Fausto Sanches Martins

Jesuitas de Portugal: 1542–1759: Arte/Culto/Vida Quotidiana. Porto: Livraria Manuel Ferreira, 2014. Pp. 469. Pb, 30 Euros.

This is a curious volume, reflecting two decades (1985–2005) of the author's archival research in Portugal, Spain, Italy, and France. Its seventeen chapters concern eighteen Jesuit colleges in Portugal and the Atlantic islands, and is derived from the author's bachelor's and doctoral theses and from papers presented at scholarly meetings. Two of the chapters lack documentation because of the author's desire to save space. Instead, he refers readers to typescripts of his theses, but does not disclose their location—presumably the library of the college of S. Lourenço (Porto) where he obtained both degrees.

The chapters vary in interest and significance. One unique essay offers comparisons between Benedictine and Jesuit domiciles in Portugal. Another concerns the devotions of Jesuit colleges in Portugal such as Loyola, Santo António, and Santa Bárbara. Another discusses the responsibilities of members of the Jesuit hierarchy from provincials and rectors to pharmacists and librarians. Martins reports that one of the duties of brothers who administered Jesuit libraries was the periodic inspection of members' cubicles to retrieve books that had been taken without authorization. Presumably such works were consulted during holy days. The book includes a very useful calendar of such days celebrated by three of the colleges.

One of the book's strength is the inclusion of a large number of fine photographs, depicting floor plans as well as key features of the interiors and exteriors of Jesuit colleges, churches, and associated structures. The most fully represented are those of S. Lourenço, the leading Jesuit college in northern Portugal. Construction of its distinctive single-nave church began during the 1570s and was still unfinished when the order was banished from Portugal in 1759. Throughout the volume, but especially in one chapter, there are useful sketches of architects, supervisors, and craftsmen—bell makers, clockmakers, stone masons, woodcarvers, painters, and others—responsible for the construction and adornment of Jesuit structures in Portugal. Some of those now largely forgotten artisans were Portuguese; others hailed from elsewhere in Europe.

The role of institutional benefactors is another interesting theme. S. Lourenço's principal benefactor was Fr. Luis Álvares da Távora, who may have fronted for his brother, Gaspar de Souza, governor-general of Brazil from 1613 to 1617. Late in the seventeenth century, the legality of their bequest became the subject of litigation, evidently unsuccessful. By then, the founder had been honored by the completion of a massive, intricate sarcophagus in the college church.

There is likewise a fruitful discussion of the funding of the colleges. S. Lourenço possessed half a dozen estates, one close to Lisbon, the others on the banks of the Douro river. They produced cereals, garden vegetables, fruit, olives, olive oil, and, of course, wine. The surviving accounts are fragmentary and puzzling: for example, in 1616, the college's leading estate produced seventy-eight pipes of wine but that number fell to forty pipes in 1651 and to only twenty-one by 1654. No explanation is provided.

As is well known, 1622 was a banner year for the Society of Jesus. It was then that Pope Gregory xv canonized both Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier. That same year Fr. António Mascarenhas founded the Congregation of Jesus in Lisbon. The congregation's statutes are usefully included here, but without any reference to the canonizations. Membership was restricted to males between ages twenty and forty, with Moors, Jews, and Mulattoes barred from admission—Martins passes over their exclusion in silence.

This substantial volume lacks an adequate introduction or a conclusion. It is unlikely that many librarians outside of Portugal will want to acquire it.

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