

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

Three Ignatian Masterpieces

Saint Ignatius Loyola: The Pilgrim Years
by James Brodrick S.J.

St. Ignatius Loyola: A Pictorial Biography
by Leonard von Matt and Hugo Rahner S.J.

Orientaciones Bibliograficas Sobre San Ignacio de Loyola
by Por Ignacio Iparraguirre S.J.

Review Author: Miguel A. Bernad

Philippine Studies vol. 6, no. 2 (1958): 223–228

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at philstudies@admu.edu.ph.

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>

Book Reviews

THREE IGNATIAN MASTERPIECES

SAINT IGNATIUS LOYOLA: THE PILGRIM YEARS. By James Brodrick S.J. London. Burns and Oates. 1956. Pp. x, 372. Illust. 4 Maps. Index.

ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA. A PICTORIAL BIOGRAPHY. By Leonard von Matt and Hugo Rahner S.J. Translated from the German by John Murray S.J. Chicago. Henry Regnery Co. 1956. Pp. vi, 106. Plates 226. Maps 2. Index.

ORIENTACIONES BIBLIOGRAFICAS SOBRE SAN IGNACIO DE LOYOLA. Por Ignacio Iparraguirre S.J. Roma. Institutum Historicum S. I. 1957. Pp. 151. Indice de autores y materias.

THE Ignatian Year commemorating the 400th anniversary of the death of St. Ignatius Loyola has brought into the world a veritable flood of printed matter dedicated to the memory of the Saint who lost a battle in Pamplona but won far greater victories instead. Unlike most floods, this one has not brought ruin and devastation. It has been a constructive flood. Some of the detritus of course has been just that, but the flood of studies has included some superb achievements of painstaking and creative scholarship, and not the least of these are the three books under review, each a masterpiece in its own field: Father Brodrick's a masterpiece of biography; Rahner's and von Matt's a masterpiece of photography; Father Iparraguirre's a very valuable piece of bibliographical compilation.

I

Father Brodrick is already well known as both a learned and an entertaining biographer. His *Bellarmino* (2 vols. 1926) and *Canisius* (1935) are definitive works which combine massive scholarship, encyclopedic information, a balanced judgment, and a style so light that the books can actually be used for bedtime reading. The same qualities appear in two smaller works: *The Origin of the Jesuits* (1940) and *The Progress of the Jesuits* (1947). Father Brodrick's reputation suffered a setback with his *Xavier* (1953), written to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of the Apostle of the Indies. That book, for all its vast erudition, shows signs of haste and of a lack of complete mastery of the material. It was consequently with some misgivings that we opened his latest work, a study of the "pilgrim years" of St. Ignatius Loyola. The misgivings however vanished quickly. In this work Brodrick surpasses himself, and the figure of St. Ignatius emerges from his sprightly pages as a real, understandable, engaging, human but very admirable and very glorious saint.

As is his wont, Brodrick begins at the beginning: from the earliest known records of the Basques and of the valley which cradled the Loyolas. "The Valley's name is Iraurgi, with all its vowels active, and it lies at the heart of Guipúzcoa, the only one of the four Basque countries which has remained completely and impenitently Basque." That is the opening sentence in the book.

From this valley, full of loam, whence came the name *loi-ol-a* ("That is the lowly, earthy, unromantic derivation of a name as celebrated as any in history") and from the complicated wars of Spain (which somehow become easy to follow in this book), Brodrick takes up the history, first of the family, then of the man Inigo López de Loyola from his birth in 1491 to his definitive settling down in Rome in 1538.

It is a sparkling narrative, as colorful as a medieval tapestry. It includes a good deal of Europe as it emerged from the middle ages. The greatest names in history and the most important and colorful cities are all part of this narrative.

Brodrick is not a pioneer. He does a good deal of rummaging in archives and libraries himself, but for the most part he builds on the labor of those who have done the spadework—in this case, Leturia, Codina and the editors of the many-tomed *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* (MHSI). Where the sources are silent,

he draws collateral material from every conceivable quarter. The Jerusalem pilgrimage becomes vivid from the accounts of various pilgrims, including two who made the pilgrimage with Ignatius in 1523. Similarly the two years at Barcelona become alive from the engaging travelogue of a Venetian ambassador, while the seven years at Paris become both alive and grim from a contemporary diary. Brodrick's painstaking scholarship may be seen in a digression on Benjamin Franklin's use of the "particular examen" technique (over three pages with over seventy lines of footnote) and on Erasmus (who keeps coming up).

In a work of this kind it is impossible to avoid controversial matter. Brodrick never shirks controversy but he approaches a controversial redoubt as it were from the rear, and with the greatest tact. Thus, he rejects as gently as possible the claim ("maintained most learnedly and charmingly" by the Benedictine Abbot Anselm Albareda) that St. Ignatius never went to Manresa but remained on Monserrat to live under the direction of a Benedictine confessor. This, says Brodrick, would be to go against the explicit testimony of the Saint himself. With equal gentleness Brodrick rejects the claim made by two distinguished Dominican scholars that St. Ignatius was never imprisoned nor interrogated by the Dominicans at Alcalá, and that the confinement and interrogation are merely "a Jesuit myth." This claim likewise goes against the explicit and detailed testimony of St. Ignatius, and to entertain it would be tantamount to calling a canonized saint of the Church a liar.

Brodrick quarrels with fellow Jesuits too. With the Catalan Jesuit, Padre Creixell, whose work is "not very critical," he differs with many a chuckle. With Pere Dudon, the French Jesuit, he differs on many a point but without the chuckle—an absence which this reviewer regrets, since Dudon's work deserves every respect.

Some controversial matters are quickly and effectively dismissed. The old claim that Cisneros is the real author of the *Spiritual Exercises* is relegated to a highly entertaining footnote. Henri Bremond's continued sniping at Ignatian spirituality is rendered innocuous by a good-natured nod at its cleverness. The life-long animosity against St. Ignatius and the Jesuits by the Dominican Fray Melchor Cano and his colleagues at Salamanca ("crack-brained hatred," Menéndez Pelayo calls it), Brodrick dismisses with a quotation from the Dominican, Father Getino: "Two men

of the University [Salamanca] . . . Melchor Cano and Martínez Siliceo, were, perhaps during the life of Ignatius the most determined opponents of his Company. No doubt his mysterious bearing and the processes of Alcalá and Salamanca had something to do with their prejudices. Lamentable condition of mankind that even the most honorable and enlightened minds could not foresee what to us, looking back, is as plain as daylight."

It is remarkable how in a book as objective and dispassionate as this, Brodrick manages to convey his own personal feelings. His admiration for the Basques and the Spaniards, his love for the beautiful city of Barcelona ("that city of unquenchable hope, so much more endearing than London or Paris"), his regret for the lost splendor of Alcalá ("whose fifty-three colleges were suppressed by the stupid 'liberals' in the nineteenth century to make room for upstart Madrid") or of the once great university of Salamanca ("Salamanca, Paris, Oxford, Cambridge and Bologna were the quintet of first magnitude stars which shone upon the Middle Ages"); above all, his admiration for Paris, the city of windmills and of the Mother of God, which the French Revolution, the commune, Napoleon III and Baron Hausmann "wantonly destroyed" — all these are conveyed to the reader in an infectious manner. Brodrick cannot contain his wrath when he speaks of the poor Baron Hausmann and the other "destroyers" of Paris: "They were the apocalyptic destroying angels who took away a world of beauty in stone and could give only wider and straighter streets, a better drainage system and the Eiffel Tower." He calls Hausmann the "bulldozing baron," the "terrible pirate," etc. He has some reason for his ire: "The traffic problems of Oxford are very well known, but no one has yet suggested the solution that would have been obvious to Hausmann, of pulling down those obstructive medieval relics, the colleges, and building fine new roads over their sites and gardens." Unfortunately, people in Manila and all over the Philippines (not to mention Ayudhya in Thailand) are doing just that.

On one point Brodrick's treatment seems to be unsure: the nature, method and duration of Ignatius' studies at Paris and the difference between Paris and the Spanish universities of Alcalá and Salamanca. In his desire to praise Alcalá and Salamanca, Brodrick tends to give the impression that the studies there were as good as at Paris, and that if Ignatius did not succeed at Alcalá,

it was entirely his own fault. This does not seem in keeping with two well known facts which Brodrick himself records. One is a letter (which Brodrick gives on page 236) of St. Ignatius to his brother, urging the latter not to send his son to Salamanca but to Paris. "For the purpose, it is my fixed opinion that he would find nowhere else in Christendom such facilities as are to be found in this University." The other equally known fact is that when the Jesuits began to open colleges, Ignatius' oft repeated instruction was that in all things they were to follow the "order and manner of Paris." Not Salamanca, not Alcalá, not Bologna, but Paris was to be the exemplar of Jesuit universities and colleges. But if so, there must have been a difference between Paris and the rest.

Brodrick's sophistication and his splendid sense of humor—irrepressible, sardonic, even cynical—and his erudition do not detract from his deep reverence for sacred things. ("An old woman covering her crucifix with kisses and tears is a much better psychologist than ever was Erasmus, who would have deprecated her emotion and advised her instead to sit and think coolly and quietly along the lines of his "Philosophy of Christ.") His sober, matter-of-fact and unadorned style has a deep musicality often charged with emotion. There is a momentary lapse in chapter 5 when he quotes poetry not altogether with success.

The book ends with the ending of the "Pilgrim Years" with the ship that failed to sail from Venice which would have brought Ignatius and his companions back to the Holy Land. Instead they went to Rome and thence to the world to make other lands holy.

II

Brodrick's splendid biography is best read with von Matt's photographs at one's elbow. The 226 full-page plates in this book (printed by Imago in Zurich) are a triumph of photography.

To one who knows the life of St. Ignatius well, the text (based on the latest scholarly studies) will have little attraction but the pictures done in black and white will be a joy forever. The Santa Casa of Loyola with the wolves-and-pot above the entrance, the bridges and houses and fields and mountains and sea-coast towns of Euskalerría, the donkeys and oxen, the albercas and alpargatas, the helmet and gauntlet and the armor of gleaming steel, Montserrat and Aránzazu, Barcelona and Gaeta, Rome and Paris, Cyprus and Jerusalem, the festival hall of Alcalá and the magnificent fa-

cade of Salamanca, *Amadis de Gaula* and Ludolph's *Life of Christ*, the diploma which made Ignatius a Master of Arts of Paris and the solemn profession by which Ignatius and his companions became full-fledge "Jesuits," the glory of stone and alabaster, of statuary and architecture—Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque—they are all are here, photographed in detail, with magnificent contrasts of light and shadow. Henry Regnery has produced excellent books before, but none more beautiful to the eye, more evocative of the glory that was Europe as it emerged from the middle ages.

III

Since the literature on St. Ignatius has become so extensive, it is natural to expect that not all of this immense literature is of equal value. To separate chaff from wheat was a herculean labor that could have been attempted only by one who had both the patience and the access to all the literature. Father Iparraguirre has both. He is a member of that dedicated group of scholars called the *Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu* whose work began in Madrid some fifty years ago and still goes on in Rome. Their great achievement is the massive library of edited manuscripts called *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* (HMSI) with over seventy-five volumes already published. Their lesser studies appear in the periodical *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* (AHSI) but their intermediary monographs (such as the work under review) are published in the series called *Bibliotheca Instituti Historici Societatis Iesu, series minor*.

As is to be expected in a bibliographical work of enormous proportions the descriptive analysis of each work listed in the bibliography is not uniformly accurate. The vague description of Ganss' *St. Ignatius' Idea of a University* (reviewed in the last issue of this Quarterly) seems inadequate. But perhaps it is sufficient for the book's purpose. With Father Iparraguirre's work, the complicated and treacherous straits of Ignatian literature are no longer uncharted.