

Laudationes Quinque (1766): History, Materiality, and Graphic Technology *of the First Jesuit* Printed Work in Córdoba, Argentina

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This text describes the location and identifies the material characteristics of the only known copy of *Laudationes Quinque*. The book (1766) is the first printed work in the city of Córdoba during the colonial period, a city that belonged to the Rio de la Plata Viceroyalty (currently Argentina). A visual analysis of the document was carried out employing the material perspective, considering the graphic technology elements of the old manual press, and observing from a graphic design perspective. This analysis revealed compositional aspects of the pages and graphic communication elements that have been frequently relegated by historians and bibliographers. This work builds upon a previous study that was carried out from a facsimile. Therefore, we take those results as preliminary and now we offer broader findings based on material analysis.

Keywords

Jesuit printing

Córdoba

Printing types

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SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF EARLY AMERICAN PRINTS

Throughout time, it has been the interest and concern of bibliographers, historians, literati, librarians, and archivists to locate and identify the first evidence of typographic activity in a city, region, or country. This interest has different aspects: it combines intellectual curiosity and the tracing of the religious, artistic, or scientific thought that gives rise to a print, but there are also more tangible and concrete aspects of that interest that are linked to the custody and control of a particular community's bibliographic and documentary heritage. Moreover, there are usually few or very few copies of the first printed materials in a locality that have been preserved and are accessible today. Therefore, among the variables that make it possible to determine the rarity and eccentricity of a book, there is precisely the existence of a few copies, that is, their relative scarcity. These facts emphasize the importance of the location of the first evidence of typographic activity, and therefore reinforce the need to locate it.

The international study of early printing has a long history and involves the coinage of specific terms, the best known of which is perhaps *incunabula*. This term is applied to printed materials published approximately between 1450 and 1500 in some European cities; that is, this word is used to designate the typographic products that saw the light during the first fifty years of movable-type printing art. There are also expressions such as *post-incunabula*, which has been used to indicate the set of pieces that were published between 1500 and 1530, a term that has been applied mainly to the case of the Iberian Peninsula (Garone Gravier, 2014b).

The comprehensive and detailed recording of the typographical characteristics of books and other documents coming out of a workshop and/or city, which has already been widely practiced in Europe, has also been

applied to products that emerged on American territories. This has allowed the emergence of bibliographies and typobibliographies for various geographical areas of the continent. However, as can be seen, due to the chronological range that circumscribes the terms ‘incunabula’ and ‘post-incunabula,’ both words do not apply to American productions because the first printing workshop established on American soil dates back to 1539. Despite the above, perhaps in a misguided attempt not to be left behind and to participate in an internationalist yet imprecise trend, several scholars and those interested in ancient American books used both expressions to name the first typographic products in America.

Due to the brief space available in this article, it is not possible to offer a genealogy of the application of the expression ‘American incunabula,’ so we will mention some specific cases of this erroneous application instead. Possibly one of the first to use it was the bibliographer Joaquín García Icazbalceta, who defined ‘Mexican incunabula’ as works printed before 1550 (Reyes, 1946) and, perhaps following him, other scholars applied it in a similar sense. Thus, Emilio Valton used the word *incunabula* in the title of one of his famous books (Valton, 1935) and extended it to the case of Peruvian and other Latin American printed works. Likewise, historian Ernesto de la Torre Villar, probably following the Spanish paleographer exiled in Mexico, Agustín Millares Carlo, used the term to refer to Mexican printed works from the 16th century (Torre Villar, 1987). In the same way, *incunabula* has been used to name the first typographic productions of other geographical spaces in America, such as Colombia (Forero, 1946); Peru (López Saldaña, 2008); and Argentina (*La primera imprenta rioplatense funcionó en las misiones de Loreto y Santa María la Mayor. Incunables jesuíticos, una historia latinoamericana*, 2007).

But not all scholars misused this expression: bibliographer Juan B. Iguíniz said that the term *incunabula* could not be applied to American prints – neither from Mexico nor from Peru – from the 16th century or later periods (1959). Hence, the most accurate way to describe the specific case of printed materials from New Spain would be to use the denomination ‘Mexican printed materials from the 16th century,’ as used by Henry Wagner (1940) and Jesús Yhmoff Cabrera (1990).

Nowadays, the most widespread expression to talk about the initial books of typographic art in some regions of America is ‘first American books’¹ or ‘first American prints,’ as it has been used for 16th century publications. By extension, it is pertinent to name the initial prints of other workshops, either from the 17th or 18th century. Thus, we will refer to the Jesuit printings of Córdoba, Argentina, as ‘first Córdoba printings’ or ‘books of the old printing press of Córdoba.’

¹ In this regard, it is worth mentioning the international collective project Primeros Libros (www.primeroslibros.org), which compiles digitized copies of American printed materials that are in the custody of numerous libraries.

After offering these brief considerations and sharing the same curiosity that has moved other scholars to locate copies and identify the material characteristics of the first printed materials in a place, in this work we seek to provide new information from an enriched perspective, under the research conditions that enabled it: the richness of which we speak emanates from the converging views of material bibliography and graphic design, which will allow us to describe the finding of the only known specimen to date of the first Cordovan print more clearly.

THE ARGENTINIAN CASE

The workshop installed by the Jesuits at the Colegio Monserrat in Córdoba in 1764 introduced typographic art to this city for the first time. Despite this pioneering effort and the fact that it was considered a good omen for the workshop's prosperous future, printing activity was soon suspended due to the expulsion of the Ignatians from all Hispanic territories in 1767. This action sealed the fate of the press and typographical tools from the workshop in Córdoba, condemning it to abandonment and deterioration (Cremonini et al., 2016). A similar fate befell the prints that left the establishment during its short productive life. Though of remarkable workmanship, these very scarce and rare works also suffered neglect and oblivion.

In order to preserve them from their destruction and at the initiative of Dr. Enrique Martínez Paz, the Instituto de Estudios Americanistas (belonging to Universidad Nacional de Córdoba) made facsimile reproductions of part of these productions. In 1937, the first book printed in Cordoba was reproduced: *Cinco oraciones laudatorias a Ignacio Duarte y Quirós* (Five Laudatory Prayers to Ignacio Duarte and Quirós) or *Laudationes Quinque*, as it is often colloquially called. This outstanding volume was published in 1766 and, as Guillermo Furlong Cardiff states in the preliminary study of the facsimile, there were very few copies available worldwide (Furlong Cardiff, 1937, p. 25). Along with this, *Reglas y Constituciones* was reprinted in 1940.

Regarding the first case, which is the one that we are interested in addressing in this work, and as the historical heritage specialist Carlos A. Page (2011) was able to establish, the two copies that Córdoba had have disappeared, and only facsimile copies are preserved in this city. Precisely one of these facsimiles (available for consultation at the Biblioteca Mayor of Universidad Nacional de Córdoba) was the object of study for the analysis of its graphic and formal aspects (Silverman et al., 2016). As we warned on that occasion, the study was limited because it was a copy of which the reproduction process is unknown. Nothing in its pages indicates whether the original was modified in its dimension or scale, or if the proportions of its

margins were respected. Not even the exact dimensions of the 1766 volume were detailed.

Interestingly, this data was not consigned on the secondary sources either, although Furlong (1937, 1947) pointed out that it was an *in-cuarto* format work. This information provides clues regarding the actual size, although without full certainty, as the dimensions of the papers were not completely standardized when the work was printed in the 18th century. With these limitations, it was only possible to consider that, originally, the pages of *Laudationes Quinque* were similar in size to that of a contemporary A4 page. Without the exact measurements of folios, text boxes, and margins, little could be said about the architecture of the pages of one of the oldest manifestations of Argentinian graphic and typographic art, a direct antecedent of national editorial design. In order to delve deeper into these aspects, it was imperative to access an original volume.

IN SEARCH OF AN ORIGINAL COPY

Although the data on the print run of *Laudationes Quinque* is not known, as expressed in previous paragraphs, by the time it was reissued in 1937 there were only five copies left worldwide. Already in the 21st century, Page updated this information and presented the following detail:

One was in a library at the Jesuit College in Malaga, another at the Argentine Biblioteca Nacional, and others at the Franciscan Library in Córdoba, the Museo Mitre in Buenos Aires, and the Chilean National Library. The copy of the Argentinian National Library was donated by a 1937 ministerial order to Colegio Nacional de Monserrat, according to the administrative pass that the Library holds. This copy had the translation that Gervasio Sueldo made in 1865 attached. It was then that Córdoba came to keep two copies of the book, but the valuable copies are no longer found among Monserrat residents, nor are they among Franciscans (Page, 2011, p. 33).

With this in mind, an investigation was initiated to verify the existence of a specimen in the three remaining locations. In order of proximity, the search began at the Museo Mitre, where we were told that the specimen was stolen more than 30 years ago and a facsimile was left in its place to pass it as the original, thus delaying the detection of the crime. The next step was the Chilean library, but unfortunately, we were informed via electronic consultation that the book in question was not available. After these news, our last hopes were placed on the library of the Jesuit College in Malaga, specifically San Estanislao de Kostka, which belongs, along with other schools, to the Loyola

Foundation, an educational institution of the Society of Jesus. By mistake, a homonymous school in Malaga was contacted, but located in Salamanca, more than 600 kilometers away. The fact that it was in the orbit of the same Loyola Foundation and had the same name led to a misunderstanding that, as will be seen, would ultimately prove to be fortunate.

Its librarian, José Luis Martín Torres, reported that the Montserrat Library of Universitat Ramon Llull in Barcelona did have the work. Finally, it was Àngels Rius i Bou, the Monserrat Abbey librarian, who confirmed the existence of the original volume of *Laudationes Quinque* in the collection.

We were informed that the back cover has the stamp of 'Porter,' a bookseller from Barcelona from whom the book was presumably bought thinking that the reference 'Collegii R. Monserratensis' in the title was related to the Catalan monastery. This is how the only known copy to date of the first book printed in Córdoba was found.² The cataloging indicates Josep Manuel Peramàs as the author (1732-17); the title is *Clarissimi viri D.D. Ignatii Duartii et Quirosii: Collegii Monserratensis Cordubae in America conditoris, laudationes quinque / quan eidem collegio regio Barnabas Echaniquius, O.D;* the imprint indicates: *Cordubae Tucumanorum [Argentina]: Typis Collegii R. Monserratensis, 1766;* and the topography inside the Library of the Abbey of Montserrat (Catalonia) is signature: Mont*I*8°*83; item: 13020100040278.

² The cataloging of the volume at the Montserrat Library is as follows: <https://bit.ly/2JKUGMC>. In gratitude for the attentions provided, a copy of the final undergraduate work by Gustavo Cremonini and Daniel Silverman, who analyzed the graphic aspects of *Laudationes Quinque* in 2015 under the guidance of Marina Garone Gravier, was sent to said library. This study was indexed by Rius i Bou as a complement to the volume printed in the Córdoba workshop at <https://bit.ly/2KjFE2G>.

MATERIAL ASPECTS OF LAUDATIONES QUINQUE (1766)

The librarian also provided details and high-resolution photographs for further material and graphic analysis. The state of conservation is good despite being moth-eaten on its margins. The binding is not from the period but from the 20th century, on maroon-colored paper.

The watermarks of the paper can be seen on several sheets: on the inner edge of the cover and all the sheets of signatures A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M.

The watermark potentially allows identifying the paper mill that produced the paper, its geographical location and, consequently, it contributes to the dating of the work. When we say 'potentially,' it is because some motifs or watermarks are used by more than one paper miller for a long period, so it is not always possible to fully know whether the paper of a given form comes exactly from a particular mill with that information alone. Due to the *in-cuarto* format of the book, watermarks are not fully appreciated; however, based on the photos, the brightness and contrast of the images were modified and a photomontage was made to reconstruct the design as completely as possible (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Detail of the back cover with the property mark 'Porter.' Photograph: Àngels Rius i Bou.

Figure 2: Image of the covers and back cover binding. Photograph: Angels Rius i Bou.

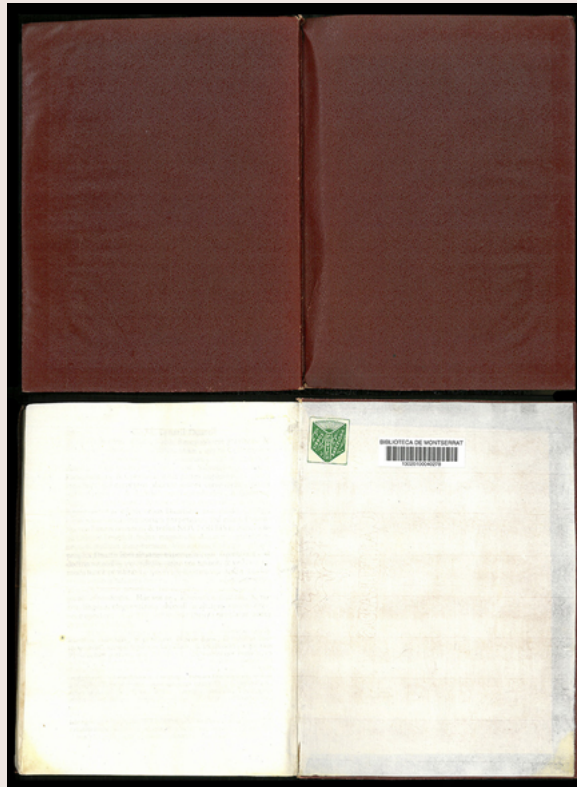
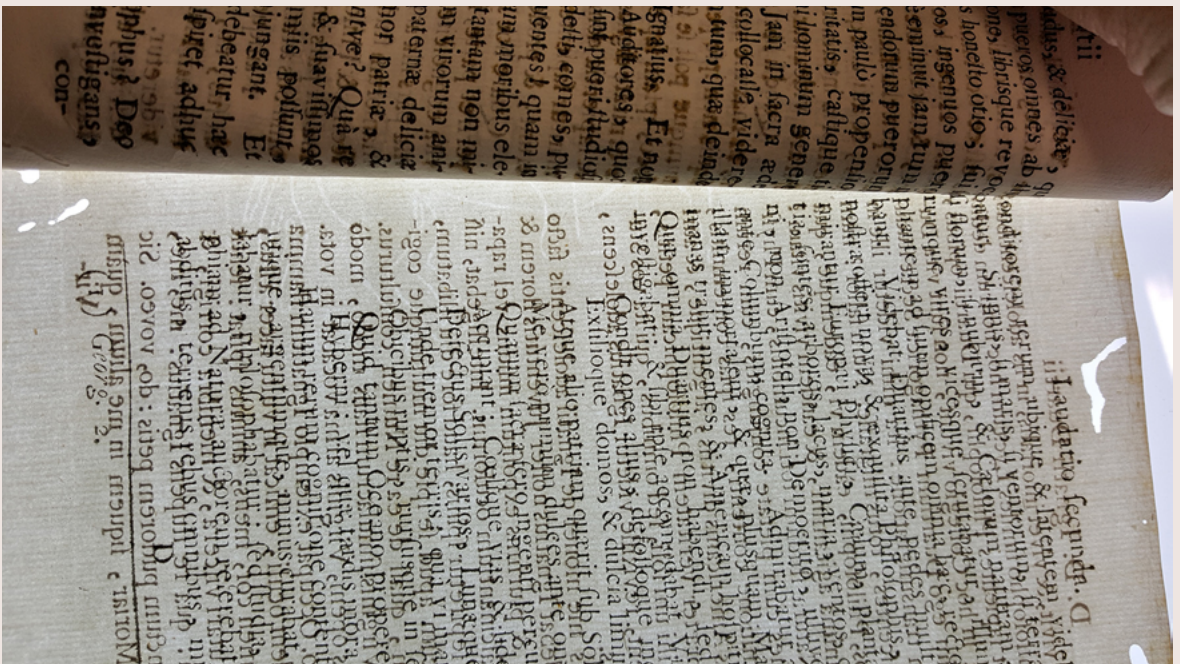


Figure 3: Backlit page 17 showing a part of the watermark and laid paper. Photograph: Angels Rius i Bou.



3 See in the collective project The Memory of Paper: https://www.memoryofpaper.eu/BernsteinPortal/appl_start.disp

4 The search for 'rejoneador' returns 136 results in the site 'Filigranas Hispánicas' of the Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España (Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España, n.d.). Two examples are: catalog number: 043001; Descriptors: Figure: Quadruped, Horse, Knight, Man, Spear, Human figure; Watermark data: Mark height: 109mm, Mark width: 110mm. And catalog number: 0031744⁴; Descriptors: Figure. Rejoneador / picador on horseback, with pike, hat, and horse in rampant attitude. Watermark data: Country of origin: Spain, Region: A Coruña (Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España, n.d.).

Following the criteria of the Bernstein catalog³ and the usual classifications for the study of watermarks, Rius i Bou interprets it as a knight riding a horse and wielding a lance, similar to the model described in the *Bibliografía de textos catalans antics* (BITECA) under the filigree classification 043001 (Biteca, 2018). This motif is also known as 'rejoneador' (lancer), a character linked to the oldest traditions of bullfighting. The design was very common in the Hispanic world and has many examples in the digital repertoires of the Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España.⁴

The attributions of the aforementioned graphic model were corroborated by María Dolores Díaz de Miranda Macías, O.S.B., curator of the Restoration Workshop-Laboratory of the Casa Ducal de Medinaceli Foundation, San Juan Bautista Hospital (Tavera), in Toledo, Spain. With great generosity, Díaz de Miranda provided additional information on the various paper mills that used the watermark and, consequently, gave further clues as to the possible origin of the paper used in the Montserrat print. The motif of the watermark, by the way, very widespread between the mid-18th century and the first quarter of the 19th century, graphically speaking, could be of both Spanish and Italian origin and even "be part of a double watermark; the other part of the watermark would be the figure of a bull" (M. D. Díaz de Miranda Macías, personal communication, May 20, 2020).

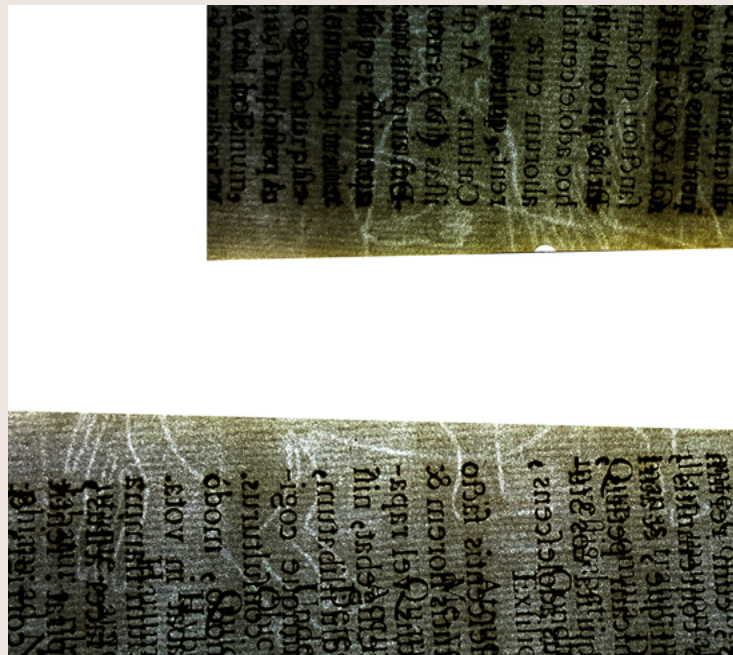


Figure 4: Photomontage made from pages 3 and 5 with light and shadow levels adjusted to reveal the watermark.

Italian papermakers

Among the Italian papermakers who use this motif are:

- 5 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=001456A> —Steffano Patrone: PFES fil 001456A/001456B⁵ and PFES fil 002130A/002130B

- Steffano Quartino
—Dania
—Polleri

Unidentified Italian papermakers:

- PFES fil 001478A/001478B/001478C⁶
—PFES fil 001387⁷

Spanish papermakers

Among the Spanish papermakers who use the *rejoneador* model, there are some from Catalonia (Capellades zone, Barcelona; Sant Pere de Riudebitlles, Barcelona; La Riba, Tarragona), Levante (Alicante-Valencia), and Segovia.

Catalonia

Capellades zone (Barcelona)

- 8 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=001126A> —Joan Costas: PFES fil 001126A/001126B⁸; PFES fil 002135A/002135B⁹; PFES fil 002287A/002287B¹⁰; PFES fil 002288A/002288B¹¹

- 11 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=002288A>

- Joan Casulleras
—Serra

Sant Pere de Riudebitlles (Barcelona)

- 12 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=001574>

- Josep Cardús: PFES fil 001574¹²
—Pere Carol

La Riba (Tarragona)

- 13 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=001707>

- Josep Oliba: PFES fil 001707¹³

Levante (Alicante-Valencia)

- 14 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=001326A>

- Francisco Moltó: PFES fil 001729A/001729B
—Albors: PFES fil 001326A/001326B¹⁴
—Pomes
—Barbarosa

Segovia

- Casaban: PFES fil 001178A/001178B

- 15 <https://memoryofpaper.eu/pfes/pfes.php?ClaveFiligrana=002285B>

Other papermakers

- Turne: PFES fil 002285A/002285B¹⁵

Additionally, Dr. Díaz de Miranda suggested that it could be a Genoese design “because of the way in which some elements of the horse’s figure (eyes, mane, tail) and the rider’s (hairstyle, hat, clothing, and lance) are drawn”, and she specified that the Spanish filigrees with this motif “are inspired by the Genoese ones, and those that I have found indicate the name of the papermaker” (M. D. Díaz de Miranda Macías, personal communication, May 20, 2020). According to the curator, the closest motif to that of the paper we are analyzing could be the one present in a document from the Archivo de Protocolos Notariales of the Real Colegio Seminario de Corpus Christi of Valencia (APCCV).¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://memoryofpaper.eu/apcv/apccv.php?Signatura=11-4949>

¹⁷ We do not want to fail to mention that there are works on watermarks in the Rio de la Plata region prints; however, we have not located this mark in those works (see Balmaceda, 1998).

Without being able to indicate with precision which of all the previous mills was the one that produced the paper of the book, the relation that we enunciated allows us to indicate a margin of possibilities instead; this aspect of the study may be investigated in future works.¹⁷ However, in his study of the Argentinian Jesuit printing workshop, Furlong, when describing the filigree of *Instrucción Pastoral* (1766), another print from the Córdoba workshop, says that “each sheet had a watermark in the center that represented a horse with a dragon’s tail, ridden by a horseman holding a long lance” (Furlong Cardiff, 1947, p. 158). Although it is another work, since it was printed in the same place and year, we can assume that the same batch of paper would have been used for *Laudationes Quinque*. This conjecture gains greater support when we remember the scarcity of paper in the period and that, as the same historian says: “The first publications were made using what could be found in Córdoba and Buenos Aires, and it seems certain that the paper ordered from Europe had not yet arrived when the expulsion of 1767 took place” (Furlong Cardiff,

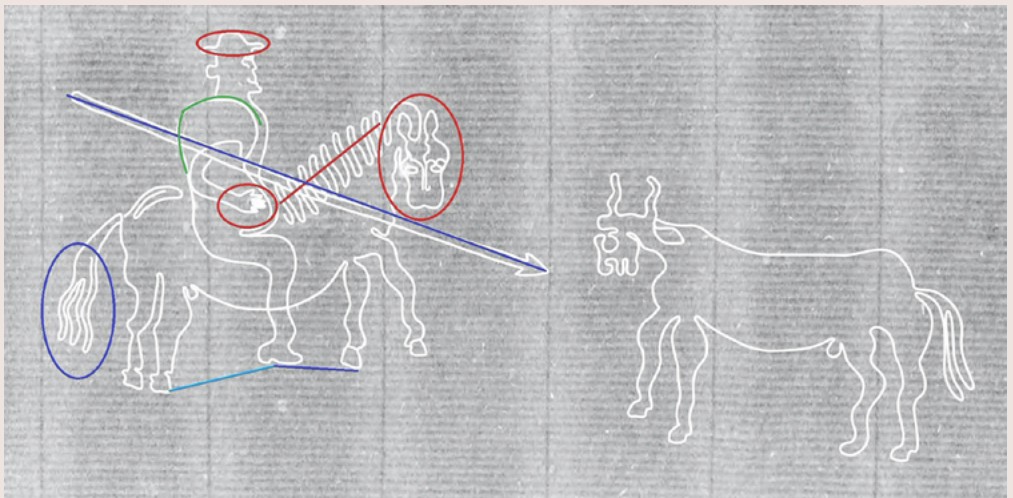


Figure 5: Detail of the rejoneador watermark; image provided by Dr. Díaz de Miranda.

1921, p. 244). The size of the work's pages is 151 x 207 mm, which along with other measurements allowed us to elucidate some compositional criteria used by Pablo Karer, the printer Father in charge of the Monserrate workshop.

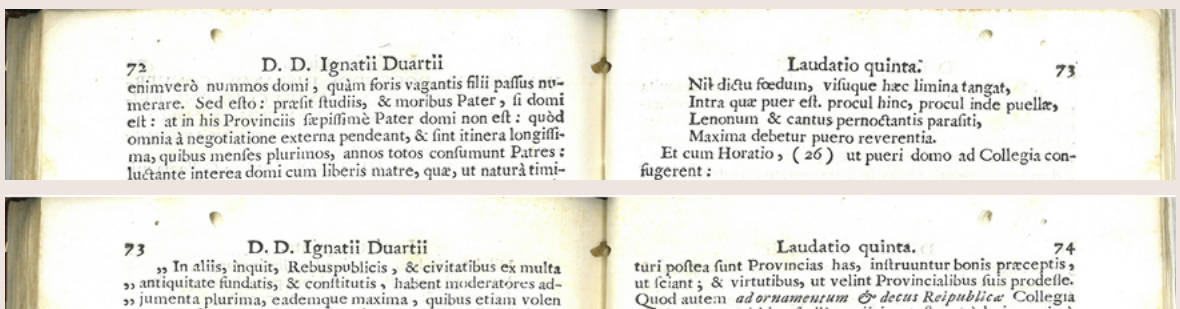
LAYOUT AND COMPOSITION CRITERIA

Other data from the existing copy allowed us to identify a difference in the overall number of pages of the five laudatory prayers, as when the pages of each praise are partially added up, the count differs from the manual and sequential count of the total pages. The difference was resolved by noting that there is a numbering error on pages 72-73 and 73-74.

With high-resolution digitizations, the study of compositional aspects began. The dimensions of the text box with and without headings and footnotes were verified by adjusting the digitized material to the size of the page given to us by the librarian. The images of the first pages of the book (a kind of dedication) were imported into a vector design program, where they were schematically reconstructed to simulate the layout of the page, the text box, and the margins. A similarity was observed between the lower and upper margins, which are in accordance with the precepts of Alonso Víctor de Paredes, who, regarding these blank spaces, advised that “margins should be equal when printing shapes of quartile, eighth or consisting of smaller pages” (Paredes, ca. 1680/2002 fol. 44r). The size of the outer margin is about twice that of the inner one, which observes a widespread rule in page design that establishes that the outer margins must be greater than the inner ones (Figure 8). By measuring the rectangle of the text box, we verify golden proportions, a compositional tradition of manual printing that dates back to the times of Gutenberg and his successors, as several authors have pointed out (Rosarivo, 1948; Tschichold, 1956).

However, when we looked at the layout on pages other than the dedication, the dimensions of the box and margins varied: the resulting compositional scheme was a root rectangle of two, as it arises from dividing its sides ($167/117 = 1.4$). Consequently, the dimensions of the margins varied,

Figure 6: Detail of the work's pages on which the repetition in the numbering can be verified.



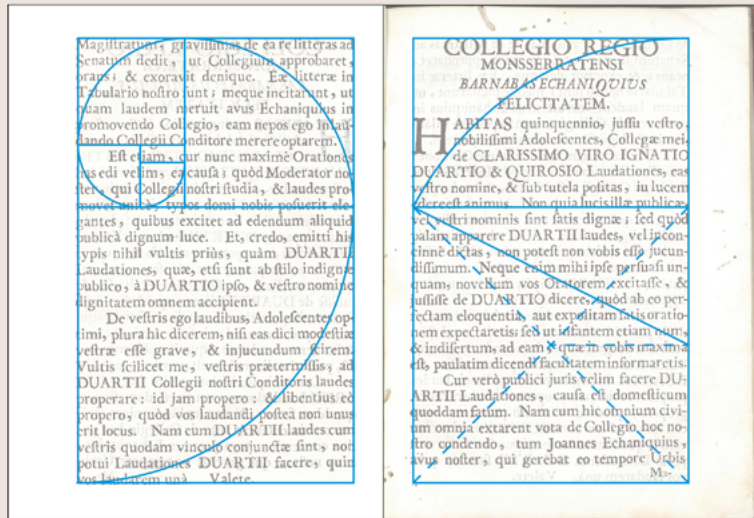


Figure 7: Dimensions and proportions of the dedication pages. Inner margin: 12mm, outer: 28mm, top: 14mm, bottom: 12mm. Height by width of the text box: 178 x 111 mm (golden section). Height by page width: 207 x 151 mm.

although the criterion of duplicating the inner margin with respect to the outer was maintained. In this second organization of the interior spaces of the page, the lower one was larger than the upper one (Figure 9), respecting the recommendations of Paredes (ca. 1680/2002 fol. 44r). This same pattern was repeated in the pages of the five laudations, being the predominant compositional scheme in the work.

The localized compositional structures provide a scaffolding to determine other elements of the typographic design and their relationship with other components of the page: the borders or headers aligned to the right and left with the justified text below them and the images that inaugurate each laudation, aligned at the base with an invisible square (Figure 10).

Another element to highlight is the great precision in the registration of the impression, as when the shots are enlarged it can be seen that the impression coincides between recto and verso, a fact that is impossible to notice in the facsimile.

After determining the architecture of the pages in the original, they were compared with the 1937 facsimile and it was found that an attempt was made to respect the original size of the box, although the dimensions of the margins were altered (perhaps to unify the size of this work with the others in the facsimile collection of prints by Monserrat). The 1937 edition gives an idea of the size of the original book and the body of the original typeface.

After verifying that the text box of the facsimile did not have scale modifications, that work was used as complementary material to deepen the typographic study.

MEASUREMENTS AND HISTORICAL STYLE OF THE PRINTING TYPES USED IN THE WORK

As Gaskell (1999, p. 17) points out, knowing the denomination of the fonts used in the composition during the period of manual printing is an important aspect for a correct typographic description, and the same is true for their size. What is measured in typography is not the eye of the letter – printing area – but the parallelepiped that contains it.

From the digitizations, the predominant body on the pages of *Laudationes Quinque* was determined following the usual method of incunabulistics (Garone Gravier, 2014b, p. 126), which consists of measuring 20 lines of text vertically. This result, expressed in millimeters, makes it possible to determine the body used by consulting tables that relate this height in millimeters to the nomenclature of the old types. This method is useful for texts that have been composed without lines that give interlines, which can be verified by looking for a point where the descending stem of a letter (such as *g*) coincides with the ascending stem of another letter (such as *l*) on the next line. On the second page of the Prologue, lines 17 and 18, it was verified that the print is not over leading and that 20 lines of text measure 114 mm.

As Moret Viñals (2014) explains, the equivalence tables between names and typographical points are neither exact nor uniform, but approximate. It is therefore advisable to consult these tables with caution since, as is evident, the exact size of the letters printed in old books such as the one that is the object of this study cannot be known. For these purposes, a table compiled by Garone Gravier (2015, pp. 72-73) and the study by Moret Viñals (2006) were used, relating the measurements of 20 lines of text with points and body names in different languages.

After obtaining a measurement of 114 mm for 20 lines of text in the Prologue, we can point out that it would be a *texto gordo*, close to 16 pt. This data was verified in a real-size print of the original's scanned page using a typometer that allowed us to corroborate the indicated score. The same methodology was replicated in other pages of the work, where we found 18 pt. (*Parangona chico*) in the 'Felicitaciones' section (texts prior to the Prologue), and 14 pt. (*Text*) in the laudations (after the Prologue).

As we expressed in previous works, the letters could be characterized as Garamond-style letters, a fact that was compared with different letter samples, of which the one published by Conrad Berner in 1592 is the most faithful to the original design by Claude Garamond¹⁸ and presented the greatest coincidences with the letters of the *Laudationes*. The study also used the *revivals* that recreate the French typographer's designs with different proximity. These recreations were considered with certain reservations, since, as

¹⁸ To delve into the work of this French typographer, see Redacción UTD, 2002.

Figure 8: Architecture of the prologue pages and the laudatory prayers. Inner margin: 12mm, outer: 22mm, top: 16mm, bottom: 24mm. Height by width of the text box: 167 x 117 mm (root of two).

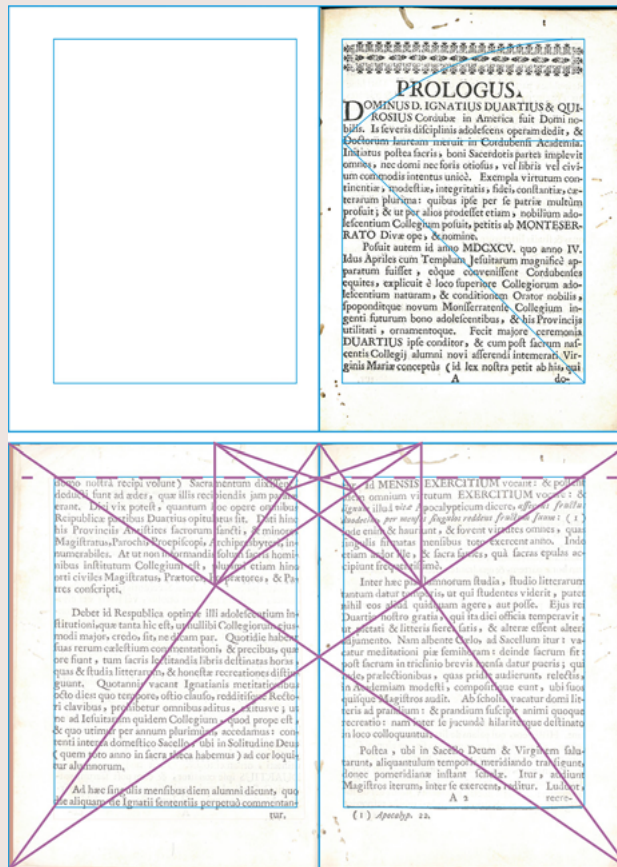


Figure 9: As can be seen in the diagram to the right, the page is very close to a root rectangle of two. The square implicit in its construction was used to place the headers of each laudation.

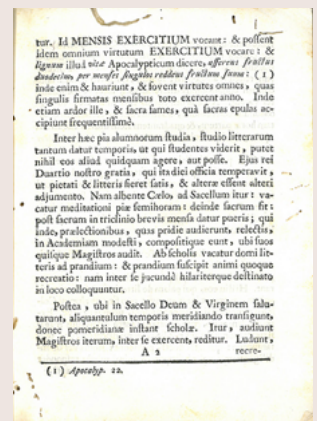


Figure 10: The high-resolution scanned images show the accuracy of the original registration, in which the lines of text on the recto and verso of the page fully coincide.

Garone Gravier points out:

The main disadvantage of using contemporary designs is that, in revivals, modifications are made that present variation from subtle to considerable, concerning the original models. Thus, we can find revivals that are faithful copies of old prints up to interpretations with different degrees of lyricism (2015, p. 97).

The same can be said of digital revivals, in which even the production process and the resulting design change. We did a similar exercise of typographic comparison between the Jesuit print and six versions of Garamond offered by the digital foundries Font Bureau, Adobe, Stempel, Berthold, ITC, and Google Fonts. With all of them, a *Laudationes* page was composed by recreating the width of the column and the size of the letters in order to compare the proximity of the different versions: the most similar result was obtained when using Google's EB Garamond.¹⁹ This design by Georg Duffner and Octavio Pardo is based on the aforementioned Berner Specimen (the acronym EB Garamond refers to Christian Egenolff, the smelter who was succeeded by Conrad Berner).²⁰ With this revival, the original composition of the page could be emulated, as shown in Figure 12.

¹⁹ This source can be downloaded from the Octavio Pardo (2017) online repository. Available in OTF and TTF format with Open Font License.

²⁰ For an explanation of the acronym, see Duffner, 2014.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE TYPOGRAPHIC STUDY IN LATINAMERICAN RARE BOOKS

It is necessary to make several clarifications that should not be overlooked when analyzing an old print from any Latin American region, especially if the perspective is that of contemporary graphic design or typographic design rather than the study of the old regional printing press.

Scope and limitations of the available documentation

To date, the studies of old typefaces that we have for the different regions of the continent have been based predominantly on making attributions of typographic styles from the comparison and contrast of local printed materials, with European letter samples by punchcutters and casters. This pragmatic methodology has been consolidated because only in a few cases we have documentation that allows us to reliably indicate the purchase of a batch or stock of letters from a European house to be used in an American printing press. Likewise, the numerous variables and agents involved in the transatlantic trade make it almost impossible (if not impossible) and very difficult to reconstruct the entire chain of intermediaries from a given point of sale to a workshop in an American city, not to mention customs agents on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as onshore transfer routes when printers are not located

Figure 41: Prologue, second page [2v]. Twenty lines of text were counted, measuring 414 mm. When the separation between descender and ascender is 0.5 mm or less (as in the enlarged detail), the lines are considered to have no leading.

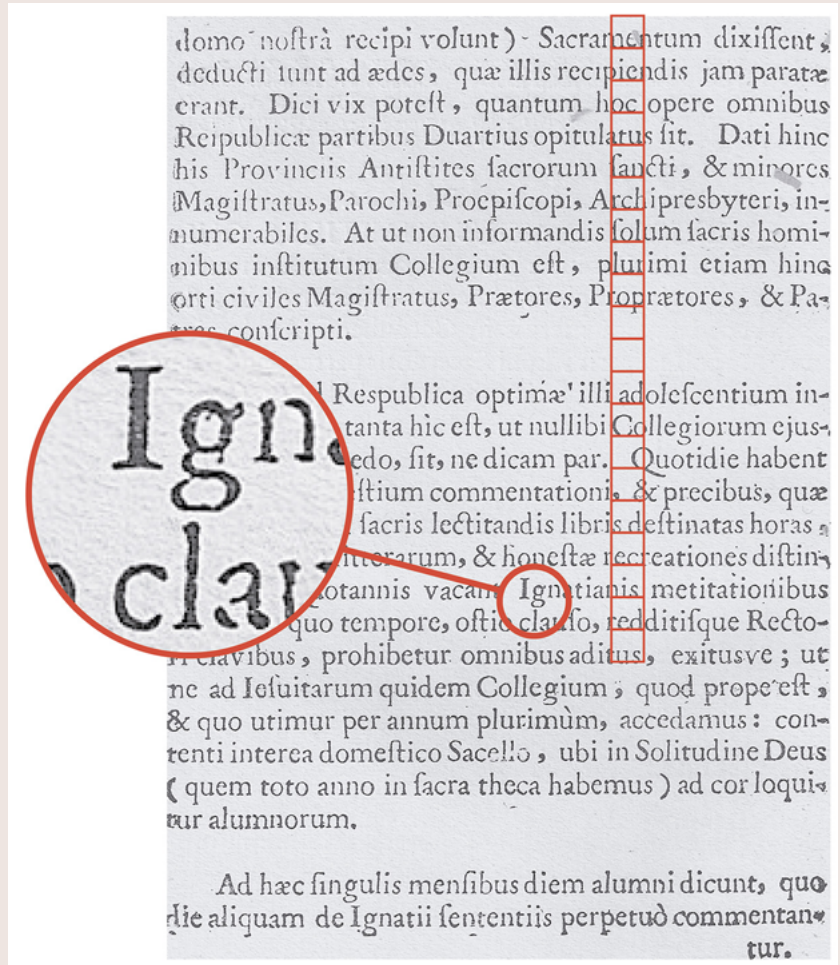
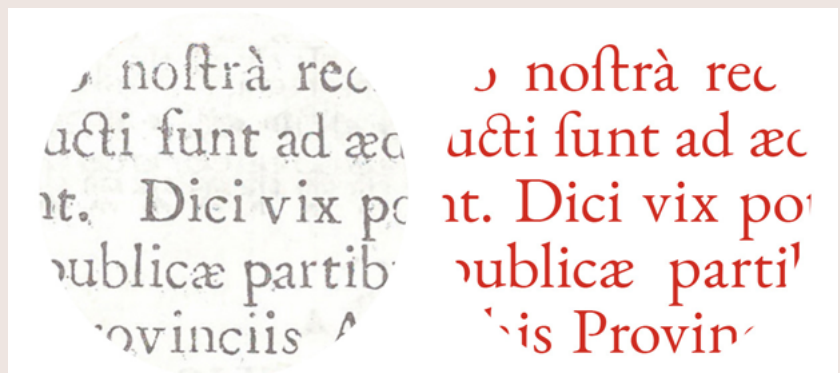


Figure 42: Comparison of EB Garamond with the characters of the *Laudationes* on the second page [2v] of the Prologue. The digital text was composed in 16 / 16.3 pt body size (that is, almost without leading, as in the original).



in a port city. Considering the above, it is important to keep in mind that in most cases – including the one in this study – the necessary documentation is not available to know and indicate precisely and scientifically whether the printing types, in this case, Garamond style, come from foundries in Antwerp, France, Germany or Spain. Consequently, to date, and due to the available documentation, it is only possible to make conjectures about the place of origin of the Monserrate typographical material that we are describing in this text.

Conjectures on the introduction of Montserrat's typographic material

a) Date of arrival of the materials in Córdoba. Regarding the temporality of the material in this workshop, and in the face of the doubt that might arise within the reader about the moment when this material was introduced by the Jesuits in Córdoba or whether the letters were supplied later, it should be recalled that the first workshop in Córdoba was installed by the Ignatians. Whether they had brought the materials from Europe or from another Latin American region (which is less likely), the route must have been the one established by the order itself, and there is no evidence that it followed the usual commercial supply circuits, or at least those we have detected for the other non-Jesuit workshops in other parts of Latin America (Garone Gravier, 2016a). Following the same line of thought and taking into account the style of the letters of the print under study, compared to other Jesuit prints, for example, those of the missions in Paraguay, perhaps the 'closest' ones to Córdoba in South America, it is not possible to establish any formal kinship of the letters. Hence, it is not feasible to suggest that the Montserrat letters were remnants or came from another workshop of the order that had fallen into disuse.

b) Origin of the typographic material. Since the Córdoba workshop had a short life due to the expulsion of the order from the Spanish dominions in America shortly after the work began and the work we studied was published, it is unlikely that the materials of this printing press were introduced after the date of establishment. However, it should be noted that all the typographical materials of the Jesuit printing work in Córdoba are 'imported,' if by imported we understand that they were neither engraved nor cast in that city.

c) State of conservation of typographic material, age of foundries, and typographic trends. As can be seen in the printing of the work, the types are little worn; however, we cannot infer from this that the foundry was made expressly for this 'work.' In any case, we can only point out that we are dealing with an assortment of letters from a new printing press, which is just beginning its tasks. Regarding the style that we identify, an element that could generate surprise is that a mid-18th century Argentinian workshop uses letters of a 16th century typeface or, in other words, 'old-fashioned' letters. Although such


an approach is valid, we must think under the parameters of the material and financial conditions in which the old typographic workshops in America operated, and not under a commercial logic of technological obsolescence of contemporary digital typography. As we have proven in numerous previous studies, in Latin America, typographic styles had a periodicity and longevity independent from that which operated in various latitudes of Europe and the United States of America. In some cases, this periodicity had noticeably longer periods of duration or survival than in the Old-World workshops, and in few cases, they walked simultaneously (Garone Gravier, 2014a, 2016b).

CONCLUSIONS

As we saw throughout this work, when addressing the history, materiality, and graphic technology of an old printing press in Latin America, it is necessary to consider the perspective of graphic and editorial design, to add them to the views and tools of bibliography and book studies from the manual printing period. This multiple and interdisciplinary perspective is crucial in order to avoid over-interpretations or, in other words, to better manage and take full advantage of the information sources that are required to answer various questions. And although it may be frustrating at times, they also warn about the inability to answer other questions fully.

The compositional and typographical analysis of the first Cordovan Jesuit print that we made in this article allows us to give an account of the high graphic quality and careful page design carried out by the Argentinian workshop. Its brilliance is enhanced when we consider that even from a contemporary design perspective, this work was configured with astonishing graphic precision, tidiness, and exquisiteness. The analysis also showed that the work met the parameters of high typographic quality for its time, to the point that it does not seem to be the work of an inexperienced typographer, but rather the result of a typesetter and printer who must have had previous experience.

The visual characteristics of the print have what we would define today as good standards of elegance and legibility, some of which are still in force and are studied in the training courses of contemporary designers. This makes it possible to propose Father Karer's work as a natural reference in the study of the history of local graphic design. The work itself constitutes a model and is a source of graphic resources that current designers can analyze and 'revisit' in their daily work. It allows us to reflect on the expertise of that 'proto-typographic designer' in Córdoba, which places it as a parameter of the work of today's editorial designers.

In addition to having managed to locate an original copy, which so far is the only one known, in this article we reveal new aspects of the graphic design and materiality of the document, with special emphasis on the oldness of the paper, which opens a whole range of opportunities to think more clearly about the potential supply routes for it, which was a scarce and expensive good in American territories. What we have presented in this piece amply complements and renews what historians and bibliographers had previously expressed. With this presentation of content, we hope to encourage others to continue the inquiries on the Argentine bibliographic heritage from the projectual, visual, and material perspectives. 

* * *

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