

Bridging Europe and China: The Professional Life of Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766)

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Introduction

I had been with some Friends at *Clamard*, a House near *Paris*, and magnificently Entertain'd there by *Monsieur de Guigy*, the Lord of it; when upon our return home, about Nine of the Clock at Night, the Air serene, and the Moon in the Full, the Contemplation of that bright Luminary, furnished us with such variety of Thoughts, as made the way seem shorter than, indeed, it was. Our Eyes being fixed upon that stately Planet, every one spoke what he thought of it: One would needs have it be a Garret Window of Heaven; another presently affirmed, That it was the Pan whereupon *Diana* smoothed *Apollo's* Band; whilst another was of Opinion, That it might very well be the Sun himself, who putting his Locks up under his Cap at Night, peeped through a hole, to observe what was doing in the World, during his absence: And for my part, Gentlemen, said I, that I may put in for a share, and guess with the rest; not to amuse my self with those curious Notions, wherewith you tickle and spur on flowpaced Time; I believe, that the Moon is a World like ours, to which this of ours serves likewise for a Moon. This was received with the general Laughter of the Company. And perhaps, said I, (Gentlemen) just so they laugh now in the Moon, at some who maintain, That this Globe, where we are, is a World. - *Cyrano de Bergerac, The Comical History of the States and Empires of the Worlds of the Moon and Sun*, translated by A.Lovell, London, 1687, 1-2.

From 1715 to 1766, Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) was employed as a painter by three successive Emperors of China: Kangxi (1654-1722, regnant: 1662-1722), Yoncheng (1678-1739, regnant: 1723-1735) and Qianlong (1711-1799, regnant: 1736-1796). Castiglione was born in Milan on 19 July 1688, according to the baptismal registers of San Marcellino, his family's parish church.¹ Once in China, he never went back to his home town and he spent all

¹ 'Giuseppe Simone Teodoro was born today, son of the married Signore Pietro Castiglione and Signora Anna Maria. He was baptized by me Carolo Garzonio, the godfather was Signore Simone [from the] Cathedral parish church and godmather Signora Maddalena Castiglione [from the] Parish church of San Marcellino' (Giuseppe Simone Teodoro, nato oggi figlio del Signore Pietro Castiglione, et Signora Anna Maria iugati. È stato battezzato da me Carolo Garzonio, conpadre fu il Signore Simone [?] Parrocchia del Duomo, conmadre Signora Maddalena Castigliona Parrocchia di san Marcellino...), *Describiuntur nomina baptizatorum*, 1680-1715, n. 29; Archivio Diocesano, Milan. The same manuscript also records the baptism of Castiglione's brother (Giovanni Battista, December 17, 1690) and his sister (Angela Maria, December 1686) who died eight months later. The mother's family name 'Vigone' may also be found in the registry of weddings of San Marcellino (1680-1787) May 24, 1684.

his life working on various commissions for the Qing Household in Beijing where he was known as Lang Shining.

In the old Catholic cemetery of Zhalan in the Chinese capital one may still see his tombstone. Like the tombs of other westerners who served the Qing dynasty, the stone on Castiglione's grave is decorated with imperial dragons and inscribed both in Chinese and in Latin. On the right side of the stone the Chinese text proclaims:

Since the years of the Kangxi reign, you, Lang Shining, worked diligently in the imperial palace and were already granted the button and belt of a third rank official. Today you passed away because of illness. In remembrance of your service in the palace for many years and given the fact that you were almost 80 years old, we hereby grant you, following the precedent of Dai Jinxian [Ignatius Kögler], the title of Vice Minister and 300 taels of silver from the imperial treasury in order to cover the expenses of your funeral so as to show our sympathy and compassion. This is our order.²

The text on the left is supplemented by a Latin inscription:

To God, the Greatest, the Best. Brother Giuseppe Castiglione, an Italian from Milan, a full Coadjutor of the Society of Jesus, came to [Beijing] by the order of the Emperor in 1715. By means of his painting, during 50 years at court, he brought great honour to Europe and rendered distinguished service to the Mission. Equally distinguished in the pursuit of religious perfection he died piously on the sixteenth day of July in the Year of the Lord 1766 at the age of 78 having spent 59 and a half years in the Society.³

Both inscriptions emphasise that Castiglione worked for the Qing court. Nevertheless, they differ, as if the painter had led two different lives. The

² ‘乾隆三十一年六月初十日奉旨西洋人郎世寧自康熙年間人值內廷頗著勤慎曾賞給三品頂帶今患病溘逝念其行走年久齒近八旬著照戴進賢之例加恩給子侍郎銜並賞內府銀叁百兩料理喪事以示優恤欽此’, edict of the Emperor Qianlong (16 July 1766). The Chinese text and its English translation are in Edward J. Malatesta and Gao Zhiyu (eds), *Departed, yet present. Zhalan the oldest Christian cemetery in Beijing*, San Francisco-Macau, 1995, 217.

³ ‘D.O.M. Fr. Joseph Castiglione, Italus, Mediolanensis, Coadjutor formatus Soc. Jesu. De mandato Iperatoris Pekinum venit, an. Dom. 1715, ubi pictoria sua arte quam magno europeii nom. Honore per ann. 50 in aula exercuit, praeclaram Missioni dedit operam, religiosae simul perfectionis praeclarus et ipse cultor. Pie obiit die 16 Jul. Ann. Dom. 1766, aetatis 78. Societ. 59 cum dimidio.’ Ibid. My translation. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations in this thesis are my own translation.

Chinese inscription refers to an esteemed imperial painter who was invested with official rank. In contrast, the Latin inscription chiefly reports the life of a Jesuit missionary, who also happened to be a painter, and his search for religious perfection.

In a sense, the contrast between the two inscriptions sums up the purpose of this dissertation, which is to explore Castiglione's career as a whole. Contrary to the current scholarly view, I shall demonstrate that Castiglione came to China first and foremost as a professional painter. From this follows the central aim of this dissertation, which is to explore and account for the entire professional career of Castiglione and, in keeping with this, to put his vocation as a Jesuit into its proper perspective.

This is a matter of some importance. Since Castiglione's death the gulf between the two versions of his life given on his tombstone has widened considerably. In fact, Castiglione's artistic personality has gradually been separated into two: the one Chinese, the other Catholic and European. When approached thus, Castiglione's life as a painter becomes incoherent, as if he were more than one person. Accordingly, almost all scholarly work on Castiglione falls into two distinct fields: art-historical studies on his role as a painter serving in the Qing workshops, and sinological research exploring his life as a Jesuit working for the Beijing mission.

Until relatively recently, the main problem with art-historical work on Castiglione was a lack of securely attributed imagery produced during his early years in Europe. As a consequence, there has been a profound lack of interest in the artist's Italian training. So far, the only scholar who has addressed this question is George Robert Loehr. In his book *Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) pittore di corte di Ch'ien-Lung, imperatore della Cina* (1940) - the first work dedicated entirely to the Milanese artist - Loehr underscores the importance of the painter's Italian professional training as an experience not linked completely to the Jesuit environment.

In fact, he acknowledged that Castiglione had 'accomplished masters' who trained him to reach the greatest professional results.⁴ This statement comes with no concrete evidence. As such, it stimulated my own exploration of

⁴ George Robert Loehr, *Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766) pittore di corte di Ch'ien-lung imperatore della Cina*, Rome, 1940, 7.

Castiglione's entire professional path, from his initial training to the fame he attained at the Beijing court. This is what distinguishes the present thesis from other studies devoted to the Milanese artist. After Loehr, the most important work on Castiglione is the highly useful *Giuseppe Castiglione: A Jesuit Painter at the Court of the Chinese Emperors* (London, 1972) by Cecile and Michel Beurdeley. It reveals a good working knowledge of Jesuit archival sources and gives an account of Castiglione's work in Italy and Portugal based on Loehr's work. It certainly throws light on the Jesuit environment in which Castiglione worked. However, the main problem with the Beurdeleys's book is a lack of data to support a proper exploration of Castiglione's artistic practices both in Italy and China. It is thus evident that the Beurdeleys do not share Loehr's interest in Castiglione's career as a whole.

A complete art-historical account of Castiglione's work but in China only is offered by Michele Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens in Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China* and in various other publications, where Pirazzoli focuses especially on the Yuanmingyuan Palace (Garden of Total Clarity), for which Castiglione and other Jesuit artists supplied architectural designs.⁵ Pirazzoli has a full command of the Chinese sources and for this reason she presents a convincing picture of the complex reality of Qianlong patronage and its effects on Castiglione's works. Castiglione's Chinese career has evidently been examined in detail. However, its exact relationship to his Italian training remains to be assessed.

So far, the few specialist studies on Castiglione and the colossal literature on related topics, such as the historical and cultural relations between Asia and Europe and the Jesuit world, are curiously unable to shed light on the basic aspects of the Milanese painter's life. Thus Castiglione's oeuvre has been explored exclusively through his Qing commissions. For this reason a range of authors, whilst offering very attentive analyses of the Chinese works, still persist in placing Castiglione in the ambiguous and not particularly helpful category of a 'Jesuit artist'. To cite one example, Craig Clunas wrongly assumes

⁵ Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2001, 823-835. For the other works by Pirazzoli see for example 'The Emperor Qianlong's European Palaces', *Oriental Art*, vol. 19, n. 11, 1988, 61-71; 'Europeomania at the Chinese court. The Palace of the Delights of Harmony (1747-1751), Architecture and interior decoration', *The Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, vol. 65, 2000-2001, 47-60.

that ‘He had been deliberately trained by the Order as a painter of religious subjects, before being sent to China.’⁶ Likewise, general reference works like *The Oxford Dictionary of Art* assert that Castiglione was an ‘Italian Jesuit missionary and amateur painter.’⁷

One of my chief aims is to challenge this narrow view of Castiglione’s career. I shall show that Castiglione was in fact a professional painter with a very full command of different pictorial styles. This is why the central premise of this thesis is that any exploration of Castiglione’s Chinese works must be supplemented by a proper understanding of his Italian training. In keeping with this, the present thesis is the first scholarly study of Castiglione’s career based on both Italian and Chinese textual and pictorial sources. It is, in part, rooted in a direct analysis of a set of hitherto ignored images that may be attributed to the artist and which are still on display in Genoa in Italy.⁸ These are seven paintings made by Castiglione in the first years of the eighteenth century, which have never been properly published and so remain unknown to art historians and sinologists alike.⁹ On the basis of this unique pictorial source, it is possible to draw links backwards - to Castiglione’s training years in Milan - and also forwards, to the painter’s Chinese career.

In many ways, Castiglione’s career as a whole represents a unique art-historical case-study. For his career was structured by two different artistic cultures, one European, the other Chinese. The former framed Castiglione’s first training and the latter shaped his major professional achievements. As I aim to prove, Castiglione’s training and the results he obtained later as an imperial painter are profoundly interconnected. Therefore, as I hope, a better understanding of his career may stimulate further and more profound enquiries into the multi-faceted artistic relations between Europe and China in the early modern period.

In keeping with these aims, I have undertaken a systematic inquiry through Jesuit manuscript sources held in the archives of the Order, and also in other

⁶ Craig Clunas, *Art in China*, Oxford-New York, 1997, 78.

⁷ Jane Turner (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*, Oxford-New York, 1993, 97.

⁸ See part II of the present thesis, 48-51.

⁹ For descriptions of Castiglione’s paintings see my part II, 52-65.

Italian collections.¹⁰ The vast collections of Jesuit primary sources have yielded a lot of evidence about artistic issues and practices not usually noted in art-historical and sinological studies. This is because Jesuit biographers of Castiglione tend to approach manuscript sources according to narrow models of Catholic historiography, ignoring therefore crucial data about the painter's artistic life.¹¹ Moreover, such studies are often not based on a systematic collecting of data and tend to be incomplete because their authors focus only on sources promoting the religious and cultural values of the Chinese mission and its history.

Here it should be stated that Castiglione certainly played an important role within the missionary strategies of the Jesuits in China. Nevertheless, his role was, quite simply, to be a painter and, through this, to help the Jesuits retain imperial favour. This much is suggested by the fact that the Order always drew a clear distinction between amateur painters and professionals. Castiglione's own works are the best example of this: in Italy, Portugal and China all of his important commissions from the Order required a high level of technical ability.¹² The Jesuits would probably not have given such technically demanding tasks to an amateur painter.

¹⁰ In addition to the Roman archive of the Society of Jesus (ARSI), a few State libraries and archives offer small but important collections of Jesuit manuscripts. In Rome these are the Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele II, (Fondo Gesuitico), the Biblioteca Corsiniana and the Biblioteca Casanatense. Also, I have looked at the small collections of Jesuit documents in the State Archives of Genoa and Turin.

¹¹ See, for example, Henri Cordier, *Histoire générale de la Chine et de ses relations avec les pays étrangers*, Paris, 1920, and *Bibliotheca Sinica*, Hildesheim-New York, 1971, 3 vols, vol. III.; Pasquale D'elia, 'Le origini dell'arte cristiana cinese (1583-1640)', Rome, *Reale Accademia d'Italia, studi e documenti*, n. 9, 1939; Joseph Dehergne, *Répertoire des jésuites de Chine de 1552 à 1800*, vol. XXXVII, Rome 1973; Antoine Gaubil, *Correspondance de Pékin 1722-1759*, Genève, 1970; Louis Pfister, *Notices Biographiques et Bibliographiques sur les jesuites de l'ancienne mission de Chine 1552-1773*, Shanghai, 1932; László Polgár, *Bibliographie sur l'Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus 1901-1980*, Roma, 1990.

¹² See part III of the present thesis, 120-128.

The trajectory of the thesis

In the first part of this thesis I shall show that the Jesuits deliberately chose Castiglione to fit with the requirements of the mid-Qing emperors, and I shall also explore what these emperors expected of the Milanese painter and how they judged him. The patron-artist relationship that Castiglione worked under in Beijing was certainly not one of open dialogue. Rather, it was based on the acceptance of definite rules and, above all, of imperial authority. Moreover, within the Beijing court Castiglione was part of a larger group of skilled individuals of very diverse origins, coming from both within and without the Manchu Empire, all subject to the cultural and political authority of the emperor. These individuals helped to fulfil one of the most important political tasks: to cultivate a certain cultural equilibrium in response to all the various demands issued by the imperial family, ranging from the commissioning of paintings to the formulation of new laws.

In addition, as the present thesis demonstrates, by the time Castiglione came to China, the strategies of the Jesuit Order were completely different from what they had been during the previous century. The missionaries were now banned from the provinces, and relations with the imperial household were no longer straightforward. Therefore, in the eighteenth century, the main aim of the Jesuit Order in China was to cultivate a close relationship with the imperial elite in Beijing, since the Jesuits had had to relinquish their hope of converting the Qing Empire to Catholic Christianity within a few decades. Castiglione's very appointment at the imperial court must be understood as part of this broader strategy. The first part of the thesis thus consists of an account of the cultural characteristics of the Qing court and of the Jesuit mission in Beijing at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The purpose is to sketch out the environment that Castiglione had to adapt himself to once he was in China.

The dissertation then explores the Milanese training and broader Italian cultural and social milieu of the young Castiglione. This is to provide a proper basis for tracing Castiglione's artistic career in its entirety and to show why the Jesuits considered him an appropriate painter for the Qing emperors. By examining Castiglione's early years and his training I will be able to show how

he acquired abilities not directly connected to the techniques of painting - although a substantial section of the second part of this thesis is given over to these practical and conceptual skills - but rather to the management of his professional status. During Castiglione's time in the Qing workshops all of his imperial employers ordered him to paint specific subjects and to follow particular techniques. And the Italian painter invariably obeyed. Due to the strict imperial control of subject-matter and the fact that many imperial commissions required the collaboration of a range of painters, certain scholars have interpreted Castiglione's Chinese works as devoid of any artistic characteristics.¹³ I shall show that this is simply wrong. As a professional painter trained in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Italy, Castiglione would have been entirely accustomed to produce works of art under the strict control of a patron. Therefore Castiglione's ability to follow established forms and rules should be understood as a professional accomplishment, and not as a lack of artistic freedom. In Castiglione's lifetime, a patron or client would often have considerable control over the final appearance of a work of art, whether produced in Italian or in Qing workshops. Various contracts show that a patron might determine features such as colours, subjects, iconography and techniques. Admittedly, there is evidence of Jesuit artists complaining about the type of commissions they received in the Beijing workshops - the best example is Jean-Denis Attiret (1702-1768).¹⁴ But, as I see it, such complaints are not so much about constraints on artistic freedom, rather about personal choices.

So, in general, the second part of the thesis will show how Castiglione acquired a set of technical and professional skills during his early years in Italy, skills that were to serve him extremely well during his Chinese career. In particular, at the end of the second part, I have explored possible frameworks for Castiglione's artistic education. On the basis of a Milanese public collection and a seventeenth-century publication on China, I will argue that in Italy

¹³ For example see Frederik Wade Mote, 'Becoming an emperor', Ho Chuimei and Cheri A. Jones (eds.), *Life in the Imperial Court of Qing Dynasty China*, Papers from the Symposium "Imperial Authority: The Inner Court of Qing Dynasty China", January 31-February 1, Denver, 1997, 11-22, 19-20.

¹⁴ See the introduction to part IV of the present thesis, 152.

Castiglione could link his knowledge of painting to broader European sets of knowledge about China available in different and heterogeneous frameworks.

In the third part, I have looked more closely at Castiglione's skills in the field of perspective, and in particular in *quadraturismo*. These skills are revealed by important textual evidence describing commissions requiring perspectival and illusionistic depictions. I will argue that this specific skill might have consented Castiglione to link his heterogeneous Italian artistic training to his work in Beijing. In fact, *quadratura* probably allowed Castiglione better to understand how to engage with the Chinese spectators of his paintings. I believe that such awareness can be seen as Castiglione's starting point for transposing his technical skills into his Qing commissions.

For this reason, in the fourth part of my thesis I will examine Castiglione's abilities to meet the orders, and satisfy the pleasures and the tastes of a non-European patron. To denote this ability I shall use the term 'translation'. By this I mean the generation of a new pictorial language or idiom but on the basis of that originally learnt. In Castiglione's case, his 'native' idiom was that of the artistic environment of Milan yet, on this basis, he had to fashion a response to other pictorial traditions, most notably those of Qing China. This kind of translation is not about developing a stable, consistently deployed pictorial idiom, rather, it is a dynamic and open-ended process.

On this basis I shall then show that Castiglione's artistic process of translation involved a system of dynamic, always shifting points of connection. These points of connection gave Castiglione the opportunity to bring his European professional training to bear on his new Chinese artistic environment and, in response to this, he developed an artistic idiom which was much more than just a Sino-European hybrid.

On a broader level, then, the purpose of the thesis is to show that the artistic career of Giuseppe Castiglione, when examined as an entire professional life, provides the basis for an extremely useful case-study. For a proper understanding of Castiglione's career helps us to map out the points of cultural and artistic connectivity that facilitated encounters between China and Europe in the eighteenth century.

PART I

PART I: CASTIGLIONE'S MISSION

On 16 January 1707 Castiglione entered the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa. There seems to have been clear expectations of how he would serve the Order. For, on exactly the same day that Castiglione became a Jesuit, he was registered as a 'novice coadjutor assigned to the Chinese Province'.¹⁵ This suggests that the Jesuit Order had found Castiglione after some sort of search in his city, Milan, with the specific intent of deploying him in the Chinese mission.

In 1709, after two probationary years in Genoa, Castiglione was transferred to Coimbra in Portugal to embark for China.¹⁶ Possibly against the Chinese mission's expectations, Castiglione's time in Portugal was exceptionally prolonged. The Beijing missionaries were actually expecting a painter from Europe to present to the Emperor Kangxi. This much is evident from a text by Matteo Ripa, a missionary sent to China by the Papal Congregation *de Propaganda Fide*.¹⁷ In a letter dated 8 November 1711 and addressed to the General Secretary Monsignor Silvio de Cavalieri, Ripa stated that the Kangxi had requested European virtuosi to be employed in the imperial workshops.¹⁸ Especially needed were: a copper engraver, an enamel craftsman, a good musician, a good surgeon and a good painter. The latter had to be skilled in

¹⁵ 'Coadiutores novity - Joseph Castilioneus, pro Provincia Sinensi -16 Jennaio 1707', *Catalogus brevis provinciae mediolanensis anni MDCCVIII*, Genuensis Domus Probationis, ARSI, Med. 7, Mediol. Catalog. 1707-1713, 20.

¹⁶ Carlos Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Paris-Bruxelles, 1891, 12 vols., vol. II, 845 ; Pfister, op. cit., vol. I, 635. No exact date is given for Castiglione's journey to Portugal.

¹⁷ Matteo Ripa (1682-1745) arrived in China in 1711. The *Propaganda Fide* is a Congregation of the Papal Curia founded in 1622. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries its remit was to coordinate and manage different Papal proposals regarding overseas and other missions. The *Propaganda Fide* consisted of one Secretary and thirteen Cardinals. The apostolic vicars in China were directly answerable to the *Propaganda Fide*. One of the major tasks of the Congregation was to exercise, for the Papacy, direct control over the different religious Orders working in the missions and to undermine the policy of the Portuguese *Padroado*.

¹⁸ Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, APF, Miscellanea 17, 17. See appendix A, 186.

portraiture and above all in optical perspective because that was what the Emperor most appreciated.¹⁹

The fact that the mission in Beijing was expecting Castiglione is also substantiated by two letters sent from Goa to Rome. In 1713 Antonio de Payra, the Jesuit Procurator with jurisdiction over the Asian missions, wrote to his General in Rome, accusing the Rector of the Jesuit College in Coimbra in Portugal of delaying Castiglione's departure.²⁰ In the two letters de Payra asked the General to obtain a refund from the Rector for the money forwarded by the Chinese mission to cover Castiglione's travel expenses. The delay was caused by the Rector's request that Castiglione should supply some paintings for the College chapel of St. Francis Borgia. Castiglione himself testifies that his time in Portugal was spent on more than just waiting for an opportunity to sail to China. For on 22 February 1714 Castiglione sent the following note from Lisbon to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini in Rome:

I received from Your Paternity and the Provincial Father notice to embark on my desired mission, as I greatly wish. But I have not departed this year for first I have to fulfil the Queen's wishes. She wants me to paint portraits of her two children. I hope to God that I will finish this in time for my embarking. By God's grace the work in the Chapel in Coimbra is finished to the satisfaction of everyone. I have no more to say but to ask humbly for the holy blessing of Your Paternity.²¹

After all this waiting, Castiglione evidently did not want to miss the spring opportunity for sailing to China. The portraits of the royal children seem not to have survived but Castiglione would have had executed them within two months because on 11 April 1714 he left Lisbon.²²

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ ARSI, Goa 9, vol. II, 500 r/v. April 6 1713. ARSI, Goa 9, vol. II, 501 v., April 18, 1713. See Appendix B, 186-187.

²¹ 'Avendo ricevuto l'avviso della Paternità Vostra e del Padre Provinciale per andare senza farlo quest'anno alla mia desiderata missione, come io grandemente desidero, ma prima devo soddisfare il desiderio della Signora regina che volle che io gli faccia i retratti dei suoi duoi fanciulini, ma spero nel Signore, che tutto li finirà a tempo per potermi imbarcare. L'opera della cappella di Coimbra sta finita con soddisfazione de tutti, per grazia del Signore, non tengo altro se non dimandare umilmente la Santa Benedizione della Vostra Paternità', ARSI, Jap. Sin. 175, 220 r. A translation of this letter may also be found in Beurdeley, *op. cit.*, 154.

²² The two children of Queen Maria Ana of Austria, married in 1708 to King João V of Portugal, were Maria Barbara (born in 1711) and Dom Pedro (born in 1712).

Castiglione arrived in China on 20 August 1715. His arrival is described in a report of 1715 by Giuseppe Cerù (1674-1750), Procurator General of Propaganda Fide in China and bishop of Beijing:

On 20 August two Portuguese vessels from Goa landed in Macao. Travelling in them were seventeen Jesuits, fifteen priests and two lay persons. These two are Italian: Brother Giuseppe Castiglione of Milan, a painter, and Brother Giuseppe Costa, a surgeon from Naples. Their Provincial Father sent them to serve this Emperor [Kangxi] with a proper present for him.²³

It is worth noting here that Castiglione and Costa are identified as ‘lay persons’ to distinguish them from the other fifteen Jesuits. Moreover, the two lay persons are identified as a painter and a surgeon, thus professionally entirely distinct from the priests.

In the same letter Cerù affirms that the Jesuit Fathers in Macao have informed the imperial governor of Guangzhou (Canton) of the arrival of the two lay Brothers. Having heard the news, the governor called Castiglione and Costa to Guangzhou where they were to await permission from the court to travel to Beijing.²⁴ After about two months, probably the time necessary for a messenger to reach the capital and to come back, they received the necessary imperial authorisation. As Cerù’s letter shows, on 11 October 1715, the two brothers departed from Guangzhou.

From the above evidence two questions arise: how did the Society of Jesus choose Castiglione? What was Castiglione’s exact role to be within the Jesuit Order? The answers to these questions lie in important documents from the Jesuit archive in Rome.

²³ ‘Alli 20. Agosto. Arrivarono a Macao due navi Portoghesi venute da Goa, sopra le quali vennero 17. Gesuiti, 15. Sacerdoti, e 2. Laici, questi erano Italiani, cioè il Fretto Giuseppe Castiglione Milanese Pittore, e il Fr Giuseppe Costa del Regno di Napoli speziale e Chirurgo, destinati dal loro Padre Provinciale per il servizio di questo Imperatore, con un buon regalo per il suddetto’, *Relazione scritta da Monsignor Vescovo di Pechino al P. Giuseppe Cerù, in ordine alla Pubblicazione de Decreti apostolici*, Biblioteca Casanatense, Manuscript 1630, 1715, 146 r.-152 v., 149 r.

²⁴ Ibid.

1. Searching for the proper candidate

In the early modern period, the Society of Jesus often employed well-trained and highly talented artists. This was the case, for example, for the famous painter Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709), who shared with Castiglione the rank of Brother Coadjutor (or lay brother). The Order chose to use Pozzo as a painter only when his skills were proven by the fame of his existing commissions and by a recommendation from an established artist, Luigi Scaramuccia (1616-1680).²⁵

Moreover, there is evidence for the sound quality of Castiglione's training in his *Memoria postuma*, a formal spiritual biography of the painter written by the Jesuits in China.²⁶ It was to be placed in their central archives immediately after Castiglione's death. Thus it is a highly reliable source. For, in such memorial texts, hagiographic elaborations were usually applied only when describing the Christian virtues of the deceased or otherwise at the end, separately from the actual narration of the life. For example, in the last paragraph of Castiglione's *Memoria*, the author noted:

In all his life he showed no interest in situations not involving the glory of God or the welfare of others. He kept his senses subdued by hair-cloths, flagellations and fasts, thus having his body enslaved by the endurance of pain. A person who had known him personally for fifteen years testified that there was nothing reprehensible in him, nothing imperfect, everything in him was perfect according to the rule of firm virtue. What he confessed as a mortal sin would hardly be considered blameworthy by his confessor. In the last days of his life, when he was ill, he spoke of his death like a happy, even desirable event. He never lost consciousness. Until his death he was pure and innocent and the fame of this man of rare virtue spread everywhere.²⁷

²⁵ For a complete survey on Andrea Pozzo and his entry into the Jesuit Order and an excellent general biography see Vittorio De Feo and Vittorio Martinelli (eds), *Andrea Pozzo*, Milano, 1996.

²⁶ *Memoria postuma*, ARSI, Bras. 28, 92 r.- 93 v. For the entire *Memoria postuma* see appendix C, 187-197.

²⁷ 'Negotia quae ad Numinis gloriam hominumque salutem non pertinerent, penitus negligebat. Sensus fraenabat cilicis, flagellis, jejuniis, et invicta rerum molestarum patientia, quibus corpus suum in servitum redigebat. Unus, qui per quindecim annos intime cum illo tractavit, asserebat

In contrast to such devout hyperbole, the first part of the *Memoria postuma* is mainly a straightforward chronicle of events in Castiglione's life. Amongst other things, the *Memoria postuma* gives the date of Castiglione's birth and this is in exact keeping with that noted in the baptismal register of his parish church.²⁸ The *Memoria* also affirms that he received his first education at home, a common custom in the early modern period amongst wealthy Italian families, who often used private tutors.²⁹ Later, Castiglione became a painter's apprentice:

Castiglione was born in the noble and ancient city of Milan into a well-known family on 19 July 1688. He was brought up in the paternal home. In his childhood he received an education which was focused on literary studies and on the practice of those virtues that children can learn. He was so keen on practicing painting under the guidance of a master who was most celebrated in that age that he showed great skill in learning the art. He entered the Society of Jesus in Genoa when he was 19.³⁰

The *Memoria postuma* stresses the sheer quality of Castiglione's professional education in Milan. In itself, this helps to explain why he was chosen by the Society of Jesus. His personal mission was to meet the Imperial demand: as already demonstrated Kangxi wanted a well-trained and skilful painter from Europe.

It is clear, then, that Castiglione was a professional painter before he became a Jesuit. By 'professional' I mean trained to satisfy private and public commissions. Commercially speaking, a painting made in a professional environment had to be the result of balancing benefits received (money, gifts, political protection, social visibility) with time, effort and materials expended.

nihil in illo notatum unquam esse quod reprehendi posset: nihil mutilum, nihil manchum, nihil imo quod ad solidae virtutis normam non exactum: non impetum animi, affectum repentinum quod a virtute deflecteret. Ea quae ad confessionem afferebat crimina erant eiuamodi ut vix sacerdos materiam aptam absolutionis inveniret. In morbo extremo qui decem et octo dies tenuit de suo obitu uti de re quadam iucunda ac porro optatissima loquebatur; nec unquam esse sui compos desit. Primam, uti creditur, innocentiam, cum pervulgata et publica non usitatae virtutis opinione tumulo intulit', *Ibid.*, 93 r.

²⁸ See my Introduction, footnote 1, 1.

²⁹ See Angelo Turchini, *Società professionale e istruzione primaria nello Stato di Milano*, Bologna, 1996, 98.

³⁰ 'Non obscuris parentibus natus est Castiglione in antiqua ac nobili civitate Mediolanensi die 19 Julii anni 1688. In paterna domo educatus, pueriles exegit annos in iis litteris ac virtutibus, quarum aetas prima capax erat. Arti pictoriae sub disciplina Magistri, illius aetatis celeberrimi, tam sedulo navavit operam, ut discere docturius videretur. Societatem iniit Genuae anno aetatis suae 19', *Memoria postuma*, op. cit., 92 r.

Italian artistic literature from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries offers useful evidence about the time/cost/benefit relationship within the professional environment. For example, in a passage on the Bolognese painter Guido Reni, Giovanpietro Bellori (1613-1696), discusses how a painter's work is judged:

...if they [ie. the connoisseurs] have to consider paintings, even if excellent and from a famous master, they still want to measure the artist's merit through the time employed. Using this information, they want to calculate how much money was spent for that amount of time in order to finish the painting...³¹

Faced with this money/time rule, successful professional painters had to develop specific qualities in order to satisfy their clients' needs. The Society of Jesus, and especially the missionaries in China, must have assumed that only a professional painter would be able to adapt successfully to working in the Qing Household, that is, to work together with local painters and complete a range of tasks in a limited period of time.

The Jesuits' recruitment of Castiglione was thus based on the need to find a painter trained in the professional environment of a famous master's workshop. In searching for such a painter, youth was probably an important criterion. A young person would cope better with the long journey and, once in China, might be more flexible in adapting to new customs. More importantly, Kangxi seems to have had very precise ideas about the duration of stay to be expected of Europeans involved with his court. In his biography of the Qing emperor, Jonathan Spence records the following statement:

Hereafter we will permit residence in China to all those who come from the West and will not return there. Residence permission will not be granted to those who come one year expecting to go home the next – because such people are like those who stand outside the main gate and discuss what people are doing inside the house.³²

³¹ '...se costoro hanno a riconoscere qualche opera di pittura, ancorche' eccellente e d'illustre nome, essi non misurano altrimenti il merito, ma il tempo e vogliono numerare i danari al computo dei giorni...', Giovan Pietro Bellori, *Le vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti moderni*, first edition: Rome, 1672; Turin, 1976, Evelina Borea (ed.), 507.

³² Kangxi's statement comes from his debate with the Papal Legate Charles-Thomas Maillard de Tournon (1668-1710) in 1705. Jonathan Spence, *Emperor of China: Self portrait of K'ang-hsi*, London, 1974, 82.

In response to such imperial expectations, the Jesuits evidently found a suitable young painter in the Duchy of Milan. After the enrolment of Castiglione in the Society, the Jesuits' next priority was to organise his journey to China successfully and then to introduce the artist at court.

To explore further what was involved in the Jesuits' search for a suitable painter, it must first be emphasised that the Order often used already famous painters as arbiters to guarantee the skills of those artists who were to receive commissions from the Order or otherwise to ensure the quality of a single painting.³³ When Castiglione started his apprenticeship, he was presumably judged both on his technical ability and on some sort of natural aptitude.³⁴ So, when he was first approached by, or he approached, the Jesuits of Milan, he was most likely to have been a promising collaborator working in an important workshop. To get a proper sense of what was involved in this first encounter, it is important to note some peculiarities of the Society of Jesus in its mission within Italian urban life.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Jesuit Fathers usually had to be knowledgeable not only about the religious institutions of their city (of congregations, churches, institutes and the Catholic hierarchy) but also about different social and professional groups.³⁵ For example, in 1674, Carlo Torre described San Fedele, the Casa Professa of the Jesuits of Milan, as follows:

Let us admire now the whole Casa Professa. It was built in this century. There are square courtyards with porticos, comfortable flats where the Fathers live and various large rooms in which public meetings of nobles and merchants are held on festival days...³⁶

³³ For example, Pascoli narrates that the General of the Order Oliva asked Maratti to evaluate two paintings received from Pozzo as a gift. See Lione Pascoli, *Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti moderni*, Rome, 1736, 250.

³⁴ Again, I would stress the importance of the search for famous or talented artists by the Order for its commissions. For example, as described by Lauro Magnani, in Genoa the Jesuits were looking for top artists to compete with other religious orders also engaged in the educational system (Scolopi, Somaschi). See Lauro Magnani, 'Lo spazio religioso. Scelta decorativa e rappresentazione del sacro', Ezia Gavazza and Lauro Magnani (eds), *Pittura e decorazione a Genova e in Liguria nel Settecento*, Genoa, 2000, 255-314, 307.

³⁵ Luigi Fiorani, 'Verso la nuova città. Conversione e conversionismo a Roma nel Cinque-Seicento', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, n. 10, 1998, 91-186.

³⁶ 'Sia da voi rimirata la Professa Casa tutta eretta in questo secolo non mancanle Cortilii quadrati co' loro Portici, appartamenti comodi per l'abitazione de' Padri, e varie vaste Sale, entro cui fannosi né giorni Festivi pubbliche Congregazioni di Nobili, e di Mercanti...', Carlo Torre, *Il ritratto di Milano, diviso in tre libri, colorito da Carlo Torre, Canonico dell'Insigne Basilica degli Appostoli, e Collegiata di San Nazaro. Nel quale vengono descritte tutte le*

The Jesuits' direct connections with different Milanese communities probably helped them to determine who was the most suitable candidate. Moreover, the Jesuits had a standard approach for evaluating those about to enter their Order. This is delineated in their *Constitutiones*. With the *Declarationes* this text forms the part of the *Institutum Societatis Iesu*, the original legislative core of the Order, composed by its founder, St. Ignatius Loyola.³⁷ The *Constitutiones* offer the following counsel on admission into the Society:

For the service of God it is essential to make a proper choice of persons to be admitted and there must be a cautious and profound attentiveness to their skills and their vocation.³⁸

A successive clause states:

Generally to speak of persons to be admitted into the Order, the more gifts - natural and acquired - that a person has received from God our Lord and the more experience he has of those gifts to further the aim of the Order to serve God, the fitter he will be for entering the Society.³⁹

Evidently, the admissions policy of the Order, as instituted by St. Ignatius, was to select individuals with more than a religious vocation. They also had to have a professional or experiential formation. These, then, were the terms of Castiglione's recruitment: a young and promising painter had to be found to serve a person no less than the Emperor of China. In such cases, mistakes in the recruitment process could not even be contemplated, as stipulated in the *Constitutiones*:

...for the most important matters and where it is essential not to make mistakes, regarding persons who are appointed for managing such

Antichità e Modernità, che vedovansi, e che si vedono nella città di Milano, sì di sontuose Fabbriche, quanto di pittura, e di scultura, Milano, 1674, 294.

³⁷ The *Constitutiones* were left by St. Ignatius and were partially printed in Latin two years after his death in 1558. Maurizio Costa, 'Costituzioni', Mario Gioia (ed.), *Gli scritti di Ignazio di Loyola*, Turin, 1977, 353-645, 375. See also Massimo Marcocchi, *La riforma Cattolica. Documenti e testimonianze. Figure ed istituzioni dal secolo XV alla metà del secolo XVII*, Brescia, vol. I, 1967, vol. II, 1970, I vol., 304.

³⁸ 'E' molto importante per il servizio di Dio che si faccia una scelta appropriata dei soggetti che si ammettono e che si cerchi attentamente di conoscere a fondo le loro doti e la loro vocazione', Maurizio Costa, op.cit., 441, clause n. 142.

³⁹ 'Per parlare in generale di quelli che dovrebbero essere ammessi, quanto più numerosi doni, naturali e infusi, una persona avrà ricevuto da Dio nostro Signore, per essere di aiuto allo scopo a cui la Compagnia tende per il servizio di Dio, e quanto più li avrà sperimentati, tanto più sarà adatta per esservi ricevuta', ibid., 442, clause n. 147.

matters through the divine grace, one must deploy chosen individuals who can be trusted entirely.⁴⁰

Having found a painter who met the mission's stringent requirements, the Order, a hierarchical organisation, placed Castiglione in a position and rank where he could accomplish his task: that of a Brother Coadjutor.

⁴⁰ '...per gli affari di maggiore importanza e dove conta di più non sbagliare, per quanto dipende da chi ha da provvedervi mediante la grazia divina, si devono inviare persone scelte e delle quali maggiormente ci si possa fidare', *ibid.*, section VII, 586.

2. Painter and Brother Coadjutor: a practical combination

After praising the education that Castiglione had received from his family and his professional training, the *Memoria postuma* describes his religious education. Castiglione did not finish his noviciate in Genoa but took his vows in Beijing. This shows the urgency with which the Jesuits tried to get Castiglione into the service of Kangxi:

During his noviciate he was so obedient and good-hearted that he did not need to learn any virtues, but just to be led to [them]. When he was sent to the Mission he finished the parts of the noviciate that he had not finished before.⁴¹

At the Portuguese Jesuit house of St. Joseph in Beijing, on 8 December 1722, seven years after his landing, Castiglione finally became a Temporal Coadjutor or Lay Brother, the lowest rank in the Jesuit Order.⁴² Poverty, chastity and obedience were the three vows that, after a noviciate of two years, one had to take to become a Temporal Coadjutor. In the Jesuit hierarchy, a Temporal Coadjutor is below a Spiritual Coadjutor (who also takes the three solemn vows) and a fully Professed Father (who takes four solemn vows). The fact that Castiglione was a Temporal Coadjutor is essential for understanding his role within the Society of Jesus. Usually, Temporal Coadjutors were occupied in the most humble activities. In exceptional cases, however, they were used by the Order in specific professional projects. For example, Giuseppe Rovella states:

Usually it is common to find coadjutors working as tailors or employed in the garden or in the kitchen rather than as architects or painters...The opposite, which happens rarely, occurs when fully formed men or young persons who have started well in their profession and with good potential enter the Order.⁴³

⁴¹ In tyrocinio autem uti erat natura docilis, ac pronus ad virtutem, ad eam duntaxat dirigi, non cogi debuerit. Nondum exacto tyrocinio, missus est Missionem', *Memoria postuma*, op. cit., 92 r.

⁴² For Castiglione's vows see appendix D, 197-198.

⁴³ È tuttavia molto naturale che assai più frequente s'incontri il coadiutore a banco del sarto o nell'orto o in cucina che non nello studio dell'architetto o sui ponti delle fabbriche...Il contrario, cosa che non interviene molto frequente, si verifica solamente quando entrano nell'Ordine uomini o già interamente formati alla loro arte o giovani ben avviati e di grandi speranze', Giuseppe Rovella, 'Andrea Pozzo e l'arte barocca', *Civiltà Cattolica*, vol. IV, 1993, Rome, 1942, 153-161, 156.

Therefore the rank of Brother Coadjutor, apart from being the position assigned for practical tasks, gave the Order a means of deploying individuals with capacities acquired outside the Society of Jesus and not strictly related to a religious vocation. So the rank of Jesuits like Castiglione indicated that they were to be involved full-time in particular assignments but without the expectation of becoming ordained priests or fully Professed Jesuits. Accordingly, the training that Castiglione received in the Jesuit environment would have been purely religious, essentially devoted to his assimilation into the Order through the practice of obedience. This would have allowed Castiglione to focus on painting without being involved in other duties. Castiglione's position in the Order may be illuminated further via the *Constitutiones*:

[Brother Coadjutors] might be employed in important activities commensurate to the skills given them by God our Lord. However their proper task is to supply all the humble and ordinary services as [these are] ordered.⁴⁴

To this, I should add that the educational system of the Jesuits did not involve the training of painters. The Order focused its major efforts on the formation of the nobility and, in general, on the dominant social classes. Rhetoric, Grammar, Logic, Natural and Moral Philosophy and Theology were usually the subjects taught in the Jesuit colleges and universities.⁴⁵ In addition, in all the noviciates the didactic efforts were completely focused on religious matters.⁴⁶ This does not mean that the Order was not involved in the promotion and patronage of certain artists. Like most other religious or non-religious early modern grouping, the Jesuit Order promoted itself and serviced its own need for painted images (for its colleges and houses) by employing the best painters available or the painters who offered the best prize in relation to quality. From Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) to Giovanni Gherardini (1655-ca.1729), the painter who,

⁴⁴ '...anche se possono essere impiegati in attività più importanti, secondo i talenti concessi loro da Dio nostro Signore, è più proprio esercitarsi in tutti i servizi umili e ordinari che saranno loro comandati', Costa, op.cit., 426, clause 114.

⁴⁵ See Simona Negruzzo, *Collegij a forma di Seminario. Il sistema di formazione teologica nello Stato di Milano in età spagnola*, Pavia, 2000,155.

⁴⁶ This is obvious by looking at the third part of the *Constitutions* dedicated to the first education of the novices.

through the French Jesuits, worked for Kangxi before Castiglione, the list of artists who received commissions from the Order is a long one.⁴⁷

The Jesuits were therefore very actively involved in the diffusion of images but absolutely not in the professional formation of artists. So, once in the Jesuit Order, Castiglione would most likely not have received any painterly training. In his case, professional training and religious learning represented two very different entities. However, once he was within the Jesuit Order, Castiglione seems to have gained much practical experience by working at commissions such as those for the chapel of St. Francis Borgia or for the Queen of Portugal. But, at this point, he was almost certainly already a fully formed painter.

It is also worth noting that in Castiglione's era religious faith alone was not sufficient for becoming an esteemed painter. Only a solid technical training paired with constant practice could lead to such a status. Personal faith might have been an important aspect of a painter's work but it was not a guarantor or a feature of technical knowledge. This challenges the views of Cecile and Michel Beurdeley, who claim that Castiglione 'adopted Chinese pictorial techniques while preserving his religious convictions.'⁴⁸ Surely for the Jesuits, 'pictorial techniques' and 'religious convictions' were neither connected nor in opposition. This is proven by the flexible nature of the rank of Brother Coadjutor as defined in the *Constitutiones*.

Now, within St. Ignatius's literary corpus, Mario Gioia has noted a basic difference between the *Constitutiones* and the *Spiritual Exercises*.⁴⁹ While the latter is based on the relation between two subjects, a director or instructor and a disciple, the *Constitutiones* show the multiple nature of Jesuit activities and also that these were allowed to be shaped by individual differences. For this reason, the *Constitutiones* posit each single Jesuit both as a member and as a unique individual. As a consequence of this it follows that Castiglione was most likely accepted into the Order because of his abilities as a painter. Yet, of course, once he was in the Order, he also received a religious formation that involved

⁴⁷ For Gherardini's commission in Beijing see part III of the present thesis, 132-134.

⁴⁸ Beurdeley and Beurdeley, op. cit., 6.

⁴⁹ Gioia, op. cit., 18.

recognising a set of authorities: God, the Jesuit General and the Provincial Father.

In the eighteenth century the Jesuits' flexible approach began to be criticized by other Catholic orders, especially in relation to the Chinese mission.⁵⁰ For example, the possibilities - in terms of proximity to the Qing court - offered to the Order by the employment of highly specialised Brother Coadjutors, were somewhat controversial. In Castiglione's case, this is apparent from a confidential letter written in 1749 by a *Propaganda Fide* missionary, Giovanni Pietro da Mantova, on the occasion of the painter's promotion to a Qing official position:

*News from the Chinese missions, written as confidential letters to friends and with secretiveness...promotion of Brother Castiglione, Jesuit and painter, to the third rank. Everyone agrees that this was a good opportunity to speak to the Emperor in favour of the Catholic religion and of the Mission. But the Brother did not consider this appropriate. What can one say? He is there as a painter and not as a missionary.*⁵¹

This letter represents an indisputable evidence that Castiglione's tasks in China were primarily related to the art of painting and that, in this, he was fully supported by the Jesuit Order. Curiously, these bald facts are still rejected by several scholars. For example, according to Yu Hui, Castiglione was destined to undertake a number of religious duties at the Qing Court:

First and foremost the Jesuits missionaries were clergymen, although some of them had undergone extensive training in the arts and the

⁵⁰ The most important were: Augustinian, Dominicans and Franciscan. Also the two congregations of the Lazarists and Missions Étrangères. Propaganda Fide employed individual members of the listed orders and congregations.

⁵¹ '...la promozione del Fratello Castiglioni Gesuita Pittore al Mandarinato di terz'ordine. Tutti convengono, che quella era una bella occasione per parlare all'Imperadore a favore della Religione, e della Missione: ma il Fratello non lo giudicò a proposito. Che si può dire? Egli è là per Pittore, e non per Missionario', Biblioteca Casanatense, *Notizie delle Missioni della Cina, fatte come per mandarle ad un'Amico in confidenza, e con segretezza*, 1746-1749, ms. 2569, Tibi Soli, 341 r.-350 r., 349 r., January 13, Macao, 1749. In another letter written in the October of the same year, Giovanni Pietro da Mantova expressed a similar uneasiness about the Jesuits involved in the construction of the European section of the Yuanmingyuan. Here this view is emphasized by a Latin quotation: 'Quomodo credent ei, quem non audierunt? quomodo autem audient sine predicante?' (How one can believe someone if he does not speak? How then, it is possible to listen to someone who does not preach?), Ibid., 317 r.- 332 v., 328 r. The term *Tibi Soli* refers to confidential letters that only a certain person was permitted to read. In the Jesuit correspondence such letters had to be opened by the General. This type of letter often contains important evidence because it is generally focused on reporting facts without any rhetorical complexities.

sciences and had carried out work in these fields in their native countries. However, these pursuits remained secondary to their religious interests; their primary aim in going to China was to undertake missionary work.⁵² In the case of Castiglione, this is patently wrong. Kangxi had requested a painter from Europe and the Jesuits did not want to disappoint him.

⁵² Yu Hui, 'Collaborative painting at the Qianlong court', Zhang Hongxing (ed.), *The Qianlong Emperor: Treasures from the Forbidden City*, Edinburgh, 2002, 169-173, 169. Also, Zhang Anzhi in his *A History of Chinese Painting* writes: 'People like Castiglione were primarily missionaries, not outstanding painters', Beijing, 1992, 187. Also, it is worth noting Howard Roger's claim that Castiglione 'was not motivated by purely aesthetic goals and artistic concerns. His sole purpose in serving the emperor so assiduously was to further the goals of the Jesuit mission in China', Howard Roger and Sherman E. Lee (eds), *Masterworks of Ming and Qing Painting from the Forbidden City*, Lansdale, 1989, 183. Although it is not clear what 'aesthetic goals' and 'artistic concerns' mean in this case, it seems to me that linking Castiglione's faith to his professional and technical knowledge is unhelpful. It might be more useful to separate individuals using images from individuals making images. It is also obvious that the Jesuits ordered Castiglione to act at court by using his professional skills and not his faith. Also, Roger supports his view by quoting Attiret's well-known complaint about the absence of artistic freedom. This rhetorical manoeuvre is curiously justified by stating that 'The sentiments recorded by Father Attiret, Castiglione's closest friend, were those of Castiglione as well', *ibid.* There is, in fact, no evidence whatsoever to support this claim.

3. Admission at court

As soon as he arrived at the Chinese court, Castiglione was required to demonstrate his abilities in front of the Emperor Kangxi. There are no less than two extant eighteenth-century descriptions of this moment:

Castiglione had just arrived in Beijing and his fame had already reached the ears of Emperor Kangxi who was waiting for him impatiently because he wanted to see with his [own] eyes all this bravura. Once [he was] in the city the Emperor ordered Castiglione to be conducted to him even before he had met our people [the Jesuit missionaries]. Without preambles [the Emperor] asked Castiglione to paint a bird. Castiglione obeyed and he succeeded so well that the Emperor was wondering if the bird was alive or painted. In order not to defraud his people [referring, it seems, to those working in the Imperial painting workshops] and to have a noble art practised by a uniquely skilful artist the Emperor chose a few disciples and appointed Castiglione as their master.⁵³

The two Jesuit lay brothers came here [in Beijing] the twenty-first of this month [December] and met His Majesty, who the day after, looked at a painting of a dog by Brother Castiglione and it pleased him. He also looked at some tools belonging to Brother Costa. The two brothers came here with a good provision of books and tools for their professions (not like us [referring here to the Propaganda Fide missionaries] who came here in the name of God) and for this reason His Majesty received a good impression of the two Brothers. [Kangxi] asked the painter if he can make portraits and if he knows linear perspective. He answered that he can

⁵³ ‘Pekinum nordum pervenerat, iam eius fama ad aures Imperatoris KanXi pervenerat, ac impatiens avidusque expectabat atque volebat suismet oculis videre tantae artis peritiam. Ubi ac urbem intravit quin ad nostros diverteret, illico ad se adduci iubet. Nec mora: ab illo petit an aviculam quando depingeret. Paruit ille et tam felici artis suae eventu, ut Imperator haesitare coepit vivand an picta foret. Ne ergo populares suos fraudaret, ac eximiae artis peritiam inter [...] unius manus occluderet, discipulos legit Castiglionemque picturae praefacit’, *Memoria postuma*, op. cit., 92 r. The manuscript is a copy of the original as demonstrated by the three different types of handwriting in which is composed.

depict [human] figures and for the rest he knows a little; I hope that His Majesty will like the painter.⁵⁴

The two passages come from two separate manuscript sources. The first is from the *Memoria postuma* and the second is from a letter sent by Matteo Ripa to Rome in 1715. Although the two passages seem to refer to two different moments it is nevertheless possible that they describe the same event. The *Memoria postuma* states that the painter was presented at court as soon as he arrived in Beijing, and that he painted a bird in front of the Emperor. Ripa's letter claims that Castiglione's first audience was on 21 December and that, the day after, Kangxi looked at a painting of a dog by the Italian artist. While the *Memoria postuma* does not indicate any precise date, Ripa's letter reports the exact date of Castiglione's audience and, more importantly, the author was actually a witness because he introduced Castiglione to the Emperor. In contrast, the *Memoria postuma* was written more than fifty years after the event narrated. This may explain some of the discrepancies between the two accounts.

For the purposes of the present argument, the most important point about these two sources is that they both describe a dialogue and a response. The Emperor asked Castiglione about his painting skills, about portraiture and optical perspective, and then, we are informed, Kangxi was touched by the verisimilitude of the artist's painted bird or dog (or both). In addition, the *Memoria postuma* further confirms that the Emperor was actually expecting 'the painter', that is Castiglione, to arrive from Europe and also that he entrusted him with training apprentices.

The arrival and the employment of a European painter at the Qing court during the Kangxi Reign was not a novelty or an exception. Castiglione was neither the

⁵⁴ 'Li due fratelli laici Giesouiti giunsero qui alli 21 del corrente, e viddero Sua Maesta', il quale ai 22 vidde un cane dipinto dal Fratel Castiglione, e li piacque, e vidde parimenti alcuni istrumenti e ferri dell'altro Fratel Costa. Son venuti ben provisti di libri, et istrumenti per la loro professione (e non come noi che venimmo in nomine Domini) il che fa' buon concetto a Sua Maesta' de soggetti. Dimandato il Pittore se sapeva far ritratti, e se sapeva di prospettiva, rispose che sapeva di far figure, e che del resto ne sapeva qualche poco; io spero che avera' a piacere a Sua Maesta', APF, *Cina e Regni Adiacenti*, Copie manoscritte di vari scritti del Servo di Dio Matteo Ripa, 1874, Miscellanea 16, 21 r., 26 December 1715. Passages from Ripa's diary related to his journey to China, his mission at the Qing court and his return to Naples via London are translated into English by Fortunato Prandi, *Memoirs of Father Ripa, during thirteen years' residence at the court of Peking in the service of the emperor of China; with an account of the foundation of the college for the education of young Chinese at Naples*, London, 1844. I have tried, however, to avoid Prandi's translations because they are sometimes inaccurate and incomplete. A useful Italian transcription of Ripa's writing is in Matteo Ripa, *Storia della Fondazione della Congregazione e del Collegio de' Cinesi*, Naples, 1832, 3 vols.

first nor the last European painter to be examined and then appointed by a Qing emperor.⁵⁵

Indeed, it seems that Castiglione's journey to China was organised with the expectation that he would replace the previous European painter holding a full-time appointment at the Beijing court, the layman Giovanni Gherardini. Gherardini, a painter from Modena who had initially worked under the protection of the Duke of Nevers, had left La Rochelle on 7 March 1698 on the ship *Amphitrite* as part of the mission to China sponsored by King Louis XIV of France.⁵⁶ Apart from working for Kangxi, Gherardini decorated the cupola of the French missionary church in Beijing which opened in 1703. In 1707 he was sent back to Europe because of his inability to accept the life-style of the mission.⁵⁷ Before him, Cristoforo Fiori (1672-?), another Italian painter, had worked in Beijing between 1694 and 1705 but, like Gherardini, Fiori asked to be repatriated.⁵⁸

With regard to Gherardini's inability to accept missionary life, it is important to underscore that he was not a member of the Jesuit Order. There was a profound difference between him and Castiglione who, as a Brother Coadjutor, had to conform to rules and obligations of the Order. After Gherardini's experience in Beijing under the supervision of the French Jesuits, the Order, in the persons of the General and the provincial fathers, probably decided that they needed a painter who was also a lay member. In this way, the Order could

⁵⁵ The first European painter working at the Beijing court was the Austrian Jesuit Johannes Grueber. He served the Emperor Shunzhi from 1659 to 1661. In 1667 pictures in a Western style were also presented to Kangxi by Luigi Buglio, the Jesuit Superior in Beijing. See George Robert Loehr, 'European artists at the Chinese court', William Watson (ed.), *The Westward influence of the Chinese arts from the 14th to the 18th century*, London, 1972, 33-42, 33-34. It is worth noticing here that Loehr's article presents valid evidence documenting the Qing and Ming interest in perspective before Castiglione's arrival. Unfortunately, this evidence, based on valuable archival sources is often ignored by contemporary scholars. For example, Jennifer Purtle wrongly affirms that Castiglione in China 'introduced Western single-point perspective to the court, as well as colouristic techniques and chiaroscuro', see Jennifer Purtle, 'China and Tibet 1650-1800', John Onians (ed.), *Atlas of World Art*, London, 2004, 202-203, 203. Castiglione in fact did not introduce any Western technique unknown to the Qing court workshops.

⁵⁶ Giovanni Gherardini described his travel to China in *Relation du voyage fait à la Chine sur le vaisseau l'Amphitrite en l'année 1698*, Paris, 1700.

⁵⁷ Gherardini was not satisfied with his living quarters at the French mission. When the Emperor was informed of the situation he moved Gherardini to the residence of one of his favourite officials. The French missionaries tried to convince the painter to return to the mission but he finally decided to go back to Europe. See Beurdeley and Beurdeley, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

deploy a more controllable person for the Qing court, someone who was unlikely to wish to return to Europe.

As both the *Memoria postuma* and Ripa's letter show, the first and most important of Kangxi's expectations of Western artists was that they would transmit to the apprentices of the Qing workshops both mathematical knowledge - such as optical perspective and the measurement of proportions - and technical knowledge, such as oil-painting techniques. Therefore the Emperor first and foremost expected Castiglione to be a good teacher. In keeping with this, Castiglione first had to satisfy the Emperor's judgment and then he was entrusted with training local apprentices.

Unfortunately, there is little evidence documenting the organisation of the imperial painting workshops during the reigns of Kangxi and Yongzheng.⁵⁹ However, data pertaining to the imperial workshops in the Qianlong period offer some understanding of the position that Castiglione was to occupy at the Qing court and of the environment into which he had to fit.⁶⁰

In the eighteenth century, Chinese painters normally entered the imperial workshops on recommendation, and did not hold a rank in the official hierarchy. Only a few exceptionally favoured painters, like Castiglione, were granted civil posts of nominal rank. Local painters also received a monthly salary augmented by gifts and special benefits in case the Emperor judged their work positively. In other cases, if the painter was unproductive or did not satisfy the Emperor he was penalised and in some cases dismissed. Painters coming from Europe, like Castiglione, were an exception because they did not receive any formal salary at all.⁶¹ Also, as shown in the above paragraphs, they were usually admitted to the painting workshops on the recommendation of Europeans working at court.

⁵⁹ Yang Boda notes: 'No clear evidence has yet been found for a Painting Academy during the Shun-chih, Kangxi, or Yongzheng periods, though it may have existed in practice if not in name', 'The development of the Ch'ien-lung painting Academy', Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong (eds), *Words and Images*, New York 1991, 333-356, 335.

⁶⁰ The most complete discussion of the Qianlong's painting workshops is the above mentioned text by Yang Boda. See also Daphne Lange Rosenzweig, 'Reassessment of Painters and Paintings at the Early Ch'ing Court', Chu-tsing Li (ed.), *Artist and Patrons. Some Social and Economic aspects of Chinese Painting*, Kansas City, 1989, 75-88; Nie Chongzheng, *Court Painting of the Qing Dynasty*, Beijing, 1992.

⁶¹ Yet Yang Boda affirms that 'The treatment of Western missionaries by the Qing court was rather favourable. When the emperor gave them permission to enter the court, he at the same time made them a gift of a mouseskin gown, a gray mouseskin jacket, and a piece of Nanking silk. In the event of their death at court, 200 *liang* of silver and ten pieces of satin were allotted for the funeral arrangements,' Yang, 1991, op. cit., 345.

However, except for the lack of a salary, Castiglione's position, and that of other European painters at the Qing court, was not very different from the other painters. Castiglione was personally responsible to the Emperor for his work and, in case of failure, he could be dismissed from the court. He was, in short, a professional court painter, a *huahuaren* (painter of paintings). Like his Chinese and other colleagues working at court, his position and his privileges depended almost entirely on the quality of his work and also on his ability to meet the Emperor's orders and general tastes.

That this is a fair account of the conditions under which professional painters worked for the Qing court may be demonstrated by reference to a letter from the *Propaganda Fide* archives. It is about the expulsion from the court of Michele Arailza (1685-?) in 1723, a Venetian painter working with the support of the *Propaganda Fide*. The letter is interesting because it suggests that the reasons behind the expulsion hinge on a comparison between the works of Castiglione and those of Arailza:

...Arailza, even if he never stopped to paint, he did not have enough skills in painting to satisfy His Majesty, especially because there was the excellent Jesuit painter Brother Castiglione.⁶²

Arailza's position at the Beijing court may be further explored by means of another document from the archive of the *Propaganda Fide*. It records that the missionary Congregation originally considered two painters as suitable Qing imperial employees. The Congregation had the choice of either Arailza or Giuseppe Minichini. Arailza is described as: 'a painter from the Venetian State, 34 years old, active under the Cardinal Cav. Luti'.⁶³ On the same page Minichini is described as a painter who 'paints in oil and watercolours, Roman, 26 years old, who trained under Maratti and Procaccini'.⁶⁴

Two crucial facts emerge from this archival source. The first is that, like the Jesuit Order, the *Propaganda Fide* was extremely aware that it had to deploy

⁶² '... et il Sig. Arailza, benchè non cessasse di dipingere, non era però tale il di lui pennello da farlo gradire dalla Maestà Sua, specialmente essendo ivi l'eccellente Pittore Gesuita Fratel Castiglione', *Memorie per la Sacra Congregazione di Propaganda Fide delle cose accadute in Cina in quest'anno 1723*, APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi. Indie orientali, Cina, 549, no signature.

⁶³ *Nota de Soggetti, che si offeriscono per Missionari in compagnia del nuovo Superiore delle Missioni della Cina ed altre*, Scritture Originali della Congregazione Particolare dell'Indie e Cina, Indie Orientali, 1667-1836, APF, (78 vols.), vol. XXIX, 164 v.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

professionally trained painters for the Chinese mission rather than amateurs. The second point is about the competition Castiglione had to face. The expulsion of Arailza proves that Castiglione had to demonstrate his artistic abilities in competition not just with locally trained artists. He also had to measure up to other professional painters from Europe.

So far, this chapter has demonstrated that by exploring Jesuit and *Propaganda Fide* manuscript sources, it is possible to reconstruct a great deal of Castiglione's role within the Jesuit Order. Both his status as a Brother Coadjutor and his professional skills as a painter indicate that Castiglione's recruitment was the result of a process of searching. The Jesuits needed a painter who would be able to work under the patronal strictures of Qing emperors. This was Castiglione's missionary task.

This was in keeping with a half-century-long tradition of professional involvement of Europeans, mostly Jesuits, in the various departments of the Qing Household. In the next section of this chapter, I will explore how Castiglione's professional status fitted with the nature of Qing artistic patronage and cultural politics.

4. Imperial patronage and cultural politics

Within the Qing workshops of painting and other crafts, painters and apprentices were civil employees without formal rank. Differences in status were marked by the bestowal of various types of nominal rank, other types of gift and by the importance of commissions received. Outside the court, painters of the imperial workshops were in principle free to work for private individuals, but any spare time was limited to the evening, as demonstrated by a letter from Father Jean-Joseph Marie Amiot (1718-1793), cited in Beurdeley.⁶⁵ In the letter Amiot states that the Jesuits employed at court worked from seven to five in the evening.

There was also another type of painter, inside and outside the court environment: the painter-officials or literati painters, *wenren huajia*. According to the Chinese tradition, a true literati painter would not work for financial rewards. Instead, his work should embody the knowledge of poetic composition and should be a spontaneous act of creation, not based on academic techniques. A literati painting reveals the comprehension of an eternal essence, it is not a representation of the apparent world. In practice, however, scholar-painters could also have worked for money and, during the Qing dynasty, have some professional relations with the court.

Even so, the *wenren huajia* at the Qing court were officials of high rank, involved in the amateur creation of painting or calligraphy. They were not part of the painting workshops even if they worked to regular schedules when presenting their works. Yet such painters, particularly well placed to understand the Emperor's tastes and preferences, would often collaborate with the workshop painters.⁶⁶ All of this helps to illuminate the Imperial expectations that culminated in the appointment of Castiglione. The use of certain techniques and the painting of specific subjects are the two main distinctions between a court painter and a literati painter, whether the latter painted for the Emperor or

⁶⁵ The letter quoted by the Beurdeleys (op. cit.) is in *Journal des Savants*, June, 1771, 408. Amiot worked on the publication of a Manchu grammar and a Manchu dictionary.

⁶⁶ For example Anita Chung presents an account of this type of collaboration for *jiehua* (architectural painting) commissions in which Castiglione was also involved, *Drawing Boundaries. Architectural Images in Qing China*, Honolulu, 2004, 58.

not.⁶⁷ Castiglione's presence was requested at court because he possessed specific skills and techniques required for specific subjects: the use of perspective and portrait painting. He was never a literati or amateur painter.

For this reason, it is important to understand the environment that framed the painter's Chinese career. How were Castiglione's activities organized? What type of Qing governmental policies influenced his commissions? In what follows I shall propose some answers.

Once appointed as an imperial painter, Castiglione worked for the *Zaobanchu* (Palace Board of Works) located in the *Yangxindian* (Inner Palace) in the Forbidden City. As Yang Boda has shown, in 1736, there were six divisions under the jurisdiction of the *Zaobanchu*. Amongst them, the *Huayuanchu* (Painting Academy Office) and the *Ruyiguan* (Hall of Fulfilled Wishes) were the two devoted to painting.⁶⁸ The *Huayuanchu* was further subdivided into two different groups: one worked in the Forbidden City and the other in the northern part of the *Yuanmingyuan* (Garden of Total Clarity), the Emperor's Summer Palace situated north of Beijing. The *Ruyiguan* was also located in the Garden of Twenty Scenes near the east gate of the *Yuanmingyuan*. In the latter the most important court painters worked, often in some form of collaboration. But its main feature was that it incorporated a painting academy and a craft workshop. Castiglione and other painters would have worked in both the *Ruyiguan* and the *Huayuanchu*, moving from one to the other. However, Castiglione was formally a dependant of the *Ruyiguan*.⁶⁹

All the paintings made in the Imperial workshops were assigned to the various painters by decrees emanating from the Emperor. In the case of the *Huayuanchu*, the orders were issued to the artists from the director of the workshop and the official under him. For his part, the Emperor gave very precise commissions for paintings. After the order was issued, the painters first had to prepare a preliminary version to be checked personally by the Emperor:

⁶⁷ However, outside the court the distinction between amateur-literati and professional painters was not based on artistic style but more on economic aspects.

⁶⁸ In connection with the two painting workshops there were also the *Falangchu* (Enamels Department) and the *Huazuo* (painting workshop), where two painters made designs for craft objects. As Yang Boda has shown, the other four divisions were: *Biaozuo* (Mounting Shop), *Jishilu* (Archives Office), *Kuzhu* (Store House), *Zimingzhong* (Clock Workshop). Yang, 1991, op. cit., 33-34.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

either a draft (*fen ben*, study copy) or a preparatory sketch (*hua gao*). Then they had to finish the painting in question and again submit this for the Emperor's final approval. In effect, the Emperor was the initiator and arbitrator of the entire creative process.⁷⁰ Castiglione thus had to be able to work to strict patronal orders.

It should also be noted that the employment of Castiglione and other European painters was entirely in keeping with the visual policies of the Manchu dynasty. One of the reasons behind the mid-Qing Emperors' success was the containment of the Empire's substantial cultural differences by the act of commissioning pictures which involved the use of different types of imagery. These types represented the various religious and cultural entities present within China: Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam, and the ethnic groups usually defined as Mongolians, Chinese (Han), Manchu (the ruling dynasty), Uigur and Tibetan. In keeping with this, it would seem that the Jesuits in Beijing appeared to the Emperor as useful agents of one of many cultural entities - that of Europe - to be contained and controlled within the Qing Empire. Therefore the acquisition, mastering and incorporation of European artistic techniques were required acts of government.⁷¹

Such political acts may be explored further through a short account of the history, structure and culture of the Manchu Imperial court and government. During the years 1629 and 1630, the Manchu took advantage of the slow collapse of the Ming dynasty and invaded the Chinese empire. In 1644 the Manchu tribes were in control of most of the provinces and thus began to rule China under the reign title of *Daicing*, in Chinese *Da Qing* (Great Clarity).⁷² After the conquest, achieving and consolidating political and military control of

⁷⁰ However, these rules were not always respected. Yang Boda, for example, reports the following episode: 'On the fifteenth day of the eleventh month..., the eunuch Mao Tuan transmitted an order to Tang Dai (active 1707-1750), Castiglione, and Chen Mei (1697-1745) to deliberate over the painting of an imperial audience on New Year's Day. The preliminary version was not inspected, and on the twenty-fifth day of the following month Chen Mei submitted the finished painting, bringing the assignment to a close. Such a smooth passage of the whole process was possible because Qianlong had confidence in the exceptional abilities and experience of the three painters involved. They were thus able to complete the assignment without close supervision,' Yang, 1991, op. cit., 348.

⁷¹ Wu Hung, in discussing important aspects of this Qing policy, pertinently states that: '...efforts, which ensured the cultural and artistic continuity, were themselves carefully calculated political acts', Wu Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting*, London 1996, 200.

⁷² This name was adopted for the first time in 1636, before the fall of the Ming.

China was not immediate but rather the result of a slow process. This culminated in the reign of Kangxi (1662-1722) who finally succeeded in winning the loyalty of the Chinese elite represented by the literati and the Ming officials. The Kangxi era ushered in a period of peace and prosperity normally attributed to the three great mid-Qing emperors who ruled China for 134 years: Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong, who were Castiglione's three major patrons.

Manchu rulers adopted Chinese administrative institutions, preserved the social organisation of the Ming dynasty and most importantly, guaranteed and supported cultural and artistic adherence to past dynastic traditions. At the same time the Manchu maintained a strong sense of their own ethnic superiority. From an historical point of view, this was a deliberate political act. Creating a continuum with past dynasties in order to win the trust of the Chinese elites was the chief motivation behind the Manchu adherence to Confucian social and political models.⁷³ To the Chinese elite, the Qing emperors presented themselves as the champions and protectors of Confucian values, by claiming to defend them from the cultural and political degeneration of the Ming dynasty. They created a moral argument that culturally associated the Qing dynasty to past Chinese dynasties yet, at the same time, they gave the Manchu rulers the right to pronounce official judgement on the political mistakes of the Ming dynasty.⁷⁴ This, in turn, offered the Chinese elites strong reasons for accepting Qing supremacy. The main instrument of this reevaluation of the past and the promotion of the present was the imperial patronage of vast publishing projects. These included the compilation of a Ming dynastic history (*Ming Shi*) during Kangxi's reign and the monumental literary anthology of the Four Treasuries, *Siku Quanshu*, completed between 1781 and 1784.⁷⁵

The Qing emperors thus became strong supporters of the neo-Confucian tradition. Confucian morality embodied a concept of absolute loyalty offered by the ministries to the Emperor and, in general, loyalty to superior ranks, social, political and military. Moreover, in this system, every single creature in the

⁷³ See Jonathan D. Spence, *The search for Modern China*, New York-London, 1990, 60, 102.

⁷⁴ See Judith A. Berling, 'When They Go Their Separate Ways: The Collapse of the Unitary Vision of Chinese Religion in the Early Ch'ing', Irene Bloom and Joshua A. Fogel (eds), *Meeting of Minds. Intellectual and religious interaction in East Asia traditions of thought*, New York, 1997, 209-237, 212-213.

⁷⁵ 'Four Treasuries' indicate the four general categories of the encyclopedia: Confucian classics, history, miscellaneous philosophy, *belles lettres*.

universe had its own rules to follow in order to maintain universal harmony. The political message related to this concept is that different human categories and hierarchies can be ruled as a unity and in supreme harmony. In short, because they ruled over a multi-ethnic empire, the first task of the Manchu emperors was to create equilibrium amongst ethnic differences whilst at the same time defending ethnic diversity.⁷⁶

Following this, the production of images by the Qing household was profoundly connected to the ‘imperial ideology of multiethnic socialization’ under the control of the Emperor who was represented as embodying all desirable moral virtues.⁷⁷ The Emperor’s strategy was to celebrate his engagement with all the different ethnical and cultural groups of the Empire, and this was done in part by visual means. It is for this reason that Castiglione’s work at the mid-Qing court had to fit with a deliberate policy of incorporating cultural differences into the very image of the Emperor. It is by this that Castiglione’s career should be judged.

There are further important facts to consider here. Once in power, the Qing adopted the Ming system of civil and military bureaucracy both in Beijing and in the provinces. Yet, into this system a few Manchu institutions were merged.⁷⁸ The most important of these were the Imperial Household, the Eight Banners and the introduction of the ‘palace memorial system’ (consisting of the Grand Council and the Chancery of Palace Memorials).⁷⁹ From the first years of the Kangxi reign and until the final modifications ordered by Yongzheng, the co-ordinated restructuring of the *Neiwufu* (Imperial Household) and of the armed section of the Banners played an important part in placing the affairs of state and finance under the direct control of the mid-Qing rulers. The armed

⁷⁶ On the formulation of official Confucian orthodoxy during the Qing dynasty: Kai-wing Chow, On-cho Ng and John B. Henderson (eds), *Imaging Boundaries. Changing Confucian Doctrines, Texts, and Hermeneutics*, New York, 1999; Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology. Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China*, Cambridge (Mass.) – London, 1984; On-cho Ng, ‘Hsing (nature) as the ontological basis of practicality in Early Ch’ing Ch’eng-Chu Confucianism: Li Kuang-ti’s (1642-1718) philosophy’, *Philosophy East & West*, vol. XXXIV, n. 1, 1994, 79-109.

⁷⁷ Alexander Woodside, ‘The Ch’ien-lung Reign’, Willard J. Peterson, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. IX, part one, 237.

⁷⁸ It is important to note that these traditional Manchu institutions were originally created by imitating the administrative models of neighbouring Chinese dynasties (especially the Song dynasty).

⁷⁹ On the palace memorial system see, Silas Hsiu-liang Wu, ‘The Memorial System of the Ch’ing Dynasty (1644-1911)’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. XXVII, 1967, 7-75.

force of the Banners came under the direct command of the Emperor and, together with the *Neiwufu*, became the most powerful financial instrument in the hands of the imperial house. In fact this latter institution, which originally served as the Emperor's personal treasury, became the chief collector of all the different forms of taxation levied within the Empire. The revenue collected was used by the Emperor in various ways to further his policies and to show at the same time the prestige of the dynasty.⁸⁰

As noted above, all the departments involved in the production of works of art were under the control of the *Zaobanchu*, including the *Neiwufu* workshops. For this reason the Emperor had direct control over the production of artistic objects. This political and bureaucratic profile represents the tightly structured Qing stage on which Castiglione had to act and work. The next section examines certain peculiar aspects of this stage.

⁸⁰ On the *Neiwufu* see Chang Te-Ch'ang, 'The Economic Role of the Imperial Household in the Ch'ing Dynasty', *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XXXI, n. 2, 1972, 243-273.

5. European painting techniques: convergences and Qing utilitarianism

By the early eighteenth century the employment of European artists by the imperial Household was a matter of course. From the early career of Cristoforo Fiori to that of Giuseppe Panzi (1733-1812), the last European painter who served the Qing dynasty, there was always one or more European artists officially employed as court painters in Beijing.⁸¹

I believe that the mid-Qing emperors decided to employ European painters because of a whole range of ideas and sympathies that were mostly utilitarian, although this cannot always be substantiated by conclusive historical evidence. In what follows, I shall explore a further reason for appointing painters from Europe. This was the steady imperial patronage of Western sciences and technologies. In turn, such patronage may be related to the imperial support for the so-called academic style in the painting workshops.

The imperial interest in Western mathematics and technology began at the end of the Ming dynasty and continued under the government of the mid-Qing emperors.⁸² During his life, Kangxi consistently expressed profound interest in Western science and technology, such as mathematics and its applications - including calendrics, optical perspective and topographical projections - and also in medicine, the production of clocks and enamel. Under Kangxi, quite a large group of Europeans were employed at the Chinese court to work on important projects involving sound mathematical skills. To mention but a few examples: Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) was the director of the Astronomy Department; Jean-Francois Gerbillon (1654-1707) worked on the publication of the *Huangyu Quanlantu*, a geographic and cartographic atlas (the project lasted from the 1707 to 1717); and Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730) translated European mathematical texts into Chinese.⁸³ Moreover, in 1669 Adam Schall von Bell

⁸¹ Cristoforo Fiori (born in 1672) was a Jesuit Brother Coadjutor. He was in Beijing in 1694 and in 1705 he had left the Order; he probably died one year after. See Deheragne, op. cit., 95. Panzi was an Italian painter sent by the Jesuits to work for the Emperor Qianlong after Castiglione's death. He arrived in the Chinese capital on 12 January 1773, see *ibid.*, 194.

⁸² For the Ming interest in European science and technology see Willard Peterson, 'Learning from Heaven: the introduction of Christianity and other Western ideas into late Ming China', Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote (eds), *The Cambridge History of China*, Cambridge, 1988, vol. VIII, part 2, 789-839.

⁸³ In the field of cartographical surveys the first work in Chinese based on the European tradition was the trigonometry text *Ce Liang Fayi (Essentials of Surveying)* published by Matteo

(1592-1666) wrote *Xinfa Suanshu (Mathematical Methods of the New Calendrical System)*.

The first text on Euclidean geometry in Chinese was a translation of the first six books of Euclid's Elements by Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) and Xu Guangqi (1562-1633), compiled during the Ming dynasty.⁸⁴ The Euclidean tradition stands as one of the main theoretical sources for optical perspective (that, in turn, was one of the main features of the European perception and representation of space). During the Qing dynasty this source received particular attention.

Among the Chinese painters who deployed European techniques, Jiao Bingzhen (one of the painters who worked with Castiglione; he was active at court between 1689 and 1726) was one of the first to assimilate linear perspective into the already established pictorial idiom of China.⁸⁵ In addition, Castiglione assisted Nian Xiyao (1671-1738), a *baoyi* (bondservant) and Superintendent of the Imperial Factories in Jingdezhen, in writing a book on perspective based on Pozzo's *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*. It was published in 1735 with the title *Shixue (Science of vision)*.⁸⁶ At the imperial court there was thus a very profound engagement with European techniques and technologies.

However, some points remain uncertain. These are related to Qing interests in deploying European painting techniques for scroll commissions. The Qing involvement in cartography is a useful point of comparison. Kangxi's first interest in trigonometry was followed by the application of survey methodology and triangulation to create a complete map of China according to European conventions. In contrast, Qing commissions of scroll paintings from European artists rarely resulted in images made entirely in keeping with the geometrical

Ricci and Xu Guangqi between 1607 and 1608. See Frank J. Swetz, *The sea island mathematical manual: surveying and mathematics in Ancient China*, University Park (Pennsylvania), 1992, 11. Also see Benjamin A. Elman, 'Geographical research in the Ming-Ch'ing Period', *Monumenta Serica*, n. 35, 1981-1983, 1-18.

⁸⁴ Peter E. Engelfriet, *Euclid in China: The Genesis on the First Chinese Translation of Euclid's Elements Books I-VI (Jihe yuanben; Beijing, 1607) and Its Reception up to 1723*, Leiden, 1998.

⁸⁵ In particular, I am referring to two works: one is the *Album of Landscape and Architecture* (ink on paper, National Palace Museum, Taipei), and the second is the *Album of Agriculture and Sericulture* (woodblock prints). See Chung, op. cit., 49-52.

⁸⁶ For the collaboration between Castiglione and Nian Xiyao see part III of this thesis, 129-130.

rules of optical perspective.⁸⁷ Within the field of cartography, the Qing rulers easily followed new applications without being restrained to the contents displayed by European maps. In Chinese painting, however, where techniques and contents were profoundly integrated, this was not as easy to achieve. In the last chapter of this thesis I will discuss this issue by analysing how Castiglione incorporated single elements of European techniques into Qing commissions. Here I shall restrict myself to textual evidence showing which European painting techniques were acknowledged and accepted in Qing China at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The techniques used for accelerated perspectives and anamorphosis help to focus this issue. In particular, anamorphic images projected onto various types of surface were a perfect example of the visual potential of optical perspective. I believe that the Qing emperors were fully aware of this type of knowledge. Before Castiglione had even arrived in China, the Jesuits of the French mission in Beijing had demonstrated to Kangxi the nature of European perspective using anamorphosis, peep shows and magic lanterns.⁸⁸ Anamorphosis is an optically deformed image that can be reformed only by using specific mirrors or, like accelerated perspective, by looking from a particular point of view. The difference between anamorphosis and accelerated perspective is that, in the latter, it is possible to recognize the subject depicted even if the point of view is not correct. Jean Baptiste Du Halde's description of the anamorphosis shown by the Jesuits to Kangxi explains this in detail:

Father Grimaldi organized another show of the marvels of optics in the Jesuits' garden in Beijing, at which the Emperor and his entourage were greatly amazed. Father Grimaldi had drawn four human figures on the four walls of the garden and each figure measured the same length as the wall, which was fifty feet. As he had perfectly followed the rules of optics you could only see mountains, forests, hunting grounds and so on but if you were standing at a certain angle you could see a well-made, well-

⁸⁷ See my analysis of a Castiglione's commission with perspective see part IV, 159-161.

⁸⁸ These demonstrations were organized in the garden of the French house in Beijing with the Emperor Kangxi present. See Jean Baptiste Du Halde, *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de l'Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise, enrichie des Cartes générales et particulières de ces pays, de la Carte générale & des Cartes particulières du Thibet & de la Corée; & ornée d'un grand nombre de Figures & de Vignettes gravées en Taille-douce*, Paris, 1736, 3 vols., vol. III, 332-336.

proportioned human figure. The Emperor honoured the House of the Jesuits with his presence and he looked with admiration at the figures drawn on the walls for a long time: the nobles and the most important Mandarins, many of whom came to see them, were surprised by them too. What struck them most was seeing how exactly and regularly the human figures had been drawn on such irregular walls, broken by doors and windows. It would take too long to report on all the figures approximately traced and that one could only see distinctly either by standing at a certain angle or by using conical, cylindrical, or pyramidal mirrors to rectify the vision, or on other marvels of optics that Father Grimaldi showed to the best men of culture in China, drawing their surprise and admiration.⁸⁹

Anamorphic images were shown together with perspectives describing architecture:

They did not forget about perspective. Father Buglio had given the Emperor three paintings on which the rules of perspective had been perfectly followed. Buglio put three copies of these paintings in the Jesuits' garden in Beijing. The Mandarins who came to Beijing from all parts of the Empire went to see the pictures out of curiosity and were amazed by looking at them. They did not understand how large rooms, galleries, porticos, aisles and avenues could be represented all together on one canvas as far as the eye can see and in such a natural way that the eye was deceived at first sight.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ 'Le P. Grimaldi donna un autre spectacle des merveilles de l'Optique dans le jardin des Jésuites de Peking, qui étonna fort tous les Grands de l'Empire. Il fit sur les quatre murailles quatre figures humaines, chacune de la longueur de la muraille qui étoit de cinquante pieds. Comme il avoit parfaitement gardé les règles de l'Optique, on n'y voyoit de front que des montagnes, des forêts, des chasses, & autres choses de cette nature. Mais d'un certain point on y appercevoit la figure d'un homme bien fait & bien proportionné. L'Empereur honora la Maison des Jésuites de sa présence, & considéra ces figures sort longtems & avec admiration. Les Grandes & les principaux Mandarins qui y venoient en foule, étoient dand la même surprise. Mais ce qui les frappoit davantage, c'étoit de voir des figures si régulières & si exactes sur des murailles très-irrégulières & entrecoupées de plusieurs portes & de fenêtres. Il seroit trop long de rapporter toutes les figures tracées confusément, & que l'on voyoit distinctement d'un certain point, ou que l'on redressoit avec des miroirs coniques, cylindriques, pyramidaux, & tant d'autres prodiges de l'Optique que le P. Grimaldi présentoit aux plus beaux esprits de la Chine, & qui attiroient également leur surprise & leur admiration', Du Halde, *op.cit.*, 333. Claudio Filippo Grimaldi (1638-1712) was in Beijing in 1671. He worked in the Astronomical Bureau as a successor of Ferdinand Verbiest from 1688 to 1709.

⁹⁰ 'Ou n'oublia pas la Perspective. Le P. Bruglio [Ludovico Buglio 1606-1682] donna à l'Empereur trois tableaux, où les règles en étoient parfaitement gardées. Il en exposa trois copies dans le jardin des Jésuite de Peking. Les Mandarins, qui de toutes les parties de l'Empire se

These passages demonstrate that Kangxi and consequently the other mid-Qing emperors were sufficiently well-informed to develop a comprehensive opinion about the potential uses of perspective in painting. However, in practice, they did not often request the use of the optical sciences within their scroll painting commissions.⁹¹ Instead, they chose the most pragmatic policy: to deploy already available European artists for the transmission of technical knowledge. This was a ‘storing action’, an accumulation of knowledge not directly related to imperial commissions.

One might thus affirm that function and utility was behind Kangxi’s request for a painter from Europe. He wanted a painter with a specific formation and with the ability to train apprentices and in this way to create a shared store of knowledge. Alien techniques were thus to be transformed into local competences.

As already noted, Castiglione’s teaching tasks are documented by the *Memoria postuma*. Further relevant information, describing Gherardini’s duties as a teacher, may be found in one of Ripa’s reports:

...I was introduced into the room of the oil painters: here there were seven disciples of Gherardini, the Italian, who years ago went back to Europe. In Beijing there is only another oil painter and in the rest of China (apart from Macao) two. The seven painters mentioned paint from invention and for China are passably good.⁹²

Ripa also offers additional evidence of imperial support for the training of local apprentices:

rendoient dans cette ville, venoient les voir par curiosité, & en étoient également frappez. Ils ne pouvoient concevoir comment sur une toile fort unie on pouvoit représenter des salles, des galeries, des portiques, des chemins, & des allées à perte de vûë, & tout cela si naturellement, que du premier coup d’oeil on y étoit trompé’, *Ibid.*, 334.

⁹¹ A more complete Qing recognition of the pictorial possibilities offered by European perspective is evinced by a few rare commissions that need to be studied attentively. One is a freestanding screen painted with the rules of perspective commissioned by Kangxi and considered by Wu Hung the earliest oil painting made in China. See Wu, *op. cit.*, 217-218.

⁹² ‘...fui introdotto nella stanza de’ Pittori ad oglio, quali sono sette discepoli del Sig Gerardino Italiano, che anni fa ritornossi ad Europa. Di pittori ad oglio in Pechino ve n’è appena un’altro, e nel resto della Cina (eccettuata Macao) due altri. I sette sudetti di Palazzo tutti dipingono d’invenzione, e per la Cina son bastamente buoni’, APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina Miscellanea 17, February 7, 1711, 33 r. This passage also appears in the English translation but with missing parts and new additions: ‘I went to the palace, and was conducted to the room of the oil-painters, who were the pupils of a certain Gerardino, the first who introduced the art of painting oil into China’, Prandi, *op.cit.*, 54. The complete transcription of the letter is in Ripa, *op. cit.*, 1832, vol. I, 465.

[the Emperor]...also enquired whether I would take two Chinese pupils on the condition that they should not teach my art to any one else. On my answering that I wished nothing so well as to please his Majesty, he immediately sent to Peking for two young men, whom I instructed with tolerable success, together with some others who came afterwards.⁹³

From this it seems that a first stimulus coming from an exposure to European technology, mostly related to optics and mathematics, had induced Kangxi to promote foreign pictorial techniques. As in the case of maps, his interest was not so much focused on content but rather on technical and practicable aspects. However, because of the difficulty of integrating foreign techniques with local contents in painting, the training of local apprentices must be seen as distinct from the fulfilling of imperial commissions. It is obvious that new techniques imported from Europe were primarily studied for pragmatic purposes and only rarely used in scrolls commission.⁹⁴

This claim may be substantiated by the comparison of two passages from Ripa's correspondence. The first is the description of Gherardini's pupils quoted above. The second is from a letter written by Ripa from Naples to the Cardinal Prefect of the *Propaganda Fide* after he had returned from China. Ripa informs him that:

[Gherardini's apprentices] do not use imprimatura, they tone down the colours heavily and do not use strong dark colours. In this way, their strongest dark colours correspond to the half-tint of my paintings. In painting flowers and animals they use very delicate brushstrokes. They draw acceptable perspectives with rulers but with it they depict only buildings and mountains. The landscapes are all made by following the Chinese manner: mountains over mountains and stones over stones, behind them some distant foreshortened mountains. Apart from the distant mountains, all the other mountains are coloured in green and are all made with the tip of the brush so that from a close distance they do not deserve to be viewed but from a greater distance they please the eyes. In painting

⁹³ Prandi's translation, op. cit., 81.

⁹⁴ See my analysis of some of the scrolls commissioned to Castiglione in the last part of the present thesis.

figures they are very weak apart from one, who has some spirit. In portraiture they are very unable.⁹⁵

So, at least for Ripa, European techniques had not been successfully incorporated into Chinese painting. Yet, in addition, Ripa describes Castiglione's tasks and achievements under Yongzheng:

To execute the honourable order from Your Reverence [...] who desires to know which science and art are more credited and accepted by the present Emperor, I will answer that these are good water-colour technique and enamel painting. [In Beijing] there is a Jesuit painter and he can paint both with water and oils with good results. He can paint figures, perspectives, landscapes, flowers and fruits. The Emperor never wanted him to paint with oil but only in water, in large and small formats. The Emperor always approved of the painter's efforts, especially the vases with flowers and fruits and perspective images that were so realistic that they deceived the viewers. Not one European is employed for the making of enamels, but several Chinese are fairly good. The Emperor wanted a European employed for enamels but because not one European at court was professionally trained for this the Emperor ordered the thirteenth prince to order the Jesuit painter to work in the enamel department. The painter obeyed and he almost succeeded if he had kept working. But after some time he [ceased] because of his sight, that he was going to lose. For this reason a good enamel artist is still needed.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ 'Non impastano i quadri, allisciano molto i colori, e non usano oscuri forti, di maniera che il loro oscuro più forte si è come la mezza tinta dei miei quadri. In far fiori ed animali hanno un pennello assai delicate. Le prospettive le disegnano bastatamente bene con le lor regole, però non fanno se non case e monti. Le case le finiscono bastatamente bene, ed a chi non s'intende di pitture paiono meraviglie. I [...] li fan tutti allo stile di Cina. Monti sopra monti, e pietre sopra pietre, dietro le quali scappano alcuni monti lontani (sic). Tutti i monti son di colore verde, fuori di quelli che sono in lontananza, e tutti li fanno à punta di pennello, di maniera che di vicino non meritano esser veduti, ma in qualche distanza appagano gl'occhi. Nelle figure sono fiacchissimi fuor di uno che ha un pò di spirito. Nel ritrarre sono affatto inabili', APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina Miscellanea 17, op. cit., 33 r.

⁹⁶ 'In esecuzione dell'onorato comando di Vostra Reverenza [...], che desidera sapere qual scienza, e qual arte potrebbe esser più gradita ed accetta al Regnante Imperatore, sono la buona pittura ad'acqua, ed'a'smalto. Pittore ve n'è colà uno et è Giesuita: e benchè dipinga egualmente bene ad acqua et ad'oglio, tanto di figure, quanto di prospettive, paesi, fiori, frutti. L'Imperatore però non volle mai che dipingesse ad'oglio, ma solo ad acqua, così in grande, come in piccolo, e gradì sempre tutte le sue fatiche: e soprattutto gradì i vasi di fiori frutti, e cose di prospettiva, che dipinse sì al naturale, che inganava chi li vedeva. Smaltista non ce ne stà nessun Europeo, ve ne sono diversi Cinesi, che fanno mediocrement bene. L'imperatore voleva uno smaltista europeo, e perche nessun europeo sapeva tal professione, ordino il 13 Regolo; che vi s'applicasse il ditto

Those two passages show that, in the Qing workshops, perspective drawing and oil-pigments were only used for specific themes and that Castiglione's tasks actually required almost only the use of Chinese mineral colours.⁹⁷ It is also evident from Castiglione's employment as an enamel painter that technical achievability and imperial taste were more important factors than exoticism or any technical-artistic hierarchy. Moreover, it should be noted again that, within the Qing commissions, there were already European elements, thoroughly absorbed into the court canon before Castiglione's arrival. The best example of this is the imperial patronage of *jiehua* (architectural paintings). This type of painting required exact delineations of space and its practice was enriched by European elements from the Kangxi era onwards.⁹⁸

European painting techniques were certainly employed in Castiglione's first proper commissions during the Yongzheng era (1723-1735).⁹⁹ These commissions were scroll paintings and probably also mural paintings located inside the Forbidden City.¹⁰⁰ The evidence for the mural paintings comes from a Jesuit report written in the year that Yongzheng ascended the throne. From a collection of letters related to the months of September, October and November 1723 is clear that the thirteenth prince had praised Castiglione to the emperor. In

Giesuita Pittore, il quale ubbedi, e v'avrebbe fatto buona riuscita, se avesse continuato, mà doppo aver lavorato qualche tempo si [...] per la vista che averebbe persa. Siche un buon smaltista sarebbe ancor gradito', APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, Miscellanea 17, op.cit., 633, Letter written from Naples, October 6, 1725. Even if Ripa does not use the name 'Castiglione', he is clearly referring to the Milanese painter because in that period, Castiglione was the only Jesuit painter working at court.

⁹⁷ I am aware that the two passages by Ripa refer to two different periods, respectively ruled by Kangxi and Yongzheng. However, I consider this valid evidence because Castiglione's assignments in the imperial workshop did not cease with the death of Kangxi. One might assume that the teaching tasks of Gherardini were assigned to Castiglione and also that Kangxi's opinion of the painter's artistic skills was accepted by his successor Yongzheng. Several pieces of evidence show that, even during the mourning period for Kangxi's death when it was forbidden to enter the court for the majority of the officials and for the Jesuits employed by the past Emperor, Yongzhen had authorised Castiglione to enter to work on some painting commissions. The only other European thus authorized was Father Angelo di Borgo S.Siro, a *Propaganda Fide* clock maker. See *Catalogus Missionariorum, qui actu existent in Imperio Sinarum*, APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, 1723, 559 v.

⁹⁸ Chung, op. cit., 46-49.

⁹⁹ Unfortunately, apart from a painting on a fan apparently painted by Castiglione in collaboration with Jiao Bingzhen, no other paintings survive from the Kangxi reign. The painting depicts the training of a horse on the northern borders. Castiglione probably painted the horse and Jiao Bingzhen the landscape. See the catalogue, *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting. The Collections of the Nelson Gallery, Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and the Cleveland Museum of Art*, Indiana, 1980, 354.

¹⁰⁰ Yongzheng's employment of Castiglione as a painter of architecture is also documented in Chung, op. cit., 52.

response, Yongzheng had issued an order for Castiglione to execute mural paintings.¹⁰¹ In a later manuscript is reported that the Emperor, pleased by the paintings, rewarded Castiglione with several gifts.¹⁰²

This pattern continued later in Castiglione's career. For example, there is Qianlong's commission of illusionistic *tieluo* (*appliqué*) paintings for the Lodge of Retirement in the Forbidden City, currently under restoration.¹⁰³ Here, within a space that encloses a private theatre, Castiglione painted parts, or the whole, of the walls and also the ceiling with an illusionistic depiction of a bamboo pergola supporting a flowering wisteria (fig.1). The use of architecture, illusion, and painting together was also deployed within the works ordered by Qianlong for the *Yuanmingyuan*, starting in 1737.¹⁰⁴ Together with the French Jesuit Father Michel Benoist (1715-1774), Castiglione produced plans for buildings, fountains and gardens. Within this context, he supplied illusionistic paintings for the interiors of some of the buildings, and probably also for the garden-setting.¹⁰⁵

It is important to note that these commissions are still awaiting a systematic scholarly attention. However, my focus here is to present important visual evidence related to Castiglione's work in Italy and to offer a complete inquiry into his acquisition and use of his professional skills. It is crucial to underscore here that Castiglione's career did not function in terms of any artistic

¹⁰¹ Fondo Gesuitico, Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome, ms. 1256, 147 r.

¹⁰² See *Notizie più recenti della Cina, Turchino, e Cocincina, Cavate dalle lettere di Settembre, Ottobre, e Novembre del 1723*, Fondo Gesuitico, Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome, ms. 1256, n. 38, 339 v.- 342 v. In a different manuscript there is a list of gifts received by Castiglione for this commission: silk ('varie pezze di seta'), meals from the Imperial table ('varie portate della sua [the emperor] tavola'). Once Castiglione even received the Emperor's hat ('una volta colla propria beretta'), Fondo Gesuitico, Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome, *Nuovi riscontri dalla Cina*, 1723, ms. 1254, n. 31, 315 r.-318 r., 315 v- 316 r.

¹⁰³ The Lodge of Retirement's restoration is sponsored by the World Monuments Fund, and its completion is scheduled for 2008. For a description of the paintings in the Lodge of Retirement see Nie Chongzheng, 'Architectural Decoration in the Forbidden City: Trompe-l'oeil Murals in the Lodge of Retiring from Hard Work', *Orientations*, Jul/Aug, 1995, 53-55. For the use of the theatrical spaces within the Forbidden City see Yu Zhuoyun, *Palaces of the Forbidden City*, New York-London, 1982, 162.

¹⁰⁴ See Pirazzoli, 1988, op. cit.; and Vincent Droguet, 'Les Palais Européens de l'empereur Qianlong et leurs sources italiennes', *Histoire de l'art*, n. 25/26, 1994, 15-28.

¹⁰⁵ For the mural decorations of interiors in the Yuanmingyuan see Michel Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, 'Europeomania at the Chinese court The Palace of the Delights of Harmony (1747-1751), Architecture and interior decoration', *The Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, n. 65, 2000-2001, 47-60, 53-56. For perspective within the garden setting, see Philippe Jonathan and Antoine Durand, 'La promenade occidentale de l'empereur Qianlong', *Le Yuanmingyuan: jeux d'eau at palais Européens du XVIII siècle à la cour de Chine*, Paris, 1987, 19-33, 31-33; also see Droguet, op. cit., 25-26.

symmetry between China and Italy. It was not a perfect balancing of two artistic traditions. For Italy was the place where Castiglione received his most important because foundational training. Later he had to rely on this training to adapt to new circumstances, most notably to working under Qing imperial patronage. Accordingly, I shall now explore the nature of Castiglione's Italian training.

PART II

PART II: CASTIGLIONE'S INITIAL TRAINING

As soon as he had entered into the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa Castiglione was employed by the Order on a double commission: two altarpieces to decorate the church of the noviciate and eight paintings for the refectory.¹⁰⁶ At present, this is Castiglione's only known commission in Italy and, as such, it should be considered as vital evidence for understanding his career as a whole.

Unfortunately, the present location of the two altarpieces - *Christ appearing to St. Ignatius* and *St. Ignatius in the cave of Manresa* - is unknown. There are pictures of them in Cécile and Michel Beurdeley (fig. 2, fig. 3).¹⁰⁷ Although the Beurdeleys affirm that the two paintings are in the Ricovero Martinez in Genoa, I have been unable to find them. However, in the Ricovero Martinez one can still find the paintings executed by Castiglione for the Jesuit refectory.

The textual evidence that affirms that these paintings are indeed by Castiglione is somewhat complex. In a letter dated 22 November 1777, Giuseppe Panzi, the painter who took over from Castiglione in the Qing painting workshop, wrote about his life in Beijing to Father Giuseppe Solari, master of novices in Genoa. In this letter, the Florentine artist, when discussing Castiglione, affirms that 'he is the one who made the famous paintings of your esteemed refectory'.¹⁰⁸ In itself, this statement is a decisive piece of evidence for Castiglione's authorship of the Genoa's refectory paintings. Moreover, Panzi's affirmation of the refectory's fame suggests that, already at the beginning of his career, Castiglione had possessed a high level of skill. Thus the paintings made by Castiglione for the Jesuits in Genoa can be considered as further proof of his professional competence.

¹⁰⁶ Beurdeley and Beurdeley, op. cit., 187. George Robert Loehr found the paintings in the Ricovero Martinez but he did not develop any analysis of them, Loehr, 1943 op. cit., 117.

¹⁰⁷ Beurdeley and Beurdeley, op. cit., 188.

¹⁰⁸ 'Questo Castiglione è quello che ha fatti i famosi quadri del loro rispettabile refettorio', Copia d'una lettera del Sig. Giuseppe Panzi laico della Compagnia di Jesu e Pittore dell'Imperador della Cina scritta da Pekino Capitale di quel Regno al sig. D. Giuseppe Solari già suo Maestro di Novizj, nel 22 novembre del mille settecento settantasette', ARSI, *Epistolae Josephi Panzi*, 1733-1795, Jap. Sin. 185, 79-86, 80.

There is a great deal of supplementary textual evidence to support the points made in Panzi's letter. First, there is an interesting if somewhat garbled passage in a guide-book to the city of Genoa published in 1766 by Carlo Giuseppe Ratti: *Istruzione di quanto può vedersi di più bello in Genova in pittura, scultura ed architettura*. He discusses the church of the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa as follows:

Giovanbattista Ricca of Oneglia planned the church and a French Jesuit, named Venghier painted St. Ignatius on the main altar... In the Refectory there are a lot of oil paintings by Venghier.¹⁰⁹

Here, Ratti actually made a mistake. Two years later, in a new edition of the guide written with Raffaello Soprani, Ratti corrected himself:

Another Jesuit painter worked in Genoa. I do not know from where he came. He was a very good painter. His name was Castiglione. By the way I have the opportunity here to correct what I have written in the 'Guide to Foreigners' published in 1766. In that book I named this Brother Jesuit 'Venghier' as I had been wrongly told. Castiglione worked at the Noviciate and painted St. Ignatius in St. Ignatius's church. He made some paintings in the Refectory as well. This painter worked a lot in both Americas. He died recently very old in the capital of China.¹¹⁰

So the second edition of Ratti's city guide contains another confused reference to the altarpiece of *St. Ignatius in the cave of Manresa*, at that time displayed in the church dedicated to the Jesuit founder. The final authorisation for this project was given only in 1723 when Castiglione had already been in Beijing

¹⁰⁹ 'La Chiesa fu ultimamente eretta con disegno di Giovanbattista Ricca di Oneglia, ed un laico Gesuita cognominato Venghier Franzese ha colorito il S. Ignazio all'Altar maggiore...Nel Refettorio per ultimo son molti quadri ad olio del già mentovato Venghier', Carlo Giuseppe Ratti, *Istruzione di quanto può vedersi di più bello in Genova in pittura, scultura ed architettura*, Genoa, 1766, 49.

¹¹⁰ 'Un altro Gesuita di non so qual nazione, parimente pittore avemmo in Genova; e ci operò con assai buona maestria. Costui cognominavasi Castiglione. Onde qui correggo lo sbaglio, che presi nella mia 'Guida a Forestieri', stampata l'anno 1767, ove tal Religioso sta cognominato Venghier; e ciò per equivoco di chi me lo suggerì. Il suddetto Castiglione ha lavorato nella chiesa di S. Ignazio al Noviziato la tavola di questo Santo, ed alcuni quadri del Refettorio. Questo pittore ha dipinto molto in ambedue le Americhe; ed ultimamente è morto nella capitale della China in età decrepita', Raffaello Soprani, Carlo Giuseppe Ratti, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti genovesi e dei forestieri che in Genova hanno operato dall'anno 1594 a tutto il 1765*, 1768, reprint edition, Bologna, 1970, vol. II, 329-330.

for eight years.¹¹¹ Therefore it is impossible that Castiglione worked on the church of San Ignazio while he was in Genoa because at that time this building did not yet exist. Castiglione most likely painted the two altarpieces for the novices' chapel and later the Jesuits moved them into the new church. Unfortunately, there is no mention of Castiglione's second altarpiece in any of the Genoese guidebooks of the period or in any other primary sources.

The third piece of important textual evidence relating to paintings in the Jesuit noviciate comes from the *Guida artistica per la città di Genova* published in 1847 by Federigo Alizeri. This guide does not mention the altarpieces in Sant' Ignazio, only the images in the refectory. Alizeri, however, helpfully gives the exact number of the paintings in the Jesuit refectory:

The building is no more than a century old. It is noble and large, and equipped with all that is needed. It is ornamented by paintings. In the refectory, among many fine paintings, I noticed an excellent one, the *Holy Family and St. Clare*, by Bernardo Castello. In the same room there is a great number of paintings. The eight paintings on the wall of this room and the other ones along the corridors and the stairs mostly represent parts of Jesus's life [and] are by some author who is unknown. Nevertheless Ratti in his Guidebook notes in the Refectory of Sant' Ignazio (the Noviciate of the Society of Jesus is now suppressed) a lot of oil paintings by a certain lay Jesuit named Castiglione. I do not usually put names of authors on works of art with ease, but because these paintings were probably moved after the suppression of the Company, and because they are so many and in the same unknown style, I think that they are by Castiglione.¹¹²

¹¹¹ On the building of Sant' Ignazio see Emmina De Negri, 'Architettura delle chiese gesuitiche nel territorio della Repubblica di Genova: progetti e realizzazioni', *Quaderni Franzoniani*, vol. V, n. 2, 1992, 209-234.

¹¹² 'Non più antico d'un secolo, ma nobile e vasto è il locale, costruito in tre piani, e fornito a dovizia di ciò che a tal'uopo si richiede. Né mancan pitture a fargli ornamento, avend'io notato eziandio nel refettorio tra parecchi buoni quadri un bellissimo di Bernardo Castello colla Sacra Famiglia e Santa Chiara. Abbondano anzi nella maggior sala. Ignoto è l'autore delle otto tavole che pendono dalle pareti di essa, e d'alcune altre sparse per le scale e i corridoi la maggior parte con istorie della vita di Cristo, che tutte conosconsi dello stesso pennello. Nondimeno riscontrando la Guida del Ratti, trovo notati nel refettorio di Sant' Ignazio (noviziato or soppresso della Compagnia di Gesù) molti quadri ad olio di certo laico gesuita cognominato Castiglione; e la probabilità che fossero traslocati nella soppressione di detta chiesa, la quantità dell'opere, l'ignoto stile mi persuaderebbe ad attribuirle francamente a quel religioso, s'io

This passage represents further evidence to affirm that Castiglione made the eight paintings for the Jesuit refectory. Regarding the other paintings displayed along the corridors and stairs, it is not possible to know their number and if they were made by Castiglione. Their actual location and state remain unknown.

The eight paintings mentioned by Alizeri are almost certainly those now in the Pio Ricovero Martinez in Genoa. The Ricovero was created in the nineteenth century through a donation given by Baron Martinez.¹¹³ Yet Alizeri's text proves that the Martinez family did not acquire the paintings immediately after the Jesuit Order was suppressed.¹¹⁴ They stayed in the defunct Jesuit refectory until at least 1847. So they were probably acquired later, either through donation or purchase. Unfortunately, there is no documentary evidence indicating exactly when the eight paintings arrived at the Ricovero Martinez. Even so, the paintings clearly draw upon Milanese models dating back to the first half of the seventeenth century (which I shall analyse in the following chapter). One of the paintings, an *Intercession of the Virgin* (fig. 4), has a different composition, palette, and most importantly, fragmented brush-work very distinct from the smooth approach evident in the other seven paintings. Also, the theme of the *Intercession* does not follow the otherwise coherent iconographic program of the other paintings now in the Pio Ricovero Martinez. In fact, as I shall show later, the subjects of the other seven paintings are mostly related to Eucharist iconography: *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (fig. 5), *The Temptation of Christ* (fig. 6), *Supper at Emmaus* (fig. 7); all scenes from the New Testament. From the Old Testament there are: *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig. 8), *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 9), *Massah and Meribah* (fig. 10); and from the Apocrypha *Tobias and the Angel* (fig. 11). Now I shall analyse how Castiglione deployed his professional skills to complete this large and complex commission, hitherto not analysed in any detail by any of Castiglione's biographers.

usassi andar men che sicuro nello apporre i nomi alle opere d'arte', Federigo Alizeri, *Guida Artistica per la città di Genova*, Genoa, 1847, 3 vols., vol. I, 277-278.

¹¹³ The donation is described in the *Statuto organico del Pio Ricovero Martinez in Genova approvato col R. Decreto 13 Marzo 1884*, Genoa, 1884, 27.

¹¹⁴ The Jesuit Order was officially suppressed by Clement XIV's bull *Dominus ac Redemptor* July 12, 1773.

1. The Jesuit refectory and Castiglione's paintings

When Castiglione was painting for the refectory of the Jesuit noviciate, he had to meet a very particular set of expectations. First it should be noted that Jesuits usually attributed great didactic potential to pictures and, on a more general level, such attitudes came out of that strand of post-Tridentine theology that took rhetoric as its keystone.¹¹⁵

Now, within the Jesuit environment, pictures represented important moral examples that could be stored and ordered in one's memory without great difficulties. As I will show in the present chapter, the paintings that Castiglione made in Genoa were meant to prompt the viewer into mnemonic activity. This is because the pictures are devised to fit very closely with the devotional activities appropriate to a refectory space, to certain textual sources, and also to the liturgy. These, I believe, were the basic requirements of the Jesuits when they commissioned Castiglione to supply paintings for the refectory. To bring this out, I shall explore Castiglione's commission mainly from the perspective of their spectators, the Jesuit novices.

Within any Jesuit institution, be they colleges, noviciates or universities, the act of producing pictures and the act of looking at pictures were together the spine of a process of learning. The Jesuits appreciated the potential of pictures for conveying human knowledge formed into a net of correspondences. Consequently, this consideration required Jesuit educators to exercise strict planning and control over the production and consumption of images. The first

¹¹⁵ In 1563, the potential of images was recognized by the Council of Trent: 'People must be taught the articles of faith and made firm in them by reminding and meditating on them through images and other visual expressions that illustrate the mysteries of our salvation' (Per historias mysteriorum nostrae redemptionis, picturis vel aliis similitudinibus expressas, erudiri et confirmari populum in articulis fidei commemorandis et assidue recolendis). See Franca Trinchieri Camiz, 'Conversione e battesimo nella pittura della controriforma a Roma', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, n. 10, 1998, 187-205. Moreover, Federico Borromeo (1564-1631) in his *De Pictura libri due* (Milan, 1624) Borromeo states: 'Colours are like words that one understands by the eyes not less than words are by the ears. (We could say that the drawings are the concepts). In this way painting is like an argument or a sermon that can be understood even by an ignorant person but it is not less valuable to learned people' (I colori sono (a guisa di) parole, che intese sono dai nostri occhi non meno agevolmente che quelle della lingua dalle orecchie da ciascuno di noi, (e il disegno delle figure che si esprimono dir si potrebbe che fossero i concetti e gli argomenti). E perciò la pittura è un certo ragionamento e sermone il quale infino dagli'ignoranti è inteso, e non per questo è men caro agl'uomini scienziati...)', Federico Borromeo, *De pictura sacra libri duo*, Milan, 1624; Pisa, 1994, Barabara Agosti (ed.), 33.

result of this was the promotion of memorization through pictures. From its foundation to its suppression, the Jesuit Order cultivated an idea of memory inherited from the classical tradition and particularly from Cicero and Quintilian.¹¹⁶ These authors, in turn, had developed an epistemological view of memory that took its departure from Aristotle. This view of memory had been generated mainly from the tradition of rhetoric or public speaking as developed in the Greek city-states. In its later humanistic development, the study of rhetoric became a useful means of analysing the preparation of acts of communication and their reception. Such an act could be a text, a speech or a picture. Within the rhetorical tradition, memory had a prominent place because it was considered not simple as a mental ‘store’ but also an active faculty capable of structuring the human mind.¹¹⁷

This is emphasised in St. Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*, used to educate Jesuit novices through each individual’s construction of mental images. For, the Jesuits believed that memory shapes itself and also the mind as a whole by making connections between places (whether real or unreal) and images. Because of this, pictures displayed in a college or in a noviciate became a crucial didactic agent, a means of stimulating the memory and its linking of texts, pictures and places, to deliver educative messages.¹¹⁸ According to this view, a painted image has to be the starting point for discovering relations between performances, spaces and texts. Thus, the painter had to understand how to deploy his technical skills in relation to the intended space for the display of his paintings.

To understand Castiglione’s commission properly, it is important to note that the Jesuit refectory was a space where the novices were involved in cognitive activities. By sharing meals, praying, listening and looking at images in the refectory, the novices learned how to structure their minds correctly in relation to future missions. As already mentioned, such activities are the basis

¹¹⁶ For the development of rhetoric within the Jesuit intellectual milieu see Evonne Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 2004, 46-47.

¹¹⁷ Giovanna Zanlonghi, ‘La psicologia e il teatro nella riflessione Gesuitica europea del Cinque-Seicento’, *Memorandum*, n. 4, 61-85, 66-67.

¹¹⁸ Emblems and other types of illustrations and performances that I will not consider in the present thesis, were important categories of images used in the Jesuit colleges and noviciates. For an interesting view on emblems see Karel Porteman, ‘Emblem Theory and Cultural Specificity’, Peter M. Daly and John Manning (eds), *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory 1500-1700*, New York, 1999, 3-12.

for St. Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*. At the beginning of the *annotaciones* that introduce the exercises, he wrote:

The term 'Spiritual Exercises' means all the ways to examine the conscience, to meditate, to contemplate, to pray orally and mentally, and all the other spiritual activities as it will be said later.¹¹⁹

Furthermore in the part dedicated to the third week of the Exercises, Ignatius gave eight rules to follow during meals. The fifth rule affirms:

...during the meals imagine looking at Christ our Lord eating with his apostles, how he is drinking, looking, talking, and eating. Try to imitate him. By this way, the major part of your soul will be engaged in considering our Lord, and the minor part will be engaged in bodily nourishment. As a result, you will act and govern yourself with harmony and order.¹²⁰

The above passage strongly suggests that during meals the Jesuits had to work mentally so as to avoid focusing their attention only on the bodily experience of eating. This is attested by the *Constitutiones*. In the chapter dedicated to the novices in their probationary period they prescribe:

During the meal, there must be given some nourishment to the soul by the reading of some books. The readings must be pious rather than difficult, in order to make everyone understand and gain profit from them. Otherwise, during the meals, someone may deliver a sermon as ordered by the superiors, or something similar, for the glory of Christ our Lord.¹²¹

Listening and mentally or orally praying were not the only means used to detach the novices from the physical pleasure of their meals. Looking at pictures was in fact one of the most important sensory and mental exercise

¹¹⁹ 'La primera anotacion es: que por este nombre Exercicios Spirituales, se entiende todo modo de examinar la consciencia, de meditar, de contemplar, de orar vocal y mental, y de otras spirituales operaciones, segun que adelante se dirà', Ignacio de Loyola, *Exercicios Spirituales del B. P. Ignacio de Loyola*, Rome, 1615, 17. The *annotaciones* explain the Exercises and are used as advices before starting the different meditations.

¹²⁰ 'La quinta, mientras la persona come, considere come que vee a Christo Nuestro Señor, comer con sus Apostoles, y come bebe, y como mira, y como habla; y procure de imitarle de manera que la principal parte del entendimiento se ocupe en la consideracion de Nuestro Señor; y la menor en la sustentacion corporal, por que a si tome mayor concierto, y orden de como se deve aver, y gobernar', *ibid.*, 122.

¹²¹ 'Durante il pranzo, poi, si dia qualche nutrimento anche all'anima con la lettura di qualche libro, piuttosto pio che difficile, che tutti possano comprendere e dal quale possano trarre profitto. Oppure, durante quel tempo, qualcuno faccia una predica, come sarà stato ordinato dai superiori, o qualcosa di simile, a gloria di Dio nostro Signore', Costa, *op. cit.*, 471-472.

undertaken in the refectory. For example, Jerome Nadal (1507-1580), one of the first members of the Society and a close collaborator of St. Ignatius, in his *Instructiones* describes the refectory in the following way:

On the four walls of the refectory high quality pictures must be displayed. Amongst them must be the Last Supper that is to be hung on the frontal wall of the refectory.¹²²

It is significant that this statement opens the chapter dedicated to the refectory. Firstly, the ‘stage’ of the refectory must be set by pictures. Then, this ‘illustrated’ space has to be filled by the educative activities of praying, meditating, and reading. Only when working together can all these elements have the maximum impact on the novices’ mind.

Regarding pictures, the description of the noviciate refectory in Genoa by Alizeri is suggestive of the Jesuit’s use of this space. There is in fact no mention of an image of the *Last Supper*. Even if it is impossible to affirm whether such picture did originally exist, two paintings noted by Alizeri could have served as substitutes for the *Last Supper*: the *Holy Family and St. Clare*, by Bernardo Castello (1557-1629) and the *Supper at Emmaus* by Castiglione. It is important to underscore that this contradicts Nadal’s recommendation that the *Last Supper* be displayed in the refectory, but not necessary his view of the Jesuit refectory as a space filled with high quality pictures.¹²³

In any case, as argued by Louis Réau, the *Supper at Emmaus* was often substituted for the *Last Supper* in monastic refectories.¹²⁴ However, because of the fame of the painter and because it is not part of the set of paintings, I believe that the *Holy Family and St. Clare* by Bernardo Castello was the most

¹²² ‘In quatuor parietibus refectorii ponantur optimae imagines, inter quas non desit coena Domini, et haec quidem in capite solet affigi’, Hieronymus Nadal, ‘Epistolae P. Nadal ab anno 1546 ad 1577’, *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, tomus IV, fasciculus I, Madrid, 1905, 604. Nadal’s passage is also quoted in John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge (Mass.)-London, 1994, 358. Nadal played an important role in improving the Constitutions of the Order, also during his life he compiled a collection of illustrations of the Gospel, *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines: Ex ordine Euangeliorum, quae toto anno in Missae Sacrificio recitantur, In ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae*, published in Antwerp in 1593.

¹²³ It is important to note that more than a century had passed between Nadal’s instructions and Castiglione’s entrance in the Genoa noviciate. During this span of time, the Jesuit Order adapted its strategies to different social and cultural circumstances.

¹²⁴ Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l’art chrétien*, first edition: Paris, 1953; Nendeln, 1974, 3 vols, vol. III, 317, 563.

important picture and thus displayed in a central position in the refectory.¹²⁵ Its link with the Eucharist and the refectory is actually very powerful. For, as her main attribute, Saint Clare bears the monstrance, where the consecrated host is kept (see for example the painting by Cavalier d'Arpino fig.12).¹²⁶ Therefore she is the champion of the Eucharist and in particular of communion. Equally importantly, the Genoa noviciate was located in a street named after St. Clare. Accordingly, Castello's painting both celebrated the Eucharist and linked the refectory to the urban space where the noviciate was situated.

In fulfilling the commission for the refectory, Castiglione followed a similar approach: the refectory has to be marked as an educative space to celebrate the Eucharist and to train the novices for their future missions within the Order. Of the seven paintings, four have a distinct Eucharistic iconography. These are: *Supper at Emmaus*, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, *Abraham and Sarah* and *Massah and Meribah*.

Paintings of the *Supper at Emmaus* (Luke, 24: 13-35) normally show the moment of recognition: the blessing of the bread (see Caravaggio's *Emmaus*, fig. 13). However, Castiglione instead chose to paint a transfiguration of Christ in front of the astonished Cleopas and his companion (fig. 14).¹²⁷ Christ is depicted in the air, illuminated by an emanation of light coming from the upper left corner of the painting. In the lower left corner, a saddlebag suggests pilgrimage. This version of the *Supper at Emmaus* required from the Jesuit novices an active intellectual and emotional involvement. The image actually trained their minds in constructing an allusive net of religious meanings. Firstly, such a net is proposed by the interplay between the *Supper at Emmaus* and the familiar narrative of the *Last Supper*. Moreover, by not showing the breaking of the bread, Castiglione's painting encourages the viewer to remember the

¹²⁵ Bernardo Castello is the father of Valerio Castello (1624-1659). Both artists received important commissions in Genoa and had a connection with the Jesuits of the city. Valerio for example painted a set of three paintings celebrating St. Francis Xavier for *Il Gesù*, the main Jesuit church of Genoa. According to Soprani and Ratti's description of Genoa, Bernardo's Castello received commissions for no less than fifteen churches and oratories of the city. See Soprani and Ratti, op. cit., vol. II, 81, 89, 91, 97, 100, 148, 177, 293, 295, 296, 299, 300, 305, 307, 316.

¹²⁶ Réau, op. cit., 317.

¹²⁷ The Bible's text and commentary I used here is George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible: the Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with general articles and introduction, exegesis, exposition for each book of the Bible*, New York – Nashville, 1951-1957, 12 vols.

preceding moment of recognition. Evidently, this interplay is between an image and a textual narrative that the novices would have read or listened to. Secondly, in front of the *Supper at Emmaus*, the novices might meditate on taking communion and thus on Christ's Passion. This reasoning obviously applies to all the images when they were displayed in the refectory. Finally, the saddlebag relates the significant moment of the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ as 'the bread of life', to the end of a spiritual journey, a pilgrimage. Within Castiglione's commission in particular, and in early modern missionary culture in general, the idea of a pilgrimage was often used as metaphor for spiritual and moral travel, it was a whole *modus vivendi*.¹²⁸ For the Jesuit master of novices, this must have been an extremely useful moral example for shaping the new members' minds. Thus, in this painting, pilgrimage does not refer simply to a precise route that leads pilgrims to a place of faith. It is also a spiritual wandering in unknown spaces where the missionary may encounter temptations.

Such a space was depicted by Castiglione in *The Temptation of Christ* (fig. 6). For forty days, Jesus was conducted into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit and was tempted by the Devil three times (Luke 4: 1-13 and Matthew 4: 1-11). In the first temptation, which is the one painted by Castiglione for the refectory, the Devil asks Jesus to transform stones into bread to make him prove that he is the son of God.¹²⁹ Surely the master of novices, who very likely supervised Castiglione's work, had chosen the episode that served the commission best. Only the first temptation occurs in the wilderness, while the other two episodes are set on high places: the pinnacle of the temple and an indefinite high place ('And the devil took him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time...'¹³⁰). In Castiglione's painting, the wilderness is painted as an oppressive space with rocks and contorted branches of plants. This type of space may be understood as imaginary, a space where the novices might mentally wander to meditate not on bread but on the

¹²⁸ Regarding pilgrimage, Bernard Aikema has noted the importance of the Syrian Saint John Climacus (sixth century) and his book *The Heavenly Ladder (Scala Paradisi)*. This was selected as devotional reading by the Jesuits, B. Aikema *Jacopo Bassano and His Public: Moralizing Pictures in an Age of Reform ca. 1535-1600*, Princeton (New Jersey), 1996, 17.

¹²⁹ In the other two temptations recounted by Luke, first the Devil offers to Jesus the authority on the kingdoms of the world and, second, asks Jesus to throw himself down from the pinnacle of a temple to prove that he is the son of God. In Matthew these two temptations are inverted.

¹³⁰ Luke 4: 1-13, 5.

life of Christ and their own resistance to temptation. Furthermore, this imaginary space didactically symbolises both the future and the present of the novices. It stood for the future as the eventual land of mission in Asia, America or Europe where some of the novices were going to be sent. In addition, in the novices' present, the wilderness stood for the noviciate as a probationary space, a space where their faith and their qualities as missionaries were tested.¹³¹ Moreover, Castiglione's painting of the temptation does not leave any doubt in the viewer about Jesus' response to the Devil. The positive ending is indicated by the presence of the three small angels in the upper right corner. The depiction of the three angels alludes to the Gospel of St. Matthew, when the end of Christ's temptations is described as follows: 'Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered him'.¹³² Therefore, visually, the three angels have a double function. They announce the victory of Jesus over the Devil and induce the novices to meditate on the other two temptations which took place before they came. Finally, one may suggest that this episode too has Eucharist overtones. This is because Jesus ate nothing during forty days in the wilderness 'and when they were ended, he was hungry' (Luke 4: 1-13, 2). Thus, this episode is also about searching for the real 'bread of life', the truth of Christ received at communion.¹³³

The novices of Genoa also had to learn that, when undertaking long journeys into unknown places, resisting temptations is possible if one obeys one's superiors. This is best exemplified by Castiglione's *Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig.8). This narrative repeats aspects of that discussed above: a journey, obedience and the Eucharist (Genesis 22: 1-19). The journey is now represented by Abraham's and Isaac's three days of travel to the land of Moriah. Once there, Abraham enacted his obedience to God by starting the sacrifice of Isaac, only to be interrupted by the angel. Next, he sacrificed a ram. Usually this is taken to symbolise Christ with a direct allusion to the crucifixion. It is especially recalled by the thicket, where Abraham finds the animal, which

¹³¹ Gertrud Schiller stresses the importance of the wilderness as a place of trial. See *Iconography of Christian Art*, 2 vols., London, 1971-72, vol. II, 143.

¹³² Ibid, Matthews 4: 1-11, 11, vol. VII; the presence of the angels at the end of the temptations is not recounted by Luke.

¹³³ The relation between the stones of the first temptation and the Eucharistic bread is underscored by Réau, op. cit., II vol., 307.

alludes to the crown of thorns.¹³⁴ As for the *Supper at Emmaus*, Castiglione did not follow the most common pictorial format given to the episode, the angel arresting Abraham's hand, ready to kill his son (see for example Caravaggio's *Sacrifice of Isaac*, fig.15). Instead, he painted Abraham sitting and the angel standing at his side; Isaac does not appear in the picture. On the ground in front of Abraham and the angel there is the head of the ram together with a pitcher and a sword with stains of blood. Also, on the stone close to Abraham there is an open book. Evidently, Castiglione depicted the moment that follows after the sacrifice of the ram. Such a setting, with the angel pointing to the pitcher and the ram's head, makes absolutely clear the didactic function of this painting. The ram's head symbolises Christ sacrificed on the cross and the pitcher alludes to his blood.

From this perspective the ram's head and the pitcher clearly refer to communion, the culmination of the Eucharist, in the mass. Furthermore, if one looks more closely at the liturgy of the Eucharist it becomes clear how this painting was bound into the space of the refectory. The Catholic liturgy of the Eucharist is divided in three parts: first the offering of the bread and the wine, then the Eucharistic prayer in which the believer thanks God and then finally the Holy Communion itself.¹³⁵ Consequently, looking at this painting, the novices were in front of the perfect offering visible on the lower left corner: the flesh and blood of Jesus. On the right, Abraham, with his eyes closed, and the book symbolising probably the Bible, may be taken as a pictorial rendering of the Eucharistic prayer.

The missing part of the painting is the Communion, yet it was emblematically enacted by the usual activities in the refectory, where the novices shared meals and prayed as a community. If one considers the Eucharistic liturgy together with the Biblical narrative of Abraham and Isaac, this painting represents a striking visual allusion to the life of Jesuit novices. During their journey in the wilderness represented by the everyday duties of the noviciate, the novices had to obey to their superiors in order not to commit sins, to resist to temptations. Obedience during such spiritual journeys was the

¹³⁴ In addition, Isaac bearing the wood for the sacrifice stands for Jesus bearing the cross, see Réau, op. cit., vol. II, 204, and Meyer Schapiro, *Words and Pictures: on the literal and the symbolic in the illustration of a text*, The Hague – Paris, 1973, 14-15.

¹³⁵ For the Eucharist liturgy in the Catholic Mass see Réau, op. cit., 233-234.

keystone of each novice's learning. In fact, obedience was one of the essential virtues for preparing the novice for the Communion and later for the taking of the vows.

Indeed, for the Jesuits, obedience was of essential importance. It was a complex type of behaviour to be analysed for its didactical potential and to be promoted pragmatically within specific projects such as the missionary enterprises. For example, the Order's Constitutions distinguish three types of obedience: of execution, of will and of intellect.¹³⁶ In the first, he who has received an order executes it. In the obedience of will, he who obeys believes in the rightness of the result in relation to the command he has received. Finally, in the obedience of intellect, he who obeys shares with his superior the same feelings, the consideration that the command is the right decision. Evidently, the first two types of obedience are imperfect and the last one is the optimal. Nevertheless, the basic nature of obedience and the potentialities related to its use within the Order were promoted by the Jesuits through emblematic and also more straightforward images. The *Constitutiones* exemplify this aspect by stating that he 'who follows the rules of obedience must let Holy Providence guide him, through the superior, like a corpse lets everyone carry it around'.¹³⁷

I believe that the difficulty of achieving obedience of intellect is related closely to Castiglione's painting of *Massah and Meribah* (fig.10). In this episode from the Old Testament, Moses is camped with his people at Raphidim in the desert, after being released from Egypt (Exodus 17: 1-7 and Numbers 20:1-13). At this point of the journey, they have already received from God the sweet water (Exodus 15) and the manna (Exodus 16). However, at Raphidim the people are thirsty and they quarrel with Moses, asking for water. Moses sees the quarrelling as a lack of faith and a way to tempt God. This divulges the meaning of the episode's title: *Meribah* means 'quarrel' and *Massah* means 'to test'.¹³⁸ The faithlessness of the people is placated by Moses when he asks God for water. In turn God instructs Moses to strike the rock at Horeb with his rod. Castiglione's painting shows the moment immediately after Moses' action,

¹³⁶ Costa, op. cit., part VI, 561.

¹³⁷ '...quanti vivono in ubbidienza si devono lasciar portare e guidare dalla divina provvidenza per mezzo del superiore, come un cadavere che si lascia portare dovunque...' Ibid., part VII, 589. The metaphor of the corps and the three types of obedience are also analysed and translated by Levy, op. cit., 3, 81.

¹³⁸ In Numbers appears only the term 'Meribah'.

when the water is flowing from the rock. The Eucharistic iconography of this episode is contained in the water and the rock, as these are usually identified with Christ.¹³⁹ In addition, as one person of the Trinity, Christ is present at Horeb as a viewer of the episode. For, in giving instructions to Moses, God affirms: 'I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb'.¹⁴⁰ This presence was marked by Castiglione with a crown of thorns, a clear symbol of the Passion, painted on a stone in the lower foreground of the picture. In addition, on the left, above one of the figures in the foreground, Castiglione painted a *memento mori* in form of a child blowing a soap bubble. The crown and the *memento mori* once more suggest that Castiglione's paintings for the refectory were meant to stimulate the novices' mind actively rather than to depict an easily legible narrative. The viewer in the refectory had to discover the net of moral allusions formed by reading the various symbols within the painted images. Then he had to project such allusions into his actual activities in the noviciate. During the journey in the desert, Christ revealed his presence to Moses and his people through the miracle of the water. But, because this act originated in a lack of faith, the novices had to focus their attention on the mercy of God, flowing ultimately from his sacrifice on the cross. They might further meditate on their lives, defined as mortal by the child with the bubble. In other words, Christ always reveals his presence, even if one doubts it because of a fear of death or lack of faith. In turn, such lack of faith may be visible through a lack of obedience. So, the different elements of *Massah and Meribah* come together into a powerful act of exemplification. The painting suggests that obedience, journey and good faith stand in contrast to the doubting of the presence of Christ. In short, the painting is a clearly didactic object for the education of the novices.

Similarly, doubt or hesitation as a sign of lack of faith is also contained in the episode of *Abraham and Sarah* (fig.9) Here, three angels in the guise of pilgrims appear in front of Abraham and Sarah, announcing the birth of Isaac (Genesis 18: 1-8). Because of her old age, Sarah's first reaction is incredulity. Such a reaction is conveyed in her face, which has a faint smile and

¹³⁹ Moses' rod striking the rock symbolizes the lance that wounded Christ on the cross, see Réau, op. cit., vol. II, 205 and Schiller, op. cit., vol. II, 25.

¹⁴⁰ Exodus, 17: 1-7, 6.

suggestively dreamy eyes. In addition her open hand, stretched out towards the angels, may denote both a receiving of God's message and self-protection. In this image, the Eucharist is referred to Abraham giving food to the angels, who are a manifestation of the Trinity, and thus an image of God.¹⁴¹ Moreover, in Castiglione's painting, in the lower right corner, there is a basin with water to wash the pilgrims' feet; this also refers to Jesus washing the disciples' feet before the *Last Supper*. On the table, placed between Abraham and the three angels, Castiglione painted a knife, a pitcher and a plate for food. Recalling motifs in the *Sacrifice of Isaac*, these objects may stand for the Eucharistic sacrifice, the bread and wine of Communion.¹⁴²

There are also Eucharistic allusions in the painting of *Christ and the Samaritan woman* (fig. 5). Christ stops at the well during his journey with his disciples from Judea to Galilee. To reach their destination, they have to pass through Samaria where Jacob's well is. There, Christ is alone when he meets the Samaritan woman, the disciples having gone to the nearby city of Sychar to procure some food (John 4: 1-42). Castiglione's painting shows Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman in front of the well. The Biblical dialogue starts with Jesus asking the Samaritan woman for water and ends with the disciples rejoining Jesus. The core of this dialogue revolves around the comparison between the water of the well and the 'living water' offered by Christ that will give eternal life. Afterwards, the woman's testimony will convince many Samaritans to believe that Jesus is the Messiah. Here, again, the real food is put into contrast with the spiritual food as Nadal and St. Ignatius did in giving the rules for the refectory.

When the disciples come back to the well they offer Christ food. Consequently, between Christ and the disciples there is the following dialogue: '... [Christ] said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Has any one brought him food?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work."'”¹⁴³ The dialogue with the Samaritan woman and the dialogue with the disciples together carry allusions to Eucharist. Furthermore, Christ's last

¹⁴¹ Schiller, op. cit., vol. II, 24.

¹⁴² Moreover, I would like to suggest that the pitcher and the plate may indicate the chalice and the paten used in Communion.

¹⁴³ Buttrick, op. cit., vol. VIII, John 4: 31-34.

response to the disciples evokes his answer to the Devil in the first temptation. As in the case of the *Supper at Emmaus* and the *Sacrifice of Isaac*, by not showing the dialogue with the disciples, the painting does not display that which can be directly related to the refectory. Through this allusive pictorial strategy, the image calls for a more profound visual and intellectual involvement: the novices must meditate carefully on the space where they eat, pray together and listen to reading. Moreover, this painting might have represented an example for promoting missionary activity. The presence of Jesus in Samaria and his dialogue with the Samaritan woman began to question the differences between the Jewish people and the Samaritans.¹⁴⁴ In turn, this suggests the possibility of converting non-Christian peoples through God's word.¹⁴⁵

Finally, the painting of *Tobias and the Angel* (fig. 11) shows Tobias with the Archangel Raphael, alias Azarias, on the river Tigris after having caught the fish that Tobias will use to cure his father's blindness (Tobit 5: 4-22; 6: 1-8).¹⁴⁶ A possible Eucharistic interpretation of this image may be deduced from the symbolism of the fish. Together with the dove and the lamb, the fish is often used as a symbol for Christ.¹⁴⁷ In the Biblical episode, after extracting from the fish the heart, the liver, and the gall that will be used as medicine for Tobit's eyes, Tobias and Raphael cooked and ate it. The fish is thus a divinely provided meal, just like Communion. The other system of symbolism refers to the moment when Tobias goes into the river and risks being killed by the fish. Even so, by following Azarias's instructions he will finally capture and kill the fish, as shown in the painting. In this interpretation the fish may be seen as a devilish presence, standing for the temptations and sins that may bedevil young persons at the beginning of their lives' journey. In turn, this draws attention to the role of Raphael as guardian angel and protector of travellers. Evidently, Castiglione wanted to emphasize this because he depicted Azarias as Raphael

¹⁴⁴ Schiller, op. cit., vol. II, 159.

¹⁴⁵ Réau, op. cit., vol. II, 323.

¹⁴⁶ For the narration of the complete journey see William Aldis Wright, *Apocrypha*, Cambridge, 1909, 105; Régis Debray, *The Old Testament*, London-New York, 2004, 191. Raphael is also related to the episode by his healing power. He is in fact designated as 'medicus'. Moreover, this episode symbolizes Jesus healing the blind, Réau, op. cit., I vol., 203.

¹⁴⁷ The fish symbolism comes from its Greek pronunciation 'ikhthus', the acronym of *Jesus Khristos Theou Uios Sôter* (Jesus Christ God's Son *Salvator Mundi*), and which was used by the first Christians.

and Tobias as a young boy. In the apocryphal narrative Azarias's true nature is revealed only when the two travellers return to Tobit's house (Tobit 12:15). Also, *Tobias and the Angel* was also a favourite subject for private commissions. In fact, the image of Tobias and Raphael was often displayed in household oratories as an example of filial obedience and as an edifying family story.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, it may well be that this painting was for the novices a familiar image that could have been used as a starting point for looking at the other paintings displayed in the refectory.

The above analysis has shown that Castiglione's seven paintings would have worked extremely well in linking the activities and the spaces of the noviciate. Only when considering this context, is possible to determine the iconographical evocations revolving around the Eucharist, journeying and obedience.

The two paintings made by Castiglione for the noviciate church seem to be different from the paintings for the refectory (see fig. 2 and 3). Most obviously, they are altarpieces. This means that, in relation to the spectator's point of view, they were in central positions, framed by the architectural structure of each altar. Such accessible locations demanded an equally easily legible iconography. Thus, the paintings show St. Ignatius's two canonical visions: at Manresa, with the Virgin dictating the *Spiritual Exercises*, and at the chapel of la Storta, near Rome, with Christ assisting Ignatius in his project for founding a religious order.¹⁴⁹ The depictions of these episodes are not as elaborately didactical as the paintings in the refectory. They are not rhetorical demonstrations or explanations of religious truths. They were displayed, instead, to show the saintly founder of the Order and his direct experiences of divine intervention and thus to evoke the religious validity of the institution.

In sum, a context such as the one encountered by Castiglione in the Genoa noviciate required painters to consider how relations between viewers, pictures and space worked. Without understanding these relations a painter simply could not be successful in her or his commissions. In his first works for the

¹⁴⁸ For the guardian angel as a typical devotion of the Counter-Reformation see Émile Mâle, *Religious Art from the twelfth to the eighteenth century*, first edition: Paris, 1949; Princeton, 1982, 187-189.

¹⁴⁹ In the vision of la Storta, Christ announces to Ignatius: 'ego vobis romae propitius ero' (in Rome I will propitiate you).

Jesuit Order Castiglione ‘only’ created a composition with the elements strictly necessary for the fulfilment of his commission and he probably chose these under the guidance of the master of novices.

Castiglione’s capacity for tailoring his pictures to the needs and expectations of his spectators must be examined further. Therefore, in the next chapter I shall evaluate the type of training that Castiglione most likely received in Milan before leaving for Genoa. In turn, the analysis of Castiglione’s training will serve as an appropriate foundation for looking at his work in China.

2. The expanded training space: learning from visuality

To describe Castiglione's artistic formation I shall use the word training in two different ways. First, it denotes a definite period of learning (the time Castiglione spent in the Milanese workshop), providing him with mostly technical knowledge. Secondly it refers to an indefinite, ongoing self-education or personal development based chiefly on looking at images and engaging with the surrounding world. Without studying these two ways of training it is impossible to understand fully the strategies eventually adopted by Castiglione to perform his role first in the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa and then as imperial painter in Beijing.

Continuous self-education was as important for the formation of an early modern European painter as the initial apprenticeship. The works made by Castiglione in China certainly indicate that the Milanese painter also engaged in active artistic self-development. But, in fact, both Castiglione's workshop training and artistic self-development began in Milan. In this city, the young Castiglione learnt to paint in a workshop and also by looking at images normally displayed in churches and in other public spaces, as well as at festival displays celebrating particular religious or political events. Although the city and the workshop can be seen as two separate places of learning - one characterised by visual experience and the other by technical practice - they are in fact different aspects of a broadly shared ideal for how a painter's apprentice should be trained in Italy in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. An apprentice should definitely make use of the displays offered by his or her city.

The city worked as a unique space of display where both apprentices and fully fledged painters could observe and learn from available models already held in high esteem. For example, in the last part addressed to apprentice-painters of his *Le finzze dei pennelli italiani* of 1674, the painter Luigi Scaramuccia discusses the usefulness of looking at paintings in Italian cities; this was certainly a common practice in Castiglione's lifetime.¹⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that Scaramuccia's text has been considered to be part of the

¹⁵⁰ For example Filippo Abbiati, the most likely candidate for the role of Castiglione's master, made extensive travels to look at paintings in Venice, Naples and Genoa. See Filippo Maria Ferro, "'Storie dipinte" da Filippo Abbiati per il duomo di Novara', *Paragone*, n. 483, 1990, 123-128, 124.

Italian ‘cicerone’ genre that spread in the seventeenth century and was fully developed in the eighteenth.¹⁵¹ *Le finzze dei pennelli italiani* is a dialogue between Giuripeno, a young devotee of art, and the spirit of Raphael. They are on an imaginary journey around Italy to look at art in the most important cities: Rome, Florence, Bologna, Naples, Milan and Venice.¹⁵² The last part of the book consists of aphorisms addressed to painters’ apprentices. If one considers Scaramuccia’s book simply as a type of guide, it is difficult to see a connection between the dialogue and the aphorisms. But the two come together if one considers the book as a treatise on the art of painting rooted in the art-theoretical tradition that has Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) as one of the most important founders.

Certainly, in Scaramuccia’s book the ideal of travelling, looking at art objects and learning from them has much in common with the views expressed by Vasari. Vasari in the *Vite* has a didactic aim in which knowledge obtained by travelling and looking at art in different Italian cities is, just as in Scaramuccia, one of the most important features.¹⁵³ In this context, it becomes clear that there is a profound relation between the part that Scaramuccia dedicated to the journey and the part with didactic aphorisms:

If you are able to go and visit old historic villages and towns as many others have done before, you must do it with good will. You will not be disappointed because in observing beautiful paintings of different kinds the many doubts that clustered your mind will be resolved and clarified. And, with experience, you might, like others before, become a famous painter. If you compare others’ fine works with your own, of course you may feel belittled but you may as well feel stimulated and, placing your

¹⁵¹ The term cicerone is used by Julius Schlosser Magnino regarding Scaramuccia, see *La letteratura artistica*, Firenze, 1935, 463.

¹⁵² Luigi Scaramuccia (1616-1680) was from Perugia. For this reason he was called Perugino: Giuripeno is its anagram.

¹⁵³ At the end of the *Vite*’s ‘Proemio’ Vasari writes: ‘I believe this work of mine will delight those who do not practise these arts and will be useful to those who practise them. They will find the different techniques in the introductory chapter and in the following part illustrating the artist’ lives they will know where the works of art are placed and will easily recognize the perfection and imperfection in them and will be able to understand the different manners’ (‘E così mi persuado che queste fatiche mie diletteranno coloro che non sono di questi esercizi, e diletteranno e gioveranno a chi ne a fatto professione. Perchè, oltra che nella introduzione rivedranno i modi dello operare, e nelle vite di essi artefici impareranno dove siano l’opere loro et a conoscere agevolmente la perfezione o imperfezione di quelle e discernere tra maniera e maniera,...’), *Giorgio Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori*, [1568], Milan, 1962, 4 vols., Rosanna Bettarini (ed.), vol. I, 44.

work in comparison with the works of others, ask yourself how far you are from their perfection. Remember though not to put yourself down, as fine and exquisite the others' paintings may be, because that would be a failure. You should on the contrary say to yourself: I want to be a strict judge of myself and I will be as successful as other painters are through hard work and with God's favour.¹⁵⁴

The practise of travelling and looking at art described by *Le finezze dei pennelli italiani* must have been known during Castiglione's lifetime. For Scaramuccia (1616-1680) was himself active in Milan where he worked on different commissions together with Procaccini. He was also the teacher of Antonio Busca (1625-1686), one of the painters whose work has certain pictorial features closely related to Castiglione's own manner.¹⁵⁵ Also, it is significant that the importance placed by Scaramuccia on artistic experience became the basis of training for young painters offered by the second Accademia Ambrosiana, re-opened in Milan in 1668.¹⁵⁶ As a Milanese artist, young Castiglione was probably influenced by the specific canon of 'good' paintings

¹⁵⁴ 'Se ti sarà permesso di vagar le Cittadi nella guisa ch'è avvenuto à molti, eseguisco di buona voglia, poichè soddisfatto, e contentissimo te ne troverai, e rimirando cose belle, e diverse di Pittura, molti dubbij che forse prima t'ingombravano la mente ti saran disciolti, e posti in chiaro, e farai come alcuni, li quali presosi tal compiacimento, divenuti eruditi coll'esperienza, si sono dati à conoscere per soggetti straordinarij al Mondo; ed'al certo che comparando l'Opere belle altrui con le tue medesime, agio haverai di mortificarti, overo di prendere animo, mentre fra te stesso così potrai discorrere. Io come mi diporto quanto lungi si trova da questo il mio sapere? Ove son'io? &c. Sovengati però di non mai avviliti per esquisite, e belle, che tu vegga le Pitture altrui, poichè ciò sarebbe un pernicioso mancamento; mà ben sì dirai: Io voglio essere inimico, e fierissimo censor di me stesso, mà vuò ben anco sperare, che si come altri son divenuti d'alto grido per mezzo delle loro fatiche, così a me col favor delle medesime, e con l'aggiunto del Cielo il simile spero dover intravenire', Luigi Scaramuccia, *Le finezze dei pennelli italiani ammirate e studiate da Giuripeno sotto la scorta e disciplina del genio di Raffaello d'Urbino; con una curiosa ed attentissima osservazione di tuttociò che facilmente possa riuscire d'utile e di diletto a chi desidera rendersi perfetto nella teorica e pratica della nobil'arte della pittura*, Pavia, 1674, 199.

¹⁵⁵ For the relation between Procaccini and Busca see Maria Luisa Gatti Perer, *La chiesa di San Marco in Milano*, Milan, 1998, 205.

¹⁵⁶ This indicates a departure from the first Accademia where the training of painters was mainly developed around anatomical studies (drawing) and the religious ideal of *decorum*, an ideal well described by Federico Borromeo and Pietro da Cortona. Silvana Modena has in fact noted that the drawings that various artists produced in the second Accademia show a marked interest in the naturalistic use of light. Such practices are, of course, intrinsic in the Lombard tradition of painting. The two most important protagonists exploring this phenomenon in painting in this area were Leonardo da Vinci and Vincenzo Foppa. See Silvana Modena, 'La seconda Accademia Ambrosiana', *Arte Lombarda*, n.1, 1960, 28-37; for the Lombard tradition, Federico Zeri, 'La percezione visiva dell'Italia e degli italiani nella storia della pittura', *Storia d'Italia*, Atlante, vol. VI, 1976, 53-217, 63.

developed within the Accademia.¹⁵⁷ Inside the Milanese workshop, where he was trained, Castiglione would then have reinforced his informal observations with the copying and reinterpreting of established models.

Copying for didactic purposes and being attentive to the cultural space offered by the city represented a particular way of learning to paint. It was not a linear process but rather a development where different phases are actually simultaneous. In one phase a painter might find in the city images from both the past and the present. In other phases a painter might use images already present in the workshop as a mnemonic support for evaluating the artistic models offered by the city. Once one understands this process, it becomes clear that Castiglione's first visual environment constitutes important evidence for understanding his oeuvre.

In Castiglione's lifetime, amongst all the available types of imagery, engravings were one of the most important visual models used to train painters and also for inspiring fully educated artists. The following passage from Scaramuccia makes this clear:

If you are so eager to dedicate yourself to this virtuous art of painting, resolve to use (when you cannot do otherwise) the good prints of the excellent Masters. You can find them everywhere. I mean those prints by Titian, Carracci and others. You will have enlightenment and help from them. If you unfortunately cannot buy them you will have to do your best to follow the precepts of Nature, that is the true Mistress. At first you should use the easiest things of nature in order to approach the most difficult ones little by little. Finally you will reach full understanding of nature. If you imitate it properly, you will undoubtedly be on the right path to obtain what you desire.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Some of the most important painters of Milan were teachers at the Accademia, yet at the same time they had apprentices in their workshops. Even so, it seems improbable that Castiglione would have been involved in the Accademia Ambrosiana. This was mainly because the Accademia accepted only painters who already had received their first training. See Marco Valsecchi, *I grandi disegni italiani del '600 lombardo all 'Ambrosiana*, Milan, 1975, 32.

¹⁵⁸ 'Se tu ti senti invogliato à pieno di questa Virtuosa facoltà della Pittura, prendi partito di servirti (quando però non ti venga permesso in altro modo) delle buone Carte de sovrani Maestri, che pur di quelle in ogni parte facilmente si ritrovano, cioè a dire di Tiziano, de Carracci, e di simili altri, perchè molto lume, e giovamento saranno per prestarti: e quando per iscarrezza di Fortuna non ti riuscisse il poter farne acquisto, doverai ingegnarti nel miglior modo, che dettaratti la natura (vera ditatrice e maestra del tutto) servirti delle cose sue più facili per poscia avanzarti di mano in mano alle altre più difficili, & ardue, fin tanto, che tù ti venghi

That Scaramuccia's views were also current amongst Europeans working in Beijing in the early modern period is substantiated by three passages from three manuscript sources relating to three artists working in the Chinese capital for the Propaganda Fide: Giovanni Damasceno (1727-1781), Ripa and Arailza. The first letter contains a request for 'prints of architecture and views of Rome'. Damasceno supported his request by stating that:

I need prints of architecture and Roman views [because] here [in Beijing] I cannot take inspiration from anything therefore it is convenient to take all this from the brain. But because my brain is a little weak and not so capable, it is best to look at engravings.¹⁵⁹

The second manuscript is a list of objects sent to Ripa in China, between 1716 and 1717, by an unknown Signor Megliorucci from Italy. Amongst the objects, mostly tools for making enamel and pigments, there is the *Prospettiva pratica* by Vignola, an unnamed *Traite de Miniature avec Secrets pour faire les couleurs* and various prints of flowers, animals, old people and perspectives.¹⁶⁰ Finally, in a letter dated 1721, Arailza requested books of prints and especially:

The book with the engravings of the Loggie of the Vatican Palace by Raphael of Urbino consisting of 53 leaves, another similar by Gio. Francesco from Bologna [Guercino] with landscapes and figures, other books with the stories of Laface [Lafaye?].¹⁶¹

All of these accounts show that images, especially prints, were employed not only during a painter's apprenticeship but also in more mature phases. First, a painter should learn from nature. Second, he should study from images displayed in public spaces. Third, he should learn from copies of paintings by

ad impossessar da dovero nel bel conoscimento dell'istessa Maestra, quale imitandola per il verso buono, non dovrai dubitar di non proseguir avanti nella certa strada, per la quale ne possi poi giungere alla da te desiderata Meta.', Scaramuccia, op.cit. 191.

¹⁵⁹ '...mi trovo in necessità di stampe di Architettura, e delle vedute di Roma, e qui non vi è da poter prendere lume da cosa alcuna, sicchè il tutto convien cavare dal Cervello, e siccome il mio è un poco fiacco, e meno capace, convien ricorrere alle stampe', Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, 1761-1764, n. 30, 215-216, 216 r., dated 22 September 1762. In the same letter Damasceno asked for brushes and pigments.

¹⁶⁰ APF, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, 1716-1717, n. 13, 649 r.

¹⁶¹ APF, Scritture Originali della Congregazione Particolare dell'Indie e Cina, Indie Orientali, 1667-1836 (78 vols.), vol. XXX, 164 v.

old masters (mostly engravings). Finally, literature was the fourth source of learning often recommended in the seventeenth and eighteenth century.¹⁶²

The Genoa commission certainly illuminates Castiglione's early artistic development. Yet, to explore this in more detail, one must first consider Castiglione's apprenticeship. In turn, this permits one to evaluate whether Castiglione acquired from his Milanese training a sufficiently extensive and resonant working memory, a memory he could draw on once he was in Genoa and, most importantly, in China.

For young Castiglione, Milan might well have seemed like a stage consisting of images unfolding before his eyes. Apart from the paintings on display in religious spaces and in the private and public collections of Milan, there were also two very important other types: those displayed only at specific times of the year and also those that formed the *Sacri Monti*. These, as I shall show, are closely related to Castiglione's paintings.

¹⁶² For example, in his treatise, Scaramuccia made a list of books necessary for painters. The list is divided in four sections: histories of the world (*historie del mondo*), holy histories (*historie sacre*), various poems (*poesie diverse*), contemporary novels (*romanzi moderni*), Scaramuccia, op.cit., 195-196.

3. The Milanese canon and the first generation: Cerano and the Procaccini, city displays and the *Sacro Monte* of Varese

In the city of Milan, religious life was regulated by a precise calendar of festivals. One of the most important celebrations was 4 November, the day of St. Charles Borromeo. By the late seventeenth century, this day was marked by the display of two sequences of images in the Cathedral of Milan (fig.16). The two cycles of paintings depict the life and miracles of the Saint; these had been commissioned by the Milanese diocesan authorities. The core set of images were originally made for St. Charles's beatification celebrated in Milan on 4 November 1602. The first twenty paintings of the life of the Saint were then made between 1602 and 1604, following a program probably devised by Federico Borromeo, and executed by the most important painters of the age. There were also paintings of the miracles commissioned on 10 September, 1609 to be ready for the day of the canonisation. The entire cycle was completed with eight other paintings executed between 1660 and 1740.¹⁶³

For a young apprentice like Castiglione, such celebratory displays were an unmatched opportunity to examine the work of famous Milanese masters directly. For example, during the annual celebrations for St. Charles Borromeo, Castiglione could admire no less than nine large tempera paintings by the celebrated Giovan Battista Crespi, (called Cerano, 1607-1675).¹⁶⁴ During Castiglione's initial period of training, this was almost certainly a very important moment. At other times, this kind of viewing was possible only by using engravings. Indeed, Scaramuccia used the displays for St. Charles's day to demonstrate how important such events were for developing artists:

... for the feast of the Glorious St. Charles the great Cathedral was usually decorated by a lot of paintings representing the most famous facts

¹⁶³ The description of the entire painting cycle of the life of St. Charles is *Vita e miracoli di S. Carlo Borromeo. Itinerario pittorico nel duomo di Milano* by Ernesto Brivio, Milan, 1995. The two cycles together, the life and the miracles of St. Charles, consist of fifty-six paintings.

¹⁶⁴ These were four paintings from the life of St. Charles: *St. Charles Sells the d'Oria Principality and Gives the Money to the Poor* (1602), *St. Charles Found the Colleges of the Jesuits, Theatines and Barnabites* (1603), *St. Charles Visits the Plague-stricken Population* (1602), *Erection and Benediction of the Crosses after the Plague* (1603) and five paintings from the miracles: *Aurelia degli Angeli's Miracle*, *Giovanna Marone's Miracle*, *Fra' Sebastiano da Piacenza's Miracle*, *Recovery of Margherita Vertua*, *Recovery of Beatrice Crespi*. All these were made in 1610.

of the Saint's life. Among the paintings displayed one could also admire the paintings by Cerano and Morazzone who are the two most important painters of Milan.¹⁶⁵

This kind of display, together with the patrimony of paintings always on display in the churches and public collections of Milan, help to link Castiglione's Genoa paintings with certain Milanese works dating to the first half of the seventeenth century. In what follows, I will show this by establishing a chronology to link Castiglione to previous generations of painters active in Milan.

Castiglione's Genoa paintings take their cue from a full three generations of Milanese artists. The first is represented by Camillo and Giulio Cesare Procaccini (1574-1625) and Cerano, the three most famous masters of the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹⁶⁶ Of the second generation, Antonio Busca (1625-1686) seems to have had the greatest impact on Castiglione. Finally, I will explain how, Filippo Abbiati (1640-1715), of the next generation, may well have been Castiglione's master.

In Castiglione's paintings, Cerano's pictorial language is echoed in the colouring and in the faceted drapery characterised by strong and geometrical contours. This becomes evident if one compares three Cerano paintings from the St. Charles cycle, *St. Charles Sells the d'Oria Principality and Gives the Money to the Poor* (fig. 17), *Erection and Benediction of the Crosses after the Plague* (fig. 18), *St. Charles Finds the Colleges of the Jesuits, Theatines and Barnabites* (fig. 19) with Castiglione's *Abraham and Sarah*, *The Temptation of Christ*, and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*. For example, the figures in the lower right corner in the three Cerano's paintings as well as the three angels of *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 20), Christ in the *Temptation* (fig. 21) and the *Samaritan Woman* (fig. 22) are all depicted using similarly metallic colours and similarly sharp outlines. Thus it seems that it was from Cerano that Castiglione learnt one of the most eye-catching features of his own manner: a dazzling yet

¹⁶⁵ '... in occasione della Festa del Glorioso S. Carlo questo gran Tempio veniva addobbato da molti Quadri, dipinti à guazzo su le tele con l'attioni sue più segnalate, trà li quali di se stessi facevano pomposa mostra, alcuni del Cerano, e del Morazzone, li due Poli principali della città di Milano.', Scaramuccia, op.cit., 133-134.

¹⁶⁶ The other three most important painters of the age are Morazzone (Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, 1573 ca.-1626), Daniele Crespi (1600 ca.-1630) and Francesco Del Cairo (1607-1665).

precise rendering of textiles. Both painters' rendition of garments is naturalistic in so far as great attention has been paid to the texture of the fabric and its fall to involve the spectator in an almost tactile experience. Both painters have subordinated the use of light and colour to this aim.

In both Castiglione's and Cerano's paintings light is not only used to give an illusion of three-dimensionality, through rays of raking light, or to convey a particular meaning. It is also employed in the minutely observed description of individual objects and specific features like objects, clothing, and plants. In fact, Castiglione seems to have learnt from observing the works of Cerano his attentiveness to the reflective qualities of different materials, such as textiles, metals, ceramics and fur, in response to different types of light.

In turn, this technical adaptability suggests a connection between Cerano's images, Castiglione's Genoese paintings and the Chinese *renwu* (portraiture) genre that would later confer on Castiglione both fame and professional status. In particular, in Beijing Castiglione painted important *renwu* commissions in the official *yurong* (visage) category. The imperial *yurong* category had to follow rigid norms based on the *yurong* ritual role: it must be a frontal portrait surrounded by empty space.¹⁶⁷ The pictorial representation of Qing Emperors was also a political and cosmological representation of the entire world embodied in the imperial figures. In this context the carefully observed delineation of the *chaofu*, the official court-robe, is essential. In fact, in *yurong* the imperial robe mediates between the emperor-self and the external world.

Castiglione was able to display his sensitivity to light and, at the same time, still respect the norms of *yurong* portraits. In *Qianlonghuangdi Chaofuxiang* (*Portrait of Emperor Qianlong in Formal Court Robe*, fig. 23) it is notable how Castiglione deployed the lessons that, as is suggested by the Genoa images, he had first learnt from Cerano. Castiglione carefully evokes the shiny silky texture of the Emperor's robe, giving the effect of three-dimensionality by using subtle chiaroscuro which does not interfere with the *minghuang* tone (bright yellow) used exclusively for emperors. In fact, this painting was made by applying Chinese mineral colours to silk. Castiglione could never have practiced this technique of painting before going to China for silk was not used

¹⁶⁷ On Castiglione's *yurong* see Wu, *op. cit.*, 211-221.

as a support for paintings in early modern Europe. However, once he started working for the Qing workshops, he immediately took up this technique with great competence, in itself an indication of the quality and flexibility of his Milanese training.

Another pictorial element probably learnt from Cerano is also apparent in *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (fig. 5), in the *Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig. 8) and in *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 9). In these three paintings, Castiglione depicted basins and pitchers very precisely, in a technique calculated to show the texture of metal and also its decorations. The basin depicted in the lower right in *Abraham and Sarah* is, in fact, an almost direct quotation from Cerano's *Miracle of the Woman in Labour* (fig. 24).

It is worth noticing here that in the seven paintings executed for the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa, Castiglione used a set of physiognomic models. See, for example, the figure of Jesus in *Christ and the Samaritan* (fig. 5), and in the *Temptation* (fig. 6), as well as in *Emmaus* (fig.7). Castiglione also used the same model for Abraham in the *Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig. 8) and *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 9) and for Moses in *Massah and Meribah* (fig, 10). Together with the physiognomic models, in the Genoa's commission, Castiglione employed a simple arrangement of figures in the overall composition. Yet most other established Milanese painters would usually construct complex compositions with a lot of figures displayed within complex architectural settings, as shown for example by Cerano's *St. Charles Sells the d'Oria Principality and Gives the Money to the Poor* (fig.18). This begs the question: which visual sources did Castiglione use to develop his unexpectedly simple compositional manner?

In keeping with the advice offered by Scaramuccia, young Castiglione probably made specific qualitative choices about which visual sources to imitate in his paintings. The sources from the Milanese tradition used by Castiglione can actually be divided in two groups. The first is best represented by Cerano's images of the life and miracles of St. Charles made for Milan Cathedral. This type of commission required large canvases and compositions adapted to specific narrative purposes. As I have just shown, such paintings influenced Castiglione in terms of colours and drawing. The second group consists of images permanently on display in the churches of Milan. These paintings could be seen by Castiglione every day of the year.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the majority of these images were actually by painters of Cerano's generation. Therefore, in Castiglione's youth, the fame of these artists came not only from their biographies or the description of their paintings in the artistic literature but also from the sheer number of paintings on display in the city. As reported in 1747 by the two painters Agostino and Giacinto Santagostino, the most visible painter in Milan was undoubtedly Camillo Procaccini. His paintings were displayed in no less than twenty-five churches.¹⁶⁸ One could also find Giulio Cesare Procaccini's paintings in eleven churches and Cerano's in fourteen. So, like the works by Cerano, images by both Camillo and Giulio Cesare Procaccini have to be considered a valuable means of understanding Castiglione's informal pictorial training. I shall now examine two images by Camillo and Giulio Cesare Procaccini. From these emerge clear similarities between their works, Castiglione's Italian paintings, and the techniques of representation used in the *Sacri Monti* that I will analyse later.

The first image is an engraving by Giulio Cesare Procaccini, *Christ on the Mount of Olives* (fig. 25). It is characterised by a simple composition with few imposing figures delineated by a vigorous and complex contour and strong, legible rays of light. Apart from *Massah and Meribah*, all the Genoa paintings have similar compositions; they are all focused on a few imposing figures. This type of spatial arrangement was widely employed in the Milanese environment during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to depict sacred figures in a more iconic, less narrative manner. One sees it, for example, in altarpieces depicting single saints. The print by Giulio Cesare Procaccini has a simple composition very much like Castiglione's *Tobias* (fig. 11), where the light emphasises the poses of the bodies in the foreground. The delineation of space is also closely integrated with that of the human body. In effect, the space is arranged theatrically: it gives a sense of depth but only as a frame for the depicted episode.

The second point to be made here is about Castiglione's use of gesture, especially in the hands. Castiglione seems to have picked up this important

¹⁶⁸ Agostino and Giacinto Santagostino, *Catalogo delle pitture insigni, che Stanno esposte al pubblico nella Città di Milano, Raccolte, e dato in luce da Agostino, e Giacinto fratelli Sant'Agostini Pittori Milanesei, coll'aggiunta di altre Pitture, parimente esposte al pubblico, date in luce da moderni Autori*, Milan, 1747, 110.

narrative device from Camillo Procaccini, an important figure in Milanese religious painting from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Conveying narrative was the aim behind Procaccini's use of gesture, rooted, as it was, in important religious commissions. Careful use of gesture was certainly a central device of Camillo Procaccini's narrative paintings; for example his *St. Augustine Disputing with St. Ambrose* (fig. 26) in San Marco in Milan and Castiglione's *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 9) both use gestures as narrative devices.¹⁶⁹ The two painters also deploy continuous variations in the position of the hands. For example, in *Abraham and Sarah* Castiglione painted the hands of the three angels, Abraham and Sarah on a continuous axis (fig. 27). This axis indicates the direction of the dialogue and the unfolding of the story. In this biblical tale Sarah received from the three angels the news that she was to have a baby. Pictorially, the dialogue starts from the first angel on the left and through Abraham reaches Sarah on the right of the composition. Therefore, Camillo and Giulio Cesare Procaccini's uses of gesture and chiaroscuro seem to have had an impact on Castiglione's Genoa paintings. But these two aspects may also have come from Castiglione's probable engagement with the *Sacri Monti*.

Below, I shall focus on one site visited regularly by the Milanese in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: the *Sacro Monte* at Varese.¹⁷⁰ The several *Sacri Monti* between Piedmont and Lombardy usually consist of a visual narration and celebration of the Mysteries of the Rosary: five joyful, five sorrowful and five glorious. The *Sacro Monte* in Varese thus consists of a system of fourteen chapels built along a road running up to a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary.¹⁷¹

The pilgrimage to the *Sacri Monti* was profoundly bound to the religious and political strategies of the Borromeo family. The personal involvement of St. Charles Borromeo and his nephew Federico in supervising and visiting these

¹⁶⁹ The church of San Marco is only a few steps from the place where Castiglione's parish church was situated.

¹⁷⁰ Evidence of the continued popularity of the *Sacro Monte* of Varese amongst the Milanese during Castiglione's lifetime may be found in Nicolò Sormani, *Il santuario di S.Maria del Monte sopra Varese*, Milan, 1739 and from the *Guida al Santuario di Santa Maria del Monte sopra Varese*, [Giordani?], Milan 1823, 12-17.

¹⁷¹ Other Holy Mountains are in Portugal (seven), in Spain (ten), in Poland (nineteen) and in France (two plus two Breton Calvaries). Piera Gatta Papavassiliou, *Il sacro monte di Ossuccio*, Bergamo, 1996, 9.

sacred places meant that, in Castiglione's age, the pilgrimage to the *Sacri Teatri* was still an important religious and social act.¹⁷² This, in turn, helps to underscore that the cultural space of the city of Milan did not simply correspond to its urban space. Instead it was a broader space used by the Milanese to celebrate and re-affirm their artistic and religious values.

The setting of the *Sacro Monte* in Varese was very important. A road with chapels was followed by the pilgrims from a valley, where the first chapel was located, to the top of the mountain where the church was set, at the end of the pilgrimage (fig. 28).¹⁷³ *Sacri Monti* like Varese had two purposes: to serve as models for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and as a symbolic barrier against Protestantism. Thus the *Sacri Monti* served as a kind of memory 'chart' to stimulate visually some form of spiritual exercise. Perhaps more importantly, in Castiglione's case, the *Sacri Monti* also represented an artistic space. In this space a young painter could view works by important Milanese painters, architects and sculptors. He or she might also learn about how these artists had collaborated to stimulate spectators to contemplate religious themes.

The *Sacro Monte* of Varese was thus fully part of the cultural space of early modern Milan. This is underscored by a guidebook to the *Sacro Monte*, published by Sormani in 1739. In various passages Sormani informs the reader about the distance from Milan to Varese. He also describes how Milanese citizens were assiduous visitors to the place.¹⁷⁴ It is also worth mentioning here that Sormani was a Prefect of the Ambrosiana Library and, in the eighteenth century, he was famous for describing and celebrating the social and artistic history of Milan. In other words, he was one of the most important local arbiters of civic pride. This book, therefore, is in itself evidence of the importance that the Milanese attached to the *Sacro Monte* of Varese.

In a chapel of a *Sacro Monte*, the narrative, the position of the spectators and the actual images are all indispensable elements amalgamated together to

¹⁷² During the last days of his life Charles Borromeo went to the *Sacro Monte* of Varallo to pray. Charles Borromeo's strategy had Milan as the centre of the religious environment in the European Alps and as the starting point for pilgrimages to the *Sacri Monti*. As archbishop, his nephew Federico Borromeo sponsored and personally supervised (with the most important Milanese families) the *fabbrica* of Varese. See Luigi Zanzi, *Atlante dei Sacri Monti prealpini*, Milano, 2002, 42, 60, 104.

¹⁷³ The same distance between every chapel gave the pilgrims time to recite ten Hail Marys and then finish the Rosary at the end, see Sormani, 1739, op. cit., 40.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

invoke a response. All these elements were discussed and analysed by the artistic literature of Castiglione's age.

The characteristics of these *Sacri Monti* become clearer when one learns that these places were also called *Sacri Teatri*.¹⁷⁵ In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the word *teatro* might indicate both religious and secular forms of display. For example, every *apparato* or ephemeral display made for church celebrations was also called a *teatro*. Thus *teatro* is both a physical entity (a theatre, a church, a *Sacro Monte*) and a mental construction (a book, a geographical map) where a form of reality is made apparent. But *teatro* could also mean the entire world or refer to a microcosm that contains every known object (as in *Theatrum mundi*). On this all-embracing stage religious and secular stories were represented by the actions of real or depicted figures set in particular frames. In keeping with this, a *Sacro Monte* chapel is a pictorial combination of fresco paintings, architecture and sculptures (fig. 29). Consequently, there were different artists employed in the creation of the chapels: sculptors, figure painters and architectural painters. The figure painters also had the task of painting the statues.¹⁷⁶ Every chapel is, in effect, a theatrical set. On the wall there is a painted background with different figures from sacred narrative or landscape images.

The chapels of the *Sacri Monti* are constructed so that one cannot go inside but only look at the scenes from three or more windows covered by heavy iron gratings. Pilgrims can attain the entire view of the sculptural and pictorial depiction only when on their knees (fig. 30).¹⁷⁷ Even so, from the several windows pilgrims may choose different viewpoints onto the same scene. The windows and different apertures on the roof also guide strong rays of light onto both sculptures and paintings (fig. 31).

To explain the connection between Castiglione's paintings and this type of chapel I would like to return again to the concept of the *Sacri Monti* as a

¹⁷⁵ See Zanzi, op. cit.

¹⁷⁶ See Silvano Lombardo, *Conoscere il Sacromonte. Guida alle Cappelle, al Santuario ed ai Musei del Sacro Monte sopra Varese*, Varese, 1982, 67.

¹⁷⁷ The illustrations I am using here are from Anna Brizio and Stefania Stefani Perrone (eds), *Galeazzo Alessi, Libro dei misteri. Progetto di pianificazione urbanistica, architettonica e figurative del Sacro Monte di Varallo in Valsesia*, Bologna, 1974, 54-58. They were made by Galeazzo Alessi for his *Libro dei Misteri* (Milan, 1565-1569) to show the planning of the chapels of the *Sacro Monte* of Varallo.

Sacro Teatro. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Jesuit Order was heavily involved in the promotion of theatrical events as a way of communicating Catholic values to different parts of society. Thus the Order's relationship with places like the *Sacri Monti* was profound. For example Nicolo' Sormani, in his 1739 description of the *Monte* in Varese, affirms that the Jesuits were 'so much loved and beneficial for the *Sacro Monte*.'¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola, essential for the training of novices, can actually be used to understand the perceptual path to be followed by the spectator of a *Sacro Teatro*. Obviously, the Jesuits did not have a monopoly on the use of images or on ecclesiastical theatrical events. However, their attitudes towards images and theatre should be considered here because they represent one of the most important aspects of the visual culture in which Castiglione was trained.

Whoever embarks on one of St. Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* first has to know a specific episode from the life of Christ. Then, before beginning on the real contemplation, one has to pass through three preludes: first recalling the episode, then composing in one's mind the place where the episode takes place and then praying to be properly involved in its contemplation.¹⁷⁹ The first two visual preludes were also experienced by the spectators of the *Sacri Monti*. They first had to remember the depicted episodes and they then composed in their minds the places connected to these episodes using topo-mimesis, that is, by imaging that the *Sacro Monte* is Jerusalem. These first two preludes to meditation were induced by the spatial setting of the different chapels on the mountain.

Only after the three preludes set out by St. Ignatius one can start the real exercises. These are based on three levels of contemplation: seeing the persons, hearing what they are saying, and looking at what they are doing. The first level can be connected to the verisimilitude of the *Sacri Monti*, both in the paintings themselves and in the sculptures (in the *Sacro Monte* of Varese some figures were actually dressed with clothes donated by noble Milanese families).¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ '... tanto ben'affetti, e giovevoli anche al Sagro Monte', Sormani, 1739, op.cit., 125.

¹⁷⁹ Heinrich Pfeiffer S. J., 'Pozzo e la spiritualita' della Compagnia di Gesu', Alberta Battisti (ed.), *Andrea Pozzo*, Milan-Trento, 1996, 13-32, 14.

¹⁸⁰ Sormani reported that the powerful Archinti family from Milan donated the mantle of the Virgin Mary in the Annunciation chapel, Sormani, 1739, op. cit, 37.

Depicting each single figure as illusionistically as possible gave the viewers a point of easy identification, by the simple device of allowing one to discover aspects of everyday life. The main devices used were: real clothes for some statues, highly realistic paintings of clothes for the majority of the protagonists and also the inclusion of common objects and animals (usually dogs, figs. 32-33). In Castiglione's Genoa paintings we find very similar pictorial devices, for example the depiction of the table in *Abraham and Sarah* (fig. 9) and in *Emmaus* (fig. 7), and the horse in *Massah and Meribah* (fig. 10).

The second contemplation of St. Ignatius, hearing what the persons in the sacred episode are saying, may also be connected to the scene represented. In the *Sacri Monti*, as in Castiglione's Genoa works, conversation is mostly suggested via gesture. In Varese, for example, in the chapel showing *Christ amongst the Doctors*, the use of gesture carries such narrative weight (fig. 34), just as it does in Castiglione's *Abraham and Sarah*.

St. Ignatius's third contemplation, looking at what the protagonists of the episode are doing, is also suggested in Castiglione's Genoese works and in the *Sacri Monti* via similar devices. One is the rendering of volume in the depiction of every single figure arising from a carefully calculated relationship between modelling, painting and lighting. Another is the use of facial stereotypes to emphasize the differences between characters. This is visible, for example, in Castiglione's *Temptation of Christ* (fig. 6). I have already described how both Giulio Cesare Procaccini and Castiglione gave equal weight to modelling based on the use of light and on sharply defined design. *Sacri Monti* sculpture and light settings (in particular those of Varese) also fit with Castiglione's use of outline and composition.

The influence of these sculptures on Castiglione's painted figures is particularly evident in the angular and vigorous drawing employed to give an impression of three-dimensionality. The light illuminates the figures with a double aim: to give shape to the bodies and the objects, and to create a rhythmic sequence to guide the gaze of the spectator. In Varese, for the purpose of conveying light, the chapels were built in specific positions. This arrangement allows for daylight to be projected for the longest possible time onto the main scene or, in certain cases, for the manipulation of light-levels. For example, the chapel showing the *Prayer on the Mount of Olives* was built

with its opening facing north to diminish natural light. Thus, there is a clear connection between the darkness and the sorrowful mystery depicted. In 1739 Nicolò Sormani commented:

This Oratory is positioned with the south at the rear to exclude the light of the brightest part of the day in favour of a more melancholy light. In this way the light better depicts the dark fears and the doleful facts of the night before God's murder.¹⁸¹

Perhaps in response to such effects Castiglione also employed rays of light to illuminate his own religious scenes to underscore their narrative purposes. Especially in *Tobias* (fig. 11), *Emmaus* (fig. 7) and the *Temptation* (fig. 6) the rays of light most literally illuminate what is happening in the image by emphasising the tension between different personages.

Christ in *Emmaus* and in the *Temptation* is even characterised by a very bright lighting that actually makes the entire scene unbalanced. From this it would seem that, when working for the Genoese Jesuits, Castiglione sometimes felt that it was more important to underscore the holiness of certain individuals than to maintain a compositional equilibrium.

The second visual device used in the *Sacri Monti* to involve the spectator is the use of facial stereotypes. The chapels showing the *Flagellation* and the *Crowning with Thorns* at Varese show these features well. In fact, the faces of the statues convey unmistakable distinctions between good and bad characters. Christ's features are stylised and delicate while the faces of the soldiers are muscular and almost grotesque. Again Sormani helps to explain the aims behind this. He even hints at possible spectator responses to the *Flagellation* chapel (fig. 35):

Here the sculptor [Martino Rezi] conveyed a full image of fear in the figures of the squalid ghostly delinquents [who flagellated Jesus] with horrible and indecent moustaches. Often the most susceptible spectators leave because scared.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ 'Questo Oratorio volge le spalle a mezzodì, per escludere il giorno più chiaro, amando una luce malinconica, per così meglio colorire le nere paure, e gli accidenti funesti di quella notte previa al Deicidio', Sormani, 1739, op. cit., 48.

¹⁸² 'Quivi l'Artefice consunse tutta l'immagine dello spavento in quei luridi spetri de'Manigoldi, con mustacci così enormemente brutti, e sconci, che sovente gli spettatori più semplici fuggono di paura.', Ibid., 53.

Similar devices are used by Castiglione in *The Temptation of Christ*. In this painting Christ is depicted with a clean and almost child-like face while the Devil's face has deep lines and a big nose (fig. 36).

So, from looking at the work of famous Milanese masters and from visiting the *Sacri Monti*, Castiglione would have learnt certain technical fundamentals: most notably to pay attention to light and space. In addition, he might have understood how the rendering of plasticity and the description of details and natural elements were essential if one sought to construct a coherent and persuasive narrative image. These points must have been reinforced further when Castiglione considered the practices of contemporary Milanese masters. Amongst these, he must have numbered his own teacher.

4. The second and the third generation: Antonio Busca and Filippo Abbiati

Stefano Maria Legnani (1661-1713), Panfilo Nuvolone (1581-1651), Morazzone (1573-1626) and Antonio Busca (1625-1686) were all important Milanese painters active in the generations before Castiglione. They all had contributed to the *Sacri Monti* of Varese as figure painters.¹⁸³ Their works could also be seen in the city of Milan.

Amongst these, Antonio Busca best represents the connection between the *Sacri Monti* and the chief Milanese commissions of the second half of the seventeenth century. For this reason it is worth comparing Busca's work with Castiglione's Genoa images and with the *Sacro Monte* of Varese. An appropriate point of comparison is the *Raising of the cross* (fig. 37) made by Busca for the church of San Marco in Milan. The church of San Marco is close to the place where Castiglione's now-demolished parish church was originally situated and it still contains a striking collection of works by the most famous seventeenth-century painters of Milan. Castiglione may well have visited this church several times and when he was a painter's apprentice he may well have used it as a handily proximate visual source.¹⁸⁴

The *Raising of the cross* has certain characteristics in common with Castiglione's painting of *Massah and Meribah* (fig. 10). In both paintings there is a large space with a substantial number of figures positioned along a vertical axis. There are also more monumental figures, which serve to draw the spectator into the composition, in the lower foreground on either side of both paintings. These figures are characterised by bright and shining colours and they are illuminated by a strong light. The persons in the background are

¹⁸³ Morazzone worked in the Sacro Monte of Varese in 1609 (*Flagellation* chapel). Panfilo Nuvolone from 1650 to 1652 (*Visitation* chapel). Antonio Busca from 1668 to 1671 (*Crucifixion* chapel). Legnani from 1686 to 1713 (the *Road to the Calvary* and the *Assumption of Maria* chapel. As reported by Sormani, the painter died before finishing this last commission, *ibid.*, 68.

¹⁸⁴ Here is Scaramuccia's description of San Marco: 'Then they went in the main chapel where they looked at the two great paintings on the lateral walls: one by Cerano and the other by Camillo Procaccini. In the latter they see great harmony and force of colours, and in the other, perfect drawing. Of both the paintings they expressed the proper appreciations' (Si portarono d'indi nella Cappella Maggiore, ove dalle parti laterali viddero due gran Tele dipinte, una del Cerano, e l'altra di Camillo Procaccini, grand'armonia, e strepito de'colori mirarono in quella, e molto esatto Disegno osservarono in questa, onde all'una, ed'all'altra diedero le convenienti lodi', Scaramuccia, *op.cit.*, 136, 137.

painted in a vaguer manner and with duller colours of a limited tonal range. In Busca's painting, the composition fits very closely with the *Sacri Monti* chapels, where the statues are in the foreground and the mural paintings in the background. The differences of lighting and colouring between the foreground and the background give each depicted scene a strong sense of three-dimensionality. In Castiglione's painting this compositional device is not so marked, but *Massah and Meribah* still counts as a suggestion that there was a connection between Castiglione, the *Sacri Monti* and Busca. To summarise, then: by the later seventeenth century the dramatic visual staging exemplified by the *Sacri Monti* and the narrative devices used by famous Milanese painters like Camillo Procaccini and Cerano were all part of a well-established Lombard pictorial tradition. In turn, this tradition seems to have had considerable impact on the young Castiglione. At least, this is what is suggested by his Genoa paintings.

Carlo Francesco Nuvolone (1609-1662), who trained Busca, was also one of the masters of Filippo Abbiati, the painter whom I consider to be the most likely candidate for the role of Castiglione's master. Certainly, there are profound similarities between Abbiati's and Castiglione's manner. The main visual evidence for a connection between these two artists is Castiglione's *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig. 8). This painting clearly shows Castiglione's responses to a fairly recent pictorial trend within Milanese painting, consisting of dynamic brushwork, a light palette and more fluid outlines. Castiglione here uses very lively brushwork to animate the figure of the angel and to create an atmosphere of tension around Abraham (fig. 38). In giving the angel this type of lightness and an almost choreographic pose Castiglione seems to be quoting Abbiati. If one compares Abbiati's *Apparition of Teodolinda and St. Elizabeth* (fig. 39) in the cathedral of Monza one can see important affinities with Castiglione's painting, especially from the depiction of St. Elisabeth. The two painters employ very similar chiaroscuro and facial expressions and a subtle torsion of the upper body. A similar manner was used by another painter trained in Abbiati's workshop, Pietro Maggi (active between the seventeenth

and eighteenth century).¹⁸⁵ In Maggi's *Apparition of the Angel to St. Monica* (fig. 40) in San Marco in Milan, the depiction of the angel's face again has the chiaroscuro and the facial expression employed by Abbiati in his *Apparition of Teodolinda and St. Elizabeth* and also by Castiglione in *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (fig. 8). So the *Sacrifice of Isaac* fits with the new manner employed by Abbiati and his workshop, including Maggi, and at the same time it displays a compositional structure derived from early seventeenth-century Milanese works.

It should also be noted that, as described by Pellegrino Orlandi in 1733, Abbiati's workshop was very important. Several acclaimed painters were educated there during the period when Castiglione must have been an apprentice:

Filippo Abbiati from Milan, Nuvolone's disciple, was sure and competent in drawing, quick in creating and fast in executing. Because of this, he accomplished several tasks in oil and fresco paintings and he left a good patrimony to his sons. From his school emerged several skilful painters. He died in 1715, seventy-five years old.¹⁸⁶

So in Milan, at the end of the seventeenth century, Filippo Abbiati directed a workshop which was entrusted with various important commissions mostly issuing from ecclesiastical patrons.¹⁸⁷ These commissions mostly involved fresco decorations in churches or important narrative cycles on canvas. Such vast tasks were often assigned to different workshops or consortia of painters. The most important commissions received by Abbiati and his workshop were: the decorations of Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia (a Barnabite church) where he worked with Federico Bianchi (?- 1719) and other artists from 1683 to 1699; paintings in the Pavia churches of San Sebastiano, of the Carmine, the

¹⁸⁵ Roberto Cassanelli and Roberto Conti, *Il duomo di Monza, Itinerario barocco*, Milan, 1995, 162.

¹⁸⁶ 'Filippo Abbiati Milanese discepolo del Nuvolone, fu Pittore facile sicuro nel disegno, prontissimo nell'invenzione, e spedito nell'operare, quindi è, che a olio, ed a fresco terminò quantità di operazioni, e lasciò un buon patrimonio ai figli. Dalla sua scuola uscirono molti buoni pittori. Morì d'anni 75 nel 1715.', Orlandi, op. cit., 148.

¹⁸⁷ Evidence about Abbiati's workshop is scarce. Aside from the analysis of visual evidence in Milan, my other data come from Franco Renzo Pesenti, 'Per la pittura lombarda del 600-700: precisazioni su Filippo Abbiati', *Commentari*, XVII, 1996, 343-348; Giacinta Rossi, 'Notizie su Antonio Busca', *Arte Lombarda*, vol. IV/2, 1959, 314-322; Giovanni Nicodemi, 'La pittura lombarda dal 1630 al 1706', *Storia di Milano*, Milano, XI, 1958; Mina Gregori and Marco Rosci, *Il Seicento lombardo*, Varese, 1996.

Carthusian monastery and in the Cathedral, all made at the end of the seventeenth century; various commissions in the Milanese churches of San Sebastiano and San Nazaro al Broglio; and also paintings in Monza cathedral made between 1697 and 1704.¹⁸⁸

This wide range of commissions indicates the importance of Abbiati and his workshop. The workshop was often involved in various tasks undertaken simultaneously. This entailed a large number of helpers and also suggests a high level of demand from local patrons. In Milan, Abbiati also contributed two paintings to the cycle of the *Holy Sacrament* that belonged to the Cathedral.¹⁸⁹ Such cycles of paintings illustrating sacred episodes, local religious narratives and lives of saints were typical of the Milanese ecclesiastical environment in the early modern period.¹⁹⁰ So, for a painter of Abbiati's generation, this kind of commission was still an essential step to social and artistic fame.¹⁹¹

In the Milanese environment, Abbiati's workshop actually incorporated various artistic tendencies coming from other Italian regions.¹⁹² Moreover, Abbiati both participated in and propagated a set of new Milanese pictorial tendencies. In these, one might also find the origins of certain aspects of Castiglione's Genoese manner. The new tendencies are perhaps best

¹⁸⁸ For Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia see Andrea Spiriti, *Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia*, Milan, 1999; Sormani, giornata seconda, 79. Also, Filarete Lariense, *Cenni storici sopra l'insigne tempio di S. Alessandro e il suo illustre Collegio*, Milan, 1825. Data on Abbiati's commissions are in Nicodemi, op. cit., 510; and Pesenti, op. cit., 343. Evidence of the commission in St. Nazaro al Broglio comes from Nicolò Sormani, *De' Passeggi Storico-Topografico-Critici nella città, indi nella Diocesi di Milano, Ad erudizione, e a diporto della gioventù nobile, e massime ecclesiastica, coll'intreccio di varie dissertazioni tratte a compendio dà manoscritti*, Milano, 1751, giornata prima, 59. Maggi was with Giuseppe Rivola (?-1740) one of the painters trained in Abbiati's workshop.

¹⁸⁹ Abbiati painted two canvases: *St. Peter Unmasks a False Madonna* and *St. Antony Converts an Heretic*. These two are now in the Diocesan Museum in Milan, see figs. 41-42 of the present thesis.

¹⁹⁰ In the Milanese Cathedral there were three main cycles: *Episodes of the life of St. Charles*, *Stories of the Holy Cross and Nail* and the *Holy Sacrament*. See Amalia Barigozzi Brini, 'I quadroni del duomo di Monza', *Arte Lombarda*, n. XV, 1970, 91-98.

¹⁹¹ Another very important commission for Abbiati in terms of social visibility was the preparation of the *catafalco* for Charles II's funeral on January 10, 1701 in the church of San Fedele. See Marina Dell'Omo, 'Apparati funebri nella Milano del secondo Seicento. Le committenze, gli artisti, le tipologie', *Arte Lombarda*, vol. III/4, 1991, 54-62, 61.

¹⁹² Filippo Maria Ferro notes of Abbiati's travels in the seventh decade of seventeenth century, undertaken before he became famous and opened his workshop in Milan. Abbiati travelled to Venice, Naples and Genoa, Ferro, op. cit., 124. This type of artistic career starting with didactic travels reflects the model set out by Scaramuccia. Abbiati's travels were mostly sponsored by the Prince Vitaliano VI Borromeo (1620-1690), his first important patron. For the relation of Abbiati with the Borromeo family see Stefano Zuffi, 'I dipinti per i Borromeo nell'evoluzione stilistica di Filippo Abbiati', *Paragone*, n. 441, 1986, 72-82. 75. Also see Costantino Baroni, 'Filippo Abbiati maestro del Magnasco', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, vol. III, 1952, 209-202.

represented by Stefano Maria Legnani and Andrea Lanzani (1639-1712), both acclaimed and successful painters when Castiglione was an apprentice.¹⁹³

In fact, the seventeenth-century artistic literature indicates that both Legnani and Lanzani shared Abbiati's fame.¹⁹⁴ In the last decades of the seventeenth century, Abbiati, Legnani and Lanzani were considered by Carlo Torre, a local historian of Milan, to be the most representative masters of contemporary Milanese painting. Later commentators have argued that their style found its most obvious expression in commissions that involved working in other Italian regions, mostly in Veneto, Liguria and Emilia, and also within Europe as a whole, especially in Austria and France. For example, Lanzani and Legnani had their most important commissions outside Lombardy. Lanzani worked in Vienna in 1697 on the Belvedere Palace and Legnani worked in Turin; the latter's work had become part of a more international, French current at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁹⁵ This, in turn, suggests that Castiglione's commitment to the seventeenth-century canon of Milan did not mean that he was necessarily immune to external influences. On the contrary, the Milanese canon would have been a solid basis permitting him to engage with more recent artistic trends.

Another indication of a connection between Castiglione and Abbiati lies in their use of light. In altarpieces and also in smaller paintings Abbiati often uses strong rays of light to emphasise the movements of the figures. Castiglione deployed a similar device in *Tobias* (fig. 11) where a strong raking light falls from the left onto the two figures to convey an atmosphere of revelation. In two paintings by Abbiati, *St. Peter Unmasks a False Madonna* and *St. Anthony Converts Heretic* (figs. 41-42), the older Milanese painter used a similar light falling from the upper left corner to illuminate the main protagonists. In the Milanese tradition *chiaroscuro* is often employed, very appropriately, for specific epiphanic themes like miracles and apparitions. As suggested by Giacinta Rossi, Abbiati was probably also influenced by the theatrical lighting

¹⁹³ Lanzani had Scaramuccia as a teacher, Orlandi op. cit., 57. The fact that Scaramuccia trained the generation of Milanese painters before Castiglione underscores once more the importance of the *Le finzze dei pennelli italiani* as a crucial text for exploring the Milanese tradition.

¹⁹⁴ See Torre, op. cit., 156.

¹⁹⁵ Carlo Pirovano, *La pittura in Lombardia*, Milan, 1973, 154.

of the *Sacri Monti*.¹⁹⁶ Finally, changes in Abbiati's use of light follows the main shifts in his manner: moving from the strong chiaroscuro of Cerano to the smoother and freer illumination used by the end of the century. Castiglione's paintings show, to a lesser degree, the same development.

To recapitulate, then, the main elements of Castiglione's engagement with the Milanese canon: he used colouring and faceted drapery derived from Cerano whilst his use of a light, compositional manner and his attention to details seems to have come from a well-established Lombard tradition exemplified by the dramatic visual staging of the *Sacri Monti*, but also transmitted by Giulio Cesare Procaccini's prints and Busca's paintings. These main elements are developed by Castiglione in some of the Genoa images, where he is moving towards Abbiati's manner by using more dynamic brushwork and fluid outlines, yet, as a whole, the Genoa paintings still remain close to the Milanese canon of the first half of the seventeenth century.

¹⁹⁶ Rossi, op. cit., 314.

5. Exploring other hypotheses on Castiglione's artistic training and his skill in *quadratura*

Several scholars have tried to identify the environment in which Castiglione received his first artistic formation and also have suggested some possible names for Castiglione's master. For example the Beurdeleys claim: 'Born, no doubt, in an artisan environment, Giuseppe Castiglione was probably trained in Genoa in one of the city's workshops.'¹⁹⁷ More categorically, Elisabetta Corsi indicates two masters for Castiglione: Andrea Pozzo and Giovan Battista Gaulli (called Baciccio, 1639-1709).¹⁹⁸ Finally, in the description of Castiglione's scroll *Hundred Horses* on the Taipei National Museum web pages, it is affirmed that Castiglione was an apprentice of Carlo Cornara.¹⁹⁹ No actual evidence is offered to support any of these claims. Before exploring Castiglione's career further, I shall consider and reject them.

To my knowledge the only evidence documenting Castiglione's artistic training is in the *Memoria postuma* and in a letter written by the painter himself. As shown in this thesis, the *Memoria postuma* affirms that Castiglione studied with a famous master in Milan but it does not give a name. In a letter written in 1729, Castiglione praises the two volumes of Pozzo's *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* (first edition 1693) while asking for permission to publish a manual for young European painters.²⁰⁰ The letter is addressed to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini. In it Castiglione mentions 'our Brother Andrea Pozzo of happy memory' and states that 'I am not a deserving disciple of this Brother'.²⁰¹ This, however, is probably no more than a rhetorical device, used by Castiglione to emphasise his similarities with the famous Pozzo, a Brother Coadjutor and a painter like himself.

¹⁹⁷ Beurdeley and Beurdeley, op.cit., 91.

¹⁹⁸ Elisabetta Corsi, 'Late Baroque Painting in China prior to the Arrival of Matteo Ripa: Giovanni Gherardini and the Perspective Painting called Xianfa', Michele Fatica and Francesco D'Arelli (eds), *Matteo Ripa e il Collegio dei Cinesi*, Naples, 1999, 103-122, 112.

¹⁹⁹ 'As a youth Castiglione learned to paint from Carlo Cornara at the studio...', www.npm.gov.tw/en/e0401010507.htm, 15-03-06.

²⁰⁰ In this thesis I will use the double text edition (Latin/Italian) of Pozzo's *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*, two volumes published in Rome in 1741 and in 1758.

²⁰¹ '...il nostro Fretto Andrea Pozzo di felice memoria imprimi con credito della Compagnia e pubblica utilità i due tomi di prospettiva, non meno celebri che ammirabili, e ancor che io povero e inutile non arrivi ad essere degno discepolo di tal Fretto...', ARSI, Jap. Sin.184, 37r.-38v., 37v. For the entire letter see appendix E.

A number of chronological facts suggest that Castiglione could not have trained with Pozzo. Pozzo worked in Rome at the church of San Ignazio from 1686 to 1694. From 1694 to 1703 he was then involved in various commissions in Rome, Frascati and Montepulciano. After this Roman period Pozzo then moved to Vienna in 1703 where he died in August 1709.²⁰² At the end of the seventeenth century, when Castiglione was only twelve years old, he was most likely too young to work as a helper in the work on the *fabrica* of Sant' Ignazio in Rome and in Pozzo's tasks around Lazio. The only possibility is that Castiglione might have moved to Lazio between the age of six and eleven to follow Pozzo in his commissions. That seems to me improbable. Pozzo did not direct a workshop but he had helpers who followed him to his different places of work.²⁰³ Finally, if any professional relations between Pozzo and Castiglione existed, surely it would have been reported in the *Memoria postuma* since both had worked extensively for the Society of Jesus. In other words: if Castiglione was Pozzo's disciple why is there no evidence from Jesuit documents that celebrate this *virtuoso* transmission within the Order?

What is, however, very clearly evident is Castiglione's appreciation and emulation of Pozzo. But this emulation was probably undertaken by Castiglione in response to Pozzo's treatise, which was, after all, one of the most famous artistic manuals of the age.²⁰⁴ However, for the study of Castiglione's works, the two scenarios - the one of Castiglione simply considering himself Pozzo's follower, the other of Castiglione actually being one of Pozzo's pupils - would lead to two profoundly different technical and artistic results. The second scenario is particularly unlikely when one considers Castiglione's Genoa paintings. They suggest a training distant from Pozzo's oeuvre precisely because they fit so strongly with Milanese tendencies as they were at the end of the seventeenth century. Even if Castiglione's work may have pictorial elements derived from Pozzo, whose influence was very great on Lombard

²⁰² See the list of Pozzo's work in Battisti, op. cit., 465.

²⁰³ Pozzo's only attested apprentice in 1697 is the Roman Alberto Carlieri (1672-1720). This information comes from the *Giornale del libro mastro* B 1345, 99 ARSI. See Marina Carta, 'Le finte cupole', Vittorio de Feo and Vittorio Martinelli, op. cit., 54-65, 65, footnote 23. That Alberto Carlieri was disciple of Pozzo (after having studied under Gioseffo de' Marchis) is also affirmed by Orlandi, op. cit., 46.

²⁰⁴ See Marina Carta and Anna Menichella, 'Il successo editoriale del trattato', de Feo and Martinelli (eds), op. cit., 220-233.

painters, this does not necessarily demonstrate that Castiglione had received any foundational training from his fellow Jesuit.²⁰⁵ Castiglione's paintings in Genoa clearly fit with the basic information given in the *Memoria postuma*: he received his training in Milan. As well as disproving the view that Pozzo was his master, this also suggests that Castiglione could not have been apprenticed to the Roman Gaulli. Finally, there is nothing in the images of the noviciate refectory to suggest a further period of formal training in Genoa.²⁰⁶

In addition, it is not clear that Castiglione came from an artisanal background. In early modern Milan, artisanal enterprises usually remained strongly within the family circle. This means that sons were usually trained from an early age in their fathers' workshops without the option of trying different professional paths. Both the males of Castiglione's family, Giuseppe and the younger Giovan Battista, entered religious orders.²⁰⁷ Only a tragic series of family events would have led to an artisanal workshop being deserted by the two only sons. Yet Castiglione entered the noviciate in Genoa when he was seventeen years old as a fully formed painter. Therefore, Castiglione's first years, as described in the *Memoria postuma*, suggests a wealthier rather than straightforwardly artisanal family situation: he was first educated at home and then trained in a famous painter's workshop. Such training would have represented not an inconsiderable financial commitment on behalf of his family.²⁰⁸ Finally, the claim that Carlo Cornara was Castiglione's teacher cannot be sustained. For Cornara died in 1673, fifteen years before Castiglione's birth. In addition, there is no evidence that he ran an actual

²⁰⁵ In Pozzo's paintings, the main elements that mark a difference with Castiglione's manner are the simplification of both the drawing and the rendering of volumes. See Mina Gregori, 'Giuseppe Antonio Petrini e la ripresa del naturalismo seicentesco come istanza antibarocca', in Gianni Carlo Sciolla and Valerio Terraroli (eds), *Artisti lombardi e centri di produzione italiani nel Settecento*, Pavia, 1995, 39-43, 39.

²⁰⁶ No evidence for these statements is given from Corsi and the Beurdeleys.

²⁰⁷ Giovan Battista born in 1690 entered the Order of St. Camillo in Rome in 1709. See *Catalogus Religiosorum 1501-2000*, vol. IV, Archivio Generale dei Ministri degli Infermi, unpagined, listed in alphabetical order.

²⁰⁸ For example, Vittorio Caprara reports the case of Rocco, Filippo Abbiati's father, who was indebted by paying for his son's painting apprenticeship. See Vittorio Caprara 'Opere di pittori lombardi in Canton Ticino; scambi culturali tra la Lombardia e l'estero', Sciolla and Terraroli (eds), *op. cit.*, 108-115, 114.

painter's workshop; only his daughter Elisabetta continued his painting activities.²⁰⁹

Later in this thesis it will be demonstrated that Castiglione was a competent *quadraturismo* painter. Thus it is likely that, in his early years, he received some form of training in this particular branch of painting. Certainly, the environment in which Castiglione served his apprenticeship offers further visual evidence to substantiate the argument that he was trained for commissions requiring *quadratura* or illusionistically painted architecture.²¹⁰ This type of painting was always done in specific spaces such as the walls and ceilings of churches and private buildings. It could be a wall painting, executed either in fresco, *mezzo fresco* or *a secco*, or a set of specially shaped canvases made to cover either part of or the whole space. It thus combined diverse elements: actual architectural features, plaster work and paintings.²¹¹

Amongst many compelling Milanese examples one of the best is the commission for S. Alessandro in Zebedia in Milan, where Abbiati worked with a group of figure and *quadrature* painters. In fact, the major commissions received by Abbiati's workshop were related not only to figure paintings but also to perspectival wall decorations.²¹² The Corpus Domini chapel in Monza exemplifies this tradition well by showing how illusionistic architecture reached an advanced technical level in the Lombard environment (fig. 43). In the chapel in Monza the fresco mimics architectural materials such as marble, stone and plaster. This helps to create an illusion of space by the seemingly three-dimensional rendition of decorations on curved surfaces.

The organization of the various tasks needed to complete the work inside Sant' Alessandro in Zebedia would have required a number of different painters. For this reason, it is a good example of how *quadratura* was usually employed in Lombardy. In this case Abbiati worked as a figure painter and the

²⁰⁹ The main biographical source for Carlo Cornara (born in 1605) is the *Abecedario pittorico* by Pellegrino Orlandi, see Orlandi op. cit., 102-103. An earlier mention of Cornara, but without any information about his death, can be found in Torre, op. cit., 89.

²¹⁰ *Quadraturismo* has its origins in the expression '*far di quadro*' used by Italian architects from sixteenth century onwards. It originally covered all the tasks that required measuring tools like the calliper (to establish proportions) and the square (to calculate the height of right angles). See Elena Filippi, *L'arte della prospettiva. L'opera e l'insegnamento di Andrea Pozzo e Ferdinando Galli Bibiena*, Città di Castello, 2002, introduction, xxvi.

²¹¹ See Andreina Griseri, 'I Galliari e l'unità delle arti nel Settecento europeo', Sciolla and Terraroli (eds), op. cit., 13-17.

²¹² On Abbiati's decorative paintings in the Duchy of Milan see Nicodemi, op. cit., 509.

two brothers Grandi, Giovanni Battista (1643-1718) and Gerolamo (1658-1718), had to construct the *quadratura* around his and other painters' figures.²¹³ Assistants within important workshops, like the one headed by Abbiati, were thus trained to cater various types of commissions by working both as figure painters and in *quadratura*. So it becomes even more plausible that Castiglione was trained within this environment. This is supported by the interesting details that Licia Carubelli offers about the visual training of the Grandi brothers. As apprentices of *quadraturismo* they were educated in the making of illusionistic paintings through viewing the chapels of the *Sacro Monte* in Varese.²¹⁴ This is further circumstantial evidence to support the point that the *Sacro Monte* was important for Castiglione's first training.

Now, the use of *quadraturismo* in Lombardy in the early modern period was not characterised by extraordinary commissions like Pozzo's for Sant' Ignazio in Rome. This difference may represent a problem when considering Castiglione's training. Yet large-scale commissions were not the only way to acquire knowledge of illusionistic painting techniques. A more limited task, like Sant' Alessandro or the Corpus Domini chapel in Monza, might be sufficient for learning the basics of *quadratura*.²¹⁵ This is probably what happened to Castiglione. Then, from these first steps, he might have improved his abilities by studying manuals like Pozzo's *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*.

There is also another important issue regarding commissions that required both figure painters and *quadraturisti*. This is about developing the professional skills necessary for working in a team of painters. Andrea Spiriti has demonstrated how this worked in practice in early modern Milan. For commissions that required teams of painters, this could involve up to five different types: painters for *quadrature*, painters for figures, coordinators, 'guest stars' (that is, famous masters who would work only on a limited portion of the commission for a limited time), and sometimes also painters who helped to

²¹³ Licia Carubelli, 'Per il quadraturismo Lombardo fra barocco e barocchetto: i fratelli Grandi', *Arte Lombarda*, n. 50, 1978, 104-115, 110.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

²¹⁵ An equally valuable experience in illusionistic painting techniques might have been a commission for ephemeral architecture. For example, in January 1701 Abbiati and his workshop made the catafalque for the obsequies of Charles II of Spain, reigning Duke of Milan, in San Fedele, the main Jesuit church. See Dell'Omo, *op. cit.*, 61.

finish the whole.²¹⁶ This challenges the idea that painters are necessarily restricted when forced to work in a team. Also, this means that one has to reassess the works that Castiglione made together with other court painters at the Beijing court. The successful completion of collaborative efforts, measurable by imperial approval, simply meant that Castiglione continued to deploy basic professional abilities learnt as a young man in Milan. For example, as noted by Pirazzoli, in Beijing Castiglione not only participated in collaborative commissions but also, after 1740, due to the increasing number of tasks, he did not paint without the help of assistants.²¹⁷

To conclude my exploration of Castiglione's training within the cultural space represented by the city of Milan, I shall now describe certain habits of thought and perception that Castiglione might have used to bridge the gap between his initial training and his adult career. This process was not linear. Certainly, Castiglione's departure for China sent him off on a new trajectory.

However, in Milan images from China were already before Castiglione's eyes, eyes professionally trained to examine, remember and use images in order to make pictures. For this reason, in the next chapter, I will explore the frameworks Castiglione might have used to link his knowledge of painting to broader European views on China.

²¹⁶ Andrea Spiriti, 'Impegno finanziario e scelte strategiche. Costo e valore dell'arte nella Milano di secondo Seicento', *Quaderni storici*, n.116, fasc. 2, 2004, 403-421, 411.

²¹⁷ See the catalogue entry n. 26 by Michele Pirazzoli, Evelyn Rawski and Jessica Rawson, China; *The Three Emperors 1662-1795*, London, 2005, 393.

6. Chinese portraits in a Jesuit book: Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli

By the end of the seventeenth century, most educated Europeans would have some sense of what China was. For, from the end of the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century, a conspicuous number of books on China were published with or without illustrations. This corpus of texts and images served the aims of traders, missionaries and kings by creating a frame of reference adaptable to any context (commercial, religious, political, intellectual). In Europe, the circulation of information about China was not confined within the borders of single states. Gazettes, journals, atlases and various kinds of luxury books were translated and, emanating mostly from the Low Countries, reached Italy, England and Germany. Texts on the Chinese rites controversy were published in Italy and France in opposition to or in favour of the Jesuit missionary enterprise. Scientific and philosophical correspondences about China were a recurrent feature of European intellectual elites and academies.²¹⁸

In Milan Castiglione could have consulted books with images of the Chinese world. For example, in 1700, when Castiglione was twelve years old, one such text was published in Milan by the Jesuit Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli under the title *Vite, e virtù di D. Paolo Siu colao della Cina e di D. Candida Hiu gran dama cinese*.

This propaganda book is a celebration of the life of Xu Guangqi (1562-1633) and his granddaughter Xu Gandida (1607-1680) who converted to Catholicism and took the names of Paolo (1604) and Candida.²¹⁹ Xu Guangqi was a Ming official and one of the most celebrated Chinese converts in the history of the Jesuit Order, and Candida Xu became an important patroness of

²¹⁸ One of the most important examples of this is the epistolary relation between Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and the Jesuits at the Beijing court. Amongst them were Claudio Grimaldi (1638-1712) and Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730). The products of this dialogue may be found especially in Leibniz's *Novissima Sinica* (Paris, 1697). See Henry Rosemont and Daniel J. Cook (eds), *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz: Discourse on the natural theology of the Chinese*, Honolulu, 1977, 8-9.

²¹⁹ Biographical information about Xu Guangqi and Candida Xu is in Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, Washington, 1943, 316-319; Albert Chan, *Chinese Books and Documents in the Jesuit Archives in Rome*, New York and London, 2002, 140-142. A book on Candida Xu, *Histoire d'une dame chrétienne de la Chine, ou, Par occasion les usages de ces peuples, l'établissement de la religion, les manieres des missionnaires, & les exercices de piété des nouveaux chrétiens sont expliquez* was published in Paris in 1688 by the Jesuit missionary Philippe Couplet (1623-1692). Unfortunately, I have not the chance to study this work.

the Jesuit mission in Jiangnan.²²⁰ Xu Guangqi knew Matteo Ricci, Lazzaro Cattaneo (1560-1640) and Francesco Sambiasi (1582-1649), the first missionaries who established relations with the Ming emperors. Apart from his conversion, as noted in the first part, Xu Guangqi's fame comes principally from his translations of European books on Geometry.²²¹ The most important of these was made in collaboration with Ricci; it was of an adaptation of Clavio's version of Euclid's *Elements* (1574) *Jihe Yuanben (Elements of Geometry)*, published in Beijing in 1607. This was then followed by *Gouguyi (Explanations of the Triangle, Beijing, 1607)* and *Celiang Fayi (Theory and Methods of Measures, Beijing, 1617)*. It is worth emphasizing that these Jesuit publications, generated from collaborations with the first Chinese converts of official rank, took place already under the Ming dynasty. Rosignoli's book demonstrates that, one whole century later, these episodes were still used in Europe to promote the Jesuit mission in China. Even so, far from being a mere book of propaganda, *Vite, e virtù di D. Paolo Siu colao della Cina e di D. Candida Hiu gran dama cinese* is an excellent example of the combination of the visual and textual elements that were often a means of circulating knowledge about China in early modern Europe. For the book is illustrated with two engravings portraying Candida Xu (fig. 44) and Xiu Guangqi (fig. 45).

The book was made for a large and popular audience, as indicated by the small pocket format and the use of the Italian language. Its purpose was to celebrate Chinese conversions to Catholicism but most of all to provide a solid argument against growing criticism, instigated by the question of rites, of Jesuit missionary strategies.²²² The Jesuit Order normally directed its self-promotion

²²⁰ *Colao* in the title of the book indicates 'prince of the imperial house' but Xu Guangqi was a Scholar and an Official. During his life he was appointed to various positions. The most important of these was probably the 'President of the Board of Ceremonies' in 1630. Because of this he was involved with the Jesuits in calendrical studies and in the construction of astronomical instruments.

²²¹ See Jean-Claude Martzloff, 'La compréhension chinoise des méthodes démonstratives euclidiennes au cours du XVII^e siècle et au début du XVIII^e', *Les rapports entre la Chine et l'Europe au temps des Lumières*, Actes du II colloque international de Sinology de Chantilly, 1977, Paris, 1980, 125-143.

²²² Discussion on the Chinese rites had already started long before the condemnation on 20 November 1704 issued by Clement XI (1649-1721, regnant 1700 to 1721). The Roman church started to enquire into the position of the Jesuits in China after the prohibition of the Chinese rites that had been issued by Charles Maigrot (1652-1730, the Apostolic vicar of Fujien) in 1693 (under Pope Innocent XII). The whole issue took its origins in Kangxi's edict of toleration of 1692, in which he provided a legislative framework for the preaching of Christianity in China.

and self-defence to all parts of European society, including the Latinate intellectual environment of the Academies and the broader audience of those only literated in the vernacular.

The image that depicts Xiu Guangqi was in fact not made for Rosignoli's book. Instead, it was copied from a book by the Jesuit Louis Le Comte, *Nouveaux memoires sur l'etat present de la Chine par le P. Louis Le Comte de la Compagnie de Jesus, Mathématicien du Roy*, published in Paris in 1697.²²³ The prints that illustrate Le Comte's book are by Gerard Edelink (1640-1707), who was one of the most important French print-makers of the age.²²⁴ In this book, the picture eventually used for the portrait of Xu Guangqi served as a type of descriptive geography conveying information about and also evaluating Chinese customs and society in general. In particular, Le Comte focuses on the nobility and on the configuration of the bureaucratic structure by describing the various Imperial ranks. The engraving later used by Rosignoli is here merely generic, being one of 'a Chinese mandarin in ceremonial clothes' (fig. 46).²²⁵ It appears amongst portraits that cover the basic hierarchy within the imperial household: a Chinese scholar, a Chinese soldier, a Chinese Colonel, a Chinese lady in casual dress.²²⁶ The fact that Rosignoli used engravings from this French Jesuit book was not unusual. There was a common practice of exchanging and copying images across early modern Europe. Undoubtedly, this was because the recycling of images was one useful way of keeping down the costs of publication. But, even so, it is worth analysing how such images were presented

See Ludwig Von Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the close of the middle ages*, first edition: Freiburg, 1886-1932; London, 1957, Ernest Graf (ed.), 40 vols., vol. XI, 393-490.

²²³ Louis Le Comte was in the first French mission sent to China under the patronage of Louis XIV. This mission led to a new era in the field of scientific exchange between Europe and China. The most important missionaries who came with le Comte were Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730), Jean-François Gerbillon (1654-1707), Claude de Visdelou (1656-1737) and Jean de Fontaney (1643-1710). They were all trained in mathematics and, once in China, they corresponded with the Académie royale des sciences. Gerbillon and Bouvet became Kangxi's teachers. Bouvet also collaborated with Castiglione and he wrote *Portrait historique de l'Empereur de la Chine présenté au Roy*, Paris, 1697. For the relationship between Kangxi, Gerbillon and Bouvet see Catherine Jami, 'Imperial control and Western learning: the Kangxi emperor's performance', *Late Imperial China*, vol. XXIII, n.1, 2002, 28-49.

²²⁴ Although the engraving used for Candida Xiu does not appear in Le Comte's 1697 edition, the image is certainly in the style of Edelink. For Edelink see Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexicon der bildenden Kunstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1914, 37 vols., vol. X, 337.

²²⁵ 'Mandarin Chinois en habit de ceremonie', Le Comte, op. cit., vol. I, 214.

²²⁶ 'Escolier Chinois, Soldat Chinois, Colonel Chinois, Dame Chinois en disabille', ibid. 214-215.

in different publications such as Rosignoli's book and the French *Nouveaux memoires sur l'etat present de la Chine*.

Here it is important to note that Jesuit descriptions of China typically paid great attention to the Chinese imperial hierarchy and nobility. The Jesuits were keen to present the Qing dynasty as an entity based on political and moral virtues comprehensible to Europeans and thus showing that the dynasty was fully entitled to govern China. Yet the Jesuit eulogising of the Qing emperors also served to promote the few Europeans working at the Beijing court, people like Castiglione. This helped to justify European involvement in projects under Qing patronage because it presented them as working in a morally grounded system even if they were not actually involved in any missionary activities.

The images serving as Xu Guangqi's and Candida Xu's portraits in Rosignoli's book follow some features typical of Chinese ancestor portraits. The male sitter is in a frontal pose wearing formal Qing clothing and is seated on a chair covered with a tiger skin. The Qing garments are a *bufu* (surcoat) with a *buzi* (rank badge) that in this case may be a crane, designating the first civil rank, or an egret, indicating the sixth civil rank. In addition both Candida and Xu Guangqi wear formal winter hats even if Candida's is rather more like a real Manchu hat. On the other hand, the depiction of Candida is less accurate in the clothes but she sits in the same manner, looking directly forward. Also, she holds a rosary to indicate her conversion. This type of depiction suggests that whoever supplied Edelinck with the designs for these prints worked from an ancestor scroll possibly brought by the Jesuits to Paris. Or it may be that he or she had followed directions issued by someone like Le Comte, who most likely had seen ancestor portraits in Beijing.

In general, the printed images of Xu Guangqi and Candida Xu contain a number of conventional Chinese elements combined with certain European features and, as such, they should be understood as connected to a number of contexts. One of these is that of the Milanese Jesuit environment, which, in support of the Chinese mission, would circulate putative portraits of important Chinese converts. The other one was that of the Parisian Jesuits, who wished to celebrate their knowledge of the Qing imperial hierarchy and their closeness to the Qing emperor. The final context consists of Chinese pictorial conventions pertaining to ancestor portraits.

The engravings used in Rosignoli's and Le Comte's books were highly adaptable. This is not strictly related to the epistemological frame of owning - buying, viewing, touching, copying and even destroying - an object in a particular space. Rather, it is related to the multiple potential viewpoints and interpretations best embodied by emblematic imagery. For, the engravings used by Le Comte and Rosignoli may be interpreted in a number of ways. Xu Guangqi is, at the same time, a mandarin, a noble, a Qing official, a Ming official, an important Chinese convert, not actually Xu Guangqi as an individual but rather a generic image of a high-ranking Chinese official.

All these different interpretations revolve around recognized forms of political and cultural supremacy. Moreover, this open-ended model of viewing and interpreting offered individuals like Castiglione an opportunity to link the prints in Rosignoli's book with a number of contexts, such as the Catholic environment of Milan, but also with certain geographical and artistic interests. In addition, not far from his family home, Castiglione could inspect objects that provided a further context for the images from China that he may have seen in books like Rosignoli's. This was the collection of Manfredo Settala.

7. The Settala collection

In Milan, the young Castiglione would have had access to Chinese objects in the Settala Museum, the famous public *wunderkammer*. Manfredo Settala (born 1600) was a Milanese nobleman, an indefatigable collector, a scientist and a connoisseur of Chinese writing.²²⁷ When he died in 1680, his *wunderkammer* passed to his brother Carlo, then to his nephew and finally it was donated to the Ambrosiana which later, unfortunately, partly dispersed it.²²⁸ Settala's collection contained paintings by the most famous Milanese masters, including Cerano, Daniele Crespi and Camillo Procaccini. There were also stones and gems, oils and balms, herbaria, musical instruments and different kinds of machines and automatons, optical instruments, mathematical tools, books, coins and medals, porcelain, glass, shells, different types of animals, parts of animals like horns, wooden objects and weapons.²²⁹ Apart from the European paintings and the library attached to the collection, all the objects listed so far may be divided into the three main areas in which Settala was active as a researcher and an inventor: technology, ethnography and the natural world.

In this chapter, I shall focus my attention simply on the display of the few objects that Settala had from Asia. These may well have been seen, considered and remembered by the young Castiglione.

Fortunately, Settala's collection is recorded in no less than three catalogues and a partially dispersed illustrated inventory. Thus I will use these sources to compensate for the lack of the actual objects. The first catalogue was published in Latin in 1644 by Paolo Maria Terzago. The second and the third catalogues are translations of Terzago's first catalogue with some additions,

²²⁷ Gino Fogolari, 'Il Museo Settala. Contributo per la storia della coltura in Milano nel secolo XVII', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, vol. XIV, 1900, 58-126. The Settala collection was described in almost all Milan city guides published in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For example see Sormani, *op.cit.*, 59. Manfredo's father, Ludovico Settala, who started the collection, was a famous physician (he died in 1633).

²²⁸ The donation to the Ambrosiana was made right after Manfredo's death but legal issues raised by members of the family stopped the process until the mid-eighteenth century. At present, the objects from Settala's *wunderkammer* owned by the Ambrosiana are still in store, awaiting an increasingly uncertain future.

²²⁹ The objects collected in Settala's *wunderkammer* are listed in the catalogues quoted in the following footnote.

published in 1666 and in 1677 by Pietro Francesco Scarabelli.²³⁰ In addition, Settala himself commissioned an inventory with coloured drawings; these were probably executed between 1640 and 1660 by a group or consortium of painters.²³¹ The five surviving volumes of the original inventory, which may have consisted of more, are at present divided between the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan and the Biblioteca Estense in Modena.²³²

The popularity of Settala's collection and the fact that it was on public display may be demonstrated by reference to Agostino and Giacinto Santagostino's mentioned book, where it is affirmed that the keepers of the Settala collection 'cordially received foreigners and citizens that come every day to admire the various rarities of many precious, natural and artificial objects...'²³³

The two Italian versions of Scarabelli's catalogue are further proof of the popularity of the collection. In addition, the collection was on display only a few steps away from San Marcellino, the parish church of Castiglione's family. This, together with the fame of Settala's museum, suggests that Castiglione is likely to have visited the collection several times during his childhood and youth. Also, it is not unimportant that, starting from the half of the seventeenth century, several guides were published to celebrate the display of art in Milan

²³⁰ Pauli Marie Terzagi, *Musaeum Septalianum Manfredi Septalae Patritii Mediolanensis Industriosi Labore Constructum. Pauli Mariae Terzagi mediolanensis physici collegiati geniali laconismo descriptum. Politioris literaturae professoribus erudita humanitate adaptum: cum Logocentronibus, sive Centonibus eiusdem Terzagi de natura Crystalli, Corallij, Testacerum montanorum, & Lapidificatorum, Achatis, Succini, Ambari, & Magnetis*, Dertonae, 1664. Pietro Francesco Scarabelli, *Museo ò Galeria Adunata dal sapere, e dallo studio del Sig. Canonico Manfredo Settala nobile milanese. Descritta in Latino dal Sig. Dott. Fis. Coll. Paoli Maria Terzago. Et hora in Italiano dal Sig. Pietro Francesco Scarabelli Dott. Fis. di Voghera e dal medesimo accresciuta*, Tortona, 1666.

²³¹ The majority of drawings are signed with the following names: Carolo Galluzio, Francesco Porro, Domenico Tencala, Giovanni Battista and Francesco Volpino, Alfonso Costa, Carolo 'a Sole'. Others come with a signature monogram only, others are unsigned.

²³² Biblioteca Ambrosiana: *Codice Settala*, Codici Ambrosiani Z 387–388–389 sup., the drawings are on display on the web page http://www.ambrosiana.it/ita/settala_principale.asp, 10-2-2006. Biblioteca Estense: *Disegni originali che sono descritti nell'Opera scritta in latino dal Dott. Fis. Collegiato Paolo Maria Terzago, tradotta in Italiano con un aumento dal Dott. Fis. Pietro Francesco Scarabelli stampata in Voghera nel 1666 in un Volume in 4 to. da Eliseo Viola*, Raccolta Campori, 338 γ H. 1. 22, 339 γ H. 1. 22.

²³³ '...sono ricevuti con ogni cortesia i Forestieri, e Cittadini che ogni giorno in molto numero vanno per ammirar in essa le varie rarità di tante cose preziose, naturali, ed artificiali,...', Agostino and Giacinto Santagostino, op. cit., 108. Settala's museum is also described in other guides of Milan, for example in Torre, op. cit., 36.

and the beauty of the city.²³⁴ Such celebratory descriptions reinforced civic pride at every level of Milanese society. So, when Milanese citizens visited Settala's collection, it was not only a matter of curiosity but also an act of civic pride and participation.²³⁵

Settala had two main sources from which he received objects and information. The first was the Jesuit Order, with which the Milanese nobleman had firm connections. For example, he personally met Jesuits who had just returned from missions around the world.²³⁶ The collection catalogues also demonstrate that, when Settala received objects from Asia, he seems to have used reports and descriptions by Jesuit missionaries to develop some notion of the original function and context of the objects. The strong link between Settala and the Jesuit Order is also proven by the commemorations that the Jesuit Academy of Brera organized to honour the Milanese nobleman immediately after his death in 1680.²³⁷ The second way that Settala developed his collection was through his various acquaintances amongst the scientific community in Florence and his contact first with Grand-Duke Ferdinando II of Tuscany, and later with Cosimo III, both of whom regularly sent gifts to him.²³⁸ From these sources Settala certainly received different types of object. Yet, more importantly, his collections were developed as part of a kind of dialogue focused on natural history, science and technology.²³⁹ In his catalogue of the collection Scarabelli summed it up as follows:

It is in the Settala museum, that the majesty of nature and the wonder of art of the whole *theatrum mundi* have been given their best place, in

²³⁴ The most important of these are: Torre, op. cit.; Serviliano Latuada, *Descrizione di Milano - ornata con molti disegni in rame delle fabbriche più cospicue che si trovano in questa metropoli*, Milan, 1737; Sant'Agostino, op. cit.; Sormani, 1751, op. cit.

²³⁵ It should also be noted that Settala worked with the support of one of the most important inhabitants of early seventeenth-century Milan, Archbishop Federico Borromeo. See Marco Rossi and Alessandro Rovetta, *La Pinacoteca Ambrosiana*, Milan, 1997, 15.

²³⁶ The Jesuit Father Marin from the mission of Tonchin gave porcelain to Settala, Scarabelli, op.cit., 135. See also Fogolari, op.cit., 59.

²³⁷ Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1994, 331.

²³⁸ Ibid, 390.

²³⁹ Settala was researching how to make porcelain and probably, like other Europeans on the same quest, he was trying to make lacquer by copying Chinese and Japanese varnishes. For Settala's interest in porcelain see Fogolari, op.cit., 111-112. Paula Findlen also affirms that, in Milan, Settala met Walthar von Tschirnhaus, one of the pioneers of porcelain production, op. cit., 327. On Settala and 'Chinese' varnish see Vincenzo Gheroldi, *Le vernici al principio del Settecento*, Cremona, 1995, 52. The author underlines the importance of Jesuit reports from Asia for varnish experiments in Europe.

relation to their relative values, and the most appropriate niches have been found for their statues.²⁴⁰

This passage from a fellow Milanese, Scarabelli, demonstrates the importance of Settala's museum at the end of the seventeenth century. It also shows how the concept of the *theatrum mundi* was applied to that collection. Scarabelli affirms that the museum is important because it represents both nature and art the two essential components of the *theatrum mundi*. Art in this case also comprehends all kinds of objects made by means of technological skill and knowledge.

Thus Settala's collection, like other European *wunderkammer*, was more than just a cabinet of curiosities. It was a microcosm of the entire world where the visitor might learn about its physical features, such as scale and size, different types of material, etc. From this point of view, Settala's *wunderkammer* was not so much a place where 'every object was replete with hidden meanings, designed more to surprise than to inform', as Paula Findlen claims.²⁴¹ More persuasively, Barbara Maria Stafford has argued that it involved 'putting distant things in contact with one another in order to make connections'.²⁴²

In Castiglione's age this 'making of connections' was profoundly influenced both by travel reports that, by now, were read all over Europe and also by established taxonomical practices for collecting, ordering, studying and displaying objects. These two traditions had already begun to shape collecting and display practices in various European countries at the beginning of the seventeenth century.²⁴³ By the end of the century they were firmly embedded in the city of Milan through Settala's collection. Thus they are likely to have shaped the mindset of the young Castiglione.

Now, there were only a few Chinese objects in Settala's collection, as listed in Scarabelli's catalogue. Here, they are described to evoke specific

²⁴⁰ 'La maestà della natura, e la meraviglia dell'Arte nel Teatro del Mondo non seppero trovar luogo più proportionato al proprio merito, ne nicchie più degne delle loro statue, che nel museo Settaliano', Scarabelli, op. cit., 1.

²⁴¹ Findlen, op. cit., 34.

²⁴² Barbara Maria Stafford, 'Revealing Technologies/Magical Domains', Barbara Maria Stafford and Frances Terpak (eds), *Devices of Wonder: From the world in a box to images on a screen*, Los Angeles, 2001, 1-142, 6.

²⁴³ For a new approach to seventeenth-century collecting practices in relation to scientific taxonomics see David Freedberg, *The Eye of the Lynx: Galileo his friends, and the beginning of modern natural history*, Chicago and London, 2002.

geographical and cultural contexts. For example, when discussing a Chinese ink pot, Scarabelli affirms that this object was probably made in the Nanjing Province:

A Chinese inkpot, with a painted image of a beautiful vast countryside in which the eye can wander. There are Chinese characters painted on it, perhaps indicating the Province of Nanjin where they are supposed to be made. It contains a big cake of ink. At one side there is a hole for holding water used to dilute the ink. They water their brushes in it before writing down the characters. They do not use an iron stylus as the other Indians do or pens as we Europeans do.²⁴⁴

This passage divulges a great deal about how one should understand Chinese objects in the context of Settala's display. Firstly, the inkpot is not described as coming from the Orient or a similarly indeterminate place. Instead, the author of the catalogue claims that it was probably made in the Nanjing Province. So, in the early modern period, after reading the catalogue or viewing the inkpot displayed in the collection, a visitor with a good library at home might then go on to check the geographical position of Nanjing by using an atlas or a map of China. By the late seventeenth century, these were available all over Europe. One could get a well-developed sense of where the inkpot came from.

Secondly, Scarabelli describes the use of the inkpot and its decoration, a landscape. For him, the inkpot is an object related to both texts and images. It is the means by which one may produce calligraphy and paintings. In Settala's collection, by looking at the inkpot and the ink (fig. 47), Castiglione might have considered and stored in his mind both the unusual landscape on the pot and also the catalogue's description of unusual techniques for painting and writing.²⁴⁵ Later, in Beijing, this memory might then have been helpful in his

²⁴⁴ 'Calamaio Chinese, in cui la spatiosità di un vaghissimo paese dipintavi rende l'occhio di chi il rimira, più che mai vagabondo; Vi si leggono caratteri Chinese forse esperimenti quella Provincia di Nanquin, ove si crede sia stato lavorato; contiene un gran pezzo d'inchiostro, scorgendovisi da un lato una cavità per riporvi acqua da stemprarli, entro di cui bagnandosi un penello simile a quello dé pittori usano quei Popoli di formare i loro caratteri, non iscrivendo questi, come gli altri Indiani con alcun stilo di ferro, ò con altra penna, come noi Europei', Scarabelli, op. cit., 137.

²⁴⁵ The illustration of the ink cakes presented here comes from the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, see *Codice Settala* op. cit., n. 93. The three pieces of Chinese ink are depicted together with a Persian inkpot. Museo Settala, Z 388, 32 r. The description of the illustration reads: 'Inkpot made in Persia showing Persian and Arab letters. Three pieces of Chinese ink' ('Calamaro fatto in Persia con lettere Persiane e arabe. Tre Pezzi d'inchiostro Chinese').

new professional environment. It could be used as one comfortably familiar point of reference for engaging with new types of imagery and new painterly techniques. However, what is important here is the fact that, through Settala's cabinet, the young Milanese artist was able to view and, in his mind, draw connections between various types of object associated with Chinese techniques of writing and image-making.

This point may be explored further through the part of the catalogue that describes different objects associated with Chinese calligraphy. These are in the section on 'foreign books and papers, made of leaves and tree pulp'.²⁴⁶ It is worth noticing that this title refers to paper and to the materials from which it is made. This shows that the collection was based on a process of cross-referencing available information to facilitate individual perception of any given object. This cross-referencing had its basis in a shared knowledge that, in turn, had its origins in visual and tactile perception. Thus, starting from the very idea of paper, visitors to the collection could go on looking at the following Chinese objects:

A large lifesize sheet of paper also called *Grandeosa* [magnificent]. On it, one sees a painted child surrounded by Chinese characters. The background is black and the characters are white: the Chinese characters are so intertwined that they become decorative. This is a curiosity that everyone would consider worth seeing and admiring.²⁴⁷

In the same section there is also listed a 'geographical book made of very thin silk and written with extremely perfect Chinese characters'.²⁴⁸ These two objects, the first presumably a negative print or rubbing and the other a geographical text of some kind, are followed by a passage on the Chinese language from Daniello Bartoli's *Historia*.²⁴⁹ Unfortunately, in the five

²⁴⁶ 'Dé libri pellegrini, carte forestiere, fatte di foglie, e di cortecce di alberi', *ibid.*

²⁴⁷ 'Foglio grande della grandezza di un'huomo onde anche *Grandeosa* vien nominato. Dipintovi si scorge un Bambino da ogni intorno di caratteri Cinesi segnato. Il fondo è di color nero, e i caratteri di bianco: tale ancor è l'intrecciamento delle lettere Cinesi, che gli fanno il fregio: Curiosità in vero degna di esser da tutti ugualmente mirata, ed ammirata', *Ibid.*, 238.

²⁴⁸ 'Libro di Cosmografia di carta di seta sottilissima, e scritto a caratteri Cinesi perfettissimi.' *Ibid.*, 233.

²⁴⁹ Scarabelli, *op.cit.*, 234-235. In the same section, 'Una carta di Cosmografia pur Cinese di tutto il Mondo, dove si vede che li Cinesi pongono l'Asia dove nelle nostre è l'Europa; perche essi pensano di star nel mezzo'(Chinese cosmographic chart where one can see that they put Asia in the place of Europe because they believe to stay in the middle), 238; 'Libro Cinese' (Herbarium book), 237; and 'Fogli di carta Cinese, diversamente colorati con oro' (sheets of

surviving volumes of the illustrated inventory the image of the child cannot be found. But there are two pertinent examples amongst the drawings held in Modena. The first depicts two types of Chinese writing. One has white characters on a black background and the other has black ink characters on plain paper (fig. 48). The second illustration shows a Chinese book that the catalogue affirms to be about the medical virtues of plants (fig. 49).²⁵⁰

In the catalogue, there is thus a firm connection between the Chinese characters that a visitor might admire on different supports (books and paper scrolls), and Bartoli's discussions of the Chinese language. At this point a visitor could look, again, at the inkpot with its ink cakes and consider in further depth Bartoli's and other similar explanations of the use of Chinese characters.

From all of the above it should be clear that Settala's museum represented a flexible non-linear path to knowledge where unfamiliar images, objects and texts could be perceived as being connected with other more familiar elements. Here young Castiglione could have found plenty to nourish his eyes and his mind, ranging from paintings by Cerano to Chinese prints. After exploring Settala's museum Castiglione would have acquired mentally a number of new images, shapes and colours, and stored them as memories. But, if he knew the museum well, and it is likely that he did, his mind would also have been acclimatised to thoughts and perceptions revolving around the measuring and understanding of textures, uses, and correspondences. For Settala's *theatrum mundi* was, on a conceptual level, a space that incorporated both China and Europe, where similarities between these two entities were as pronounced as were the differences. From all these factors it emerges that, when considering the painterly and personal formation of young Castiglione, one should not simply focus on the actual objects that he might have seen in the Settala collection. Of equal, if not greater importance, are the connections created around each object, the links to China that these were made to stand for.

Chinese paper variously coloured with gold), 237. For Daniello Bartoli see the introduction to part III of the present thesis.

²⁵⁰ *Disegni originali che sono descritti nell'Opera scritta in latino dal Dott. Fis. Collegiato Paolo Maria Terzago, tradotta in Italiano con un aumento dal Dott. Fis. Pietro Francesco Scarabelli stampata in Voghera nel 1666 in un Volume in 4 to. da Eliseo Viola, op. cit., 338 γ H. 1. 22, 11 r. and 14 r., both signed Domenico Tencalla.*

Beginning with the commission for the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa, in this second part of my thesis I have explored Castiglione's formal and informal training. I have also attempted to delineate the frameworks for perceiving and memorising various types of images, in particular from China, that Castiglione might have used to improve his painterly knowledge. Such activities were not so much about understanding the nature of diversity, rather they gave one the possibility of creating links between one's own knowledge and what was unknown. For this reason, in the next part I will look more closely at the construction of such links. In particular, I will explore the forms of knowledge coming from the various practices surrounding the early modern use of perspective. I will argue that, for Castiglione, the knowledge of perspective worked both as an epistemic model, a means of linking Europe and China through geographical elements, and as a basis for changing his painterly practices to cater to his new Chinese spectators.

PART III

PART III: BRIDGING THE DISTANCE THROUGH GEOMETRY

To reach Milan, images from Asia had to move through actual geographical spaces or else arrive as memories later to be transformed into pictures. ‘Space’ in this case was a linear metric interval, a measurable extension comprised of equal parts.

This idea of space has its basis in geometrical conventions. Geometrical and thus geographical conventions helped the European elites in defining Asia as a measurable and therefore existing and complex world. This, in turn, shaped a form of knowledge meant to encompass a commercially global world. For a painter like Castiglione, one of the most familiar subsets of this type of knowledge must have been optical perspective. In fact, for early modern painters the practice of perspective had a twofold nature: on the one hand it was a means of perceiving and of describing, on the other hand it unified the scientific and the artistic.

When Castiglione entered the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa he already knew that his final destination was Beijing. Accordingly, he may well have had some sense of the distance between Lisbon, where he would embark, and Macao, where he would land. For more than a century before Castiglione’s departure, travel reports and maps on China had been published in Europe and therefore increasing general awareness of the relative geographical position of Asia.²⁵¹ This awareness was also cultivated within the Jesuit Order and was surely an important part of Castiglione’s preparations in Genoa. Daniello Bartoli, the most important historiographer of the Order, reveals in the Asian part of his *Dell’Istoria della Compagnia di Giesù* of 1667 that all Jesuits had to remember

²⁵¹ Zoli’s interesting article points out the fact that in 1596 Ricci removed China from the European perception of an indefinite space by calculating the Empire’s geographic position: between nineteen and the forty-two degrees latitude north. See Sergio Zoli, ‘L’immagine dell’Oriente nella cultura italiana da Marco Polo al Settecento’, Ruggiero Romano and Corrado Vivanti (eds), *Storia d’Italia*, Turin, 1972-1981, 4 vols., vol. V, 45-123.

in their prayers the Asian regions where the missionaries were working.²⁵² From March to October - the season for sailing to Asia - Bartoli informs us that the Jesuits had to commend in their daily prayers the ships in which missionaries were travelling back and forth between Asia and Europe.²⁵³ These statements and instructions are not only about devotional practices but they also show the visual and didactic role of geographical measurement within the Jesuit ambit.²⁵⁴ This is well exemplified by Bartoli's *Dell'Istoria* where, in the first four pages, the author summarises the development of the Portuguese maritime enterprises in Asia. His summary is enriched by a description of the sea routes given in terms of latitude and longitude. This description is then followed by the statement that, at the end of seventeenth century, the use of compasses and geographical observations decreased the possibility of mistakes.²⁵⁵

The importance of geographical measurement, and especially of maps, was underscored in engravings used as frontispieces for several Jesuit books on China. Good examples are the *Istoria* by Bartoli and the *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher.²⁵⁶ In both books the frontispiece contains a map of China. The frontispiece to Bartoli's book shows a Jesuit who has just disembarked (fig. 50). He is presenting a map of Asia to personifications of the different populations of the continent. In Kircher's book the frontispiece celebrates the work of the Jesuits at the Chinese court (fig. 51). This print portrays two famous Jesuit fathers, Matteo Ricci and Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688); the latter was on the Imperial Board of Astronomy from 1669 to 1688. They, in turn, are lit by rays of light coming from the monogram of Christ flanked by St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier. Verbiest wears the robe of a Qing civil official and on the right Ricci is dressed in the traditional literati or Confucian waistcoat holding a fan in his hands. They hold together a map of China. Under the two Jesuits there are tools: a clock, a calliper, a square, a ruler, a sextant and an astrolabe. Such tools would have been used by both Verbiest and Ricci in their

²⁵² See Daniello Bartoli, *Dell'Istoria della Compagnia di Giesù. L'Asia descritta dal P. Daniello Bartoli Della Medesima Compagnia*, Rome, 1667, 21.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁵⁴ See Ezio Raimondi, 'La nuova scienza e la visione degli oggetti', *Lettere Italiane*, vol. XXI, n. 3, 1969, 265-305, 275.

²⁵⁵ Bartoli, 1667, *op. cit.*, 22.

²⁵⁶ The present study relies on the French edition of Athanasius Kircher's book, *La Chine d'Athanasie Kirchere De la Compagnie de Jesus, Illustrée De plusieurs Monuments Tant Sacrés que Profanes, Et de quantité de Recherchés de la Nature & de l'Art*, Amsterdam, 1670.

astronomical and cartographic tasks.²⁵⁷ Castiglione, as a painter trained in linear perspective, would also have known how to use the square and the calliper. Indeed, any perspective image of some complexity required such tools and consequently their use was recommended to painter's apprentices. For example, in his *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*, Pozzo advises those who want to learn perspective not to waste time with theoretical speculations and studies. Instead one should start immediately to use the calliper and the ruler.²⁵⁸ As a painter, Castiglione was thus extremely familiar with certain tools and certain rules for measurement.

It is important to emphasize that all the different perspectival techniques used by painters had their origins in basic geometrical rules also shared by cartographers.²⁵⁹ Both cartography and perspectival painting are governed by the model of Euclidean plane. Quite apart from technical and aesthetic achievements, this geometrical model was a powerful and highly developed tool for perceiving, describing and even reconstructing reality.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ The clock measures time, the calliper and the square measure space, the sextant and the astrolabe are for angular and linear measurements between the stars and the horizon. All these tools belong to the mathematical field. In fact, until the late eighteenth century, mathematics embraced astronomy, mechanics, optics, navigation measurements, and geometry, see Catherine Jami, 'Western Devices for Measuring Time and Space: Clocks and Euclidean Geometry in Late Ming and Ch'ing China', Chun-Chieh Huang and Erik Zürcher (eds), *Time and Space in Chinese Culture*, Leiden-New York-Köln, 1995, 169-200, 177. For a complete overview on drawing instruments see Maya Hambly, *Drawing Instruments 1580-1980*, London, 1988.

²⁵⁸ Andrea Pozzo, 1741/1758, op. cit., II part, introduction, introduction, unpaginated.

²⁵⁹ See Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed Their World*, London, 1997, 165; Leo Bagrow and R. A. Skelton, *History of Cartography*, London, 1964, 77-89.

²⁶⁰ Franco Farinelli, *Geografia. Un'introduzione ai modelli del mondo*, Turin, 2003, 15, 25.

1. Perspective as an epistemic model: linking Europe and China

In the perspectival systems that Castiglione must have been trained in, the painter's knowledge corresponds to actual vision. Also, in such systems the nature of things, depicted on the Euclidean plane, was defined by the proportional relation of distances, dimensions, angles and fixed points of view. A European map or a painting of the early modern period usually evokes a space with no apparent interruptions and where the elements depicted are homogeneous. These features basically come from optics, which attempt to account for the geometrical conduct of light and of the human eye. Using perspective, optical rules were applied by European painters - as gradients, in mimicking the relation between the eye and the horizon, through relative size and convergence - to depict space. These purely optical rules were, of course, combined with the atmospheric and non-geometric aspects of distance, such as colour, transparency, superposition, etc. The seventeenth-century Italian architect and painter Ferdinando Galli Bibiena sets out this European view of space by offering a definition of geometry in the opening passage of his *L'Architettura civile*:

Geometry is the [branch of] mathematics that considers the element of constancy in measurable elements. We can distinguish three parts of Geometry: *Eutimetria*, *Embadometria* and *Stereometria*; the term Geometry comes from the Greek words *Geos* and *Metria* meaning 'measuring the earth'. *Eutimetria* means the measuring of lines. *Embadometria* means measuring planes. *Stereometria* means measuring objects.²⁶¹

So, as I have already hinted, the aim of an early modern European painting or a map is to project a three-dimensional image onto a two-dimensional plane. However, more importantly, Bibiena claims that geometry is about the

²⁶¹ 'Geometria è quella specie di Matematica, che considera la quantità continua nelle grandezze. Distinguesi la Geometria in tre parti, cioè Eutimetria, Embadometria, & Stereometria; da Geos, & Metria, voci Greche, viene il nome di Geometria, quasi dicendo misura di terra. Eutimetria, significa misura di linea. Embadometria, misura di superficie. Stereometria, misura di corpo', Ferdinando Galli Bibiena, *L'Architettura civile preparata su la geometria, e ridotta alle prospettive. Considerazioni pratiche di Ferdinando Galli Bibiena cittadino bolognese architetto primario, capo mastro maggiore, e pittore di camera, e feste di teatro della maestà di Carlo III. il monarca delle Spagne dissegnate, e descritte in cinque parti*, Parma, 1711, 1.

proportional value of the measuring unit. This was an important issue for painters and geographers alike: getting the scale right and thus describing space through proportions. For the scale discloses the relation between linear measures and reality.²⁶² Therefore, in Castiglione's era, the idea of proportionality was one of the most important features of perspective. Moreover, as this chapter will show, it allowed one to create various cultural connections and it was a visual way of learning.

In the geographical charts coming from the Jesuit environment popular all over Europe, China was clearly connected to Europe through geometrical lines, 'in proportion' with Europe, symmetrical to Castiglione's world. China was an entity existing in the 'logic space' defined in Europe, not a distant and non-descript place.²⁶³ Geographical charts were used not only to locate a place. They also gave the viewer a certain knowledge about that place. For example, Daniello Bartoli in his *Della Geografia trasportata al morale* explained that history without geography would be blind because it cannot reveal where events are happening.²⁶⁴ Equally importantly, he compares history to the art of painting:

History is very similar to that kind of painting that takes inspiration from reality (in fact, History does not invent anything but makes depictions of real things); but what is the use of a good drawing, fine colours and a noble subject if Geography does not give History the chart where a fact can be illustrated in a place that is the only one where a fact can be put?²⁶⁵

The art of painting, like geography, needs a clearly delimited surface where it can define its own version of reality. Bartoli's comparison of painting and

²⁶² See Farinelli, op.cit., 11.

²⁶³ Here I am adapting Farinelli's view of 'logic space' in opposition to 'place', ibid., 3.

²⁶⁴ In considering the uses of geography by historians it is worth looking at Abraham Ortelius's (1527-1598) atlas *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, first published in 1567. In the later editions this atlas was supplemented by a *parergon* or frame consisting of historical maps. The *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* was published until the beginning of seventeenth century (last edition 1612, Antwerp). This tradition was then perpetuated by Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571-1638), a pupil of Tycho Brahe, with his famous *Theatrum orbis terrarum sive Atlas novus*, 1635. In 1655 this work consisted of six volumes, in 1667 eleven volumes entitled *Geographia Blaviana* that incorporated in a separate volume Martino Martini's *Atlas Sinensis*. See Bagrow and Skelton, op.cit., 179-185.

²⁶⁵ 'Somigliantissima a quella parte della Pittura che ricava dal naturale (che tale è il far dell'Historia, la quale non lavora d'inventione a capriccio, ma di ritratto in sul vero) ma che prò haver buon disegno, color fini, nobile argomento, se la Geografia non le dà il piano, e la tavola in cui sola il tal fatto può historiarisi, come si proprio in tal luogo, che a niun altro se non ingannevole fingimento si adatterebbe?', Daniello Bartoli, *Della Geografia trasportata al morale*, Venice, 1664, 7r.

geography is not simply a rhetorical manoeuvre but expresses a real and reciprocal relation between painting and cartography. From the cartographic point of view, in the early modern period, this relation had been defined by drawing a distinction between geography and chorography.

Geography indicated the act of mathematical measuring to compose a scheme characterised by symmetry between its parts. The chorographer described single parts or areas of the geographic scheme using pictorial language. The role of chorography is thus to give the geometrical image of geography a resemblance to reality.²⁶⁶ Therefore a European geographical chart produced in the early modern period combined the mathematical and the artistic (see for example Blaeu's map, fig. 52). From the painters' point of view, the convergence of the two branches of knowledge is described in the already mentioned *La carta del Navegar pitoresco* ('The map of pictorial navigation') by Marco Boschini:

We can consider [pictorial] quantity in two ways (as you know). The physical or natural is the first. The mathematical is the second. Painters have good knowledge of both. Mathematics teaches one how to study. Nature teaches one how to paint and to be ingenious when needed. To study you need compasses and a ruler. To paint you need brush and wit. These two practices lead to perfect drawing [or design], do not let anyone confuse your mind.²⁶⁷

Similarly, Giulio Troili, in his manual *Paradossi* for the teaching of perspective, defines the natural and the mathematical as corresponding to practice and theory.²⁶⁸ Bibiena follows the same division:

²⁶⁶ For the relation between chorography and geography see Lucia Nuti, 'Misura e pittura nella cartografia dei secoli XVI-XVII', *Storia Urbana*, n. 62, 1993, 5-34, 7.

²⁶⁷ 'La quantità però (come savè). In do maniere la consideremo. Fisica, o natural, che xè'l medemo. O pura matematica la xè. El Pitor ben intende, e quela, e questa. Questa gh'avre la strada al studiar: Quela gh'insegna el muodo d'operar, Per far, quando convien, zioghi de testa. Per studiar ghe vuol compasso, e riga. Per operar ghe vuol penelo, e inzegno. E qua aponto consiste el bon dessegno, no'lassè, che'l cervelo altri ve intriga', Boschini, op. cit., 298. The original text is in Venetian poetic verses, the capital letter indicates the beginning of every verse.

²⁶⁸ 'Perche in questa Scienza la capacità della Teorica è assai bella, perchè è intesa ancora da quelli, che non sono Pittori, perciò potiamo dire, che la Teorica ci dà de i Fiori; ma che li Frutti non si raccolgono, se non con la mano, cioè a dire, con la pratica, che mette in evidenza ogni bellissimo concetto', Giulio Troili, *Paradossi per praticare la prospettiva senza saperla, fiori, per facilitare l'intelligenza, frutti, per non operare alla cieca*, Bologna, 1683, 49.

[perspective] gives knowledge of the effects of various sources of light and through the painter's intellect and manual practice allow one to see in a glance anything that our eyes can see.²⁶⁹

Perspective was thus understood to involve both the manual and the intellectual. This suggests something of the manner of knowing that a painter like Castiglione had at his disposition. As a basic background, he was trained in perceiving and in describing and constructing by means of linear measures. As I have argued, at the core of perspectival practices lay visual perception and the use of proportionality. When Castiglione entered the Jesuit Order such practices had already been used to define China in a tradition running back to Matteo Ricci.

At the end of the sixteenth century Ricci described the Chinese as very fond of the art of painting and not second to any nation in manual skills and wit. Yet they were still not at the same level of the European painters. Ricci explains why:

It seems that they did not excel in those arts for the lack of communications with other nations by which they could have been helped...²⁷⁰

For Ricci, what he saw as the relative mediocrity of Chinese artistic production came from a lack of communication between China and other nations. Here 'communication' may be understood as a geographical relation: China and its artists were not proportionally linked with other traditions. Almost one century later Bartoli uses the same idea in the section dedicated to China in his *Della Geografia trasportata al morale*. There he gave each different nation of the world a motto in order to explain their nature. The motto for China was: 'the blindness of not knowing oneself'.²⁷¹ Bartoli explains that for centuries China has combined great knowledge with the greatest ignorance of the world by believing firmly that China was the world.

²⁶⁹ 'Dà cognizione degli effetti de'lumi, e coll'occhio dell'intelletto, e la pratica della mano, fà vedere in un'occhiata tutto l'effetto di qualsivoglia cosa, che l'occhio nostro sia capace a vedere', Galli Bibiena, op. cit., 77.

²⁷⁰ 'E parmi che la causa di non essere loro eminenti in simili arti fu la puoca o nessuna communicatione che ebbero con altre nationi dalle quali potessero essere agiutati...', Pasquale D'Elia, *Fonti Ricciane*, Rome, 1942, vol. I, n. 39-41, 41-43. Letter written between 1582 and 1597.

²⁷¹ 'La cecità di non conoscer sè stessi', Bartoli, 1664, op.cit., 45-48.

Bartoli's statement helps one to develop a clearer sense of the conceptual tools that Castiglione may have also brought to bear on his perceptions of China. First, Bartoli's understanding of knowledge, like perspective, is related to eyesight. Secondly, functioning eyes allow one to discover that there are other nations different to oneself. Realising such difference or distance is the first step toward creating a linear connection that prompts not a dialogue but the subject's own consciousness of difference. This in turn is possible because the concept of difference is also a means of connecting, being a negative or positive relation. Thus it can be described as a relation between proportionate parts. So, using systems of proportional measurement and representation to define Sino-European relations was not a search for similarities. Instead it was a search for connections: the construction of a framework that would allow a conscious subject to formulate knowledge and judgement of others.

After Ricci the theoretical and practical idea of a space defined by proportions and represented by perspective became central to European perceptions of China. This, together with established European artistic traditions, made perspective the central means by which Europeans would assess Chinese painting and architecture. Important evidence for this come from a unique report on China: Lorenzo Magalotti's *Notizie varie dell'imperio della China*. Magalotti was a writer on science and in 1660 became the secretary of the Accademia del Cimento of Florence. His text on China is based on conversations he had in Florence in 1665 with the Austrian Jesuit Father Johann Grueber (1623-1680) who had served in Beijing as a mathematician from 1659 to 1661. Grueber was also one of the most important correspondents of Athanasius Kircher.²⁷² For Magalotti the fact that the Chinese did not use convergent perspective and optics explained the 'low' quality of their painting and architecture:

Because the Chinese do not have any notions of perspective or other parts of optics we can easily figure out the quality of their paintings and architecture.²⁷³

²⁷² This relationship may be detected in Kircher's *China Illustrata* where various passages replicate Magalotti's text.

²⁷³ '...né della prospettiva né dell'altre parti dell'ottica non hanno alcun lume. Dal che si può facilmente argomentare l'eccellenza non meno delle loro pitture che delle loro fabbriche', Lorenzo Magalotti, *Notizie varie dell'imperio della China e di qualche altro paese adiacente*

This point of view was reiterated by Gherardini few years later. In a report written in Canton in 1698 and published in Paris in 1700 he wrote:

Long live Italy for the Fine Arts, the Chinese are as knowledgeable about architecture and painting as I am in Greek and Hebrew. Nevertheless the Chinese are fascinated by a good drawing, a well structured and lively landscape, a natural perspective, but they are not interested in how to achieve that...²⁷⁴

In this manner Gherardini suggests that, for a European, the practice of perspective was one of the most important aspects of working as a professional painter. Gherardini recognises some salient features of the Chinese way of looking but puts them in the realm of the natural. Rightly or wrongly, in doing so, Gherardini defines the Chinese artistic environment as a space he can dominate, using his own optical-geometrical model.

For Gherardini, then, the Chinese are not interested in describing their space and their reality following the European model. They do not wish to use specific techniques such as optical perspective. Gherardini's statement, like those of Bibiena and Boschini, revolves around the idea that there is a firm connection between geometrical knowledge and natural reality. It is this that allows the painter to perceive and, at the same time, to describe the world.

This perspectival model was not only used to define China. It was also deployed to describe the creative process itself. Bibiena saw it as follows:

When you have an image of a sketch in your mind and you want to draw it you must enlarge it and consider its proportions according to the original image you had in your mind. Then you have to draw it larger again and you will see how it has lost the quality it had in your mind. Then if you try to enlarge it more you will discover it will be of a lesser quality. If you keep on adjusting it here and there you will finally find not even the shadow of that spirit that was in your mind first.²⁷⁵

con la vita di Confucio. Il Gran Savio della China, e un saggio della sua Morale, Florence, 1697. 30-31.

²⁷⁴ 'Vive l'Italie pour les beaux Arts, les Chinois se connoissent en Architecture & en Peinture comme moy, en Grec & en Hebreu. Ils sont pourtant charmez d'un beau dessein, d'un paisage bien vif & bien ménagé, d'une perspective naturelle; mais pour savoir comment on s'y prend ça n'est pas là leur affaire,...', Gherardini, op. cit., 78.

²⁷⁵ 'Quando poi per l'idea concepita formate l'embrione d'un qualche Schizzetto, voi dovete prima ridurlo un poco più grande, fatto prima l'esame delle sue proporzioni conformi al dettame del pensiero; doppo le dovete ridurre in maggior grandezza, che vedrete il calo, che avrà fatto da

This passage shows how the proportional model for acquiring knowledge was valid in both technical and creative fields: the sketch has to follow the proportions first established by the mind. For painters, then, proportionality and perspective was a pervasive way of perceiving and delineating reality as well as a means of assessing their own ideas.

In fact, the creative process described by Bibiena also involves painterly ways of using perspective and, in particular, projective geometry to transfer drawings onto walls as a basis for fresco and other types of painting. Painters first had to establish the right proportions in the cartoon, a full scale drawing used to transfer the desired image onto walls or other surfaces.²⁷⁶ In vast spaces, especially churches, where the eyes of the painter were very far from the surface to be painted, it was customary to produce several drawings.

In the next chapter I will show that, such practices, and what they required in terms of materials and organization, were probably deployed by Castiglione both during his short stay in Portugal and in Beijing. However, more importantly, such commissions show that Castiglione adopted perspectival techniques that required from the painter an approach different from the epistemic model described above. Thus, in the next chapter, I will account for Castiglione's *quadratura* commissions.

quando vi propose l'idea; poscia riducendolo nelle proporzioni, se è figura, o architettura, vedrete quanto più scemerà. Ritornate a parte a parte ad aggiustarlo, che in ultimo ritrovarete, avvicinando lo Schizzo al Disegno esatto, non essere più ne meno un'ombra di quel spirito, ch'era nel primo pensiero', Galli Bibiena, op. cit., 112.

²⁷⁶ In fresco painting the cartoon was used to develop a sinopia or an *incisione*. The cartoon then had to be subdivided into sections the size of the space the painter could realize in one day of work. This was because the painter had to paint before the plaster-ground dried up. See Filippi, op. cit., 30.

2. Evidence for Castiglione's knowledge of projective geometry

In Castiglione's era painters used projective geometry to make two-dimensional drawings of seemingly three-dimensional images on ceilings, walls or other surfaces. Technically, using projective geometry or using normal perspective was just a matter of what a commission required. When working in fresco, it principally meant considering where the future viewers would be in relation to the image and where the painting was located. For example a *di sotto in sù* view in fresco required projective geometry to fool the viewer below into believing in the three-dimensionality of the image.²⁷⁷

The geometrical basis for *quadratura*, the projective geometry that Castiglione possibly had learnt during his apprenticeship in Milan and also from Pozzo's work, was a radical development of perspective as based on traditional Euclidean geometry and optics. Originally, projective geometry was developed by Girard Desargues (1591-1661) who in 1639 published *Brouillon project d'une atteinte aux événements des recontres du cône avec un plan*.²⁷⁸ The theories developed by Desargues solved problems that geometers had considered for a long time. These were about the mathematical relation between two different sections, sections made by projections of the same object.²⁷⁹ Some confusion remains in art-historical studies about the exact difference between projective geometry and images following the 'older' rules of perspective. This is because the basis for projective geometry partly comes from Euclidean geometry but its applications do not. Also, the term projective geometry only gained currency in the nineteenth century. In early modern terminology there was no real distinction between Euclidean geometry and projective geometry.

²⁷⁷ Troili in his manual uses the term 'ordinary perspective' (*prospettive ordinarie*) to indicate images where the vertical lines are perpendicular to the horizon. In the other types of perspective like *di sotto in sù* the vertical lines are not perpendicular to the horizon, see Troili, op. cit., 104.

²⁷⁸ However, the main work by Desargues was published in Paris by Abraham Bosse in 1648, *Manière universelle de M. Desargues pour pratiquer la perspective* and in 1653, *Moyen universel de pratiquer la perspective sur les tableaux ou surfaces irrégulières*.

²⁷⁹ See Morris Kline, *Mathematical Thought from Ancient to Modern Times*, New York, 1972, 286-287. See also his chapter on projective geometry in *Mathematics in Western Culture*, London, 1990, 170-185.

Optical or convergent perspective, as used in painting in eighteenth-century Europe, was the result of a long and sometimes obscure process moved more by practical experiments than by rational development. Perspective had been studied in different but linked fields like Euclidean and projective geometry, the study of the physical qualities of light and the ‘physiological and perceptual’ properties of vision.²⁸⁰ Often these fields were linked together to form a body of knowledge used in various practices. The perspective systems studied by Castiglione were thus formed by elements of optics, geometry, mathematics and painting together.

Castiglione’s *quadratura* works are generally neglected by those studies that analyse only his Chinese oeuvre.²⁸¹ This makes it difficult to discover his actual knowledge of perspectival forms. Castiglione’s use of perspective is thus usually linked to the general skills deployed by all European painters, without distinguishing between different types of perspectival technique. But if one considers Castiglione’s perspectival knowledge with more care a different story emerges. However, before looking at the repercussions that Castiglione’s knowledge of perspective might have had on his career, here I shall first present the basic evidence for his commissions that required projective geometry.

Castiglione seems to have used projective geometry for at least three commissions, once in Portugal and twice in Beijing. This is proven by a number of sources that have not so far received sufficient scholarly attention. The evidence is, in fact, essential.

First, there are two early eighteenth-century descriptions by the Portuguese Jesuit Antonio Franco, both showing that Castiglione’s works for the chapel of St. Francis Borgia in Coimbra included paintings both on the wall and on canvas. The first of these states:

Father Domenico Nunio ... also ordered paintings to be made on the walls of the Chapel inside the College dedicated to St. Francis Borgia. They were excellently made by the Milanese Giuseppe Castiglione. Castiglione had come from Italy and had stayed here waiting for an

²⁸⁰ See David Summers, *Real Spaces. World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism*, London, 2003, 508.

²⁸¹ To my knowledge, Elisabetta Corsi and Hui Zou are the only two authors who consider the differences between a central perspective construction projected on a flat surface and the applications of *quadratura* as developed at the end of the seventeenth century, see pages 125 and 129 of this part.

opportunity to sail to China, where he finally went after doing the work. He was a Brother Coadjutor, a man of a very sweet nature and many virtues. He also painted the Circumcision of Christ which can be seen over the main altar.²⁸²

The second passage indicates that in the chapel of St. Francis Borgia Castiglione had used illusionistic perspective:

While Castiglione was in Portugal from 1709 to 1714, waiting for the opportunity to sail to China, he never ceased to practise his art. Here he did the paintings representing the life of St. Francis Borgia that hung all around the walls of the common Chapel of the College in Coimbra and most of the other paintings in the Chapel except those at the top. He painted there curious perspectives of stairs and also of foliage that one cannot believe to be painted without [first] having touched them.²⁸³

As the Beurdeleys noted, the paintings on canvas now on display in Coimbra are probably not by Castiglione and no traces remain of the illusionistic fresco and of the *Circumcision of Christ*.²⁸⁴

Once he was in Beijing, Castiglione was commissioned by the Jesuit Order to decorate the *Dong Tang* (Eastern Church) or St. Joseph, built in 1721. In this he collaborated with the Florentine architect Ferdinando Bonaventura Moggi.²⁸⁵ In a letter of November 1729, also addressed to General Tamburini, Moggi describes the paintings by Castiglione:

²⁸² '1712. Conimbricæ auro obductum est nostri templi pegma ligneum, quo exornatur princeps ara. Id fecerat P. Gonzalus Sequeira: hoc autem anno P. Dominicus Nunius iterum Rector perfecit opus. Idem Rector curavit fieri egregias picturas, et tabulas, quibus cingitur intra Collegium S. Francisco Borgiæ dicatum sacellum. Depinxit Josephus Castelonus Mediolanensis, qui ex Italia venerat iturus ad Sinam, & post opus perfectum eò navigavit. Erat Coadjutor indolis mitissimæ, & multæ virtutis. Ejusdem manu facta pictura Circumcisi Domini, quæ cernitur in summa templi ara. Augusti 19 addita manus suprema fornicibus omnium pergularum superiorum ejusdem Collegii. Intra menses viginti tantum opus vidimus inceptum, & asolutum, quod vix credet posteritas.' Antonio Franco, *Synopsis Annalium Societatis Jesu in Lusitania ab anno 1540 usque ad annum 1725*, Lisbon, 1760, 441.

²⁸³ '[Castiglione] Enquanto se demorou em Portugal esperando a monção para a Oriente, entreteve-se no exercicio de su arte. Pintou em Coimbra, no Collégio, os painéis da vida de S. Francisco de Borja, que rodeavam a capela da comunidade, e todas as mais obras que nela há de pintura, tirando o tecto. Fez as perspectivas curiosas da Escada banquinho e tambem da folha, que ninguém se persuade ser pintura senão depois de quase as apalpar com as mãos.' Antonio Franco, *Imagem da Virtude em o Noviciado da Companhia de Jesus do Real Collegio do Espirito Santo de Evora*, Lisbon 1714, 57.

²⁸⁴ Beurdeley and Beurdeley, op.cit., 187, 188.

²⁸⁵ Ferdinando Bonaventura Moggi (1684-?), like Castiglione, was a Brother Coadjutor. He arrived in Beijing on 6 September 1721, Deheregne, op. cit., 177.

A drawing cannot describe what I am saying: the whole interior of the Church looks as if it were covered with the most beautiful variety of marbles and golden bronzes. Because of the high quality of Chinese varnish and the skill of the Chinese helpers at preparing a smooth foundation these decorations are painted in a realistic way and have the quality of marble [even] if one touches them. The vaults are beautifully painted by Brother Castiglione. The best painting is that of the cupola painted by Castiglione on a flat canvas. It gives to the eye the effect of height and depth because it is very well lit thanks to the skilfully created effects of lights and shadows. Inside, on the main door there is a cartouche with the following words: made by the Society of Jesus in 1728. It is the year when the church opened. Your Paternity will be able to see the images of the Church by looking at the drawings that Brother Castiglione would like to put at the end of the book he is going to write if you will give your approval for it.²⁸⁶

Castiglione's false cupola in the *Dong Tang* is conclusive evidence of his admiration for Pozzo. False cupolas were not so common in Castiglione's time but they were typical of Pozzo, almost his signature. In 1685 Pozzo had painted a false cupola in the church of Sant' Ignazio in Rome (fig. 53). This enterprise was described in his *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* as the final step for learning how to use the type *quadratura* based on projective geometry. Also, in the letters to Tamburini, both Moggi and Castiglione mention the painter's plan for writing a treatise like Pozzo's.²⁸⁷ Castiglione had planned to use all his preparatory drawings to create this book.²⁸⁸ His aim was to engrave copper plates to reproduce the drawings. The book, it seems, was meant to serve as a

²⁸⁶ 'Per dire alcuna cosa di quelle che non si possono esprimere nei disegni dico, che tutto l'interiore della Chiesa fa la medesima vista che se fosse di bellissimoi marmi misti e bronzi dorati, e per beneficio delle vernici del Paese e perizia de i Cinesi in preparare i fondi lisci, hancora toccandole con mano, paiono vere pietre per essere tutte dipinte al naturale. Le volte sono tutte dipinte dal Fratello Giuseppe Castiglioni con molta vaghezza, ma sopra tutto la Cupola che dipinse in un telaro piano, la quale fa il suo effetto di alzare in su, e insieme è molto luminosa, essendo tanto bene contraposti li chiari e scuri che riuscì a maraviglia. Sopra la porta maggiore di dentro stà un Cartellone nel quale è scritto il seguente: Societas Jesu posuit an. 1728 che fu l'anno che si aprì...Il compreso ne li disegni, e quel pocho che in particolare ne scrivo V.P. lo potrà tutto vedere posto in disegni particolari, che il Fratello Giuseppe Castiglione tiene intenzione che si pongano nel fine del libro de quale scrisse alla P.V. se però si degni di approvarlo', ARSI, Jap. Sin. 184, 41 r/v.

²⁸⁷ ARSI, Jap. Sin. 184, 37r./v.-38r./v., for Castiglione's entire letter see appendix E, 198-200.

²⁸⁸ Unfortunately, there is no trace of these drawings. Nor could I find any reply by General Tamburini to Castiglione's letter in ARSI.

manual for trainee artists and also as tangible proof of the achievements of the Italian artist whilst working for the Beijing mission. Here, Castiglione clearly follows Pozzo, hoping to circulate his own work for didactic purposes and at the same time promoting himself as a professional painter. This point is further supported by the fact that Pozzo's *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* was also an anthology of that painter's commissions issued in order to celebrate the Society of Jesus, his main patrons.

Mikinosuke Ishida has discovered further evidence from certain Chinese sources about the *Nan Tang* (Southern Church) of the Portuguese residence. For this church Castiglione made two canvases and two mural paintings.²⁸⁹ The mural works were on the east and west walls. They are described in the *Zhuyeting zaji* by the contemporary scholar Yao Yuanzhi. Here is his account as translated by Ishida:

Within the Nan-t'ang there are two 'linear school' pictures drawn by Lang Shih-ning. They are spread on the two walls, east and west of the parlour, high and large like the walls. If you stand at the foot of the west wall, close one eye, and look toward the east wall, the inner chamber extends to a great depth, with the bead-blinds completely drawn up. The southern window is half open. The sunbeams play on the floor. A large quantity of books in scrolls with ivory plates used as indexes and jade axes fill up the book-shelves. There is a magnificent cabinet containing a number of curios which glitter up and down. On the north end a tall table stands. On the table stands a vase in which peacock feathers are arranged. A brilliant feather-fan is in the sunshine. Under the sunbeams the shadow of the fan, the shadow of the vase, the shadow of the table all these are perfectly accurate. On the wall are calligraphic scrolls and hanging pairs of rhymed epigraphs in decorative style exhibited for inspection. If you go through the chamber and go east, you will come to the north part of a large court. There a long corridor runs on and on. A set of pillars stand in

²⁸⁹ The two canvases depicted the *Emperor Constantine about to win a battle* and *Constantine's triumph*. According to Ishida these two paintings were on the north and south walls. See Mikinosuke Ishida, 'A Biographical Study of Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shih-ning), a Jesuit Painter in the Court of Peking under the Ch'ing Dynasty', in *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, vol. XIX, 1960, 79-121, 101. The evidence comes from *Honneurs rendus par l'Empereur de Chine aux Européens*, Paris, 1782, vol. VIII, 283-288; see Ishida's footnote 4, 100.

line. The stone-pavement evenly shines with brightness. If you go east, you will see as if a house exists, and the door seems not yet open. If you lower your head and look out of the window, you will see two dogs playing together on the ground. If you stand again at the foot of the east wall, and look toward the west wall, you will again see the three chambers of the outer building. By the southern window, the sun shadows three tripod-kettles. Three tables are arranged in a row. The gold glitters. On the top of the pillars in the hall, three large mirrors are hung. On the north end of the hall, screens stand; on the east and west, stand two tables on which red brocade covers are spread. On one of them stands a clock which strikes automatically; on the other, an astronomical instrument is placed. Between the two tables are placed two chairs. On the pillar are placed four lamp-basins on which silver-like candles stand. Looking up to the ceiling, you will see the wood carved into flowers. The middle part is raised to look like stamens and pistils. The lower part hangs down as if left upside down. If you look down upon the floor, you will see it so bright like a mirror that you will be able to count all the square tiles. One white stream along the centre of the tiles shows that it is paved with white stones. If you step further in from the hall, there are two stories of the bed-room. The blinds in the doorway are still and it is profoundly quiet. The table in the room, when seen at a distance, is tidied in perfect order so that you will be tempted to enter. If you touch it, you will suddenly find it a wall. There was no technique of perspective representation in ancient times. Since it is so accurate as this, you will only regret that ancient people had not seen it. Hence this account.²⁹⁰

The same evidence has recently been evaluated by Hui Zou who also translated the Chinese passages.²⁹¹ In addition he has identified a second account of Castiglione's paintings in the Nan Tang from the *Qiuping xinyu* by Zhang Jingyun:

²⁹⁰ Ishida, op. cit., 102, 103. Ishida affirms that these paintings survived until 1777, the year in which they were described in Sichelbarth's birthday report.

²⁹¹ Hui Zou, 'Jesuit Perspective in China', *Architectura*, n. 31, 2001, 145-168. Hui Zou's translation of Yao Yuanzhi's description has instead of "linear school pictures" the Chinese term *xianfahua*. This literally means 'painting of the line method', 156.

If one leans on the west wall and looks eastward, one sees a double door and a chamber endlessly deep and wide. The interior chamber surrounded by more chambers seems partly open and partly closed...(The painter) was an expert in the art of *yin* and *yang* [indicating chiaroscuro]; therefore, when viewed at a distance, things will always appear so real (*zhen*).²⁹²

The Portuguese evidence, together with these descriptions of the paintings in the *Nan Tang* and the *Dong Tang*, constitute a clear profile of Castiglione's perspectival skills. All three commissions involved fitting images into existing architectural spaces to create enormously complex illusions of fictional spaces. Accomplishing this required a level of practical training that Castiglione must at least have begun during his apprenticeship in Milan. Also, as suggested by Castiglione himself, he considered Pozzo's treatise as his technical and theoretical foundation.

Not all professional painters were capable of the technical feat of constructing fully deceptive images on vast spaces like cupolas or church walls. Within this type of commission, the main difficulty was the fact that the images had to be projected onto surfaces which were not flat and also because they were displayed in spaces where the viewers would not necessarily stand immediately in front of them. The intrinsic difficulty of *quadratura* is a point made both by Pozzo, Scaramuccia and Orlandi. Scaramuccia takes as an example Giovanni Lanfranco (1582-1647), an apprentice and collaborator of the Carracci and Guido Reni. Between 1621 and 1627 he was commissioned to paint an illusionistic image of the Assumption in the church of Sant' Andrea della Valle in Rome (fig. 54). According to Scaramuccia, in the process:

Lanfranco asked some very competent friends who had gone to see him painting the dome of Sant' Andrea della Valle in Rome to point to him any fault they could see in his painting, not in the drawing itself (as he was a true master) but in the entire composition of all the elements forming such a great enterprise.²⁹³

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ 'Il Lanfranchi disse à certi suoi amici molto intendenti, quai si portarono à vederlo dipingere la Cuppola di S.Andrea della Valle in Roma, che dovessero avvisarlo di qualche difetto intorno al Disegno, essendoche, più che à quello (di cui per altro ne vivea franco possessore) guardava al negotio importantissimo del tutto insieme in quella gran machina', Scaramuccia, op.cit., 206.

This suggests that, even for famous and skilful painters, there was always a risk of mistakes when painting large illusionistic images in great architectural spaces. As Scaramuccia advises, one of the main problems with such commissions was to link the depicted figures or objects to the painted and the actual architecture and thus construct a homogenous whole composed by the real architecture and the illusionistic paintings. In a similar vein, Pozzo berates painters who do not want to labour to learn perspective because it is not useful for depicting figures.

...they are wrong, in fact perspective is very important for painting figures.

Do not let yourself be deceived by their stupid words if you do not want to make those great mistakes you can see in their paintings at which we cannot but laugh when we see them.²⁹⁴

Orlandi makes similar points in his *Abecedario Pittorico*. He rhetorically recalls the famous painter Antonio Sacchi who died for shame because he could not bear his own miscalculation of the convergent point in the church of San Fedele in Como. As a result the figures were too large.²⁹⁵

All of this proves that Castiglione was trained in techniques widely associated with considerable professional skill and great technical difficulties. Even if the paintings executed in Genoa do not bear any traces of training in *quadratura*, the textual accounts of the lost illusionistic paintings in Coimbra and Beijing suggest the level of Castiglione's accomplishments. He simply must have been trained both as a figure painter and as a *quadraturista*. As already argued, the artistic environment of Milan could certainly support this type of training.

In fact, in the seventeenth century both Emilia and Lombardy were particularly renowned for commissions requiring illusionistic paintings. Apart from Pozzo's works, other examples that Castiglione might have seen in Milan were those of Ferdinando Galli Bibiena and Giovanni Galliari, both founders of famous artistic dynasties. Especially the Bibiena family were involved in making theatre sets where they introduced multiple focal points and the *veduta*

²⁹⁴ '...s'ingannano molto, importando assaissimo anche per queste: nè vi lasciate però aggirare dalle loro dicerie, se non volete ancor voi incorrere in quelli errori massicci, che nell'opere loro, non senza riso, si mirano', Pozzo, 1758, op. cit., part. II, *Al lettore*, unpagged.

²⁹⁵ See Orlandi, op.cit., 73.

per angolo.²⁹⁶ These were important changes for seventeenth-century *quadraturismo*. Even so, the common ground shared by all these north-Italian artists and by Pozzo was that they took the design of theatrical stage sets and ephemeral festival architecture as the starting point for developing skills in *quadratura*.²⁹⁷

From the above exploration of Castiglione's commission involving *quadratura*, it is obvious that painting within a space delimited by an architectural structure was profoundly different from painting a central perspective on a flat surface located close to the viewers, like a perspectival painting on a canvas or on a delimited space of a wall. Here it is worth analysing this difference because it did not only influence the technicalities of the painter's work but also had a large impact on the painter's means of understanding and pleasing his spectators. However, first, I shall account for textual and visual sources related to *quadratura* that were available in China at the beginning of the eighteenth century. For Castiglione's lost Chinese *quadratura* works can only be understood properly if one understands what his audience in Beijing brought to bear on them.

²⁹⁶ Giovanni Galliari worked in Crema and Milan at the beginning of the eighteenth century; he died in 1721. He had three children: Bernardino, Fabrizio and Giovanni Antonio, see Valerio Terraroli, 'Giovanni Galliari', Mario Caravale (ed.), *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Rome, 1960-, 62 vols., vol. LI, 641-644. From Ferdinando Galli Bibiena (1675-1743) and his father Giovanni Maria (1618-19-1665) came an entire family of artists involved in important commissions until the end of the eighteenth century. See Anna Maria Matteucci, *Architettura, scenografia, paesaggio*, Bologna, 1979, 6-12, 28.

²⁹⁷ The differences between Pozzo and the Bibienas lie partly in the nature of their commissions: *quadrature* and *scenografie* respectively. Coming with considerably experience of architectural planning, the Bibienas aimed to create a total illusion and projective geometry was deployed to make deceptive architecture *ex novo*, see *ibid.*, 28.

3. European perspective in China: theory and commissions

In eighteenth-century China Pozzo's book on perspective, *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*, drew the interest of the Manchu elite. As mentioned in the first part of this thesis, a partial translation of Pozzo's manual was first published in 1729 by Nian Xiyao. It was entitled *Shixue Jingyun (Essence of the Science of Vision)*.²⁹⁸ In 1735 a new and more complete edition appeared under the title *Shixue (Science of Vision)*.²⁹⁹ These publications were accomplished with Castiglione's collaboration. For in the prologues of both editions Nian Xiyao mentions the Italian artist by name. In the first he wrote:

In the past, I allowed myself to be captivated by the study of perspective. While attending to my usual duties, my mind meditated deeply and searched, but I failed to master its basic principles. This went on until I met Master Lang, who came from the West and we had many an exchange of ideas.³⁰⁰

The same point is made in the second prologue of the second edition:

Although this technique was shown by me to artists who shared my interests, it inevitably degenerated into a certain superficiality. I have therefore recently gone frequently to Master Lang Shining to perfect my knowledge of it and to study its sources.³⁰¹

Although the publications were rooted in this interesting collaboration, they did not succeed in spreading the knowledge of projective geometry across China. Here are some possible reasons.

²⁹⁸ The term *Shixue* was first used to indicate perspective by Nian Xiyao. As Hui Zou notes, *Shixue* literally means "high knowledge of perception", Hui, op. cit., footnote 57, 157.

²⁹⁹ Four copies of *Shixue* are in European Libraries in England, France and the Russian Federation. Two copies are preserved in the collection of the India Office in London and in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Only two copies of the second edition remain in China. See Elisabetta Corsi, 'Envisioning Perspective, Nian Xiyao's (年希堯 1671-1738) Rendering of Western Perspective in the Prologues to the "Science of Vision"', Antonino Forte and Federico Masini (eds), *A Life Journey to the East. Sinological Studies in Memory of Giuliano Bertuccioli*, Kyoto, 2002, 201-204, 208-211.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 224. Hui Zou's translation of the passage from the 1729 preface adds that Nian Xiyao had produced paintings according to European forms of perspective: 'I had paid attention to *shixue* for a long time, thinking hard but unable to understand it well. Later, after talking with the Western scholar Lang [Shi'ning] several times, I began to do a Chinese painting in the Western way', Hui, op. cit., 157.

³⁰¹ Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 229. This translation is also different from Hui Zou's version: 'Although I have opened my study to the public, my understanding is still shallow. I recently met Mr. Lang Shi'ning several times, and studied the origin of *shixue* with him', Hui, op. cit., 158.

First, seventeenth-century perspectival knowledge such as that needed for illusionistic mural paintings required training based on both practice and theory. This much is suggested by Pozzo's book, which focused on real commissions in order to teach projective geometry and also to convey the perceptual responses to be sought by this technique. The explanatory drawings represent the most important part of the book; the images are to be used while practising actual painted projections. By comparing the original engravings with those that illustrate the Chinese text, a second reason arises. The first twenty-nine engravings contained in Nian Xiyao's book, copied from Pozzo, are in fact less detailed than the original images (fig. 55).³⁰² As noted by Michel Sullivan, this virtually negates their didactic function.³⁰³ How could a Chinese apprentice learn to use projective geometry by looking at these incomplete drawings? Of course, this is a rhetorical question because in China there was no urgent need for the technical knowledge essential for making vast illusionistic images. If one considers some characteristics of Chinese palace architecture, it is evident that there was a lack of proper spaces for illusionistic frescos. Generally such buildings had the following characteristics: illumination was obtained by diffused light and not by apertures; the timber structure of buildings is usually visible and used to support decorations; and, finally, there is an extensive use of columns.³⁰⁴

Third, Chinese painters' acceptance of European perspective might have meant choosing, in some cases, between an untried foreign theory and 'working' local traditions. As argued by Cahill, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'the Chinese painting tradition was too healthy, too assured of its self-sufficiency, to be overwhelmed by any foreign incursion.'³⁰⁵ This is also attested by Nian Xiyao who, in the preface of *Shixue*, wrote in favour of the Northern-Song landscape tradition that, during the Qing dynasty,

³⁰² This comparison was first made by Sullivan who shows the two prints of the false cupola from Pozzo and Nian Xiyao, Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1984, 55.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ See Laurence G. Liu, *Chinese Architecture*, London, 1989. For example, Liu shows the plan of the Taihe Dian (Hall of Supreme Harmony), one of the most important building of the Forbidden City. This building, apart from the columns within the walls, has twenty-four columns which support the roof from the inside, 247-252.

³⁰⁵ James Cahill, *The Compelling Image*, Cambridge (Mass.) - London, 1982, 71.

supplied the preferred means of evoking space in painting.³⁰⁶ Instead, what seems to have happened is that Chinese artists gave ‘a new, native content’ to artistic ideas from Europe.³⁰⁷ That is to say, in Castiglione’s case, that the Qing court environment was ready to accept certain European elements only if presented in translation. As I shall argue in the final parts of this thesis, these elements were then deployed following the Emperor’s personal taste, in particular in scroll commissions. Even so, in the preface of the second edition of *Shixue*, Nian Xiyao describes the realistic effects of perspective:

If we draw a room according to this *fa* and arrange everything in order, the beholder might want to walk on the steps, enter the door and stand in the hall but does not know it is only a painting. If we draw an object and hang the painting – whose surfaces are up and down, level, slant and solid, bright in light and dark in shadows, with clear convex and concave – in the air, the beholder must take it as a real thing. When an object becomes convex and concave with *yin* and *yang* and a room becomes deep with mutual setting off, is not this the quintessence of the *fa* of Western painting?³⁰⁸

Nian Xiyao’s book therefore shows a profound understanding of the two main qualities of perspective: its deceptively convincing illusion of reality and the sense that, at a glance, one may comprehend a proportionally coherent space. Nian Xiyao’s awareness of these qualities was probably shared by the Qing emperors who, after all, sometimes commissioned Castiglione to paint using perspectival techniques. Of course, Qing awareness of European perspective did not start with Nian Xiyao’s translation of Pozzo’s book but with the arrival of Matteo Ricci. Later, after the fall of the Ming dynasty, in the Qing painting workshops interest in certain European artistic methods was still cultivated. Thus, by Castiglione’s arrival in China, there was already a ‘native’ Chinese knowledge of perspective. Hence, Castiglione’s task in the Jesuit churches of Beijing was to display more than just European skills or to promote Europeans points of view. He also had to cater to well informed locals.

³⁰⁶ Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 202.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Translation by Hui Zou. *Fa* means ‘method’, ‘law’; *Yin* and *yang* means chiaroscuro, Hui, op. cit., 158.

An important point to be made about the churches that Castiglione and the other Europeans decorated in Beijing is that they contained mural paintings from not one but two traditions of *quadraturismo* that had developed in Northern Italy at the end of the seventeenth century. These are represented respectively by Castiglione's work, who followed Pozzo, and by Gherardini's. The latter came from within an Emilian tradition dominated by the 'Bolognese perspective' best represented by Michelangelo Colonna and by the *quadraturismo* of the Bibienas and the Galliaris. It is important here to note that Pozzo and Ferdinando Bibiena wrote the two most important manuals for *quadraturismo* of their age.³⁰⁹ The difference between their approaches lay mostly in the type of commission they got. They actually shared the same technical basis and often operated in interchangeable contexts. Accordingly, Pozzo's manual did not only instruct the painter to operate in religious spaces but his technique could be used for any type of commission.³¹⁰ Pozzo and Bibiena were, however, different in the way they presented their illusions, using different types of *quadratura* to prompt distinct visual responses. These traditions are too complex to discuss in detail here. But I would like briefly to explore the differences between Gherardini's and Castiglione's approaches and thus to illuminate certain scholarly disputes regarding the Jesuit's use of perspective and religious images in the Chinese mission. In addition, this comparison will show a certain set of skills that Castiglione might have acquired whilst painting *quadratura*.

Thanks to Jesuit letters and reports it may be established that Gherardini's work in the *Bei Tang* (Northern Church) followed the 'Bolognese' tradition. Here is a description of Gherardini's vault:

The ceiling is all painted: it is divided into three parts; the middle part represents a dome, all open, of rich architecture. It has marble columns which support a range of arcades on top of which there is a nice balustrade. The columns themselves constitute a finely drawn balustrade with nicely placed vases of flowers. High above among the clouds over a group of angels the Heavenly Father is holding the terrestrial globe in his hands.

³⁰⁹ Respectively the *L'Architettura civile* (first edition 1711) by Ferdinando Bibiena and the *Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum* by Pozzo, both already discussed in this thesis.

³¹⁰ I believe that, in the field of illusionistic mural paintings it is not helpful to maintain a strict division between religious and secular commissions. On the contrary, there were actually great similarities between churches and theatres even if there remained certain crucial differences.

The Chinese cannot believe that all this has been painted on one plane, and cannot be persuaded that the columns are not straight as they seem to be. The light that comes through the arcades and the balustrades is so wisely painted that one can easily be deceived. This painting is by M. Gherardini, an Italian painter that Father Bouvet took with him when he went to China. The altarpiece is painted too: both sides of it represent the continuation of the architecture of the church in perspective. It was amusing to see the Chinese visit that part of the church which seemed as if it was behind the altar: when they arrived at it they stopped, then stepped back a little, then forward again and put their hands on it to find out that there were really no relief or hollows.³¹¹

This shows that in the *Bei Tang* Gherardini mixed various types of illusionistic techniques such as convergent perspective, *quadraturismo* and *sfondati* (breakthrough). Unfortunately, it is impossible to make a meaningful comparison of Gherardini's vault with Castiglione's in the *Dong Tang* because Moggi's letter only states that the latter's vault was 'beautifully painted'. However, Moggi's description of the cupola by Castiglione is still valuable evidence. If one imagines a comparison with Gherardini's vault the differences may have been like those between the two Roman churches of Sant' Ignazio and Il Gesù, with vaults painted by Pozzo and Baciccio respectively.³¹² Baciccio's shared some of Gherardini's background. Gherardini's teachers were the

³¹¹ 'Le plafond est tout-à-fait peint: il est divisé en trois parties: le milieu représente un dôme tout ouvert d'une riche architecture: ce sont des colonnes de marbre, qui portent un rang d'arcades surmonté d'une belle balustrade. Les colonnes sont elles mêmes encastrées dans une autre balustrade d'un beau dessin, avec des vases de fleur fort bien placés. On voit au-dessus le Pere Eternel dans les nuées sur un groupe d'AnGES, & tenant le globe du monde en sa main. On a beau dire aux Chinois que tout cela est peint sur un plan uni; ils ne peuvent se persuader que ces colonnes ne soient droites, comme elles le paroissent. Les jours sont si bien ménagés à travers les arcades & les balustrades, qu'il est aisé de s'y tromper. Cette piece est de M. Gherardini Peintre Italien que le P. Bouvet amena avec lui à la Chine. Aux deux côtés du Dôme sont deux ovales, dont les peintures sont très-riantes. Le retable est peint de même que le plafond: les côtés du retable sont une continuation de l'architecture de l'Eglise en perspective. C'étoit un plaisir de voir les Chinois s'avancer, pour visiter cette partie de l'Eglise, qu'ils disoient être derrière l'autel: quand ils y étoient arrivés, ils s'arrêtoient, ils reculoient un peu, ils revenoient sur leurs pas, ils y appliquoient les mains, pour découvrir si véritablement il n'y avoit ni élévations, ni enfoncemens', Du Halde, op. cit., vol. III, 140-141.

³¹² The difference between Pozzo and Baciccio is undervalued by Elisabetta Corsi who affirms that the two painters represent one type of illusionism, Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 220-221. As noted by Robert Enggass: 'Baciccio's fresco depends for its spatial effects on atmospheric perspective, on figurative diminution, and especially on the architecture of the building itself. There is no *quadratura* at all', *The Painting of Baciccio. Giovanni Battista Gaulli 1639-1709*, Pennsylvania, 1964, 49.

Bolognese Angelo Michele Colonna (1604-1687) and Agostino Mitelli (1609-1660) who collaborated with Gioacchino Pizzoli (1651-1733), also Colonna's pupil. Pizzoli and Gherardini worked together on various commissions and went together to Paris where the latter met the Jesuit Joachim Bouvet, who convinced him to work for Kangxi.

Now, Pozzo's *quadratura* is a legible illusion: in Sant' Ignazio the observer may comprehend the structure behind the painting and receive clear messages about the political and religious power of the Jesuit Order (fig. 56).³¹³ Pozzo constructed his illusion by using architectural elements, real and painted, and by inserting figures into this architectural system. Accordingly, observers of Pozzo's vault and painted cupola soon realise that the viewer's physical position is crucial for achieving a perfect view of the illusion. In this way one becomes aware of the illusionistic stratagems of the image through its distortions. Simply by using one's eyes and by moving, one may discover how one is deceived. Baciccio's vault gives a more solid impression but at the same time it leaves the observer unable to find a legible geometrical structure behind the *sfondato* in which angels and clouds seemingly fall into the church (fig. 57). In addition, while in Sant' Ignazio the divine light is mediated by the figure of St. Ignatius, in Il Gesù the observer is directly exposed to it. In other words, Pozzo's illusion functions through a tight integration of architectural space and painting. In contrast, the illusion of Baciccio really remains within the painting. From this it would seem that the *sfondato* by Gherardini and the false cupola by Castiglione came from two different traditions which came with their own valuations of perspective. But, given the scant evidence, this distinction can only ever be speculative. More importantly, as I will show in the next chapter, the two distinct approaches would solicit different responses from the observers.

³¹³ Pozzo's vault can be seen as the triumphal *impresa* of the Jesuits. From this perspective the two mottos Est Nomen Eius Jesus (His name is Jesus) and Ignem Veni Mittere in Terram, et quid volo nisi accendatur (I came to set fire to the earth, let it burn) work as the textual part and the fresco as the visual part of the *impresa*.

4. Questioning the theological view of perspective. The value of distortion in *quadratura*

It is important to pay attention to the differences between the two perspectival views followed by Castiglione and Gherardini because they begin to resolve certain scholarly problems about perspective and Catholic imagery in China. In fact, in some of the comparative studies that analyse artistic exchanges between China and Europe in the eighteenth century, there is a tendency to underestimate the technical differences between various types of perspectival painting. Optical perspective thus has been used wrongly as a general parameter for describing European visual culture in China and its perception by non-Europeans. In Europe, the history of perspective, from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, was a process consisting both of mathematical discoveries and practical improvements. For this reason, in order to analyse the Chinese reaction to perspective, it is important first to understand the European development of perspective over time.

European perspective is a technique for projecting on a surface the shapes of objects as they appear to the eye. Geometrically this is obtained by a projection onto a section of space determined by the position of the viewer. In seventeenth-century painting these basics were developed further by projective geometry both in theory and practice. This helped the execution of paintings requiring geometrical coherence on any type of surface. In other words: a perspective painting made on a flat surface requires a different technique from a painting made on an irregular surface. But this was not all. Perspectival techniques changed according to the position of the viewer and also if they were incorporated into architectural contexts.

Now, as shown with regards to Pozzo and Baciccio, the differences between a *sfondato* and a false cupola are absolutely crucial. This point is not sufficiently appreciated by Hui Zou who contents himself with the statement that ‘the counter-eye in Jesuit perspective involved the beholder in a unique frontality where invisible reality, “the truth,” was encountered.’³¹⁴ This is much too simple and general.

³¹⁴ Hui, op.cit., 147.

I would further define this reductive point of view by borrowing a phrase from Elisabetta Corsi, who discusses the ‘theological implications of perspective’.³¹⁵ She, like Hui Zou, posits the nature and the use of perspective in a narrowly symbolic and theological manner rooted in the notion that perspective is homogeneous and immutable.

Apart from the complex role played by perspective in the practice of painters in early modern Europe, such approaches do not take into account the Jesuit failure to export creationism and other fundamental forms of Christian theology to China.³¹⁶ This suggests that the Jesuits would have been very foolish indeed if they expected that the Chinese would somehow discover ‘the truth’ or an ‘invisible reality’ or even God simply by looking at perspectival paintings. A better point of departure would be to accept that it is not appropriate to interpret perspective simply as a symbolic tool serving religious aims, be that in China or in Europe.

Already in the first stages of the Jesuit mission in China, Ricci was aware that European images might become an impediment rather than a help for religious proselytization. When describing the Ming Emperor’s response to European images, Ricci noted: ‘the Emperor could not understand the artifice of our figures as they were very small and with shadows, which the Chinese would not paint.’³¹⁷

As Ricci saw it, the Emperor did not understand the artifice of the images; the problem was not the images per se but about the techniques employed. Probably, for this reason, the Jesuits in China concentrated their efforts on translating and teaching European mathematical knowledge, and went to great efforts to find painters like Castiglione who could successfully transpose perspectival techniques to the Chinese environment. In other words, they wanted to re-contextualize European images so that they would fit into this new environment, rather than simply impose European pictorial forms.

The theological view of perspective claims to be based on a seventeenth-century understanding of God as the source of geometrical reality, visible

³¹⁵ Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 216.

³¹⁶ See Erik Zürcher, ‘“In the Beginning”: 17th-Century Chinese Reaction to Christian Creationism’, Huang and Zürcher (eds), op. cit., 132-166, 133. See also Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian impact: a conflict of cultures*, Cambridge, 1985.

³¹⁷ ‘...non seppa intendere l’artificio delle nostre figure per essere l’immagine piccola e con le ombre, che i Chinese non sogliono pingere’, D’Elia, 1942, op. cit., vol. II, 131.

through perspectival pictures. However, this needs some clarification. At the end of the introduction to his treatise on perspective Pozzo indicates the position of God in the perspectival projection: ‘...reader, happily start your work by constantly applying your mind to your art and by leading all the lines of your operations to the true point of the eye that is the glory of God.’³¹⁸ Such statements are considered by some authors to be valid evidence for the missionary use of perspective images in China. For example, David Summers claims that ‘Pozzo called the vanishing point “that true point, the Glory of God”’.³¹⁹ But this is a misreading of Pozzo’s actual point. As a Jesuit, Pozzo’s aim was to underscore that God is behind all human enterprises and thus behind geometrical knowledge, not to connect the geometrical structure of painted images to the divinity. Also, Pozzo’s statement is directed at trainee painters. It is thus for the painter to understand that geometry ultimately is an expression of God’s glory but mediated through the scientific efforts of humanity. As stated by Alberto Pérez-Gómez in his writings on Guarino Guarini’s *Placita Philosophica* (1665), between learnt knowledge and God ‘there was no dilemma because ultimately all knowledge was resolved in God’.³²⁰

In other words there are no direct visual connection between the vanishing point of a perspectival painting and God. As already noted, there are instead accelerated perspectives with vanishing points outside the compositions and, besides this, forms of perspective that have multiple vanishing points. The only point that is unchangeable is the eye of the viewer, that is, the point from which the vanishing point is projected on the plane. In any case, from Pozzo’s point of view, the main task of this type of painting was simply to stimulate the observer to wonder and then to understand the illusionistic methods behind the image as evidence of human abilities.

From a Jesuit point of view, the human eye, in Castiglione’s lifetime the most celebrated of all the human senses, ‘the most acute’ according to Pozzo, was still insufficient for seeing God.³²¹ The Jesuit Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli

³¹⁸ ‘...Cominciate dunque o mio Lettore allegramente il vostro lavor; con risoluzione di tirar sempre tutte le linee delle vostre operazioni al vero punto dell’occhio, che è la gloria Divina’, Pozzo, 1741/1758, op.cit., vol. I, introduction, unpagged.

³¹⁹ Summers, op. cit., 542.

³²⁰ Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science*, Cambridge (Mass.)-London, 1984, 81.

³²¹ ‘...il più accorto de’ nostri sensi’, Pozzo, 1741/1758, op. cit., vol. I, introduction, unpagged.

explained this in theological terms in his *Verità eterne esposte in lettioni Ordinate principalmente Per li giorni degli Esercizj Spirituali*, published in Milan in 1688:

To observe terrestrial objects the eye needs only one lens. But to see celestial objects one needs two lenses in the telescope. The objects of life beyond this world are very far from our senses. If one wants to look at them the lens of meditation is not enough, one also needs the lens of teaching.³²²

For Rosignoli not even the internal eye used for meditation is enough to see sacred truths. One needs a 'lectio' from God, not a rational message but a revelation. It is a kind of knowledge that cannot be generated from geometry or even from religious training. Bartoli made a similar point:

Why I am talking about men who as acutely they can see, in the end they are only moths that are blinded or dazzled by a singular spark of light, coming not only from rational matters but even from matters that involve the senses?³²³

From this point of view, the use of perspective and of images in general was certainly important. But it had to be done in conjunction with other factors. Jesuit imagery was not, as stated by Corsi, simply 'to provoke an emotional shock' and 'to arouse in the observer, seen as a potential novice, sentiments of fear, terror and wonder'.³²⁴ Contrarily to this view, I believe that in Sant' Ignazio - the painted cupola, the illusionistic vault, the perspective technique

³²² 'Per mirar le cose vicine della Terra può bastare all'occhio un sol vetro: ma non già per vedere le cose remote del Cielo: hanno ad esser due nel Cannocchiale. Le cose dell'altra vita sono lontanissime da' nostri sensi. A ben rimirarle non è sufficiente il cristallo della meditatione, fa di mestieri anche quello della lettione', Carlo Gregorio Rosignoli, *Verità eterne esposte in lettioni Ordinate principalmente Per li giorni degli Esercizj Spirituali*, Milan, 1688, 1.

³²³ 'Ma che parlo io de gli huomini, che per quanto acutamente veggano, pure in fine sono farfalle, cui una scintilla di luce, non dico sol delle pure cose intellegibili, ma delle sensibili ancora, o gli acceca, o gli abbaglia?', Daniello Bartoli, *La ricreatione del savio in discorso con la natura e con Dio*, Rome, 1659, 315.

³²⁴ Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 114. It is worth noting that, according to the *Bei Tang* catalogue of Jesuit libraries in Beijing, the two Jesuit authors just quoted were really important for the missionaries living in China. In the Italian section of the library Rosignoli's *Verità eterne esposte in lettioni* could be found in three editions (Bologna 1689, Bologna undated, Venice 1763) and that was also the case for Bartoli's *La ricreatione del savio* by Bartoli (Rome 1659, Milan 1660, Bologna 1668). Also, various others work by the two Jesuit authors are listed in the catalogue (Bartoli is represented by ten titles and fourteen books, Rosignoli by five titles and nine books). Only very few other European authors were so heavily represented. See Hubert Verhaeren, *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque du Pé-Tang*, Pékin, 1949, authors listed in alphabetical order, Italian section.

employed, the faith of the observer and the emblems and the symbols in general – were all meant to work together to prompt a religious understanding. The aim was not to solicit simple awe and blind worship starting from perspective.

Therefore it is crucial to look more closely at Pozzo's painting in Rome in order to understand how in China Castiglione might have understood his paintings in relation to his viewers. My several visits to Sant' Ignazio has helped me to comprehend the particular features of this type of pictorial setting. In Sant' Ignazio, Pozzo painted three separate areas: the fresco of the vault (fig. 58-59), the fresco of the tribune (fig. 60), and the canvas of the false cupola (fig. 61). These three paintings have three singular different points of view. The ideal point of view for the vault, where it works as an optical illusion, is in the centre of the nave; for the other two paintings the ideal points of view are closer to the main altar. In short, this means that in the correct position, the viewer of one of the three paintings sees the other two only in distortion. In addition, at any moment of time, only one spectator can look at one of the paintings from the correct point of view. In other words, it is distortion that mainly characterises the experience of looking at Pozzo's paintings inside the church of Sant' Ignazio. So, by using three single centres of projection, Pozzo did not completely deceive the eyes of everyone inside the church.

So, Pozzo catches the attention of his spectators through the wonder of distortion but without losing the effect of three-dimensionality. This effect was mainly achieved through the fusion of the actual architecture and the paintings. This was obtained by the deployment of various gradients of depth in the perspectival drawing of the paintings, and also in the variations of colour and shadow. Also, as argued by Maurice Henri Pirenne, the paintings are so distant that the spectators' binocular vision ceases to function properly.³²⁵ As reported by Zhang Jingyun and Yao Yuanzhi, the same seems to have happened in the *Nan Tang*. The two authors constantly indicate where one has to stand in order to look properly at certain parts of Castiglione's mural paintings. From their descriptions, one senses them walking around in the church, searching for the correct point of view.

³²⁵ Pirenne Maurice Henri, *Optics, painting & photography*, Cambridge, 1970, 85.

It is obvious that being inside an architectural space defined by *quadratura* is different from looking at one single perspectival painting. In the making of paintings like the ones for the refectory in Genoa, Castiglione had to construct a geometrical structure within the picture as delimited by the frame in order to obtain an effect of three-dimensionality. In contrast, in the *Nan Tang*, the geometrical structure on which the painting was made was simultaneously outside and inside the picture. In fact, it is the architecture together with geometrical aspects of the painting that are combined to make the picture. In this case, even if the picture has only one point from which can be viewed correctly, the spectator can look at the painting when moving, from various points of view. Thus, within this context, one loses any linear relationship between the viewer and the picture.

To a certain degree, the type of *quadratura* deployed by Castiglione and Pozzo does not give viewers a perfect system of homogeneity and proportionality. But it still functions in terms of three-dimensionality and colouring in order to create a coherent space for perception. Of course, within such a framework any straightforward symbolical relationship between the spectators and the picture is not possible. It is thus reasonable to affirm that, in the *Nan Tang*, Castiglione depicted so many local objects (for example, scrolls and screens) to give local observers a more solid ground for looking at the pictures. He needed to compensate for the freedom of the spectators with recognizable painted objects.

All the above underscores the fact that the nature of a perspectival construction is not symbolic in itself. Yet it can be used, in Erwin Panofsky's famous phrase, as a 'symbolic form'.³²⁶ It is thus the context of use that changes perspective into a symbolic form (or into any form that solicits symbolic responses in the viewers). It is undeniable that Sant' Ignazio in Rome is a highly

³²⁶ In Panofsky's view the term 'symbolic form' refers to a specific perspectival view. In fact, according to the author 'We shall speak of a fully "perspectival" view of space not when mere isolated objects, such as houses of furniture, are represented in "foreshortening", but rather only when the entire picture has been transformed- to cite another Renaissance theoretician - into a "window", and when we are meant to believe we are looking through this window into space', Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as a Symbolic Form*, New York, 1991, 27. It is obvious that the product of projective geometry as deployed by Castiglione and Pozzo is not about the production of an advantageous point of view in order to look into space (the window). Rather it is about the deploying of a certain set of visual stratagems in order to take the viewer into a space in which what is fictitious and what is real create different visual paths.

symbolic space. But this characteristic does not originate from the geometric structure deployed by Pozzo. Instead, the space is used to link visual and non-visual elements together in a symbolic fashion.

Castiglione's knowledge and use of perspective is thus crucial for exploring his professional development. In fact, this means that Castiglione, according to different situations and in relation to his knowledge of perspective, may well have used two different ways of addressing his spectators. The first is exemplified by the epistemic model used for linking diverse concepts and worlds through proportionality that I have already explored. The second view is the one revealed by the *quadratura* framework as discussed above, and by the way Castiglione learnt from visual sources during his initial training.³²⁷

In sum, in practicing *quadratura*, Castiglione experienced the impossibility of relating his pictures to his viewers in a straightforwardly and symbolic manner. Therefore, he must have understood the importance of reaching his audience by linking his work to their contexts of use; this was, after all, something he had already done when, as a young man, he decorated the refectory of the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa.

Distortion, created by the one-point perspective *quadratura*, offered an easy way to obtain this linkage: viewers were free to have different visual experiences in the same space and also to consider their tactile and kinetic actions. This means that, at least in one of the two churches that he painted in Beijing, Castiglione clearly considered that eliciting wonder was the best way to link his pictures and his spectators. However, this was to stimulate intellectual curiosity, without expecting a given mental or devotional response. As I will explore in the next chapter, such a response could only be produced by means of a specific cultural environment.

³²⁷ See part II of the present thesis, 66-71.

5. Europeans and Chinese look together at images and illusionistic paintings

Emanuele Tesauro, the seventeenth-century Italian author interested in perception and aesthetics, gave a useful definition of wonder in his *Filosofia morale*:

Wonder is when the mind is intensively captured by a new striking thing [object, phenomenon, image] of which it does not know the cause [origin]. Thus the soul, suspended and waiting [to know the cause], is captivated and the body as well stays stunned as if by a sudden rapture, petrified, motionless, wordless... That is the reason why animals do not feel wonder: they just see the effects and do not look for the causes.³²⁸

Similarly, Bartoli wrote that one first:

...stops [and looks] in wonder, [then] one talks to oneself or others [about these elements] to attain intellectual enrichment and [finally] one can lose oneself [by looking at these elements] to attain pleasure.³²⁹

Apart from this final pleasure, Bartoli's stages conform to those described by Tesauro.³³⁰ What is clear from Tesauro is that wonder represents the first stage of a process of observation that leads the viewer to a rational exploration and does not leave him still with astonishment. Even so, in Italian the difference between *stupore* and *meraviglia* is not always well defined.

³²⁸ 'La meraviglia è un'attenta affission della mente a qualche nuovo e serio oggetto; di cui non sapendo la cagione, l'animo sospeso desia di saperla, e in quel breve rapimento ancora il corpo rimane quasi da subita estasi stupidito, impietrato, senza movimento e senza favella.' '...perciò la meraviglia non sorprende gli animali perché veggono gli effetti e non cercano la cagione', Mario Zanardi, *La metafora e la sua dinamica di significazione nel «cannocchiale aristotelico» di Emanuele Tesauro*, Turin, 1980, 350.

³²⁹ '... fermarsi per meraviglia, discorrere per addottrinamento, e perdersi per diletto', Bartoli, 1664, op. cit., 3 v.-4 r.

³³⁰ The importance of pleasure in the cognitive process and its relationship to wonder is discussed by Horst Bredekamp: 'According to the image of the "deus ludens", the collector, in comprehending the creative process, preserved the reciprocity of useful application and lack of purpose, in order to gain knowledge "while at play"', *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine: The Kunstkammer and the Evolution of Nature, Art, and Technology*, Princeton, 1995, 72-73.

In Tesauro's case 'wonder' is nevertheless different from 'astonishment' because it indicates a first reaction, part of a larger perceptual process and not an autonomous feeling. Wonder makes the viewer ask: 'what next?' That this idea is relevant to Castiglione's work is corroborated by several assertions that viewers had to touch his paintings to convince themselves that they were not real. In this case, the touch indicates the passage from wonder to intellectual attention by checking where real space becomes illusion, and thus destroying the apparent uniformity of architecture and illusionistic painting. In descriptions of Castiglione's and also Gherardini's paintings it is manifest that touch neutralized the wondering view of both Chinese and European eyes. Here it is worthwhile recapitulating the relevant passages from various sources, already presented in this thesis.

1. Franco's description of Castiglione's paintings for the chapel of St. Francis Borgia in Coimbra in Portugal: 'no one can believe [them] to be painted without having touched them'.³³¹

2. Yao Yuanzhi's description of paintings in the *Nan Tang* by Castiglione: 'if you touch it, you will suddenly find it a wall'.³³²

3. Ferdinando Moggi's description of the illusionistic paint-work that makes the columns of *Nan Tang* look like marble: 'still when one touches them [the columns] it seems they are made of real stone'.³³³

4. Zhang Jingyun's description of paintings in the *Nan Tang* or in the Jesuit house probably also by Castiglione: 'As soon as one comes under the picture and touches it, there remains only one fence. It is almost like a fairy-land which can be gazed on, but never approached. One is left disappointed for a long time.'³³⁴

³³¹ Franco, 1714, op. cit., 57.

³³² '飭如也可以入矣，即之即油然璧也'，the English translation is by Ishida, op. cit., 102-103.

³³³ See chapter II of this part, 123.

³³⁴ '及至其下捫之，則塊然堵牆而已。殆如神州瑤嶼可望不可即，令人悵惘久之'，I have changed Ishida's translation. He interprets *wang* (望, to gaze) and *ji* (即, to approach) as 'idealized' and 'realized'. Also, the last passage is translated by Ishida as: 'One is left a long time in lamentation', Ishida, op. cit., 104-106.

5. A French report of a painting by Gherardini in the *Bei Tang* church of the Holy Saviour: ‘It was amusing to see the Chinese visit that part of the church which seemed as if it were behind the altar: when they arrived at it they stopped, then stepped back a little, then forward again and put their hands on it to find out that there were really no relief or hollows’.³³⁵

So, when considered in their original contexts, both Chinese and European reactions to Castiglione’s work were of wonder. As already noted, wonder in Europe was seen as a first reaction, meant to prompt a more discerning form of observation. For wonder was meant to stimulate the intellect through the eyes. In addition, within seventeenth-century European culture, wonder was easily prompted by the unexpected and the multiple.³³⁶ Here I will not analyse what was considered intriguingly multiple both in China and Europe. But I would like to emphasise that, in eighteenth-century urban China, encountering European images such as prints and paintings was not fully unexpected. On the contrary, such encounters sat comfortably within a civic tradition of engaging with and describing curiosities. Clunas has demonstrated that in a guide-book of 1635 on Beijing, one finds descriptions of objects and images contained in the main Jesuit church in the city and also of European images purchasable at one of the city’s markets.³³⁷ This suggests that Chinese wonder was a response generated only from the mimetic and not the symbolic qualities of illusionistic images. Or, to put differently, the missionaries simply could not rely on perspectival images alone.

Catholic missionaries were of course fully aware of this problem. As described by Prospero Intorcetta in his *Compendiosa Narratione Dello Stato della Missione Cinese, dall’Anno 1581. fino al 1669...*, the most important achievements of the Beijing mission after twenty years of preparation were:

³³⁵ See chapter III of this part, 133.

³³⁶ See Paolo Renucci, ‘Il Seicento: dalla selva barocca alla scuola del classicismo’, *Storia d’Italia*, op. cit., vol. II, 1360-1445, 1407.

³³⁷ Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*, London, 1997, 173. The guide is the *Di jing jing wu liu* by Liu Tong and Yu Yizheng, Beijing, 1635.

...our churches are open and respected by everyone. The principle feasts of the year are performed with solemn celebrations. The sacred images are adored with profound reverence by the pagans too. New and sumptuous churches dedicated to Jesus Christ and to his pure Virgin Mother were constructed. Most of all, our Sacred Religion has been propagated by the Fathers through their voices and printed images...Our numerous books printed in the Chinese language, that are different in style and in this way made appropriate to various types of persons, are given and wanted by everyone.³³⁸

Despite its celebratory emphasis, this passage offers important evidence about the missionary orchestration of a number of elements: ceremonies, painted images, architecture, printed images, texts, words. As demonstrated by Pozzo's paintings in Sant' Ignazio, the *quadraturismo* learned by Castiglione needed a context in order to function properly. This also explains why European wonder was significant only as part of a chain of perceptual and intellectual responses. In other words: in painting *quadraturismo*, the painter's aim was to stimulate wonder because it was considered a good way of stimulating a desire for knowledge. For, once experienced, wonder was considered to prompt a linking of the initial act of perception with rational elements. And *quadraturismo* was thought to be an efficient way to stimulate this secondary response precisely because it hints at the skills involved in the construction of a visual illusion as well as being such an illusion in itself. In touching the walls covered with paintings, Chinese and European hands discovered the presence of illusionistic images, not a new reality. In this way the observer acquired his or her own

³³⁸ '...aperte le nostre Chiese e riverite da tutti, solennizzate pomposamente le Feste principali dell'anno, et adorate con profondissima riverenza anche da gentili le Sacre Immagini, fabricate nuove e sontuose Chiese a Christo Giesù, et alla purissima Vergine sua Madre, e soprattutto con la voce e con le stampe da Predicatori Evangelici propagata la nostra Santa Fede...desiderati da tutti, e procurati i nostri libri stampati in lingua Cinese, che sono molti, e varij nello stile, proportionati alla varietà delle persone...[1671]', Prospero Intorcetta, *Compendiosa Narratione Dello Stato della Missione Cinese, dall'Anno 1581. fino al 1669. Offerta in Roma. Alli Eminentissimi Signori Cardinali della Sacra Congregatione de Propaganda Fide. Dal P. Prospero Intorcetta della Compagnia di Giesù: Missionario, e Procuratore della Cina: con l'aggiunta de'Prodigij da Dio operati; e Lettere venute dalla Corte di Pekino con felicissime nuove*, Rome, 1672, 11-12.

insight, rationally considering the act of looking at something. If this might be considered valid for Europeans, what about Chinese viewers?

Both the Chinese and the European descriptions of the act of touching the paintings show the same type of wonder as a spark for the act of touching. At the same time, both Chinese and Europeans in Beijing experienced the images in two closely related contexts. The first was that created by the Europeans, for example, when these presented images as described by Intorcetta above. The second context is rooted in the civic culture of Beijing, as described by Clunas, and also in the Qing imperial policy for sponsoring and at the same time controlling and delimiting Catholic spaces in the capital. Of course, this context took its origins in local traditions for looking at paintings. The various aspects of the Chinese context were profoundly inter-connected. Just as in Europe, it too involved ceremonies, painted images, printed images, texts and words. In Beijing, therefore, Chinese and European conceptual frameworks for responding to paintings seem to have overlapped in certain areas. They were connected even if they remained different.

First they intersected in relation to printed imagery. It seems reasonable to propose that printed images were an important way for testing each other's tastes. Certainly Moggi, the architect who collaborated with Castiglione, would consider Chinese tastes in relation to European architecture when describing the *Nan Tang*. He affirmed in a letter to General Tamburini that he had shown to various persons books with printed images of churches and other buildings:

As for the church [the Nan Tang], the differences of the European architectural style are for the greater part concealed in order to meet the Chinese taste for a rich[ly adorned] architecture with plenty of columns, works and all that is abundant. The kind of architectural work that we consider heavy and sturdy is customary for them, as I happened to learn

when I showed them some European prints of churches and similar works.³³⁹

In the same letter Moggi wrote:

The Chinese of all classes who come to visit this church do not tire of praising it in unison. [Yet] everyone notes that it is too high. On the contrary, it is certainly too bulky compared with the fine European churches and this is its greatest fault in the general effect. Well, the habits of this environment are so different from those of Europe, that it would be too long to explain.³⁴⁰

Moggi and his unknown Chinese observers together used printed images and actual buildings to discuss their tastes in architecture. Moggi thus divulges an interesting point: the *Nan Tang* is European in style yet it is built following certain Chinese architectural characteristics because in China tastes are different.³⁴¹ In a third passage from the same letter Moggi adds:

And what very often caused my admiration was to hear their very congruous opinions: the first man to whom I showed some prints gave the same opinion as the next one, and the next one, as if the word was passed from one to the other. That is incredible and virtually unlikely to happen in Europe. I remember that when I was in Europe and showed any work of art to people, I would hear very different opinions about it. For this reason I affirm that here in China, more than in Europe, it is important to produce

³³⁹ 'Questo medesimo hancora si puole dire di tutta la Chiesa, la quale in quello che difere dal gusto Architettonico di Europa, è in grande parte disimulato per accomodarsi al genio Cinese, che gusta di multiplicità di colonne, multiplicità di lavori e insomma tutto in copia, e le fabbriche che noi chiamiamo gravi, e solide, loro le stimano ordinarissime, siccome io medesimo o sperimentato con mostrarli stampe di Chiese e di altre fabbriche...', ARSI, Jap. Sin. 184, 41 r./v., to the General Michelangelo Tamburini, Beijing, November 8, 1729.

³⁴⁰ 'Tutti i Cinesi siano Grandi e piccoli che vengono a vedere questa Chiesa non si sazano di lodarla tutti come si suol dire a una bocca, e tutti medesimamente la notano di molto alta, essendo certo che a proporzione delle belle Chiese Europee il maggiore difetto che viene considerato il tutto insieme, è essere alquanto tozza, in somma il genio di questo clima è tanto diferente da quello di Europa che lungo sarebbe esplicarlo', *ibid.*

³⁴¹ This is further evidence against the notion that there was a specific 'Jesuit style' in architecture. Instead, it underscores the Order's capacity for fitting its commissions into different environments. This flexibility may also be detected in the architecture of the Order in Italy. See Stefano Della Torre and Richard Schofield, *Pellegrino Tibaldi architetto e il S.Fedele di Milano. Invenzione e costruzione di una chiesa esemplare*, Milan, 1994, 16.

works that are consonant with everybody's taste as Chinese people have very similar ways of both praising and disdaining.³⁴²

Moggi's sense of the uniformity of Chinese observers' reactions suggests that there was a tradition of homogenous responses to images that had come from outside China. It was, perhaps, a way of incorporating and controlling novelties imported by the Qing emperors but already present in certain Ming reports. The Chinese descriptions of Beijing Jesuit churches given above should therefore be considered within this tradition.

The *Nan Tang* and all the images in it were also framed by another basic intersection or point of connection between the European and Chinese contexts. This was the recognition of imperial power both by the citizens of Beijing and the Europeans. The churches in the capital could only have been built with imperial permission and on the basis of an imperial gift of a lot of land. Moreover, the Qing emperors laid claim to the churches by personally visiting the European missions and by having the missionaries display various imperial symbols.³⁴³

Having partially defined these frameworks it is now important to re-imagine the reaction of a Beijing viewer in front of Castiglione's illusionistic paintings. Given the various imperial claims laid to the Jesuit's churches in Beijing, a local viewer would probably enter the church thinking, first and foremost, that the space was under imperial favour. In addition, he or she might have looked at printed images of European architecture and may have analysed the church's features on this basis. Finally, there is the touching of the mural paintings and the homogenous response described by Moggi.

³⁴² ...e cosa certo che molte volte mi causò ammirazione il vedere l'uniformità del gusto cinese per che mostrandosegli alcuna stampa di quelle che già dissi; quello che noto il primo che la vedde lo notano ancora li altri come se uno lo havesse detto all'altro cosa affatto incredibile, e che in Europa è rara a succedere, e mi ricordo che quando la stavo, a quanti soggetti mostravo una cosa, tanti erano i pareri tra se inconbinabili; dal detto voglio riferire che qua più che in Europa, inporta l'accomodarsi al genio del Paese e dei Paesani, che si nel lodare, come nel biasimare sono a meraviglia uniformi', ARSI, Jap. Sin. 184, f.41 v., op.cit.

³⁴³ For example, when describing the *Nan Tang*, Chang Ching-yun refers to a tablet presented by Kangxi. See Ishida, op.cit., 105. In addition Du Halde's book describes Kangxi's visit to the French mission, see Du Halde, op. cit., chapter II, 8.

However, Moggi's description is not necessarily about a lack of individuality in the Chinese reception of images. In fact, there is a basic similarity between Italian wonder ('meraviglia') and the Chinese attention to the double nature of cognition. Both revolve around an awareness of the impossibility of perceiving an image without combining intellectual and physiological-cognitive perceptions. If 'meraviglia' was seen only as a first step towards a complete vision that had to be enriched by rational discernment, similarly in Chinese literary traditions the senses are not sufficient for understanding reality. This view is actually central to the history of Chinese artistic literature. For example, the famous poet and painter Wang Wei (415-443) in his *Xu Hua* (*Discussion of Painting*, a text quoted in the *Lidai minghua ji* (ca. 847) by Zhang Yanyuan, (ca. 815-after 875) wrote:

Now those who speak of painting ultimately focus on nothing but appearances and positioning. Still, when the ancients made paintings, it was not in order to plan the boundaries of cities or differentiate the locale of provinces, to make mountains and plateaus or delineate watercourses. What is founded in form is fused with soul, and what activates movement is the mind. If the soul cannot be seen, then that wherein it lodges will not move. If eyesight is limited, then what is seen will not be complete.³⁴⁴

As in the European tradition, the senses must be supplemented with deeper reflection to form proper cognitive activity. However, the initial awareness and wonder of both Europeans and Chinese produced very different results. Theoretically, in China a complete understanding of a painting cannot be described as two separate perceptions, one for appearances or the visible, the other for 'true' reality, the invisible.³⁴⁵ Cognitive action is instead one dynamic process. In contrast, early modern Europeans would describe it as a linear process that can indeed be divided into different stages. When this insight is

³⁴⁴ Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*, Cambridge (Mass.) – London, 1985, 38.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 93.

brought to bear on the Chinese descriptions of Castiglione's paintings, an interesting point emerges.

In both of the Chinese descriptions of Castiglione's paintings in the Jesuit churches, the observer refers to the act of looking as *zhu* or *shi*.³⁴⁶ These two words describe only the physical perception of the eye and can be translated as 'to look at'. In using these verbs the authors precisely defined how they categorised Castiglione's paintings. The observer is in front of an image that displays only physical appearances and it is esteemed for its mimetic qualities. Moggi had received the same response from various persons: the observers were probably all dwelling on the biological aspect of sight.

The initial shared wonder in this case does not lead the Chinese observer to define Castiglione's painting by the verbs *du* (to read) or *guan* (to observe). *Guan* is mostly used in the literary tradition for describing the act of looking at paintings as a comprehensive examination and understanding based on both observation and contemplation. For this reason it was a personal act.³⁴⁷ In particular, for Chinese eyes, what Castiglione's painting in the Beijing churches did not contain is the *sheng* (living spirit) of things that allows one to see the constant changing of reality. For this perception to be triggered, *guanxiang* (the observation of the forms of objects) and *guanbian* (the observation of the changing of objects) must all act together.³⁴⁸ Very differently, the European illusionistic tradition played a game in which what is real is set off against what is merely depicted yet seems real. In this way the observer may discover through wonder. Yet such imagery could not trigger the perception of a continuous interflow between the world and the self as required by the Chinese tradition.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ Ishida, op. cit., 102-104.

³⁴⁷ Cheng Chung-ying, 'Chinese-Western conceptions of beauty and good and their cultural implications', Karl-Heinz Pohl (ed.), *Chinese Thought in a Global Context*, 1999, 190-235, 193. For the differences between *guan*, *du* and *kan* (to look) see also Clunas, 1997, op.cit., 117-119.

³⁴⁸ Cheng, op. cit., 197.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 198.

My analysis of Castiglione's knowledge of European perspective, supported by the evidence presented in this part of the thesis suggests that the painter's approach to China was guided by different types of knowledge and opinions. However, his approach did probably not develop by following definable stages but instead resulted from the day-to-day tasks that Castiglione had to face. In general, the epistemic and geographic model of perspective presented in this section presumably worked well in linking elements of knowledge and memories developed in Europe to the new Chinese environment. In contrast, Castiglione's intellectual and practical involvement in *quadratura*, a form of painting not restricted to a fixed knowledge of perspective, might have interrupted this linear linking process by supplying him with a more flexible way of envisaging different tasks. He might well have recognised the importance of contexts when making pictures for 'uncertain' spectators. This knowledge was of course applicable both when he painted in Europe and in China. This, I believe, was the starting point for Castiglione's work of translation. For, in working under the patronage of the mid-Qing emperors, Castiglione would seamlessly join European artistic skills and techniques with elements belonging to the Qing court tradition. Therefore, in my fourth and final section, I will argue that when Castiglione made a painting in the Qing workshops, the result was not a hybrid but instead an elegant act of translation.

PART IV

PART IV: CASTIGLIONE'S TRANSLATION

The French painter Jean-Denis Attiret (1702-1768) worked at the Qing court with Castiglione from 1739 to 1768. He wrote in one of his letters from China: 'I had to forget all that I had learned and make a new style for myself to conform to the nation's taste'.³⁵⁰ Attiret's statement must be a rhetorical flourish to show profound disappointment. It is, of course, impossible to forget entirely a skill that one has once learned. It is actually extremely unlikely that a painter like Castiglione would be able to block out his original training because, as an apprentice, he learned not only a set of techniques but a whole system for perceiving reality. On the basis of Attiret's statement, Pirazzoli has argued that Castiglione had to 'combine Chinese methods and canons with European traditions' and that 'to achieve this synthesis, Castiglione chose among the Western techniques the one which served his purposes best'.³⁵¹ This process is what Attiret called 'forgetting to conform' yet I think it is more appropriately to describe it as 'translation'.

So far, in this thesis I have proposed that Castiglione's career should be understood as an individual and uninterrupted artistic experience, not as divided into two essentially unrelated Italian and Chinese episodes.³⁵² In fact, the Italian and the Chinese paintings both conform to Castiglione's artistic idiom. The painter simply fitted this idiom into different professional contexts. I shall call

³⁵⁰ 'Il m'a fallu oublier tout ce que j'avais appris, et me faire une nouvelle manière pour me conformer au gout de la nation.' The English translation and the French text come from Pirazzoli, 2001, op. cit., 823-835, 825.

³⁵¹ Ibid., 826.

³⁵² For example Yang Boda writes that 'by adapting his former training with a deliberation of Chinese painting traditions and use of Chinese media, Castiglione created a new style which also appealed to the emperor's aesthetic taste'; he also employs the notion of 'hybrid style', 'Castiglione at the Qing Court. An Important Artistic Contribution', *Orientalisms*, vol. 19, n. 11, 1988, 44-51, 49-51.

this process ‘translation’ and the main aim of this final part is to account for and analyse it.

Castiglione’s translation was a cognitive process that required conscious intellectual activity. The painter had to create mental frameworks and, through them, draw connections between his Italian skills and the Chinese court canon. In relation to Qing commissions, this meant understanding the patron’s taste and the circumstances into which the painting had to fit. Thus, once he had considered the practical demands arising from a Qing court commission, Castiglione could then devise a strategy for meeting these demands on the basis of his Italian experiences.

In this part, in order to provide some examples of how this worked, I will analyse some scroll paintings executed by Castiglione under Yongzheng’s and Qianlong’s patronage. All these pictures show the use of certain European techniques. Castiglione would mainly employ *chiaroscuro* (an element definitely derived from oil painting) and central perspective. These could be incorporated into imperial commissions because Castiglione used them in a manner fully congruent with the existing canon of court painting.

1. The *Juruitu* scroll: modulating lines, chiaroscuro and reflections in a Qing commission

One of the first paintings commissioned by Yongzheng may be seen as exemplary of Castiglione's method of translation. This is a vertical scroll executed in 1723: *Juruitu* (*Assembled Auspicious Objects*, fig. 62). For this image, Castiglione adopted a simple axonometric drawing for delineating the wooden support below the vase. It is also worth noting the use of chiaroscuro to give volume and texture to the vase and the meticulous drawing employed for the bunch of flowers. Apart from chiaroscuro and optical perspective, the painting has sharp contours, meticulous brushstrokes and a use of light pigments. These features, part of Castiglione's technical repertoire, were also used by the other court painters. Yet they could also be considered features of the Chinese environment since they had local forms and names: *gongbi* (realistic representation of objects) and *jiehua* (meticulous and detailed use of the brush, the colours and the ink). As Yang Boda has demonstrated, these already existing ways of painting were enriched in the court environment by the technique of linear perspective, known in Chinese as *xianfa* (the line method).³⁵³

During the Qing dynasty, court paintings constructed by the means of *xianfa* were classified as *gongbi jiehua*. Specific colours were also characteristic of particular court genres painted within the *gongbi* and *xianfa* methods. For example, some of the court painters who collaborated with Castiglione were notable for the use of *gongbi zhongcai* (fine line and vivid colours).³⁵⁴ These techniques were core elements of the so-called academic style.³⁵⁵ This term designates the technical features and subject-matter deployed by famous Song

³⁵³ Probably the term *xianfa* refers to a general concept of linear perspective. See Yang, 1988, op. cit., 44-51.

³⁵⁴ For example, these include Jiao Bingzhen (who painted at court from the 1680 to the 1720), Ding Guanpeng (active at court between the 1726 and the 1770), Jin Tingbiao (1757-1767) and Chen Mei.

³⁵⁵ Richard M. Barnhart, *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*, Yale-Beijing, 1997, 281. The Qing support of this tradition mostly resulted from the imperial interest in collecting and study ancient paintings from various masters.

and Ming court painters. Academic paintings were characterised by the careful description of birds and flowers, figures and landscape and the naturalistic depiction of architectural features, using mimetic drawing and brushwork supported by vivid colours.

Castiglione seems to have translated his knowledge and experiences into these existing Chinese categories by carefully considering the context of his commission. First, he visited the *Shangsui* valley. For, as noted in the colophon of the *Juruitu* scroll, there the painter had observed the twin lotus stalk that he would later paint together with the other auspicious plants of peony, millet and arrowhead.³⁵⁶

Castiglione could make use of his European artistic skills, and thus make the scroll, whilst also completely respecting the rules of the commission. This flexibility worked on two strictly connected levels. On one level, it was linked to the technical traditions embodied by Qing scroll paintings and, on the other, a personal repertoire composed by a memory-bank of images. On the technical level Castiglione might have considered the Lombard tradition of tempera paintings and, in particular, illustrations such as those made by Milanese painters for the Settala inventory.³⁵⁷ The peculiarity of these images is that they are not sketches but complete depictions based on direct and meticulous observation. Moreover, the Qing scroll and the images in the Milanese inventory are both on unpainted, raw silk or on blank paper (see for example fig. 63). This similarity suggests that the Milanese album represented, for Castiglione, one model for making a Chinese still-life even if the medium, the dimensions and the uses of the images were profoundly different. In both cases, the unpainted space has the effect of drawing the viewer's attention towards the carefully observed details of the actual depiction. In the Settala inventory, this attention to detail was to serve both illustrative and didactic aims. In the *Juruitu*,

³⁵⁶ See Yang, 1988, op. cit., 44.

³⁵⁷ *Disegni originali che sono descritti nell'Opera scritta in latino dal Dott. Fis. Collegiato Paolo Maria Terzago, tradotta in Italiano con un aumento dal Dott. Fis. Pietro Francesco Scarabelli*, op. cit., I vol., 338 δ, H.1.22; II vol., 1236 δ, H. 7. 49.

it is meant to prompt a visual search for the clear symbolism of the various plants.

In the making of the *Juruitu*, Castiglione avoided strong chiaroscuro even if this was a technique in which he was highly skilled, as evinced by the Genoa paintings. For this might well have obscured the neat and straightforward depiction of the plants. Instead, he chose a diffuse light yet maintained the illusion of one single light source, as may be seen on the front right of the porcelain vase. In fact the intensity of light gradually and smoothly changes across the image, from bottom to top. In the depiction of the wooden support the chiaroscuro is at its strongest and leaves the left part in shadow. For the vase, Castiglione used a different light intensity. He emphasises the reflective quality of the porcelain in order to show its texture and volume and this is also accentuated by the delicately rendered craquelure. Even so, traces of chiaroscuro remain visible in the depiction of the stems of the plants and this gives a sense of depth to the bunch. Finally, the plants themselves are illuminated by a diffuse light so that one may discern even the most subtle features. This way, of structuring the viewer's experience by setting up a certain tension between a single source of light and diffuse illumination, may also be seen in Castiglione's *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, made for the Jesuit noviciate in (fig. 5). Here the light coming from the left falls on the back of the Samaritan woman and it casts her shadow onto the well. The importance of the light effects is also conveyed in the shining silky effects on her left and in the right side of Christ's face. In contrast, the figure of Christ and the corner of the well are illuminated by a much more diffuse light that allows the painter to evoke the texture of marble and thus convey a sense of the natural environment surrounding the two figures.

To summarise, Castiglione's skills in relation to chiaroscuro and the fall of light are here the terms of translation. This translation was possible because it functioned within a system of perception constituted by the painter's skills that allowed him to link Chinese elements and Italian forms. The *Juruitu* scroll is, in

effect, a Qing image made by elements translated from the Italian tradition of painting. It is not a simple hybrid or an adaptation; it is too coherent visually to be described as such.

Castiglione's approach to the courtly and canonical *gongbi jiehua* method may also be seen by comparing the *Juruitu* with similar pictures by Chinese painters. In the Qing hanging-scroll *Arrangement of Flowers and Objects to Celebrate the Chinese New Year* (fig. 64), the painter was not so concerned with a realistic description of the objects and their textures. Nevertheless the visual impact of this image is not so different from the *Juruitu*. The clarity of the contours and the use of colours on the unpainted silk background have very similar results.

This manner of the painting has its model in the ink monochrome style, which involves linear drawing. For example, this is visible in the Qing panel *Crab-apple in a Glass Vase* (fig. 65) Without being concerned about the reflective qualities of objects, the painter conveys the impression of volume by juxtaposing the linear image of the vase with the realism of the crab-apple branches, invoked by the various nuances of the ink. This suggests that the precise attention to details embodied by the Chinese academic style may have been the Qing emperors' basic criterion for judging the works of the Italian artist. Respecting the academic style, in turn, left Castiglione with some space to deploy discrete elements of European techniques such as, for example, *chiaroscuro*.

As shown when discussing the Genoa paintings, Castiglione's manner entails a particular attention to the reflective qualities of different materials in response to different types of light. Here, then, it is worth considering the differences between attention to light and *chiaroscuro*. *Chiaroscuro* cannot easily be separated from optical perspective because it is the element that conveys three-dimensionality, especially in relation to fixed light sources. Attention to light and, in particular, in Castiglione's case, attention to the reflective qualities of different surface, leads to similar results. But this does not

have to involve geometrical contextualisation and fixed light sources.³⁵⁸ Moreover, as the *Juruitu* shows, by combining chiaroscuro and a careful delineation of the reflective qualities of different materials (for example, wood and porcelain), Castiglione could avoid the purely perspectival yet still fulfil his commissions.

The appreciation and depiction of reflections and reflective surfaces in both China and Europe certainly need further research. However, here I shall consider briefly the *Manual of Birds* commissioned by Qianlong from Yu Sheng and Zhang Weibang in 1750. The manual is composed by twelve albums with thirty leaves each; it took eleven years to finish. Each album contains meticulous pictorial descriptions rooted in a highly controlled drawing technique and a careful use of colours. For example, in the leaf showing a parrot (fig. 66) one may observe the realistic rendering of feathers and the accurate physical description of the bird. Yet there is a marked absence of chiaroscuro. The three-dimensional aspects of the parrot are conveyed by a mere attention to the reflective qualities of the feathers and to how their patterns of colour appear to human eyes. Thus, together with a precise attention to details, the knowledge of the reflective qualities of various surfaces already gained within Castiglione's initial training may be seen as another term of translation. This particular skill was clearly used by Castiglione to please his Qing patrons; he must have estimated that his imperial patrons would assess his work on this basis.

³⁵⁸ Recent studies in the field of human vision demonstrate that objects (natural or artificial) reflections may lead to the visual recognition of three-dimensional shape. For example, see Roland W. Fleming –Antonio Torralba – Edwards Adelson, 'Specular reflections and the perception of shape', *Journal of Vision*, n. 4, 2004, 798-820.

2. The *Suichaotu* scroll: incomplete perspective

Castiglione's Chinese commissions constitute important visual evidence for exploring how the Qing court saw European perspective. And the images also reveal something of Castiglione's method of translation. For example, the vertical scroll *Suichaotu* (*The Qianlong Emperor and the Royal Children*) by Castiglione and Ding Guanpeng shows the use of certain perspectival techniques although it is not a perspectival painting (fig. 67). The image belongs to the *xingletu* category (pictures of behaviour and enjoyment) of the *renwu* genre (figure and genre painting).³⁵⁹ In this New Year scroll Castiglione applied a single vanishing point placed outside the composition, beyond the left upper corner. However, this vanishing point was used only to depict the portico but not applied to other objects, such as the small piece of furniture at the top left corner of the pavilion. In addition, to indicate his supreme rank, the figure of Qianlong is not in scale with the other protagonists and there are no shadows to evoke volume. So this image was not painted in full perspective but using only elements of perspectival technique. Here certain parts of the commission required a European rendition of depth and detailed linear drawing but not a realistic homogeneity of the figures, not a geometrical consistency. This shows how Castiglione had to translate his working repertoire to cater to Qing court commissions. In this case perspective was simply one discrete element within the process of translation. This element was not adapted or changed according to Chinese views. Instead, it was used as detachable pictorial entity inserted into existing Chinese conventions.

Using optical perspective for representing three-dimensionality may be explained as means of showing as many elements as possible on the painted surface. As Bibiena argued, perspective 'allows one to look with one glance at the entire essence of any object that our eyes can see'.³⁶⁰ Both Hui Zou and

³⁵⁹ Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900*, New York, 1992, 9.

³⁶⁰ 'fà vedere in un'occhiata tutto l'effetto di qualsivoglia cosa, che l'occhio nostro sia capace a vedere', Galli Bibiena, *op. cit.*, 77.

Elisabetta Corsi have underestimated this characteristic feature when writing about European perspective in China. They have used instead the literal definition of perspective: ‘seeing through’.³⁶¹ In contrast, Bibiena’s point reveals another meaning behind perspective, an idea of a perfect and complete view. *Perspicere*, the Latin root for ‘perspective’, is in fact formed by *per* and *spicere*, the latter is ‘to see’ and *per* here means ‘the whole’ or ‘completely’ as in the word ‘perfect’ from *per-factum*, completely made. A sketch for a print by Agostino Carracci, *Perspective View of a Countryside*, best illustrates this idea: the viewer embraces the entire panorama with his eyes (fig. 68).³⁶² In this sense perspective was used by painters to reach a perfectly comprehensible view of a pictorial whole.

In the *Suichaotu* scroll the elements of European perspective were clearly not used in keeping with Bibiena’s views. Instead, it simply serves to show the limited space of the garden and the pavilion enclosed by the wall. Similar results could have been obtained using the traditional Chinese system of axonometric projection. For example, the roof of a pavilion coming out from the mist suggests a distant space unconnected to the otherwise measurable space of the foreground scene. It is a conventional image, following the Chinese tradition that lets the eye wander in a space without clear boundaries and dimensions.³⁶³ The other element of perspective that seems to have stimulated the curiosity of court painters was the use of chiaroscuro. Again, the *Suichaotu* scroll shows that chiaroscuro was not always used together with the delineation of shapes by means of orthogonals meeting in a vanishing point. Therefore, once Castiglione was in China, he began to use perspective in a different way. To make this system of perception fit with Chinese tastes, it now became one way - but not the only one - that a painter might evoke depth and three-dimensionality.

³⁶¹ Hui, op. cit., 156; Corsi, 2002, op. cit., 216.

³⁶² In Diane De Grazia Bohlin, ‘Italian Masters of the Sixteenth Century’, *Illustrated Bartsch*, New York, 1980, vol. XXXIX, 370.

³⁶³ See for example the section on Chinese landscape texts in Bush and Shih, op. cit., 141-190.

In itself, this fits with the fact that the emperor Kangxi, the first Qing patron who employed Castiglione, had asked the Jesuits for a painter with specifically European skills, such as the ability to work with perspective and in oil paints. These skills then had to be deployed for imperial commissions and transmitted to Chinese and Manchu apprentices. This means that the mid-Qing emperors appreciated certain technical features of European painting, such as convergent perspective and chiaroscuro. In few cases, they wanted these features incorporated in their commissions.³⁶⁴ Used to the highest quality, they were probably not inclined to patronize paintings showing awkward hybrid modifications of European techniques.³⁶⁵ Hybridization might have represented a risk, undermining the coherence of images meant to promote imperial supremacy. Instead, the Qing emperors wanted pictures fully following the Chinese court tradition but enriched by discrete and therefore governable European components. In the two scrolls discussed so far, Castiglione met these requirements in a most exacting manner.

³⁶⁴ In exploring the *jiehua* tradition of painting during the Qing dynasty, Anita Chung argues: 'Painters were fascinated by how European linear perspective could create an illusory space that induced viewers to walk into it, and they applied the newly imported foreign methods to Chinese architectural representation. This in turn, enhanced the tangible quality of physical space in Qing architectural paintings. Although this borrowing was selective (because there was no attempt to organize the whole composition with perspectival construction), it was in line with the aesthetic conception of the period', Chung, op. cit., 159-160.

³⁶⁵ See Naquin and Rawski, op. cit., 18-21, 68-69.

3. Castiglione's images of the sea: natural observations and the painting canon

In this chapter my purpose is to interrogate Castiglione's use of landscape imagery. Could he link his own artistic attitudes to nature with the Chinese way of looking?

This issue hinges on the painter's ability to arrest the ephemerality of nature through combining different natural motifs. These motifs are fixed as long-term memories and derived from the linking between the actual experiences of looking at nature and the looking or making pictures depicting nature. Of course, within this process, memory was often helped by the making of sketches or by viewing printed pictures. Therefore, to translate such visual memories into a Qing commission, Castiglione had to connect his past and present experiences to the canon of Chinese court painting.

The best example for this process is probably the hanging scroll *Haitian Xuritu* (*Rising Sun Against Oceanic Sky*, date unknown, fig. 69).³⁶⁶ This scroll shows how Castiglione modulated various visual fragments to meet Qing commissions. In this bird's-eye view of the ocean, with only a very limited portion of *terra firma*, Castiglione differentiated carefully between water and sky. The upper part of the sky, which fills the most of the scroll, is painted using a European manner with carefully blended colours and a delicate use of shadowing in order to give volume to the clouds. However, both clouds and sky partially obscure the horizon line and the shape of the land. This, employing one key feature of the Chinese landscape tradition, gives a sense of an indefinite and great space and offers the possibility of a more profound visual experience.³⁶⁷ Then, also according to the Chinese canon, Castiglione painted the sea by using detailed lines and by following a geometrical pattern for the waves.

³⁶⁶ Zhu Bian and Nie Chongzheng, *Painting by the Court Artists of the Qing Court: The Complete Collection of the Treasure of the Palace Museum*, Hong Kong, 1996, 186.

³⁶⁷ For Chinese landscape painting and the Song model followed by Qianlong see Richard Edwards, *The World Around the Chinese Artist. Aspect of Realism in Chinese Painting*, Ann Arbor (Michigan), 1989, 20.

Even if it is not possible to know exactly which natural phenomena Castiglione had in mind, the scroll suggests some interesting issues. One may infer that Castiglione probably painted the sky by using his most recent visual experiences of sky and sea, such as he may have observed during his long voyage to China, together with his experiences of making other depictions of the sky. At the same time, as shown by this painting of the sea, he also followed established Qing conventions for this type of commission. These are best exemplified by an album of copies of the *Shuitu (Studies of water)* by Ma Yuan's (active 1190 – after 1225), executed by Qianlong (fig. 70) who very much liked and collected images by the Southern-Song painter (fig. 71).³⁶⁸ Two images in particular, *Breeze-stroked Ripples on Lake Dongting* and *Surging Waves*, show renditions of space and of waves very similar to Castiglione's. Again, it is clear that, in his Qing commissions, Castiglione combined his European and Chinese painterly experiences. This translation generated imagery that fitted neatly into the Chinese tradition.

Of course this type of translation was limited by differences that one must acknowledge. The most important of these is represented by the technical processes adopted by European painters. Francesco Fulvio Frugoni (1620-1686), writer and pupil of Tesauro, begins to explain this in the *De' ritratti critici* when he discusses the similarities between poetry and painting. He states that poetry and painting 'both draw before pigments are applied. Both then paint, almost always, what they draw. They draw what they wish to represent through figures, they represent through figures what they have composed, and they compose what they invented'.³⁶⁹ When traced in its proper order, this becomes a process beginning with invention, then follows composition, representation, drawing and finally painting. This order represented the standard early modern European

³⁶⁸ Zhang, op. cit, 129. The painting by Ma Yuan is an hand-scroll composed by twelve sections, each 26.8 × 41.6. Images of the hand-scroll are in Zhu Jiajin, *Treasures of the Forbidden City*, New York, 1986, 102-103.

³⁶⁹ '...ambedue disegnano prima che coloriscano; et ambedue coloriscono, quasi sempre, ciò che disegnano. Disegnano ciò, che figurano, figurano ciò che compongono, compongono ciò che inventano', Frugoni, op., cit., 70.

account for the creation of a painting.³⁷⁰ It is profoundly different from the Chinese landscape tradition. The monochrome ink technique in general, but also the use of colours in the Chinese tradition requires a skilled and perceptive use of brush-strokes without preparatory drawing. This fuses memory and the senses into an act of immediate creation. In China, unlike in Europe, the eye did not predominate over the other senses. Anne Burkus-Chasson has noted in her discussion of practices of observations in seventeenth-century China, that the eye was not ‘dissociated from the body, nor was it dissociated from the world it rendered visible’.³⁷¹ Thus the difference between the observer and the landscape is not pronounced.³⁷² In addition, the Chinese landscape tradition requires a deep understanding of ink that would have been difficult to attain for a painter trained to use oil or mineral colours, as Castiglione was. Therefore it was not as open to translation as were, for example, those of still-life and portraiture. This is probably why there are only a few known landscapes by Castiglione.

³⁷⁰ See also Rensselaer Wright Lee, *Ut pictura poesis: the humanistic theory of painting*, New York, 1967, appendix 2, 70-71.

³⁷¹ Anne Burkus-Chasson, ‘‘Clouds and Mists That Emanate and Sink Away’: Shitao’s *Waterfall on Mount Lu* and practices of observation in the seventeenth century’, *Art History*, vol. XIX, n. 2, 1996, 169-190, 184.

³⁷² See Michael A. Fuller, ‘Pursuing the Complete Bamboo in the Breast: Reflections on a Classical Chinese Image for Immediacy’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. LIII, n. 1, 1993, 5-23, 16.

4. Imperial portraits: Castiglione as a courtier

Now I shall explore Castiglione's process of translation in relation to portraiture. Qianlong required Castiglione to become his portrait painter already at the beginning of his reign. In 1736 Castiglione executed the accession portrait *Qianlong Huangdi Chaofuxiang* (fig. 23), and also the inaugural portrait of the Emperor with his eleven consorts, the scroll *Xinxie Zhipingtu* (*In My Heart There is the Power to Reign Peaceably*, fig. 72). Castiglione also painted subjects of the *fengsuhua* genre (genre painting).³⁷³ These were representations of the ideal Confucian ruler in which the Emperor is shown as he is involved in public ceremonies and also in more private moments. The fact that there are so many surviving images of this type of commission shows that, amongst Castiglione's technical skills, it was those that pertained to portraiture which drew the greatest approval from his imperial patron. Yet *fengsuhua* commissions often involved a team of different painters working on the same scroll. In such cases Castiglione had always the task of depicting facial and physical features.³⁷⁴

Here I shall discuss how he reached the best conditions for making a convincing likeness of his sitter. One must take into account the fact that, in the imperial environment, Castiglione not only acted as a professional painter but also as a courtier. The ability to attain and maintain a positive relationship with a person of political or religious authority may be considered as another part of the early modern painter's professional formation, no less important than technical training. Once more, both Castiglione's painterly training in Milan and

³⁷³ Also called *fengsu renwu* (genre painting). During the Qing dynasty, one of the most successful formats for *fengsuhua* portraits was the *tieluo*. The *tieluo* paintings were generally executed on paper or strong silk and then glued onto a wall.

³⁷⁴ Evidence for this comes from the Beijing Palace Archives. For example an imperial decree dated 1762 reads: '*Jin Tingbiao must to do the sketch on silk of the emperor's visage, then Castiglione will paint the face.*' See Ka Bo Tsang, 'Portraits of Meritorious Officials: Eight Examples from the First set Commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor', *Arts Asiatiques*, vol. XLVII, 1992, 69-88, 84.

the religious education that he would have received from the Jesuits help to explore this point.

First, it is worth recalling that, when Castiglione arrived in China, he had already worked for patrons who were also rulers. In Portugal Queen Maria Anna had commissioned portraits of her two children, Maria Barbara and Pedro.³⁷⁵ To this, one must add Castiglione's relations with the various Jesuit authorities who entrusted him with the important tasks of decorating the church and refectory of the Jesuit Noviciate in Genoa and the chapel of the College in Coimbra.³⁷⁶ From Castiglione's perspective his religious patrons, such as the Jesuit General or a Provincial Rector, were probably not notably different from a monarchical figure.

Within the Jesuit Order the ideal of the perfect courtier was developed in relation to the idea of obedience, related to the most important of the vows that both Coadjutors and fully Professed Fathers had to take. Performing obedience was not a spontaneous matter but required one to be predisposed to it; one had to have the right skills. For Castiglione, the most important of these skills seems to have been prudence. This is affirmed in both Italian and Chinese sources. For example, the Jesuit *Memoria postuma* shows indubitably that Castiglione was guided by virtues such as dexterity and prudence.³⁷⁷ In addition, Qianlong's decree inscribed in Chinese on Castiglione's tombstone includes the word *qinshen* (diligent and prudent).³⁷⁸ Thus both sources link prudence and artistic application. Dexterity must surely indicate artistic ability and *qinshen* is formed by *qin*, diligent, industrious, and *shen*, being cautious. The point made in both sources, then, is that Castiglione performed his tasks of painting with care and diligence. It is worth pointing out here that similar considerations of prudence and diligence may be found in an imperial decree proclaiming the promotion of the painter Ignace Sichelbart in 1767, one year after Castiglione's death. As the

³⁷⁵ See part I of the present thesis, 12.

³⁷⁶ For my analysis of Castiglione's Portuguese commission see part III, 120-123.

³⁷⁷ See *Memoria postuma*, appendix C, 187-197.

³⁷⁸ See the introduction of the present thesis, 2.

decree strongly suggests, even after his death, Castiglione continued to serve the Emperor of China as an example of the virtuous court painter:

February 26 1767. The Emperor decreed: The Westerner, Ai Ch'i-meng (Ignace Sichelbart) has served in the Inner Court. He is diligent and prudent. We order that following the example of Lang Shih-ning he be awarded the title of Director of the Feng Ch'en Yüan.³⁷⁹

Being an exemplar of virtue was actually something that the Jesuit Order expected of its members. This is evident from the second section of the triennial catalogues, evaluations of each individual Jesuit to be composed by the Provincial Fathers and then sent to their General in Rome. Here, the basic characteristics of each Jesuits were evaluated following four specifications: *ingenium, iudicium, prudentia, naturalis complexio*. Here, prudence, discernment and wit are grouped together.³⁸⁰

In the making of imperial portraits, Castiglione's prudence might be considered to be an essential rather than peripheral skill. Prudence would have helped Castiglione to gain the trust of the Emperor Qianlong; it would have helped the painter to observe proper conduct while working with his patron and to understand the limits of pictorial representation, both as according to the Emperor's tastes and the existing iconographic canon.³⁸¹ The Emperors of

³⁷⁹ Fu Lo-shu, *A documentary chronicle of Sino-Western relations (1644-1820)*, Tucson (Arizona)

1966, 2 vols. vol. II, 555.

³⁸⁰ *Naturalis complexio* refers to individual temperament (complexion). As a response, the Provincial Father could choose between three typologies: *temperata, flegmatica* and *sanguinea*. Unfortunately, I have not found any triennial catalogues related to Castiglione. The only evidence on Castiglione's personal characteristics is in the *Catalogus Sociorum Vice Provinciae Sinensis*. Here Castiglione's physical state (*vires*) is described as good (*bonae*) in 1741 and weak (*debiles*) in 1751, 1754 and 1755. See ARSI, *Jap. Sin. 134, Catalog. Breves et Triennales, 1621-1759, Sina*, 436 r, 439 r. From the *Memoria postuma* we know that this was caused by gout.

³⁸¹ There is a range of evidence to prove Qianlong's appreciation for Castiglione's skills in portraiture. Apart from the evidence represented by the imperial commissions, Qianlong wrote a colophon celebrating Castiglione's ability. This is on the vertical hand-scroll 'Spring peaceful message' (originally a *Tieluo*, ink and colour on silk, 1728/9, 68.8 × 40.8 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing), representing the young prince Hongli, the future Qianlong, with his father Yongzheng. The hand-scroll is a copy of a painting positioned in the Hall of Cultivating the Mind in the Forbidden City in the Room of the Three Rarities. The colophon written after Castiglione's death recites: 'In portraiture Shining is masterful, He painted me during my younger days; The

China were certainly concerned that their courtiers behaved properly. This is evident from a Qing decree describing a lack of prudence in Castiglione. Castiglione, it seems, had been speculating in the mortgaging of land although this was against Qing legislation.³⁸² Castiglione and the other people involved, both Europeans and Chinese, were first admonished and then pardoned. Even if this episode may not seem all that important for exploring artistic matters, it reveals something of Castiglione's attitude to being a courtier. Castiglione certainly did not see himself simply as a humble missionary. With the mortgage affair, Castiglione made a mistake; he showed a lack of prudence. Even so, in other matters he was so circumspect that he became the most important portraiture painter of Qianlong emperor.

This may be explored further through the portrait *Qianlong Dayuetu* (*Qianlong Inspecting the Troops*, *tieluo* transformed in hanging scroll, fig. 73). Regarding the pose of the horse, seemingly moving slowly and with one knee raised, some scholars have tried to find plausible European pictorial sources. For example, Pamela Kyle Crossley has related the pose to a tradition with its origins in the Roman equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius which may also be found in the 'Spanish mode favoured in all equestrian portrayals of early modern European emperors'.³⁸³ Also, Crossley suggests further influences from Spanish and Indian images of St. James. She therefore sees the portrait of Qianlong as an 'icon of the empowered universal ruler, holding the reins of orthodoxy, disinterestedly riding over chaos, dissidence, and heathenism'.³⁸⁴ Yet this does not at all fit with the conciliatory and emblematic images usually favoured by both the Jesuit Order and the mid-Qing emperors. Apart from the implausible link to the iconography of St. James, I believe that generalisations

white-headed one who enters the room today, does not recognize who this is'. Translation by Howard Rogers quoted in Wu, op. cit., 224. Also, there is an analysis of this painting and colophon by Zhu Jiajin, 'Castiglione's *Tieluo* Paintings', *Orientalism*, vol. 19, n. 11, 1988, 80-83, 80.

³⁸² The decree is in Fu, op. cit., 188-189.

³⁸³ Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror. History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1999, 275-278.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 279.

such as those presented by Crossley do not do much to elucidate the models that Castiglione would draw on when making Chinese imperial imagery. There were, in fact, models that were much more closely related to Castiglione's own experiences. For the equestrian portrait of Qianlong, it seems that he drew on Nieuhoff's *Legatio Batavica*, published in 1688 and well-known across Europe.³⁸⁵ The book contains two prints of the Qing emperor, or the First Prince, first reviewing troops and then leading mounted troops. The two prints carry captions in both Dutch and Latin: *Jonge Onder Koonig/Junior Prorex* and *Kryghs-ordre in het marseren/Ordo equitantis exercitus* (*Junior Viceroy* and *Mounted Troops Exercises*, figs. 74-75). In both prints and in Castiglione's painting the horses have one front knee raised. The captions on Nieuhoff's images explain what this pose means: it marks the role of the emperor as supreme military commander. In Castiglione's painting, this is also evident from Qianlong's armour and his weapons. Moreover, the imperial symbols are visible on Qianlong's clothes. This, and not the pose of the horse, celebrates Qianlong as the militant ruler of the Qing Empire. Therefore Castiglione here uses the horse mainly to indicate the Emperor's military role. It is not a simple or straightforward personification of sovereignty.

In contrast, in European equestrian portraits, the pose of the horse frequently carries a great deal of symbolism in relation to the idea of sovereignty. This is often conveyed by showing the horse in a rampant pose. For example, in the engraving by Gabriel Ladame depicting the *Magnifique Entrée Royale* performed in 1660 by Louis XIV of France, the horses of the king and the nobles close to him are all in the rampant pose (fig. 76).³⁸⁶ In this case the

³⁸⁵ *Legatio Batavica ad Magnum Tartariae Chamum Sungteium, Modernum Sinae Imperatorem. Historiarum narratione, quae legatis in Provinciis Quantung, Kiangsi, Nanking, Xantung, Peking, & Aula Imperatoriâ ab Anno 1655 ad annum 1657 obtigerunt, ut & ardua Sinensium in bello Tartarico fortunâ, Provinciarum accurata Geographia, urbium delineatione, nec non Artis et Naturae miraculis ex Animalium, Vegetabilium, Mineralium genere per centum et quinquaginta aeneas figuras passim illustrata et conscripta vernacule per Joannem Nieuhovium*, Amsterdam, 1688. The first English edition of this book was published in 1669 with the title *An Embassy from the East India Company of the United Provinces to the Grand Tartar Chan, Emperor of China*.

³⁸⁶ Lavallo, op. cit., 113.

pose certainly denotes the rider's status. Yet, for Qianlong, the rampant pose could have no symbolic meaning because, traditionally, the signs of his power were shown by his clothes. Knowing this, Castiglione might well have looked towards the tradition of book illustrations of China, choosing such examples as best fitted with the Qing commission and with his personal experience of looking at the Emperor reviewing the troops. The idea that Qianlong is portrayed in relation to a specific activity is corroborated by a poem composed by the Emperor much later, in 1783, which is also the main source for dating the painting. The poem is entitled *Various reflections and accounts of the Xinyamen Xinggong*: 'In the year Wuyan [1758], when the portrait at the grand troop inspection was executed, [the subject] sat nobly upright in the saddle. Today, unmounted, he enters the studio and, white-haired, looks at the painting, not sure who it portrays'.³⁸⁷ The aged Emperor thus took the portrait to commemorate himself in a highly specific, youthful and militaristic role.

In terms of the composition, the central figure of the emperor riding the horse is framed by a portion of landscape consisting of three distinct spaces. These spaces do not precisely coincide with the spatial planes but are differentiated technically. The first space consists of the lower left corner of the foreground where there are some plants painted with strong chiaroscuro. Apart from the Milanese tradition of depicting natural elements, discussed in the second part of this thesis, this group of plants actually follows a spatial arrangement typical of Castiglione's Genoa paintings. In these he often inserted certain isolated elements in the left or right foreground or in other corners of compositions, where most of the central foreground is otherwise given over to figures. The best examples are the plants in the lower right corner of *Tobias and the Angel*, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (figs. 11 and 5) and in *The Temptation of Christ* (fig. 6). A similar arrangement is visible in the *Supper at Emmaus* (fig. 7) where a saddlebag is positioned in the lower right corner.

³⁸⁷ Zhu, 1988, op.cit., 82.

The second space is comprised by the portion of ground where Qianlong is, together with the landscape in the background. This space is painted in a Chinese manner with brush strokes in the form of dots or small touches of brush and it is lit in a uniform manner.³⁸⁸ The third space is the sky. This is painted in a European manner identical to that used in the scroll *Rising Sun Against Oceanic Sky*. Laid on with the brush, there is a homogeneous arrangement of pigment set out to obtain the right blend of colours.

The monumental image of Qianlong on his horse is not incorporated into the landscape. Only the solid pose of the horse prevents a radical disjuncture between the portrait and the landscape. This lack of pictorial connections between the figure and the landscape is mainly generated by the absence of shadows to connect the horse to the ground. This is also visible in the scroll *Hasake Gongmatu (Kazakhs Presenting Horses in Tribute, 1759)* and in *Shaolutu (Deer Hunting Patrol, 1741)* where the horses are almost entirely disjointed from their surroundings (figs. 77-78). However, in the portrait of Qianlong on horseback, the disjunction between rider and landscape actually enlarges the figure of the ruler. In fact, it seems that the Emperor not only dominates by showing his military supremacy but also by overriding the entire pictorial system.

All the various elements that comprise the equestrian portrait of Qianlong - the technical skills, the symbolism, the verisimilitude - help to show how Castiglione's translation worked. It was the fact that Castiglione could link all of these elements together that meant he could complete his tasks successfully.

In this case the terms for translation were easy to reach for Castiglione. Firstly, Castiglione did not need to create for himself a valid context for Qing symbolism. This had been available for more than a century within the Jesuit Order and in Europe, where there were few doubts about the moral validity of

³⁸⁸ The Chinese 'dot' used in painting was originated in calligraphy and consists of dots and lines. It is usually used to depict distant trees, and vegetation. See Kwo Da-wei, *Chinese Brushwork: Its History, Aesthetics, and Techniques*, Montclair and London, 1981, 1, 28; see also Mai-Mai Sze, *op. cit.*, 98-100.

Qing sovereignty. Intorcetta's description in 1672 of the most important feature of imperial symbolism is a good example:

One notices that the imperial arms of the Chinese monarchy are dragons armed with five claws. In China only what is related to the emperor is decorated with this type of dragon. The death penalty is assigned for those who, without fear, will use or take in their houses this insignia.³⁸⁹

Finally, to accomplish his task successfully, Castiglione only needed to turn his eyes towards court ceremonial and similar official events, like Emperor's reviewing of his troops.

³⁸⁹ 'Si noti pure che l'arme Imperiali della Monarchia Cinese consistono nel Dragone armato i piedi di cinque unghie: e però nella Cina solo le cose appartenenti all'uso, e servizio dell'imperatore sono freggiate con l'insegna del detto Dragone; e vi è pena di morte stabilita a chi ardisse usare, e ritenere in sua casa tale insegna', Intorcetta, op.cit., 68-69.

5. Removing shadows: the patron's translation and the difference between amateur and professional painters

After Castiglione's death, Giuseppe Panzi was introduced as a painter in the Qing workshops. He had never met Castiglione but he admired his work. By his own account, he saw Castiglione's paintings in Genoa, in the Jesuit house in Beijing and in the Qing workshops. This admiration is expressed in a letter that Panzi wrote to his teacher, Father Giuseppe Solari. Solari was the teacher of novices when Panzi was in Genoa, precisely in the place where Castiglione had decorated the refectory and the church.³⁹⁰ Fourteen years later, in a letter sent to Father Solari and Father Bridault, Panzi observed an interesting fact about Castiglione's paintings:

[The Chinese] want paintings without chiaroscuro. In this way the images are without a sense of volume. Because I am writing about this, I will report that the Emperor, who profoundly estimated Castiglione for his paintings, has ordered his Chinese painters to retouch many of Castiglione's works. Qianlong ordered the removal of the power of shadows necessary for the impression of volume. Your Reverence can well see and believe, as we believe, that the Chinese painters have damaged Castiglione's paintings very much.³⁹¹

This remarkable passage discloses Qianlong's involvement with Castiglione's paintings even after the latter's death, although it may seem a rather negative form of involvement. However, it would be a mistake to consider this attention simply as an act of correction. Shadow was for Castiglione a term of translation and, once part of a finished Qing scroll, it could be re-translated by the only person who had participated actively in the first translation. Qianlong was this

³⁹⁰ *Epistolae Josephi Panzi*, op. cit., 80.

³⁹¹ ...vogliono la pittura senza chiaroscuro, che è senza rilievo; Già che sono su di questo punto dirò, che l'imperatore, ch'è tanto stimato Castiglione in quest'arte, egli à fatto ritoccare da i suoi pittori Cinesi, molte pitture di Castiglione, con ordine imperiale di levare quella forza di ombre che avevano, per il necessario rilievo: vede bene Vostra Reverenza, e crede certo come noi, che essi pittori le hanno guastate malamente', *ibid.*, November 7, 1791, 134.

person. One might argue that Qianlong had ordered his painters to erase Castiglione's shadows in order to create a new context. The erasure thus proves that Castiglione's pictorial translation was successful because its elements might be changed or even deleted without compromising the actual image.

It is not possible to know if this was only a passing whim or whether Qianlong was trying to make Castiglione's work a component of established court traditions. For example, the shadows of Castiglione's *Hundred Horses*, a picture that I will discuss presently, do not seem to have been considered superfluous or dangerous by Yongzheng.³⁹² However, Qianlong might have wanted to create a stronger coherence across all the images that he had commissioned. Moreover, within the court canon, shadows were seen as unfavourable. This was noted by the French Jesuit Jean-Baptiste Joseph de Grammont in a letter sent to his General on 16 October 1773. Grammont was deployed in Beijing as a mathematician and a musician and in the following passage he reports on Panzi's activities:

About his talent for painting, I will honestly say to Your Reverence that he is too skilful for this country. For this reason he is trying without success to adapt to the nation's taste. But even the talented Castiglione and Attiret found it hard. Father Poirot and other painters of ours who paint without rules learned from masters and without understanding the art of chiaroscuro, which is like the soul of painting, have adapted without any difficulty to the Chinese manner. They consider shadows to be like unshapely and unfavourable blots. Yet for Your Reverence there is no need to be worry. Like Castiglione and Attiret who, after some time and through many difficulties, at the end were preferred and held in high esteem by the emperor, the same will happen to our Panzi. Because of the shadows, although it was very realistic, the portrait of the Emperor executed by Panzi the third day after his arrival was not appreciated. This

³⁹² The shadows of the horses also appear on the preparatory draft to be submitted to the emperor (*fenben*, ink on paper, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, illus.). In this case, the horses are linked to the ground by discrete shadows, see fig. 81 of this thesis.

year he painted a vision of the Prophet Daniel that was really appreciated. For this reason, we can hope that with the help of God his brush will not be less useful for our mission than the one of Castiglione, his famous compatriot.³⁹³

Apart from attesting that in China shadows were considered unlucky elements, this passage captures one of the main points of this thesis. There is a contradiction in stating that amateur painters, who do not know how to use shadows, would find it easier to adapt to the Chinese manner while, on the other hand, professional painters trained in chiaroscuro could not so easily adapt to and yet these became the most preferred by their patrons, the Qing emperors. So, how is it possible that in Beijing the most successful court painters from Europe were the ones who used shadows that were either accepted or later erased? One possible answer may be found when we consider the difference between imitating and creating a painting, at least from the European point of view. Father Poirot and other amateurs imitated a certain Chinese manner, but Castiglione and Panzi needed time to conceive imagery that respected the local manner without renouncing elements of their own painterly knowledge, such as chiaroscuro or perspective. They were thoroughly trained to reach these results. To achieve this, they had to move their Italian use of chiaroscuro into commissions that required the use of light as preferred at the Qing court. It is thus obvious that this action is a translation of essential pictorial elements but without changing their quality.

³⁹³ 'Quanto al di lui talento per la pittura, io dirò schietto a Vostra Reverenza ch'egli è troppo bravo per questo paese; e perciò stenta egli molto ad accomodarsi al genio di questa gente, siccome stentarono molto anche essi i bravissimi Castiglione ed Attiret. Il P. Poirot e quei altri nostri pittori, che dipingono senza regole imparate da' Maestri, senza intendere l'arte del chiaro-scuro che però è come l'anima della pittura, essi senza niuno stento, anzi con più facilità si adattano alla maniera dei Cinesi, ai di cui occhi le ombre nella pittura sono come tante macchie informi e disgraziate. Mà stia pur'quieta Vostra Reverenza I due mentovati fratelli, con tutto quello loro stentare, furono finalmente dopo qualche tempo stimatissimi e graditissimi dall'Imperatore. Così sarà il nostro Panzi. A cagione di queste ombre non piacque tanto il ritratto, benché somigliantissimo, che fece egli dell'Imperatore il terzo giorno dopo il suo arrivo in Pekino. Questo anno egli à dipinta una visione del Propheta Daniele, ed è piaciuta assai; onde vi è da sperare che con l'aiuto del Signore il suo pennello non sarà meno utile alla nostra missione di quello del Celebre Castiglione suo paesano', *Epistolae Josephi Panzi 1733-1795*, op. cit., unpagined.

Grammont considered chiaroscuro an indivisible entity, ‘the soul of painting’, probably because, from a theological perspective, shadows are an opposition to light. In this way, they become negative elements to be controlled by the holy disposition. As a result, shadows give greater value to the virtuous light that shows God’s will. As stated by Bartoli: ‘The shadows are artistically used by painting. These come from the malignity of sins well disposed by Providence’.³⁹⁴ This concept was reiterated by Leibniz. In writing about universal harmony, he affirmed that ‘shadows enhance painting, as well as carefully placed dissonances enhance harmony’.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁴ ‘Le Ombre usate con arte dalla pittura, Cioè i mali di colpa. Bene ordinati dalla Provvidenza’, Bartoli, 1659, op. cit., vol. II, 338.

³⁹⁵ ‘Pictura per umbras, harmonia per dissonantias apte admissas, exaltata est’, quoted in Rosario Assunto, *Infinita contemplazione. Gusto e filosofia dell’Europa barocca*, Naples, 1979, passage from Leibniz’s letter to Johann Friedrich III in Ger. vol. I, 61, 12.

6. The Baijuntu scroll: how to paint a picture in movement

The scroll *Baijuntu* (*Hundred Horses*, fig. 79) represents a unique commission within Castiglione's long and successful career. For *Baijuntu* is a scroll painted in full perspective. It shows homogeneity of proportions and consistency in placing shadows and using chiaroscuro. Yet it is still the product of a translation on the level of its format, a hand-scroll. The *Baijuntu* hand-scroll is 94.5 cm high and 776.2 cm long. Such a length is not uncommon for this format which allows a private and intimate view. The viewer can unroll, from right to left, the scroll in his or her hands or instead unroll it on a table. In both cases one still needs to secure the two extremities with both hands. For this reason the view of a hand-scroll consists of a sequence of various pictures that are not still but flows in front of the eyes. Indeed, it is an intimate way of looking at a picture because the viewer decides the speed and the direction of viewing with the painting very close to her or his eyes. In contrast, the vertical scrolls described above are displayed by showing their entire surface, usually on a wall, and they can be viewed by more than one person, which is not so different from a painting delimited by a frame. Generally, hand-scrolls in which the landscape is predominant, as in the case of *Baijuntu*, present a coherent image without compositional fractures. Nevertheless, if it is divided into sections, any single section has a certain compositional autonomy. More than just a narrative device, it is a system that allows the viewer to wander in a pictorial space. Because of the coherence of the hand-scroll, both in the overall view, and in the particular, its imagery may be merged into the viewer's reality, offering an almost cinematographic experience.

This double coherence may be found in Castiglione's hand-scroll. Its semi-panoramic view of a plane with horses and persons delimited by high mountains on the horizon is not interrupted by any element. It is a unified view. If one hypothetically divides the scroll into sections to obtain the average length displayed during the actual view, it is obvious that each section still maintains an adequate compositional autonomy (fig. 80).

This proves that Castiglione accomplished his task successfully. Surely, for a European painter, making a hand-scroll of this length was not an easy task.

First, the painter had to understand the nature of the new format. Then during the execution he had to have considered the picture as a whole view as well as the singular views of the scroll.

Moreover, the particular format of the *Baijuntu* raises other questions: how did Castiglione solve the problems encountered in this commission? How did he prepare the scroll? Fortunately, another hand-scroll by Castiglione, owned by the Metropolitan Museum in New York, answers these questions. This is the preparatory drawing of the *Baijuntu*; it is almost of the same size, 94 x 789.3 cm, and it is made of ink on paper (fig. 81) From this impressive preparatory drawing we may suppose that, to solve the problems related to the overall coherence of the long picture, Castiglione did not want to divide it into several drawings. However, the cleanness of the drawing, without any pentimento, may suggest that this long scroll was only the last of a series of other preparatory sketches. If this preparatory scroll solved the problem of making a coherent overall view, there still remains the difficulty related to the coherence of subsections of the picture.

This may be examined further by looking at the type of perspective used by Castiglione in the *Baijuntu*. He deployed a perspectival system with three vanishing points that together create diagonal vistas. In this way, the attention of the viewer is not captivated by the single vanishing point but can follow the rhythm of the vistas. At the same time every vista delimits a space that can be viewed in its parts as a perfectly coherent scene. To obtain this, Castiglione placed trees and horses as elements that can either break or enhance the vistas. However, the horses form an uninterrupted line in front of the observer at any moment of the viewing. To put it differently, any possible portion of the landscape contains one or more horses.

In viewing the scroll, it is evident that the point of view is slightly elevated. From right to left, first one will note two pine trees in the foreground in the place where a diagonal opens the first vista towards the horizon. Close to the two pines, three horses start the line that forms the herd. Right after the three animals, in another space in the middle ground, there is another group of horses. These may be seen as an element used by Castiglione to lead the observer's gaze towards the first vanishing point and, in particular, towards the horseman catching an isolated horse. From there, following the flow of the scroll, the

viewer will move onto the scene in the foreground with the group of horses galloping, ending with the single horseman who appears behind the little hill. This figure is in the view generated by the second vanishing point. At the same time, one has before one's eyes the horses in the foreground. In general, when in the foreground, the horses are used to indicate the flow of the scroll, both pictorially and mechanically, as generated by the viewer's hands. In contrast, the few depicted trees fix the diagonal vistas and divide the various views, such as the line of trees that delimit the stream of water in the left part of the scroll. The trunks of these trees are painted in a naturalistic manner, slightly inclined towards the third vanishing point. Moreover, the stream of water, together with the hill in the foreground, on which a horse and a tree are depicted, form an 'x' in the landscape. This has a double function: it creates an intersection between a view that goes towards the third vanishing point and a view leading towards the high peaks at the end of the scroll and outside it.

I believe that the perspectival system deployed by Castiglione in the *Baijuntu* comes from the early modern tradition of European theatrical images. This was a well-attested tradition known by most painters, especially those with skills and commission related to *quadratura*. A few images from this tradition may clarify my argument. The first is a drawing of a forest made with pencil, brush and brown ink (fig. 82) by Giuseppe Galli Bibiena (1696-1757), a son of the aforementioned Ferdinando. Here, the group of trees in the centre of the drawing divides two vistas with their vanishing points outside the picture (*veduta per angolo*), from which other vistas and other possible vanishing points are generated. In particular, this use of perspective allows the creation of various points of view within the same image. This type of perspective fits remarkably well with the requirements for a scroll of the dimensions of the *Baijuntu*. Two printed images from the treatise *Pratica di fabricar scene, e machine ne' teatri* by Nicolò Sabbatini, published in Ravenna in 1638, supply a more legible explanation of this method.³⁹⁶ The first is a picture of three streets with one vanishing point and the second is a picture of three streets with three vanishing points (fig. 83). Clearly, the second solution is a division of space very similar to that deployed by Castiglione in his long hand-scroll.

³⁹⁶ See Ferruccio Marotti, *Lo spazio scenico. Teorie e tecniche scenografiche in Italia dall'età barocca al settecento*, Rome, 1974.

Castiglione's *Baijuntu* and his oeuvre in general prove that - even when the work of painters might be defined by pictorial traditions pertaining to definite places - painters do not learn to paint by using all-embracing concepts or realities. Instead, they isolate single elements to create painterly fictions of new realities to fit into new contexts. Thus, instead of forgetting and destroying, the painter has the power to transform images and techniques so as to fit with new commissions.

As I have argued, Castiglione was trained to consider and remember objects, images and words. In the cultural space of Milan, his experiences and memories could have been expanded considerably through a number of sources: churches, collections, workshops, books, buildings and public events. The storing of images from these sources was not a simple cataloguing. Castiglione's training would also have encouraged him to incorporate them into his own pictorial repertoire. Once he was in China, he simply continued this process.

Conclusions

The main aim of this thesis was to explore the whole artistic and professional career of Giuseppe Castiglione, which spanned two profoundly different traditions of painting. Accordingly, in the first part I looked at Castiglione's position within the Jesuit Order in relation to his professional formation as a painter. Was Castiglione missionary or a missionary painter? I believe that I have answered this question through compelling evidence, mainly from Jesuit sources. Castiglione was neither of the two. As proven by his courtly status and by his activities within the Jesuit Order, he was a professionally trained painter who served the mission in Beijing mainly by working for the Qing workshops. Castiglione was not directly involved in missionary activity yet he was fully a member of the Order.

To develop this point, a second aspect needed to be properly explored. This was the motivations behind Kangxi's appointment of Castiglione at court. Supported by a brief historical survey of mid-Qing political and cultural policies, I presented an account of Castiglione's entrance into the Qing court and of his status as imperial painter.

Having defined these basic points, in the second part of my thesis, I explored several aspects of Castiglione's artistic training. Where else to start when writing about a painter? My question is not completely rhetorical. What has been characteristic of previous studies is a neglect of Castiglione's artistic background, in favour of a view through the lenses of religious history, or through those of an undefined sense of dilettantism. The analysis of the commission at Genoa shows that Castiglione's painterly skills could only have been developed by a thorough professional training. Moreover, the importance of the Genoa commission certainly lies in the fact that it represents unexplored

visual evidence. But it also indicates that the origins of Castiglione's career lay in Milan. In addition, the pictures for the Jesuit noviciate in Genoa evince skills which are not strictly technical. In particular, they show the painter's capacity for fitting his work into the place of display and into the broader aims of the commission. This is crucial for our understanding of Castiglione's work in Beijing.

Following this, I explored Castiglione's first knowledge of painting. To do so I considered the Milanese canon of painting and I compared Castiglione's Genoa paintings with some masters who, I believe, show important affinities with the pictures for the Jesuit noviciate. In particular, the paintings for the noviciate have important similarities with the work of Cerano. This suggests that Castiglione was part of a Milanese tradition of painting that ran from the first half of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Following this thread, I proposed a possible master for Castiglione. This is Filippo Abbiati, a painter well grounded in the Milanese artistic environment and with an active workshop where several painters operated. As I have shown, evidence from Castiglione's *Memoria postuma* corroborates this hypothesis further.

In the same section I also looked at one particularly important aspect of Castiglione's training. This was the ability to cull useful pictorial examples from visual sources such as religious festivals, architecture and other elements displayed within the cultural space of Milan. For this reason, I have emphasized the relevance of places like the *Sacro Monte* of Varese or of festivals like the celebrations of St. Charles Borromeo. I believe that the visual evidence represented by the commission in Genoa fully supports this view.

From the formal type of training, in turn, I extended my exploration of the practice of gathering visual knowledge to visual elements not strictly included in the canon of painting that existed in Castiglione's city. One of the main reasons for this is that such practices are described in great detail in the artistic literature of early modern Italy. To follow this aim, I undertook a short investigation within the Milanese visual culture of Castiglione's age. My research has uncovered important images for understanding the training of the painter. These images, which Castiglione could easily access, were book illustrations and objects from the Milanese *wunderkammer* of Manfredo Settala.

Both of these categories are related to China and come with critical features and contexts that one must acknowledge when studying the artistic relations between China and Europe.

Shifting my focus from the immediate surroundings of Castiglione's training, in the beginning of the third part I concentrated on the geographical contextualisation of early modern European imagery of China. There, I tried to give a clear picture of the relationship between geography and painting and to explore those elements important for Castiglione's journey to China. The keystone that supports this argument is that perspective could be used as an epistemic-cognitive model as well as a mere painting technique. Far from having exhausted the exploration of such vast territory, I simply looked at perspective as a useful agent in Castiglione's hands. My attention to perspective was also motivated by textual evidence attesting Castiglione's engagement in commissions involving specific perspectival techniques. These techniques were mainly used for mural paintings. They entailed a working knowledge of projective geometry which was developed especially by Andrea Pozzo, one of Castiglione's artistic models. Furthermore, I have argued that such use of perspective might have given Castiglione the possibility of linking his pictures to new visual contexts.

By using the textual sources, I discussed the commissions in which Castiglione had to use a highly specialised knowledge of projective geometry. It seems that Castiglione used this knowledge for mural painting commissions in Lisbon and also for two Catholic churches in Beijing. In particular, the two Beijing commissions not only represent an important aspect of Castiglione's oeuvre but they are also a useful source for enquiring into the painter's relationship with his spectators, and into the Chinese reception of images embodying European techniques and aesthetic views. Accordingly, I have accounted for this interesting encounter between China and Europe by analysing briefly the Chinese knowledge of linear perspective and by comparing European and Chinese responses to illusionistic pictures. I believe that a proper understanding of such responses is a first step towards a fuller comprehension of Castiglione's achievements in the large number of scrolls that he made for his imperial patrons. The view that I have developed in this thesis challenges the idea of hybridisation and adaptation often promoted by scholars who attend only

to Castiglione's work in China.³⁹⁷ Instead, I proposed the idea of translation as the main working process adopted by Castiglione in Beijing.

From this point of view, in the final part I analysed the Qing scrolls that I consider most representative of Castiglione's translation process. Here, by looking at the paintings, I explained how Castiglione translated his knowledge of perspective, of *chiaroscuro*, of the reflective qualities of surfaces and other skills to meet his Qing commissions. A comparison between his Italian paintings and his Qing scrolls reveals Castiglione's artistic achievements in great detail. Regarding the non-technical aspects of Castiglione's translation, I have focused my attention on his capacity to act as a courtier and to deploy learnt behaviours like obedience and prudence.

The aspiration of this thesis was to offer new insights into a unique artistic career. I believe that Castiglione's career cannot be divided anymore into two distinct entities, one in Europe, the other in China. It must be considered as one continuous and individual achievement mainly formed by a search for points of connectivity. Castiglione's experience shows that such an artistic endeavour was prompted by a professional need to link particular pictures with particular spaces and spectators. In other words, connectivity was for Castiglione an endless effort to understand the ever-changing frameworks for making and using pictures. To do so between two different artistic contexts, Castiglione had to understand both his technical competence and his viewers' context. Surely it was a heterogeneous and contradictory experience where cultural analogies unified different observers, and where cultural differences created profound fractures between individuals. For this reason, I believe that in looking at early modern artistic interrelations between Europe and China, one must explore the moving boundaries between individual and collective spaces, body and intellect, curiosity and indifference. In turn, it might be possible to discover the effects that such boundaries had and have on the use of pictures.

Castiglione's translation shows that a painter's individual manner is composed by the way in which he manages his skills in relation to the nature of the commission. The idea of translation also proves that Castiglione and his patrons together made pictures that they did not consider hybrids but, rather,

³⁹⁷ See my introduction, 1-9.

perfectly homogeneous in their functions and style. Regarding works of art that straddle the two cultural spheres of China and Europe, translation should make art historians reject the east-west dichotomy that posits two fixed styles as representative of two different artistic cultures. Instead, we need to look at the history of how certain artistic skills were used and combined by artists, patrons or collectors.

From the concept of translation it is obvious that a painter's individual manner cannot be used to compare two cultures. The individual manner is indeed influenced by the culture in which it was developed but it is not reducible to it. An artist like Castiglione is in a peculiar position: he used what he had learnt in Italy to paint in China. His Western skills are essential for understanding his entire career but they are useless if one wishes to compare two entire artistic cultures, the Italian and the Chinese. From Castiglione's translation, instead one may start to consider artistic encounters between China and Europe from a different perspective. This perspective uses the individual manners of the picture makers, both artists and patrons, as the basic terms of analysis. It is a way of giving life to objects that allows us to draw links between the past and the present, and between individuals and cultures.

Appendices

Appendix A

Matteo Ripa to General Secretary Monsignor Silvio de Cavalieri, Archivio di Propaganda Fide, Scritture riferite nei congressi – Indie Orientali, Cina, Miscellanea 17, f. 17.

Non lascino d’inviare alcun virtuoso. Un’Intagliatore di rame a bolino, uno che sapesse smaldare galanterie d’oro, d’argento etc, un buon Musico, un buon Chirurgo et un buon Pittore, specialmente se fusse ritrattista, e sapesse di prospettive che’è quello che più qui stima S.M [Sua Maestà].

Appendix B

Two letters by Antonio De Payra to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini: ARSI, Goa 9, vol. II, ff.500 r/v., April 18, 1713; ARSI, Goa 9, vol. II, f. 501 v., August 26, 1713.

1.

...Fratr Josephus Castellone ex longo tempore designatus ad Sinas, etiam iturus erat hoc anno cum aliis sed mansit Conimbricæ culpa P. Rectoris illius Collegii; qui a me apto tempore monitus ut dictum fratrem huc remitteret cum

aliis navem ascensurum astute illum detinuit ut absolveret quasdam picturas ab eo inceptas in Sacello dicti Collegii. Quo factum est ut Vice Provinciae Sinicae frustra expenderit ad ducenta prope scuta ad illius comeatum nauticum insumptum. Quos sumptus tenetur solvere ex iustitia Collegium Conimbricense cum illius Rector causa fuerit ut frustra expenderemur. Ad quod Paternitatis Vestrae brachium imploro quae non sinit pauperrimam illam Vice Provinciam tam grave nocumentum pati. Interim Paternitati Vestrae felicissimam salutem exopto suamque deprecor mihi impartiam benedictionem et me specialiter meminerit in suis Sanctis Sacrificiis, quibus me valde commendo. Paternitatis Vestrae Humillimus in Christo Filius.

2.

Fr Josephus Castiglioni hoc anno non ivit Pechinum ex culpa Patris Rectoris Corimbricensis qui voluit ut prius absolventur quaedam picturae. Unde petit ut Collegium Corimbricense ex iustitia solveret 200 scuta quae Provincia Sinensis expendit in preparativis necessariis pro Fr Castiglioni, et hac perierunt.

Appendix C

Giuseppe Castiglione's *Memoria postuma*, author unknown, ARSI, Bras. 28, f. 92 r. Underlining indicates passages quoted in the main text of this thesis.

Memoria postuma Fratris Josphehi Castiglione

Ex iis qui in nostra Provincia vivere desierunt maximo luctu clarus est Frater Josephus Castiglione, vir in quo conditiones et dotes quas in adiutore domesticae rei requirit societas apprime eminebant; vir quamvis in nostro ordine in humilem coadiutoris gradum adoptatus, nullisque dignitatibus ornatus, virtutum tamen magnitudine, ac huius Imperii honoribus, atque dignitatibus inclitus, vir cuius celebrius est nomen quam ut ulla hominum comendatione indigeat: vir equidem, sive morum et vitae sanctitas, sive artis suae pictoriae excellentia spectanda sit, utraque laude floruit inter eximios religiosae virtutis, et inter praestantissimos artis suae: societatem vero nostram humili suo adiutoris gradu ita illustravit et rem christianam arte sua adeo promovit, ut nemo omnium magis. Eius virtutem satis, superque aestimare licebit ex eo, quod non modo inter nostros verum etiam inter Aethnicos amicos institutum

erat eum Sanctum senem, Sanctum hominem appellare. Hodiernus Imperator qui in discernendis hominum vitiis ac virtutibus est perquam versatissimus, tantam de illius sanctitate conceperat opinionem ut ambigere coeperit an in orbe universo reperiri similis possit. Verba illius hic repeto: In Europae reperiuntur homines tuae artis similes? Respondet Castiglione: Sunt equidem multi. Urget iterum: Et tuae eximiae virtutis parem inveniamne ego?

De eius picturae praestantia unquam de aliquo legi, audivi meritum aliquando fuisse titulum, hiuc simili, quem Imperator regio penicillo eius picturis inscripsit = Effectuosus rerum penicillus = scilicet, ita naturas rerum imitatur pingendo ut videatur non pingere sed eas efficere. His ergo breviter indicatis, eius duntaxat vitam per summa capita percurram: nec mihi satis est otii ut possim longam narrationem atexere.

Non obscuris parentibus natus est Castiglione in antiqua ac nobili civitate Mediolanensi die 19 Julii anni 1688. In paterna domo educatus, pueriles exegit annos in iis litteris ac virtutibus, quarum aetas prima capax erat. Arti pictoriae sub disciplina Magistri, illius aetatis celeberrimi, tam sedulo navavit operam, ut discere docturius videretur. Societatem iniit Genuae anno aetatis suae 19. In tyrocinio autem uti erat natura docilis, ac pronus ad virtutem, ad eam duntaxat dirigi, non cogi debuerit. Nondum exacto tyrocinio, missus est Missionem; ibique tyrocinium singulari, uti historia illius testatur, vitae cum exemplo, legumque nostrarum observantia absolvit. Postquam se Deo votis simplicibus obstrinxit, in Corimbricam migrare missus est; quo tempore sacellum domesticum illius collegii suis picturis ornavit, tam secunda fama ac tanta omnium approbatione, ut in nostra etiam aetate nemo est qui non miretur tantae artis naturam ac praestantiam.

Olyssiponem e Conimbrica reversus, navem in Indiam profecturam ascendit sed vix vela dare coeperat dum adhuc prope in conspectu erat Olyssiponis, navis in scopos ingressa, nisi Dei benignitate ereptus, certo naufragio periret; sed post sexcenta maris pericula, Deo propitio, Goamtandem, Indiarum caput, pervenit. Ibi, dum opportunitatem in Sinus quo sua illum vota ferebant, proficiscendi, praestolatur, vires reficit, ac novis virtutum exercitiis ad difficilem periculosamque navigationem se accingit. Jam navis erat in procinctu, cum tot tantaeque navigandi suboriuntur difficultates, ut penes solvendi spes nulla jam adesset. Sed Castiglione qui usu ipso et patientia ocoluerat, ad

omnem maris hominumque acerbiter, omnes illas difficultates quae Procuratoribus nostris maximae videbantur, Divina pavente clementia vicit, ac secunda navigatione Macaum appulit die 1 Julii 1715. Ad petitionem Magnatis qui issu Imperatoris eum Pekinum ducere deberet non sine peculiari Numinis providentia Macai aliquantulum est moratus: in ipso enim tempore disensiones inter Genuensem et Senatores illius urbis exortas sedavit, eosque pristinae amicitiae restituit.

Pekinum nordum pervenerat, iam eius fama ad aures Imperatoris KanXi pervenerat, ac impatiens avidusque expectabat atque volebat suismet oculis videre tantae artis peritiam. Ubi ac urbem intravit quin ad nostros diverteret, illico ad se adduci iubet. Nec mora: ab illo petit an aviculam quando depingeret. Paruit ille et tam felici artis suae eventu, ut Imperator haesitare coepit viva an picta foret. Ne ergo populares suos fraudaret, ac eximiae artis peritiam inter [...] unius manus occluderet, discipulos legit Castiglioneque picturae praefacit. Hanc Praefecturam, quae raro sine aliorum offensa exercetur, per quadraginta et amplius annos tanta dexteritate ac prudentia tractavit Castiglione, ut offendiundum ulli non modo non praebuerit, immo omnium benevolentiam ita captaverit, ut ad difficultates tot quot tribunali illi operam dabant ad illum tamquam ad Patrem occurrerent.

Evivis sublatis Imperatoribus Kan Xi et Yum Chim, tronum ascendit Kien Lum qui Castiglione peculiari amore ac veluti filiali affectu a puero prosequabatur; nec patiebatur videre emeritam Castiglione senectutem nullis dignitatibus ornatam; eis de causis eum in Magnatum Ordinem cooptare decreverat. Rumor iste urbe tota adeo invalescebat, ut multi rem pro confecta haberent, ac Castiglione aperte congratularentur. At bonus senex qui eiusmodi dignitates, utpote odiosas Ordini nostro, a suaque humilitate alienas, perhorrebat totus profusus in lacrimas, a Deo media quibus ad eas viam occludat enixe orat efflagitatque. Deum igitur suum perpendit quo modo sine tanti Principis offendiendo eas deflectare valeat, inusitatam in vultu praefert maestitiam, qua amicis indicium facit perquam invitatus sit illas accepturus: nec hoc latuit Imperatorem qui, ne illum cui placere desiderat contristaret, decretum suum, quod raro fit, revocavit. Vincit tandem Castiglione humilitas: ceterum cum honores suam semper naturam sequantur ac retineant, fugientemque prosequantur, effugere tamen eos quos urbanitas et gratitudo acceptare suadebat

haud quaquam potuit. Donavit illi Imperator proprium birretum quod donum adeo rarissimum est ut vix intra annorum saecula semel audiatur ab Imperatore ulli fieri. Sed bonus frater honore illo ac dignitate adeo parce est usus, ut non nisi festis diebus Imperatoris, illo tectus in publicum prodiret. Praeterea cum dolores podagrae ita acerrime illum cruciarent, ut non nisi maximo dolore ac difficultate intrare posset in Palatium, decretavit Imperator ut ritu Regulorum intra moenia Palatii equitaret. Et si bonus senex pro eo eximio honore ac beneficio ingentes agerit gratias Imperatori, eo tamen privilegio uti non est ausus. Hanc renitentiam humilitati Castiglione attribuit Imperator; ideoque non ut oboediat urget sed summa erga Senem benevolentia amice monet suadetque, ut velit pro comoditate sua equitare. His duplicatis beneficiis devictus Senex, ne inurbana duritia ac contumacia offensionem daret monenti, bis tantum equitavit ad id excusationem afferens sibi commodius infirmitatique sua salubrius fore deambulare potius quam equitare. Sed cum honores et dignitates adeo importune eum sequebantur, ut Imperatoris mater etiam vellet inter Magnates adoptatum, idque filio petiit ac demum oboedientiae lex eum coegit acceptare, horrorem illum vicit ut moderatoribus suis pareret. Caeterum sibi adeo strictas instituit leges ut dignitate sua umquam committeret quod quisquam gravate ferret eius imperium, et illud in suo dominatu praecipuum atque unice expetendum putabat, in ferendis muneribus praeire caeteris constanter debere; suaque modestia, et exemplo potius quam auctoritate gubernare oporteret. Quod reliquum vitae tempus habuit in picturae atque Architecturae negotiis sedulo impendit, particeps semper laborum ac curarum omnium quae in iis maxime temporibus inciderunt.

Beneficia atque amoris signa, quibus eum Imperator affecit tam multa sunt ut omnia amplecti longa narratione opus esset. Tanta solitudine eius salutem ac comoditatem curabat ac si parentis sui valetudinem tractaret. Medicos, quibus utebatur ad eum mittebat; medicamina omnia ex Regia Farmacopea mittebat. Si quandoquidem in Palatio eum non videbat adeo irrequieta cura de illo inquirebat ut haut obscure indicaret quantam sibi molestiam afferret eius absentiae causa: hins ut quamprimum convalesceret, medicinam jinsem praetiosissimam illi saepe donabat: multaeties illum hortabatur ut domi quiesceret viresque attritas reficeret.

Denique, ut omnia paucis amplectar, quidquid filialis pietas erga parentes ac officiosa amicitia erga amicos excogitare solet, id totum satagebat Imperator erga suum charum Castiglione. Eius septuagesimum aetatis annum summa beneficentia, Regiaque liberalitate ac maximo honore celebravit et quod caput est cum sciret ea quae fragili hominum memoriae comendantur facilius corrumpi quam quae scriptis mandantur, proprio penicillo eius laudes scripsit. Octogesimum quoque aetatis illius decreverat celebraturum: sed Divina Bonitas prius eum ad premium suorum laborum evocavit, ac die 16 Julii anni 1766 e vivis discessit. Admonitus a medicis de eius morte uti verus ac sincerus amicus eum universa aula condoluit his verbis: Dolendum, dolendum sane, quod praestanti viro privamur! Praeterea tamquam si pristina beneficia imparia forent tanti viri meritis, denuo inter Magnates secundi ordinis eum cooptavit ac primario huius aulae tribunali praefecit: virtutes eius honorificentissimo elogio extolit et tandem pro funeris expensis trecenta scuta elargitur.

Castiglione mors ab omnibus complorata, tamquam maxima totius Provinciae iactura: in illo quippe nostrorum Christianorumque spes nitebatur ut si quae exorirentur difficultates, illius autoritate ac precibus evanuisent: in comuni vero maerore nobis solatiae sunt eximiae eius virtutes quas nobis ad perpetuum excitamentum reliquit. Nutus maiorum ut leges observabat, praevertebatque. Nulla illi potior cura quam ut Deo ac moderatoribus suis, quippe Dei vicariam potestatem habentibus, satisfaceret. Paupertatem colebat tam arcte ut nihil daret acceptaretve quin ad id, toties quoties id acciderit, suorum moderatorum consensum impetraretur. Castitatem incredibili cura ac prope superstitione custodiebat; senex aetatis decrepitae tot pugnis et victoris clarus sensus suos tam severa lege fraenabat ut umquam quidquam laxari illis permiserit: locutiones umbram duntaxat impuritatis involventes summa diligentia amovebat: libros [...] obscaenitatis flagitia referentes legere numquam est ausus. Legum nostrarum observantia adeo in illo exacta ad normam mentis S. Parentis, ut multi dicere solerent si quo interiret casu in Castiglione reperienda. Animi perturbationes atque illam praesertim quae praestantibus in aliqua arte viris gloriolae beneficio insidiatur, ita subegerat, ut fateretur se capere non posse ut quisquam propriis laudibus delectaretur. Quamvis per tot annos versaretur in aula, de spiritu tamen aulico, quidquam umquam traxit: non adulatione inflatus, non dignitatum aut commodorum illecebra tactus: a simulatione prorsus alienus:

imo uti erat natura ipsa candidus, et ingenuus, animi sui sensus ita solebat sine ambagibus explicare, ut ab eo fraudem metueret nemo, nemo eius quaecumque vocem haberet suspectam. Nullus vidit eum aliquando otiosum: quod rebus gerendis supererat temporis aut contemplationi rerum caelestium, aut precibus fundendis impendebat Totus Deo et suo numeri: ideoque per raro diverticulum aliquod appetebat aut quaerebat. Negotia quae ad Numinis gloriam hominumque salutem non pertinerent, penitus negligebat. Sensus fraenabat ciliciis, flagellis, jejuniis, et invicta rerum molestarum patientia, quibus corpus suum in servitutem redigebat. Unus, qui per quindecim annos intime cum illo tractavit, asserebat nihil in illo notatum unquam esse quod reprehendi posset: nihil mutilum, nihil manchum, nihil imo quod ad solidae virtutis normam non exactum: non impetum animi, affectum repentinum quod a virtute deflecteret. Ea quae ad confessionem afferebat crimina erant eiusmodi ut vix sacerdos materiam aptam absolutionis inveniret. In morbo extremo qui decem et octo dies tenuit de suo obitu uti de re quadam iucunda ac porro optatissima loquebatur; nec unquam esse sui compos desit. Primam, uti creditur, innocentiam, cum pervulgata et publica non usitatae virtutis opinione tumulo intulit.

English translation of the *Memoria postuma*

Among those who passed away with great mourning in our Province one should mention the well-known Brother Castiglione. He was greatly endowed with all those qualities that our Society appreciates in a brother coadjutor. Though he worked in our Society in the humble rank of coadjutor without any honorific titles, he was nevertheless renowned for his great virtues as well as for the appreciation and honours granted to him by the Emperor. His name is so celebrated that it is beyond human praise. He was certainly admired both for his saintly life and morals and for the excellence of his pictorial art and therefore celebrated by highly religious men as well as by excellent painters. He so well represented our Society as a humble domestic servant and so well promoted Christianity by his art that nobody else did it better.

By all means, we can hold him in esteem for his virtues: in fact he was called ‘holy man’ or ‘holy old man’ by our brothers as well as by native friends.

The present Emperor who is so clever in discerning people's vices and virtues had so high an opinion of his piety that he believed that a similar man could not be found all over the world. One can imagine the Emperor's words: 'Are there in Europe such excellent artists as you are?' Castiglione would have replied: 'There are many indeed'. And back the Emperor pressing him: 'And would I find one as virtuous as you are?'

As to the excellence of his art I never read or heard of any painter on whose paintings the Emperor wrote with his royal brush the words 'brush creator of things' as a mark of praise to indicate that he was so good at imitating nature that he did not seem to paint things, rather to create them. Having said that, I will give you a brief summary of his life since I have not enough time for a long narration.

Castiglione was born in the noble and ancient city of Milan into a well-known family on 19 July 1688. He was brought up in the paternal home. In his childhood he received an education which was focused on literary studies and on the practice of those virtues that children can learn. He was so keen on practicing painting under the guidance of a master who was most celebrated in that age that he showed great skill in learning the art. He entered the Society of Jesus in Genoa when he was 19.

During his noviciate he was so obedient and good-hearted that he did not need to learn any virtues, rather just to be led to them. When he was sent to the Mission he finished the part of the noviciate that he had not completed before. As we can see from his life, he was an example of rare virtue and always respectful of the laws of the Society of Jesus. After taking the simple vows he was sent to Coimbra where he painted the domestic chapel of the Jesuit College. He was greatly admired for that work and gained great fame for it. Today there is no one who does not admire the nature and beauty of his great art.

He left Coimbra for Lisbon where he sailed for India; unfortunately the ship, soon after it had left the harbour and Lisbon could still be seen, crashed into some rocks and Castiglione surely would have died if God's hand had not snatched him from the wreck. Anyway, after many perilous adventures on sea, thanks to God, he landed at Goa, the capital city in India. Here, he was offered the opportunity to sail for China, which was his great desire; he regained his strength and prepared himself by renewed exercises of virtue to undertake the

hard and dangerous navigation. The ship was just leaving when obstacles arose regarding such a lengthy voyage that there was no more hope for sailing. But Castiglione was used to human and natural obstacles and with God's help he overcame even these difficulties, that had seemed insuperable to our Superiors, and after a happy journey he reached Macao on the first of July, 1715.

He was asked, by the Mandarin who had to take him to Beijing according to the Emperor's instructions, to stay at Macao for some time and this event did not occur without particular intervention of Holy Providence; in fact in those days he [Castiglione] had the opportunity to settle some quarrels that had risen between the Genoese and the senior members of the community of Macao and he brought them back to be on good terms.

As soon as Castiglione arrived in Beijing, his fame reached the ears of Emperor Kangxi who was waiting for him very impatiently because he wanted to see with his own eyes all this bravura. Once in the city, the Emperor ordered Castiglione to be conducted to him even before he had met our people [the Jesuit missionaries]. Without preambles the Emperor asked Castiglione to paint a bird. Castiglione obeyed and he did it so skilfully that the Emperor was wondering whether the bird was alive or painted. In order not to defraud his people [probably referring to those working in the Imperial painting workshops] and to have a noble art practised by a uniquely skilful artist, the Emperor chose a few disciples and appointed Castiglione as their master. He led the workshop with so much skill and sensibility for more than forty years that no disciples ever felt hurt by him, which is usually hard to avoid. What is more, he was so esteemed by his disciples that, when in difficulties, they referred to him like a father.

After the reigns of Kanxi and Yonzheng, Qianlong ascended the throne. Since he was a child he was an admirer of Castiglione and developed a great love and filial affection for him. As soon as he became the Emperor, he could not stand the fact that the worthy old man did not have any honours so he decreed that he would enter the order of Mandarins. As the news was rapidly spreading over the city, a lot of people started to congratulate him openly on what they thought was a settled fact, but the virtuous old man abhorred these kinds of honours, which are alien to our Society and incompatible with his humility, and prayed God with many tears to show him the way to avoid them.

So while asking God for what he had to do to avoid those honours with no offence for such a prince, he looked unusually sad so that his friends took it as a clear sign of his unwillingness to accept such a favour: a clear sign indeed also for the Emperor who, as he did not want to afflict the very person he wanted to gratify, recalled the decree, something which rarely happens. Castiglione's humility had prevailed. There were other honours, which were natural consequences of his nature and behaviour, [and these were] haunting him constantly. Among those he could not avoid [were] the ones that his politeness and gratitude persuaded him to accept. The Emperor gave Castiglione his cap as a present. Such an event is so rare that no one in the course of the centuries ever heard of the Emperor giving someone his cap as a present; our good brother was so sober in wearing that dignified present, that he did not wear it in public except during the celebrations for the Emperor. Moreover since Castiglione seriously suffered from gout and got into the Imperial Palace with great pain and difficulty, the Emperor decreed that he would enter the Palace on horseback according to the Palace Rules for princes. The good old man thanked the Emperor very much for the eminent and dignified honour and benefit but did not dare to use it. The Emperor imputed such reluctance to Castiglione's humility so he did not force him to obey, but tried to persuade him with great regard and benevolence to go on horseback any time he thought it was for his greater comfort and convenience. Castiglione was won over twice to accept given honour and, not wanting to offend the Emperor with his impolite severity and indifference, accepted a ride just twice and then apologized, giving the reason that it was healthier to walk rather than to ride to cure his infirmities. Honours and benefits greatly haunted him, so much that even the Emperor's mother asked her son to accept Castiglione among the Nobles. Finally he was forced to consent by the law of obedience, in fact he had to overcome the repulsion for honours in order to obey his Superiors. Furthermore he lived by very strict rules and never required from his disciples anything too hard to accomplish, using his prestige. He believed it was uniquely and particularly requested by him as a master always to do his own duty first and then expect it from the others and to lead with modesty and good behaviour more than with authority. He spent the rest of his life in executing pictorial and architectural works with great earnestness, always sharing all the difficulties and cares of our times. He was

given so many favours and signs of love by the Emperor that a long account would be needed to list them all.

The Emperor used to care for Castiglione's health and comfort with the same solicitude he would have shown for a member of his family and used to send him his doctors and all the remedies from the Imperial Pharmacy. When he did not see him at the Palace, he enquired about him so anxiously that it was clear that he suffered from his absence and, as soon as Castiglione recovered, he gave him the precious medicine called *jinseng*. Frequently, he exhorted him to stay at home in order to build up his weakening strength.

Finally, to summarize all in few words, the Emperor used to do for his dear friend Castiglione all that filial love can devise for parents' comfort and [all that] solicitous friendliness [can devise] for friends' happiness. He celebrated Castiglione's seventieth birthday with very great humanity, royal munificence and the greatest honours and what is more, since he knew that what is committed to the frail human memory is more easily corrupted than what is committed to written words, he wrote the praises of him with his royal brush. He also had decreed celebrations for his eightieth birthday, but Divine Providence designed to call him earlier from this world to receive the prize for his labours and he passed away the 16 of July, 1766. [After being] informed by the doctors about Castiglione's death the Emperor, as a true and sincere friend, lamented the loss with the whole court with these words: 'We really have to lament the loss of such a worthy man'. Then, as though the previous favours were inadequate for the virtues of such a man, he inscribed him in the second order of the Notables [Mandarins] and, presiding at the supreme tribunal, he exalted his virtues with a very honorific discourse and liberally gave three hundred *scuta* for the funeral.

Castiglione's death was generally lamented as a misfortune for the whole province since Christian hope lived in him so evidently that difficulties seemed to vanish thanks to his authority and prayers. In our common grief we can find much consolation in the high virtues that he left us as a constant spur. He used to fulfil the elders' wills and anticipate them. He did not care for anything else but to please God and his own spiritual fathers, as God's vicars. He cultivated poverty so strictly that he rarely gave or accepted anything from anyone and when he did it, it was with his superiors' consent. He preserved his chastity with incredible care and some superstition. When very old and illustrious after so

many struggles and victories, he was still keeping his senses dominated and did not let them relax for any reason. He avoided all expressions containing even the smallest hint of impurity. He never dared to read books in which he might find shameful obscenities. In the observation of the laws of our Society he so perfectly adhered to the principles of our Patron Saint that it was generally said that, in the case our Rule was lost, it could be found in him. He so much controlled his emotions, mostly that perturbation that usually seduce excellent artists with the hope of some small glory, that he confessed he could not stand those who took pleasure in being praised. Though he had frequented the Imperial Palace for so long, there was nothing of the court spirit in him as he did not swell up by adulation or was captured by the seduction of honours and benefits and he was completely alien to falsehood. He was pure and ingenuous by nature and used to show his feelings without ambiguity so that no one feared to be deceived or to hear an ambiguous word from his mouth. No one ever saw him inactive as he used his spare time in meditating on heavenly things or in praying. All in him was for God and His love, so he rarely desired or looked for distractions of any kind.

In all his life he showed no interest in situations not involving the glory of God or the welfare of others. He kept his senses subdued by hair-cloths, flagellations and fasts, thus having his body enslaved by the endurance of pain. A man who had known him personally for fifteen years testified that there was nothing reprehensible in him, nothing imperfect, everything about him was perfect according to the rule of a firm virtue, no feeling or rapture of the soul was detached from virtue. What he would confess as a mortal sin was hardly considered blameworthy by his confessor. When his life was coming to a close over the last eighteen days of his illness, he was talking of his death like a happy, even desirable event. He never lost consciousness. Until his death he was pure and innocent and the fame of his rare virtues spread everywhere.

Appendix D

Castiglione's vows signed by the artist, the Vice General Father Giovanni Suarez, and the General Michelangelo Tamburini. ARSI, *Ad Gradum Admissi 1541-1773*, Juxta Formulas Votorum in Arsi Asservatas., Lus.24, Ass. Lusit. Coad. Spirit. 1706-1768 (Listed in alphabetical order).

Ego Joseph Castiglione promitto Onnipotenti Deo, coram eius Virgine Matre, et tota coelesti curia, et tibi Reverendo Patri Josepho Suarez Societatis Iesu, vice F.R.P. Michaelis Angeli Tamburini Praeposti Generalis Societatis Iesu, et Successorum eius locum Dei tenenti, perpetua Pauperitatem, Castitatem, et Obedenciam, juxta modum, in litteris Apostolicis et Constitutionibus dictae Societatis expressum. Pekini in Ecclesia Collegii Societatis Iesu die octavo Decembris anno Millesimo Septingentesimo vigesimo Secundo.

Appendix E

Castiglione to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini, ARSI, Jap. Sin.184, ff. 37r/v 38r/v.

14 ottobre 1729. Pekino. Al Molto Reverendissimo in Cristo Nostro Padre.
Con umile e filiale confidenza mi pongo ai piedi di V.P. baciandoli con quell'affetto e sincerità che richiede l'umile stato di un minimo [Temporal Coadjutor], e inutile ma fortunato figlio di V.P. Ieri con singular mia consolatione, e con interno rispetto, e riverenza ricevetti benchè indegna una memoria di V.P., con la quale s'invigorì un poco l'anima mia, nel divino servitio. Ringratio umilmente V.P. di questo conforto, poiché i deboli come io l'hanno di bisogno, io non saprò con parole ringratiare a bastanza il paternale amore di V.P., ma La ringratio ben sì, con sospiri e lagrime di tenerezza, e di filiale sommissione, e rispetto all P.V., riconoscendomi indegno di un tale sollazzo. Ma in ottima occasione mi inviò il Signore Iddio questo soglievo di V.P., poiché stavo attualmente considerando tra me stesso (con alcun timore e rossore) come havevo di proporre a V.P. una piccola idea, che mi occorse, ma vedendo la benignità di V.P., presi cuore per proporre con maggiore confidenza e sommissione a V.P. la seguente supplica, poi che havendomi Dio Nostro Signore per sua bontà dato alcun desiderio di evitare l'otio desiderarebbi di impiegare quel tempo che mi avanza delle occupationi precise in qualche cosa degna di qualche lode, la quale fusse d'alcuna gloria d'Dio, utilità di questa missione, e d'alcun piccolo credito della Compagnia. Stando in questo pensiero mi occorse che il nostro Fretto Andrea Pozzo di felice memoria imprimì con credito della Compagnia e pubblica utilità i due tomi di prospettiva

[*Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum*], non meno celebri che ammirabili, e ancor che io povero e inutile non arrivi ad essere degno discepolo di tal Fretto, e che considerando la mia poca abilità tenga motivo di timere e d'abbattemi d'animo, con tutto animato della Bontà di Dio e confidato nel patrocinio di Maria Santissima, e del suo Sposo, e nostro protettore S.Giuseppe, volentieri apro il mio cuore a V.P. con quella indifferenza che mi è possibile conforme le nostre regole, ma se questa mia piccola idea parrà a V.P. un grande sproposito, lascerò (col favore d'Dio) ogni impresa come se mai mi fusse occorsa. E cossi propongo a V.P., come per il decorso de varii anni feci varie opere di pittura (benchè di poco valore) delle quali mi restarono i disegni con i quali mi pare che si potrebbero intagliare rami, e imprimersi imagini per utilità di questa Missione, e poi doppo con le dette immagini formare un libro, il quale servisse in Europa d'alcun aiuto a principianti nel arte della pittura, con acrescervi (se cossi mi parra conveniente) alcuni consilii, e documenti della medesima arte. Ma come per fare quest'operetta si richiede la mano di un buono intagliatore in rame, proposi questa piccola idea al nostro Fretto Ferdinando Moggi (che di presente risiede in questa Residenza) il quale con molto affetto si offerì per abbracciare questo lavoro, essendovi però il beneplacito de Superiori e veramente mi sarebbe di molta consolatione se in questa piccola opera non entrasse nissun esterno, ma fusse fatta solo de due Fretti della Compagnia, e questo medesimo (a mio parere) sarebbe d'edificazione a secolari d'Europa di vedere che non stiamo qui otiosi, e che ci profittiamo di tutto quel tempo che potiamo, a gloria d'Dio e questo medesimo si spiegarà nel medesimo libro. Se poi Dio Nostro Signore (col beneplacito di V.P.) ci concederà gratia di terminare questa piccola fatica, e quella riuscire d'alcuna accettatione, e habbia qualche esito (come spero nel Signore, poichè credo che sarà cosa alquanto utile e dilettevole, e se non questo almeno di qualche divotione, e d'alcuna novità in Europa) la nostra intentione dico poi, de ambidue, sarebbe d'applicare il lucro della detta opera, in alcun opera pia, in beneficio di questa Missione, ripartendo il detto lucro per la metà di sorte che ciascheduno de noi due Fretti possa (con licenza di V.P.) applicare la detta metà in quello che averà maggiore divotione in bene della Missione. Intorno poi alle spese del detto libro, mi aiuterò della limosina, della congrua di mio uso, ancorchè io veda, che quella

certamente non basterà, a cagione d'altre precise necessità, ma in tal caso poi ricorrerò ai Superiori, o ad altri nostri, e se sarà necessario, spero che Dio Nostro Signore mi darà animo di ricorrere ancora a V.P., già che per mia fortuna tengo tal Padre, e sono (benchè indegno) figlio di tal Madre. La sudetta idea e supplica manifestai già al P. Vis Ignatio Kegler, al P. Prov. Giovanni Duarte e al suo successore il P. Andrea Pereyra, come ancora il P. Superiore Domenico Pinheiro, i quali con paternale amore annuirono a questa petitione con segni di speciale consolatione. Questa piccola opera, inclinano questi Superiori, con molto mio gusto, e consolatione, che io la dedichi a Sua Maestà il Re di Portogallo [Ferdinando III]. Circa poi al esame del detto libro, suppongo, che i Superiori di qua hanno già l'autorità per rivederlo e esaminarlo. Questo è quel tanto che umilmente propongo alla P.V. chiedendoli il suo beneplacito e licenza, se V.P. cossì lo giudica nel Signore, e quando V.P. non lo giudicasse spediente, tanto il Fretto Moggi quanto io ci confermiamo totalmente alla dispositione di V.P. Però se la P.V. si vorrà degnare di consolarci, col dilei consenso, e beneplacito, resteremo ambi due animati e confortati nel Signore per virtù della Santa ubbidienza, e speraremo, che la Sua Divina Maestà ci concederà vitta, tempo, e salute per poterci impiegare in questa piccola opera in onore e gloria sua, e quando la divina bontà non lo disponesse cossì sia sempre fatta la sua santissima volontà. Amen. Umilmente chiedi i S.Sac. e la Santa e paternale benedittione di V.P.

Pekino dalla Residenza di S. Giuseppe 14 Ottobre 1729.

Glossary of Chinese names, titles, and terms

Titles of paintings and books are in italics

<i>Baijuntu</i>	百駿圖 (<i>Hundred Horses</i> , 1728)
Bei Tang	北堂 (Northern Church)
Biaozuo	裱作 (Mounting Shop)
baoyi	包衣 (Manchu bondservants)
bufu	補服 (surcoat)
buzi	補子 (rank badge)
<i>Celiang Fayi</i>	側量法義 (<i>Theory and Methods of Measures</i>)
Chen Mei	陳枚 (1697-1745)
Da Qing	大清 (Great Clarity)
Ding Guanpeng	丁觀鵬 (active at court between the 1726 and the 1770)
Dong Tang	東堂 (Eastern Church)
du	讀 (to read)
fa	法 (method)
Falangchu	琺瑯處 (Enamels Department)
fenben	粉本 (a draft, a study)
fengsuhua	風俗畫 (genre painting)
guan	觀 (to observe)
guanbian	觀變 (the observation of the changing of objects)
guanxiang	觀相 (the observation of the forms of objects)
gongbi	工筆 (realistic representation of objects)
gongbi jiehua	工筆界畫 (realistic representation of objects and detailed use of brush, ink and pigments)
gongbi zhongcai	工筆重彩 (realistic representation of objects and use of vivid colours)
<i>Gouguyi</i>	勾股義 (<i>Explanations of the Triangle</i>)
<i>Haitianxuritu</i>	海天旭日圖 (<i>Rising Sun Against Oceanic Sky</i>)
<i>Hasake Gongmatu</i>	哈薩克貢馬圖 (<i>Kazakhs Presenting Horses in Tribute</i>)
huagao	畫稿 (a preliminary sketch)
huahuaren	畫畫人 (painter)
<i>Huangyu Quanlantu</i>	黃輿全覽圖 (<i>Geographic and Cartographic Atlas</i>)
Huayuanchu	畫院處 (Painting Academy Office)
Huazuo	畫作 (Painting Workshop)
ji	即 (to approach)

Jiao Bingzhen	焦秉貞 (active at court from 1680 to 1720)
jiehua	界畫 (detailed use of brush, ink and pigments)
<i>Jihe Yuanben</i>	幾何原本 (the translation of Euclid's <i>Elements of Geometry</i>)
Jin Tingbiao	金廷標 (1757-1767)
<i>Juruitu</i>	聚瑞圖 (<i>Assembled Auspicious Objects</i>)
Jishilu	記事錄 (Archives Office?)
Kangxi	康熙 (玄暉 Xuanhui, 1645-1722)
Kuzhu	庫貯 (Storehouse)
Lang Shining	郎世寧 (Giuseppe Castiglione, 1688-1766)
<i>Lidai Minghuaji</i>	歷代名畫記 (<i>Record of Famous Painters of all the Dynasties</i>)
Li Boming	利博明 (Ferdinando Bonaventura Moggi)
Li Madou	利瑪竇 (Matteo Ricci, 1552-1610)
Ma Guoxian	馬國賢 (Matteo Ripa)
Ma Yuan	馬遠 (1190-1224)
Minghuang	明黃 (bright yellow)
<i>Mingshi</i>	明史 (<i>Ming History</i>)
Nan Tang	南堂 (Southern Church)
Neiwufu	內務府 (Imperial Household)
Nian Xiyao	年希堯 (d.1738)
Pan Tingzhang	潘廷章 (Giuseppe Panzi, 1733-1812)
Qianlong	乾隆 (弘曆 Hongli 1711-1799)
<i>Qianlong Huangdi</i>	乾隆皇帝朝服像 (<i>Portrait of Emperor Qianlong in Formal Court Robe</i>)
<i>Chaofuxiang</i>	
<i>Qianlong Dayuetu</i>	乾隆大閱圖 (<i>Qianlong Inspecting the Troops</i>)
qin	勤 (diligent)
qinshen	勤慎 (diligent and prudent)
<i>Qiuping Xinyu</i>	秋坪新語
renwu	人物 (figure and genre painting)
Ruyiguan	如意館 (Hall of Fulfilled Wishes)
Shanshuihua	山水畫 (landscape painting)
<i>Shaolutu</i>	哨鹿圖 (<i>Deer Hunting Patrol</i>)
shen	慎 (cautious)
Sheng	生 (living spirit)
Shi	視 (to look at)
<i>Shixue</i>	視學 (<i>Visual Learning</i>)
<i>Shixue Jingyun</i>	視學精蘊 (<i>Essence of the Science of Vision</i>)
<i>Shuitu</i>	水圖 (<i>Studies of Water</i>)
<i>Siku quanshu</i>	四庫全書 (<i>Complete Library of the Four Treasuries</i>)
<i>Suichaotu</i>	歲朝圖 (<i>The Qianlong Emperor and the Royal Children</i>)
Taihedian	太和殿 (Hall of Supreme Harmony)
Tangdai	唐岱 (active 1707-1750)

tieluo	貼落 (<i>appliqué</i> , ‘past-on lift-off’)
wang	望 (to gaze)
Wang Wei	王微 (701-761)
Wang Zhicheng	王緻誠 (Jean-Denis Attiret, 1702-1768)
Wenrenhuajia	文人畫家 (literati painter)
<i>Wuruitu</i>	午瑞圖 (<i>Auspicious Objects</i>)
xianfahua	線法畫 (painting of the line method)
xingletu	行樂圖 (pictures of behaviour and enjoyment)
<i>Xinfa Suanshu</i>	新法算書 (<i>Mathematical Methods of the New Calendrical System</i>)
<i>Xinxie Zhipingtu</i>	心寫治平圖 (<i>In My Heart There is the Power to Reign Peaceably</i>)
Xu Gandida	徐甘第大 (Candida Xu, 1607-1680)
Xu Guangqi	徐光啟 (1562-1633)
<i>Xu Hua</i>	敘畫 (<i>Discussion of Painting</i>)
Yangxindian	養心殿 (Inner Palace)
Yao Yuanzhi	姚元之 (?-?)
yinyang	陰陽 (chiaroscuro)
Yongzheng	雍正 (胤禛 Yinzhen, 1678-1736)
Yuanmingyuan	圓明園 (Garden of Total Clarity)
yurong	御容 (imperial visage)
Yu Sheng	余省 (active at court in the second half of the eighteenth century)
Zaobanchu	造辦處 (Palace Board of Works)
Zhalan	柵欄 (the Catholic cemetery in Beijing)
Zhang Jingyun	張景運 (?-?)
Zhang Weibang	張為邦 (active at court in the second half of the eighteenth century)
Zhang Yanyuan	張彥遠 (ca. 815-after 875)
zhen	真 (real)
zhu	矚 (to gaze at)
<i>Zhuyeting Zaji</i>	竹葉亭雜記 (<i>Miscellaneous of the Bamboo's Leaf Pavilion</i>)
Zimingzhong	自鳴鐘 (Clock Workshop)

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