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# THE JESUIT CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEATRE

HENRY SCHNITZLER

## I

Immediately after its foundation, the Order of the Jesuits embarked upon an intensive educational scheme which found its expression in the rapid spreading of Jesuit Colleges over large parts of the European Continent. The methods of instruction employed in these institutions proved so successful that within a few decades the Jesuits became "the schoolmasters of Europe."<sup>1</sup> Even Protestant children were entrusted to their care; a remarkable fact, since the Order's professed aim was to serve as a fighting force in the struggle against the New Faith. Relentlessly pursuing this aim, the Jesuits established themselves as the standard-bearers of the Counter Reformation, proclaiming as their foremost purpose the "Propaganda Fides," the propagation of the faith.

From the very beginning, the Jesuit curriculum included dramatic activities. Such practices were not new in themselves, since school dramatics had become generally accepted as part of the educational system of the Humanists. There, however, the use of drama had been dictated primarily by the real-

ization that performances of Latin plays could serve as an ideal tool not only for the teaching of that classical tongue, but also for what we today would call "personality development." The Jesuits, on the other hand, at once recognized the theatre as a dynamic force which might be used for much broader and, in terms of the Order's missionary program, more significant ends. The awareness that here was a powerful weapon for the implementation of counter-reformatory propaganda was responsible for the development as well as for most features of that unique phenomenon, the Jesuit school theatre.

From its foundation, in 1540, to its temporary suppression, in 1773, the Order carried on a vast theatrical program. During nearly two and a half centuries, Jesuit priests and their students devoted a large portion of their time and energy to work in every conceivable area related to the stage. Since one of the characteristics of all Jesuit undertakings was their rigidly disciplined uniformity, it is possible to point out typical features of the Jesuit school theatre, regardless of national or local differences. Although these, at times, did influence certain details, they were never permitted to interfere with the basic principles which guided the Order's

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<sup>1</sup>E. A. Fitzpatrick, *St. Ignatius and the Ratio Studiorum* (New York, 1933), p. 24.

educational and missionary institutions. The Jesuits' singleness of purpose determined direction, quality, and scope of all dramatic activities.

The Jesuit school theatre was a propagandist theatre. As a matter of fact, it may be said to have been the first theatre consciously used for propagandistic ends. These were naturally more conspicuous during the first decades of the Order's existence, when new ground had to be won, chiefly by reaching huge audiences and impressing them with the spiritual message of Roman Catholicism. At that time, therefore, the theatrical form used was frequently, although by no means exclusively, the open-air pageant which could assume considerable proportions. One such spectacle, to name an outstanding instance given in Munich, in 1574, lasted two days and employed 1,000 players, among them 185 actors.<sup>2</sup>

Such mass performances, however, favored in Germany and Austria, where Protestantism had registered ominous gains, were exceptional even there, and they soon disappeared almost entirely. Around 1600, the Jesuit school theatre retired into the college building, using for its productions the *Aula*, or Festival Hall. Obtaining security and power in those countries where the Counter Reformation had proved victorious, the Jesuit Fathers were now in a position to organize their theatre with that mixture of determination and flexibility which contributed not only to their success but just as much to the antagonism, and even hatred, they so frequently aroused. During what may be called the Jesuit school theatre's golden age, the seventeenth century, regular stages were installed in most colleges, equipped with all technical achievements available at

the time. Some institutions possessed even two theatres, one for the major productions, another for the numerous dramatic exercises on a smaller scale that occurred throughout the year. Usually, the main event, carefully prepared for months, took place at the end of the school year, coincident with the distribution of prizes. However, in some more important colleges, especially those situated in larger cities, several major productions might be presented during one academic year, sometimes on festival occasions related to political events or local holidays.

Just as the actors appearing in the plays were students, the playwrights were, without exception, Jesuit priests. Certain ranks among the teachers were under the obligation to provide the dramatic material, whether this consisted of full-length plays, or merely of short dialogues for classroom use. All Jesuit plays were to be written in Latin. The exclusive use of this language was at least stipulated in the *Ratio Studiorum*, the body of rules governing the Order's educational methods. This particular rule, however, was not always followed; short scenes and, in exceptional instances, even entire plays in the vernacular were tolerated. Besides, the native language proved indispensable in comic interludes which soon became standard features of many Jesuit dramas.

One of the principles adopted by Jesuit Colleges was to avoid the revival of plays previously performed at another school. Although exceptions are known, this policy was largely followed, with the result that most Jesuit plays were "originals." Yet, this term has to be taken with a grain of salt. Jesuit playwriting was based on imitation and convention rather than on creativeness and originality. While some of the Order's dramatists

<sup>2</sup> Karl von Reinhardtstoettner, "Zur Geschichte des Jesuitendramas in Muenchen," in *Jahrbuch fuer Muenchener Geschichte* (Munich, 1889), III, 76.

deservedly attained fame as truly creative writers, the majority composed their pieces following a rather rigid and uninspiring formula derived either from other Jesuit dramas or from the numerous Jesuit manuals on playwriting. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that the hundreds of plays written each year were cut to one and the same pattern. On the other hand, Jesuit playwrights had no literary ambitions but considered themselves merely dutiful providers of the required dramatic fare. There is ample proof that thoughts of fame or posterity never entered their devout minds, an attitude which also explains why so few Jesuit dramas have survived and why still fewer have ever been printed. The text of a play was regarded merely as the score to be used for a theatrical performance, but never as an end in itself.

Many Jesuit dramas did survive in a fragmentary form, namely in the so-called *Periochi*, i.e., synopses distributed among the spectators in order to enable those unfamiliar with the Latin language to follow the action. It is questionable, however, whether such aids were really necessary since on the Jesuit stage the spoken word was relatively unimportant, modestly taking its place alongside of the other production elements which frequently overshadowed the dialogue. A Jesuit performance was to be an irresistible appeal to senses and emotions rather than to intellect and reason. The spectator was to be virtually hypnotized by a concerted attack of all known theatrical devices, until he surrendered his entire being to the drama's spiritual message. This appeal to the senses, a tendency the Jesuit theatre shared with the other arts of the Baroque period,<sup>3</sup> may explain the

extraordinary and well-documented effect its productions had even on largely illiterate seventeenth-century audiences. For the reasons just indicated, the Jesuit theatre also served as an ideal weapon in the Order's missionary activity among non-European peoples where, as for instance among the Indians of South America, its suggestive power was used with striking results.<sup>4</sup>

## II

Before investigating the roots of these varied dramatic activities, it will be necessary to describe briefly the features typical of all Jesuit plays and to point out the elements which lent themselves so readily to the abundant and often extravagant use of spectacular devices.

Form and content of all Jesuit dramas were determined by their ultimate educational and religious aims. In the Order's Constitution, these were clearly defined as follows: "The object of this Society is to labor not only for the salvation and perfection of our own souls, by the help of God's Grace, but also, by the same help devote ourselves zealously to the salvation and perfection of our neighbors."<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the tendency of every play was to exalt the blessings of a devout life and to inspire the audience with the Christian virtues of humility and piety. The subjects, chosen accordingly, demonstrated the instability and vanity of fame and fortune and urged constant watchfulness against the ever-present seductions of the world. The ending exemplified the play's message by showing either the hero's conversion rewarded by salvation and heavenly bliss, or his stubborn refusal to listen to the

(Paris, 1951); and Werner Weisbach, *Der Barock als Kunst der Gegenreformation* (Berlin, 1921).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. René Fuloop-Miller, *Macht und Geheimnis der Jesuiten*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1932), p. 354; p. 507f.

<sup>3</sup> See Wilhelm Hausenstein, *Vom Geist des Barock* (Munich, 1924); Emile Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du XVIe siècle, du XVIIe siècle, et du XVIIIe siècle. Etude sur l'iconographie après le Concile de Trente*, 2nd ed.

<sup>5</sup> The *Primum ac Generale Examen*, quoted by H. Dwight-Sedgwick in *Ignatius Loyola* (New York, 1923), p. 216.

word of God punished by eternal damnation in Hell. The variety of subjects used to illustrate what may be called the dominant theme of all Jesuit plays, namely the persuasive antithesis World-God, is, in view of their never-changing pattern, truly astounding. The Bible provided useful material, as did legends and stories related to Saints and Martyrs. Favorite topics were the lives of enemies and protectors of the Church, or of historical characters whose fates could furnish object lessons for the Order's missionary activity. It has been correctly stated that the Jesuits used virtually all significant themes of world drama, many of them for the first time. Their uncanny flair for theatrical values no doubt proved stimulating for contemporary as well as later playwrights.

Closely related to the Jesuits' principle to convey their message through an appeal to the senses rather than by relying on the spoken word, was their continuous use of allegorical figures. Personifications of ideas, attitudes, desires, were a familiar sight on Jesuit stages, as were representations of ghosts, angels, devils, and the spirits of the dead. Such figures were used in the frequent dream scenes, in episodes showing magicians and sorcerers at work, in frightening images of Hell, or in dazzling visions of Heaven. In some instances a Chorus of allegorical characters was employed to comment upon the play's meaning.

Not only allegorical figures but other characters as well were often seen in another standard feature of Jesuit dramaturgy, the Interludes. What the play's action showed in terms of human beings, these interludes explained mostly in terms of allegory. A device such as this again facilitated the spectators' comprehension of a drama acted in a language which most of them could not understand.

Another device, used for a similar purpose, was the *Scena Muta*, i.e., The Mute Scene, or Dumb-Show, where allegorical characters pointed out in pantomime the play's meaning either by predicting events that were to follow, or by summing up the significance of what had just occurred on the stage.

The obviously didactic character of the Jesuit school theatre, however, was never allowed to become obtrusive. On the contrary, with admirable skill the Jesuits succeeded in presenting their message in the most enticing manner, shrewdly disguising it under the colorful cloak of splendid entertainment. To achieve this aim, they never hesitated to use for their own purposes all existing dramatic and theatrical forms. Without exaggerating in the least, one can state that there was not a single theatrical *genre* that could not, at some time or place, be seen in a Jesuit theatre. A list would have to include not merely tragedy, comedy, pantomime, pastoral play, and farce, but also opera and ballet. One must never forget, on the other hand, that even these last-mentioned types, which we usually associate with the not exactly religious court spectacles of the Baroque age, were admitted to Jesuit schools only as long as they could be made to serve the Order's never-changing aim. This was further emphasized by the practice of printing, at the end of every synopsis and at the bottom of every program, the letters "O.A.M.D.G.," an abbreviation of the motto *Omnia Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, i.e. "All to the Greater Glory of God."

We can well understand the necessity of stressing this lofty purpose when we hear of what was no doubt one of the most baffling disguises a religious message has ever assumed: the ballet. While theatrical dancing was developed especially at the Order's Paris College, it was encouraged in other Jesuit schools too.

Naturally, the Fathers hastened to point out, not only in theoretical writings on the art of the dance but also through the choice of suitable subjects, that here too the basic aim of their theatre was firmly upheld.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, we must not be astonished to find on Jesuit stages dancing saints and martyrs, emperors and generals, not to mention a host of allegorical figures who had also been seized by this outburst of a religiously inspired balletomania.<sup>7</sup>

In order to stage such a variety of theatrical forms, elaborate scenic effects were required; and the Jesuit priests provided them generously. The familiar equipment of the Baroque theatre, with its trap doors and flying machines, its lightning and thunder, was at once taken over by the Jesuit colleges. Numerous changes of scenery, one of the chief attractions of the contemporary operatic

<sup>6</sup> In one instance, an entire ballet was designed to justify the educational value of the Jesuit school theatre: *L'Homme Instruit par les spectacles, ou le théâtre changé en école de vertu*, by P. Charles Porée, performed at the *Collège Louis le Grand* in Paris, on August 6, 1726; cf. Ernest Boyssse, *Le Théâtre des Jésuites* (Paris, 1880), p. 278.

<sup>7</sup> The idea of using a ballet to convey a religious message might appear less strange when we learn that in our own day a football game has been used for a similar purpose. *Time* (LVIII [October 29, 1951], 63f.) printed the account of a radio program, *The Great Game of Life*, whose public appeal proved so great that a recorded version, made upon the urgent demand of enthusiastic listeners, sold by the thousands. The two teams involved in this fictitious contest represent the forces of Christianity and of Evil, while allegorical figures, such as Prayer, Love, Bible-Study, Witnessing, Faithfulness, Church-Attendance, and Humility, are employed to drive home the spiritual message. The Christian team "has as its coach the greatest of them all, noted for his great and unerring wisdom," namely Jesus Christ, while the forces of Evil are led by Satan. "And believe you me," the announcer continues, "this guy Satan and his men will be tough to handle." We are also told that "the referee of this Game of Life is God Himself, the perfect, just, and all-seeing referee . . ." One wonders whether the author, Jarrell F. McCracken, by profession a sportscaster for a Waco, Texas, radio station, was aware of the fact that he had resorted to devices known not only to medieval drama but also effectively used by the Jesuit school theatre.

stage, contributed greatly to the popularity of the school performances, as did spectacular costumes and lovely music. It is symptomatic of the significance assumed by the Jesuit theatre in its time that distinguished composers like Orlando di Lasso (1530?-1594) and Johann Caspar Kerll (1625-1692), wrote original scores for some of its productions.<sup>8</sup>

### III

What may be the roots of this astounding theatre, where prodigious feats of acting, dancing, and singing, supported by a combination of the most effective tricks of the Baroque stage, were employed, not to provide entertainment but "All to the Greater Glory of God?" How can we explain the attempt to achieve purely spiritual ends by utterly sensual means? The answer to these questions may be found in the teachings of the Order's founder, Ignatius of Loyola. As a matter of fact, much that does strike us as strange, in a school theatre committed to a religious task, may be traced back to Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*. These, to quote from the complete title of the celebrated book, are "chosen with a view to lead Man to conquer himself, to disengage himself from the fatal influence of evil affections, and, with his heart thus set free, to trace out for himself the plan of a truly Christian life."<sup>9</sup> In Loyola's own definition, the *Spiritual Exercises* are "certain operations of the mind and heart, such as the examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, mental and vocal prayer, which are employed in order to free the soul from its irregular affections, and so to put it in the way of knowing and embracing the will of God towards it."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Max Wittwer, *Die Musikpflege in Jesuitenorden* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Greifswald, 1934).

<sup>9</sup> *Manresa; The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, New ed. (New York, 1914), p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.



Of particular importance among the various exercises, which are to be undertaken in seclusion and concentration or, in other words, in retreat, are, for our purposes at least, meditation and contemplation, both designed to enable the believer to reach his spiritual goal. Through meditation he may intellectually grasp an abstract truth; through contemplation he may, for instance, recall to his memory some episode from the life of Christ, or he may imagine Hell and its tortures. To render the act of contemplation effective, he is advised to resort to what Ignatius of Loyola calls the "Application of the Senses"; that is, he should attempt, by using his imagination, to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch every detail that may assist him in bringing to life as vividly as possible the subject he has chosen. To put it in modern terms: an imaginary stimulus is to be used to call forth an empathic response.

When, for instance, Loyola, explaining the "Exercise on Hell," states: "Imagine to yourself the height, the breadth, and depth of Hell,"<sup>11</sup> this instruction is to be taken quite literally. The "Application of the Senses," as related to this particular exercise, considers at length how all physical details associated with the concept of Hell are to be re-experienced in the individual's imagination, by the use of what we today call sense memory.<sup>12</sup>

The *Spiritual Exercises* are primarily designed to be used in complete isolation, while the individual in retreat is cut off from every contact with his worldly environment. Yet, the Jesuits soon discovered the value and effectiveness of collective retreats.<sup>13</sup> Loyola himself recommended the practice of giving the

exercises publicly in the churches.<sup>14</sup> A whole group of persons was urged, again using the "Application of the Senses," to imagine simultaneously certain situations, or episodes, which might help them to grasp the spiritual truth they were seeking.

What could have been more logical than to take one further step to aid the imagination which, in some individuals, might not be sufficiently developed? This could be done by actually showing what the *Spiritual Exercises* suggested merely as objects of contemplation, thus directly appealing to the senses in order to ascertain the desired empathic response. The realization of these momentous possibilities not only led to the development of the Jesuit school theatre but also explains its strikingly sensual quality. The relentless assault on the spectators' senses in the Jesuit theatre, then, must be understood not as a superficial stimulant but solely in terms of the Order's spiritual purposes. On the stages of Jesuit colleges, inner images were made concrete; here, the imaginary stimuli, as suggested by the exercises, were supplanted by actual sensory experiences.

The principle of the "Application of the Senses" formed also an integral part of the Jesuit system of education. Expressly referring to Loyola's instructions, Jesuit theorists point out that education must begin with sensory observation.<sup>15</sup> To develop the student's capacity for conscious use of his senses becomes, therefore, a task as important as to contribute to his intellectual growth. To stimulate the powers of imagination which, in turn, are believed to be dependent upon exact sensory observation, is considered as essential as to foster the

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163f.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Alexandre Brou, S.J., *Les Exercices Spirituels de Saint Ignace de Loyola; Histoire et Psychologie* (Paris, 1922), p. 56ff.

<sup>14</sup> Letter of February 3, 1554; quoted by Paul Debuchy in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1911), XII, 796.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. F. Charmot, S.J., *La Pédagogie des Jésuites* (Paris, 1943), p. 221.

faculty of abstract thinking.<sup>16</sup> Since the theatre, by its very nature as a means to facilitate sensory experiences, could thus obviously contribute to the Order's educational aims, its integration in the Jesuit curriculum would appear entirely understandable.

One may conjecture whether the emphasis on the significance of sensory experiences might not also provide a clue to the frequently reported excellence of Jesuit student actors. Trained in the principle of the "Application of the Senses," they possibly approached the problems of acting in a manner anticipating modern methods which, as is well known, attempt to stimulate the actor's imagination and to widen his range of expressiveness by the conscious use of sensory observation and of sense memory.<sup>17</sup>

#### IV

In conclusion, the attempt may be made to sum up briefly the Jesuits' chief contributions to the development of dramatic art and to evaluate the significance of their theatrical activities.

Although the Order's achievements in dramatic literature were slight, its school theatre nevertheless had considerable influence on European drama. Many distinguished playwrights were pupils of Jesuit colleges where they first came into contact with the stage. In France, Molière, Pierre and Thomas Corneille, Lesage, Diderot, and Voltaire were educated by the Jesuits. Voltaire, who can hardly be credited with much sympathy for the Order's ideals, even stated in his later years that the plays produced at the Paris College had been by far the best part of the education he received

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. I. Rapoport, "The Work of the Actor," in *Acting; A Handbook of the Stanislavski Method*, ed. Toby Cole (New York, 1947), p. 33ff.; and Lee Strasberg, "Acting and the Training of the Actor," in *Producing the Play*, ed. John Gassner (New York, 1941), p. 143ff.

there.<sup>18</sup> The Jesuit school theatre in Spain profoundly influenced the work of Calderon de la Barca, whose religious dramas show numerous analogies with the methods and techniques of Jesuit plays.<sup>19</sup> In Holland, the celebrated Joost van den Vondel;<sup>20</sup> in Germany, Andreas Gryphius, the country's first significant tragic author<sup>21</sup>—both testified to the positive achievement of the Jesuit school theatre. In Austria, one of the Order's strongholds, Jesuit influence was to a great extent responsible for numerous characteristics of the popular stage, particularly for the development of the Viennese fairy-tale plays.<sup>22</sup> One of these may be assured of immortality: the libretto of Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* (1791).

Many Jesuit priests dealt with theatrical subjects in books whose circulation was by no means restricted to members of the Order. Jesuit manuals on dramatic theory and playwriting, far too numerous to be mentioned, were widely read and used.<sup>23</sup> The first comprehensive history and theory of the dance ever written, *Des Ballets Anciens et Modernes*, published in Paris, in 1682, was by a

<sup>18</sup> Letter to Dr. Bianchi, 1763, quoted by L.-V. Gofflot, in *Le Théâtre au Collège du Moyen Age a nos jours* (Paris, 1907), p. 181.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ludwig Pfandl, *Geschichte der spanischen Nationalliteratur in ihrer Blütezeit* (Freiburg i. Br., 1929), p. 406ff.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Alexander Baumgartner, S.J., *Joost van den Vondel; sein Leben und seine Werke* (Freiburg i. Br., 1882), p. 233ff.

<sup>21</sup> See W. Harring, *Andreas Gryphius und das Drama der Jesuiten* (Halle, 1907), Vol. V; and Willi Flemming, *Andreas Gryphius und die Bühne* (Halle, 1921).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Alexander von Weilen, *Geschichte des Wiener Theaterwesens von den ältesten Zeiten bis zu den Anfängen der Hof-Theater* (Die Theater Wiens, Vienna, 1899), I, 43; see also Moriz Enzinger, *Die Entwicklung des Wiener Theaters vom 16. zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Schriften der Gesellschaft fuer Theatergeschichte, vols. 28 and 29, Berlin, 1918-19).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Johannes Mueller, S.J., *Das Jesuitendrama in den Laendern deutscher Zunge vom Anfang bis zum Hochbarock* (Augsburg, 1930), II, 39; and Willi Flemming, *Das Ordensdrama* (Deutsche Literatur in Entwicklungsreihen; Barockdrama, Leipzig, 1930), II, 15ff.



French Jesuit, P. Claude Francois Menestrier.<sup>24</sup>

In the fields of theatre architecture and stagecraft, the Order followed, on the whole, contemporary developments, first using platforms reminiscent of medieval types, later adopting the picture-frame stage of Italian origin. Yet, there are two stage forms peculiar to Jesuit practices. The first combines the medieval principle of the simultaneous setting with that of the picture-frame stage, showing a large platform backed by one or more curtained cubicles which could be equipped with wings and backdrops. This type has survived to our own day in the stage used at the Oberammergau Passion Play.<sup>25</sup> The second, developed at the Colleges of Paris and Rennes, shows a certain resemblance to the permanent architectural front that was used by the Dutch guilds, the Rederijkers, for their dramatic performances.<sup>26</sup>

Several Jesuit priests worked on the theory of perspective painting and its application to theatrical scenery. The French Jesuit, Jean Dubreuil (1602-1670), in his treatise *La Perspective Pratique*, dealt for the first time extensively with the various problems involved.<sup>27</sup> Another Jesuit priest, Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709), an Italian by birth, acquired fame not merely as a theorist but also as a creative artist. Specializing

in the most elaborate tricks of perspective painting, he stunned Europe by the skill and effectiveness of his craftsmanship. His treatise on perspective, *Perspectiva pictorum atque architectorum*, published in Rome in two abundantly illustrated volumes, between 1693 and 1700, re-edited and translated several times, was studied and admired by contemporary architects. Here Pozzo also explained with understandable pride one of the discoveries he had made, namely, how to transpose a sketch, according to the laws of perspective, onto the flat panels of wings and, moreover, how this procedure could be used for the representation of circular buildings on the stage, an effect no one had achieved before his time.<sup>28</sup>

A German Jesuit, Franciscus Lang (1645-1725), wrote the first manual on acting and directing, titled *Dissertatio de Actione Scenica* and posthumously published in Munich, in 1727.<sup>29</sup> Based, as the author does not fail to point out, on his own practical experience, it contains detailed advice on speech, movement, and gesture. A separate chapter deals with the duties and problems of the *Choragus*, i.e., the director. As a matter of fact, the Jesuits were the first stage directors in the modern sense of the term. What the Meiningers, and Richard Wagner, what all modern directors have been trying to achieve, the perfect co-

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Boyse, op. cit., p. 35ff; and Gofflot, op. cit., p. 115ff.

<sup>25</sup> For a detailed discussion of Jesuit stage types, see Willi Flemming, *Geschichte des Jesuitendramas in den Landen deutscher Zunge* (Schriften der Gesellschaft fuer Theatergeschichte, vol. 32, Berlin, 1923).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Boyse, op. cit., p. 63ff; and George R. Kernodle, *From Art to Theatre* (Chicago, 1944), p. 164ff. For illustrations, see Gofflot, op. cit., frontispiece, and plates following pp. 64 and 176; and Carl Niessen, *Das Buehnenbild* (Bonn, 1924), plates 16, 24, and 37.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Guenter Schoene, *Die Entwicklung der Perspektivbuehne von Serlio bis Galli-Bibiena* (Theatergeschichtliche Forschungen, Leipzig, 1933), XLIII, 52ff. Dubreuil's work was published anonymously, in 3 volumes, in Paris, between 1642 and 1649.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Guenter Schoene, op. cit., p. 66ff.; Martin Hammitzsch, *Der moderne Theaterbau* (Berlin, 1907), p. 45ff.; Paul Zucker, *Die Theaterdekoration des Barock* (Berlin, 1925), p. 24f.; Hans Tintelnot, *Barocktheater und Barocke Kunst* (Berlin, 1939), p. 50ff. and p. 276ff.; and Helène Leclerc, *Les Origines Italiennes de l'Architecture Théâtrale Moderne* (Bibliothèque de la Société des Historiens du Théâtre, vol. 32, Paris, 1946), p. 184ff. On Pozzo, see also Thieme-Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Kuenstler* (Leipzig, 1933), XXVII, 334ff.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Nicolaus Scheid "P. Fr. Langs Buechlein ueber die Schauspielkunst," in *Euphorion*, VIII (1901), 57ff.; and Willi Flemming, *Geschichte des Jesuitentheaters in den Landen deutscher Zunge*, passim. Some passages from Lang's book are quoted by Tintelnot, op. cit., p. 315.

ordination and unification of all production elements through careful planning and rehearsing, was realized for the first time in the Jesuit school theatre. One can understand why the Jesuits looked with an attitude of contemptuous superiority on the professional stage of their time, with its lack of discipline and its haphazard rehearsal practices. Through the Order's school performances, popular audiences whose theatrical experiences would otherwise have been restricted to the crude histrionics of strolling players, were introduced to high standards achieved by conscientious working methods and, furthermore, to a theatre used not for purposes of entertainment but consciously employed as a medium for the communication of ideas. By consistently planning their productions for broad educational and cultural ends, the Jesuits helped pave the way for a concept of dramatic art which was to materialize in the government subsidized theatres of Europe. It is hardly an accident that the first National Theatres of consequence were founded in the two capitals which had indeed been centers of Jesuit activities: Paris and Vienna.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, the Order of the Jesuits may be said to be partly responsible for another medium of communication whose potential as an educational and cultural agent need not be emphasized: the motion pictures. Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), one of the Order's most celebrated members, distinguished in so many fields of knowledge that his contemporaries named him the "Doctor of a hundred arts," invented, around 1645, the Magic Lantern, the first instrument designed to project images on a flat surface and therefore the very basis of all screen

shows.<sup>31</sup> Kircher used his projector "for scientific as well as for entertainment purposes."<sup>32</sup> Employing a revolving wheel on which pictures were painted, he was able to show a succession of lantern slides which were sometimes arranged to tell a story.<sup>33</sup> His stunned contemporaries accused him of being "in league with the devil, because he could make images and shadows and objects appear where none had been before."<sup>34</sup> Kircher's pupil, the Jesuit Gaspar Schott (1608-1666), was the first to describe "optical illusions caused by a rapidly revolving wheel," thereby starting studies which directly led to the invention of motion pictures.<sup>35</sup> Still another Jesuit, Claude Francois Milliet de Châles (1621-1678), was the first to point out, at the end of the seventeenth century, "that the eye actually sees color and light and not objects and movement—a fact upon which the whole motion picture process is based."<sup>36</sup>

In view of the scope and variety of the Jesuits' contribution to the arts of the stage, it is hard to understand why this momentous and colorful chapter in theatrical history has been so sadly neglected by most historians. Its study is not only indispensable for a full comprehension of the Baroque theatre, of which it formed an essential part, but also, because of the conscious use it made of the sensual aspects of the stage, for any exploration of the aesthetic foundations of dramatic art. Moreover, in the Jesuit school theatre, the attempt was made for the first time to use the stage, not as the Humanists had used it, merely for the sake of teaching Latin, but as a

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Martin Quigley, *Magic Shadows; The Story of the Origin of Motion Pictures* (Washington, D. C., 1948), p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54; p. 58f.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62f.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64f.

<sup>30</sup> The Comédie Française was founded in 1680; the Burgtheater, in 1776.

formative influence on the student's entire personality. Finally, by reaching out far beyond the bounds of the school building in order to serve the community

at large, the Jesuits anticipated one of the functions which the American educational theatre is striving to fulfill in our own day.