

Francisco Malta Romeiras

Os jesuítas em Portugal depois de Pombal: História ilustrada. Cascais: Lucerna, 2018. Pp. xix+139. Hb, € 17,85.

Philippe Ariès (1914–84) belongs to a group of historians who helped us reconsider the role of history and the meaning of the concept of historical source, such as the use of the “portraits” of Beauregard’s castle (Ariès, *Le temps de l’histoire* [Le Rocher, 1954], 33–34). In the first half of the twentieth century, this French historian broadened his field of investigation while bringing new topics for debate as a result of a new heuristic approach, as in the case of iconographic representations. History, especially social and cultural, sought and seeks in the image the material that represents the society that produced it, showing what is portrayed as well as how to expose it. The images, when articulated with other registers, amplify our knowledge about the past. Regardless of the type of source, what is important for the historian/researcher is to know how to deal critically and methodologically with the document, or rather, how people represented their history and historicity.

Historiography is currently more in tune with academia than conventionalism. Thematic diversity (namely the history of gender, subaltern people, and other underrepresented groups), historical compendia, and even the interest in biographical work, all have gained prominence in recent world historiography. In Portugal, for example, research has been done on the Portuguese empire (1415–1999), slavery, and topics that over the centuries have represented the Portuguese mindset when it comes to its past, such as the missionary activity of the Society of Jesus or even historical biographies. For example, the Society of Jesus has been one of the most present themes in the history of Portugal. This, in part, is due to the “myth” that was built around it during the first two hundred and fifty years of its existence. Several studies have been written on this subject, either praising the actions of the Society of Jesus, particularly overseas, or blaming the Jesuits for being responsible for the cultural and scientific backwardness in which Portugal lived until at least the eighteenth century. Yet, this last interpretation has recently changed. Today, it is widely known that many Jesuits knew and practiced science and were also responsible for the introduction of modern discoveries in science, such as the use of the Galilean telescope in Portugal and its introduction in the Far East. Scholars took into account the educational background of the Jesuits in the sciences as well as the globalization process to which they contributed (Leitão, “Galileo’s Telescopic Observations in Portugal,” in José Montesinos y Carlos Solís, eds., *Largo camino di filosofare: Eurosymposium Galileo 2001* [La Orotava: Fundación Canaria Orotava de la Historia de la Ciencia, 2001], 903–13). Publications of the

studies on the Jesuits are not only limited to their ties to science, but also to the need to reaffirm those aspects that have distinguished them from other religious orders, such as their teaching method, their national and overseas evangelization techniques, as well as portraying their persecution and eventually the rebirth of their history. This task has been carried out by laymen as well as by Jesuits. The desire to record their actions for posterity was always present within their order. In the twentieth century, for example, there were many Jesuits who wanted to disseminate documentation on their missionary work. Worth mentioning is the great editions arranged by Joseph Wicki, S.J., or Serafim Leite, S.J. Additionally, the Portuguese journal *Brotéria*, edited by the Jesuits, has always been on the forefront when it comes to present the educational and cultural sides of the Society of Jesus.

Francisco Malta Romeiras's latest publication, *Os jesuítas em Portugal depois de Pombal: História ilustrada*, features something unique and fresh, namely, a selection of photographs. By doing so, Romeiras wanted to join the celebrations of the 160th anniversary of the restoration of the Society of Jesus in Portugal after its expulsion in 1759 and suppression in 1773. For the edition of the book, Romeiras used photos found in the Jesuit province of Portugal: 160 pages with c.260 unedited photographs, c.160 of which were taken after the restoration of the Society of Jesus in Portugal (1858). The book comes with a preface written by José Frazão Correia, S.J., a brief chronological introduction, followed by a chronology (1759–2014), and it ends with a short, yet very useful, recommended bibliography.

The uniqueness of the photographs and the importance that this special publication has for the historical narrative is an added value to academia, one that most likely will lead the way to new types of sources. I commend the selection of the photographs and the important historical references that can be drawn from them, such as the support for and the persecution of the Society of Jesus. Most of the photographs refer to the Jesuit colleges and their educational services. The Jesuit emphasized theological knowledge as well as the teaching of the humanities, science, the arts (e.g., theater and music), and sports. Famous Portuguese alumni of Jesuit colleges are José de Almada Negreiros (4) and Egas Moniz (xii), the latter winner of the only Nobel Prize in medicine ever won by the Portuguese. Additionally, there are pictures highlighting the moments of persecution and humiliation to which the Jesuits were subjected during the First Portuguese Republic (October 5, 1910–May 28, 1926), such as the episode of the phrenological measurements, in the prison of Caxias, performed by doctors who wanted to prove “scientifically” the degeneration of the Jesuits. Afonso Costa (1871–1937), a staunch anticlerical republican, appears in one of the photos while interrogating Father António Maria Alves (57–69).