

Contributing to the Identification of Publications from the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan Presses through a Study of Graphic Art in Manila, 1604-1815

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Abstract: This article demonstrates the use of graphic art as a source of information. This information, gathered through non-verbal methods, and not available through other methodologies, contributes to the identification of anonymous publications by supporting or prompting reinvestigation of claims by previous scholars. The information was gathered through a chronological cataloguing of various graphic art elements from each press from the start of letterpress printing in the Philippines to 1825. The elements are categorized into (1) *iniciales grabadas* or decorative initials, (2) *viñetas* or printers decorations, (3) *orla bordadas* or border decorations (4) *risos xilográficos* or xylographic headers, and (4) *laminas* or copperplate prints. Organizing these graphic art elements in this manner presents the frequency of use of distinct elements over time. The article provides a timeline of the arrival and use of art movements that influenced decorative graphic art in Manila. Based on the catalogue, a narrative of the use of graphic art elements of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan press is presented, along with comparisons of elements from known presses to prints from unidentified presses.

Keywords: Manila, printing press, graphic art, Dominican, Jesuit, Franciscan

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Introduction

The eighteenth century is probably one of the most obscured parts of Philippine history. Popular representations of the history of colonial Philippines is distorted by an interpretative imbalance that resulted from a range of political agendas that pushed and pulled over the decades. Historian William Henry Scott compared the different agendas that shroud textual sources to a parchment curtain, and at the same time, saw opportunities to see beyond the limits of these textual materials. He said that there are “cracks in the parchment curtain [...] to which fleeting glimpses of Filipinos and their reactions to Spanish dominion may be seen,” and that these cracks hold references to Filipino behavior and conditions.¹

Graphic art is a crack in the parchment curtain. As with all art forms, graphic art is reflective of a society's values and attitudes; it is an industry that has a direct relationship to the intellectual landscape of a culture. Graphic art elements, though seemingly unassuming, contain information that can complement textual sources. The term graphic art generally refers to visual artistic expression applied onto flat surfaces.² Many scholars in visual arts, however, use the term ‘graphic art’ to refer specifically to only prints created through various processes, excluding drawing and painting.³ This article pays attention to graphic art as defined in the latter, more specifically to the minor and often understudied parts, such as decorative borders, initials, and headers, to name a few.

Over the decades, scholars have made monumental progress in the study of Philippine graphic art. However, those researches were often focused on the larger pictorial works or engravings. To complement these studies, this project employed a methodology that would extract information instead from the minor, supporting elements of graphic art, often printed using smaller xylographs or woodblock engravings. One of the objectives of the study is to demonstrate the potential of these modest elements to contribute to the history of press in early modern Manila.

Through a chronological cataloguing of graphic art elements from the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan presses in Manila from the start of letterpress printing in the Philippines to 1825, the elements were categorized into (1) *iniciales grabadas* or decorative initials, (2) *viñetas* or printer's decorations, (3) *orlas bordadas*

¹ William Henry Scott, *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain and Other Essays in Philippine History* (Manila: New Day Publishers, 1982), 7.

² “Graphic Art,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. Accessed March 18, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/art/graphic-art>.

³ Ian Chilvers, Harold Osborne, and Dennis Farr, *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 218.

or border decorations (4) *risos xilográficos* or xylographic headers, and (4) *láminas* or copperplate prints.⁴ The findings from the data collected are presented in narratives that reveal patterns and irregularities that become grounds for forming deductions necessary towards the identification of publications from unidentified presses. The study is currently limited to materials accessible in local and digital archives as of writing. The chronological scope of the study is capped at 1825—around the time when secular presses had started to emerge and when lithographic printing technology arrived in the Philippines—since these shifts in context requires a reassessment of methods used.

To situate Philippine graphic art within the context of global art, the article starts with a timeline of decorative art movements. Following this is a discussion of the narrative of the graphic arts of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan presses. The narratives lay down representatives of graphic art elements used by each press over the decades and bring out patterns that contribute to the identification of anonymous publications.

Timeline of decorative art movements in Philippine publications⁵

It is almost impossible to write any timeline of art without running into the risk of oversimplification. The mere use of terminologies for a style insinuates a monolithic institutional uniformity that obscures the variety and originality brought about by its development as it travels through space and time. The ideas that carried these styles arrived in heterogeneous cultures with different political landscapes, religious beliefs, and were accepted with varying degrees of enthusiasm.⁶ Therefore, it is important to point out that the following chronological categorization of styles do not imply sudden and total changes in style, and that terms are used as a convenient way to discuss stylistic commonalities for the purpose of situating Philippine graphic art within these exchanges of ideas.

Such is the case in the Philippines. Being in the crossroads of world civilizations, it was far from a blank sheet when the first known text was published using traditional printing methods. In pictorial arts, according to art historian Santiago Albano Pilar, despite the missionaries' intention to prescribe the Baroque style as standard pictorial conventions for evangelization, local cultures, Chinese

⁴ For brevity, decorative initials will be referred to as 'initials'. The term 'viñetas' will be used in lieu of 'printer's decoration'; this is also the term commonly used by previous Filipino art scholars to refer to the decorative elements placed at the end of a page or section.

⁵ Terminologies and chronology also based on a lecture by Regalado Trota Jose on Philippine Visual Arts delivered in the course Introduction to Culture, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, 2015.

⁶ Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Baroque and Rococo* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2012), 21.

commodities, and Mexican influences, among others, permeated and enriched the Philippines' creative works.⁷ The preferred style, Baroque, grew out of the Catholic Reformation, and is a powerfully persuasive style based on rhetoric and drama, as they seek to engage and employ intense human passions. Born in the painting studios of Bologna and Rome in the 1580s and 1590s, and in Roman sculptural and architectural ateliers in the second and third decades of the seventeenth century, the Baroque spread swiftly throughout Italy, Spain, the rest of Europe, and expanded into the empires and trading networks.⁸ In Philippine print, the first recorded graphic art is seen in the front page of the tagalog *Doctrina Christiana*. The border seems to be a variation of the fleur-de-lis: a stylized lily flower with three petals bundled by together with a cord; a symbol said to represent chastity associated with the Marian devotion or the Holy Trinity rendered in a lightly arranged variant of the Baroque-Arabesque style. The image in the center is reminiscent of Chinese genre paintings with flat, restrained lines forming the human figure, set in a natural terrain (See figure 1).

The missionaries' objective of standardizing evangelical publications became more feasible—for graphic art, at least—upon the arrival of *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines*. The book, printed in Antwerp in 1593 in the Plantin-Moretus publishing house, contains 153 engravings originally meant to aid Jesuit novices in meditation. It was circulated all around the globe and became a sourcebook of Christian graphic art.⁹ A comparison of the early graphic art elements in works of Tomas Pinpin shows a detectable resemblance to that of *Evangelicae Historiae* as well as other works by the artists from the presses of Antwerp (See Figure 2). Despite this, a mix of influences continued to be seen throughout the timeline of Philippine graphic art through initials reminiscent of Chinese genre paintings, Byzantinesque figures probably influenced by Mexico, and the prevalence of native faces peeking through the swirls of Baroque decors.

This Arabesque style, found in the decorations of *Evangelicae Historiae*, is a variant of the Baroque and refers to a style developed out of the long-established traditions of plant-based scroll ornaments. They are intricate and fanciful surface decorations based on rhythmic linear patterns of scrolling, interlacing foliage, and tendrils. Their origin is disputed but the name derives from the perception that it is usually Saracenic. Its first known use in printmaking was in c.1530.¹⁰ These motifs

⁷ Santiago Albano Pilar, "Manila's early ateliers: Tracing the history of the Filipino Icon." *Archipelago Magazine*, February 1979, 10.

⁸ Bailey, *Baroque and Rococo*, 4.

⁹ Ibid, 390. Owing to these Antwerp engravings, the Chinese court began to show slight interest in the Baroque style by the end of the Ming Dynasty. It was only due to the patronage of Emperor Qianlong during the Qing dynasty when this taste for 'Western exotica' reached its peak.

¹⁰ John Fleming and Hugh Honour, *The Penguin Dictionary of Decorative Arts*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 32.

were often used in print throughout the world for graphic art because their abstract nature allows them to be used repeatedly for many topics since designs usually had no specific connection to the meaning of a text and could therefore be reused in different titles.

Simultaneous with the development of Arabesque style is that of *strapwork* or *scrollwork*. These are ornaments consisting of interlaced bands, reminiscent of leather thongs.¹¹ The exact nature of the connection between the two are unknown but both styles were characteristics of the earliest recorded decades of Philippine graphic art (See Figure 3 and 4).

Another motif that became popular in local printing is the grotesque decoration. Similar to Arabesque in that it still used scrolling foliage, grotesque motifs included human figures and animals, even mystical creatures such as mermaids. It is described in the 1989 *Penguin Dictionary of Decorative Arts* as “an unnatural or unordered composition for delight’s sake, of men, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers, etc. without rhyme or reason.” This type of trend started in ancient Rome and was revived in the Renaissance period when Raphael used them throughout the Vatican Logge in c.1519.¹² The grotesque style spread from Rome and Italy to the rest of Europe in the 1600s and was applied to almost every medium for the next 300 years. The use of grotesque decor was widely used in Philippine printing by around 1730¹³ (See Figure 5).

During the 1700s in Europe, the scrollwork became increasingly slender and sinuous. Soon, a new variation emerged, Rococo, and Rococo-Grotesques began to replace the Arabesque strapwork style. The once rhythmic and confined ornamentation started to swirl freely regardless of symmetry.¹⁴ Characterized by delicately light and elegant elements, it is said to be a counter reaction to the pompous seriousness of the old Baroque. Rococo ornamentation is often composed with S-shaped curves, motifs from nature, and fluid abstract ornaments that create silhouettes reminiscent of splashing water. This style is considered by some as the last iteration of the Baroque period, while some consider it to be a separate movement in general.¹⁵ A perfect representative of this transition to a Rococo-grotesque style is found in the 1742 Manila publication *Historia de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de*

¹¹ Ibid, 786-787.

¹² Ibid, 370.

¹³ There has been at least one appearance of an initial ‘P’ with half a face in a 1626 Dominican publication. This earlier finding still warrants confirmation. It is included in Figure 8 for the reader’s inspection.

¹⁴ Ibid, 370-371.

¹⁵ Ibid, 690-691.

Filipinas (See Figure 6).¹⁶ The style reached its peak popularity in Philippine printing at around 1780.

Paradoxically, Baroque and Rococo's mass appeal also caused its own descent over the centuries. Neoclassicism, the next movement observed in Philippine graphic art was presumed to be caused again by a reaction to the incumbent style: the overstimulus brought about by the Baroque style probably prompted a demand for stillness and simplicity. This movement, described as dignified and restrained, uses only simple geometric forms that are linear and flat in contrast to the Baroque's highly sculptural forms; it was seen as 'curbing Rococo's inventiveness and experimentation with archaeological insistence on authenticity.' This movement started to emerge in Europe in the 1750s and was well established by the 1770s.¹⁷ It has been observed in Philippine print as early as 1773 in a publication by the Seminarian press (See Figure 7). This drastic change in the landscape of Philippine graphic art runs parallel with the series of societal changes in the city. In 1781, the *Real Sociedad Económica de los Amigos del País* was established to apply the principles of the Enlightenment age; this association also sponsored the first known formal art school in the Philippines, *Academia de dibujo y pintura*. In 1785, the ecclesiastical restriction on painters to practice art outside the church was lifted by royal decree and secularization of the arts ushered a new demand from the affluent families. The cosmopolitanization of art was further driven by the opening of trade ports made official by three decrees in 1785, 1787, and 1789.¹⁸ Printing presses operated by lay people started to emerge as well: starting from the press of Manuel Memije in 1814.

Graphic art narratives of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan press

This part of the study presents a chronological narrative of the graphic art of the three most active presses during the period: Dominican, Jesuit, and Franciscan presses. It is not known yet if the name of the printer appearing on the various texts was the person doing the engraving or if they acquired the xylographs through purchase or commission. The little information known about the equipment used in the presses are mostly about letter types and not the decorative elements. Nineteenth century historian Wenceslao Retana assures that there was sufficient evidence that the fonts used in the Philippine printing in the first half of the seventeenth century

¹⁶ Full title: *Historia de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas, China, y Tunquin Orden de Predicadores: quarta parte desde el año de 1700 hasta el de 1765 / por... Fr. Domingo Collantes... Cancelario del Colegio Real y Pontificia Universidad de Santo Tomas de Manila* [#815, Impreso].

¹⁷ Ibid, 570-571; Bailey, *Baroque and Rococo*, 401-404.

¹⁸ Rodolfo Paras-Pérez, "The Graphic Landscape: a Critical Perspective." In *Filipino Engraving: 17th to 19th century* (Manila: Ylang-Ylang Graphic Group, 1980), 7-8.

were cast locally and at the same foundry.¹⁹ It is not known however if this ‘casting’ involves only the last few steps of the process—which is pouring an alloy into a matrix held by a mould—or if the locals were also involved in the production of the matrix and mould, and more importantly, the letter punches that create the matrices. Both of these scenarios seem feasible since the local population had an extensive metalsmithing culture²⁰ and was most probably capable of producing their own type.

However, as early as the start of eighteenth century, there have been records that moulds and matrices used in local presses were being imported. In 1703, a letter from the Real Convento de San Gil in Madrid stated that two sets of letter moulds were sent to the Franciscan press: one complete set, and one set which lacks the italics.²¹ Also in 1768, in the inventory of the Jesuit press commissioned in light of their expulsion, there is a statement from the directors of the presses saying that the matrices and moulds of the Jesuit press, as with the Dominican press and Franciscan press, were brought from Mexico. Mexico’s presses depended on their trade in commercial networks of the *Carrera de Indias* (Indies Route). In the 1600s, printers in Mexico were also merchants and booksellers who traded in commercial networks between the Old and New World to provide printers with the necessary supplies for the production of books, especially paper and types.²² From these accounts, an important question arises: if matrices and moulds for casting types were imported, could the decorative elements—such as initials, xylographic headers, borders, and other engravings—have been imported too?

Currently, there are no known documents that mention the import of woodblocks for graphic art elements into the Philippines, though the level of skill in the visual arts of the local population also seem to point toward the idea that printing blocks for graphic art elements were made locally. Historian María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo attests that like all other cultures introduced to the art of engraving, the quality of the laminas produced by the locals have improved significantly over time, so much so that their works can even be ranked above many Spanish engravers.²³ In 1590, Bishop of Manila Domingo Salazar stated in a letter to Philip II, “When

¹⁹ Piet Van der Loon, *The Manila Incunabula and Early Hokkien Studies* (Manila: The Philippine Historical Committee, 1966), 26; Wenceslao E. Retana, *Orígenes de la Imprenta Filipinas*. (Madrid: Imp. de Fortanet, 1911), 44.

²⁰ René B. Javellana, *Weaving Cultures: The Invention of Colonial Art and Culture in the Philippines, 1565-1850*. (Quezon City: Ateneo De Manila University Press, 2017), 318.

²¹ Cayetano Sánchez Fuertes, “Impresos Franciscanos Hispano-Filipinos 1593-1699 (Part I).” *Philippiniana Sacra*, L, N° 150 (May-August 2015), 303.

²² Idalia García, “Atrás de la escena tipográfica: los impresores en la Nueva España,” *Investigación Bibliotecológica*, Vol. 29, Núm. 66, (2015): 124-127.

²³ María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, *Grabadores Filipinos del Siglo XVIII* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1962), 29-30.

I arrived, no Sangley knew how to paint anything but now they have perfected themselves in the art that they produce marvelous work with both the brush and the chisel... Considering the ability displayed by these people in reproducing images which come from Europe, I believe that soon we shall not even miss those made in Flanders.”²⁴

A number of decorative types are seen across local presses such as the fleuron (☞), pilcrow (¶), and such other symbols (* § f) which are often arranged decoratively on borders or at the end of a page in Philippine publications; these decorative types are used internationally and may have been part of the standard set of movable types that were imported. Aside from this, a preliminary search in the publications from within the galleon trade network—in Macao, Mexico, Spain, and Peru—have not yielded any elements identical with that of the Philippine presses.

While the origin of these graphic art elements remains unknown, the following discussions will be based on the fact that these elements were used under the name of the press and will nonetheless be able to form its narrative.

Graphic art narrative of the Dominican Press from 1604 to 1813

Following the printing of the first books and the introduction of the movable type press by 1604,²⁵ the printers relocated to a site in Abucay, Bataan. This is where Tomas Pinpin, a young native of the town was trained in graphic art. In 1623, both Pinpin and the press transferred to Manila to the *Hospital de San Gabriel* in Binondo, and by 1625, the press was housed in the *Colegio de Santo Tomás* in Intramuros.²⁶

When Pinpin printed for the Dominican press in 1626, he made use of arabesque initials that seem to be influenced by the books from Antwerp; though these initials are still distinct from what he used in the Jesuit press in the same decade. The initials are decorated with scrollwork: one distinct set is composed with tighter, more symmetrical elements (See Figure 8), and the other is composed using looser lines that are more organic than rhythmic (See Figure 9).

Luis Beltrán, a Tagalog native and a disciple of Pinpin, made use of strapwork cartouches, one done in a Byzantine-grotesque manner. The initials Beltrán uses seemed to come from the set of initials with organically-arranged foliage previously

²⁴ Pilar, “Manila Ateliers,” 8.

²⁵ Jorge Mojarro, “Los primeros libros impresos en Filipinas (1593-1607).” *Hispania Sacra* 72, no. 145 (2020): 235.

²⁶ Imelda Cajipe-Endaya, “The Dominican Press,” in *Filipino Engraving: 17th to 19th century* (Manila: Ylang-Ylang Graphic Group, 1980), 14; W. E. Retana: *Orígenes de la imprenta filipina* (Madrid: V. Suárez, 1911), 58.

used by Tomas Pinpin. These initials, shown in Figure 10, were also used by Gaspar de los Reyes, and were used up until the regency of Juan Correa.

Around 1730, a scuffle between the Cabildo and the religious orders started a series of publications from anonymous presses. *Por la jurisdicción*,²⁷ printed around 1735, is an anonymous document that collected the testimonies from the heads of the various religious orders in Manila regarding the day and time of the distribution of the controversial document, *Dialogo mixti fori*, a lampoon printed in 1734 meant to criticize the actions of the ecclesiastical Cabildo. Researcher Matthew Hill attributes the publication to Dominican Juan de Arechederra, who was at that time, one of the four superintendent-commissaries appointed by the Holy Office of the Inquisition.²⁸

Comparing the graphic elements of the document with the data collected reveals that the initial 'S' in *Por la Jurisdicción* matches the initial found in *Relación con inserción de autos*,²⁹ a document authored by Raimundo Berart and printed by Gaspar de los Reyes in 1685 (See Figure 11). Berart was a Dominican priest whose name appears as author in two more documents that are known.³⁰ He served as rector of the University of Santo Tomas for two terms from 1686-1688 and 1688-1689.

Another publication from an unidentified press is *Translado de una consulta*, printed in 1685 still under the name of Gaspar de los Reyes. The same initial, although printed upside down, is found in a publication identified as published by the Dominican Press and printed by Reyes (See Figure 12).

²⁷ Full title: *Por la jurisdicción del Santo Oficio de México en su Comisaría de Manila, capital de estas Islas Filipinas, sobre la vulneración de su fuero y primordiales derechos causada por el V. D. y C. sede vacante con el hecho de haber publicado en su Santa Iglesia Metropolitana el día 11 de noviembre del año de 1734 Edicto en que con diversas censuras teológicas y eclesiásticas, prohíbe y condena por malsonante, etc, un papel anónimo impreso intitulado Diálogo mixtiforni, que se distribuyó en esta ciudad el día 8 de dicho mes, en cuyo examen y reconocimiento se hallaba de oficio entendiendo el Comisario del Santo Oficio de dicha ciudad desde el día 9 de dicho mes.* [#449, Impreso]

A comprehensive and detailed study about the content and possible authors of the publications are written by Matthew J.K. Hill in his dissertation: "Intercolonial Currents: Printing Press and Book Circulation in the Spanish Philippines, 1575-1821" (University of Texas at Austin, 2015).

²⁸ Hill, "Intercolonial Currents," 72-73; 109.

²⁹ Full title: *Relación con inserción de autos sobre todo lo que [sic] a passado para restituir a su silla al ... D. Fr. Phelippe Pardo Arzobispo Metropolitano de Manila ... y de las demás consecuencias, segun consta en este Juzgado Ecclesiástico* [#235, Impreso].

³⁰ (1) *Manifiesto por la justificación de D. Fr. Phelipe Pardo, arzobispo de la ciudad de Manila, en las Islas Philipinas, en orden á la absolución, y penitencia del Maestre de Campo D. Juan de Vargas Hurtado, y exhumación de los cuerpos de dos ministros togados* (Madrid, 1690); (2) *Señor. Fray Raymundo Berart, de el Orden de Predicadores, poder aviente de el arzobispo de Manila, dize: : han llegado á sus manos tres copias de vn memorial impresso, que Antonio Xaramillo, procurador general de la Provincia de la Sagrada Religion de la Compañia de Jesvs de Philipinas, presentò en el Real, y Supremo Consejo de Indias, y ha esparcido en esta Corte.* (Manila? 1691?) [Not catalogued in Impreso].

The next printer who headed the Dominican press was Juan Correa, who started in 1703. Correa continued to use the initials with organic foliage that had been used since the time of Luis Beltran, as well as the cartouche used by Reyes. During his regency, additions of a few arabesque viñetas can be observed (See Figure 13).

After Juan Correa, the name Jerónimo Correa de Castro appeared as printer for the Dominican press from 1731 until 1752. Interestingly, along with graphic art elements previously used exclusively by the Dominican press, this next Correa uses elements also found in the publications of the Franciscan press. Shown in Figure 14 are elements used in the 1942 *Historia de la Provincia de el Santissimo Rosario*,³¹ separated are those used exclusively by the Dominican press and those elements shared with the Franciscans. This use of common elements was found in several other Dominican publications until at least 1753. Other Dominican publications found that have identical graphic elements with Franciscan press are *Breve relación y felizes*, printed in 1739; *Melpomene heroyca* in 1746; and the Dominican *Haec Sunt acta congregationis* in 1753, though the latter was already printed under the next printer, Tomás Adriano. These common elements are illustrated in Figure 15. Tomás Adriano succeeded Jerónimo Correa as printer from 1753 to 1781. Aside from introducing new arabesque elements to the Dominican publications illustrated in Figure 16, Adriano uses an observably consistent style of laying out the front page of his publications.³²

In 1757, a publication titled *Ordenanzas de Marina*³³ was written by then Governor General Pedro Manuel de Arandia Santisteban. Antonio Palau y Dulcet supposed it was published by the Jesuit press.³⁴ However, looking at the graphics of *Ordenanzas de Marina*, it can be seen that it was laid out in a strikingly similar fashion to *Ordenanzas de la Compañía*, *Astro Brillante*, and the Dominican *Haec sunt acta*

³¹ Full title: *Historia de la provincia de el Santissimo Rosario de Philipinas, China y Tunking, de el sagrado Orden de Predicadores: tercera parte en que se tratan los sucessos de dicha Provincia desde el año de 1669 hasta el de 1700 / compuesta por ... Fr. Vicente de Salazar ... Rector de el Collegio de Santo Thomas de la ciudad de Manila* [#534, Impreso].

³² One exemption is a 1777 publication *Doctrina Christiana con su breve declaración* which was laid out similarly, but used different decorative types for the border probably due to its paper size.

³³ Full title: *Ordenanzas de Marina, para los navios del Rey de las Islas Philipinas, que en Guerra, y con Reales Permisos hacen Viages al Reyna de la Nueva España, u otro destino del Real servicio. Tomo Primero Año de 1757. de Jesús* [#662, Impreso].

³⁴ Palau was a bookseller, bibliographer, writer, cultural historian, and *cervantista español* most known for his *Manual del librero hispano-americano* (Madrid: Julio Ollero, 1990).

congregationis.³⁵ Aside from this, the other graphic elements used within the pages of *Ordenanzas de Marina* match those exclusively used by the Dominican press during the decade (See Figure 17). One of the most striking evidences that point to the Dominican press can be found in the document's initials: the same chip on the lower right corner of the initial 'P' could both be seen printed on *Ordenanzas de Marina* and *Astro Brillante* as shown in Figure 18. It is highly probable that these impressions came from the same damaged xylograph. Such identical irregularities in printing could also be observed in the initial letters 'S' and 'A' of the same publications.

From 1783 to 1786, Juan Francisco de los Santos served as the head of the press for the Order. The first of the publications he printed in the 1783 *Historia de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario*, is decorated with rococo elements (See Figure 19). These elements were used again when Vicente Adriano was the printer for the Dominicans for *Reglamento para el gobierno*³⁶ in 1791. Curiously, these rococo initials were seen again in the publications of the Seminary press which was established from the printing equipment left by the Jesuits after their expulsion.

Carlos Francisco de la Cruz, as far as is known, introduced the Neoclassical aesthetic to the Dominican press. Cruz printed for the Dominicans from 1805 to 1813. The publications that are seen from him are laid out in a stark manner, with formally balanced compositions and sparing decorative lines.

Graphic art narrative of the Jesuit Press from 1623 to 1768

Established in 1623, the printing office was said to be located in the ground floor of the *Colegio de Manila*, a quadrilateral building with an inner open-air patio erected between Calle Real, Calle Basco, Calle Victoria, and the Muralla in Intramuros. It shared the same floor as the office of the Province, the Procurators of the College, as well as the pharmacy started by the well-known brother Georg Kamel. Spanish Jesuit cartographer Pedro Murillo Velarde claims that the press produced work "as neat as any in Spain."³⁷

³⁵ Full titles: *Ordenanzas de la Compañía de Comercio, que se ha formado en esta ciudad de Manila bajo del patrocinio de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, y de la protección de su Magestad* [#657, Impreso]; *Astro Brillante en el Nuevo Mundo, fragante flor de el Parayso plantada en el Iardín de América* [#654, Impreso]; *Haec sunt acta congregationis intermediae provinciae sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum Saer. Ord. Praedicatorum celebratae in conventu sancti Pat. Dominici Manilensi die XII Maii Ann. Dom MDCCLIII* [#634, Impreso].

³⁶ Full title: *Reglamento para el gobierno del Monte Pío de viudas y pupilos de Ministros de la Audiencia, y Real Hacienda de la comprehension del Gobierno de las Islas Philipinas: aprobado por su Magestad en 27 de Marzo de 1776 a consecuencia de los establecidos en el Virreynatos de Nueva España, Perú, Santa Fé y Gobierno de Guathemala, en los años 1770, y 177* [#870, Impreso].

³⁷ Horacio de la Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines 1581-1768*. (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 1961), 556; Horacio de la Costa, "Jesuit Education in the Philippines to 1768," *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 4, nº 2 (1956): 142.

There were two types of presses inside the Jesuit press mentioned in the 1768 inventory: one for *láminas* or copperplate engraving, and four machines for typesetting. The machine for copperplate engraving was sent from Japan in 1611, which originally arrived from Europe in 1590. The press was previously used by Padre Giovanni Niccolo, a prolific painter and engraver born in Naples, who successfully taught a good number of visual artists who would later on provide religious images in Japan as well as China.³⁸

Tomas Pinpin printed for the Jesuit press as well. In 1637, his work for this press was adorned by an arabesque initial, along with a block print of an IHS monogram encased in a strapwork cartouche (Figure 20). This monogram seems to have been copied from a publication titled *Compendium Spiritualis Doctrinae*, which was printed in Madrid in 1598 (Figure 21). The 1637 copy replicates the composition and tonal values of the *Compendium* but deviates slightly on the cross and the letter 'H'. This composition seems to have been used as reference for the monogram printed 1670, too.

In 1656, decorative initials with serif letters juxtaposed on illustrations of birds in natural landscape were used by Simón Pinpin (See Figure 22). Quite the outlier in the timeline of Philippine graphic art, it might be possible that these were influenced by Chinese genre paintings. These initials were continued to be used by Sebastián Lopez Sabino, Santiago Dimatangso³⁹ and Phelipe de Guzmán until around 1740s. Aside from using these initials, Dimatangso introduced a few arabesque initials. Dimatangso's work also featured strapwork illustrations of a coat of arms and a *viñeta* that adorned ends of texts (See Figure 23).

Nicolás de la Cruz Bagay, a printer born at around 1701 in the district of Tamombong in Tondo, assumed the regency of the Jesuit press from 1743 until the expulsion of the order in 1768.⁴⁰ Representatives of graphic elements introduced in his regency are shown in Figure 24. The first known work of Bagay is a copperplate engraving of the coat of arms of the governor Fernando de Valdés Tamón printed in the Dominican publication *Sermon que en el capítulo provincial*⁴¹ in 1731.⁴² In the same year, the engraving appeared again in the publication *Estatua verdadera*

³⁸ John E. McCall, "Early Jesuit Art in the Far East. I: The Pioneers," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 10, no. 2 (1947), 131-134.

³⁹ Also referred to in some texts as Santiago de Matangso.

⁴⁰ Paras-Pérez, "The Graphic Landscape: a Critical Perspective," 2.

⁴¹ Full title: *Sermón que en el capítulo provincial, que celebró la provincia del Ssmo. Rosario de Religiosos del Señor Santo Domingo en las islas Philipinas el día 14 de Abril de 1731 ... en que fue Electo Provincial ... Fr. Diego Sáenz / predicó ... Ivan de Arechederra... Sácalo a la luz ... D. Miguel de Allanegui ..* [#412, Impreso]

⁴² Díaz-Trechuelo, *Grabadores Filipinos del Siglo XVIII*, 7.

*grandeza*⁴³ authored by Juan de Arechederra.⁴⁴ The printer of this publication was not explicitly identified but the graphic art elements matches those used exclusively by the Jesuit press. The publication makes use of the distinct bird initials, the fonts, and the ornamental arrangement of types that served as a *viñeta*: all of which have been exclusively used by the Jesuit press during this decade until the expulsion.

Publications printed under Bagay's regency often featured a distinguishable style of graphics wherein figures are toned with tight, combed parallel lines that follow the shape of its outer outline, often bound inside a black border lined with white dots. Also found consistently are the folksy facial features of its human elements (See Figure 25). Due to the nature of creating woodblocks for print, value toning through lines is an instinctive feature, but the decorations used by Bagay seem to have a distinct regularity that sets it apart from other block prints throughout seventeenth and eighteenth century.

As in the Dominican press, there are elements from the Jesuit press that were also used by the Franciscan press. The three elements are illustrated in Figure 26. Two of these, the *viñeta* with the cherub playing the guitar and the triangular abstract *viñeta* seem to be consistent with Bagay's style.

Bagay remained as director until the Jesuit expulsion in 1768. Pardo de Tavera claims that Bagay's assets (this probably includes equipment for printing) were given to the government along with the rest of the Jesuit press.⁴⁵ The decorative initials and a few of the *viñetas* that Bagay used for the Jesuit Press were used in the products of the recipient press, *Imprenta del Rey*, which was eventually passed on to the Archbishop under the name of *Imprenta del Seminario*.

Graphic art narrative of the Franciscan Press from 1700 to 1790

According to Cayetano Sánchez, from 1613, the Franciscans made use of the services, equipment, and office of Tomas Pinpin to be able to print their first publication starting from Pedro de San Buenaventura's *Vocabulario de la lengua*

⁴³ Full title: *Estatua de verdadera grandeza dibujada en los empleos honoríficos y virtuosos procedimientos de el Illmo. Señor... Don Manuel Joseph de Endoya y Aro, Dean de Placencia... / Sermón funeral predicado por... Fr. Ivan de Arechederra... en la Santa Iglesia Cathedral de Manila el día 10 de Noviembre de 1731...* [#424, Impreso].

⁴⁴ Diaz-Trechuelo mentions that the coat of arms was printed again in 1734 in the seminal work *Navegación especulativa y práctica del almirante*, a publication by the Franciscan press. However, the copies of this publication available during this study does not contain this engraving. It is seen instead in *Demonstración del cuerpo de cargos*, a 1737 publication printed also by the Franciscan press.

⁴⁵ T. H. Pardo de Tavera, *Noticias Sobre la Imprenta y El Grabado en Filipinas* (Madrid: Tipografía de los Hijos de M. G. Hernández, 1893), 29.

tagala.⁴⁶ After encountering delays with the publication of Domingo de los Santos' *Vocabulario Tagalo*⁴⁷ and the *Chronicas*,⁴⁸ it is probable that the Franciscans initiated the idea of establishing their own printing press in 1692. In 1699, they set up a movable type press in Longos, Laguna, and was eventually transferred to Tayabas, Quezon and then to Manila.⁴⁹ The Franciscan press, operated as a close collaboration between lay people and the friars up until it became part of the secular branch of the Franciscans. The person in charge of the proper functioning of the Franciscan press was normally a religious who was sometimes a priest, a lay brother, or a *hermano donado*. Sánchez mentions that the lack of standards for appointment in this position indicated that the position was very important since the choice depended on the decision of the provincial supervisor. He deduces from the exemptions and privileges given, that the director of the press was equated with a provincial chronicler and librarian. For the Franciscan press, the competence of a director includes that of a publisher, printer, bookbinder, and librarian. He must also do proofreading, especially when the typesetters do not know Spanish. The director also oversees the accounting of expenses of the press. Most of the time, the role of the lay people was limited to technical printing and at the highest rank were called *impresor principal* or *maestro impresor*.⁵⁰ Very little is known about the names of the printers who served this press as they are seldom credited for their work in the publications unlike the two other religious presses. Sánchez justifies this anonymity with the Franciscan value of modesty.⁵¹

The Franciscans encountered economic challenges while running the press. According to Tavera, there were letters dated 1679 from the Philippines addressed to the Commissioner General of Mexico saying that a Franciscan brother brought a copy of the *Crónicas* to Mexico to find someone who would sponsor its printing, else it would be taken to Spain. Due to this lack of funds, the manuscript returned to the Philippines and was only completely printed in 1744.⁵² Ironically, the products of the Franciscan press cannot be described as modest. Despite a three-decade long hiatus in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the press was one of the most

⁴⁶ Full title: *Vocabulario de lengua tagala: el romance castellano puesto primero* [#22, Impreso].

⁴⁷ Full title: *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala: Primera y segunda parte. En la primera, se pone primero el castellano, y despues el tagalo. Y en la segunda al contrario, que son las rayzes simples con sus accentos / Compuesto por... Fray Domingo de los Santos...* [#889, Impreso].

⁴⁸ Full title: *Chronicas de la Apostolica Provincia de S. Gregorio de Religiosos Descalzos de N.S.P. S. Francisco en las Islas Philipinas, China, Japon, & c.: parte primera...* / escrita por el P. fr. Juan Francisco de S. Antonio... [#478, Impreso].

⁴⁹ Sanchez, "Impresos Franciscanos Hispano-Filipinos 1593-1699 (Part I)," 300-301.

⁵⁰ Sánchez, "Los franciscanos y la imprenta en Filipinas (Part II)," 367-386.

⁵¹ Sánchez, "Los franciscanos y la imprenta en Filipinas (Part I)," 13.

⁵² Sánchez, "Impresos Franciscanos Hispano-Filipinos 1593-1699 (Part I)," 304; Pardo de Tavera, *Noticias*, 35.

consistent producers of printed work, producing 258 volumes from 1700 to 1813.⁵³ Aside from the quantity, they have printed with the widest range of decorative elements compared to the two other presses. This wide range makes it impractical to have a representative of each element printed here as sample. Instead, the following discussion will demonstrate how the chronology of movements in Philippine graphic art applies to the Franciscan press.

1692 - c. 1730: Arabesque

The graphic art of the Franciscan press around 1730 is characterized by rich, dense, arabesque compositions. There is an observable difference in the quality of lines in the products of the Franciscan press from this period: the lines are heftier and tapered at the ends showing the strokes of the burin or carving tool (See Figure 27). The quality of lines from these decorative elements appear crude when compared to the finer lines of the succeeding decades. This difference may be attributed to the skill level of the engraver or the tools and materials available.

c.1740-c1750: Grotesque

This period in Franciscan press' graphic art shows more refined lines. In charge of the press during this decade was Juan del Sotillo, described by Tavera as one of the best typographers of the time. He was born in Sotillo de la Adrada in Ávila in 1701, arrived in the Philippines in 1724, and remained with the press until 1758.⁵⁴ The first instance of a grotesque initial in Franciscan prints is observed in a 1738 publication titled *Sermón de los Dolores*⁵⁵ and also in the previously mentioned *Chronicas*. After this until late 1750s, the Franciscan press applied this style generously, packing human figures and animals tightly among whimsically composed foliage (See Figure 28). The publications under Sotillo also had a consistent preference for a certain floral border and were accompanied by a specific style of laying out the front page (See Figure 29). Curiously, the floral border which Sotillo used for *Chronicas* and *Festivas Expressiones*⁵⁶ was also used for the Dominican *Historia de la Provincia*,

⁵³ Hill, "Intercolonial Currents," 13. For comparison, Jesuits produced 193 volumes from 1623-1768; the Dominican press had 343 volumes from 1604-1813. Based on the table provided by Matthew Hill tallying the number of texts produced by year.

⁵⁴ Pardo de Tavera, *Noticias*, 35-36.

⁵⁵ Full title: *Sermón de los Dolores de Maria Santissima Señora Nuestra, que a la Solemnidad de su Fiesta, que annualmente celebra el Convento del Señor S. Juan de Dios en su Iglesia de esta Ciudad / Predicó ... D. Martin Ioseph de Endaya, y Rayo, Canónigo ... de esta ... Cathedral ... El Viernes de Ramos, día 28. de Marzo de 1738* [#475, *Impreso*].

⁵⁶ Full title: *Festivas expresiones, aplausos celebres, y sagrados triumphos, con que la santa provincia del Sño. Rosario de las Islas Philipinas celebrò la beatificacion del nuevo astro dominico, san Benedicto XI, en el convento de N.P.S. Domingo de la ciudad de Manila, el día 7 de Julio del año 1741...* [#533, *Impreso*].

illustrated in Figure 30. This decade also coincides with the time when other identical elements are seen in the publications of the Dominican and Jesuit press; most notably in the previously mentioned the 1742 *Historia de la Provincia* of the Dominicans (shown previously in Figure 14) and the 1749 *Historia de la Provincia*⁵⁷ of the Jesuits (shown previously in Figure 26). For now, it is not feasible to ascertain whether these were printed using outsourced services and the graphic elements were brought to the press by the printers or if these elements were purchased from neighboring local press. Nonetheless, if these elements were created locally, these could imply an understudied civil or economic relationship between presses.

An important anonymous publication printed in 1751 carries these grotesque graphic art elements used by Sotillo: *Carta Pastoral* written by Pedro Martínez de Arizala⁵⁸ who served as the Archbishop of Manila from 1746 to 1755. Philologist Jorge Mojarro, wrote in his annotations for the catalogue of Archivo de Universidad de Santo Tomas that the letter was addressed to all inhabitants of the Philippines, in which the archbishop criticizes the superstitions and lack of discipline of the natives, the laziness of some friars, the greed of traders, the non-Catholic life of Sangleyes, the common practice of usury, and so forth. Jose Toribio Medina and Carlos Sanz attribute the printing to the Dominican or Jesuit press. Angel Pérez and Cecilio Güemes supposed it is from the Jesuit or Franciscan.⁵⁹ In the catalogue data of Biblioteca Nacional de España, it is provisionally identified as printed by the Dominican press. The publication was adorned with a xylographic header in the grotesque style with the IHS symbol and two faces melding into the floral motif, as well as the grotesque initials, all illustrated in the samples in Figure 28. These elements used in the pastoral letter, including some decorative types, were exclusively used by the Franciscan press. These graphic evidences support the observations of Mojarro who had noted that ‘the last vignette of the book represents the five wounds of Christ which is a Franciscan symbol and that the initial letters also resemble those of the Franciscan press.

⁵⁷ Full title: *Historia de la Prouincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de Iesus :segunda parte, que comprehende los progresos de esta Prouincia desde el año 1616 hasta el de 1716 / por el P. Pedro Murillo Velarde de la Compañía de Iesus* [#595, Impreso].

⁵⁸ CARTA PASTORAL. DON FR. PEDRO DE LA SSMA. Trinidad, Martínez de Arizala, del Consejo de Su Magestad, y del Real, y Supremo de las Indias, Arzobispo Metropolitano de estas Islas Philipinas. [#613, Impreso]

⁵⁹ Regalado Trota José (ed.), *Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomas Catalogue 2 Libritos, 1516-1944* / Regalado Trota Jose, compiler and editor; with bibliographic descriptions by Anabel de la Paz González and historico-literary annotations by Jorge Mojarro Romero (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2017), 118-119.

c.1780: Rococo

After the death of Juan del Sotillo in 1762, there have been no known publications from the Franciscan press until 1780s. When the press resumed operation by then, a recognizable relaxation of the once tightly packed graphics was seen in Franciscan publications (See Figure 31). Baltasar Mariano, a native lay brother, headed the Franciscan press during this period until his death in 1794. One of the more important publications printed under Mariano were the seventh to fourteenth volumes of the *Historia General de Philipinas*⁶⁰ of Juan de la Concepción. Within the publication is copperplate engraving of a rococo motif accompanying a map; it was signed 'C. Bagay', most probably Cipriano Bagay, who was 'undoubtedly a relative of [Nicolas de la Cruz] Bagay', as Tavera says. Cipriano Bagay went on to serve as the regent of the Conciliar Seminary press in 1786.⁶¹

c.1790: Neoclassicism

The Franciscan press shifted its aesthetic to neoclassicism by the 1790s (See Figure 32). The ownership of the press was passed on to the secular branch or third order of the Franciscans by 1808. However, according to Tavera, by this point, the types, the machines, and other printing equipment must have been used up and were in a decrepit state judging from its almost illegible products produced between 1780 and 1830.⁶²

Conclusion

The chronological cataloguing of the graphic art of Manila allows for patterns and irregularities to emerge from this often discounted data, consequently finding function in the ornamental. By distinguishing the characteristics of the publications of each press over time, the graphic art elements are made to speak and contribute to previous claims or prompt questions that lead to new research directions. The deductions that come from these patterns add information to the identity of publications such as *Ordenanzas de Marina*, *Translado de una consulta*, *Por la Jurisdicción*, *Estatua verdadera grandeza*, and *Carta Pastoral* among others.

While textual sources remain indispensable, this method may be used to provide supplementary data that would not have been available through other

⁶⁰ Full title: *Historia general de Philipinas: conquistas espirituales y temporales de estos españoles dominios, establecimientos progresos y decadencias ... / por el P. Fr. Juan de la Concepción, Recoleta Agustino Descalzo ...* [#854, 857-859, 867, 874-876, Impreso].

⁶¹ Pardo de Tavera, *Noticias*, 38.

⁶² Ibid, 37.

approaches. This approach may also be used to find and identify more Philippine publications in archives around the world that are not yet attributed to the Manila presses and therefore have not been catalogued in Philippine bibliographies. This research was undertaken in the hope that this will contribute, in its own quiet way, to the unshrouding of this obscured period in the history of Philippine press.**PS**

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Legend:

BNE - Biblioteca Nacional de España

AUST - Archivo de Universidad de Santo Tomas

Figure 1: graphic art border of Doctrina Christiana, 1593



decorative border of Doctrina Christiana

similar motifs in other artforms overseas for comparison



A panel from Ara Pacis Augustae, an altar in Rome dedicated to Pax, the Roman goddess of Peace. The monument was commissioned by the Roman Senate on July 4, 13 BC



From the Louvre: Albarello with fleur-de-lys decoration early 14th century, Syria

Figure 2: graphic art elements from *Evangelicae Historiae*, 1593 and *Adnotaciones*



Figure 3: arabesque decors found in Manila publications

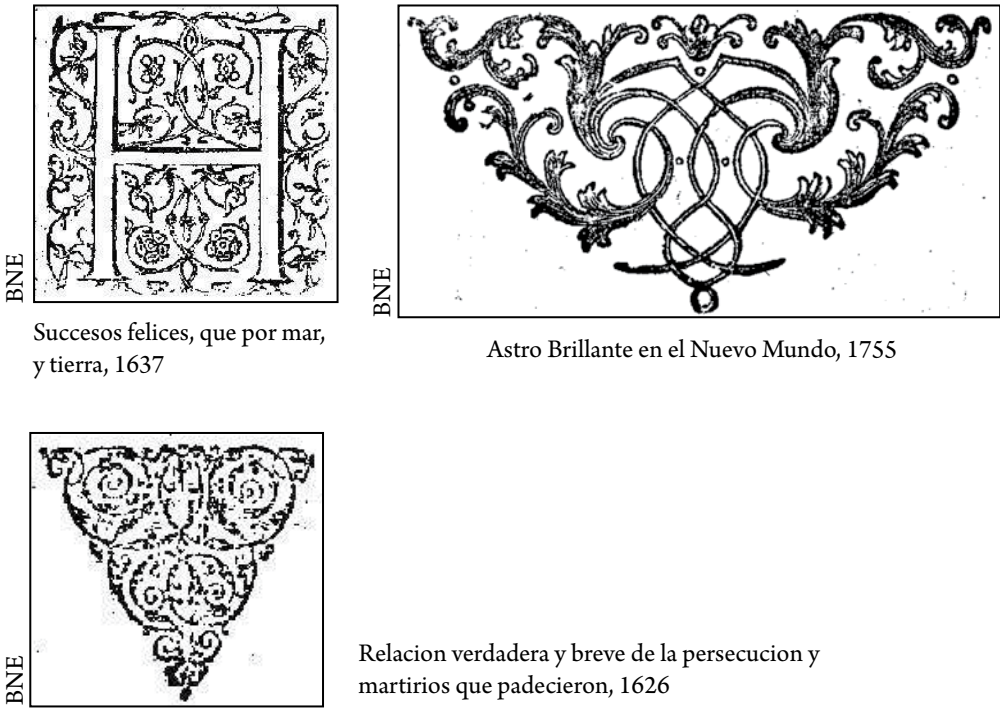


Figure 4: strapwork decors in Manila publications

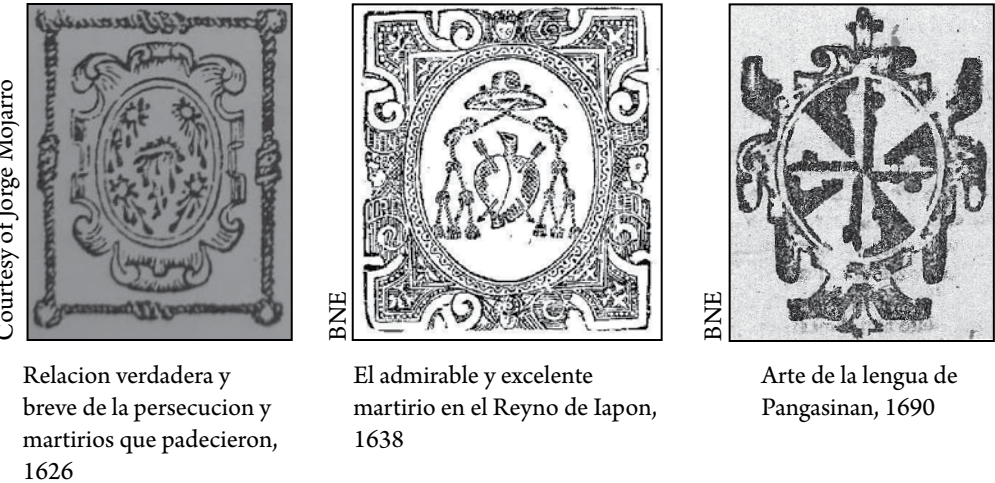


Figure 5: grotesque decors in Manila publications

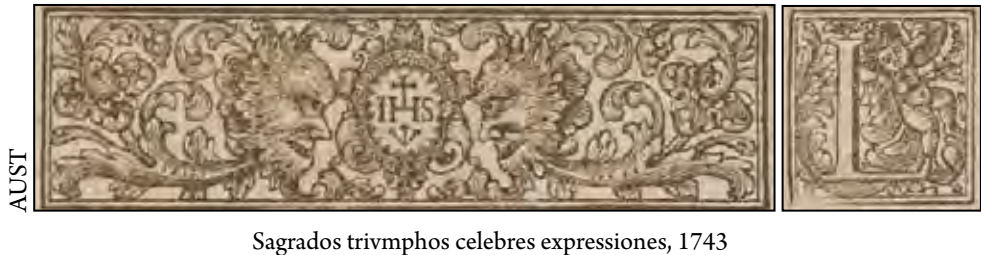


Figure 6: grotesque rococo decors in Manila publications

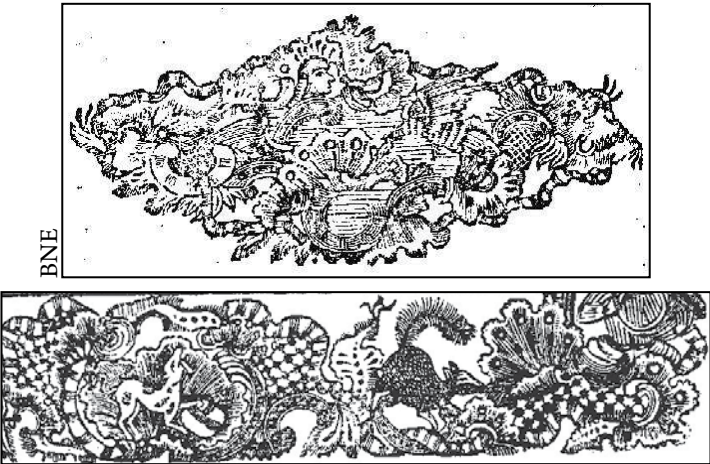


Figure 7: Neo classical layout design in Manila publications



Figure 8: representatives of graphic art elements used by Tomas Pinpin for the Dominican press

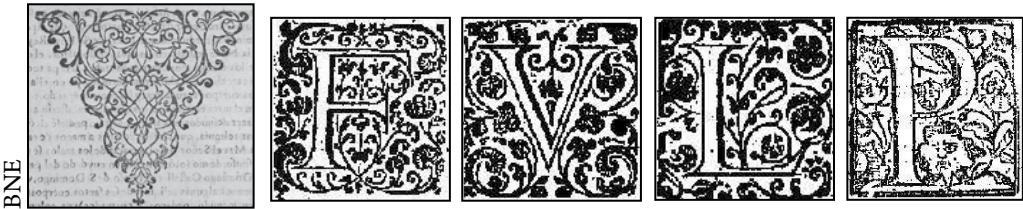


Figure 9: representatives of decorative initials with organic foliage used by Dominican press

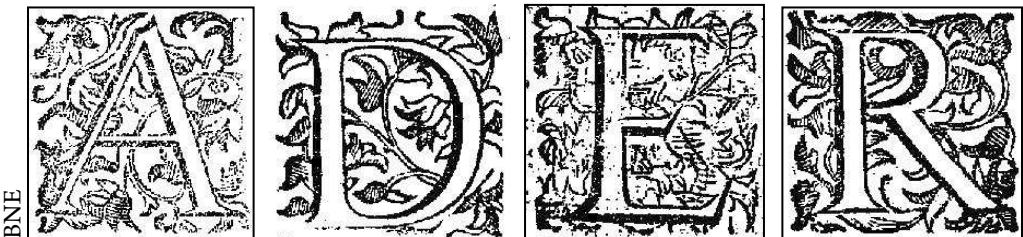
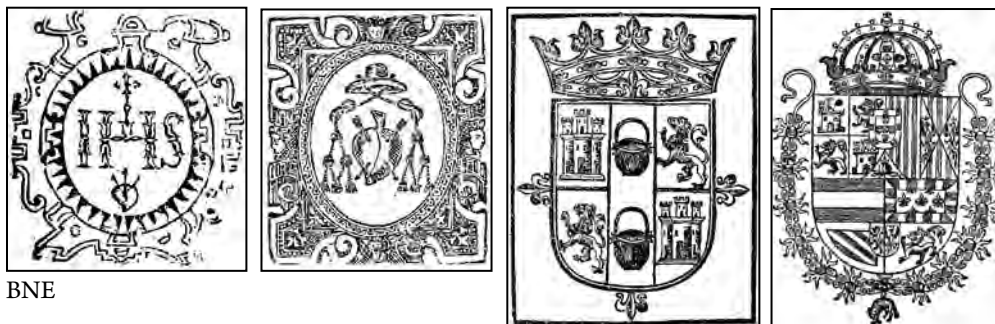
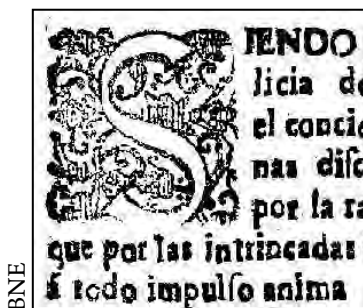


Figure 10: cartouches used by Dominican press (1635-1692)



BNE

Figure 11: comparison of graphic art samples for *Por la Jurisdiccion*



BNE

Por la Jurisdiccion del Santo
Oficio de Mexico en su
Comissaria de Manila, 1735?



Relación con inserción de autos,
1685

Figure 12: comparison of graphic art samples for *Traslado de vna consulta*



BNE

Traslado de vna consulta fecha a los
Illustrissimos Señores Auxiliares, 1685



Verdad nada amarga, 1692

Figure 13: representatives of graphic art elements used by Juan Correa for the Dominican press



Figure 14: graphic elements of *Historia de la Provincia de el Santissimo Rosario*, 1742

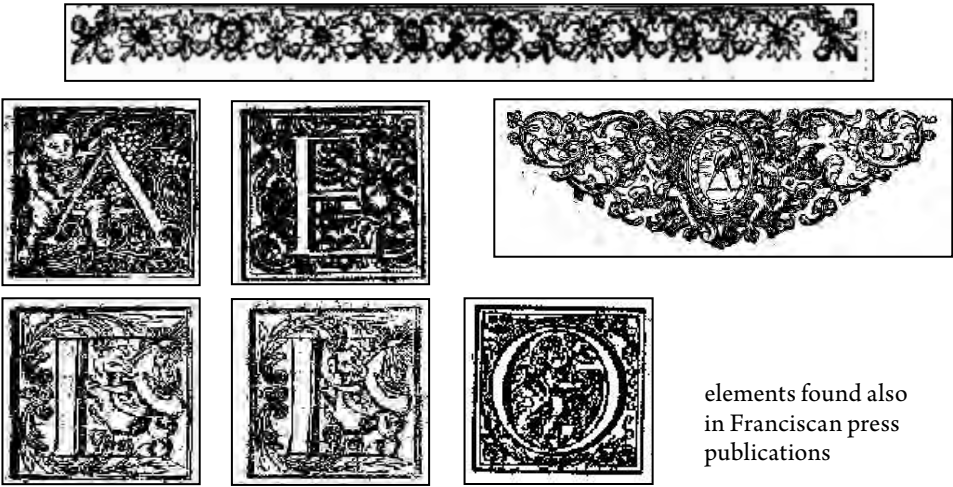
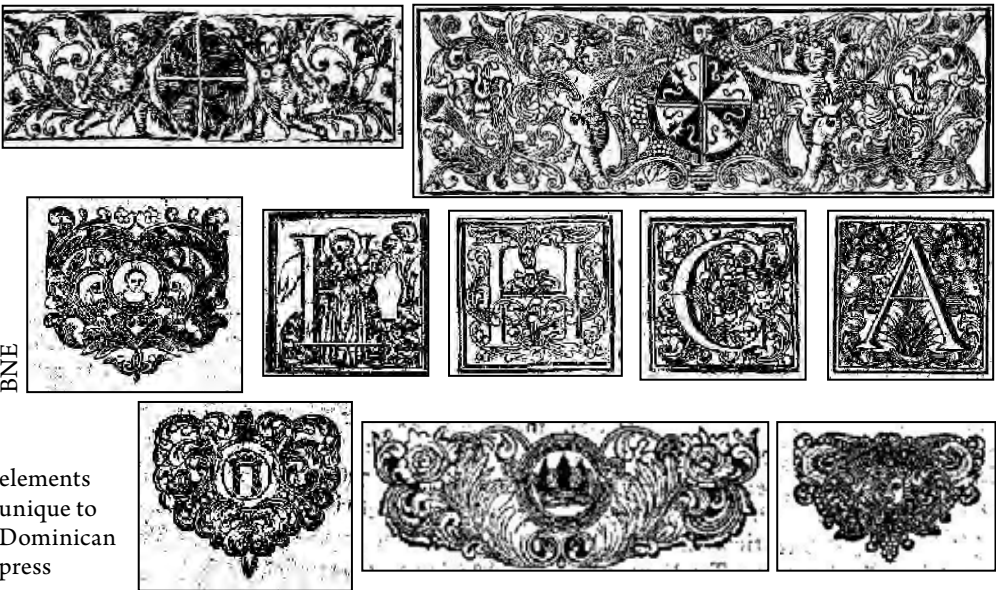
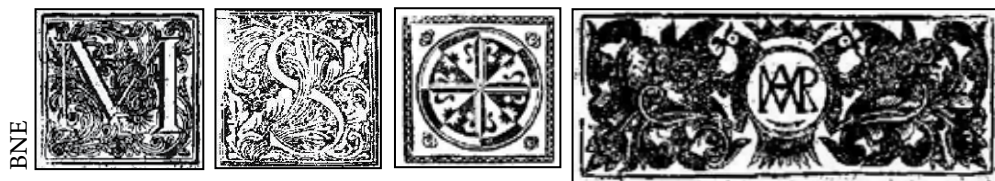
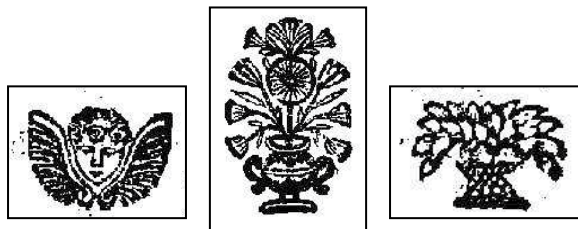


Figure 15: graphic art elements used by Jeronimo Correa for the Dominican press



elements unique to Dominican press



elements found also in Franciscan press publications

Figure 16: graphic art elements used by Tomas Adriano for the Dominican press



Figure 17: comparison of Ordenanzas de Marina to Dominican Press cover pages

Ordenanzas de Marina,
anonymous press, 1757Publications from Dominican
press, 1755

Figure 18: comparison of decorative initial showing same damage on lower right corner



Figure 19: rococo elements used by Juan Francisco de los Santos for the Dominican press

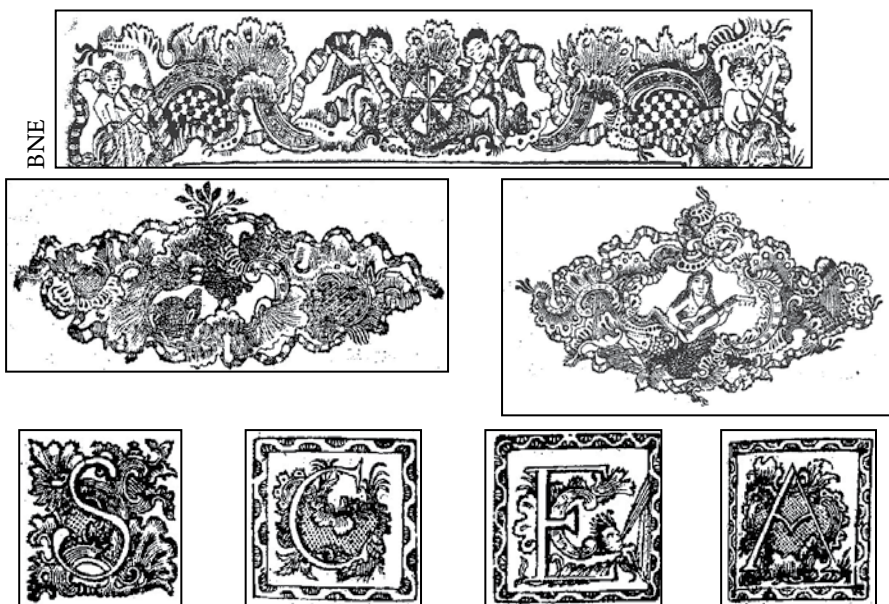


Figure 20: representative of graphic elements used by Tomas Pinpin



Figure 21: block print from Madrid publication, *Compendium Spiritualis Doctrinae*, 1598



Figure 22: representative of decorative initials depicting birds in natural landscape



Figure 23: representative of graphic elements used by Santiago Dimatangso

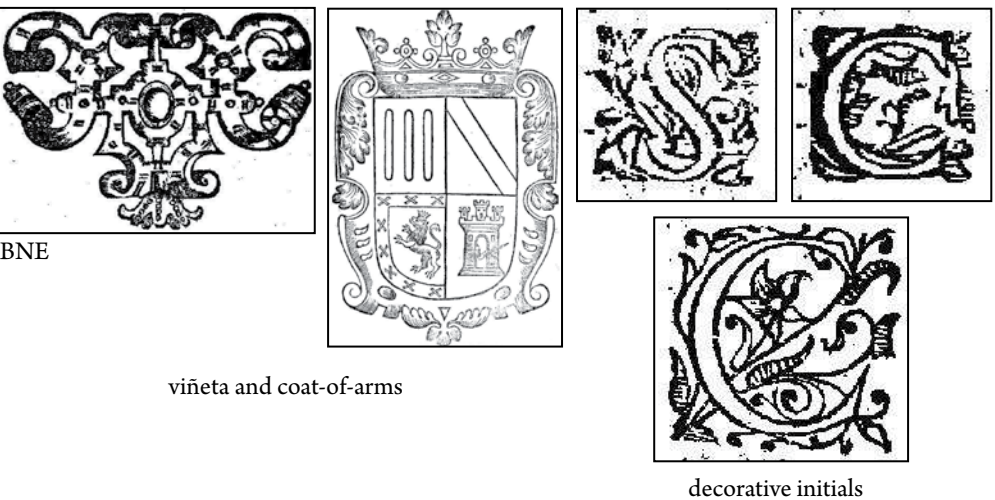


Figure 26: graphic art elements found in both Jesuit and Franciscan Press

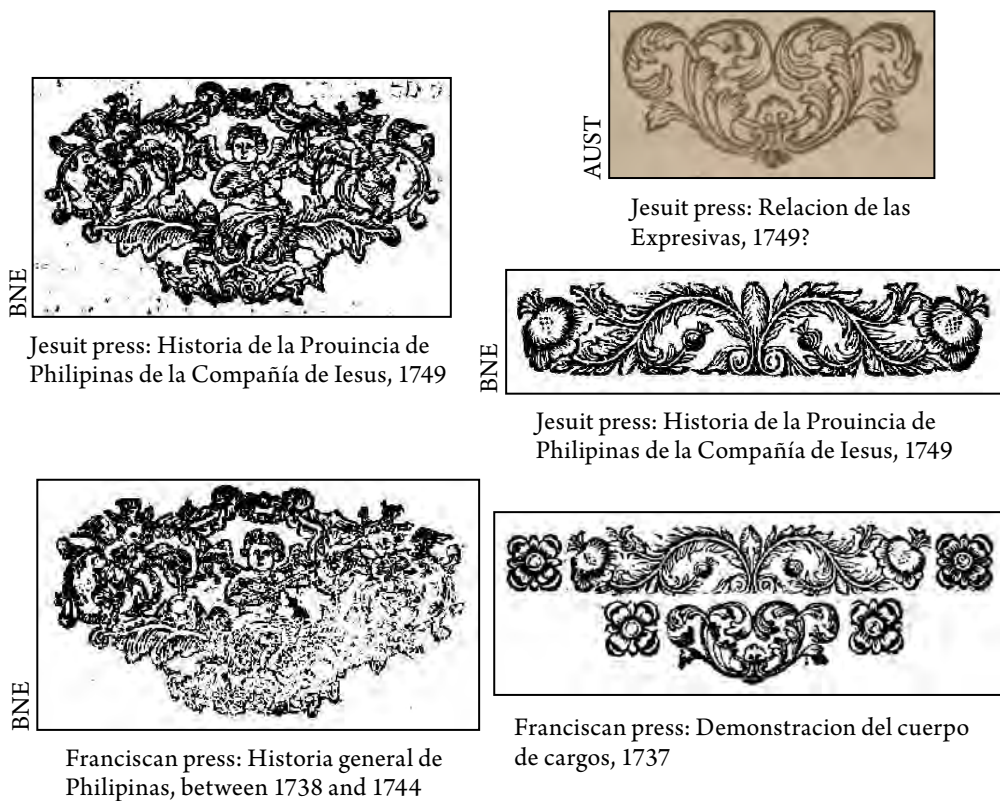


Figure 27: representative of graphic elements used in Franciscan press in c1730

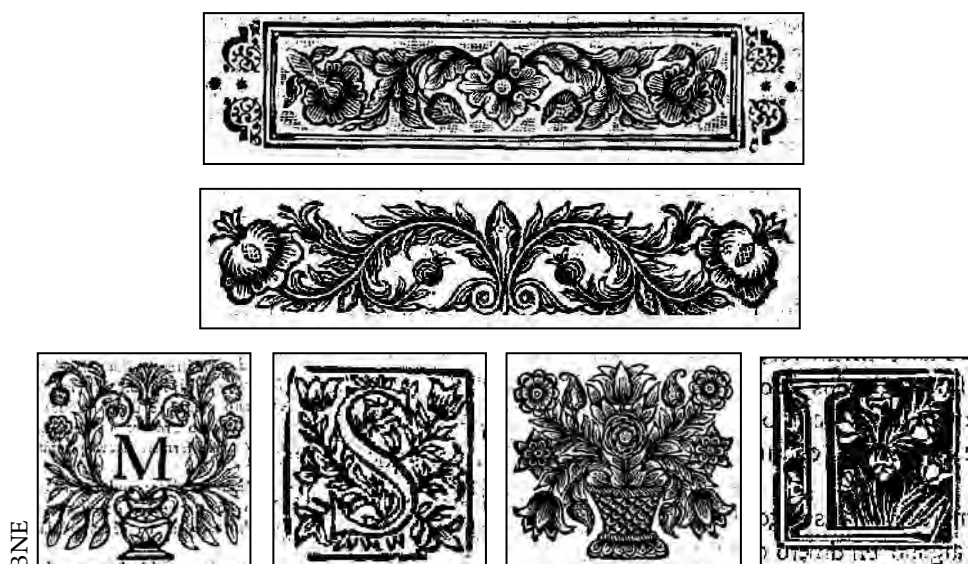


Figure 28: representative of graphic elements used in Franciscan press in c1740-1750

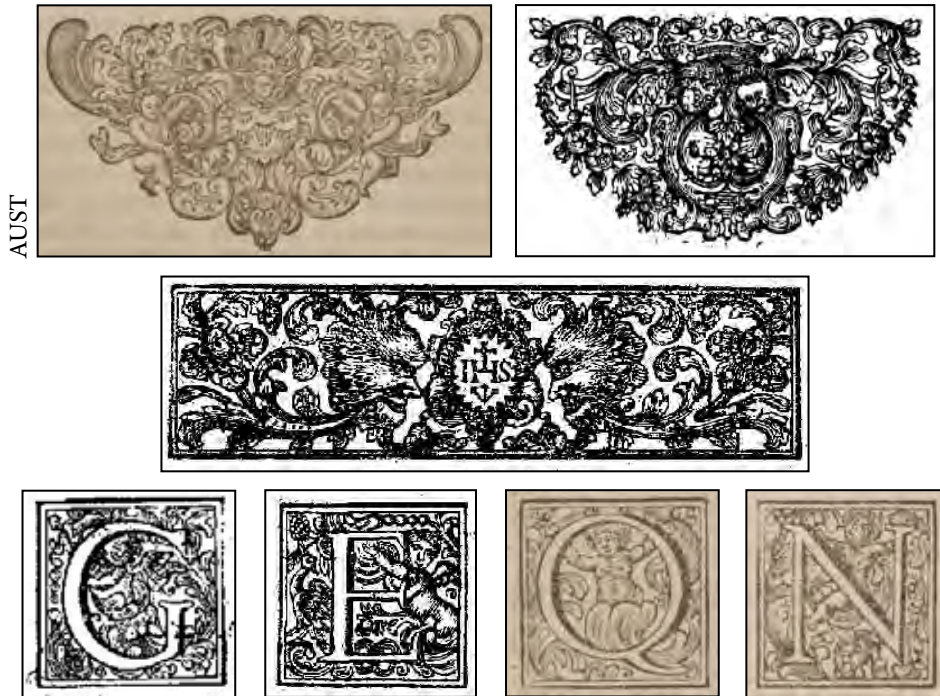


Figure 29: front page layout of publications printed under Juan del Sotillo



Festivas expresiones, aplausos celebres, y sagrados triumphos, con que la santa provincia del Smo. Rosario de las Islas Philipinas, 1742

Estatutos y ordenaciones de la Santa Prouincia de San Gregorio de Religioso Descalzos, 1753

Academia devota, poetico sagrado certamen, vida panegyrica del gloriosissimo S. Pedro de Verona, 1740

Figure 30: floral border common in Franciscan and Dominican publications



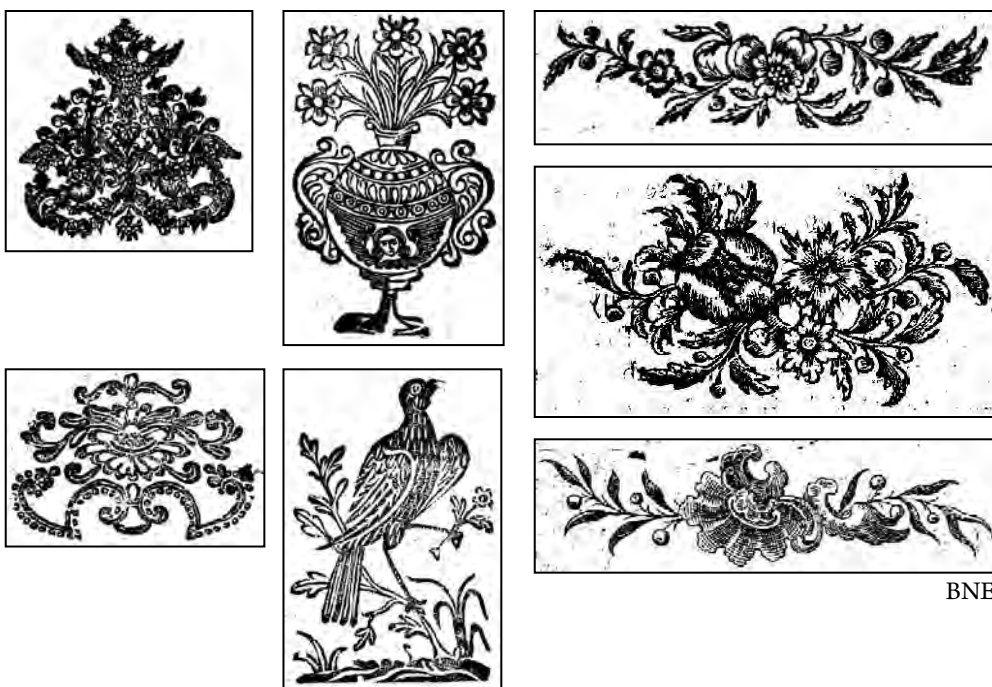
Chronicas de la Apostolica Provincia
de S. Gregorio, 1738-1744

Historia de la prouincia de el
Santissimo Rosario de Philipinas,
1742

Figure 31: representative of graphic elements used in Franciscan press in c1780



front page layouts



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decorative elements

Figure 32: representative of layout design used in Franciscan press in c1790



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