

# The Participation of the Local Clergy in late 18<sup>th</sup> Century Philippine Art

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**Abstract:** Most Philippine church historical accounts were prepared by religious congregations, principally the Augustinians, Augustinian Recollects, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits. The majority of their members were Spaniards. As such, most of the churches and church art created during the Spanish colonial era are credited to them. In a way, such church art has suffered from a certain odium in that they are “reminders of foreign friar oppression.” To get a more balanced view, it is important to know that a number of churches and liturgical art were built or commissioned by members of the diocesan, also called the secular clergy. Members of this clergy were subject to the bishop, and not to the provincial in the case of the religious orders. Furthermore, they were largely drawn from both the native and *mestizo* population. Although the published literature on the local clergy’s role vis-à-vis art is practically nil, leads are gradually turning up in the form of archival sources, piecing together of time lines, and actual examples of architecture and works of art. This article will present some examples of the seculars’ contributions to Philippine art in the waning years of the eighteenth century.

**Keywords:** churches, diocesan clergy, regular clergy, religious congregations, rococo, secular clergy

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## Introduction

In the popular mind, all Spanish colonial churches were built by the friars, and consequently are often regarded as reminders of “oppression” and “forced labor.” (These issues are beyond the scope of the present article.) Following up the histories of these religious congregations, however, there are periods when they were replaced by members of what we call the secular clergy. Churches erected during these gaps may then be attributed to these priests.

For more than three centuries under Spanish rule, Christianization in the Philippines was mostly undertaken by the religious orders. They were also known as the regulars, because their daily life was governed by a *regula*, or rule. The most significant religious orders during the Spanish Philippines were the Augustinians, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, and the Augustinian Recollects. The Jesuits, who were not an order, were also counted among these missionaries and spiritual administrators. Since it was the charism of these groups of men and women to spread the word of God through preaching and missions (as opposed to those congregations of the early Middle Ages that were more contemplative and cenobitic in nature), they were the ones that answered the Spanish crown’s call for missionaries to the Philippines. *Las Islas Filipinas*, in fact, were the first mission territory taken up by the newly-established Augustinian Recollects. The entire geographic area spiritually administered by an order or congregation was called a province, and hence its head was the provincial. The provinces of each of these religious groups encompassed not just the Philippines but China, Japan, and Vietnam as well.

Apart from the regular orders and the Jesuits, there were secular priests. These ministers answered to the bishop of a diocese, and were ideally trained to take over the missions as they matured into parishes.<sup>1</sup> For more than the first two centuries of Christianization, there were only handfuls of secular priests who assisted the bishops in their cathedrals. The great majority of them were Spaniards, as with the religious congregations. Due to various historical reasons which will not be taken up here, it took about a century and a half before the first *indios* or native Filipinos were ordained as secular priests.<sup>2</sup>

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Over the arched doorways of some of the churches discussed in this article

<sup>1</sup> Msgr. Hernando M. Coronel: *Boatmen for Christ. The Early Filipino Priests* (n.p.: Reyes Publishing, Inc., for Catholic Book Center, 1998), 155.

<sup>2</sup> This author pays tribute to the ground-breaking work of the scholar and doctor Luciano “Chito” P.R. Santiago. My research methods and outlook were enhanced greatly by our trips, conversations, and friendship. Chito was born on San Luis Gonzaga’s feastday, June 21, in 1942. He died quietly, much as he lived life, on February 2, 2019. More than any other church historian, he has provided material to disprove the popular view that the secular priests were no better than the “boatmen of the Pasig.” See his *The Hidden Light: the First Filipino Priests* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1987).

is affixed a frame, usually of stone, featuring the papal tiara over the crossed keys of Saint Peter. This seal identified the church as being under the administration of the diocesan, or secular clergy. It was the generic symbol of the diocese, as opposed to the seals of the religious congregations: a book, bishop's hat and tassels, and a flaming heart pierced by an arrow (Augustinians), the Augustinian belt, a lily, a partridge on a dish, and seven stars (Augustinian Recollects), the bare hand of Christ over the sleeved hand of Saint Francis, in front of a cross (Franciscans), a black-and-white cross with its four tips ending in fleur-de-lis (Dominicans), and the initials JHS or IHS, surmounted by a small cross (Jesuits).

Throughout the 18th century, the bishops insisted on their right to canonically visit the parishes within their jurisdiction. This was in accordance with the directives of the Council of Trent. However, this went against the religious orders who claimed that the administration of their parishes was subject only to their superiors, the provincials, and not to the bishop, who was after all placed there by the Real Patronato. This jurisdictional conflict led to the unseating of regular ministers from their churches by the diocesan prelate and their replacement by secular priests. Some orders walked out of their ministries to protest the actions of the administration, whether ecclesiastical or civil. The controversy was hounded by racial overtones. Since the native Filipinos or indios had very little hope of entering the congregations, they pursued their religious calling by studying in the conciliar seminaries (as organized by the Council of Trent) and being ordained priests of the diocese. They were addressed as Padre Don, or simply Don, instead of Fray. Since these racist conditions have been told and retold before, they will be touched on here only insofar as they have bearing on our protagonists' careers.

As Christianization progressed, some religious orders became hard-pressed for personnel. Due to such a problem, for example, the Franciscans turned over their missions in what are now Sorsogan, and Albay to the diocese as early as 1660, others in 1696. They were reclaimed in 1768, but ceded back *a la mitra* (to the mitre, a metaphor for the diocese) in 1794, this time for good (some were taken over by the Augustinian Recollects from 1758 to 1768). Matters were exacerbated when the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1768 left many ministries vacant, pressuring the remaining religious orders to fill in the gaps. The Dominicans, who were based in Luzon, were suddenly assigned Visayan-speaking missions in Iloilo and Negros; understandably, they pulled out after a few years.

It is in the lacunae of the religious orders that we find the secular clergy. Ironically, due to the absence of histories written by the diocesan priests until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we have to refer to the narratives of the regulars for details, clues, and implications on the work of the seculars. Establishing the presence of the secular

priests,<sup>3</sup> then correlating these priests with the churches built or improved during their term has provided the major sources for this article.

Thus, correlating seals with archival and other textual evidence, complemented by examinations of existing structures and objects and juxtaposed against lists of parish priests, it is possible to tease out the tangible evidence of the artistic works of the secular clergy. In this article, only extant architecture or art works will be presented. The archival reconstruction of lost buildings must be the subject of another study.

## The architectural and retablo record

### *Binondo, 1781-1788*

An early notice of secular building activity is the repair of the church of Binondo in the 1770s. The church had been under the care of the archdiocese since 1768, when the Dominicans resigned from certain ministries to protest the

interference of Governor General José Raon.<sup>4</sup> Binondo's curate then was Don Luis Ignacio del Corro, most probably a Spaniard,<sup>5</sup> and one of the first ordinees of Archbishop Basilio Sancho de Santa Justa y Rufina. (He arrived in 1767 to effect the expulsion of the Jesuits among other things.) Del Corro reported in 1773 that he was busy repairing its ceiling and roof. In 1781, he had the *mestizo sangley* architect Domingo de la Cruz González erect four new arches of Meycauayan stone, over which an oval dome replaced the octagonal one (Fig. 1).<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 1. Present interior of what is now the Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo, Manila

<sup>3</sup> Research on the 19<sup>th</sup> century clergy is made easier by the accessibility of official yearbooks with listings of parish priests.

<sup>4</sup> The Dominican parishes that the archbishop took over were those of Binondo, Parian, and Bataan. Pablo Fernández, O.P., *Dominicos donde nace el sol* [Barcelona: Archidiócesis de Barcelona], 1958, 283-284.

<sup>5</sup> Coronel, 170.

<sup>6</sup> María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo Spínola, *Arquitectura Española en Filipinas (1565-1800)*, (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1959), 282. A new vaulted ceiling was also added, and the bell tower was reconstructed with six levels.

The next major architectural activity involving a secular priest took place also in the vicinity of Binondo, only a few years after that church's renovations. The resident associations or *gremios* of Binondo and its adjoining districts of Santa Cruz and Tondo had been seeking official approval for the establishment of a special convent since 1778. The convent, to be named after Santa Rosa de Lima and to be spiritually administered by the Dominicans, was meant to house a community of *mestizo sangley* women who wished to embrace the religious life (the doors of the Franciscans' monastery of Santa Clara and the Dominicans' convent of Santa Catalina were open only for those with Spanish blood).<sup>7</sup> In 1786 the *gremios* appointed a secular priest, Bachiller Don Casimiro de los Santos, to represent them in their project. When pressed by authorities in 1788 for an architectural plan of the compound, de los Santos knew whom to commission: Domingo de la Cruz González,<sup>8</sup> this time with the assistance of another Binondo architect, Don Juan Bautista Nieto.<sup>9</sup>

To assure the convent's financial stability, several wealthy sponsors pledged donations. In a magnanimous gesture, Bachiller Don Casimiro de los Santos promised to furnish the convent's church with a sanctuary lamp, a processional cross, altarpieces, saints' images, bells, liturgical vessels, vestments in all the five ritual colors, and other precious objects. It was a most unusual offering, considering that construction of the church hadn't even begun. He even stipulated this bequest in his

<sup>7</sup> Díaz-Trechuelo, *Arquitectura*, 278-279, and Fig. 148. For a full study on the Santa Rosa de Lima convent, see Marta Maria Manchado López, "El proyecto de convento para mestizas de Santa Rosa de Lima, en Filipinas" *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 56:2 (1999 December), 505.

<sup>8</sup> On p. 278 of Díaz-Trechuelo, his name appears as 'Domingo González de la Cruz;' in the rest of the section, he appears as 'Domingo de la Cruz González.' In the registers of the Colegio de San Juan de Letrán, a boarding school run by the Dominicans, there figures the name of Domingo de la Cruz, who finished studies there in 1746 at the age of 20 years. He was the son of Francisco de la Cruz and Doña Manuela de la Encarnación. Opposite his entry was a handwritten note: *labrador* [worker]. If this were the same Domingo de la Cruz González who renovated Binondo church in 1781, he would have been 55 years old, and 62 years old when he drew the plan for the Santa Rosa convent in 1788. Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *Historia documentada del real colegio de San Juan de Letrán* (Manila: Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1933), 148.

<sup>9</sup> "Plan y elevación de la Casa o Monasterio con su Yglecia con el título de Santa Rosa de Lima que se ha de fundar en el pueblo de Binondoc, proyectado por el Capitán Don Domingo de la Cruz González de orden del Señor Don Manuel del Castillo y Negrete, del Concejo de Su M.G., su Oidor en esta Real Audiencia con la asistencia y acuerdo de Don Juan Bautista Nieto, nombrado para el efecto por el Bachiller Don Casimiro de los Santos, Apoderado del Gremio de Mestizos de Tondo, Binondoc y Santa Cruz." 1788-12-24. Archivo General de Indias [henceforth AGI], MP-FILIPINAS, 179. The nave was lit by two rows of windows, one above the other. The historian Diego Angulo Iníguez remarked that the lower level of windows did not leave enough space for retablos and altars (Díaz-Trechuelo, 279), while Pedro Luengo—who mentions the architect as Domingo de la Cruz—commented that the design provided much more interior light than in the other churches; Pedro Luengo Gutiérrez, "Notas sobre arquitectura y retablos en las iglesias de los arrabales de Manila en 1782," in Pedro San Ginés Aguilar, ed., *Cruce de Miradas, Relaciones e Intercambios* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2010), 274.

will, signed in Santa Cruz on 28 July 1788, should death precede the construction of the church.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, the *mestizo sangley* communities' hopes were dashed when their project was denied with finality by a royal decree, upon recommendations from Manila's Real Audiencia and the fiscal in Spain, on 22 November 1789. Contemporary scholars trace this rejection to the deep-seated belief among high church officials in the Philippines of the immaturity of the Filipinos' Catholicity, which rendered them incapable of undertaking the rigors of the religious life.<sup>11</sup>

This setback, as we shall see, did not deter Bachiller de los Santos from advocating good and fine art for the churches of his confreres.

*Tabaco church tower, Albay, 1780s*

The Franciscans started evangelization in the settlement of Tabaco, Albay in 1587, as a *visita* (mission station) of Cagsaua. It gained independent status in 1616. However, by 1660 it does not appear in the acts of the chapter meetings, indicating it had either reverted to *visita* status, or had been ceded to the diocese (although there was no decree of turnover).<sup>12</sup> From other unverified sources, Tabaco is said to have become the equivalent of a regular parish and handed over to the secular clergy in 1664. It has been served by the diocesan priests ever since. A settlement was established in 1703 in the present barangays San Carlos and San Vicente, only to be abandoned some twenty years later when the inhabitants moved to what is now barangay Cormidal, nearer the sea. A church was built here, 1723-1731, but the town was destroyed by a typhoon in 1811, and then by the eruption of Mayon in 1814. The survivors left their old town (the ruins of the church still stand)<sup>13</sup> and relocated further uphill. The church on the new site was built by Father Fermin Llorente from 1864 to 1879 (he is buried in the central aisle of his masterpiece).

To the right of the church is a massive tower of more ancient stonework and proportions (Fig. 2). Standing on the brink of a hill it must have served as a look-out

<sup>10</sup> Manchado López, 505, footnote 47, citing "Escritura de donación realizada por don Casimiro de los Santos, clérigo presbítero, maestro de ceremonias de la santa iglesia catedral y notario mayor del real y apostólico tribunal de la santa cruzada." Santa Cruz, 28 de julio de 1788, AGI, Filipinas, 1048.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, 512.

<sup>12</sup> Félix de Huerta, O.F.M., *Estado geográfico, topográfico, estadístico, histórico-religioso, de la Santa y Apostólica Provincia de S. Gregorio Magno, de religiosos menores descalzos de la regular y más estrecha observancia de N.S.P.S. Francisco, en las Islas Filipinas* (Binondo, Manila: Imprenta de M. Sánchez y C.ª, 1865), 590-591.

<sup>13</sup> [Diocese of Legazpi], *Earthen Vessels. Golden Anniversary Diocese of Legazpi 1951-2001* ([Legaspi City: Diocese of Legazpi, 2001.]), 69-71. This author was unable to examine the ruins of this earlier church, which surely would have been built by the secular parish priest.

against pirate raids; a stone stairway hugging its exterior facilitated a speedy climb up in an emergency. A closer examination of the structure reveals some interesting details. We find *rocalla* flourishes framing the windows and cartouches, indicating a late eighteenth century construction. *Rocalla*, the irregular vegetal or rock-like forms that characterize the rococo style, became popular in Philippine church art in the last three decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; *rocalla* elements eventually gave way to the more architectural neo-classical style in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in cases where no precise dating is available, architecture and art-works that feature *rocalla* elements may be dated to roughly between the 1770s and the 1810s.<sup>14</sup>

We see how the rococo elements help to ‘nail down’ or confirm the period of construction or repair of other churches. If the time frame coincides with the period when the church was under the diocese, then we can assume that church was built or repaired by the secular clergy.

On the lower walls of the Tabaco tower, we can make out a bishop’s wide-brimmed galera and its tassels, and underneath it the still recognizable coat of arms of Most Rev. Juan Antonio Gallego de Órbigo, O.F.M., bishop of Nueva Cáceres (in Bicol, 1780-1788) (Figs. 3 and 4). One of the bas-reliefs on the walls is a profile of a man with a skull cap, very likely of Bishop Órbigo himself (Fig. 5)! This hands-on bishop repaired the cathedral in Naga, constructed a bishop’s palace, and commenced the building of the conciliar seminary. This watch tower then must have been built in the 1780s, with the bishop himself inaugurating it. The rococo elements complement the dating.

We meet Bishop Órbigo once more in the next church, after he moved to Manila as archbishop of the capital in 1788.<sup>15</sup> It must be noted that from there, he sent a complete set of liturgical vestments to his hometown, Hospital de Órbigo (from where he took the name by which he is better known), in the province of León. The vestments are still kept in the parish church of San Juan Bautista, where they were received in 1795 (two years before his death). The precious textiles manifest

<sup>14</sup> Some engravings already carried *rocalla* elements as early as the 1750s, but the *rocalla* in larger pieces only started to appear in the 1770s. For an overview, see Regalado Trota José, “Bubbles and Tongues of Fire: *Rocalla* in the Philippines.” In Florina H. Capistrano-Baker and Meha Priyadarshini, eds. *Trade, Translation, and Visual Culture of Entangled Empires (1565-1898)*. (Makati City: Ayala Foundation, Inc., Los Angeles, Calif., USA: Getty Research Institute, and Firenze, Italy: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (Max-Planck Institut), 2020), 117-131.

<sup>15</sup> He was the first bishop known to make a full visitation of the diocese of Nueva Cáceres, including Catanduanes. There, the poisoned chocolate served him was luckily discovered on time. Domingo Abella, *Bikol Annals. A Collection of Vignettes of Philippine History* (Manila: The Author, 1954), 136-140.

rococo motifs, as does a pair of silver candelabra which most probably came with the bequest.<sup>16</sup>

#### Tabaco, Albay



Fig. 2. Church tower



Fig. 3. Seal of Bishop Juan Antonio de Órbigo



Fig. 4. Seal of Bishop Juan Antonio de Órbigo, from Abella, *Bikol Annals*



Fig. 5. Profile of a bishop, perhaps of Bishop Órbigo?

#### *San Luis Gonzaga, Pampanga, 1793-1801*

Opposing views of ecclesiastical management led to the transfer of the Augustinian parishes in Pampanga and Ilocos Sur to the Archdiocese of Manila and the Diocese of Nueva Segovia, respectively, in the 1770s. Many were returned only well into the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> On 14 April 1785, the Augustinian curate

<sup>16</sup> María Victoria Herráez, “158. Terno pontifical del obispo Fray Juan Antonio Gallego,” and “185. Pareja de candelabros.” In Alfredo J. Morales, ed., *Filipinas Puerta de Oriente. De Legazpi a Malaspina*. (n.p.: SEACEX and Lunwerg Editores, 2003), 281-282 and 303, respectively.

<sup>17</sup> In Pampanga, Lubao remained under secular ministrations until 1864; Candaba, until 1854, and Guagua, until 1853. Regalado Trota José, *Curas de Almas* (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2008), III, 170-171.



of San Luis Gonzaga, Pampanga, Padre Fray Domingo Thomas Bellveser turned over the parish that had been under his care for eleven years, to the secular priest Bachiller Don Gaspar Macalinao.<sup>18</sup> Padre Macalinao, who obtained his bachelor's degree in Philosophy at the University of Santo Tomas in 1775,<sup>19</sup> was to administer the parish for the next 31 years. The parish's Libro de Cargo y Data records Padre Macalinao's improvements on the church that he inherited, including whitewashing the retablo and fencing the churchyard in stone in 1785, purchasing processional images and silver accessories for the altar in 1786, and commissioning a bell in 1789 (which still exists, Fig. 6). After a few years Padre Macalinao made the momentous decision to erect a more substantial church. The first stone was blessed and laid by the Archbishop of Manila Juan Antonio Gallego de Órbigo, on 19 April 1793. The building was substantially finished by 1801. At the end of his episcopal visitation of San Luis in March 1806, Archbishop Juan Antonio Zulaybar wrote in the Libro de Cargo y Data of his joy at seeing the church in such a "state of perfection."

Although one could pass off Macalinao's building as just another mass of finely cut stone, the uniqueness of the façade should be quickly pointed out. It consists of the usual vertical triple-bay division still common in the country, except that the two out-most bays project forward, recessing the central section and creating an unusual concave plane (Fig. 7). Above each of the bays rises a small steeple (Fig. 8 and 9). Atop the pilasters that frame the central bay are triangular finials with slightly undulating silhouettes. The deeply concave frontage (seen in a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century Mexican churches), the trio of towers, and the sinewy finials (popular in Philippine 18<sup>th</sup> century retablos, but not seen in architecture) are not seen elsewhere in Philippine colonial church architecture, and raise the question: where did Macalinao get his "out-of-the-box" artistic ideas?

According to a receipt in the San Luis Libro de Cargo y Data dated 9 July 1789, the parish 250 pesos for a set of silver *ciriales* (a processional crucifix with its pair of candleholders) to Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos. Through other pieces of evidence, which we shall examine later, it seems that de los Santos was a point person for the acquisition and commissioning of church objects. Such a position would have exposed him to all kinds of design and construction ideas. Could he have seen in San Luis a venue for his creative energies, if not a massive statement on what the diocesan clergy could do?

<sup>18</sup> Regalado Trota José, "A Visual Documentation on Fil-Hispanic Churches. Part 11. The Secular-Built Parish Church of San Luis, Pampanga," *Philippiniana Sacra* XLIX:146 (2014 January-April), 83-102.

<sup>19</sup> Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomás (AUST): Diligencias de Grados, Filosofía, 1775. If Macalinao was 16 years old when he obtained his bachelor's degree, he would have been born around 1759; he must have been at least 33 years old in 1792. *University of Santo Tomás Alumni Directory 1611-1971* (Manila: U.S.T. Alumni Association, Inc., [1972]).

Of significance for our study, the exuberantly carved stone seal of St. Peter over the main entrance is framed in lush rococo elements (Fig. 10).

#### San Luis Gonzaga, Pampanga



Fig. 6. Bell, commissioned in 1789 by Padre Gaspar Macalinao



Fig. 7. Church façade

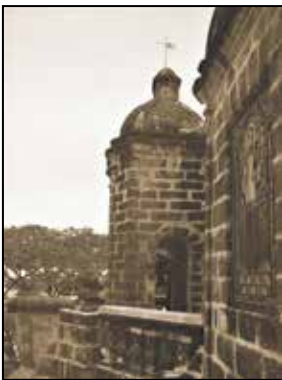


Fig. 8. North tower



Fig. 9. Scroll buttresses supporting the quadrangular dome



Fig. 10. Carved stone seal of St. Peter over the main entrance

#### *Betis, Pampanga: finishing of the central retablo, c.1790-1812*

The secular clergy were in charge of the church of Betis, Pampanga, from 1771 to about 1831.<sup>20</sup> The retablo (with its full complement of Augustinian saints) was commissioned but left unpainted by the last Augustinian curate, according to a 1790 report. By 1812, this altarpiece had been painted and gold-leafed by the secular

<sup>20</sup> Nina L.B. Tomen, *Súli. Legacies of Santiago Apostol Church of Betis* (n.p.: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and St. James the Apostle Heritage Foundation, Inc., 2012), 64.

priest, Don Thomas Phelipe Gozum (Fig. 11).<sup>21</sup> Padre Gozum also donated the largest bell, still in the tower, earlier in 1787 (Fig. 12).<sup>22</sup>

#### Betis, Pampanga



Fig. 11. Detail of central retablo, commissioned by the Augustinians and finished possibly by Don Thomas Phelipe Gozum



Fig. 12. Largest bell in the tower, commissioned in 1787 by Don Thomas Phelipe Gozum

#### *San Pedro Makati, 1796*

The seal of St. Peter framed in *rocalla* over the doorway of the church of San Luis, Pampanga, also appears that of San Pedro in Makati, Metro Manila. This church formed part of the compound of the Jesuit novitiate, built about 1620 and repaired several times.<sup>23</sup> It was turned over to the archdiocese of Manila after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1768. Some three decades later, it was renovated by the interim parish priest, Bachiller Don Facundo Mariano, with the patronage of Don Pedro de Galarraga, Director General of the Tobacco Trade in the Philippines, and Colonel of the Camarines and Tayabas Regiment. What kind of interventions were undertaken cannot yet be ascertained, but they may have been costly and substantial enough (perhaps the replacement of the roof and timbers) to merit a grand re-opening on 29 June 1796, the fiesta of Saints Peter and Paul. A highlight of the solemn blessing was a sermon delivered by Doctor Don Mariano Pilapil, a respected professor of the

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 98. This is one more datum for the chronological dating of retablos, in line with Pedro Luengo's "Philippine style on wood screens: early-modern altarpieces in Manila and the Archipelago," in *Philippiniana Sacra* LVI: 168 (May-August 2021), 341-374.

<sup>22</sup> Regalado Trota José, "List of church bells by provinces," ms., 2009. The name on the bell was spelled P. Tom.s Pelipe Gozon.

<sup>23</sup> Rene B. Javellana, S.J. *Wood & Stone for God's Greater Glory. Jesuit Art and Architecture in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1991), 196.

Colegio de San José in Manila. The sermon was printed, and the rococo seal of St. Peter was affixed to mark the occasion (Figs. 13 and 14).<sup>24</sup>

#### San Pedro, Makati



Fig. 13. Façade of the former Jesuit church, renovated in 1796 under Padre Mariano Facundo with the sponsorship of Don Pedro de Galarraga



Fig. 14. Seal of St. Peter over the central doorway, affixed in 1796

#### *Indan (now Vinzons), Camarines Norte, late 18<sup>th</sup> century*

Indan was one of the missions in the Bicol area that were founded by the Franciscans but were turned over to the diocese for long periods of time. Known as Tacboan, it was established as a mission by the Franciscans in 1581. It was assigned its first minister in 1611, and a church was built dedicated to Saint Peter the Apostle. In 1624, it was moved to another site, where another church was built. Its name was changed to Indan, after an eponymous tree. Due to a lack of personnel, Indan and the other ministries in what is now Camarines Norte, Paracale, and Capalongan, were ceded to the diocese: Indan and Capalongan in 1661, Paracale the next year. Capalongan and Paracale were retaken by the Franciscans in 1681 and 1687 respectively, although Capalongan was ceded back *a la mitra* in 1684; Paracale

<sup>24</sup> Mariano Pilapil, *Oración panegírica ... en la bendición de la Iglesia de San Pedro Macati, que reedificó el Señor Don Pedro de Galarraga [...]* (Sampaloc, por el H. Pedro Argüelles de la Concepcion, 1796). The only known copy of this booklet is in the Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati. [https://issuu.com/filipinasheritagelibrary/docs/oracion\\_20panegiricaque?e=18015266/55448844](https://issuu.com/filipinasheritagelibrary/docs/oracion_20panegiricaque?e=18015266/55448844). Accessed 16 February 2021.



followed in 1696.<sup>25</sup> Indan remained under diocesan administration from 1661 until the Franciscans returned in the 1880s.<sup>26</sup>

The massive church of Indan stands in the center of town. The carved decoration on its stone façade is sparse, and limited to the frame of the central niche housing an image of the patron saint, Saint Peter. But the intricate C-scrolls and irregular leafy forms proclaim its rococo, and therefore late eighteenth-century, heritage. Atop the niche is St. Peter's mitre in front of the crossed keys, confirming the construction of the building under the administration of the secular clergy (Figs. 15, 16, and 17).

Indan (now Vinzons), Camarines Norte



Fig. 15. Façade and tower of the church



Fig. 16. Central niche with the image of the patron saint, St. Peter



Fig. 17. Seal of St. Peter over the niche

<sup>25</sup> Huerta, *Estado*, 584-585.

<sup>26</sup> José, *Curas de Almas*, II, 143.

*Vigan, Ilocos Sur, late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century*

The Ilocos region northwest of Manila was the mission territory of the Augustinians since the late sixteenth century. However, there were a few “pockets” of secular administration, which were affiliated with the bishop in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. The Augustinian Recollect bishop Juan Ruiz de San Agustin began the construction of the cathedral in 1790 but died three years before it was finished in 1799. The day-to-day operations were taken care of by the secular parish priest, Don Manuel Basa, who upon his death in 1794 was succeeded by Doctor Don Eustaquio Benson (1795-1806). Bishop Ruiz acknowledged the two as “the truly great benefactors of this church,” along with his predecessor, Bishop Miguel Garcia. *Rocalla* elements are found encircling swollen ovoid forms on the pediment of the cathedral (Fig. 18). Inside, tufts of *rocalla* sprout from a collateral retablo for the Nazarene, donated in 1802 by two *mestizos sangleyes*, Don Juan Mariano and Don Alexandro de Leon (Fig. 19).<sup>27</sup>

Bishop Ruiz created two parishes separate from Vigan in 1794, Santa Catalina and San Vicente.<sup>28</sup> The churches here were also built under secular administration, but later in the nineteenth century.

Vigan Cathedral, Ilocos Sur



Fig. 18. Section of the façade, showing vestiges of rocalla around the frames



Fig. 19. Left side retablo, showing vestiges of rocalla on the canopy and flanges

<sup>27</sup> Frederick Scharpf, S.V.D., “The building of the Vigan Cathedral,” *The Ilocos Review* 17 (1985), 35-36, 41-42. For a biography of Dr. Don Eustaquio Benson, a *mestizo sangley* from Lingayen, Pangasinan, see Luciano P.R. Santiago, “Fr. Eustaquio Benson, ICD, 1759-1806; the First Filipino Priest Doctor of Nueva Segovia,” *The Ilocos Review* 15 (1983), 84-93.

<sup>28</sup> Scharpf, “Vigan Cathedral,” 37.

*Bangued, Abra, eighteenth-early nineteenth century*

A special mission for the priests from Vigan was Abra. It was originally under the care of the Augustinians, but the area was turned over to the secular clergy in around 1622. Bangued, the capital, remained under the seculars until 1891, when the Augustinians returned. According to the Augustinian historian Pedro Galende, the church (now a cathedral) was built by the secular priests Don Quintin Paredes and Don Segundo Teaño.<sup>29</sup> Their terms can be traced from yearbooks to 1884 and 1885-1891 respectively.<sup>30</sup> However, a marker on the cathedral says its construction began in 1722 and was completed in 1807. A photograph of the retablo before the church was bombed in 1945 shows an altarpiece replete with rococo flanges and crowned niches, placing it within the last quarter of the eighteenth century or the first years of the nineteenth, which coincides with 1807 (Figs. 20 and 21).<sup>31</sup> Therefore the structure must have been built by the secular priests of this earlier period, and renovated by Paredes and Teaño later in the nineteenth century. The Augustinians erected the convento in the last years of the nineteenth century.

## Bangued Cathedral, Abra



Fig. 20. Façade and tower, greatly renovated after World War II damage



Fig. 21. 1936 photo of the central retablo, showing rococo elements such as the flanges and niche crowns

<sup>29</sup> Pedro G. Galende, O.S.A., *Angels in Stone. Architecture of Augustinian Churches in the Philippines* (Metro Manila: G. A. Formoso Publishing, 1987), 327-328.

<sup>30</sup> José, *Curas de Almas*, II, 3.

<sup>31</sup> The distinctive striped rococo flanges link this retablo with those in Sinait (Ilocos Sur); Namacpacan (now Luna, La Union); and Lingayen (Pangasinan—sadly, all five retablos in this church disappeared in the bombing in 1945).

*Samboan, Cebu, late eighteenth century- early nineteenth century*

The area of spiritual administration of the province of Cebu under the secular clergy comprised the cathedral and Parian parish in Cebu City, the western and northeastern portions of the island, and the island of Bantayan. Of the stone churches built by the seculars, only those in Parian and Samboan were erected before the nineteenth century. That in Parian, dedicated to St. John the Baptist and said to be the richest and most magnificent in the province, was ordered demolished in 1878-1879; its parish had been suppressed in 1849.<sup>32</sup> In the resulting diaspora of objects, its bell dated 1690 and bearing the name of its donor, Bachiller Don Juan Alfonso Ruiz, ended up in Calape, Bohol (Fig. 22).<sup>33</sup>



Fig. 22. 1690 bell from the Parian church, Cebu, now in Calape, Bohol

The church in Samboan is said to have been concluded in 1842,<sup>34</sup> although this seems a rather late date in the context of other Cebuano churches. Its parish, dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, was established in 1784.<sup>35</sup> Its more possible dating may be inferred from the similarities of its façade and other details with those of the churches of Argao (1788 on a transept door) and the old San Nicolas church in Cebu City (1787-1804), and to a slightly lesser extent with those of Boljoon (c. 1783-1801) and Dalaguete (1802-1825).<sup>36</sup> The Samboan central retablo and the

<sup>32</sup> See the travails of the Parian parish in Michael Cullinane, "In the Shadow of the Santo Niño: San Vidal's Sojourn in Cebu City, 1565-2018," *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 67:3-4 (2019), 425-430.

<sup>33</sup> Regalado Trota José, "List of church bells by provinces," (ms., 2009): "Calape."

<sup>34</sup> José Eleazar R. Bersales, ed., *Balaanong Bahandi. Sacred Treasures of the Archdiocese of Cebu* (Cebu City: The Cathedral Museum of Cebu, Inc., and University of San Carlos Press, 2010), 223.

<sup>35</sup> Pbro. D. Felipe Redondo y Sendino, *Breve Reseña de lo que fue y de lo que es la Diócesis de Cebú en las Islas Filipinas*. Translated into English by Azucena L. Pace (Cebu City: The University of San Carlos Press, 2014), 144.

<sup>36</sup> For Argao, see Galende, 453; Bersales 41. In Boljoon, the epistle side entrance is inscribed 17



balcony adjoining the choirloft are in a simplified rococo style, and thus may date at about the same time as the church, which—contextualizing it with the churches just mentioned—may be placed within the last ten years of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth century (Figs. 23, 24, and 25). (The frontispiece of a history of the Santo Niño de Cebu commissioned by the Augustinians in 1804 is still replete with swirling *rocalla*.)<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, it may be surmised that the same team or “school” of architects and carvers were employed on all five churches. In other words, the secular parish priest of Samboan very likely used his connections with the Augustinians to get the same artists to work on his church.

#### Samboan, Cebu



Fig. 23. Façade and tower



Fig. 24. Central retablo, with rococo elements



Fig. 25. Balcony over the nave, with faint rococo features

Sept 1789; the epistle transept retained the same style though it was built later and inscribed 31 March 1829; the year 1801 is on the façade. See Galende 451, and Bersales, 91. There are no exact dates for Dalaguete, which was founded in 1711; however a list of parish priests in the convento begins in 1798, suggesting the extant canonical books began at this date, which in turn suggests a fire may have damaged or consumed the earlier building, necessitating rebuilding. See Galende, 452, and Bersales, 135. The year 1641 is given for San Nicolas, which is too early for this style, but it greatly resembles the three previous churches; see Galende, 446, and Bersales, 235. Further research, especially construction analysis, can help narrow the datings of all these churches.

<sup>37</sup> See the cover and page 45 of Resil B. Mojares' *The Feast of the Santo Niño* (Cebu City: University of San Carlos Press, 2017).

## Smaller artifacts

### *The refurbishing of churches in Cavite, 1780s-1790s*

The most famous icon of the province of Cavite was, and still is, the painting of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad de Porta Baga. The icon dates from at least 1692, based on an inscription on its back (Fig. 26). It was enshrined in its own church, known as the Ermita, just outside the walls of the Puerto de Cavite. The shrine was maintained by a chaplain, who was affiliated with the parish of San Pedro inside the walled enclave. This parish was always under the archdiocese of Manila, until around 1870 when it was turned over to the Augustinian Recollects.<sup>38</sup>



Fig. 26. Nuestra Señora de la Soledad de Porta Vaga. From *Novena de la Santísima Virgen de los Dolores María Nuestra Señora*. Imprenta de Cavite, 1814. AUST, Libros 226.

The engraving shows the icon as it was kept, possibly temporarily, at the Hospital de San Juan de Dios in Cavite Puerto

Apart from the two churches in Cavite Puerto, two others nearby were also administered by diocesan priests until the last decades of the nineteenth century: San Roque (which today houses the Soledad icon), and Bacoor. In the belltower of the latter church hang two bells commissioned by the eighteenth century curates: one dated 1756 or 1766, bearing the name of Bachiller Don Joseph Jimenes, and the other 1793 (Figs. 27 and 28).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Regalado Trota José, “The Eight Churches of Cavite Puerto (1586-1800)” *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 15:4 (December 1987): 311-317, 340-346.

<sup>39</sup> José, “List of church bells: Bacoor.” For a biography of Joseph Jimenes, see Santiago, *Hidden Light*, 121-122.

Bells in Bacoor, Cavite



Fig. 27. Bell dedicated to Nuestra Señora del Remedio and San Miguel Arcangel, commissioned in 1756 or 1766 by Bachiller Don Joseph Jimenes



Fig. 28. Bell dedicated to San Joseph Esposo de Nuestra Señora, dated 1793

After the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1768, their ministries in Cavite province were turned over to the archdiocese. The contents of their church of Nuestra Señora de Loreto in Cavite Puerto were kept in a storehouse. In 1786, the curate of Indang, Cavite, obtained permission from the archbishop to retrieve from the storehouse the image of Nuestra Señora de Loreto. The precious statue with ivory head and hands was renamed Nuestra Señora del Rosario when it was enshrined in Indang (Fig. 29).



Fig. 29. Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Indang, Cavite. Formerly Nuestra Señora de Loreto, venerated in the Jesuit church in Cavite Puerto, and brought to Indang in 1786

Similarly, the parish priest of Santa Cruz de Malabon (now Tanza), Padre Narciso Manas, was able to furnish his church with objects from the Loreto church, which were listed in a report in 1790. Among others, these included processional candlestands in the form of lions and portions of retablos which were re-assembled in the church (Figs. 30 and 31).<sup>40</sup> Padre Manas had been in charge of the parish since its founding in 1780. Having studied in the University of Santo Tomas, he may have procured the bas-relief of Our Lady of the Rosary through one of his Dominican professors.<sup>41</sup>

Items from the Jesuit church in Cavite Puerto, and brought to Tanza, Cavite before 1790



Fig. 30. Bas-reliefs and portions of the retablo; recently re-assembled



Fig. 31. *Ciriales* stand in the form of a lion

### *The engraved prints of Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos, 1789-1798*

We meet Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos where we had last left him, procuring a set of silver *ciriales* for the church of San Luis, Pampanga, in 1789. From

<sup>40</sup> On Loreto church, Indang, and Tanza, see José, “Cavite Puerto,” 321-326. Since these works of art came from the Jesuit churches, they all antedate 1768 when the Jesuits were expelled. Additional information from Romeo Galang, Jr., 2021, for which I am grateful. Both the Loreto image and the lion *cirial* stand have since been stolen.

<sup>41</sup> Narciso Manas was a *mestizo sangley*, born in Bulacan in 1755. He studied in the Seminary of San Carlos, and obtained his bachelor of philosophy in 1775 from the University of Santo Tomas. He was one of the ordinees of Archbishop Sancho during his first decade (1768-1778). He died in Santa Cruz de Malabon in 1817. Coronel, 98; *University of Santo Tomás Alumni Directory*.

this same year we find a *Last Supper* engraved by Phelipe Sevilla (“Ph. Sev. Sculp. an. 89”)<sup>42</sup> with the added inscription that it was based on a drawing by de los Santos (“B.r Casim. á Sanctis M.C. excogitavit”). He used the Latin word *excogitavit*, which meant “evolved, invented, or contrived in the mind.” This manner of one’s acknowledging his own work is unique in Philippine engraving (others used *delineavit*, “drawn”), and implies a more thoughtful approach to the subject. Additionally, his concept of the Last Supper as a *tondo* or roundel, and his framing it with rather refined and controlled *rocalla*, manifest a confident and innovative hand (Fig. 32).



Fig. 32. *The Last Supper*, 1789. Drawn by Bachiller Don Casimiro de los Santos, and engraved by Phelipe Sevilla

Nine years later, de los Santos engraved four plates, probably from his own designs, for the 1789 Manila edition of Gregorio Galindo’s *Sacred Rubrics for the Roman Missal*.<sup>43</sup> The first plate, *Tabula Prima*, depicts the order in which an altar is to be incensed; *Tabula Secunda*, the order of incensing a chalice in a cross-wise motion; *Tabula Tertia*, the order of incensing a chalice in a circular motion; and *Tabula Quarta*, the order of folding a corporal. At the lower right corner of *Tabula Tertia* we find inscribed: “Por el Br. Casim”, and in the lower left of *Tabula* “de los Santos.” All *Tabulae* were engraved from copperplates (Figs. 33-36). The fineness of his engraving of an altar table replete with *rocalla*-styled *ramilletes* (flower-like ornaments) in the first plate has been commented on by Spanish art historians,<sup>44</sup> who compare it with

<sup>42</sup> Imelda Cajipe Endaya, et al, *Filipino Engraving. 17th to 19th Century* (Manila: Ylang-Ylang Graphic Group, 1980). The print shown is a restrike made by Cajipe Endaya from the copperplate in the UST Museum.

<sup>43</sup> Gregorio Galindo, *Sagradas Rúbricas del Misal Romano, y Práctica General de Celebrar el Tremendo Sacrificio de la Misa* (Sampaloc [Manila]: Imprenta del Convento de N.S. de Loreto por Fr. Pedro Argüelles de la Concepción, 1798).

<sup>44</sup> For example, María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo Spínola, “Grabadores filipinos del siglo XVIII,” separata from *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 19, (1962), 277–306; and Pedro Vindel, *Biblioteca Oriental*, I (Madrid: P. Vindel Librero-Anticuário, 1911).



the 1759 Madrid edition which was rougher in execution.<sup>45</sup> This earlier edition, as well as others printed in the rest of the eighteenth century, used wood-block for printing, hence its appearance (Fig. 37). In contrast to these editions that used the same block-print throughout, de los Santos' edition carried four, meaning he had to visualize the three other plates.

Copperplate engravings by Casimiro de los Santos in *Sagradas Rúbricas*, Sampaloc, 1789. Courtesy of the University of Santo Tomas Antonio Vivencio del Rosario Heritage Library.



Fig. 33. Tabula Prima



Fig. 34. Tabula Secunda



Fig. 35. Tabula Tertia



Fig. 36. Tabula Quarta



Fig. 37. Woodblock print, basis of de los Santos' Tabula Prima, in the *Sagradas Rubricas* edition of Zaragoza, 1739. Courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional de España

<sup>45</sup> Actually, the wood-block used in the 1759 Madrid edition was originally used in what seems to be the first edition, printed in 1739 in Zaragoza. This wood-block was used in subsequent editions printed in Madrid (1764, 1779, 1784, and 1789), and Barcelona (1768). The Mexican edition (1778) carried a similar print, also from a wood-block. Access to these editions was possible through the website of the Biblioteca Nacional de España, <http://www.bne.es/>.

We shall recap our findings on Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos at the end of this article.

*Ciborium of Diego Eugenio Gutierrez, 1799*

A rare object that was formerly owned by a secular priest, bearing his name, is kept in a private collection. The silver *copón* or ciborium, a chalice-like vessel for keeping the eucharistic hosts, is inscribed on its underside: *B[achille]r D[o]n Diego Eug[eni]o Gutierrez Año d[e] 1799* (Figs. 38, 39). From the notes of Luciano P. R. Santiago, taken mostly from the Archdiocesan Archives of Manila, we learn that Padre Gutierrez was born in 1741 of parents from Hagonoy, Bulacan. He was one of the ordinees of Archbishop Sancho between 1768 and 1772 at the latest. In the latter year he was parish priest of Tarlac, Tarlac, where he served for at least five decades. By his fiftieth year, 1812, he had also moved the church to a higher site and built it of lime and stone.<sup>46</sup> Thus the ciborium was one of the precious liturgical vessels of the town, now city, of Tarlac. This artifact with its intricately wrought rococo motifs contradicts the popular idea that the secular priests were poor and pitiful.

On an art-historical note—since dated objects of precious metals are extraordinarily difficult to come by—there is a silver tabernacle ensemble in Vigan Cathedral, Ilocos Sur with rococo elements similar to the above ciborium dated 1790 through archival sources.<sup>47</sup> A ciborium of similar workmanship as that of the *copón* presented above is also displayed in the ecclesiastical museum adjacent to the cathedral.<sup>48</sup> In fact, an extraordinary number of chalices, altar frontals, candlestands, and other ecclesiastical vessels of silver worked with profuse rococo elements are found throughout the Ilocos area. Due to similarities in style of these pieces, it is quite possible that itinerant silversmiths were employed in northwestern Luzon during the last decade or so of the eighteenth century. A chalice of partial Philippine craftsmanship with rococo motifs, but by a different school, bears the date 1787 which reinforces the dating of this style in the country. It was meant for the parish of Mairena del Alcor in Seville, but was crafted in Acapulco, Mexico and re-worked or repaired in Manila.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> José, “Bubbles and tongues of fire,” 131; Coronel, 93.

<sup>47</sup> Regalado Trota José, “Is there folk knowledge that is neither folk nor knowledge? Jottings on the Ecclesiastical Museum in Vigan.” In Ino Manalo, ed. *Conscripción: Imagining and Inscribing the Ilocano World*. (Manila: National Archives of the Philippines in partnership with The Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur, 2014), 50. The elaborate ensemble is still mounted for the Holy Thursday service.

<sup>48</sup> Rene B. Javellana, S.J., “The Church and the development of the arts in colonial Philippines.” In Nicanor G. Tiongson, ed., *Igkas-Arte. The Philippine Arts During the Spanish Period* (Manila: Sentrong Pangkultura ng Pilipinas and Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, 1998), 39.

<sup>49</sup> María Jesús Sáenz Serrano, “187. Cáliz.” In Alfredo J. Morales, ed., *Filipinas Puerta de Oriente. De Legazpi a Malaspina*. (n.p.: SEACEX and Lunwerg Editores, 2003), 304-305. The *copón* de Tarlac mentioned in this entry is the one presented in this article.



Fig. 38. Ciborium,  
1799. Courtesy of  
PAGREL Collection



Fig. 39. Underside of the  
ciborium, engraved with the  
date and owner's name

*Rococo drawings in the church books of Santa Cruz de Malabon, 1800-1804*

The last flowering of rococo ornament was in the first years of the nineteenth century, long after the conscious move away from the baroque and the rococo in favor of a return to classical forms in Europe and America. Already in 1773, a decree issued by King Charles III had instituted the adoption of classical architecture as promoted by the Royal Academy.<sup>50</sup> A striking documentary witness to this “sunset” is the second baptismal book of the parish of Santa Cruz de Malabon already presented above (the first book has been lost, so it is not possible to know if the *rocalla* were already present there).<sup>51</sup> The second book begins on June 1800, and its frontispiece and the years from 1801 to 1804 are framed and festooned in *rocalla*. All the months of 1802 are framed in *rocalla* (Figs. 40-47). After February 1804 the decorations become more loose and fluid, but the month of September is abruptly framed in a double circle with nary a flourish: the *rocalla* had totally vanished (Fig. 48). We do not know if the decorations were all done by the same scribe or artist, or if there was a change in artist in September, or if the parish priest himself, Padre Manas, had directed the change of style.

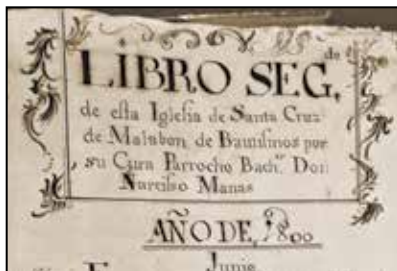


Fig. 40. Upper section  
of Second Book of  
Baptisms, June 1800

<sup>50</sup> Luengo, “Philippine style,” 369.

<sup>51</sup> Archives of the Parish of Santa Cruz, Tanza, Cavite: Book of Baptisms, II.





Fig. 41. 1801, September



Fig. 42. 1802, January



Fig. 43. 1802, July



Fig. 44. 1803, January



Fig. 45. 1803, October



Fig. 46. 1804, January



Fig. 47. 1804, August



Fig. 48. 1804, September

### *Recapping the career of Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos, a priest-artist*

We are able to partially piece together a biography of Bachiller Casimiro de los Santos, thanks through that of his brother, Francisco Borja de los Santos. Francisco Borja was born in 1754 in Santa Cruz, Manila. His father was Julian de los

Santos, who was described as one of the more noteworthy *capitanes* or officials of the time. Francisco entered the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in 1768, just like his father before him, and his brothers Mariano, Manuel, and Casimiro after him (considering that his father and brother were all surnamed de los Santos, he must have been named after the Jesuit saint, and therefore should not be listed under “Borja”). Francisco continued his education at the University of Santo Tomás, obtaining a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and after that, pursuing a licentiate. He entered history books when he put up a protracted written protest against those who opposed the granting of such a degree, on the grounds of his not being a Spaniard. However, the professors of his alma mater backed him up in 1776, and even conferred a further degree of “master of arts” in 1777. Francisco took the Dominican habit a month after his conferment, was ordained a priest in 1780, and served the Order as an exemplary missionary in Cagayan until his death there in 1807. His brother Mariano was also ordained a priest and became the parish priest of Quiapo and later San Mateo.<sup>52</sup>

After basic schooling at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Casimiro finished his bachelor’s degree in Philosophy in 1774,<sup>53</sup> four years after Francisco. We may therefore assume that Casimiro was born around 1758, and that he was about 28 years old in 1786 when he was chosen by the *gremios* of Binondo, Santa Cruz, and Tondo to be their representative in the stillborn project of the Santa Rosa de Lima convent. (His confidence in such a task may have been inspired by his brother Francisco Borja’s earlier victory over the racists.) Casimiro’s being born in Santa Cruz was greatly influential in his exposure to art: by the eighteenth century, the district (under the spiritual charge of the Jesuits) was a major hub of artists whose work in precious metals, ivory, wood, textile, paper and paint provisioned churches all over the country.<sup>54</sup> As seen above, Padre Casimiro was a point person for the commissioning of certain silver objects for the church of San Luis in 1789.<sup>55</sup> Other

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<sup>52</sup> Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *Historia documentada del real colegio de San Juan de Letrán* (Manila: Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1933), 229. Alberto Santamaría, O.P.: *Estudios históricos de la Universidad de Santo Tomás* (Manila: Tip. Pont. de la Univ. de Sto. Tomás, 1938), 43-51. *University of Santo Tomás Alumni Directory 1611-1971*. Hilario Ocio, O.P., and Eladio Neira, O.P., *Misioneros Dominicanos en el Extremo Oriente, 1587–1835* (Manila: Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas, 2000), 527-528. Fidel Villarroel, O.P., *A History of the University of Santo Tomás (1611-2011)*, 2 vols. (Manila: University of Santo Tomás Publishing House, 2012), I, 227-233.

<sup>53</sup> *University of Santo Tomás Alumni Directory 1611-1971*.

<sup>54</sup> One institution in Santa Cruz, the Jesuit Colegio de San Ildefonso, was a center for the procurement and distribution of works of art and architectural expertise for their missions. See Pedro Luengo Gutiérrez, “Noticias sobre el Colegio de San Ildefonso de Manila y el desarrollo de las artes en Filipinas durante el siglo XVIII,” *Artigrama* 25 (2010), 641-644.

<sup>55</sup> “Recivi de D.a Agustina Ygnio [Ygnacio?] 150 pesos que me embió el B.r D. Gaspar Macalinao, que con otros 100 pesos, que antecedamente me remitió por manos del Pe Mariano Josep de que tengo recibo embiado, componen las dos partidas 250 pesos para los ciriales y cruz que manda hazer. Y para que conste firmé este en 9 de Julio de 1789. Casimiro de los Santos.” Loose receipt in the Libro

purchases from Santa Cruz for San Luis during those years were an image of the Santo Sepulcro and another of the Nuestra Señora de los Dolores with its vestments (1786), and a sanctuary lamp by the silversmith Paulino Gabriel (1801).<sup>56</sup>

In his bequest of church furnishings for the Santa Rosa convent signed in Santa Cruz on 28 July 1788, Padre Casimiro mentioned that he was master of ceremonies of the cathedral and *notario mayor* of the Royal and Apostolic Tribunal of the Holy Crusade.<sup>57</sup> These crucial positions enriched his artistic contacts as well as his practical experience. Thus we find him with the *Last Supper* of 1789, clarifying that it was he who conceptualized, not only drew, the composition. This, plus the controlled delineation of the *rocalla* appear to be almost self-conscious manifestations of his university education. (The original copper plate is in the collection of the UST Press artifacts, housed in the UST Museum.) He drew on his experiences as master of ceremonies of the Manila cathedral to provide additional instructional plates for the 1798 Manila edition of Galindo's *Sagradas Rúbricas*. By that time, he had relinquished his position to Doctor Don Josef Valentín Araya, who dedicated the reprinting to Don Francisco Díaz de Durana, vicar general of the archdiocese of Manila (who, way back in 1786, procured a set of three *sacras* or altar cards for San Luis).<sup>58</sup>

Thus far our sketch of Bachiller Don Casimiro de los Santos, born about 1758 and active till at least 1798. Hopefully other data about this artistic priest and his colleagues will be found, to give a better picture of his milieu.

## Conclusion

Having turned up examples of secular-built architecture, it behooves us to refrain from describing them as “works of the friars.” Studies will have to be made on such themes as the dynamics in the construction of such edifices, their effect on structures in the region, the relationships between the secular priests and their brothers the regulars.<sup>59</sup> How did the Augustinians view San Luis Gonzaga, which was so different from their churches? What led to the demolition of the Parian church in Cebu? Why is the church in Samboan so similar to that of its Augustinian counterparts

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de Cargo y Data of the Parish of San Luis Gonzaga, Pampanga. Archdiocese of San Fernando Museum and Archives, San Fernando, Pampanga.

<sup>56</sup> José, “San Luis,” 2014, 85-86.

<sup>57</sup> Also mentioned in Bazaco, 229.

<sup>58</sup> José, “San Luis,” 2014, 85.

<sup>59</sup> Another theme would be the choices of the indigenous clergy in the trees, flowers, and other vegetation in their church compounds, as suggested by Pedro Luengo in “Árboles prehispánicos para atrios novohispanos,” in Rafael López Guzmán, Yolanda Guasch Marí, and Guadalupe Romero Sánchez, eds., *América: Cultural Visual y Relaciones Artísticas* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2015), 67-74.

on the opposite shore of Cebu? How much remains of the Jesuit construction of San Pedro Makati, and what were the interventions of the diocesan clergy?

In the nineteenth century, many more churches were built in areas under diocesan administration. Some of these were rehabilitated when parishes were turned over to the religious orders. The cycle of material changes continued. The convento built by Modesto de Castro in Naic, for example was torn down by the succeeding Dominicans. But the old stairway was unearthed, and has been restored. Divining the *transitus Domini*, the passage of the Lord, therefore becomes more complex. How much can we renovate or build over, how much can we retain? We have to cultivate a sensitivity to what the structures and objects are telling us, or have yet to tell us. Deeper studies, in the forensic manner, are needed. Texts have to be preserved and made accessible so as to be subject to exegesis, much like for scripture. Woe to us if the “trolls”<sup>60</sup> of history and faith might cause us to ignore, impede, dilute, deface or even obliterate our authentic Christian birthright. Letting the church stand tall and clean in our plazas and in our hearts, we can join others in their encounter with the passage of the Lord in our time. **PS**

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<sup>60</sup> A contemporary term for persons who post defamatory, inflammatory or false matter online. Many are on the payroll of unscrupulous entities.

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Fig. 49



Fig. 50



Fig. 51

Seals of St. Peter on the façades of (left to right) San Luis Gonzaga, Pampanga; San Pedro Makati, Metro Manila; and Indan (now Vinzons), Camarines Norte.