

Editor's Note

This second special issue of *Philippiniana Sacra* devoted to the history of the Catholic Church in the archipelago comes with eight insightful scholarly articles and two important textual recoveries.

Art historian Pedro Luengo, from Universidad de Sevilla, addresses the creation of altarpieces in the Philippines during early modernity, highlighting the agency of local woodcarving traditions and the reinterpretation of Western forms in Philippine soil. Apart from providing approximate dates for their creation, Luengo's article includes a rich set of images of a heritage that "is still alive in the archipelago, giving continuity to their religious meaning begun by the first Catholic missionaries five centuries ago."

Eberhard Crailsheim, from CSIC (Madrid), demonstrates that, in many instances, missionaries did not carry out only religious works, but they also played an important role as cultural intermediators. Crailsheim's article shows the geopolitics of the Jesuits in Mindanao and Sulu, their important role as negotiators, and how in many episodes their own proselitizing interest did not necessarily align with those of the Spanish colonial government.

One of the most outstanding contributions of the Church to the Philippines was the printing press. Carla Gamalinda's article tackles with the history of the book in the Philippines, but choosing an original and necessary perspective. By analyzing the floritures, capital letters, and printed decorations in a wide array of old imprints, she has been able to discover patterns that facilitate the identification of the printing press. The images included are, again, of upmost interest.

Ana Ruiz Gutiérrez's contribution attempts to provide a biographical sketch of a bishop that has been harshly criticized for his role during the English siege in both Spanish and Philippine historiography: Manuel Antonio Rojo del Río Lafuente y Vieyra (1708-1764). Ruiz Gutiérrez's piece challenges those prevailing views about Father Rojo highlighting, among other things, "his decisive participation in the promotion of arts in the Philippines."

The impact of the Real Pragmática (1776) on the marriages in the Philippines is the topic of the article by Marya Svetlana T. Camacho. Making extensive use of archival documents to exemplify with many historical cases, Camacho shows how this legal instrument challenged the freedom of marriage defended by the Church while giving, at the same time, "legal support to the value given to respect for parental authority in native Filipino society."

José Ángel del Barrio uncovers the activities of Fr. Francisco Muiños, a Dominican friar who, after spending nineteen years of missionary work in the Philippines, was caught in the Hospicio de San Jacinto (Mexico) during the revolution. Thanks to his letters, the Dominican friars of the Philippines were able to know the development of the war that would separate the Philippines politically from Mexico. Del Barrio's research convincingly suggests that the anticlerical tone of the Mexican revolution, as retold by Fr. Muiños, might be behind the strong antiliberal position of the Dominican friars in Manila at the beginning of 19th Century.

The Province of the Holy Rosary also made engineering contributions to the Philippines. This is the topic of the article authored by Edgar Sembrano, who attempts to trace the history of the Campana Dam in Calamba, Laguna, making use of archival documents from the Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomás (AUST). Sembrano argues that "the construction and subsequent renovation of the Campana Dam is an enduring non-religious legacy of the Order of Preachers not only in Laguna but in the country as a whole." Parishes in the provinces still hold a substantial amount of archival documentation that is rarely consulted.

Dave J. Kendall's research in the parishes of Cebu, Bohol, Negros, and Siquijor provides countless information regarding the impact of pandemics and natural calamities in those communities, while reminding the "commitment and dedication of those who faithfully tended the parish, from parish priests fulfilling their calling and avocation, to the too often unnamed and unacknowledged secretaries, musicians, sacristans, laundresses, workmen, porters, and servants who likewise dedicated their lives, talents, and labor to the work, maintenance, and beautification of their community's spiritual home." Kendall's contribution provides another view towards life in and around parishes from the second half of 19th until the American period.

The volume ends, as usual, with two relevant textual recoveries. Regalado Trota José presents with unbeatable erudition a true gem from the Archivo de la Universidad de Santo Tomas (AUST): the last will and testament of Miguel Dipasouay, a Tagalog gentleman from Biñán, Laguna, dated in 1654, and signed in baybayin. For my part, I present an annotated edition with a brief introduction of an account of Dominican martyrdoms in Japan: *Relacion verdadera y breve del excelente martirio que once religiosos de la sagrada Orden de Predicadores padecieron por Cristo nuestro Señor, en el imperio de Japon los años de 1618 y 1622* (Madrid, 1624), from the only known copy at the New York Public Library.

The life of the parishioners in the Bisayas, the vicissitudes of a Dominican friar during the Mexican revolution, the construction of dams, the syncretic nature of Philippine altarpieces, the intricacies of Philippine typography, the impact of legal decrees in social life, the life of a neglected bishop or the adventures of the Jesuits in the southern frontier are the topics included in this volume. The diversity of themes and perspectives addressed in this volume, as in the first one (January), does not only testify the endless possibilities of this fascinating research area but the importance of Church History in the Philippines, which cannot be stressed enough. **PS**

Jorge Mojarro
Guest Editor