

Ayala MUSEUM



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Transpacific Engagements: Visual Culture of Global Exchange (1781–1869)

Symposium

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SPEAKERS

Jens Baumgarten

Professor, Department of Art History, Federal University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

Abstract

Circulation of Philippine and Brazilian Colonial Art: An Approach for a Comparative Analysis

Colonial Brazil and the Philippines unite the Pacific and Atlantic systems through their relationship to the Iberian Peninsula and share cultural structural conditions derived from the Iberian tradition. The analysis of processes of complex encounters is aided by a transcultural approach and the discourse on sensual experience and emotional perception. In its approach to the Iberian World, this paper focuses on the relationship between Brazil and the Philippines. It explores bodily perceptions, especially the olfactory and kinesthetic senses, and their impact on the emotions of the individual in a colonial context. Giving greater consideration to “embodiments,” this paper seeks to identify a new relationship between the body, its perceptual apparatus, and cultural practice. Colonialism was profoundly “material” as different centers connected to one another via a continuous exchange that encompassed a variety of objects. In particular, the analysis of the circulation of sculptures and their functions in Brazil and in the Philippines sheds light on this transpacific exchange. The understanding of complex relations of baroque and neo-baroque encounters challenges the discipline of art history to consider non-Western regimes of perception.

Bio

Jens Baumgarten studied Art History and History in Hamburg and Florence. After post-doctorate fellowships in Dresden, Germany, Mexico-City, and Campinas, Brazil he became Professor of Art History at the History Department of the Federal University of São Paulo (Universidade Federal de São Paulo), where he later established one of the first autonomous departments of Art History in Brazil. In 2010 he was visiting scholar at the Getty Research Institute. He is research fellow of the Brazilian National Council for Research (CNPq) and secretary of the Brazilian Committee of Art History (CBHA). Professor Baumgarten specializes in early modern art history of Latin America and Europe as well as in historiography of art, visual culture, and their theoretical and methodological contexts. He is the author of *Image, Confession, and Power* (in German, 2004), several articles, and is preparing book manuscripts titled *Visual Systems in Colonial Brazil* and *São Paulo as a Neo-Baroque City*.

Esperanza Bunag Gatbonton
Independent Scholar, Philippines

Abstract

Foreign Influences in the Philippine Context: Transcending Cultural Differences in Imaging the Catholic Faith

Religious art in the Philippines sprang from the evangelization of the archipelago in the mid-sixteenth century. Fleshing out the hierarchy of saints and housing them in appropriate altars stretched the imagination of the early artisans who were totally unfamiliar with the requirements of the new art form. There was a paucity of models to copy. Right from the beginning, a problematic scenario formed: how to carve these images that were so totally alien to them? The clothes worn were so unfamiliar, the gestures meaningless. Isolated from the original sources, the Filipino and Chinese carvers were able to develop their own styles. However, the transpacific galleon trade and the Southeast Asian maritime trade opened up vistas for the local artisans and carvers to participate in the cultural exchanges. They drew from their own experiences augmenting them with outside stimuli that gave unique traits to their artistic outputs. Liberal ideas and economic changes that crept into the archipelago allowed for growth and the rise of a small indio/mestizo entrepreneurial class to emerge. The opening of the Suez Canal brought in newer trends and bolder ideas. The creation by Royal Decree of the *Escuela Práctica Profesional de Artes y Oficios* in 1889 would be responsible for introducing purely European models.

Bio

Esperanza Bunag Gatbonton holds a doctoral degree in Philippine Studies from the University of the Philippines. She is an advocate of cultural heritage conservation and has worked on the management of cultural heritage sites. She was the Philippine representative to the Governing Board of SPAFA (Southeast Asian Projects in Archaeology and the Fine Arts) from 1986 to 1989. For her advocacy, she was conferred the *PAMA-AS GINTONG BAI* award in 2005 in recognition of her lifetime dedication to cultural conservation. She has taught at the University of the Philippines and at Graduate School of Conservation at the University of Santo Tomas. She continues to write on various aspects of Philippine culture and history.

Florina H. Capistrano-Baker

Scholar, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Consulting Curator, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Consultant, Ayala Museum, Makati City, Philippines

Abstract

Inscribing Identities: Export Watercolors and the Manila-Massachusetts Trade

American merchant houses in Manila generated extraordinary wealth along with sophisticated tastes for imported luxury goods in the late eighteenth to nineteenth centuries when Asian trade with the Early American Republic (notably the economically ascendant New England cities of Salem and Boston) overlapped with, and subsequently superseded the Spanish-controlled Manila Galleon Trade. Among the least studied objects from this period are export watercolors depicting local scenes that are now in various local and overseas collections. Of particular interest are two related art forms—namely, export watercolors depicting local inhabitants, costumes and occupations (*tipos del pais*) and paintings of merchants' names spelled with figured letters (*letras y figuras*)—whose formal genealogies, mutations, and translations will be explored as they circulate through time and geography. Referencing published and archival sources including business and personal correspondence, this paper examines in particular the politics of constructing identities through commissioned trophies of trade, arguing that evocative imagery portraying business houses, occupations, and social classes was selectively configured to renegotiate and inscribe newly manufactured identities in a deliberate strategy of self-fashioning.

Bio

Florina H. Capistrano-Baker received the Ph.D., M.Phil., and M.A. from the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. Recently a Getty Research Institute Scholar, she has held fellowships from the American Association of University Women, Asian Cultural Council, Ford Foundation, Columbia University, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where as research assistant for Oceania she wrote *Art of Island Southeast Asia: The Fred and Rita Richman Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (1994). Her recent publications include *Philippine Ancestral Gold* (2011) and a forthcoming essay “Beyond Hemp: The Manila-Salem Trade (1796–1858)” in *Global Trade and Visual Arts in Federal New England* (2014). She has taught art history at Skidmore College, Bard Graduate Center, Northwestern University, and University of Illinois at Chicago. Currently consulting curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Dr. Baker was formerly director of Ayala Museum and continues to serve as project consultant and consulting curator.

Patrick D. Flores

Guest Scholar, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Professor, Department of Art Studies, University of the Philippines; Curator, Vargas Museum, Manila, Philippines

Abstract*Miniaturismo and the Aesthetic of the Figurine*

The paper tries to conceptualize the theme of exchange through a theory of *miniaturismo*, a category of style and facture in Philippine colonial art history that privileges the depiction of the diminutive details of things, specifically textile, jewelry, and furniture as well as the vignette. This will be studied through a range of forms, from maps to portraits and representations of everyday life and historical events. Through the practice and discourse of *miniaturismo*, it reflects on the processes of the “transfer” and “worlding” of these things that moved between Europe and Asia. At the same time, this paper keenly probes the production of object, its particular rendering, its circulation in the social and pictorial world, the disposition of the artisanal and artistic talent, and the aesthetic of appearance in terms of scale and intricacy. The works of Antonio Malantic and Simon Flores are foregrounded to demonstrate these concerns and to further participate in the conversation on the theory of ornament, possession, and the Philippine figurine. It finally seeks to inflect the art historical with the aesthetic, and so crossing the gaps between disciplines in the study of art in the postcolony.

Bio

Patrick D. Flores is Professor of Art Studies at the Department of Art Studies of the University of the Philippines, which he chaired from 1997 to 2003, and Curator of the Vargas Museum in Manila. He is Adjunct Curator at the National Art Gallery, Singapore. He was a Visiting Fellow at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. in 1999 and an Asian Public Intellectuals Fellow in 2004. Among his publications are *Painting History: Revisions in Philippine Colonial Art* (1999) and *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia* (2008). He was a grantee of the Asian Cultural Council (2010) and was a member of the Guggenheim Museum’s Asian Art Council (2011). He co-edited the Southeast Asian issue for *Third Text* (2011). He convened in 2013 on behalf of the Clark Institute and the University of the Philippines the conference “Histories of Art History in Southeast Asia” in Manila.

Caroline Frank

Visiting Assistant Professor, American Studies, Brown University, Providence, USA

Abstract*Federal New England Imperial Aesthetics: The Asian-Pacific as American Classical Antiquity*

The federal-era United States, led by New England mariners, forged the greatest critical mass of transoceanic seafarers the Pacific had ever known. In the wake of independence, Yankee merchants and whalers sailed into every corner of the Pacific, and shiploads of Asian-Pacific goods returned with them, comprising in Massachusetts port towns up to one-fifth of household effects. Such trade goods informed a new aesthetic, engaged with notions of both republican simplicity and an emerging ideology of U.S. mastery in the Pacific. As art historian Christin Mamiya tells us, “Decorating a home involved the management of social signifiers” (2007). Art historians have traditionally interpreted federal era neoclassicism as an American affinity for simple patrician virtue. But the Romans were also well known for their imperial victories. New Englanders carried their admiration of imperial prowess into the Pacific region, seamlessly blending Roman and Greek neoclassicism with a new imperial sensibility built on Asia-Pacific aesthetics in their homes, dress, and decorative styles. This paper draws on examples from Rhode Island, and merchant Edward Carrington’s house in particular.

Bio

Caroline Frank teaches early American visual and material cultural studies at Brown University. She co-directs two projects: the “Asia-Pacific in the Making of the Americas” global history symposia and the “Greene Farm Archaeology Project” in Warwick, Rhode Island. Her recent publications include *Objectifying China, Imagining America: Chinese Commodities in Early America* (University of Chicago Press, 2011) and, as coauthor, *Global Trade and Visual Arts in Federal New England* and “Excavating the Quiet History of a Providence Plantation” (*Historical Archaeology* 47:2[2013]). Frank also teaches American history and material culture at the Rhode Island School of Design. She received a Ph.D. in American Studies from Brown University, and an M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Chicago.

Marco Musillo

Scholar, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Research Associate in Chinese Art at the Museo delle Culture, Lugano, Switzerland

Abstract

Art to Look Beyond: The Qing Patronage of European Painters and its Modern Commercial Simulacra

This paper compares two streams of painting productions that traversed China between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century: the Qing patronage of European artists and the Cantonese market of European-style painting for export. At present, the dialogues surfacing from such intertwined histories have not received enough scholarly attention, especially in regards to transcultural engagements from an East-Asian perspective. In particular, Dr. Musillo will discuss two spectacular contexts: on one side, the artistic adaptation of Italian painters such as Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766)—known in Chinese as Langshining—receiving commissions by the mid-Qing Emperors; on the other, the work of Chinese painters such as Spolium (active between 1785 and 1810) and Lamqua (Guan Qiaochang, active between 1830-1850) producing pictures for the European market. The exploration and comparison of the two frameworks will reveal interesting points of connection, and will remarkably disclose how artistic adaptations became at once vehicles of Chinese interregional exchanges, and markers of global encounters.

Bio

Marco Musillo is Research Associate in Chinese Art and Culture at the Museo delle Culture, Lugano, Switzerland. He specializes in early modern European and Chinese painting, artistic literature, and cross-cultural dialogues within the Pacific region. Recent publications include: "American Entertainment and Display: Qing Empress Cixi in the St. Louis Exposition," in F. Dal Lago (ed.) *China on Display* (Leiden 2014); and "Mid-Qing Arts and Jesuit Visions: Visual Encounters and Exchanges in 18th-Century Beijing," in Susan Delson (ed.) *Ai Weiwei: Circle of Animals* (New York 2011). He is the author of the forthcoming *The Shining Inheritance: Italian Artists at the Qing Court, 1700–1800* (2014), and his current project explores new art historical perspectives in early modern Pacific trades between East Asia and the Americas.

Sean Nelson

Predocctoral Fellow, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Florence, Italy;
PhD candidate, Department of Art History, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA

Abstract*The Merrie Monarch, King Kalākaua, in Meiji Japan*

In 1881 the monarch of Hawai'i, King Kalākaua set out on an around the world trip, a diplomatic mission to drum up alliances and support for his fledgling kingdom. After leaving from San Francisco, his initial stop was Japan, the earliest visit by a foreign monarch ever to the Emperor Meiji in Tokyo. King Kalākaua sailed first to Japan to approach the emperor about forming a "Pan-Asian Alliance" mainly to protect the islands against encroaching Western powers like the United States. The King of Hawai'i also intended to address the matter in China, Siam, India, and Persia. In Tokyo, Kalākaua was received in the fashion of the most important rulers of the world, events that are documented by both the king, his retinue, and in a set of objects exchanged between the two rulers, including lacquer and porcelain. In the company of the emperor, King Kalākaua visited cloth factories and painting studios, attended ceremonies at Buddhist temples and traditional theater. Called the "Merrie Monarch," Kalākaua was a man well-known for his love of the arts and took great pleasure in these new visual forms. Instead the Emperor Meiji witnessed an altogether unknown type of ruler. The king spoke English like an Englishman, but wore a red and yellow feather cape over his western-style military uniform. Though the alliance never came to fruition, King Kalākaua's visit marked a crucial turning point in Japanese interaction with the Hawaiian islands. This paper will explore King Kalākaua's time in Japan focusing on his experience of Japanese visual culture during the Meiji Restoration. Addressing the mix of native Hawaiian and colonial perceptions present in documentation of the events, it will address the manner in which the arts formed a common bond and a point of separation for the two island nations.

Bio

Sean Nelson is a PhD candidate in the Art History Department at the University of Southern California. His research interests focus primarily on early modern Italy and its visual and cross-cultural exchange with the Ottoman Empire, the relationship between science/technology and artistic practice, as well as the role of the arts in fashioning concepts of nationhood. In 2012 he was a pre-doctoral fellow at the Max-Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin where he worked on intersections between artistic and alchemical practices in seventeenth-century Italy. Since then he has been a Max-Planck pre-doctoral fellow at the Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florenz, working on his dissertation project on Grand Ducal Florence. Raised on O'ahu, he has also had an extended interest in the Kingdom of Hawai'i and its place in the history of the Pacific.

Mei Qing

Guest Scholar, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Associate Professor of Architectural History and Architectural Conservation in the Department of Architecture at Tongji University, Shanghai, China

Abstract

“What Can We Dedicate to You”: *The Art of Exchange of China with the Philippines and Beyond*

When the bell sounded, ships began to sail to the South Seas. By the eighteenth century, missionaries and traders from Europe and craftsmen from South China, especially from Canton factories, had moved to the Philippines. Residing either in Canton or in Manila, these celebrated Chinese artisans, these celebrated Chinese artisans (e.g., goldsmiths, silversmiths, and glass makers) produced art and artifacts for export that were sent via Manila to the New World across the Pacific Ocean. Artists created new art styles to suit foreign tastes and incorporated new motifs that indexed the objects’ long-distance exchange. These motifs included notable landmarks along the maritime silk route, such as distant hills, bell towers of cathedrals and churches, temples and pagodas.

Professor Qing will explore issues related to the export of Chinese art during the late eighteenth century with a case study of the Pan family (Puankehua I–III). This Chinese family of craftsmen produced objects for foreign trade spanning the reigns of Qianlong (r. 1735–1796) and Daoguang (r. 1820–1850). Having developed close business relations with the Philippines, once one of the leading trade nations and the home of European and American art exchanges in colonial Asia, the Pan family returned to Canton (present-day Guangzhou), site of the Thirteen Hongs (areas of foreign settlement in the city where international trade was authorized), and became wealthy within the global exchange network established by the Qing court for imperial tribute during the reign of Emperor Qianlong, the first emperor to become enamored with European art.

Bio

Mei Qing is Associate Professor of Architectural History and Architectural Conservation in the Department of Architecture at Tongji University, Shanghai, China. She received her Ph.D. from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her academic interests focus on overseas Chinese architecture—particularly “Chinese” building types: temple, *huiguan*, and garden. These types were transmitted from South China to countries along the maritime silk road. Recent publications include her most recent book *Home in the Dream* (2012) and a paper *The Colors of Home* (2013). She has received Excellent Teaching Awards, Overseas Chinese Research Awards, China Post-Doctor Award, Pujiang Talents Award, George R. Collins Award from SAH, and GRI Connecting Art History Award 2013-2014. In recent years, Mei has taught architectural history, historic conservation and design studio in Tongji University, China. She has established close

connections with ARC (Alliance of Religion and Conservation), ICOMOS China, ICOMOS SBH, WHC UNESCO as well as universities, research organizations and institutes.

Meha Priyadarshini

Predoctoral Fellow, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; PhD candidate, Department of History, Columbia University, New York, USA

Abstract

From Junk to Galleon: Commercial Activity in Manila and the Making of the Transpacific Trade

Starting in the late sixteenth century, silver from the mines of colonial Latin America was brought to Manila, where Spanish merchants procured Asian commodities for eager consumers in the Americas. The trade, often referred to as the Manila Galleon Trade, continued for nearly 250 years and had a lasting impact on Asia and Latin America. This paper explores Manila's vital role in connecting producers of crafted goods in China to consumers in colonial Latin America. The central argument is that Manila was not a mere way station for the transpacific trade. The region's history prior to Spanish arrival was significant to the development of the trade, as were the daily activities and conditions of the port city once it was under Spanish control. The paper analyzes the various transactions and tasks that were required to get goods from Chinese junks arriving in Manila on to Spanish galleons that were heading to Acapulco.

Bio

Meha Priyadarshini is a doctoral candidate in the History Department at Columbia University. Her dissertation, "From the Chinese *Guan* to the Mexican *Chocolatero*: A Tactile History of the Trans-Pacific Trade, 1571–1815," follows a category of objects, Chinese porcelains, from the point of production in China to their eventual consumption in Mexico. It is a study of the global and local factors that were significant in the making of an early modern trade network. She has received numerous awards and grants to pursue her research, including a fellowship at the Getty Research Institute as part of the 2013–2014 theme *Connecting Seas: Cultural and Artistic Exchange*.

Vicente Rafael

Professor, Department of History, University of Washington, Seattle, USA

Abstract*Colonial Contractions: The Making of Las Islas Filipinas, 1565–1898*

How did the largely autonomous native villages spread across an archipelago on the easternmost edge of Asia and at the westernmost edge of the Pacific, become transformed into "las islas filipinas," the Spanish empire's most distant colony? Arguably the last gasp of the Reconquista, how did the colonization of the Philippines compare to that of Latin America and the archipelagos of the Caribbean and the Canaries? What sorts of radical transformations did the Spaniards introduce into native lives? And how did the realities, at once recalcitrant and pliable, of native lives alter the thrust of colonialism and conversion, contracting their reach even as native peoples contracted the virus of colonial rule? This paper will sketch the broad outlines of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines: its genesis, mutations, political collapse, and persistent legacies.

Bio

Vicente L. Rafael is Professor of History and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is the author of several works on the cultural and political history of the Philippines, including *Contracting Colonialism* (1988), *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (2000), *The Promise of the Foreign* (2005), and editor of volumes such as *Discrepant Histories* (1995) and *Figures of Criminality in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Colonial Vietnam* (1999). He is currently at work on a book on the politics of translation in the making of historical imaginations in the Philippines and the United States.

Ana Ruiz Gutiérrez

Professor, Departamento de Historia del Arte, Universidad de Granada, Granada, Spain

Abstract

Hispanic-Philippine Ivories: A Leading Subject in the Cultural Exchange of the “Nao de China”

The cultural transfer that occurred in the Philippine archipelago starting in the sixteenth century with the arrival of the Spaniards was not new in the region. People from Southeast Asia, such as the Chinese and Malays, had earlier arrived on the Philippine shores, providing Asian aesthetic criteria to the artistic manifestations of the islands. Between 1565 and 1815, the Manila Galleon’s seaway brought about the beginning of a series of exchanges between the Philippines and Spain. They did not only focus on food and equipment for the crew, but led to a huge market of art, traded where ships reached ports, such as Cavite, Acapulco, Cadiz, and Seville, as well as others that redistributed those objects, such as Callao in Peru. Significantly, the Manila Galleon created a parallel complementary land trade that brought those pieces to distant areas.

The importance of this art traffic lies not only in the cross-cultural exchange of indigenous Philippine art, but in the enrichment generated due to contact with aesthetic influences from regions such as China, Japan, Spain, and New Spain. This paper presents a comparative study of Hispanic-Philippine ivory sculpture, one of the most important artistic expressions of the “Nao de China,” through the analysis of Spanish, Mexican, and Philippine collections.

Bio

Ana Ruiz Gutiérrez is a professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Granada in Spain. Her doctoral thesis, *The Artistic Traffic between Spain and the Philippines. 1565–1815*, has allowed her to specialize in one of the largest processes of cultural exchange: the trade route of the Manila Galleon, which linked the Asian archipelago with Spain through Mexico. Her knowledge of Mexico as a cross-cultural space between Europe, America, and Asia, has served to deepen in this line of work, and she has continued her research on artistic exchanges between Spain and Mexico. Those research findings have been shared at international conferences and journals, highlighting three individual books: *Art Traffic between Spain and the Philippines: 1565–1815* (University of Granada, 2005), *Fray Alonso de Montúfar: Loja and the Formation of the Indian Church* (Foundation Obn al- Khatib, 2007), *North Philippines Indian Art: Ethnic Groups in the Luzón Mountain Range* (Editorial Atrium, 2012).

Sofía Sanabraís

Scholar, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Lecturer, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA

Abstract

“Manila...the marvel and pearl of the Orient:” The Philippine Asia Trade and its Impact on Spanish Colonial Artistic Production in Latin America

The earliest contacts between Japan and Mexico evolved from the Manila Galleon Trade. Manila, the center of intra-Asian trade networks, was a vital entrepôt for Spanish colonial commercial transactions. Japanese luxury goods, among them lacquer ware and folding screens were among the first documented objects exported to Mexico by way of Manila, described during colonial times as “the marvel and pearl of the Orient.” Looking at the production of folding screens and the use of mother-of-pearl in Mexican paintings and Peruvian decorative objects, this paper will examine how the trade with Asia impacted, transformed and enriched artistic production in colonial Latin America.

Bio

Sofía Sanabraís received her Ph.D. from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Dr. Sanabraís brings a global perspective to the visual culture of colonial Latin America by examining the exchange of material culture between the New World and Asia. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Getty Foundation. She was a contributing author to the Denver Art Museum’s 2009 publication, *Asia and Spanish America: Trans-Pacific Trade and Cultural Exchange, 1500–1850*. From 2006-2013, Dr. Sanabraís was the Assistant Curator of Latin American Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) where she worked on the exhibitions *The Arts in Latin America, 1492–1820* (2006) and *Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World* (2011). She is currently a Getty Scholar and a Lecturer of Art History at the University of Southern California.

Regalado Trota Jose

Archivist, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines

Abstract

Pages of Engagements in the Thomasian Outpost of Asia: Treasures of the University of Santo Tomas Archives and Library, Manila, 1781–1869

In 1785, the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in Manila was bestowed the title “Royal and Loyal” by the Spanish King. The university was granted this title in return for equipping a force to counter British encroachments in Philippine waters. In 1865, the Spanish throne mandated that the University oversee the implementation of a broad program of education in the country. These events, of great import not only for the University but for the region as well, are amply reflected in the collections amassed by the Dominican fathers and now housed in two repositories: the Archives and the Heritage Library. The UST was founded 1611 and is reputed to be the oldest in Asia. This paper will introduce the UST Archives and Library as important witnesses to the exchange of ideas—religious, political, philosophical, artistic, scientific, etc.—that swirled through the ancient University’s corridors. Though documents range from the 1500s to the present, emphasis will be placed on materials dating within the symposium’s timeframe.

Bio

Regalado Trota Jose has researched and written for more than 30 years on the cultural heritage of the church in the Philippines, especially during the Spanish colonial period. He is active with national and private heritage and history organizations. At present, he is the Archivist of the 400-year old University of Santo Tomas, Manila. His studies at the University of the Philippines (A.B. Anthropology, 1978; M.A. Philippine Studies, 1991) were augmented by extensive travels around the country and the world (both through research grants and as a member of the University of the Philippines Madrigal Singers). In 1999, Jose received the Cultural Center of the Philippines Centennial Award for the Arts for work in art history, as one of “100 outstanding Filipinos who have helped build the Filipino nation through art and culture during the last 100 years.”