

<b>Institution:</b> Queen's University, Belfast
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 - Modern Languages
<b>Title of case study:</b> Cultural Identity in a Global Brand: Ibarra Real and Microsoft
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The aim of the Ibarra Real Project was to fashion a distinctive Spanish font for use in contemporary print and digital media in order to create a twenty-first century typographic identity that was firmly rooted in Spanish culture. The project focused on the revival and re-establishing of the iconic eighteenth-century Ibarra Real typeface, and research by Sánchez Espinosa in the UoA provided the historical and cultural underpinning that validates the claim of the font to be characteristically Spanish. The project has had a clear impact on Spanish graphic and book design and has added a distinctive Hispanic typeface to Microsoft's suite of fonts. It has contributed to the promotion of cultural diversity in the context of global media dominated by the English language and Anglo-American visual culture.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The Ibarra Real project is a collaboration between academics and typographers supported by the Spanish Ministry of Industry, the Spanish International Cooperation and Development Agency, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, and Microsoft. Sánchez Espinosa has been a member of the project since its inception in 2005. His role in the team was to research the historical context in which the Ibarra Real font was produced. Based on extensive archival and library research, he explored the political and ideological background to the creation of the eighteenth-century Royal Publishing House (<i>Imprenta Real</i>), its administrative organization, working practices, cultural programme, material production, and technological and socio-political significance (Sánchez Espinosa 2009, 2011, 2012).</p> <p>Sánchez Espinosa's research reveals that the publication programme of the Royal Publishing House can be interpreted as a record of the political, social and cultural changes that occurred in Spain during the 1760s and 1770s. The creation of Madrid's <i>Imprenta Real</i> satisfied the Spanish Crown's need to control the political information then being disseminated by periodical publications while simultaneously providing an outlet for the elite's own publications. From the mid-1760s, the Spanish government, following the example of other European royal presses, funded <i>Imprenta Real</i>'s programme of publications of cultural, scientific, and political significance. Sánchez Espinosa demonstrates that the work and structure of <i>Imprenta Real</i> fell completely under government control after 1780. The revamped <i>Imprenta Real</i> showed a significant improvement in the materials, production methods, and quality of illustrations, accompanied by a growing number of presses. It set the standard for book production in the period 1780-1808 (the beginning of the Peninsular War), in constant competition with and emulation of the best private Spanish presses such as Ibarra and Sancha, as well as what was being produced in the rest of Europe. But Sánchez Espinosa's study also hints at the negative consequences that the privileged and growingly monopolistic position of the publicly funded <i>Imprenta Real</i> caused for medium-sized Madrid publishing houses which saw their production diminish during the 1790s as they could not compete with the prestige and the technical superiority of the state-sponsored institution.</p> <p>The Project was directed by the font designer Dr J.M. Ribagorda (Madrid's Complutense University), who was the curator of the exhibition, <i>Imprenta Real. Fuentes de la tipografía española</i>. The scientific team comprised Dr Sánchez Espinosa, Dr Corbeto (Reial Academia de Bones Lletres, Barcelona), Dr Torné (Alcalá University, Madrid), Dr Villena (Calcografía Nacional),</p>

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Dr Badius (Typerepublic digital Foundry), and Dr Garone (UNAM, Mexico).

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

#### (i) key research outputs:

- G. Sánchez Espinosa, 'La producción editorial del Despotismo Ilustrado: la Imprenta Real' in *Imprenta Real: fuentes de la tipografía española* (Madrid: AECID, 2009), pp. 72-85 and 180-192. ISBN 978-84-8347-102-9.
  - Espinosa also compiled the captions for the majority of the illustrations in the book.
- G. Sánchez Espinosa, 'Los puestos de libros de las gradas de San Felipe de Madrid en el siglo XVIII', *Goya* 335 (2011), 142-155
- G. Sánchez Espinosa, 'Los librereros Ángel Corradi y Antoine Boudet, y la importación de libros franceses para la Academia de San Fernando', *Bulletin Hispanique* 114.1 (2012), 195-216.

#### (ii) evidence of quality:

- The three publications listed in (i) above are included in the REF submission.
- The book has gone into 3 editions: see review in *Boletín. Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas* 14.1-2 (2009), 237-240, an academic journal from the Mexican UNAM.
- The 'Ibarra Real' project (2006-10) was funded by €300k from the Spanish Ministry of Industry, the Spanish International Cooperation and Development Agency, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, and Microsoft.
- Sánchez Espinosa was awarded a one-year British Academy-CSIC joint project grant with Dr J. Álvarez Barrientos, CSIC, for the project 'Towards a catalogue of Madrid bookshops, 1759-1814' (Feb. 2008-9). The value of the grant was £5000.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The aim of the Ibarra Real project was to revive a traditional prestige Spanish font within a modern context and so to promote Iberian cultural distinctiveness in the face of the increasing global dominance of English language and culture. Because of his record of research in the publishing industry of the Spanish Enlightenment, Sánchez Espinosa was engaged to investigate and elucidate the historical context in which the Ibarra Real font was first created and used. The aim of this contextualisation was to provide the historical, political and social rationale to support the reintroduction of the font as an emblem of Spanish distinctiveness and to validate the claim of the typeface to be truly representative of Spanish culture. By locating the original font within the political and cultural environment of the period, Sánchez Espinosa was able to create a robust link between the new typeface and a period of high ambition and cultural vision in Spanish history.

The font's cultural significance was conveyed to its intended users, namely, publishers, typographers and the general public, through public exhibitions and a companion book describing the history and use of the typeface; these two elements also generated considerable publicity for the project and attracted press attention, including trade journals, to highlight the reintroduction of the font. Sánchez Espinosa played a key role in the development and realisation of both the exhibition and the book. He was primarily responsible for selection and cataloguing of the Imprenta Real items and artefacts that appeared in the exhibition and in the book, and he contributed a major chapter to the book on the origins of the font.

The particularity of the font was central to the agendas of the project's funders. The project supported Microsoft's ethical agenda which aims to sustain linguistic and cultural diversity in national and regional languages through localisation of its products. The Marketing and Operations director of Microsoft Spain, Enrique Fernández-Laguilhoat, remarked at the launch of the project that it underlines Microsoft's 'strong commitment to the respect of the cultural identities' of the

countries in which it operates (<http://tinyurl.com/bn2sw9m>). The Spanish Ministry of Industry and the Spanish International Cooperation and Development Agency were also among the funders for the project; they were also concerned with supporting and developing a distinctive Spanish design industry in which Espinosa's contextualisation was central. The success of the cultural identity agenda has been remarked upon by several commentators. The prominent designer Enric Satué describes the inclusion of the font in Microsoft's catalogue as 'without a doubt, the best indication so far of Spanish participation in the international graphic design scene' (*Arte en la tipografía*: 25), and Cocoliso, writing on the graphic design blog, *Unos tipos duros*, remarks on the luxury of being able 'to use a font which is truly Spanish' (17.8.2010). The graphic designer J.-M. Ribagorda observes that the project's exhibition 'connects design with culture and technology through the enhancement of national heritage [and] the pursuit of formal identity of the Spanish language' and acknowledges that it is 'the Royal Spanish Press, its historical contribution in the past, and its future contribution' to the world of graphic design that binds the whole narrative together (*Unos tipos duros*, 1 December 2009).

Ibarra Real has been included in the Microsoft font catalogue since March 2010, and its software can be downloaded for free for Windows, Apple Mac and Linux. Figures for Microsoft downloads are commercially sensitive and have not been released, but the fact that some 4000 sites worldwide offer it for download provides an indication of its reach.

In addition to the downloadable version, the font was intended from the start to be rolled out as a classic font to print media. Spanish and Latin American book and graphic designers are already using the Ibarra Real typefaces in a significant variety of genres. For example, it has been used in institutional publications such as the book for the Prince Felipe of Spain's 2009 Prize for Management Excellence, *Premios Príncipe Felipe a la excelencia empresarial* (2009), see <http://tinyurl.com/cta7sct>; in academic publications such as K. Gregor and A.-L. Pujante, *Macbeth en España. Las versiones neoclásicas* (Murcia: Murcia University Press, 2011); in creative and artistic publications such as the Chilean Vicente Reyes's *La isla* (2011) and the recent bibliophile edition of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Primero sueño* (Valladolid: Gato Gris, 2012). It has been adopted by the main Spanish/Hispanic publishing house, Editorial Planeta, for some of the annotated Renaissance classics belonging to its series *Espasa Clásicos* (for example, the recent editions of *Amadís de Gaula* and *Orlando Furioso*), and for their special editions, like the 3 volume *Cortes y Constitución de Cádiz. 200 años* (2012), an academic collective work commemorating the first Spanish constitution. The Ibarra Real typeface and font have also been used in the graphic image and text displays of other recent exhibitions of historical artefacts, such as *Corona y Arqueología en el Siglo de las Luces* (Royal Palace, Madrid, 15 April–11 July 2010). See <http://tinyurl.com/ctsja4p>.

The project's exhibition, *Imprenta Real, fuentes de la tipografía española*, was shown at two major venues in Spain and Mexico with a total recorded footfall specifically for this exhibition of 45,000, namely:

- The Royal Academy of Arts, Madrid (December 2009–February 2010): 9266 visitors.
- Museo Regional de Guadalajara, Mexico (November–December 2010): 35222 visitors.

The exhibition in Guadalajara attracted large numbers of bibliophiles and booksellers as it was timed to coincide with the International Book Fair held in the city.

The Ibarra Real project has inspired similar projects, such as the 2010 *Expósitos, La tipografía en Buenos Aires, 1780-1824*. This project aimed to reconstruct the typeface used in the Real Imprenta de Niños Expósitos, the first printing house in Buenos Aires during the last years of the Spanish colony. A free downloadable book has been produced that contextualizes the birth of this printing house, its political significance in relation to an increasing Argentinean identity, its material production, and the steps taken in the reconstruction of the font (see

<http://tinyurl.com/d2fsvkz>).

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

### (i) web resources:

- Website of the Ibarra Real project: <http://www.ibarrareal.es/>.
- Free downloadable font for PC and Mac from 4 official Microsoft sites and some 36 main international graphic design websites, available from Feb.-March 2010, including <http://www.microsoft.com/es-es/download/details.aspx?id=10005>
- 9,740 Google results for “Ibarra Real” and 13,400 for “Fuentes de la tipografía española” (13.05.2013)
- 4,100 Google results for webpages from which to download Ibarra Real (searching: download/descargar “Ibarra Real”).

### (ii) reviews:

- Newspaper reviews in *El País* (30.05.2006, 27.11.2009, 13.12.2009); in *El Mundo*, 1.12.2009.
- Extensive review articles of the project and exhibition in:
  - the British design journal *Eye. International Review of Graphic Design* 77 (Autumn 2010)
  - the Italian design journal *Progetto grafico* 18 (Sept 2010)
  - the German design journal *Novum* (November 2010).
- Project and exhibition reviewed (1.12.2009) in the specialist typography and graphic design websites *Unos tipos duros* <http://www.unostiposduros.com/?p=3338> and *The Quaint. Notizen zur Buch-Kultur* <http://www.thequaint.de/?p=252>
- Enric Satué, *Arte en la tipografía y tipografía en el arte* (Madrid: Siruela, 2007).
- Graphic design digital journal *My Typo. Digital Type Foundry* (September 2011-February 2012): <http://tinyurl.com/bw9prj4>

### (iii) awards:

- The exhibition catalogue was awarded a ED Gold Award in the category of artistic catalogues in the 2010 European Design Awards (Rotterdam).
- The exhibition catalogue won second prize in the *Libros mejor editados* 2010 award, awarded by the Spanish Ministry for Culture to the best designed Spanish books.

### (iv) organisations and individuals for consultation: (see corroborating contacts)

- Museo del Prado (Curator). The 18th-century curator can corroborate the general impact of this project on Spain and the Hispanic world.
- Medialab Prado (General Co-ordinator). Medialab is a public institution supporting projects in the new technologies that combine cultural aims with a global scope. It can corroborate the technological impact of the Ibarra Real project, and comment on the collaboration between public institutions and private enterprise.
- Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Project Co-ordinator). The Royal Academy can corroborate the general impact of the project in relation both to its linked exhibition and the media, and can corroborate the underpinning research.
- Independent graphic designer. This renowned independent graphic designer, who is very active in book design, can testify to the interest that has been awoken among book designers in Spain by the Ibarra Real typeface.