

Summary

This research tries to establish how the documentary funds found in Alzira, which were printed between the years 1881 and 2000, keep and are faithful to the foundations of Alzira society in those years.

In the first chapter we deal with historical, geographical, economic and technical aspects which demarcate the increase of activity of the printing presses in “La Ribera” area. First we mention the main historical events that describe the transitional period from agricultural activity towards industrialization, stating the socioeconomic situation and its repercussions throughout the development of graphic arts (s. XIX-XX). Then, with Luis Suñer Sánchis and his enterprise “Suñer’s cardboard”, we approach the visual aspect of containers: cotton thread boxes “tank boxes”, military shoe boxes, “Calver” talcum powder boxes and antibiotic boxes, flexible materials and wrapping paper for oranges and “Apolo” ice-cream, all of which count the local history and customs and show the technical development of industry. The next section summarizes the circumstances that determined the beginning of printing in Valencia and its expansion in Alzira towards 1872 although the title of this thesis gives the year 1881 as the starting point as the starting point of the history of local printing because this is the date of the first printed paper we have found coming from the first printing press in Alzira whose owner was José Muñoz.

The second chapter analyses the graphemes of the writing and their evolutionary process that reflects on the style and aesthetics of the printed works since the beginning of the European printing and their effects in the Valencian printing until the use of photomechanical systems. We want to stand out the peculiarity of the methods used by the local printers in typesetting. The next section tackles the unavoidable study of technical aspects that has to be with the procedures and systems of typesetting, which keep changing according to technological advances, used by the local printing presses. Here we have included the information about the evolution process of printing machinery, from the vertical press by Gutenberg to the arrival of linotype and offset machines.

The third chapter is one of the main parts of this research as it compiles most of the graphic production of printing trade in Alzira in this period. The variety of the studied documentation took us to organize the information in catalogue form with general technical specifications that allow to present the found information in chronological order where the features of year, press and remarks are essential. This way we make it easy to follow and analyze the images grouped according to their own character and technical specifications. Next we state the classification and criteria taken into account when analyzing each group of images, for instance: the section of brochures affects layout; through posters, the next group brings the advertising conception in Valencian Community in the eighties; and then with the containers we pay attention to their design aesthetics as well as to the labels for oranges boxes and the tissue wrapping paper which are analyzed the same way.

This research ends up with an account of conclusions that answer the questions related to the set out hypothesis and the proposed objectives. The bibliography includes the documentary sources that have led and given sense to this work and also some general bibliography.