

Editor's Note

Against my own expectations, this last special issue of *Philippiniana Sacra* about the History of the Church in the Philippines has been the most difficult one to work on. The current pandemic situation has complicated the possibility of carrying out research, especially in the Philippines, where most libraries and archives continue to be closed, but also during long periods in universities abroad. However, thanks to the kindness and generosity of contributors and reviewers, the third outcome of the year has been, to say at least, very satisfactory.

Rona Repancol, from the research area of Heritage Studies, has provided an innovative contribution about the relationship between one of the most important sources of stone materials in colonial building history, the quarries of Meycauayan, the people of the town and their church. It highlights the agency of the folk by transcribing a precious 1731 Tagalog document from AFIO, dealing with the donation of quarries made by the people of Meycauayan to their church.

Research about martyrdom literature of Mindanao and Sulu usually focuses on the role of the Jesuits. Rodríguez has instead focused on the under researched Recollect sources –ecclesiastical chronicles and accounts. Her analysis shows how Recollect narratives emphasized the heroicity of the martyrs and the extreme violence they suffered before death. Rodríguez suggests that, in their texts, martyrdoms were an essential element aimed to transform failure into success.

Regalado Trota José explores the role of the native people in Philippine art by presenting some examples of the seculars' contributions to Philippine art in the waning years of the eighteenth century. José rightly confirms that *arte sacro* was not a monopoly of Spanish friars.

Hill provides a lengthy detectivesque account of friar disputes and legal fights over jurisdiction in 18th century that fastly escalated and gave rise to the publication of several controversial imprints. His study describes carefully describes the actors

involved and their interests. Finally, Hill finalizes his paper with a convincing hypothesis regarding the authorship of the very controversial *Dialogo Mixti Fori*.

Blanco Andrés' research focuses on an enlightened member of the Augustinians who has not attracted too much attention from historians: Fr. Agustín Pedro Blaquier (1749-1803), who was Bishop of Nueva Segovia from 1799 until his death. Blanco Andrés evaluates his tireless efforts to modernize the Church and his attempts to secularize the parishes of his bishopry, firmly believing in the capacities of the natives to carry out pastoral work.

Elizalde's research analyzes the opinion that foreign residents and visitors expressed about the role played by religious orders in the Philippines during the Spanish rule. Exploring several texts written by diplomats, merchants, professionals, and travelers from different nations, Elizalde's article provides a necessary foreign view that portrays at times contradictory, but nevertheless insightful views about the friars.

The Philippiniana Records section brings the transcription of the dossier on Doña Juana Manahin, kept in the Augustinian Archives in Valladolid. This document presents a rare, detailed account of the establishment of a chaplaincy in the late 17th century. Against what has been believed, José rightly demonstrates how the use of Tagalog in legal contracts was something very common in Spanish Philippines.

Mojarro transcribes an extremely rare imprint dealing with a celebration in Manila in 1791. Written by a Dominican father, Manuel Barrios, OP, it is confirmed with evidences that the poetry was actually written by Luis Rodríguez Varela, a creole moved by his will to assert his privileges as a member of the local creole elite.

Finally, I would like to say thank you once again to all the people who have made these three issues possible to come out under exceptional circumstances: to Fr. Jesus M. Miranda Jr. OP, PhD, Dr. Joel C. Sagut and Angelita R. Guinto, for their support and patience; to Regalado Trota José, from UST Archives, for the too many times he has helped me; and also to the very patient reviewers. It is my hope that these three issues, counting 24 articles coming from 24 researchers from Europe, United States, and the Philippines, will help renovate the field of Church History in the Philippines by providing new insights and perspectives.**PS**

Jorge Mojarro
Guest Editor