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Liam Matthew Brockey, *The Visitor André Palmeiro and the Jesuits in Asia*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014, 528 pp., ISBN 9780674416680.

The main aim of Liam Brockey's book *The Visitor André Palmeiro and the Jesuits in Asia* (2014) was to rescue from "undeserved oblivion" (p. 5) this Portuguese Jesuit, born in Lisbon in 1569, dead in Macau in 1635, and visitor to the Asian Jesuit missions between 1617 and 1635. From Brockey's viewpoint, Palmeiro's most decisive contributions lied precisely on his "continual movement that he kept *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* over the course of his twilight years (Palmeiro was forty-nine years old when he was assigned the role of visitor to Asia missions), and the constant critical regard that he applied to his men and their endeavours" (p. 6).

Brockey structured his biography on André Palmeiro in two main parts consisting of five chapters each. The first part, entitled "Inside the Empire" (pp. 27–192), discusses Palmeiro's life and activity in Portugal and his two terms as visitor in South Asia. The second part, called "At Empire's Edge" (pp. 195–442), approaches his final nine years as visitor to the East Asian missions.

In the first chapter, "Entering the Order" (pp. 27–48), Brockey mentions the little information available about Palmeiro's first years before entering the Society in 1584, aged fifteen, followed by his formative years at the College of Santo Antão, from the late 1570s, and then his four years of novitiate in Coimbra, from 1584 (pp. 41–3). The second chapter, "The Visitor in Training" (pp. 49–81), is dedicated to his "informal training as administrator" and his ascendance of "the hierarchical ladder from a simple priest to a professed Jesuit" (p. 49). In 1598, Palmeiro initiated his brilliant activity as professor at Coimbra (p. 73). In 1614, he was chosen as rector of the College of Braga, an assignment that meant a shift in his career, as this nomination meant that his administrative skills had been recognized by superiors. Chapter 3, "Manager of Men" (pp. 82–115), begins with his travel to Goa in 1617. This chapter is largely dedicated to Palmeiro's role in

the Roberto de Nobili affair. In the end, Palmeiro sided with Nobili (p. 96). Chapter 4, “In the Footsteps of the Apostles” (pp. 116–48), is dedicated to Palmeiro’s inspection trips to Southern India and Ceylon between 1620 and 1624. During this period, Palmeiro had to face two major conflicts with the Bishops of Cochin: the dispute between the Jesuits and secular ecclesiastic hierarchy over the Fishery Coast, and the decision taken in 1619, also by the Bishop of Cochin, to seize the properties of both the Franciscans and the Jesuits in Ceylon, which constituted the order’s local main sources of income (pp. 121–5). Chapter 5, “Among Archbishops, Emperors, and Viceroys” (pp. 148–92), approaches Palmeiro’s activity in Goa after his return from Cochin in 1621 and his trip to the Province of the North completed by the end of 1622. In his double role of visitor to India and Malabar, Palmeiro was the leading Jesuit in Asia. The title of this chapter alludes to his activity among secular and religious leaders, such as the viceroys, the Great Akbar and the Emperor of Ethiopia. Palmeiro indeed tried his best to convince headquarters in Lisbon and Rome to finally assure that talented Jesuits would be sent to Asian missions (p. 161).

The year 1626 marked a second landmark in Palmeiro’s life. In July of that year he arrived in Macau. The position he then assumed as Visitor to East Indies marked the second fundamental shift in his life. The first chapter of Part Two, “At Empire’s Edge”, is called precisely “The View from Macau” (pp. 195–239). This chapter is dedicated to Palmeiro’s activity as regards both the China and Japan missions. The next chapter, “To Beijing and Back Again” (pp. 240–77), is dedicated to Palmeiro’s activity in Central China, with a special focus on his trips to The Forbidden City and Southern China (Shanghai and Tianjin). Chapter 8 is entitled “Challenging Accommodation” (pp. 278–285). This chapter analyses the limits to and the problems posed by the accommodation policy followed by Matteo Ricci in China and summoned by Brockey into three main aspects. These are respectively “the misunderstanding of the dynamics of conversion, the false equivalence between Christianity and indigenous teachings, and the limited use of shared moral principles” (p. 307). Chapter 9, “Sunrise in the West” (pp. 326–74), is about the net cast by Visitor Palmeiro in South East Asia (Cochinchina, Tonkin, Cambodia, Siam). The last chapter, chapter 19, “Sunset in the East” (pp. 375–410), deals with contemporary persecutions of Christians in Japan.

I argue that this book fully accomplishes the author’s main aim as stated above to recover the Portuguese Jesuit André Palmeiro from undeserved oblivion, because it depicts a portrait of this Portuguese Jesuit as a highly decisive figure in shaping Jesuit enterprise in Asia in the first half of the seventeenth century. After a brilliant academician career in Coimbra, and the development of his administrative skills as rector of the Colégio de Braga, he was sent to Asia. His administrative skills were certainly the reason he was chosen by superiors to be sent East in a mature period of life, something uncommon at the time. Brockey also refers that Palmeiro led an austere life and was a man of profound internal life (p. 41 and p. 410). The subtitle of the conclusion “A Baroque Death” (pp. 411–42), moreover indicates that his death may have fulfilled the pattern of *bona mors*, the happy death fostered by Baroque Catholicism (p. 413).

Brockey traced the main aspects of the character, trajectory and career of André Palmeiro within their broad religious, cultural and social framework further to the mere chronological presentation of facts and events. For instance, in the introduction, Brockey explains in depth the role attributed to the visitors within the Society of Jesus, and interprets it within the order's missionary strategies in relation to the special context of Portuguese Asia (pp. 12–6). Indeed, the structure of this book itself reflects Brockey's choice to explain Palmeiro's trajectory and deeds by delineating the broader framework of coeval social, cultural, historical and religious events. The book begins with the "Prelude Nagasaki", 1625 (pp. 1–3). In the conclusion Brockey claims that the news of the Japan martyrdoms contributed to accelerate his death that occurred in Macau on the 24th March 1635 (p. 419). The 1630s marked precisely the epilogue of the wave of martyrdom of both Christian missionaries and lay people in Japan.

In a still uncommon way among most historians, Brockey shows great skills in the reconstruction of psychological portraits. Whenever possible, he interprets the reasons behind the facts, also from a psychological and personal viewpoint. In the conclusion, Brockey regrets precisely the fact that available primary sources (Palmeiro's necrology constitutes an exception in this respect!) are very scarce on Palmeiro's inner life and spirituality. And he explains this aspect, attributing it to Palmeiro's wish: "The best explanation for Palmeiro's silence on matters that were so important to him is that he viewed his devotions as private concerns to be shared only with God and his confessor (whose identity he does not reveal!)" (p. 415).

To conclude, the book *The Visitor André Palmeiro and the Jesuits in Asia*, by Liam Matthew Brockey, is of great interest for scholars of Jesuits and Portuguese Empire as well as for the public in general. It constructs a lively portrait of the Portuguese Jesuit André Palmeiro as a personality able to decisively determine circumstances and events he was involved with, in particular, during the last and most decisive years of his life as visitor to Jesuit Asian mission.

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Zoltán Biedermann, *The Portuguese in Sri Lanka and South India. Studies in the History of Diplomacy, Empire and Trade, 1500–1650*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014, 265 pp. ISBN: 9783447100625.

Zoltán Biedermann's book *The Portuguese in Sri Lanka and South Asia* presents the history of Portuguese interaction with Sri Lanka (and to a lesser extent, southern India) during the heyday of its empire (roughly 1505–1650s). It is in origin an assemblage of six freshly revised case studies woven together via an Introduction and an Afterword, which seek to