

O Arqueólogo Cordial: A Junta Nacional de Educação e o Enquadramento Institucional da Arqueologia Portuguesa durante o Estado Novo (1936–1974)

Rui Gomes Coelho, *Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Lisbon, Portugal, 2018. 153 pp., 5 figs. €15.00, paper*

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The relationship between dictatorships and archaeology is a topic that has been approached by numerous scholars in recent decades such as Arnold (1990), Galaty and Watkinson (2004), and González-Ruibal (2012). In *O Arqueólogo Cordial (The Cordial Archaeologist)*, Rui Gomes Coelho gives us an intimate look at archaeology in Portugal under the *Estado Novo* (New State) between 1936 and 1974. The architect of this dictatorship, António de Oliveira Salazar, envisioned the *Estado Novo* as a corporative state organized not by class lines but by organizations or councils involved in similar trades, such as the military and education, that were centrally controlled by the state. The *Estado Novo* was also hierarchical, religious (Catholic), and patriarchal, mirroring the ideal Portuguese family. During this same period, archaeology in Portugal was institutionalized for the first time and placed under the jurisdiction of the governmental agency known as the *Junta Nacional de Educação* (JNE) (National Council of Education).

In this fascinating work, written in Portuguese, Gomes Coelho examines heritage legislation and

correspondence written during the *Estado Novo* to explore how the Portuguese state created an archaeological community that was inspired by the corporative myth and was articulated by an economy of affects that fostered the creation of the “cordial archaeologist.” This cordial archaeologist was one who not only knew how to engage in correct interactions of deference to superiors and, in general, knew their “place,” but one whose heart and emotions were central to their archaeological practice. Gomes Coelho demonstrates how the “cordial archaeologist” was both a product of a particular political condition but also helped to maintain those conditions.

What Gomes Coelho has carried out in this book is not only a painstaking analysis of Portuguese archaeology during a pivotal period of history, he has conducted an archaeology of emotions, using the materials and methods of a historian. While other scholars have conducted critical historiography of Portuguese archaeology during the dictatorship, this is the first time a deeper analysis has been undertaken that shows how the tentacles of the dictatorship wrapped themselves into and throughout archaeology, and indeed, how even today, nearly 50 years since the end of the dictatorship, the legacy of the cordial archaeologist endures in Portugal, according to Gomes Coelho.

In the five chapters of the book, Gomes Coelho gives the reader a panoramic view of the history of Portuguese archaeological legislation, including that prior to the dictatorship. He discusses how the JNE took on the role of centralizing and legislating archaeological investigations of the Portuguese nation, although there were

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incidents at the local/regional level that challenged this central power. As in Germany, the Salazar government did not actually care that much about archaeology, unlike other fields. For example, while the state provided funding for the *Associação dos Arqueólogos Portugueses* (Association of Portuguese Archaeologists), it was not enough, and requests for additional funding had to be made. Nonetheless, everything passed through the desk of the JNE. The most interesting part of the book, however, is chapter 4, in which instances of the cordial practices of archaeologists are recounted. For example, archaeologist Abel Viana almost did not submit his book for a competition because he would be competing against his friend D. Fernando de Almeida, who had done an important favor for Viana's daughter. Important personages, such as José Leite de Vasconcellos, the first director of the National Museum of Archaeology, were viewed as patriarchs. When Vasconcellos died, for example, scholars expressed their devotion and love of him as though they were his "children." These accounts provide striking illustrations of the ways that emotions and the patriarchal family structure promoted by the *Estado Novo* were replicated at the professional level among archaeologists.

Gomes Coelho has done a superb job of elucidating how dictatorships have the capacity to shape archaeological practice at an intimate level by providing a glimpse of the everyday practices of archaeologists living and working under the *Estado Novo*. He successfully shows the relationship between dry archaeological legislation and the interpersonal relationships/tensions of the Portuguese archaeological community. He also reveals gaps and tensions inherent in a highly centralized state, when not everyone did or could conform to the prescribed rules of engagement. A similar analysis

of the transformations of Portuguese archaeology after the 1974 revolution and its articulation within a neoliberal European community remains to be carried out. One minor critique I have is that one finds similar systems of "cordiality" outside dictatorship regimes. For example, the practice of precedence and deep feelings of emotional indebtedness to one's academic patron or "patriarch" occurs in academia in the United States and in other countries that do not have this same history as Portugal.

Because this book is published in Portuguese, it is hoped that the author will consider publishing a full-length article in English so that the lessons learned from the Portuguese situation can be more broadly disseminated. *O Arqueólogo Cordial* represents an innovative and important contribution in understanding the complex relationship between archaeology and political regimes, in whatever form they may take.

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