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## ROLE OF CATHOLICISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

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### ABSTRACT:

This paper presents an exploratory study on the role of Catholicism in the development of libraries in the Philippines. The paper's aim is to provide perspective and background information in Philippine library history accounts reflecting Catholicism's involvement and contributions to the development, and influence to the present stature of libraries in the Philippines. These is presented into three parts: 1) the first collections and convent libraries, 2) Catholicism, education and libraries, and 3) religious collections and religious libraries.

**Keywords:** Catholicism; Philippines; library history; religion; libraries

## INTRODUCTION

### Philippine Library History

The study and writing of Philippine library history is described to be juvenile. The earliest essay written on this literature was published in 1928, "Libraries in the Philippines" in the *Library Journal*, by Eulogio Rodriguez, while the first book was published in 1974 entitled *The Libraries of the Philippines* written by Concordia Sanchez. An extensive study of the sources and chronology of events pertaining to the Philippine library history from the sixteenth to the end of the nineteenth century was made available in 1996 by Vicente Hernandez through the book entitled *History of Books and Libraries in the Philippines, 1521-1900*. In the introduction of book, Hernandez (1996) provided a review of the extent of existing literature written on Philippine library history. Based on this review, it can be concluded that not much, or relatively a few, books and articles have been written and published about the history and development of libraries in the Philippines (Hernandez, 1996; and Totanes, 2006),

particularly during the pre-colonial and Spanish colonial periods. This period prior to the 1900s was once called by Hernandez as the “dark age of library history in the Philippines.”

Furthermore, Olle (1971) mentioned that in an ideal sense, library history should not be studied on its own, but always in relation to the relevant social, educational, and publishing history – forming its background information. It is on this proposition that Hernandez (1996), have noted that the articles written on it lack enough background information and linkage. This information and linkage would further establish the contexts, and facilitates the understanding of particular events and accounts in the history and development of libraries in the Philippines. The scarcity of professional and scholarly literature on this led to the conceptualization of this paper.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This paper aims to provide perspective and background information based on the links of libraries and religion in the Philippines, particularly exploring the role of the religion brought by the colonizers, Catholicism, to the development of libraries in the country. It shall trace the Philippine library history accounts that reflect Catholicism’s involvement in the establishment and development of libraries in the country. At the same time, it shall identify and highlight the contributions and influences of Catholicism to the present stature of libraries in the Philippines.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative-descriptive research design was employed in this study. Historical documents and existing literature on the subject were examined. A thorough review of literature was provided, after which an analysis was made to put context in the targeted Philippine library history with reference to Catholicism.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In order to establish the framework for this paper, the relationship or connection of libraries and religion was reviewed and presented.

### **Libraries and Religion**

The link between ‘libraries and librarianship’ and ‘religion’ is one of the oldest and most important relationships in the history of library development.

In the early days, libraries, in the form of repositories for records, were often found in temples and were cared by priests or monks, and by educated slaves. The context and content of these earliest texts and records – that are religious in nature, and the motivations of efforts to keep, distribute, and promote these by religious authorities, were identified by Schneider (2009) as further evidences to this historical relationship. This relationship between libraries and religion has been discussed in literature in several different ways spanning from the history of the Western to the Oriental civilization of the world.

Peterson (2010) in an article has concluded that the great medieval monastic libraries and their scriptoria had their birth in the book-collecting activity necessary to support the monastic form of individual prayer life. The monk's daily work of copying texts, which evolved from the farm to the scriptorium, aided the monk in memorizing them for prayer. In this way, work and prayer were melded together in the monk's life. Later on, it became customary for monasteries to lend texts to other monasteries, giving birth to the inter-library loan. With these developments, the ancient wisdom was saved for its rebirth at the Renaissance – a truly significant contribution to the history of Western culture. There's no doubt that in a way or another, monastic libraries represented "the heart of Western learning for more than 1,000 years" (Harris, 1999).

On the other side of the world, based on the historical research done by Ranaweera & Ranasinghe (2013), it is evident that early libraries of Sri Lanka were started in the monasteries with the influence of Buddhism. Gathered literature showed that the literary activities and libraries were maintained in an excellent manner during the Anurādhapura period – the ancient citadel, and more or less, the heart and soul of the religious and cultural heritage of Sri Lanka. They have also noted that Buddhist monks and high-ranking officials were the main users of monastic libraries functioned in the period of Anurādhapura kingdom. This is a clear manifestation that religion is a catalyst to the development of libraries.

In the Catholic Church, libraries are traditionally viewed as key resources. In fact, in monasteries of the medieval times, the library was simply called an "armarium" – a closet where treasures of are stored like a spiritual and intellectual arsenal (Clausen, 2004). This position on libraries was further expounded in the March 19, 1994 religious letter of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church stating that:

*"...the mere existence of ecclesiastical libraries, of which many are of ancient foundation and of extraordinary cultural value, constitutes a decisive testimony to this irrevocable effort of the Church towards a spiritual heritage documented by a library tradition which she considers, at the same time, as both a good of her own and as a universal good placed at the service of human society."*

To give light to this position, a study by Chancellor (2012) examined the relationship of the early history of the profession with religion, and even more specifically, the Catholic Church. Through citing monastery libraries, the production of manuscripts and books, the design of classification system to organize resources by monks, and as well as the union catalog, she concluded that the Catholic Church played a pivotal role in the historical development of libraries and the library and information science profession. The findings of the study support the Catholic Church position that it has participated in a determinate way towards the molding of cultural institutions (such as the library), often with an innovative impulse and with long enduring results, - through direct or indirect influence with regards to the specific evolution of library institutions.

### **Catholicism in the Philippines**

Catholicism, being the most popular religion in the Philippines, became the springboard for the development of early libraries in the context of religion. Catholicism in the Philippines, based on historical facts, was interpreted in two extreme ways: 1) Catholicism was completely imposed on the natives through the use of superior military, political and cultural force, and 2) Catholicism rescued native society from pagan and uncivilized darkness (Francisco, 2000).

The history of the Catholic Church in the Philippines started with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in 1521. During the period of conquest, several religious orders arrived in the Philippines. First were the Augustinians, who came with Miguel Lopez de Legazpi's expedition to the Philippines and built the church of Saint Paul (would later be known as the San Agustin Church). The Franciscans were the next to enter the Philippines in 1578 and created the typical town design common today in the Philippines. The Jesuits came next, whose primary focus was the evangelization of the southern part of the Philippines, but was later expelled under the decree of Charles II in 1768. This led to a great loss, both in ministry work and education, until their return in 1859. The Dominicans were next to arrive with Domingo de Salazar, the first Archbishop of Manila, and built the University of Santo Tomas – the oldest standing Catholic university in Asia. The last religious order to arrive to the Philippines were the Augustinian Recollects.

The synod of Manila is one of the greatest achievements of the first bishop of Manila. It started in 1581 and ended in 1586. The problems discussed in the synod were mainly related to the legality of the Spanish conquest and the best means to bring the Filipinos to the knowledge of the Christian faith. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Philippines experienced progress. Filipinos were happy and full of energy, and optimism pervaded the land. But during the 19th century, the friars, who have defended the welfare of the people for centuries, started putting the interest of Spain above the interest of the Philippines (Gutierrez, 1999). They paid allegiance to Spain even if at times, they had differences in functionalities.

The situation of Catholicism in the Philippines changed during the period of American colonization. The Americans introduced the doctrine of separation of church and the state. They reorganized education and created the public school system. In spite of this, Catholicism adapted quickly to the new system. Francisco (2000) noted that the defeat of the Spaniards may have worked to the advantage of Catholicism in the Philippines. New religious orders established Catholic schools within the Commonwealth framework of government in the Philippines. The separation from politics enabled groups within Catholicism to engage in different social problems, especially the problem of land tenancy in the 1930s up to the 1950s. In 1945, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines was formed. Its purpose was to unify, coordinate and organize the Filipino Catholics in the works of education, social welfare, religious and spiritual aid under the direction of the Filipino bishops (Quitorio, 1996).

The history of Catholicism in the Philippines showed that the Catholic Church played a big role in the formation of the Philippines, as we know it today. And as Francisco (2000) pointed out, though the Catholic Church does not emerge from history unscathed, it is not surprising why it retains an overwhelming majority of the population.

### **Catholicism and the Development of Libraries in the Philippines**

Guided by the historical and socio-cultural pattern in the development of libraries, as well as the literature review that shows the evident link between religion and libraries, the role of Catholicism in the development of libraries in the Philippines is sought by this study. It presents and expounds on the direct and indirect contributions of Catholicism and group them into the three topics: 1) first collections and convent libraries, 2) Catholicism, education and libraries, and 3) religious collections and religious libraries.

#### **a. First Collections and Convent Libraries**

The study and writing of history of libraries in the Philippines is often linked with the country's political / colonial history. The accounts of most writers start with the "discovery" of the Philippines by the Spanish conquistadors in the 1520s. This is because there is uncertainty if there were libraries and/or library collections existing in the archipelago prior to the coming of the Spaniards. Although it is speculated that there could have been books in whatever form that might have existed in the Philippines during that period (Vallejo, 1993), the absence of records that would prove this hypothesis is a major setback among scholars. Vallejo attributed this lack to the destruction by the Spaniards of the materials of culture in the archipelago, including reading materials, associated with pagan worship of the natives.



It is believed that the first libraries in the Philippines were established by religious orders. It was described that these religious orders have brought with them their books and their library tradition, through their first private collections and convent libraries that are mostly concentrated to books relating to Christian religion and morality. One explanation for this is the royal law that forbids the shipping of non-Christian books to the Spanish colonies which was enforced in the Philippines. This further explains the slow proliferation of libraries in the Philippines during the early years of Spanish colonization.

Although the Spanish religious' efforts were concentrated on the spread of religious literature, Hernandez (1996) has noted that they contributed beyond this through the first library regulations, first printing press, and book trade. They have learned to use these knowledge for the benefit of their field of mission – evangelization.

Early libraries in the Philippines may have existed during these early years of Spanish colonization, but the first documented reference to the existence of a “library” in the island of the Philippine was in the letter to Philip II of Fr.DomingodeSalazar, the first Bishop of Manila, on June 18, 1583 complaining about the destruction of a “very good library” in the fire, which consumed his living quarters (Hernandez, 1996).

Here are the early libraries that were established in the Philippines by the different religious orders, and were documented. This is a summary of the research done by Hernandez in 1993:

#### Augustinian Libraries

Library of the Augustinian Convent of San Pablo in Intramuros (1607)

- 1,000 rare titles
- *Geographicae enarrationis: libro octo* by Prolemaei Alexandrini – oldest book in the library
- Fr. Agustin Maria de Catro - considered as the first known librarian in the Philippines and the greatest Augustinian bibliographer
- Fr. Policarpio Hernandez
- the library used to be located in the upper cloister facing Santa Pontencia St., above the sacristy

Library of the Parish of Bauan, Batangas (1596 – 1928)

- destroyed by fire

Library of the Augustinian Convent in Cebu City (1768)

- 2,000 good and rare books

Library of the Augustinian Orphanage of Malabon (until 1896)

- confiscated by the new Philippine Republic
- Library of the Escuela Normal Superior de Maestras
- the school was run by the Augustinian nuns of the Assumption from 1892 to 1898

### Franciscan Libraries

- Library of the Convent of Our Lady of Angels in Intramuros (1578 – 1946)
- 8000 books
  - Librarians: Fr. Cristobal Velda (1864); Fr. Cipriano Gonzalez (1890); Fr. Antonio de Vidales (1891 – 1892)
- Library of the Santa Ana Church

### Dominican Libraries

- Library of the Dominican College of Manila (1605 – 1611)
- received Archbishop Benavides' collection
  - absorbed in the University of Santo Tomas
- Library of the University of Santo Tomas (1611)
- 12,000 volumes of rare books
  - *La Guerra Judaica* by Pablos Josephus ca. 79 AD – oldest book in the library
  - part of the book collection that the Jesuits had before their expulsion from the Philippines in 1768 were transferred here
- Library of San Juan de Letran (1669)
- Library of the Convent of Santo Domingo in Intramuros (until 1941)

### Jesuit Libraries

- Library of the College of San Ignacio and College of San Jose (1583, 1601)
- the two colleges shared the same library
- Library of the College of San Felipe de Austria (1640 – 1644)
- Library of the Mission House in Palapag, Samar (1693)
- Library of the Ateneo Municipal and the Casa Misiones (1859 – 1932)
- destroyed by a fire

### Recollect Libraries

- Library of the Convent of San Nicolas in Intramuros (1608 – 1945)
- contained 7114 books
- Library of San Sebastian Church and Convent (1621)
- Recollect Library and Archives (1994)

- 12,000 volumes in holdings
- *Historia General de Philipinas* by Juan de la Concepcion 1788 – oldest book in the collection
- Librarians: Fr. Regino Bangcaya; Owen Maturan

### Daughters of Charity Libraries

Library of Santa Isabel College in Intramuros (1632 – Second World War)

Library of the La Concordia College (1868 – 1945)

It can be summed up that the Catholic religious orders have established these libraries for two purposes: 1) to support the needs of their order for intellectual development and repository of their records, and 2) to support the schools or learning institutions they have established. It also reflects that there was an established management of libraries and even designated librarians during the time specified, a first in the Philippine islands as mentioned in the records. These may not be the totality of all the libraries established by the religious orders, but these were the only few recorded. It is possible that there were other libraries established that were not available in the records. As further observed, most of these libraries along with its institutions were either destroyed by natural calamities (i.e. fire) or the war. Most of the surviving remnants of these libraries' early collections comprise the present-day rare books collections of a number of institutions in the Philippines. Since printing was introduced by the Catholic religious, some of these collections can be classified as Filipiniana rare books as they fall under the criteria "all books printed in the Philippines prior 1945" which also includes Philippine incunabula or books printed in the Philippines from 1593 to 1640 (Ubay, Perez, Moran & Siapno, 2013).

## **b. Catholicism, Education and Libraries**

Establishment of schools was not the priority of the missionaries who came to the Philippines but rather, found it as a means for evangelization. As early missionaries were also learned scholars, they found the need to educate (Fernandez, 1979). They have established learning institutions supported by libraries, which stirred up the creation of a national association of Catholic educational institutions in 1941 and much later contributed to the educational accreditation we presently know.

### *i. Catholicism and Education in the Philippines*

Early elementary education can be traced to the Augustinians. When they arrive in Cebu in 1565, they started schools that taught the Christian religion to the children of the *datus*. The Franciscans started what we know now as elementary

schools. They also taught Filipinos practical arts. The start of Jesuit education in the Philippines was pushed by Pedro Chirino in Iloilo in 1592. They taught students, who also used the school as residence, with the idea of turning them into catechists who will become evangelizers to the people in their own areas.

In 1581, Bishop Domingo de Salazar wrote to the King of Spain to express the need for a college to educate priests. The college was opened in 1596 and was named Colegio de Manila or Colegio de la Compania. This college was administered by Jesuit priests. By 1733, the institution was renamed University of San Ildefonso. The University of San Ignacio, from its very beginning, had a printing press. From it came out *Gramaticas* or Lexicos and the *Vocabularios* or Dictionaries, written by professors from the university, people of long experience in the Philippines. The Dominicans established Colegio de San Juan de Letran, one of the earliest well-known school in the Philippines, in 1620. This was important since not only did the school accepted orphans as students, their college also educated men who were employed in the civil service and ecclesiastical life in the Philippines.

An instruction was given to Gov. Gomez Perez Dasmarinas by Philip II in 1589 to establish a school for Spanish girls in the Philippines. This led to the creation of Colegio de Santa Potenciana in 1594. The college offered basic education to orphaned Spanish women. The Confraternity of Santa Mesa de la Miscordia erected a new college for women in 1632, named Santa Isabel. In 1862, these two colleges were fused together to form the College of Santa Isabel, which offered similar education as in Europe.

The Jesuits, insinuated by Capt. Gen. Don Fernando Norzagaray in 1895, took charge of a primary school of thirty boys. The institution was called “Escuela Pia” of Manila. The institution was elevated to a college of secondary teaching by Queen Isabel II of Spain in 1865 and was renamed Ateneo Municipal de Manila.

Catholic schools built during the Spanish colonization continued to function during the American period but were faced with a lot of difficulties. Public schools had better quality of education as compared to the catholic schools. The early 1900s also saw the arrival of new religious congregations in the Philippines. Their arrival paved way to the founding of more Catholic schools in the country. These religious congregations were the following: the ICM sisters (1910) who joined the CICM, the Holy Spirit Sisters (1912) who joined the SVDs, the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres (1904), the Benedictine Sisters (1906), the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (1912), and the Good Shepherd Sisters (1912). Schools established during this period were Assumption College, St. Scholastica College, and La Salle College by the Christian Brothers of New York and San Beda College by the Benedictines.

It can be summed up that Catholic education laid the foundations of education in the Philippines, which contributions span from the developments in sciences and other disciplines to the preservation of our dialects manifested in the grammar and catechetical books like the *Doctrina Cristiana* (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2012).

These accounts mentioned may not explicitly describe the contribution of this educational system established by the Catholic religious to the development of libraries in the Philippines. Rather, it is assumed that along with the establishment of Catholic schools, universities, seminaries and other learning institutions, libraries also flourished as support to the academic needs of these educational institutions.

## *ii. Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP)*

Despite the reforms in the Philippine educational system introduced by the Americans, Catholic education has withstood and adapted to the waves of changes until the present-day. It has become responsive to the needs of the Philippine educational system. In 1940, an auxiliary board of the Archdiocese of Manila was created to address the educational concerns and cooperation among Catholic schools, and to collectively respond not only to urgent educational issues but also societal issues. On February 2, 1941, the constitution of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines was drafted and officers were elected. CEAP is the national association of Catholic educational institutions in the Philippines. At first, CEAP was composed only of schools within the Archdiocese of Manila, but soon extended its membership throughout the Philippines. During the Second World War, CEAP ceased operations. Library-related programs of CEAP are handled by the CEAP Library Committee. Through CEAP Library Committee, library-related concerns were addressed among its members. Cooperation is evident through their programs and projects for the advancement of their libraries, librarians, and the library profession.

## *iii. Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and University (PAASCU) and Accreditation*

Another indirect contribution of Catholicism in education and libraries in the Philippines is on the aspect of accreditation. Accreditation is a concept based on self-regulation which focuses on evaluation and the continuing improvement of educational quality (PAASCU, 2014). It is through the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines (CEAP) that Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and University (PAASCU), one of the established accrediting agencies in the Philippines, was born. PAASCU is a service organization that aims to accredit academic programs that meet commonly accepted standards of quality education.

PAASCU's history can be traced back to CEAP's Accreditation Committee, which was founded in October 1954, to facilitate the voluntary accreditation for CEAP colleges and universities. On its initial meeting, it drew up a Manual of Accrediting with self-survey forms for eight different areas, in which the "Library" is one of them. (PAASCU, 2002). By November 1, 1957, eleven (11) CEAP colleges and universities had undergone an institutional self-survey and been visited by an outside accreditation team. These 11 private Catholic educational institutions were: Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, College of Holy Spirit, Maryknoll College, San Beda College, St. Joseph's College (Quezon City), St. Paul College of Manila, St. Scholastica's College, St. Theresa's College (Cebu), St. Theresa's College (Manila), and University of San Carlos. Their acceptance to be charter members of the first permanent accreditation association in the Philippines marks the end of the task of the CEAP Accreditation Committee and marked the birth of an incorporated organization. In December 2, 1957, PAASCU was registered as a corporation with the Securities and Exchange Commission in the Philippines. It also extended its membership to all private colleges, universities and high schools, both sectarian and non-sectarian.

The "Library" as one of the eight areas being evaluated for each institution, PAASCU looks into the library as a support to the school's academic programs. The particular sections of the "Library" area include: administration; collections/holdings; personnel; financial support; services and use; and physical facilities. PAASCU's library standards are stipulated in their accreditation instrument where the first part is the extensive explanation of the requirements and the second part is the evaluation tool (Obille, 2007). The evaluation results of each library would depend on the following outcomes measures: development of the library, sufficient budget, updated and adequate library collections, qualified and competent personnel, innovative library services, and improved library facilities, among others.

As early as 1969, Alcazar has already observed that the findings of the accrediting teams give a true picture of the libraries being surveyed, and in effect, had led to significant improvements in libraries being accredited. Renovations and face-liftings were spearheaded. Professionally trained librarians have been employed and given faculty status. Library collections has been enriched by regular acquisitions. And in general, the library's role in the achievement of the institution's objectives was realized among the institutions being accredited.

Based on these, it can, therefore, be argued that in one way or another, Catholicism through CEAP, its members' libraries and PAASCU has indirectly contributed to the development of libraries in the Philippines, as they have pioneered the present-day accreditation practice in the country. These institutions and associations have also paved way in raising the quality of libraries in the country.

### c. Religious Collections and Religious Libraries

Acknowledging the role of libraries and their collections in its mission, the Catholic Church has valued and regarded them as important instruments for evangelization. Under this topic, an attempt to present existing religious libraries in the Philippines and their collections was sought. Three (3) of these are hereby presented: the Miguel De Benavides Library of the University of Santo Tomas, the Ralph B. Gehring Library of the Loyola School of Theology and the Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes Memorial Library of the San Carlos Seminary.

#### *i. Miguel De Benavides Library (University of Santo Tomas )*

The University of Santo Tomas is the Philippines' oldest standing university. It was built under the direction of Archbishop Miguel de Benavides. "Benavides wanted to create a university that was to bring the Good News to the people, the expansion of Christian faith, the intellectual apostolate and the preparation of clerics and laymen for the task of the church and the state." Before Benavides' death in 1605, he wrote in his testament a donation of 1,500 pesos and his personal library towards the establishment of a college of higher studies. This, along with other donations collected led to the creation of the university on April 18, 1611. It was built as a Dominican educational institution until the educational and ecclesiastical decree given to the university by King Philip IV. Pope Innocent X conferred the title university in the bull *In Supereminenti*, November 20, 1645. King Charles III of Spain gave the university the royal title in 1785. The university was exclusive only to Spaniards at first, but mestizos and pure Filipinos were eventually admitted by the eighteenth century.

Hernandez (1996) noted that there are no available information pertaining to the library. It is also probable that some of the books kept in the rare books section of the library were part of Archbishop Benavides' collections, as pointed out by Fr. Fidel Villaroel (1982). During the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Philippines in 1768, books from their colleges and residences were donated to the UST Library. UST also inherited the College of San Jose, which later became the College of Medicine and the College of Pharmacy. The UST being the only official university in the Philippines during the nineteenth century paved way to the improvement of the library. During this period, holding of books have significantly increased and a total of three libraries were created, one for each campus (Hernandez, 1996).

Candida Cabatu (1952) wrote that from the beginning of the UST library to 1926, books were classified using the Fixed System. This system is an antiquated scheme wherein call numbers of each book was identified by a letter and two numbers - the first number identifies the shelf, the letter identifies the compartment,

and the second number represents the position where the book is located in the compartment. The Library of Congress System replaced this system in 1936. As pointed out by Cabatu (1952), the UST Library has a bountiful collection of old and new documents in its archives, which is of paramount importance for the study and better understanding of Philippine history.

When the UST campus in Intramuros, after its destruction during the Second World War, was transferred to its present location in Sampaloc, Manila, the library was transferred to the main building. On October 29, 1989, an exclusive building for the library was built, named UST Central Library Building. The library was later renamed Miguel de Benavides Library in commemoration to Archbishop Benavides. This was done in line with the celebration of the 400 years of existence of the library (University of Santo Tomas, 2014).

The present-day Miguel de Benavides Library has evolved to a university library that supports various degree programs in UST. The extent of the Library's religious collection can be found in one of its sections and a branch library: Religion Section and Ecclesiastical Faculties Library, respectively. The Religion Section caters to the academic needs of college students in their theology courses. It contains almost 9,000 volumes and more than 5,000 titles. While Ecclesiastical Faculties Library, a branch library located at the ground floor of the Father's Residence, provides books and periodicals on Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law for students and professors of the Ecclesiastical Faculties of UST. In addition, UST has established the Antonio V. Del Rosario UST Heritage Library which houses the vast printed collection of the UST's historical materials such as rare books from 1492 through 1900, Filipiniana rare books and materials, rare periodicals, and rare legal collections, medical books and book on pharmacy (UST, 2014). On this Library, the surviving books in the initial collection Archbishop Benavides are preserved.

## *ii. Ralph B. Gehring Library (Loyola School of Theology)*

The Loyola School of Theology (LST) Library, or the Ralph B. Gehring Library, has been described as the "best theological library in Southeast Asia". This might not refer to the physical appearance of the library but rather to the books and periodicals the library holds. The library was created from the merging of materials from two Jesuit institutions, the San Jose Major Seminary and Berchmans College, in 1955. These 25,000 books collected from the sorting and weeding created the base for the collection of the library. The library receives periodicals through subscription and in exchange for *Landas*, the journal of the Loyola School of Theology. Presently, it houses an approximate of 100,000 volumes of library materials. This number does not include publications of little worth or interest to the Library. It does, however, include philosophical, cultural, historical, sociological periodicals which complements the School of Theology's program of instruction and the Jesuit character of the institution (Gehring, 1992).



Formerly owned by the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, the Library was donated to Loyola School of Theology in 1996, and is intended primarily for use by the faculty and students of Loyola School of Theology.

*iii. The Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes Memorial Library (San Carlos Seminary)*

The Archbishop Gabriel Reyes Memorial (AGRM) Library is the official research and information resource center of the San Carlos Seminary, the Holy Apostles Senior Seminary and the Lorenzo Mission Institute- at the service of the professors and seminarians. The Library was dedicated and named after the first Filipino Archbishop of Manila. On June 29, 1987, together with the San Carlos Graduate School of Theology, the AGRM Library was completed and blessed by His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila and His Eminence Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, Archbishop of Cebu. AGRM's principal aim is to promote the intellectual and spiritual formation of seminarians residing at the San Carlos Pastoral Formation Complex.

A major part of its collection of books and periodicals was put together through the dedication, initiative and efforts of Fr. John P. Zwaenepoel, CICM, the first Library Director. This collection covers religious and Catholic literature and references. Approximately 70% of it are on theology / religion, 15% on philosophy and 15% on other subjects. The Library also contains thesis and research output of the seminarians of San Carlos Seminary. Acquisition of new books, publications and periodicals, and various donations to the Library, are made possible through the Archdiocese of Manila (San Carlos Seminary, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

As exemplified in the literature, the link between libraries and religion is one of the oldest and most important relationships in the history of library development. This is true to the case of the Philippines, in which Catholicism, the religion brought by the Spanish colonizers, has played a role in the development of libraries in the Philippines.

The history of Catholicism in the Philippines showed that the Catholic Church played a significant role in formation of the Philippines. This is why majority of the Filipino population are Catholics and the country is recognized for having the largest number of Catholics in Asia.

As the paper aimed to provide perspective and background information on the links of libraries and Catholicism in the Philippines, it has pointed out, through Philippine library history accounts, Catholicism's involvement in the establishment and development of libraries in the country until the present time.

These were presented into three parts: 1) the first collections and convent libraries, 2) Catholicism, education and libraries, and 3) religious collections and religious libraries.

The history of libraries in the Philippines began with the arrival of Spanish colonizers. Along with the colonizers came the evangelization by the Catholic missionaries. Religious books were the main contents of the earliest library collections in the country in accordance with King Philip II of Spain's decree. They brought with them their books and their library tradition, through their first private collections and convent libraries. These have provided a direct impact in the history of libraries in the Philippines. These also became the foundation of libraries and librarianship in the country. The surviving library collections and convent libraries formed the nucleus of modern day rare books collections and heritage libraries in the country.

As early missionaries were also learned scholars, they found the need to educate. They used education as an instrument for evangelization. The creation of seminaries, schools, universities and other learning institution by various Catholic religious led to the establishment of libraries that would support these educational institutions, which in turn leads to the enrichment of the collections of libraries. In 1941, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), a national association of Catholic educational institutions in the Philippines, was established. CEAP is concerned with the promotion of the interests of Catholic educators. Through its Library Committee, CEAP has fostered cooperation among its members' libraries and librarians and has contributed to their development. It was also through CEAP that the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and University (PAASCU), one of the established accrediting agencies in the Philippines, was born. PAASCU pioneered the accreditation of academic programs to meet commonly accepted standards of quality education, in which the library is one of its areas. This indirect link of Catholicism to libraries in the Philippines through education and accreditation has caused a significant improvement in the standards for libraries in the country. It may not be fully credited to Catholicism, but in one way or another, it has contributed to the development of libraries in the country.

As Catholicism develops in the Philippines, and so do the religious collections and religious libraries. The virtually nonexistent literature on them is indicative that little is known about them yet, however the cases of the Miguel de Benavides Library, the Ralph B. Gehring Library and the Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes Memorial Library, which primarily act as special and academic libraries, illustrate these developments. This is the direct contribution of Catholicism to the growth of religious collections and religious libraries.

With these points cited, this study has highlighted, in one way or another, the role of Catholicism in the development of libraries in the Philippines. These contexts shouldn't be disregarded in the study and writing of history and development of libraries in the Philippines. This would further imply that the present stature of libraries and librarianship in the country is once rooted in Catholicism's influence. As we acknowledge that these contexts shapes our history and society, this could be a basis in analyzing the growth of these libraries and the profession, as well as in understanding how the identity of libraries and librarianship in the Philippines was shaped by this religion. This also provides a basis for future research into an interesting and often overlooked context within library history, not just in the case of the Philippines but as well in other countries.

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