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Colonial Mural Palimpsests in the Northern Andes: Layers of Memory and Meaning

By

Yessica Liliana Porras

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History of Art

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Renaissance and Early Modern Studies

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Todd Olson, Co-Chair

Professor Lisa Trever, Co-Chair

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Abstract

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By

Yessica Liliana Porras

Doctor of Philosophy in History of Art

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University of California, Berkeley

Professor Todd Olson, Co-Chair

Professor Lisa Trever, Co-Chair

Colonial mural paintings are part of many convents across Latin America, serving as a reminder of their historical past and the women who inhabited these spaces. This study delves into the mural layers of three convents in present-day Ecuador and Colombia that were painted between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries: the choir in the Convents of Santa Clara in Santafé (1647), Santa Clara la Real in Tunja (1571), and the living quarters of the Convent of San José in Quito (1653). It examines the painting remnants, which include religious scenes and figures, landscapes, and ornate patterns that span from comprehensible visual scenes to unintelligible, overlapping, and disjointed fragments, thus creating a palimpsest of paint layers, devotional practices, and memories. Located in the northern Andes, these convents were relatively autonomous from Spanish colonial control, unlike the viceregal metropolises of New Spain (Mexico) and Peru. This geographical isolation fostered a secluded artistic development, where books and images imported from Europe interacted with local Indigenous visual and musical cultures.

The comparison of the choir spaces of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja provides an overview of the development of conventual institutions in Nueva Granada to meet the increasing need for a uniquely female space to accommodate unmarried women of Spanish origin (*criollas*). The mural paintings in the choirs and the decoration of the church beyond the nuns' enclosure were part of a multisensorial space, where sound and sight indicated the

cloistered nuns' presence in the church during ceremonies open to the lay public. Their voices permeated the space, reverberating from the painted walls. The Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja exemplifies the use of ornament as a site of meaning, while the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé represents Santafé's preeminence in Nueva Granada and the economic and social power of the convent through the combination of gilded ornaments with animal and saintly figures. In contrast, the Convent of San José in Quito represents a different approach; its living quarters were covered with scenes from *The Life of St. Teresa*, a printed book engraved by Adrien Collaert and Cornelius Galle in 1613. The paintings symbolize the continuation of sanctity in the convent, from Mariana de Jesús, who was the first Ecuadorian saint, to the arrival of the Carmelite Order in Quito, represented by the image of St. Teresa of Avilá. In this mural program, colonial subjects did not passively copy European prints. Instead, painting was a dynamic artistic and devotional expression, where the nuns, through collective and anonymous manual labor and curatorial decisions, were active participants in Quito's cultural development. The mural paintings in these convents and the human interactions that took place within them created a unique space where the past and present have come together. These murals are layered upon each other, creating a physical and conceptual palimpsest. The mural paintings in the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja, as well as the convent of San José in Quito, represent the different stages in the lives of the women who once inhabited them. The mural paintings embed the memory of these women through their contemplation, interventions, and devotional practices.

Dedication

To my loving Abuelita Vicenta.
Gracias por siempre estar a mi lado y enseñarme que es el verdadero amor.
I miss you.

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Figure 2.59. Unknown, *Book Ornaments License, Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

Figure 2.60. Unknown, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen (Ceremonial of the Discalced of Our Lady of Carmen)*, 1792, page 10, Paper on Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

Figure 2.61. Unknown, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen (Ceremonial of the Discalced of Our Lady of Carmen)*, 1792, page 189, Paper on Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

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Figure 2.68. Unknown, *Pedro Nolasco*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Oil on wood. Cusco, Convent of La Merced.

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Colonial Mural Palimpsests in the Northern Andes: Layers of Memory and Meaning

How beautiful and delightful is ... enclosure, from which one cannot leave until after exhaling one's last breath. Fragrances from heaven are inhaled in this premises, filled with blooming roses, violets, and carnations. For the cloistered nuns, the convent is the anteroom to heaven. [...] Cloistered in the lovely enclosure of the tabernacle, presiding over the liturgical cult; *images, already simple, artistic works adorn the chapel, the choirs, and the walls of the convent; everything calls for recollection*; virtue transforms into light and life for each of the nuns inhabiting the sacred precinct, and invites us to work every day with greater zeal for spiritual perfection and the vision of the universe.¹
—Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios.

Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios was a nun in the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Nueva Granada in the 18th century, where she researched and chronicled the life of her predecessor, the mystic writer Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo (1671-1742).² Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios's account included everyday occurrences and offered an inside perspective of the convent and its operations in what is now Colombia. She had privileged access to the convent and included her viewpoint on enclosure as a central tenet of conventual life. This reflection on enclosure includes a parallel between the nuns' lives inside the convent until their deaths and the presence of images covering its walls: "cloistered in the lovely enclosure of the tabernacle, presiding over the liturgical cult, images, already simple, artistic works adorn the chapel, the choirs and the walls of the convent, everything calls for recollection."³ These paintings were not just seen as mere decorations but as an extension of the devotional life of the convent.

The juxtaposition of the nuns' enclosure with paintings reveals the effect images had on Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios and the women that inhabited this space - images- "invite them [the nuns] to work every day with greater zeal in spiritual perfection and the vision of the universe." The experience of Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios in the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja (Colombia) was shared by women throughout colonial Latin America, including Santafé (Bogotá, Colombia) and Quito (Ecuador) (Appendix 1). Mural paintings served both as part of the nuns' confinement and to mark of autonomy where ornaments, religious figures, and narratives allowed intervention, replacement, and alteration, extending the space beyond its walls. The paradoxical nature of conventual mural paintings during the colonial period offers an unexpected context of colonial conventual cloistered life and the relationship of the women in the convent with the paintings and the conventual institution. A crucial component of the nuns' relationship with the convent was the promise of sainthood and spiritual guidance, which was particularly relevant in the Spanish Catholic world. The idolatrous practices of the Indigenous population and the desire to advance the social position of nuns drove women and

¹ María Antonia del Niño Dios, *Flor de Santidad: La Madre Castillo*, 1^a ed. (Tunja: Contraloría General de Boyacá, 1993), 447.

² The writings of Antonia del Niño Dios were collected in *Flor de Santidad*. It is not clear when this book was written; the manuscript was found in the archives of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real, where Mother María Antonia del Niño Dios professed during the eighteenth century.

³ María Antonia del Niño Dios, *Flor de Santidad: La Madre Castillo*, 447.

their families to associate with religious spaces where they could perform their devotion and obtain spiritual guidance.

The adornment of the walls of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja exemplifies the close ties of the nuns with these images as part of their religious education and as a site for the remembrance of exemplary lives and the assertion of their own existence. As a chronicler of the convent, Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios would have been aware of the omnipresence of mural paintings, even beneath the wooden retablo of the church that covered many of the mural images. It is possible that she witnessed the covering, erasure, and repainting of the mural paintings that now lay in fragments over their wall.

Like Sor María Antonia del Niño Dios, I was also aware of the prevalence of mural paintings in the convents that I visited during constant pilgrimages with my grandmother in my childhood and then, years later, as a researcher. When I first visited these churches, many of these paintings were already relegated to the corners of gilded retablos or as a mark of the decay of the churches whose walls were crumbling, revealing paintings underneath. The current fragmentary nature of these paintings offers only partial images – ornamental patterns, figures, flowers, saints, and landscapes - that are hard to read, suggesting an incomplete history and context. However, characteristics such as fragmentation and deterioration that dissuade scholars from studying mural paintings provide an unexpected source of information, where mural layers witness the history and interactions of the nuns in the conventual space. This dissertation proposes an exploration of mural painting as a palimpsest of collective memories where each layer explores the paradoxical nature of each painting and where the painted interventions contain memories of the human exchanges among Indigenous groups, religious patrons, artists, parishioners, and visitors who inhabited and helped to build these painted spaces.

Mural paintings are an indelible symbol of the founding of convents in Latin America during the colonial period and female participation in the colony's development. They are a transformative gesture that reflects the dynamism of the convents and their inhabitants. The efforts to cover, erase, and make images produced an accumulation of painting layers imbued with a "temporal quality" characteristic of a palimpsest.⁴ The fragmented nature of these images makes them often overlooked due to the intractable nature of the overlapping images and blank spaces, where traces of the Indigenous and colonial past are hidden and collapsing into the present. This study explores surviving fragments of mural paintings to understand the nuns' relationship with these images and what these paintings can reveal about the historical context of convents and the lives of the women therein.

Mural Painting Research Precedent and Inspiration

This work is indebted to the work of scholars who opened the field of colonial art history to the study of mural paintings. Their curiosity and research are expressed in their scholarly articles and books, which opened the possibilities for different approaches to the study of mural paintings and expanded their understanding. The academic study of colonial mural paintings was launched by George Kubler's 1948 publication *Mexican Architecture of the*

⁴ Nadja Aksamija et al., eds., *Palimpsests: Buildings, Sites, Time*, Architectural Crossroads, Vol. 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 9.

Sixteenth Century.⁵ Here, Kubler described, “the murals remain as documents of the popular and pathetic Christianity of the late Middle Ages, transplanted by the missionaries to the new conversions of America,” which showcases an early view of colonial murals when viewed only as an anachronic and as a lesser copy from its European counterpart. However, his inclusion of extensive illustrations introduced scholars unfamiliar with colonial art to Latin American colonial mural painting, inciting their research.⁶ As Jeanette Peterson points out in *The Paradise Garden Murals Of Malinalco*: “Kubler, at the time, had access to a limited number of colonial murals, but he brought international attention to these colonial works.”⁷ While Kubler provided a starting point for colonial architecture and mural research, the Bolivian scholar Teresa Gisbert brought attention to colonial mural painting in South America. Gisbert focused on studying colonial mural paintings in Bolivia and Peru at a time when most academic interest centered on Mexico. In her article *La Pintura Mural Andina* (1992), Gisbert offers an overview of Andean mural painting where native Incan visual practices were incorporated into studying colonial murals.⁸ Later in *El Paraíso De Los Pájaros Parlantes* (1999), She explores the presence of elements of Incan religion in juxtaposition with European Christianity in the formation of colonial imagery.⁹ Contrary to Kubler, Gisbert did not see a rupture between colonial and Indigenous art but an extension of Indigenous visual practices, central to my own approach to the study of colonial mural paintings in the northern Andes. Jorge Flores Ochoa with his book *Pintura Mural en el Sur Andino*, offered me an overview of the prevalence of mural painting in South America and Mexico, which helped me in the initial stages of my research to plan and develop my initial ideas.¹⁰

The academic work of Ananda Cohen-Aponte and Lisa Trever has inspired me to move away from European iconographic comparisons and explore these paintings from local perspectives. In *Heaven, Hell, and Everything in Between*, Ananda Cohen-Aponte's advice about “The Problems of Palimpsest,” a warning that included useful information regarding its pitfalls, helped me consider how to approach such an academic endeavor.¹¹ She also connected the mural painting to local historical events and how local viewers would recognize these elements even though they are embedded in religious narratives. Lisa Trever conveyed to me the importance of considering the active presence of Indigenous people during the development of the Latin American Spanish colonies. In her work with pre-Hispanic Moche mural painting in Pañamarca, northern Peru, Trever links the mural elements with Moche religious practices that

⁵ George Kubler 1912-1996, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century* : V.2, vol. 2 (Connecticut: Yale Univ. Press, 1948, 1948).

⁶ Kubler, 2:380.

⁷ Jeanette Favrot Peterson, *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco: Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 5.

⁸ Teresa Gisbert, “La Pintura Mural Andina,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 1, no. 1–2 (January 1992): 113, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10609169208569791>.

⁹ Teresa Gisbert, *El paraíso de los pájaros parlantes: la imagen del otro en la cultura andina* (La Paz: Plural Ed, 1999).

¹⁰ Jorge A Flores Ochoa, Elizabeth Kuon Arce, and Roberto Samanez Argumedo, *Pintura Mural En El Sur Andino* (Lima: Banco de Crédito del Perú, 1993).

¹¹ Ananda Cohen Suarez, *Heaven, Hell, and Everything in between: Murals of the Colonial Andes*, First edition, Recovering Languages and Literacies of the Americas Mellon Foundation Initiative (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016), 19–23.

are not readily visible.¹² These and many other studies of mural painting have developed and expanded the field, allowing me to add the present work to this conversation and build upon these foundations.

The Fragmentary Nature of Mural Painting

My study of mural painting fragments provides a methodology that concentrates on local perceptions that highlight different visual decisions. Here, I explore how the appearance of fragments was handled and how these fragments adjust to the present function of the space. Convents provide ideal examples of this approach because they form part of a cloistered space, indicating that the mural paintings inside were made to engage the nuns in specific areas. The Northern Andes are filled with ample examples of mural images that have not been studied due to their inherent fragility, making them physically and visually unstable. The volatility of the murals was heightened by using the *al temple* technique, which was used throughout the Northern Andes to paint colonial murals.¹³ This type of paint is applied over the already-dried plaster and is comprised of a mix of color pigments with water and an organic binder, which dries fast, creating a fine layer that retains the brightness of the colors.¹⁴ These qualities make the painting less flexible and susceptible to cracking due to environmental exposure or, as in the case of the Convent of San José, seismic activity, often requiring subsequent resurfacing and repainting. This gives mural painting a humble quality that sets it apart from other art forms like easel painting, sculpture, and goldsmithing. This quality allows murals to be flexible and transformable, making them ideal for reflecting their historical context and revealing how architecture, images, and the people that inhabit those spaces are related.

The fragility of mural painting parallels women's social standing during the colonial period, where they were closely scrutinized and forced to be married or secluded. The convents sheltered women from the external gaze, protecting them from society at large and limiting their interactions with the outside world while creating spaces of autonomy. The juxtaposition between the fragility and strength of mural paintings and conventual life provides a better understanding of the relationship between images and devotion.

Audiencia of Santafé and Quito: Changes and Impact

This study focuses on the mural paintings found at three convents in the Northern Andes: The Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé, The Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, both located in the altiplano Cundiboyacense in Colombia and the Convent of San José (now known

¹² Lisa Trever, "The Artistry of Moche Mural Painting and the Ephemerality of Monuments," in *Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World*, ed. Cathy Lynne Costin and Dumbarton Oaks, Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Symposia and Colloquia (Pre-Columbian Studies Symposium "Making Value, Making Meaning : Techné in the Pre-Columbian World," Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2016), 253–79; Lisa Trever, *The Archaeology of Mural Painting at Pañamarca, Peru*, Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology, Number 40 (Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017).

¹³ Rodolfo Vallín Magaña and Clemencia Arango, *Imágenes Bajo Cal & Pañete: Pintura Mural de La Colonia En Colombia* (Bogotá: El Sello Editorial: Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá, 1998), 49.

¹⁴ Ralph Mayer, "Tempera Painting," in *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques*, 3d ed., rev.expanded (New York: Viking Press, 1970), 225.

as Carmen Alto) in Quito, Ecuador. I chose these convents as case studies because each of them stands for a different type of architectural space and artistic approach that shape the organization of my dissertation. These convents are also important for my study because they were not at the center of Spanish administration and, as a result, the objects of academic scrutiny, as in the ecclesiastical institutions in the established colonial metropolises.

The geographical position of the Northern Andes (Colombia and Ecuador) made imperial access and regulation difficult. As a result, these convents were in an unsteady area of Spanish colonial control, located at the margins of the prominent viceroyalties of New Spain and Perú. As in convents, the seclusion of this colonial territory fostered spaces of autonomy. Local inhabitants were left to interpret many of the rules and the significance of artworks arriving from Spain and influential viceroyalties. The difficulty of ruling in this area is reflected in the multiple changes in political structure, which acknowledged the need for a form of government independent from the already formed viceroyalties. It is, therefore, necessary to describe the history of the political structure surrounding the convents under discussion.

The Spanish colonial government was divided into viceroyalties, audiencias, and cabildos, which were overseen by the Council of Indies, which convened in Seville, Spain. This distinction is important because it impacted the relationship between the colonial territories and the Spanish crown. In the case of the Northern Andes, it is important to be aware of the division between viceroyalties and the audiencias, and their formation and changes. The first mention of the intent to establish a vice royal figure in the New World is found in the agreement between Cristobal Colon and the Spanish Crown known as the Capitulations of Santafé written in 1492: "Furthermore, that your highnesses make the said Don Cristobal the viceroy and governor of all the said terra firma and islands that, he discovers or gains in said seas."¹⁵ This governmental figure was later given to trusted officials, who became his direct representative in a world that was geographically inaccessible to the Spanish king. The vast expanse of the New World required the division of the viceroyalties of the two main territories: New Spain (1535) and Perú (1542); this last one included most of South America, including Santafé (Colombia) and Quito (Ecuador). On the other hand, the audiencia was a judicial branch of the Spanish Government in charge of administering law, overseeing the compliance of Royal dispositions, governmental control, and a source of legal information for the viceroy and governors.¹⁶

The audiencia consisted of twelve territorial divisions, which included the Audiencia of Santafé, which oversaw the Kingdom of Nueva Granada. Before becoming a viceroyalty, the area of the Northern Andes (not including the area of Ecuador) was referred to as Nueva Granada, which can cause some confusion in a historical timeline. The audiencia of Santafé was established in 1549 by King Charles V, who became aware of the economic growth of the Kingdom of Nueva Granada and of the difficulties in imparting the law in a territory difficult to access from Lima, the capital of the Viceroyalty of Perú.¹⁷ The Audiencia of Quito was instituted

¹⁵ ACA, Cancillería, Registros, Núm.3569, Fol135v-136v, "Capitulaciones Del Almirante Don Cristóbal Colón o 'de Santa Fe'" (Santa fe, 1492), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹⁶ *Recopilacion De Leyes De Los Reynos De Las Indias* (Madrid: Antonio Balbas, 1756), xv–xviii.

¹⁷ Patronato,197,R.24, Fol11, "Asentamiento de La Audiencia de Santa Fe" (Santa Fe, 1550), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

under similar circumstances, established in 1563 by King Philip II, and the distance from Lima to Quito and Santafé affected the control of the territory.¹⁸

Importantly for my study, even though the Audiencias of Santafé and Quito were considered centers of the colonial empire, they were peripheral to the Viceroyalties of Perú and New Spain, which relegated the northern Andes cultural, social, and economic participation to the margins.

The seclusion of the Audiencias of Santafé and Quito interfered with the convents' organization, operation, and development, including the Convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé and the Convent of San José in Quito, founded during this period. Most of the first convents founded in these audiencias were spearheaded locally. They were not regulated directly by European orders, which did not send representatives due to the distance and difficult access, pushing these institutions to use their local perception to interpret texts and artworks from Europe.

The convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja included local elements associated with the Muisca culture (local Indigenous group) in their mural paintings. However, although geographically proximate to one another and belonging to the same governmental division, their economic and social configuration differed. In chapter two, I explore how each of these convents in Nueva Granada had a different financial structure -encomienda vs. dowry- affecting their income and artistic funds. In the case of the Audiencia of Quito, in chapter four, I analyze how the Convent of San José exemplifies women's participation in developing local artistic sensitivities linked to Quito's geographical isolation. The isolation also affected the economy of the Convent of San José; for instance, the Audiencia of Quito had an Indigenous demographic resurgence in the sixteenth century, which allowed the territory to become a manufacturing hub. This allowed local artistic production to develop and grow, including "artisanal products such as buttons, fine lace, and rosaries," influencing Quito's conventual handcraft work.¹⁹

The arrival of the Bourbons to power in Spain and the introduction of new political and economic reforms included the formation of the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada (1717) and the brief dissolution of the Audiencia of Quito (1717-1720).²⁰ Quito enjoyed an economic boom during the seventeenth century due to its agricultural and textile development, which gave the Audiencia of Quito a level of economic autonomy that was threatened by their incorporation into the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada.²¹ The return of the Audiencia of Quito to the Viceroyalty of Perú was followed by the dissolution of the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada on the 5th of November, 1723 to "avoid the waste of as many monies as must be consumed in the up-keep

¹⁸ Quito, 17.N.2, "Sobre Fundación de La Audiencia y Nombramiento de Presidente" (Quito, 1564), Seville, Archivo General de Indias; *Recopilacion De Leyes*, 189.

¹⁹ Kimberly Gauderman, *Women's Lives in Colonial Quito Gender, Law, and Economy in Spanish America* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003), 2.

²⁰ Carmen Ruigómez Gómez, "Los Efectos de La Creación Del Virreinato de Nueva Granada En La Real Hacienda de Quito (1718-1721)," *Fronteras de La Historia* 22, no. 1 (2017): 203, <https://doi.org/10.22380/20274688.18>.

²¹ Francisco A. Eissa-Barroso, *The Spanish Monarchy and the Creation of the Viceroyalty of New Granada (1717-1739): The Politics of Early Bourbon Reform in Spain and Spanish America*, Early American History Series, volume 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 173–74.

of the Viceroy, his salary and that of his guards, and other major expenses (of his house and family), which are Inevitable."²²

In 1739, during the Bourbon Monarchy in Spain, the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada was reinstated, including the Audiencia of Quito. According to the royal decree of San Ildefonso, signed by Don Miguel de Villanueva, the reason for its reinstatement relates to the state of neglect of the territory of Nueva Granada and the desire of the population to have a closer government: "having experienced a great decline in those precious domains [Nueva Granada], which is increasing daily as several communities have presented to me, begging us to re-establish the Viceroyalty."²³ This time, the viceroyalty remained until the territory of Nueva Granada obtained independence in 1810. Towards the end of the colonial period, the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja and San José in Quito were under the same political and economic authority until the separation of Ecuador from the Gran Colombia (new independent republic, former Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada) in 1830. Again, as in the initial institution of its convent, geographical distances from Santafé to Ecuador "affected their administrative participation" and the governability of the area.²⁴

Ultimately, the instability of the Northern Andes and the persistent difficulties of governance brought by the long distances produced by its mountainous topography influenced the artistic decisions taken by the nuns of Nueva Granada and Quito. The distinction between the changing government organization of Quito and Nueva Granada helps us to understand cultural and social organization at the time of the convents' development. Distance from the colonial metropolises had an impact on the surviving mural paintings analyzed in my dissertation. Rather than succumbing to a model of provincialism, which dominated the early study of Latin American art, I argue that relative cultural and physical isolation, like conventual enclosure itself, provided a unique environment and community wherein local Indigenous and Catholic visual elements were meaningfully connected and embedded in cloistered spaces.

Research cases: Parts and Chapters

The mural programs examined in this study represent the complexity generated by the painted palimpsests, which require careful visual analysis in conjunction with historical research unexpectedly resurfacing the memory of the women in the convent. This close approach forced me to contemplate each image slowly and let the images embrace me with their beauty and history. The details unwrapped from this method can be hard to distinguish without organization and guidance. This is why the research is divided into two parts, which allow a comprehensive exploration of the images and their relationships with the nuns and the convents.

Part I, *The Choir: A Liminal Space Between the Public and the Private*, concentrates on the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé and the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja (Figure

²² Eissa-Barroso, 143; Sergio Elías Ortiz, *Nuevo Reino de Granada. El Virreynato. Tomo 1 (1719–1753). Historia Extensa de Colombia, Volumen IV* (Bogotá: Academia Colombiana de Historia, 1970), 52.

²³ Miscelánea: SC. 39, 97, D. 26, "Real Cédula Mediante La Cual Se Erige El Virreinato de Santafé o Nueva Granada y Se Señala a Veragua En Su Distrito, San Ildefonso" (San Ildefonso, 1739), Bogotá, Archivo General de la Nación.

²⁴ Frank Robinson Safford, *Historia de Colombia: país fragmentado, sociedad dividida*, trans. Marco Palacios Roza, 2. ed, vol. Segunda parte: Desde c. 1808 hasta c. 1875, Historia Empresarial (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2012), 209.

1.1, 1.5). Here, I focus on the mural paintings located at the choir from both convents of Santa Clara, which flourished in Nueva Granada between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The choir was a space that allowed the nuns to participate in liturgical celebrations without breaking their enclosure. Through their voices, the women created sound landscapes that extended the warmth and vitality of ornamental and devotional images into the church space while asserting their presence. The choir was a hierarchical space in which access was associated with the women's lineage and their musical abilities. The analysis of these mural images is accompanied by accounts such as the day-to-day remarks of Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo. She was a mystic writer who inhabited the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja from 1691 until her death in 1742. She was an active choir member and used the space fervently as a site for prayer.²⁵ Her link to this space of devotion was so strong that her own room was adjacent to the choir.²⁶ Each mural layer physically and conceptually represents the significant role images had in the devotional life of the convent, showcasing multimedia and cultural exchanges.

Even though both convents belonged to the same religious order, their mural paintings exemplify the changes that occurred in Nueva Granada during their foundation. The convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja was the first convent founded in Nueva Granada in 1571, thirty-two years after the foundation of Tunja in 1539. At the time, Tunja and Santafé were vying to be the center of power of Nueva Granada. The Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé was founded in 1647 when Santafé was on the path to establishing its dominance in the area. The political transition is evident in the state of the mural paintings; for instance, in Santafé, the mural paintings were complemented with carved gilded ornaments, while in Tunja, the paintings suffered decay, close to the point of destruction. Although heavily damaged, the paintings at the convent's choir in Tunja illustrate the embodiment of meaning and female representation through ornamentation. The fragmented nature of these murals required me to assemble virtually the surviving remnants in digital reconstructions that allow a better appreciation of their effect on the women who had access to the choral space.

These murals do not attempt to teach or provide a cohesive narrative. In the choral singing, the sole use of floral, architectural, and ornamental elements accompanied the voices of the nuns. Like the notations on music sheets held by the nuns, painted ornament floats in apparent chaos but with a predetermined pattern that allows the nuns singing in this room to transcend the convent's walls. In contrast, the murals found in the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé focus on recognizable historical figures, accompanied by controlled depictions of floral arrangements. These figures are juxtaposed with painted animals suspended in the choir's ceiling that, like the ornamental patterns in the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, mark the sacred space. The comparison of these two mural programs reveals the role of ornament bearing witness to the nuns' religious aspirations, their relationships with each other, and their efforts to create a multi-sensorial experience.

Part II, *Imitation, Repetition, and Adaptation as a Path to Sanctity: The Devotional Visual Journey of the Nuns of the Carmelite Convent of San José (Carmen Alto)*, departs from the study of murals found in a dedicated devotional space (the choir) to images placed adjacent to the

²⁵ Francisca Josefa del Castillo, *Mi Vida* (Ministerio de Cultura: Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, 2015), 113.

²⁶ Castillo, 81.

common living spaces of the Carmelite Convent of San José in Quito (1653) (Figure 2.1). This part moves from studying small ornate remnants in the first part to the explication of a full narrative mural program depicting the life of the sixteenth-century Spanish nun St. Teresa of Ávila. This mural program dedicated to the founder of the Discalced Carmelite order is in narrow hallways that require circumambulation of the space to obtain the full story. In this case, most of the murals are in a complete state or have undergone restorations and changes without substantial changes to the story. Part II centers on the unexpected interactions between nuns and the murals and how the murals were an extension of conventual religious practices such as praying and using Spiritual Exercises. Imitation and repetition became transformative forces that granted access to religious scenes, exalting their virtue and their own saintly potential.

The murals reveal a consistent devotional juxtaposition of the convent's two principal figures, St. Teresa of Ávila and Mariana de Jesús (the first saint of Ecuador). Even though these mural paintings were taken from a book of European engravings, the nuns appropriated peripheral visual elements to embed themselves into the scene. The complexity created by the nuns' interventions requires a closer look into the history of the prints and the relationship of St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús with the convent's foundation, including the historical context. I then explore the paint palimpsests and how they reveal a fascinating pictorial interaction and artistic awareness of the women from the convent. This challenging task required the use of illustrations and reconstructions to explore each detail closely, producing a great number of complementary images that are dissected and cataloged as figures in the appendix, which provide a guiding map to facilitate the understanding of the relationship of the murals, their printed template, local beliefs, and the women that inhabited the convent.

Conventual Mural Paintings: Devotion and Imagination

Through this research, I want to recreate the experience of persistent contact with these mural images. Both parts of this dissertation demonstrate how the women in the convents acknowledged the role of images as a devotional tool and how the dynamic nature of mural painting created spaces to expound on these interactions. Mural paintings took a role similar to other devotional objects made in the convents, such as paper reliquaries, which were "composed of paper strips shaped into figures that resemble a garden with flowers, leaves, and paths that meander in the space to guide the viewer through almost indiscernible relics" (Figure 0.1).²⁷ The physical contact of the nuns with paper reliquaries and with mural paintings through labor and daily contact recorded their hand and body movements and thus the real lives of cloistered women. These interactions facilitated the nuns' religious contemplation and embedded them into sacred spaces. Each of the mural paintings studied in this work demonstrates that they were more than decorative images. Beauty and visual joy move away from superficial roles to take a prominent function as sites of memory and meaning.

²⁷ Yessica Porras, "Un Viaje En Papel a Un Mundo Sagrado: Manifestaciones Manuales de Devoción En El Nuevo Mundo (A Journey on Paper to A Sacred World: Manual Manifestations of Devotion in The New World).", in *Spolia Sancta: Reliquias y Arte Entre El Viejo y El Nuevo Mundo*, ed. Luisa Elena Alcalá and Juan Luis González García, Akal Arte y Estética 94 (Madrid, España: Ediciones Akal, 2023), 164.

PART I

The Choir: A Liminal Space Between the Public and the Private

How among all the women, so many and so holy who shine like stars, my Lady and Mother is like the sun, chosen among so many choirs of virgins, martyrs, and nuns, who are like lilies and carnations, like roses and irises. All the beauty of the field is in Mary Most Holy; by comparison, the flowers are like thorns among whom the lily shines.²⁸
- Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo y Guevara.

The sun, stars, roses, lilies, and carnations stand for the Holy Virgin in Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo's exploration of the Hail Mary prayer in *Afectos Espirituales*.²⁹ Here Mary is in the sky with the stars and the sun and in the fields whose soil allows fragrant flowers to grow in all their beauty. Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo moved to the convent of Santa Clara la Real, Tunja in 1689, when she was eighteen years old. She inhabited the convent for forty-three years until her death in 1742. Del Castillo wrote two manuscripts, *Afectos Espirituales* (poems and verses divinely inspired) and *Mi Vida* (memoirs), which after her death give us a glimpse of early conventual life in Nueva Granada and established her as a mystical writer.³⁰ The life of the Holy Mother was a guide for nuns who, through their enclosure, attempted to gain access to her holiness by emulation. Enclosure provided the cloistered nuns the opportunity to devote their lives to sanctity. Stars and flowers converged in the convent's walls and texts, impressing their spiritual aspirations. The choir of the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, the home of Mother Francisca del Castillo, stands as the visual representation of the paradox between the public and private space that folds together the sacred (heaven) and the mundane (ground) in a limited space (Figure 1.1). This space contrasts with the elaborate ornamentation of the church where the nave and altar are covered by red wooden planks of with gold leaf ornaments that glow like stars throughout the church (Figure 1.2). The area between the church and the choir marks the space between visibility and obscurity. This choral space allows nuns to participate in the mass below while keeping strict enclosure. A perforated wooden screen enables their voice to reverberate throughout the church, creating an in-between space where they are present in public through their singing. The layers of mural paintings in the choir are remnants of the past and the present of the convent and the women that inhabited that space.

The convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, founded in 1571, the first convent established in Nueva Granada, in conjunction with the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé (currently Bogotá), founded in 1647, provide exceptional case studies of early female colonial

²⁸ Francisca Josefa del Castillo y Guevara, "Afectos Espirituales" (Manuscript, Tunja, 1724), 230V, Bogotá, Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango. Cómo entre todas las mujeres, tantas y tan santas que como estrellas resplandecen, mi Señora y Madre es como el sol, escogida entre tan innumerables coros de vírgenes, mártires y religiosas, que son como azucenas y claveles, como rosas y lirios. Toda la hermosura del campo está en María Santísima; y en su comparación son las flores como espinas entre quien resplandece el lirio.

²⁹ Francisca Josefa del Castillo y Guevara, "Afectos Espirituales."

³⁰ Kathryn Joy McKnight, *The Mystic of Tunja: The Writings of Madre Castillo, 1671-17* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 167.

choirs. These convents were abandoned after the confiscation of assets from the decree of *desamortización de bienes de manos muertas* (confiscation of mortmain properties), of September 9th, 1861.³¹ The decree, made during the presidency of Gen. Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, “extinguished in Boyacá all (male and female) convents, monasteries and religious houses” as a way to liberate religious properties for sale and create an economic gain for the nation after independence.³² This process included the secularization and religious deactivation of these buildings. The shift of the religious nature of the buildings into secular institutions froze in time areas of the convent, like the church. Other spaces, such as the living quarters, had multiple physical and institutional transformations, including the whitewashing of the walls, which both hid the visual history of the place and became a blanket that protected it from further destruction by natural elements. It also prevented further painting additions and erasures. The convent in Tunja was converted into a Hospital of Charity in 1864 and 1965, the building was given as a loan to the Pedagogical and Technological University to install a male student residence (Figure 1.3).³³ Once the building was in public hands, the directive was to “repair and whiten the entire building.”³⁴

For the Convent of Santa Clara, Santafé, in 1863, the architecture was adapted to be used as a military garrison of the Zapadores Battalion under the command of Colonel Daniel Delgado.³⁵ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the structure became the National Printing Press: “this building was in a state of abandonment, and part of it was in ruins.”³⁶ Despite the reforms to the buildings done by private and governmental institutions, the choir and the main church of these convents survived with most of their original architectural structure. The closeness of the choir to the ornate church allowed the survival of mural fragments underneath the white layer of painting (Figure 1.4). However, the space was devoid of ecclesiastical furnishings and visible evidence of the existence of the nuns who inhabited this space. In both Carmelite convents, the remains of mural painting mediate between the destruction of the past and the desire to recover lost memories and meanings rooted in the choral space.

This chapter is constructed as a progressive analytical journey that begins with a close look into mural fragments as the primary source. The visual analysis is later complemented with archival and artistic sources revealing unexpected connections between the paintings and the site’s history, including unforeseen visual readings. I begin with a section titled “Mural

³¹ Roberto Luis Jaramillo and Adolfo Meisel-Roca, “Más allá de la retórica de la reacción: análisis económico de la desamortización en Colombia, 1861-1888” (Bogotá, Colombia: Banco de la República, December 1, 2008), 7, <https://doi.org/10.32468/chee.22>.

Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, *Recopilación de Las Disposiciones Fundamentales i Reglamentarias Sobre Crédito Nacional i Desamortización de Bienes de Manos Muertas* (Bogotá: Imprenta de la Nación, 1862), 26.

³² Mosquera, *Recopilación de Las Disposiciones Fundamentales*, 26.

³³ Fernando Díaz Díaz, *La Desamortización de Bienes Eclesiásticos En Boyacá*, 1. ed., Colección Nueva Universidad; No. 12 (Tunja: Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, Secretaría de Investigaciones y Extensión Universitaria, 1977), 8–49.

³⁴ “Informes Del Gabinete al Presidente Del Estado de Boyacá, 1875” (Torres hermanos y compañía, n.d.), 32.

³⁵ Daniel Ortega Ricaurte, *Cosas de Santafé de Bogotá.*, Academia Colombiana de Historia. Biblioteca Eduardo Santos, v. 17 (Bogotá: ABC, 1959), 257.

³⁶ “Informe Que El Ministro de Fomento Presenta al Congreso de Colombia En Sus Sesiones Ordinarias de 1894” (Bogotá: Casa Editorial de J.J. Pérez, 1894), 129.

Encounters and Transformations,” which is an overview of the choral space. I then move into specific elements like the changing quality of the room: “Brushstrokes of Memories: Mural Painting Layers.” After an exploration of the presence of animals, flowers, and the sun in the following three sections, I shift the emphasis to archival material that links the formation of Tunja’s convent of Santa Clara la Real with Indigenous peoples. Archives reveal the convent’s dependence on the encomienda system and the circulation and influence of music in Nueva Granada. This section also explores music as an essential part of women’s education and a manifestation of devotion in “The Crafting of Exceptional Women Through Music.” The final section, “The Choirs of Santa Clara: Beyond Painting Fragments,” ties together each element of the chapter, including the photographic and digital reconstructive work.

Chapter 1

Mural Encounters and Transformations

The history of the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja parallels the ever-changing dynamism of its walls and memories that, layer by layer, were covered in paintings and built up a visual record (Figure 1.1, 1.5). The walls offer glimpses of various stages of murals, which hold in their layers the remnants of social, economic, and spiritual changes. The marked differences between the images in various convent areas defined the limits of private and public sacred spaces. These limits are salient in the paintings in the high choir that were concealed and displayed simultaneously. Located on the northwest side of the convent's church, the high choir has a privileged view that oversees the nave above the entrance, the altar, and lay visitors (Figure 1.6-1.7). The choir hangs over the end of the church's nave, echoing its liminal quality as a place that belongs to the main space but is inaccessible to the congregation. A distinct division between private and public is that the survival and continuation of mural painting marks the sequestered space (cloister). In contrast, the public side (church) was enhanced by the opulence of the candlelight reflected from the golden reliefs of the retablo.

Small hints of mural painting similar to the one excavated in the choir survive in the corners of the church's wooden retablos and doors (Figure 1.8). The ornamentation of each layer and area denotes their purpose: the choir as a place of female meditation and the church as a place of conversion, honor, and the exhibition of wealth.³⁷ Convents were characterized as hierarchical institutions, where women with higher economic, social, and genealogical standing held positions of power such as membership in the choral ensemble and greater access to the choral space.³⁸ Singing in the choir literally gave a voice to cloistered women who were otherwise required to be silent. They established their presence as individuals who participated in the outside society through their music. Choral music permeated the convent with the nuns' continuous, disciplined practices, and the congregation heard their performances during mass and religious festivities. The now empty and silent spaces were centers of female communities, aspects of whose lives are preserved in their wall remnants and archives.

The mural paintings at the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé were whitewashed at different stages to accommodate the changing use of the space (Figure 1.1). The multiple changes of ownership and function of the convents contributed to the deterioration of the convents' infrastructures. In Tunja, the space became a storage room for the city. In the 1980s, a beam fell and cracked the wall, which uncovered small remnants of the paintings that lay underneath (Figure 1.9).³⁹ Then, in 1983-84, the first attempt to restore the paintings occurred. Later from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, the Mexican restorer Rodolfo

³⁷ Pilar Jaramillo de Zuleta, *Coro alto de Santa Clara* (Bogotá: El Navegante, 1991), 30.

³⁸ María Constanza Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII* (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Ministerio de Cultura, Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2008), 199.

³⁹ Andrea Straunch González, "Exploración Mural Claustro Santa Clara La Real-Tunja, Boyacá" (Escuela Taller de Boyacá, 2010), 45, Tunja, Boyacá.

Vallín executed the latest intervention of the mural paintings.⁴⁰ In Santafé, the convent was loaned to the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1874, and in 1889, the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Santa Clara.⁴¹ In 1971, the local government acquired the convent to make a museum, which included the destruction and rearrangement of some of the areas, which created a problem of humidity, putting the mural paintings located under the plaster in danger.⁴² Mural painting was found in 1977 once the building was taken over by CONCULTURA (Colombian Institute of Culture), which worked to stop the deterioration of the building (Figure 1.10).⁴³ This work prompted the creation and formation of the Foundation for the Conservation and Restoration of Colombian Cultural Heritage; however, the multiple services offered by the foundation hindered the progress of the convent's restoration and lasted only until 1983.⁴⁴ This work included the initial uncovering of the high choir walls and the wooden ceiling, revealing an exceptional painting program that significantly deviates from the images found in the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja).

The paintings on the choir walls enveloped the conventual occupants in the space and visually enlarged the small room and the ceiling (Figure 1.1, 1.5). The room transported nuns outside the convent's walls into a virtual world activated by prayer and music. A close exploration of each layer of the choir allows a better understanding of this multisensorial relationship. The hierarchical social structure of the convents is mirrored in their architectural and painting configuration, where access by elites to the elevated space of the choir held an exclusive and privileged position closer to the divine. Women with familial ties to the founders held the highest positions, such as abbess.⁴⁵ For instance, the first Carmelite convent of Santafé was funded by the widow Elvira de Padilla, who was in charge of the convent, her donation included a stipulation: "Me and my aforementioned daughters and nieces have to enter and profess with irrevocable treatment."⁴⁶ According to Marta Fajardo de Rueda, by 1700, there were at least thirty-four close relatives of Doña Elvira who belonged to the convent.⁴⁷

Besides familial links, the nuns' position depended on their dowry. Like Doña Elvira, nuns of the black veil held positions of power such as singing in the choir, the right to vote, and the possibility to become an abbess; they paid about two thousand *patacones* in 1643.⁴⁸ Black-veiled nuns were also called *monjas de coro* (choir nuns), indicating the choir's tie to conventual

⁴⁰ "Del Claustro a La Escuela: 440 Años de Historia.," *Escuela Taller-Tunja*, 2013, 37; Rodolfo Vallín Magaña and Clemencia Arango, *Imágenes Bajo Cal & Pañete: Pintura Mural de La Colonia En Colombia* (Bogotá: El Sello Editorial: Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá, 1998), 138–39.

⁴¹ Germán Franco Salamanca, *Templo de Santa Clara, Bogotá* (Bogotá, Colombia: Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1987), 108.

⁴² Franco Salamanca, 115.

⁴³ Franco Salamanca, 132.

⁴⁴ Franco Salamanca, 140.

⁴⁵ Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII*, 73.

⁴⁶ Conventos, 56, fol. 177V, "Fundación Del Convento Carmelita Santafé" (Bogota, 1606), Bogotá, Archivo General de la Nación. "En la cual tenemos de entrar yo y las dichas mis hijas y sobrinas y profesar con trato irrevocable."

⁴⁷ Marta. Fajardo de Rueda, *Tesoros Artísticos Del Convento de Las Carmelitas Descalzas de Santafé de Bogotá*, 1. ed. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2005), 52.

⁴⁸ Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII*, 120–21.

hierarchy.⁴⁹ However, white veil nuns, who could not demonstrate a “pure” (exclusively Christian-European) family descendance did not have access to education, private quarters or the choir. They paid a relatively smaller dowry of three to six hundred *patacones* in 1645.⁵⁰

Murals addressed a select audience. In the case of the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé, the apparent decorative function of the choir paintings, like the apparently unassuming power of the women that inhabited these convents, stood for more than what is immediately accessible. Despite the ever-changing nature of choral mural paintings, the ceiling offers the most stable example of mural painting in both Convents of Santa Clara (Tunja-Santafé). As the highest part of each convent, the ceiling of the church and the choir were carefully decorated with evocative patterns and figures that served multiple purposes and meanings. The public nature of the church made it stand as the representation of the convents' social, economic, and religious standing among their community, which was represented with a gilded ceiling. On the other hand, the choir corresponded to the internal needs or perspectives of the nuns, where images and patterns comprised the austere choirs.

Brushstrokes of Memories: Mural Painting Layers –Santa Clara la Real (Tunja)

Each surviving layer and brushstroke of mural painting in the choirs of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé are witness to their former conventual life. The paintings' fragmentary and fragile quality obscures visual components and layers, requiring a close visual study where minor painterly and architectural details transformed into key elements offering an intense visual journey. One of these architectural details at the high choir of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja is the ceiling with a mansard structure (roof with four sloping sides) made out of “fired brick, adobe and mud wall” (Figure 1.11.1).⁵¹ The ceiling extended into the church; however, a divider breaks the continuation of the choir paintings into the nave's wooden ceiling (Figure 1.6). The rudimentary choir's structure is emphasized by the ceiling's visible *guadua* rods (a type of bamboo that grows in Colombia) sporadically wrapped with jute. The rods form a linear pattern that radiates from the edge of the walls to a flattened elongated painted register, heightening the space and its sacred character.

On the ceiling at Tunja, flowers and leaves form a pattern, where painted leaves form well-thought-out curves and twists to create a dynamic pattern around a trio of larger quatrefoil plants (Figure 1.11.2). At the center of the ceiling, there is a yellow flower with petals paired with larger leaves with midribs of the same color (Figure 1.11.3). The distinction between the leaves and the flower was blurred by green oval edges and red feathered shapes that extended the figure to the sides. The yellow and red give dimension to the middle of the flat register, becoming the base of more complex forms found in the rest of the composition. At the southeast of the ceiling, the surviving flower was reconstructed as a continuation of the central floral figure (Figure 1.11.4). The middle of this flower has a circle with a red dot surrounded by two green spirals that contrast with the coalescent leaf patterns that unify the

⁴⁹ Luis Martín, *Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1989), 180.

⁵⁰ Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII*, 120–21. Patacón was a way to refer to local currency.

⁵¹ Santafé, 237, “Información de Servicios Francisco Salguero Ante El Escribano Luis de Vergara” (Tunja, 1574), Seville, a General de Indias.

painting. There was no restoration of the left side of the ceiling register, but it is safe to assume that it followed the structure and color of the restored right side.

A close comparison between the center and the available side images shows two different approaches to the pattern. Even though both flowers have similar shapes, the color fills each figure at the center, evenly flattening the area. In contrast, the color of the floral patterns at the side feathers toward the interior and the red outline give dimension to the pattern. A green border creates a limit between the rafters and the ceiling. The sides that end towards the church are open, creating the illusion that the leaf patterns continue beyond the room (Figure 1.11.2). There is no layering of adjacent painting remnants, in contrast with the physical state of the choir walls. The lack of layers indicates that contrary to the changing choir walls, the ceiling was only painted once, besides its later whitewashing.

Floral patterns at Tunja's convent were part of the choir's initial and final stage of the mural three paint layers. The surviving first painting program was made in the 16th century. It consisted of white floral patterns highlighted by a soft blue shadow and a rounded yellow center that contrasts with the pink of the background (Figure 1.12.1). The wall has a tripartite niche where either a monstrance or sheet music would have been placed. This structure is framed by two thin blue columns create the illusion that the choir space extends beyond the walls (Figure 1.12.2). The center of the structure is less fragmented due to the lack of overpainting. The background flowers of the tripartite niche were placed randomly in a trio of columns that, when seen up close, take the shape of a heraldic fleur-de-lis. They consist of three curvilinear petals gathered in the center, which are replicated upside-down in the same figure to complete the flower (Figure 1.12.3). Small flowers with simplified arched petals in an undulating pattern fill the in-between space. A thin black line creates an arched border filled with ornamental white lines. The sides of the tripartite niche have a faint shadow of the same flowers with less linear positions; both areas evoke the sense of repetition and spatial arrangement of wallpaper.

The floral patterns show us a desire to create a serene space where white lilies represent the beauty and connection of the nuns with the Virgin Mary and the use of the choir. Like musical notes, the wall flowers build a harmony where repetition and intervals create a visual melody, and like sheet music, the rigid columns mark the end of the pattern (Figure 1.12.1). The odd elongated shape of the columns contrasts with the delicate blue contour of the petals, suggesting inexperience or lack of training in the construction of trompe l'oeil and perspective (Figure 1.12.2). There are no other surviving fragments of this wall in other parts of the room; as the first coat of paint, much of this painting program did not survive. It is unclear, therefore, if the floral pattern, the columns, or both were replicated elsewhere in the room.

The subsequent painting overlay of the choir walls (second layer) has a pattern of columns and arches, made in the 17th century, reflecting a change of visual focus. Monochromatic columns and arches in grisaille fill the walls with a low register emulating black and white tiles (Figure 1.13.1). This is a departure from the previous floral patterns and an evolution from the awkward bluish pilasters to solid columns and arches that rule the space. The change of the mural painting's emphasis shows a shift from a horror vacui "wallpaper" to the creation of a spatial illusion that adds dimensionality to the limited space. The inside of the arches is a blank space interrupted by a checkerboard pattern of lopsided rhombuses that create the illusion of continuation of the room, emulating the surface of a tiled floor and

moving the arches beyond the physical wall (Figure 1.13.3). The second space is similar to the physical arrangement of the nuns' living quarters. Their courtyard house was composed of two levels surrounding the central patio, with long, arched hallways that were the threshold between their rooms and the exterior (Figure 1.13.2).

This mural layer shows us the awareness by the artist, the patron, and the nuns that mural painting could modify the perception of a space. This awareness continued during and beyond the life of the convent in surviving fragments of mural images found inside their living quarters. Among these fragments, there are paint remnants inside these rooms, such as the top of a cross that indicates a religious narrative and a large S in the hallway that stands for *Sala de Cirugía* (Operating Room) from the time the convent became a hospital (Figure 1.14, 1.15). However, most paintings were lost to damage sustained from subsequent constructions and exposure to the elements such as humidity. The similarities between the mural layers of the choir show its transformation from an ornamental floral fantasy that sheltered these women into a familiar visual arrangement that signals the historical continuity of the choir. The attempt to recreate the arched hallway of their living space makes use of negative space to build architectural shapes. The lack of color adds to the program's architectural realism; the columns and arches near the living quarters are shaped by the shadows formed over the white surface throughout the day. However, this spatial mimicry has ornamental details that give a nod to the floral pattern from the previous layer, the ceiling paintings, and the upcoming mural (Figure 1.13).

Vegetal elements persist in other areas of the mural program. The spandrel (triangular area formed between the adjoining arch and column) has two trefoil plants covering the large area of the truncated triangle and a single upward leaf at the lower center (Figure 1.13.4). The upper register of the arched structure is formed by curved lines that attempt to create the illusion of a decorative relief; organic forms emulate leaves and vines that connect the walls into a continuous pattern. These lines also have the same visual energy as the vegetal forms on the ceiling that fill the space and give dimensionality to the room with the curves' multiple directions (Figure 1.11.2). A west-side window disrupts the uniformity of the mural; the painter had to adjust the pattern to integrate the window into the illusion (Figure 1.16.1, 1.16.2).

A simple line integrates the disjointed upper area of the window, with a single fleur-de-lis hovering over the line's top center echoing the trapezoidal slanted ceiling (Figure 1.16.3). Between the painted rhombuses and the lower part of the window, a rectangular register replicates the vegetal shapes of the upper register, connecting the arches and columns with the incongruent area (Figure 1.16.2). This register suggests flowers that intertwine over lines and multidirectional strokes of black paint. The curved lines transcend the area of the choir, extending into the church, framing the nave's wall (Figure 1.4). Enlarged rectangular patterns replicate the ornamentation found in the second mural layer framing the area adjacent to the choir and the church's nave (Figure 1.1, 1.4). The larger area allowed the painters to further develop the design, including small vignettes with crowns with protruding elongated lilies on the sides, and at the center, a fleur-des-lis protruding from a flower (Figure 1.18.2). Like the choir pattern, the overall depiction is outlined by a thinner register of c-shaped spirals (Figure 1.18.3). The juxtaposition of the retablo and the black and white design indicates the order of the painted layers, establishing its time of creation before 1613, the year inscribed at the top of the retablo (Figure 1.18.1).

The second mural overlay at the choir shows the continuation of the mural pattern that connects the secluded (choir) and the accessible (nave) area of the church. The extension of a familiar and everyday setting like the nuns' living quarters --which resemble the typical domestic architectural configuration of colonial homes--is incongruous with the sacred and private purpose of the choral space to reach the divine through music and prayer. The floral marked the exceptional transitional role of the choir, where the subtle replication of forms embodies the presence of the nuns in the temple with a fantastical illusion. In contrast, the architectural monotone subverted the liminal quality of the choir by clearly delineating this area with a recognizable scene not accessible to the rest of the congregation. It is uncertain if the nuns or artists were aware of the first mural program, but the arches and columns were later transformed into a colorful outburst that brought back the mural's whimsical character.

The architectural forms were replaced in the surviving third and last painting overlay by flowers, leaves, vegetal shapes, and two cherubim (Figure 1.19, 1.20). Here, a bright yellow background with vivid designs shows the resurface of design elements from the previous mural layers. The surviving fragment was in an area located inside a niche previously covered with bricks. This is an example of how the covering of the mural programs allowed for their survival. It is unclear if the layer of painted choir walls, immediately beneath the overpainting, replicated the design of the surviving pattern. This painting layer was the closest to the final whitewash of the room, making it vulnerable to breakage during the restoration process and exposure to environmental elements. The rectangular niche where the surviving painting is located has three divisions marked by the receding wall. The middle wall is further away from the vertical sides, giving the painting width and forming a ledge. In the distance, the mural looks flat due to the consistent use of color that created a seamless continuation into the foreground area of the mural. The middle panel reverses the pattern found in the first mural painting. The small quatrefoil flowers that humbly filled the blank space became the salient element of this pattern. The tinted pink flowers have crisscross lines that intersect and extend, becoming leaves and connecting to the other flowers creating a diamond shape pattern (Figure 1.20). A familiar double fleur-de-lis pattern of the first layer emerges in the three painting layers, accentuating the flowers of the design configuration (Figure 1.21).

The emergence of the first paint pattern with the fleur-des-lis poses a question: during the making of the second niche, did they see the pattern before covering it, or was it taken from a sliver of painting that survived on the border of the stone retablo (Figure 1.22)? The edge shows the use of blue pastel with soft pink delineations that repeat linearly. The double-sided fleur-de-lis is depicted inside an undulating diamond-shaped frame, next to undulating lines that echo the first mural painting and create the feeling of wallpaper with its soothing visual recurrences. The foreground of the last choir mural has vertical registers enclosed by blue vertical bands with undulating lines, similar to the decorative edges found in the previous two painting programs (Figure 1.21). Inside, there are more detailed reproductions of the decorative lines in green, pink, orange, and blue that enhance the middle figure of a cherub that flanks the niche (Figure 1.20). These figures have blue (left) and green (right) wings; they do not have a body or limbs, their heads stand on top of their wings with a three-quarter look towards the viewer. Their childish faces with curly locks, rosy cheeks, small mouths, and big eyes match the liveliness of the ornamental lines. The shape of the niche where the paintings survived is peculiar to fit a monstrance, crucifix, or texts; the main part is rectangular, while the

top has an upward curved indentation that meets with a wooden beam (Figure 1.19). The right side of the mural recess is located over the arched niche of the first mural layer (Figure 1.1). This juxtaposition shows that there was no awareness of the existence of the original wall recess, which awkwardly cuts the area. Nevertheless, there are correlations with the other two previous mural layers.

The cherubic theme is repeated in the stone altarpiece (retablo) near the entrance of the nave, where a group of these figures was placed around the central area (Figure 1.17). A line of cherubim is placed between the retablo pillars and traversed at the top by interchanging cherubic figures that fill the recess. Also, they are found on top of the triangular area surrounding a circle with golden flashes emanating from a now blank space, which symbolizes the Holy Spirit, represented by a dove. The choir's colorful cherubim and wall patterns contrast with the red and gold figures over the white background of the stone retablo (Figure 1.23.1). These colors mimicked the wooden planks that covered the rest of the church, suggesting a painting date of around 1613: the date inscribed at the top of the retablo (Figure 1.2, 1.17). The stone retablo, as noted before, has adjacent remnants of paint that denote the existence of mural paintings prior to the building of this structure and the concealment of the church's walls. The retablo paint demonstrates a complete restoration; the only painting fragment is found at the under-bench (lower part of the retablo), where there is a pattern similar to the vegetal forms of the choir's ceiling and the vertical ledges in the choir's niche (Figure 1.23.3). A central flower with four well-defined petals has curved leaves painted in bright yellow, blue, red, and orange, reminiscent of the vegetal forms near the cherubim (Figure 1.23). Again, there is a prevalence of design and color that shows that the artists were aware of the existence of previous layers and the images found in other areas of the convent. This prevalence shows an early visual link between the church and the choir, where the mural programs were an extension of the church into the choir, becoming a shared sacred space.

The desire to build a collective experience in the private and public space changed with the construction of the wooden retablo. This marked the spatial differences between the preservation of mural paintings and their concealment (Figure 1.1-1.2). The choir contrasts with the decoration of the red altarpiece with golden sparkles in the church, reflecting the convent's opulence and the women who inhabited it. This public space allowed these women to show themselves without being seen. In contrast, the choir was a private space where they had more freedom to decide the images that fit their needs. The paintings density on the choir walls enveloped the occupants in the space and visually enlarged the small room and ceiling. The room transported the nuns outside the convent walls into a virtual world activated by prayer and music. The Convent of Santa Clara (Santafé), like most convents established during the early part of the colonial period, adopted mural painting to give shape to the choir's composition and create outside worlds. Nonetheless, they are from the same religious order and constructed near geographical proximity; this convent had a different approach to painting, ornamentation, and distribution while keeping a similar sense of memory, permeability, and meaning.

A Fantasy of Celestial Animals and Flowers – Santa Clara, Santafé

A fantastical universe of golden wooden flower reliefs interlaced with painted animal constellations envelops the high choir of the Convent of Santa Clara (Santafé) (Figure 1.5).

These figures painted over wooden planks flatten the ceiling covering the interior structure. This structure creates visual continuity with the church's vault through the consistent use of wooden golden flowers that take the form of shining stars in the distance (Figure 1.24). The choir's figuration served as a counterpoint to the ornamental patterns of Tunja's high Choir of Santa Clara la Real. It illustrates how convents based on the same religious order, close geographical location, similar native and European inhabitants, spiritual goals, rules, and ideals, had differing visual interpretations of the choral space. The animals are apparently randomly positioned all over the ceiling, only interrupted by wooden flower replicas of the gilded floral carvings from the church's vault, which create an extension of these spaces. At the same time, the fragmented walls preserve remnants of religious figures and events, with few flower bouquets on bases and baskets that do not form a continuous pattern (Figure 1.26). In the convent of Santa Clara in Santafé, there is a visual incongruence between the religious figures, the fruit and flower baskets with the ceiling's animal-filled celestial fantasy. Also, the architectural emphasis, like the one found in the painted recreation of the arched hallway of the living area of the choir in Tunja, shifted in the convent in Santafé to the church's nave, with a painted illusion of marbled and tile textures (Figure 1.27).

The architectural mural elements of the church are found in the predella, the lower part of the retablo (Figure 1.27). During the restoration made by COLCULTURA in 1983, they decided to restore and leave part of these mural paintings exposed to integrate these paintings with the wooden retablo.⁵² The painting at the predella comprises rectangular yellow, ochre, grey, red, and blue segments that fit like puzzle pieces, bordered by yellow spiral columns (Figure 1.27.1). Each rectangular part emulates the texture of materials such as wood and marble. A combination of shading and white sgraffito (scratches) creates the illusion of luster and depth (Figure 1.27.2). The middle of the segment is composed of two horizontal rectangles divided by a square creating an I-shape. These fragments mimic the surface of wooden paneling with corner carvings formed by black and white lines that divide the figure into four parts creating a foreground that intersects at a circle in the middle (Figure 1.27.1). Two flower halves flank the spiral columns and form a cross. The assembly of all these shapes, colors, and contrast intertwines, creating multiple patterns.

On the right-side wall of the choir lies the only surviving attempt at an architectural illusion (Figure 1.26.1.3.5). The paintings at the interior ledges of the rectangular side alcove suggest decorative shelves that extend the space. The top niche depicts a black flower vase with snake handles and a grotesque face at the center; the vase has a bouquet of outlined red roses and orange carnations (Figure 1.26.1). On the lower ledge, there is a basket with a cornucopia of fruits at each side of the alcove. On the right side, a cornucopia of fruits such as papaya, a guanabana (soursop), and bananas are recognizable, while on the left, oranges, avocados, and ajís (small chili pepper) fill the basket (Figure 1.26.3.5). The bottom ledge of both painted shelves is composed of multicolored tiles on each side that use conjoining lines to create depth. The tile replicas contrast with the organic pattern that frames the shelves (Figure 1.26.5). These choral mural fragments were made with a similar approach to the retablo's predella, implying a contemporaneous painting period. The lower mural layers and the choir's alcove suggest an earlier making to the decorative red, blue, and yellow pattern on the altar

⁵² Franco Salamanca, *Templo de Santa Clara*, 198.

and the nave's ceiling. In contrast to the ceiling in the nave, the choir's ceiling has only one surviving painting program. Even though it shares decorative elements with the church, it has an unusual animal theme that makes dating difficult. The wooden ceiling has a white painted base that creates a blank background against the multidirectional animal figures that appear to float without a specific order or narrative (Figure 1.25).

The assortment of animals does not make sense at first, but once patterns and outlines are manifested, the world outside the choir opens into an imaginary sky. Flowers turn into stars with a luminosity that guides the viewers through the apparent chaos (Figure 1.5). The wood-carved flowers have five elongated petals that have the characteristic of a leaf, each with a midrib and three lobes at each side that intersect at the center of a round relief (Figure 1.25). Gilded flowers shrouded the shared sacred space where nature transforms into the heavens (Figure 1.7). Delicate blue vines with red florets connect through wood-gilded flowers and buttons that, with their glow, transform into stars (Figure 1.28). The thickness of the delineation of the vines divides the church's space. The sacred area of the altar's vault has thin delineated forms that accentuate the white background, creating the illusion that the ornaments are floating in the sky, and forming a receding view from the nave (Figure 1.28.2, 1.24). The visual differences in the church's ceiling paintings emphasize the hierarchical significance of the altar for the congregation at the nave. The painted pattern is interrupted by an arched ledge that divides the setting while linking both spaces with larger wooden flowers lined over the arch and the side facing the church's nave (Figure 1.28.4).

The wood-carved flowers at the arched edge between the altar and the nave demonstrate a mastery of formal manipulation, adapting to a challenging space (Figure 1.29). The enlarged floral reliefs at both the side and center of the dividing arch have symmetrical forms. The flowers in-between (at the thinner part of the arch) are elongated to fit better in the limited space (Figure 1.28.1). A blue outline frames the wooden flowers in the same color tint as adjacent curled stems. These ornamental patterns include brushstrokes of yellow, green, and red paint, creating a visual link between the painted vaults (Figure 1.28.4). The design and colors of the arch continue at the pier with a more prominent and detailed composition. The stems transform into blue and yellow leaves that curl up and down, merging towards a yellow ring at the middle and with an amorphous green shape at the other end, creating a continuous pattern enhanced by small yellow dots and green twists adding complexity to the design (Figure 1.31). The curvilinear lines of the pier transform into simplified, angular shapes at the middle indentations. Sequences of the same color palette serve as an extension of the larger figures (Figure 1.31.2). Adjacent to the painted walls, red planks covering most of the nave's walls had replicas of the carved gilded flowers found in the ceiling, which complement the resplendent retablos of the church (Figure 1.30). The five golden petals mutated into a crisscross made from elongated quatrefoil branches, placed horizontally and vertically to fit the space between the retablos and easel paintings (Figure 1.30.1.2.3).

The mural paintings at the predella complement the wooden retablo. However, a missing plank on top of the sacristy's entrance reveals a painting remnant that frames the door with blue, red, and yellow shapes similar to those found at the ceiling and painted column (Figure 1.32.1). The photographs published by Franco Salamanca of the restoration of the convent reveal remnants of mural paintings with the decorative style and palette of the vault's

pattern (Figure 1.32.2).⁵³ These forms create large frames for canvas paintings or erased painted figures or scenes. The consistency of the lines under the retablo is a continuation of the nave's vault pattern (Figure 1.28.3, 1.29). The church's ceiling has darker blue leaves and vines with C-shapes that, in the end, have red and yellow flowers. The red is repeated on small floating flowers, while yellow pistils protrude from the sides of the wooden flowers (Figure 1.30.5). The harmony between the mural paintings and the retablo indicates the coordination of different visual periods of the convent.

The painting remnants under the retablo suggest that the church was completely covered in mural paintings, an ornamental tendency found in most convents and churches built during the colonial period.⁵⁴ The gilded stars are complemented by the surrounding paintings in the church's nave and in the choir (Figure 1.28, 1.33). The coordination of both painted and wooden works created a harmonious balance, where the golden carved stars are highlighted by painted borders and extended by organic forms with twisted branches and flowers (Figure 1.28, 1.29). The mural painting found under the retablo demonstrates that even though the wooden planks covered the memory of the original ornamental program, forms from the previous mural were replicated on the retablo and the following paintings (Figure 1.28, 1.32).

The choir's ceiling is a continuation of the church-painted ornamentation and the dividing column of the church (Figure 1.33). The natural forms and the carved wooden flowers that emanate from the white wooden planks of the ceiling link the sacred spaces that, like sound waves, disperse between areas. However, between these shared organic forms, animals, cherubim, and angels interrupt the pattern as a counterpoint (Figure 1.25, 1.33.2). These paintings were uncovered during the intervention and restorations made by COLCULTURA. The harsh whitewashing of the choir's ceiling flattened the room, making it look smaller and devoid of life (Figure 1.33.1). Not even the golden flowers compensate for the loss of the painting. The decision to cover these paintings was a product of the changing history of the convent. The paintings were probably covered when the convent became a secular building in the 1860s or when the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus took over the building between 1874-1889.⁵⁵

There are indications that this nineteenth-century order modified areas of the convent, such as the predella of the church that was painted red to match the wooden retablo, and they also made the "substitution of some images -paintings, and sculptures- by others linked to his devotion."⁵⁶ These included the addition to the retablo of the sculpture of Santa Margarita María de Alacoque, a nun from the Order of the Visitation of Saint Mary, who witnessed multiple mystic appearances of Jesus Christ: "I was praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament when I felt totally penetrated with his Divine Presence, but to such a degree that I lost all consciousness of myself and the place where I was, and I abandoned myself to his Divine Spirit, surrendering my heart totally to the power of his love [...] For the first time, he opened his

⁵³ Franco Salamanca, 162.

⁵⁴ There are surviving mural paintings made in the sixteenth century found in New Spain in convents, such as the paintings at the former convent of San Agustín of Molinalco (Mexico). Also, Perú like the paintings at the church of San Juan Bautista in Huaro, and multiple painting fragments survive from California to South America.

⁵⁵ Franco Salamanca, *Templo de Santa Clara*, 108.

⁵⁶ Franco Salamanca, 178.

Sacred Heart for me" (Figure 1.34).⁵⁷ St. Margarita was one of the early adopters of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Later, this devotion evolved into the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesús. During their occupation of the convent of Santa Clara in Santafé, the order continued to use art to convey their religious message.

The recovery of the choral ceiling paintings provides a unique insight into an unusual stylistic decision that differentiates the convent's interior from the church's public space. A wide range of animals were depicted, from multiple birds of different kinds, such as a parrot, doves, and a sparrow, to a variety of mammals that include a jaguar, monkeys, a rabbit, goat, bull, armadillo, and deer among others (Figure 1.35, 1.36, 1.38). At the edge of the ceiling, two incongruous human figures stand by the edge of the choir's ceiling, flanked by a perpendicular peaceful cherub in respect to the edge and the other two figures (Figure 1.37). His face is delineated by two partially curved lines forming his closed eyes and mouth; he has multicolored wings supporting the head.

The following recognizable figure is the archangel Michael, with chest armor and helmet and a text curved towards his upper torso that indicates spoken words "QVIS VT DEVS" (who [is] like God?). Michael the archangel is known as a warrior of the church; in Revelations 12:7, he was active in the final biblical battle: "And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."⁵⁸ The indiscernible figure to his left separates the archangel from the cherub. This figure has a bulky bottom, long neck, and fangs or sharp teeth similar to a snake's head. The heavy damage to the painting makes it hard to be sure if some elements are just a result of the restoration scraping or painted characteristics. Archangels reappear in the walls of convents and churches, showcasing their importance as the Catholic faith's defender against the devil's temptations. Religious and governmental Spanish authorities during the colonial period undertook the role of suppressing the so-called idolatry of the Indigenous population in the New World.

The young woman located at the right of the archangel is identified as a young St. Claire (Santa Clara) of Assisi; the staff in her right hand is a visual attribute of this saint (Figure 1.37).⁵⁹ She wears a red dress and has loose hair, a depiction that contrasts with this saint's typical depictions. St. Claire is usually painted more austere, with her habit, as in the wall painting at the window recess of the choir (Figure 1.39.1). In this mural, she wears black and white religious robes and holds her staff with her left hand and a bouquet of lilies with her right. Her blank face denotes a loss of detail that could not be saved by the restorers, but the direction of her body and face indicates her gaze had been directed towards the choir's center. St. Claire, as the patron saint of the convent, observed the women's musical devotion. She is accompanied on the other side of the window by St. Francis of Assisi. He wears the characteristic long gray robes that he adopted as a symbol of humility, accompanied by a brown cincture. His left hand

⁵⁷ Luis Gamas, *La Autobiografía De Santa Margarita Maria Alacoque* (Palibrio, 2014), 86.

⁵⁸ Revelations 12:7-9 (NRSV)

⁵⁹ María Costanza Toquica Clavijo, ed., *Catálogo Museo Colonial*, Primera edición (Bogotá: Ministerio de Cultura, 2014), 166.

has a red dot indicating his stigmata and sacred standing in the church. St. Francis's body is turned towards the window, and his face is pointed at the painting of St. Claire (Figure 1.39.2). The Franciscan Italian friar Thomas of Celano who wrote the first *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (1228), includes an account of the friendship between St. Francis and St. Claire, and how he encouraged her to enter the monastic life: "And so he visited her, and many times she visited him, coming forth and from her home in secret with an intimate female friend. Father Francis exhorted her to despise the world ---said that its hopes were vain, its beauty false, and, acting deftly like a faithful bridegroom, instilled into her ears the sweet nuptials of Heaven."⁶⁰

St. Claire's presence on the ceiling of the choir reinforces the principal religious model of the convent, but I propose a different identity for the third person on the scene. Instead of St. Claire, this figure is another archangel of a minor category to Michael, who accompanied him during the apocalyptic battle, or a fellow archangel like St. Raphael. The undulation of his garment can be armor or a ruffled shirt, the staff a weapon, and his left-hand does not have a recognizable figure. (Figure 1.37). The painting of Archangel Raphael in the Convent of Santa Clara (Santafé) showcases the similitudes, where the gender of the figures is ambiguous. In this image, the archangel wears a similar dress to the painting and has his attributes: a staff and a fish (Figure 1.40.1). This painting is part of a series of images where St. Michael is slightly older and more prominent, visually marking his higher status amongst the sacred painting series (Figure 1.37, 1.40.2). The Archangels are flanked by intricately carved gilded flowers that introduce the ornamental pattern of the ceiling and separate these angelic figures from the multidirectional garden that fills the ceiling.

Adjacent to the three figures at the choir's ceiling, there is an outburst of Indigenous animals, flora, and fauna congruous with the European fantasy of the New World. Accounts such as *Noticias Historiales De Las Conquistas De Tierra Firme En Las Indias Occidentales* (1626) by Franciscan Spanish Fray Pedro Simón, include multiple stories and descriptions from the author's encounters with animals in Nueva Granada inciting the imagination of his distant readers: "This land has the same birds and animals that have been found in these Provinces of the Indies, although it is said that the tigers are more ferocious than in other parts, [...] [tigers] entered their [Indigenous people] home and seized an Indian, carrying him in their mouths as a cat carries a mouse" (Figure 1.35-1.36).⁶¹ The depiction of birds and mammals conflates them into the same geographical area, where all plants and animals on the ceiling of the choir interact in the same plane. Here, the animals do not relate to each other but to the surrounding paintings. The wooden discs serve the same function as in the church's vault. Undulating forms radiate from the discs, creating a floating vegetal landscape that connects the golden elements with the animal figures of the painting (Figure 1.36).

Up close, the seemingly unrelated-floating animals are anchored to wooden flowers and decorative shapes, grounding the space, which gives realistic movements, poses, and behaviors to these animal figures. A sparrow stands over the shadow of a wooden flower, while the other is located nearby, standing on a nearby branch (Figure 1.35.2). The parrot stands at the edge of

⁶⁰ Thomas and Christopher. Stace, *Thomas of Celano's First Life of St Francis of Assisi*, First Life of St. Francis of Assisi (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000), 23–24; Ernest. Gilliat-Smith, *Saint Clare of Assisi: Her Life and Legislation* (London & Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, limited, 1914), 35.

⁶¹ Pedro Simón 1626, *Noticias Historiales de Las Conquistas de Tierra Firme En Las Indias Occidentales* (Colombia: M. Rivas, 1882-92, 1892), 35.

a flower pulling with his beak a squirming worm with a curved tail (Figure 1.35.5). A tender example of the relationship between the flowers, branches, and depth is embodied by a gray bird that stands at the margin of a wooden flower, with its body turned towards the next golden petal. This bird had an elongated neck and short beak that held a now erased prey directed toward two simplified long heads, which appear from the back of the painted shadow of the wooden petal, trying to receive the game brought by the larger bird (Figure 1.35.3). The birds that interact with the space define the foreground, while birds in mid-flight, like the dove with open wings, heighten the celestial visual illusion by accentuating the blank space and crafting a space beyond the plants and the flowers (Figure 1.25, 1.35.1).

The birds were not the only ones to interrelate with the space. The other painted animals continue the illusion of an open-air space enhanced by their interaction with the vegetal forms. For instance, the monkey hangs from a vine, and both hands hold at each side of a painted floral arrangement (Figure 1.38.3). His long arms create depth with a twisted position. The left arm is extended, accentuating the angular position of the body. This illusion is reinforced by his folded legs that float, emphasizing a hanging position. There is also a goat that stands at mid-walk over the shadow of the wooden flower, a fox launching over a similar floral shadow, with both lower legs connected to the border while the top legs extend with the front of its body (Figure 1.38.8.5). A bull and a deer stretch their legs over two petals, extending sideways as if they were hiking a mountain (Figure 1.38.6).

Flowers and vegetal ornamental painting became the topography for this South American menagerie. Various four-legged animals depicted on the ceiling have an elongated form, like the jaguar and the rabbit; we are reminded of the open-winged birds. These animals appear to be floating while simultaneously giving the illusion of solidity to the branches that serve as a lunging path. As a parallel point of comparison, there are surviving mural paintings of Indigenous warriors wearing Jaguar skins in the Augustine church of Ixmiquipan, New Spain [Mexico](Figure 1.42).⁶² The skins indicate a specific military elite that was allowed to use them in local religious festivities.⁶³ The Mexican scene was contemporary with current events, and the skin is contingent to the human wearer. In contrast, the jaguar at the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé is independent of human control. The jaguar propels itself from a branch sticking out of one of the wooden flowers, with its paws and head floating indistinctly (Figure 1.41). The non-violent intent of the ceiling jaguar contrasts with the church of Ixmiquipan jaguar-man's masculine combative disposition. The warrior holds with his right hand the head of a vanquished enemy while his body slightly inclines forward in a menacing position; this contrasts with the idyllic meditative quality of the convent's jaguar (Figure 1.41, 1.42).⁶⁴ The jaguar's interaction with the other animal figures underlines its relationship with nature and is part of the visual illusion of the ceiling as opening up to a natural realm beyond the convent.

⁶² Serge Gruzinski, *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 84–85. Gruzinski, uses images of the church of Ixmiquipan to explore how “religious authorities allowed the Indians to retain some of their dances, as long as the content was no longer conspicuously pagan.

⁶³ Gruzinski, 86.

⁶⁴ Gruzinski, 84–85. Gruzinski, uses images of the church of Ixmiquipan to explore how “religious authorities allowed the Indians to retain some of their dances, as long as the content was no longer conspicuously pagan.

The Flying Tiger

The ornamental details of each of the animals in the ceiling contrast with the fantasy world of the ornamental vines and flowers, while at the same time, the complete scene is otherworldly (Figure 1.36). The animals become part of a field of ornament, and life, a constellation of figures without any narrative or apparent purpose. Animals have taken part in Christianity as story characters and symbols of a more significant idea. For instance, the goat, an animal that appears in the ceiling painting, is a recurrent animal in the bible: "Three things are stately in their stride; four are stately in their gait: the lion, which is mightiest among wild animals and does not turn back before any; the strutting rooster, the he-goat, and a king striding before his people (Figure 1.38.8)."⁶⁵ Here the goat is equated to leadership that knows how to carry himself to assert his position. There are also frequent reappearances of the goat as a sacrificial offering, "once the sin that he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring as his offering a male goat without blemish."⁶⁶ The specific significance is recognized by Christians familiar with the biblical iconography. Other of the animals such as the deer, dove, bull, and pelican on the choir's ceiling appear in biblical stories. However, the freedom and unattachment of these animals differ from a structured biblical reading, making the link to biblical symbols tenuous.

The image of the jaguar is a remarkable example of an unexpected presence in a sacred space (Figure 1.41). This feline is usually associated with the Amazon and lower lands, not with the Andean region, challenging the traditional understanding of "lo Andino". The concept of an Andean culture can be totalizing, denying a permeability between cultures and diverse ecosystems, their similarities and differences. The notion of what is Andean today comes from a nineteenth-century effort of the new republics located in the main areas (Peru and Bolivia) of the Inca Empire to "position as a corrective to the idea of nation and nationality, two concepts that represent the utopian horizons of criollo groups."⁶⁷ These efforts homogenized the Andes, erasing the contributions from neighboring cultures like the Chunchos (Amazonian Indigenous people) in Peru and Bolivia. As pointed out by Thierry Saignes: "The distance between the forms called "civilized" or "superior" [Andean] and the so-called "savage," "primitive" or "inferior" [Amazonian] is not as great as it has been profusely underlined."⁶⁸ When the animal paintings were made, the connotation of the Andino was not widely known, or even extant as such yet. Particularly in Santafé, located at the geographical edge of the Andes. The jaguar's survival is an opportunity to explore historical predispositions that, like the "Andean," limits the understanding of colonial and pre-Hispanic multiculturalism.

Animals, like languages, are not confined to one place; they can travel and belong to multiple places simultaneously. It is unclear if the area of Santafé was part of the jaguars' natural habitat or if the Muisca (Indigenous group that controlled the area where Santafé and Tunja were located) brought them during their exchanges with nearby areas. There are physical

⁶⁵ Prov 30 29:3

⁶⁶ Lev 4:23

⁶⁷ Jorge Coronado, "Sobre La Noción de Lo Andino: Ciencia, Literatura y Consumo," in *Crítica de La Razón Andina*, ed. Carlos Abreu Mendoza and Denise Y. Arnold, Serie Literatura y Cultura (Raleigh, NC: Editorial A Contracorriente, 2018), 204.

⁶⁸ Thierry Saignes, *Los Andes Orientales: historia de un olvido* (Lima: Institut français d'études andines, 2014), 38–39.

and written records of their presence in Santafé. For instance, in the area near the convent of Santa Clara in Santafé "near the Tunjuelito river, in the neighborhood Candelaria La Nueva [Bogotá], researchers Cifuentes and Moreno (1987) excavated an ancient Muisca settlement. In niches, generally located near houses or tombs, they found the presence of remains of deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and curí (*Cavia porcellus*), fragments of armadillo shell (*Dasypus novemcintusi*), a perforated feline fang and various instruments made of deer bone."⁶⁹ These animals were part of the lives of the Muisca before the arrival of the Spanish. Santafé (Bogotá), located at an altitude of 8,530 feet-2,600 m, is an area surrounded by wetlands that constituted the primary source of sustenance and were the focus of the religious organization of the Muisca.⁷⁰ This ecosystem allowed a great diversity of birds that, like the ones found on the ceiling of the choir, ranged from sparrows and doves to marsh birds, characterized by their long neck (Figure 1.35.3). The Andes and the surrounding area of Bogotá have a singular characteristic. The great extension of the region included smaller natural regions created by microclimates produced at different altitudes. The cold weather and high altitude were not ideal places for jaguars or monkeys to roam; nearby areas known by the Muisca-like populations by the Magdalena River were favorable.⁷¹ The feline in the choir's ceiling resembles a *panthera onca*, a jaguar found throughout the Americas; they travel between areas in search of food without regard to national borders (Figure 1.41).⁷² The jaguar inhabits the Colombian Atlantic coastal area near the Darien, the Pacific region, and Amazon areas (Appendix 1).⁷³ The visual presence of the *panthera onca* brings to light multiple connections between the Muisca and the nuns with lands outside Santafé and the altiplano Cundiboyacense.

In colonial texts, jaguars were known as *tigres* (tigers). The fusion of the terms is due to the similarities of the jaguars with African and European tigers: "The first Spaniards who saw these tigers [jaguars] on Tierra-Firme, named these animals [jaguars], which are the ones that Admiral Don Diego Colón gave to His Majesty in this city of Toledo, which they brought from New Spain."⁷⁴ Spanish chronicles gave the (jaguar) American tiger negative connotations such as "clumsy and heavy."⁷⁵ In the Basilica of Our Lady of Monguí (a town near Tunja y Mongua) survives an ex-voto depicting a jaguar when it was killed by a woman and her two children, with the intercession of the Virgin of Monguí (Figure 1.43.1). The painting has a lower register with the textual account of what is happening:

⁶⁹ Anne Legast, "La fauna Muisca y sus símbolos," *Boletín de Arqueología de la Fian* 13, no. 3 (1998): 15.

⁷⁰ Henny Margoth Santiago Villa, "Importancia histórica y cultural de los humedales del borde norte de Bogotá (Colombia)," *Revista U.D.C.A Actualidad & Divulgación Científica* 15, no. 1 (June 30, 2012): 171, <https://doi.org/10.31910/rudca.v15.n1.2012.814>.

⁷¹ Villa, 170.

⁷² The *Panthera onca* depends on genetic intermix for the continuation and strength of the population. Right now, the jaguars' presence in the US is threatened due to the border wall that prevents animal migration endangering their survival.

⁷³ Manuel Ruiz-García et al., "DNA Microsatellite Characterization of the Jaguar (*Panthera Onca*) in Colombia," *Genes & Genetic Systems* 81, no. 2 (2006): 117, <https://doi.org/10.1266/ggs.81.115>.

⁷⁴ Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia General y Natural de Las Indias, Islas y Tierra Firme Del Mar Océano*, vol. II (Madrid, 1851), 143.

⁷⁵ Fernández de Oviedo, II:144.

In the year 1698 came a mendicant father with the Virgin of Monguí by Marroquin to collect alms to provide for the construction of her temple; He arrived at the house of Ysabel Dias and exhorted her to be devoted to the Virgin brought by him. Shortly after, this woman and her two sons were surprised by a tiger, and in her excitement, she called upon Our Lady, saying: "Oh [mendicant] Father's Virgin," and throwing boiling paste at the animal, and she killed it.⁷⁶

The viewer witnesses a miracle in action, where the presence of the sacred family is sudden and unexpected. Over a thick forest with palms and trees, a white tail condenses into a white cloud where the secret family emerges (Figure 1.43.1.2). This image is a duplicate of a copy made from a painting sent by Philip II in 1558 to Nueva Granda of *The Rest on the Flight to Egypt*, which "miraculously" disappeared from its designated place in Sogamoso and appeared in Monguí (Figure 1.43.3).⁷⁷ In this case, it refers to the duplicate carried by the priest to incite devotion amongst the local population. The humble hut depicted to the left and her long skirt, ruffle shirt, and her hat indicates that this woman works the land, lives far from the main town, and is mestiza. The legend has a dual-fold purpose, continuing with the purpose of conversion and devotion by showcasing the power of religious figures and the dangers of the lack of faith represented by the tiger. If Ysabel Dias did not invoke the Virgin of Monguí, she would not know what to do, and the tiger (a savage creature) would have attacked her and her children. The pastoral work of the priest and the recollection by Ysabel of his teachings allowed her to act quickly.

On the other hand, the tiger is depicted in a moment of defeat, where the boiling paste takes the form of white rays killing him (Figure 1.43.1). The tiger's eyes are closed, and his body is soft and inactive; his legs collapse over the ground. Ysabel's geographical and spiritual distance represents a danger that can be dealt with through religious images and the construction of more Christian temples. There was a need to destroy savage costumes and creatures like the tiger. At the house of the scribe Juan de Vargas in Tunja, a tiger accompanies a savage man, hairy, only covered by a shrub, and carrying a wooden club (Figure 1.43.4). In contrast to the unruliness of the man, the tiger takes a domesticated form emphasized by an unthreatening wooden pose (Figure 1.43.5). Patricia Zalamea, in her study of these mural paintings, refers to "the connection between wild men as heraldic elements and noble identity" and how the "figure of the conqueror is contrasted with the wild man."⁷⁸ The depiction of the tiger and the wild man juxtaposes the Spanish's role in America to "spread Christianity over the Indigenous infidels."⁷⁹

The Spanish conflated the Indigenous culture with idolatrous practices; hence, they were as dangerous as tigers. The *tigre* was part of the imagery of Indigenous religious traditions, as stated in the 1688 account of the priest and historian Lucas Fernández de

⁷⁶ Unknown, *Exvoto Milagro Virgen de Monguí*, 1698, Tempera on wood, 1698, Basilica of Our Lady of Monguí.

⁷⁷ Olga Isabel Acosta Luna, *Milagrosas Imágenes Marianas En El Nuevo Reino de Granada*, Ars Iberica et Americana, vol. 14 (Madrid, Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana; Vervuert, 2011), 101.

⁷⁸ Patricia Zalamea, "En Diálogo Con Un Mundo Antiguo: Las Pinturas de Las Casas Coloniales de Tunja En El Marco de Un Renacimiento Global," *Historia y Sociedad*, no. 36 (January 1, 2019): 187, <https://doi.org/10.15446/hys.n36.73800>.

⁷⁹ Zalamea, 181.

Piedrahita: "Among the Indios there are some great sorcerers, who take on the appearance of tigers, lions, and other noxious animals, and to the effect of the real ones, they are used to harm the human race; and it is very credible, that they have communication with the devil."⁸⁰ Powerful Muisca, like the cacique, included the tiger in their burials, as mentioned before, also showcase their status by wearing tiger skins: "Caciques traveled with skins of brave animals, such as Bears, Tigers, and Lions on their head, with tinted with feathers of all colors, and on their foreheads gold or silver upward crescents."⁸¹ Tiger skins and fangs probably arrived in Santafé from the Magdalena-Medio area on the slopes of the Magdalena River or from the area of the Sierra Nevada.⁸²

The survival of tiger skin imagery shows the strong ties between the Indigenous groups in this area, including a shared linguistic family. Resembling the final destiny of the tigers in Santafé, the Muisca language became extinct, surviving on colonial catechisms such as the *Sermón del Bautismo* (Baptism Sermon) found in the National Library of Colombia.⁸³ Also found in elements of the *Chibcha* language family, from the Magdalenian branch, which includes the Kogui and Arahua at the north in the Sierra Nevada, Santa Marta.⁸⁴ The eradication of Indigenous languages followed the demographic collapse of the Muisca, in 1770, an edict of King Charles III of Spain stated that: "the Indians are to be instructed in the Dogmas of our Religion in Spanish, and be taught to read and write in this language, which should be extended, and made unique and universal in the same Domains, as it is the language of the Indians. Monarchs and conquerors." The policy led to the extinction of the Muisca language.⁸⁵

The tiger's survival in the choir of the convent of Santa Clara (Santafé) challenges the efforts of obliteration by hinting at the Indigenous past. When the choir's ceiling was painted, the tiger and the Muisca language were on their way to disappearing. Extinction becomes a salient theme, a way to eradicate what seems dangerous or out of place from colonial control. Cultural homogenization became a tool to eliminate others and maintain the Spanish empire. However, this was probably an unexpected development and not the intent of these murals. The convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja are part of what Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui calls a *ch'ixi* epistemology: "a knowledge that articulates contradictions, stirrer time, [and] of what exists with the subtle "weapons" of the paradoxical, of the hidden and forgotten, of the ancient and the small."⁸⁶ In other words, the murals represent the contradictions of the colonial period, where the efforts of Christianization of the New World coexisted with Indigenous epistemologies, creating a tension that is embodied in the paradoxical readings of the mural

⁸⁰ Lucas Fernández de Piedrahita, *Noticia Historial de Las Conquistas Del Nuevo Reino de Granada* (Amberes: Juan Baptisa Verdussen, 1688), 18.

⁸¹ Fernández de Piedrahita, 15.

⁸² Juan Rodríguez Freyle and Darío Achury Valenzuela, *El Carnero*, Biblioteca Ayacucho 66 (Caracas, Venezuela: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1979), 47.

⁸³ Diccionario y gramática chibcha, RM 158, fol. 144v., "Sermón Del Bautismo" (1620 1605), Bogotá, Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia.

⁸⁴ Claudine Chamoreau, "Equative and Similative Constructions in Chibchan Languages," *Faits de Langues* 50, no. 1 (December 4, 2019): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1163/19589514-05001012>.

⁸⁵ Humberto. Triana y Antorveza, *Las Lenguas Indígenas En La Historia Social Del Nuevo Reino de Granada*, Biblioteca "Ezequiel Uricoechea," 2 (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1987), 507.

⁸⁶ Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and Molly Geidel, *Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonisation*, Critical South (Cambridge, UK ; Medford, MA: Polity, 2020), 30.

paintings of these convents. As part of the visual ambiguity of the mural paintings, it is possible that the nuns or the artist created figures like the jaguar as an ornamental figure or as an indication of a celestial world that intertwined with their conventual life through vines, flowers, and animals that became part of their daily lives. The following chapter will expand on the contradictions, ambiguity, and representations found in these two convents, including the relationship of the music that was played in the choirs and the paintings.

Chapter 2

Flourishing Heaven: Music, Flowers, and Sun as Metaphorical Force

The vegetal patterns and flowers of the ceiling of the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja did not have a solely decorative function. Flowers, as mentioned in the quote from Mother Francisca del Castillo's *Afectos Espirituales*, represented a more profound meaning where the sun, nuns, and flowers stand for the Holy Mother.⁸⁷ The sun and stars, like the flowers and plants on the choir's ceiling, oversee the nuns' behavior and their likelihood to achieve sanctity in a space that gave them the possibility to actively participate in the Eucharist while at the same time was the center of the social life of the convent. The choir's mural paintings heighten the liminal quality of this space by conveying purposes beyond what is immediately accessible. Like its walls, the choir has layers of meaning that allude to metaphors that activate the senses (Figure 1.1). The image of flowers incites the viewer to remember their sweet smell, feel the breeze outdoors, and hear the rustling of plants which boosts the connection "to that graceful field of Mary, a field full of the fragrance of all the flowers, full of the softest aroma of all the virtues."⁸⁸

The sweet smell of flowers is linked to the proof of sanctity after death, known as the odor of sanctity. References of a saintly fragrance are part of the narrative of the virgin Mary's assumption to heaven, which is based on the apocryphal gospel attributed to John of Arimathea *Concerning the Passing of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.⁸⁹ This text describes the moment the apostles return to the tomb of Mary and her body "was perfectly clean and stained by no moisture of filth. [...] And the body of the blessed Mary was like lily flowers; and an odour of great sweetness came forth from it, so that no sweetness could be found like it."⁹⁰ The odor of sanctity became part of the early Christian cult and a characteristic of female ascetics, including St. Teresa de Jesús. In Nueva Granada, the link to floral images was embodied in the portraits of *Monjas Coronadas* (crowned nuns), which in Colombia became funerary paintings and did not attempt to beautify the nuns. James Cordova's study of *Monjas Coronadas* in New Spain discusses the association of flowers and Nuptial Mysticism as a link "with images of the Virgin and popular female saints that stood as models of feminine piety and sanctity for Spanish America's nuns."⁹¹

Flower adornments were a visual signifier of the social status of these women. From early on, colonial artists used intricate fabrics, jewelry, and coats of arms to display wealth and social prestige. The portraits of *Monjas Coronadas* (crowned nuns) were part of this visual vocabulary, primarily to memorialize these women at the precise moment of their death in

⁸⁷ Francisca Josefa del Castillo y Guevara, "Afectos Espirituales," 230V.

⁸⁸ Francisca Josefa de la Concepción de Castillo, *Afectos Espirituales*, Latin American Women Writers (Bogotá: [Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Ediciones de la Revista "Bolívar," 1956], 68. "aquel gracioso campo de María, campo lleno de la fragancia de todas las flores, lleno del suavísimo aroma de todas las virtudes."

⁸⁹ Alexander Walker, *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Revelations*, Ante-Nicene Christian Library, v. 16 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1890), 504–30.

⁹⁰ Walker, 526–27.

⁹¹ James M Cordova, *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico: Crowned-Nun Portraits and Reform in the Convent*, 2021, 4.

Nueva Granada or when they were taking their vows in New Spain. However, there is a salient difference in their approaches. In New Spain, these paintings exalt the potential of a young woman to fulfill a saintly role, and their families commissioned the paintings to showcase their “high social rank, ecclesiastical affiliation, and financial standing.”⁹² On the other hand, in Nueva Granada, the portraits depict the realization of their sanctity at the end of their lives and, in this case, were commissioned by the convents to exalt their prestige and the possibilities for the new and current nuns to be close to sanctity. These portraits were of women in the convent who lived exemplary lives, recognized for their model behavior, and was to be immortalized for the congregation's edification.⁹³

The portrait of Sor Inés de la Trinidad (1715) from the Convento Santa Clara in Santafé (Bogotá) is one of the earliest examples of this portrait genre in Nueva Granada. White lilies compose her crown, white and red roses support her head, and a branch of lilies lays over her chest (Figure 1.44). This portrait is the only one painted on wood and without the use of multiple colors and a variety of flowers. The monochromatic flower decorations and soft shadow enhance the contrast of her eyes, cheeks, and mouth to evoke the moment of her death. These funerary paintings were honest depictions to make these women more relatable. This is a personalized realistic depiction of their demise; as well-known women in their community, their portraits depicted them with their imperfections, including the physical signs of death.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, painters would go to the convent to closely recreate their resemblance posthumously: “They sent for a Master Painter, named Juan Francisco de Ochoa, preceded by permission from the Prelate to portray her [...] I went to the Convent, (in here) the corpse was revealed by the light, (allowing me) to take a good look at those perfections and to run sketches on the canvas. [...] Even though I made sketches (the portrait), it did not look like her exemplary resemblance.”⁹⁴ Nuns in Nueva Granada became knowledgeable of the power of images to represent ideas. In the account of Friar Pedro Pablo de Villamor about the Carmelite Mother Francisca María del Niño Jesús, he described her notoriety in Santafé to the extent that when people knew about her death (1708), they gathered in the convent to obtain some of her blood. Once there was only a small quantity left to save as a relic, the convent became aware of the need for her image: “And how this afflicted convent would like to have a living copy of its mother since its original was missing because in her image the love for her virtues is preserved.”⁹⁵ These portraits were of women in the convent who lived exemplary lives, recognized for their model behavior that was to be immortalized for the congregation's edification.⁹⁶

⁹² Josefina Muriel and Manuel Romero de Terreros, *Retratos de Monjas* (Mexico: Jus, 1952), 29; Cordova, *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico*, 47.

⁹³ Alma Montero Alarcón et al., eds., *Muerte Barroca: Retratos de Monjas Coronadas* (Bogotá, Colombia: Banco de la República, 2016), 66.

⁹⁴ Pedro Pablo de Villamor, *Vida y Virtudes de La Venerable Madre Francisca Maria Del Niño Jesús, Religiosa Professa En El Real Convento de Carmelitas Descalzas de La Ciudad de Santa Fé ...* (Madrid: Tomás Rodríguez Frias, 1724), 344.

⁹⁵ Villamor, 344.

⁹⁶ Montero Alarcón et al., *Muerte Barroca*, 66.

The portrait genre of the *Monjas Coronadas* was used in the painting of Mother María Josefa del Espíritu Santo, whose ability to sing and read music placed her in the higher ranks of the Convent of Santa Inés in Santafé. She had the unique privilege to have her portrait made to record her virtuosity (Figure 1.45). The posthumous portrait of Mother María Josefa del Espíritu Santo is one of two known portraits in Nueva Granada where the nun is depicted amid action, though in a state between life and death.⁹⁷ Her eyes are rolled back almost closed, and her body stands in profile while rigid, and her hands are over a sheet of music. She has rounded facial features; her eyes are lowered towards the music as if in deep concentration. Her mouth is closed and delineated by the coral color of her lips. The black veil obscures her body and contrasts with the almost conical crown of three tiers of pink and white flowers that is the focal point of the painting. The beholder's eye moves through the delicate ornamental patterns of her gold embroidered cape to her soft hands and ends over the music in the atrium. The portrait indicates that her ability to sing and read music placed her in the higher ranks of the Convent of Santa Inés in Santafé. The text at the bottom of the painting describes her importance in the convent:

Mother Maria Josefa of the Holy Spirit (Porras y de la Torre) Religious woman of this Convent of Our Holy Mother Ynes, she exercised the virtues of humility, charity, patience, and conformity in the illnesses she suffered. She was very fond of receiving the Sacred Eucharist. She distinguished herself in the devotions of the high Ministry of the Holy Trinity, the Sorrows of the Holy Mother, and the Patriarch Saint Josef, she was a lover of her convent for whose advancement she was tireless, and she left many examples of it. *Our Lord endowed her with particular talent [and] skills, especially with a very fine Voice, which she used through her life to praise our Lord in the choir since she understood perfectly the rules of singing.* She obtained all the jobs of the Religion, up to the awarded by our novices, she was 3 times a sub-prioress and president. She professed on April 17. She died on December 14 of this year, 1817, at 71 years, 6 months, and 13 days of her age.⁹⁸

This cartouche made in the year of Mother Maria Josefa's death (1817) hints at the importance of her position as a singer and music teacher in the choir that made her a role model, moving the directives of the Convent of Santa Inés in Santafé to commission this painting. First, her Christian values are established: "she exercised the virtues of humility, charity, patience, and conformity in the illnesses she suffered." This highlights the overall behavior expected in most women entering the convent. Then the text exalts what made her *special* among all the nuns: "*Our Lord endowed her with particular talent [and] skills, especially with a very fine Voice [...] she understood perfectly the rules of Singing.*" This showcases her voice in combination with the possibility of teaching. Her knowledge allowed other nuns to expand their musical knowledge. Early convents in Nueva Granada and most of Latin America

⁹⁷ The other portrait of an alive *Monjas Coronada* nun is of Sor María de Santa Teresa from the convent of Santa Inés, Bogotá (1843). In this portrait, the nun stands pointing to a bookshelf with her left hand and holds a book with her right hand, with her index finger in-between the pages.

⁹⁸ Text at the lower part of the painting of Mother María Josefa del Espíritu Santo, a singing nun of the convent of Santa Inés. Anonymous, Oil on canvas, Nineteenth century. [My emphasis].

during the colonial period required a dowry, which was the surrender of the women's patrimony to the convent to take the religious habit. This ensured the economic sustainability of the convent and the acceptance of women from prestigious families. In the case of the Convent of Santa Inés de Montepulciano, after its foundation, it was stipulated that "those who wish to enter [the convent] a dowry of one thousand pesos."⁹⁹ In the eighteenth century, during the time Mother María Josefa entered the convent, the dowry increased to two thousand pesos for black veiled nuns and four to nine hundred for white veil nuns; for women who entered the choir, the dowry was reduced to one thousand pesos.¹⁰⁰

In the case of Mother María Josefa, when she began her journey as a nun on February 24th, 1763, she paid less dowry and held a higher position than most of her peers, with the "obligation to sing and play the violin."¹⁰¹ Therefore, even though she was dead, Mother María Josefa was depicted alive because the memory of her ability to sing was superimposed with her spiritual encounter with God after death. Her life was the chosen moment of inspiration by the authorities at the convent. The importance of musical knowledge shown in the creation of mural paintings and the depiction of the portrait of Mother María Josefa also showcases how the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé were active participants in the musical-cultural scene in Nueva Granada. The floral crown serves as a visual and spiritual link between Mother María Josefa and Sor Inés de la Trinidad and others (Figure 1.44-1.45).

As in the portraits of *Monjas Coronadas*, floral depictions on the mural walls in convents were a reminder of their religious mission, a symbol of their devotion, their union with God, and Mary as a female spiritual guide. The painted flowers on the choir's wall and ceiling in the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé had shifting meanings and purposes associated with the viewer's changes of religious perspective and taste, allowing the nuns' voice to be heard. Floral patterns were the visual force of the choir, commanding how the choir's area was arranged by creating visual effects that extended the space and guided the gaze of the people that occupied it. Likewise, in the *Monjas Coronada's* portraits, flowers perform a decorative and symbolic role that directs the composition and reading of the painting and infers the importance of the woman depicted. Painted murals with flowers and leaves, tell us more about the function of the choir and the religious and everyday use of the space.

The shape of the vegetal figures on the ceiling is replicated in the side's wooden beams throughout the choir and the nave and in painted remnants by a small door connecting the convent to the church's altar (Figure 1.8, 1.11.2). The side beams have curvilinear flowers and leaves that, like the roof paintings, hint at an interconnection between every figure to emulate a pattern. The shared configuration indicates that these depictions were part of the first painting program of the church and survived in the main altar by being on wood, therefore surviving the whitewashing of the church walls. The roof paintings from the choir were likely

⁹⁹ Santa_fe,134,N.23, F.2V, "Informaciones: Tomás Vaca" (Santafé, 1630), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹⁰⁰ "Libro de Las Profesiones de Las Monjas de Este Monasterio de Señora Sancta Ines, n.º 2 (Numeración Antigua), s. f." (Santafé, 18th Century), Bogotá, Archivo Monasterio de Santa Inés de Montepulciano; Oscar Leonardo Londoño, "Organización y Tránsito Social En El Interior Del Monasterio de Santa Inés de Montepulciano En El Nuevo Reino de Granada Durante El Siglo XVIII," *Fronteras de La Historia* 23, no. 1 (February 28, 2018): 197, <https://doi.org/10.22380/20274688.316>.

¹⁰¹ Montero Alarcón et al., *Muerte Barroca*, 47. Document found in a particular collection.

part of the main church, and the private quality of the choir allowed this mural to survive. The floral pattern becomes a witness to the nuns' lives and a pictorialization of their music.

The choir patterns also inspired elements for the later installed red retablo of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja), which borrowed the leaf shapes as a background and as the shapes of the wooden planks (Figure 1.46.1.2). The altar's ceiling creates the illusion of a celestial space where golden flowers are perceived as stars placed sporadically over red wooden lines that extend upwardly (Figure 1.46.3). The planks slope in four parts that converge towards the center. Each side holds a heptagon framing an angelic figure known as a seraph, which has similar characteristics to a cherub with a chubby face and curly hair, but is visually differentiated by his six golden wings that point to the corners of the frame and surround the angelic faces (Figure 1.46.1). Seraphic figures appear in Isaiah 6: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.'"¹⁰² Here, the expression "Holy, holy, holy" is key to the association of the seraphic figure with rituals of praise during God's worship. The presence of seraphim at the altar underscores the importance of the altar as a place of devotion where the act of transubstantiation, communion, and liturgy takes place.¹⁰³

On the other hand, cherubim who appear in the choir and church walls are known helpers of God, one rank lower than the seraphim in the celestial hierarchy (Figure 1.20, 1.22, 1.23.1.2). Cherubim first appear in Genesis: "He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life."¹⁰⁴ Ezekiel described them: "Each had four faces, each four wings, and underneath their wings something like human hands."¹⁰⁵ However, their characteristics transformed over time into the figures found in the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja), with a single pair of wings and a childish face (Figure 1.20). Cherubim perform divine assignments; while the seraphim are associated with the liturgy, the painted cherubim figures are protectors. Their closeness to God allows them to interact with humans and intercede on their behalf, creating an association with lay congregants and the nuns.¹⁰⁶

Seraphim echo the cherub depiction of the mural paintings found in the choir and the masonry retablo located immediately under the high choir (Figure 1.20, 1.23.1). In contrast, the cherub faces were part of the last painting program, indicating the last change before the walls were whitewashed, which broke the visual connection between the church and the choir. The wooden cherub structure at the ceiling formed a hexagon that merged into a squared area (Figure 1.45.3). The center held a large golden sun with a round face and anthropomorphic features: eyes, nose, and mouth surrounded by long and pointy sunbeams that connected all the figures on the ceiling. When the altar's roof is seen at once, the cherub's wings transform

¹⁰² Isa 6:1-3

¹⁰³ The act of transubstantiation refers to the transformation of bread and wine into the blood and body of Christ without a change in their physical appearance.

¹⁰⁴ Gen 3:24

¹⁰⁵ Ezek 10:21

¹⁰⁶ Ellen Muehlberger, *Angels in Late Ancient Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 180, 155.

into petals, and all the elements together form a large flower (Figure 1.45.4). The reverberation of floral shapes in the altar points to the nuns' presence throughout the church despite their closure. Furthermore, the voices of the nuns reverberate through the space. Their vantage point from the high choir in relation to the nave and the altar duplicates their concealed presence (Appendix.2).

The Shifting Meaning of the Sun: From Christian Stars and Flowers to the presence of the Muisca God *Xué*

The presence of the sun is not unique to the architectural elements of churches and convents in the New World. It is also a prominent element in Christian painting, exalting the sanctity of figures such as the Virgin Mary and the Holy Trinity. The painting of the *Coronation of the Virgin* (1635-36) by Diego Velázquez has at the apex of the painting a subtle depiction of a sun with emanating rays that frame the Holy Spirit and extend over the heads of God, Jesus, and his mother Mary (Figure 1.47). Even though the sun by itself does not have a sacred meaning, painters such as Jean Massard and Baltasar Vargas de Figueroa have replicated its luminosity and its greater hierarchy as a celestial body (Figure 1.47, 1.48, 1.49). Paintings like Velázquez's *Coronation* were transformed into etchings that circulated in Europe and America, becoming a template of Christian imagery around the world (Figure 1.48). In Nueva Granada, Baltazar Vargas de Figueroa was among the painters who adopted the use of solar rays in sacred images in his seventeenth-century depiction of the *Coronation of the Virgin* (Figure 1.49).

A representation of the sun as the background of the Holy Spirit is found at the apex of the stone retablo, where a gold disk surrounded by cherubim becomes the structure's focal point (Figure 1.23.1). Up close, the almost imperceptible red circular background becomes visible. A slightly smaller circumference covers it with short, uniform irradiating rays crafting a solid sun figure. There is a blank vertical ellipsis at the center of the sun instead of the emblematic dove. The erasure of the dove is enigmatic, especially when all the surrounding paintings are restored. The blank space has marks of scraping that produce a controlled jagged edge where the red background emerges, and the elliptical shape is formed (Figure 1.23.1). Aside from damaged mural fragments, the dove at the sun's center is the only image indicating a planned removal. Usually, structural damage or restoration results in irregular outlines (Figure 1.5, 1.16.2). There is no information regarding this erasure. It is possible that when the nuns were expelled during the *desamortización de bienes de manos muertas* (confiscation of mortmain properties) in the 1860s, the nuns or a priest removed the dove as an indication of the deactivation of the convent as a sacred precinct. Familiarity with this motif allowed the sun to survive beyond the Christian and European significance to shift meanings once introduced into the diverse society of New Granada, including interpretations of the sun by local Indigenous communities.

The Muisca were the most preeminent Indigenous group in Nueva Granada, which offered the expedition of Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada the possibility of fame and riches like Cortés in New Spain and Pizarro in Peru.¹⁰⁷ The encounter of emerald mines and the use of gold

¹⁰⁷ Patronato, 155, N. 1, R.14, fol. 740r, "Servicios y Méritos de Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada" (1563 1562), Seville, Archivo General de Indias. Once the Spanish arrived in the altiplano Cundiboyasence, they became familiar with

by the Muisca fed the imagination of the Spanish as the embodiment of the myth of "El Dorado," accelerating the takeover of the territory.¹⁰⁸ Nested between the Andes, Bacatá (Bogotá) and Hunza (Tunja) were the two Muisca political centers, where later, the two convents of Santa Clara explored in this chapter were constructed. The intersection between the Spanish and the Muisca cultures allowed the inclusion of Muisca belief in local Christian constructions. The presence of the anthropomorphic sun at the top of the altar at the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja) may also allude to the religious beliefs of the Muisca. The sun was an integral part of Muisca mythology; Fray Pedro Simon wrote in his chronicle of the Indigenous peoples of Nueva Granada about the origin of the sun and transformation into the God Xué:

The lands were in darkness, and to give them light, the Cacique of Sogamoso sent the Cacique of Ramiriquí, who was his nephew, to go up to the sky and light up the world, made the sun as he did, but seeing that it was not enough to light up the night, Sogamoso went up himself to the sky and became the moon, with which the night was clear, and the Indians were forced to worship both, as they did with many other idols.¹⁰⁹

Also, Lucas Fernández Piedrahita's account of the history of the conquest of Nueva Granada, *Historia general de las conquistas del Nuevo Reyno de Granada* (1688), points to the continuation of the cult of the sun as a God after the arrival of the Spanish: "The Indigenous believed that there was an author of nature, who made heaven, and the earth; however, they did not stop worshiping for God in the Sun for his beauty."¹¹⁰ The figure of the sun was recognizable to the Indigenous population. Piedrahita's account hints at the feasible awareness of the nuns and religious authorities of the importance of the sun and Indigenous representations for the process of conversion of the Muisca into Christianity, an assumption reinforced by the sun's placement in the altar.

Under the retablo of the statue of St. Margarita María de Alacoque in the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé, a small mural painting of the sun and the moon with facial features was found (Figure 1.34, 1.50.2).¹¹¹ The detail of the faces mimics the characteristics of the wooden sun in Tunja, the survival of this figure shows a shifting preeminence and use of the sun in local religious institutions. While in the convent in Tunja, the sun occupies a prominent and central place over the altar, the sun in Santafé was part of a larger painted scene later covered to give space to new religious priorities. Near the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, the doctrinal Church (a religious temple built to convert local Indigenous People to Christianity) of the Immaculate Conception of Ocaita has a sun with facial features at the altars' ceiling, like the one found at the altar ceiling of the convent (Figure 1.50.1.3). The sun is located at the middle of the altar, with a blue background, and small stars were painted on the slanted part of the roof. Under a layer of translucent white paint, at the corners, cherubim faces emerge. The faces have similar characteristics to the wooden relief angels at the altar of the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja): faces with dark hair and wings (Figure 1.51). Nonetheless, while the

¹⁰⁸ Patronato, 27, R.14, Fol.3, "Relación Descubrimiento de Santa Marta" (Tunja, 1574), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹⁰⁹ Simón, *Noticias Historiales de Las Conquistas de Tierra Firme En Las Indias Occidentales*, 312.

¹¹⁰ Fernández de Piedrahita, *Noticia Historial de Las Conquistas Del Nuevo Reino de Granada*, 17.

¹¹¹ Franco Salamanca, *Templo de Santa Clara*, 199.

cherubim in the convent have generic faces, the painted cherubim faces at Ocaitá have particular characteristics such as shoulder-length hair, almond-shaped eyes, and a prominent nose, reminiscent of Muisca depictions found in the area (Figure 1.52). Angels with similar facial traits are found in the ceiling's threshold between the nave and the altar.

The wooden border has two complete figures of two archangels holding a palm leaf. The angels have dark hair parted in the middle, straight noses, high rosy cheeks, and almond-shaped eyes, facial features characteristic of the Muisca population. Similar figures are found in paintings, such as the portraits of caciques (Indigenous leaders) in the church of St. John the Baptist in Sutatausa (Figure 1.53, 1.54, 1.55). However, their body shape relates to the figures of Christian archangels found in paintings such as the image of the archangel Michael by Esteban Murillo: *Archangel Michael Hurls the Devil into the Abyss* (Figure 1.56). Murillo paints this celestial being in the middle of swinging his sword; the strength of his arms contrast with the delicacy of his robe that folds at his right knee, revealing his leg stepping over the devil. The muscles in the leg are soft, and his feet are decorated with delicate sandals that go over the calf. The daintiness of the feet pointing down push the dark lower figure with the lightness of his body. The archangels at the convent and the church of Ocaitá wear diaphanous robes and a spear pointing toward the top of the monstrance that imitates the circular shape that emanates rays of light (Figure 1.51). The high position of the Archangels near the ceiling, marks the space between the altar and the nave, and their role as mediators between Angels and God.¹¹²

The positioning of the archangels and their embodiment of Muisca physical features showcases the understanding of the Muisca caciques in the use of imagery and representation and their role as "officials of the Hispanic empire and their position as a crucial link in the chain that connected native communities with the imperial administration."¹¹³ The figure's height makes it visible over the nave and the choir but at the same time alienates the congregants with their distance. The mixture of local and foreign features of the archangels and their position at the church's threshold, where the physical and the sacred collide, represent the negotiated transitional state of the Indigenous population. Europeans and their descendants lived alongside Indigenous and Black people, creating a multicultural society where the subjugated population was omnipresent in their homes and towns.

The presence of the sun is a link between the Muisca and the Christian God to assist in the conversion efforts of the local population. The sun points to the altar as a sacred place, where transformation indicates a connection between the human and the divine. The Muisca have socio-political links, where the caciques were able to transform into the sun.¹¹⁴ The cacique's association with the sun was a marker of power relations and Indigenous nobility. The success of the Christian conversion of the Muisca population was based on the Spanish alliances with the caciques, who served as intermediaries between the native population and

¹¹² Muehlberger, *Angels in Late Ancient Christianity*, 158.

¹¹³ Santiago Muñoz Arbeláez, *Costumbres En Disputa: Los Muiscas y El Imperio Español En Ubaque, Siglo XVI*, Primera edición (Bogotá, D.C., Colombia: Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Departamento de Historia, 2015), 14.

¹¹⁴ François Correa Rubio, *El Sol Del Poder: Simbología y Política Entre Los Muiscas Del Norte de Los Andes*, 1. ed, Colección Sede 16 (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, 2004), 40. The convent also provided the ability of transformation, see Black veiled and white veiled above.

the Spanish. Indigenous people had an active role that included serving as translators, artists, and patrons.

The church of St. John the Baptist in the town of Sutatausa, Colombia, has a visual example of the patronage of caciques and their understanding of visual elements for representation (Figure 1.53, 1.54). The mural program found in the nave of the Church of Sutatausa includes the depiction of a noble Muisca woman known as a *Cacica* in characteristic *ruana* (shawl) near the altar and a male group portrait placed by the Last Judgment scene located on the left wall of the entrance of the church; this scene has the inscription (Figure 1.54, 1.55):

PINTOSE ESTE JVIZIO A DEVOCION DEL PVEBLO D SVTA. SIENDO CACIQVE DON
DOMINGO Y CAPITANES, D LAZARO, don Juan Neaetariguia, Don Juan Corula y Don
Andres. 16?? [sic]
[Painted this judgment of devotion of the town of Suta being Cacique Don
Domingo, and the captains, D Lazaro, and Juan Neaetariguia, Don Juan Corula y Don
Andres. 16??.]¹¹⁵

The presence of the portrait and text naming the Indigenous leaders *caciques* showcases the awareness of the Muisca population in their understanding of images as forms of representation and power. Their placement in the Last Judgment as part of the people that will be saved over the unnamed naked figures. The unclothed bodies have European physical characteristics such as lighter hair, eyes, and a beard that contrast with the shoulder length, half parted black hair and darker skin, clean shaved faces, and fully dressed Indigenous figures. From early on, the Muisca, like other Indigenous groups in America, contributed with labor and resources to build churches and convents. In the case of the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja), the construction of the buildings and the sustenance of the nuns depended on Indigenous labor, as discussed in the next section.

The Encomienda of Mongua: Indigenous links with the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja)

Before the arrival of the Spanish, the town of Mongua was part of the chiefdom of Iraca, associated with the spiritual power of the Muisca, and centered by the sun Temple located in Sugamoxi.¹¹⁶ Some historians such as Martín Medina have associated the etymology of Mongua with the Sun-*Gua*, translating the name to “Tierra del sol naciente” (land of the rising sun), which underscores the visual and economic association of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja with the town of Mongua.¹¹⁷ The reappearance of the sun in this section reiterates its importance as a religious symbol in the Muisca people and its reappropriation by the churches. There was an active duality between the relationship of the Muisca with imposed Christianity and their Indigenous religious practices. Like the caciques of Sutatausa, they understood the importance of display to establish alliances to maintain their power and lead Indigenous

¹¹⁵ This inscription is located in the mural of the Last Judgement in the Church of Sutatausa [Published].

¹¹⁶ Maria Rósula Vargas de Castañeda, *El origen histórico de los pueblos de Boyacá*, 2011, 336.

¹¹⁷ Martín Medina, “Arqueología,” *Repertorio Boyacense, Tunja*, no. X (October 1929).

groups. Elements of this duality inadvertently became part of the foundation of the convent. Santa Clara la Real (Tunja) was funded by the encomienda of Mongua the encomienda was a tribute that was imposed on the Indigenous population, which comprised goods from gold and emeralds to mantas (shawls) and personal services that included Indigenous labor for churches and convents.¹¹⁸

The funds and labor from the encomienda of Mongua awarded to the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja) were administered by the nuns; it was their primary form of sustenance for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth century.¹¹⁹ The continual financial support from the encomienda is of note because most convents obtained their funds from the entering nuns' dowry and donations.¹²⁰ The prominence of Santafé as the political and economic center of Nueva Granada and the depletion of the Indigenous population: "the Indians of this town have come to less, it is much less what it is worth today," increased the convent's financial need. Upon the arrival of the Spanish into the Muisca territory, the Portuguese Francisco Salguero, a cavalry soldier for the Spanish under Gonzalo Jimenez de Quezada, the founder of Santafé de Bogotá (1538), received the title of captain once Santafé, Tunja, and surrounding areas were occupied, becoming Nueva Granada.¹²¹ As a reward, Salguero also obtained minor *encomiendas*, including Mongua and about 200 Indigenous people.¹²²

Part of the responsibilities of the *encomenderos* (encomienda holder) was collaborating with missionaries to convert the Indigenous population under their control. The Encomienda was a Spanish governmental system where "they assigned land and the people that lived in there to Spanish colonizers in exchange for their conversion to Christianity."¹²³ Hernan Cortés in his 1524-25 *Ordenanza para el Buen Trato y Régimen de los Indios* (Ordinance for the Good Treatment and Regime of the Indians), includes among the requirements for the *encomenderos*: "sea obligado a lo mostrar las cosas de Nuestra Santa Fé (be obliged to show them the things of Our Holy Faith)," which indicates the close relationship between the legal and economic system with the church through their religious missions.¹²⁴ Another of the *Ordinances* states: "los españoles tienen necesidad de bastimentos [...] permito e mando que para remedio desto, los españoles tobiesen depositados o señalados indios, puedan con ellos

¹¹⁸ Camilo Alexander Zambrano Cardona, *Luisa de Venero, Una Encomendera En Santafé: Microhistoria de Las Mujeres Encomenderas En El Nuevo Reino de Granada, Siglo XVI*, 1. ed, Ciencias Humanas (Bogotá, D.C: Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2019), 27; Muñoz Arbeláez, *Costumbres En Disputa*, 42–51.

¹¹⁹ Santafé, 171, N.6, "Confirmación de Encomienda de Mongua" (Tunja, 1639), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹²⁰ Sofía Molina Brizuela, "'Para Reparar de Tanta Doncella'. El Origen de La Vida Conventual Femenina En Tunja (1571-1636)," *Theologica Xaveriana* 69, no. 187 (January 17, 2019): 13, <https://doi.org/10.11144/javeriana.tx69-187.prttd>.

¹²¹ Soledad Acosta de Samper, *Biografías de Hombres Ilustres ó Notables, Relativas á La Época Del Descubrimiento, Conquista y Colonización de La Parte de América Denominada Actualmente EE. UU. de Colombia* (Bogotá: La Luz, 1883), 434, <https://babel.banrepcultural.org/digital/collection/p17054coll10/id/3168>.

¹²² Sir Clement Markham, *The Conquest of Nueva Granada* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1912), 205.

¹²³ "Concesiones y Confirmaciones de Encomiendas en el Archivo General de Indias," accessed November 26, 2022, <https://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/areas/archivos/mc/archivos/agi/recursos/profesionales/encomiendas.html>.

¹²⁴ Joaquín Francisco Pacheco, Francisco de Cárdenas y Espejo, and Luis Torres de Mendoza, *Colección de Documentos Inéditos, Relativos al Descubrimiento, Conquista y Organización de Las Antiguas Posesiones Españolas de América y Oceanía, Sacados de Los Archivos Del Reino, y Muy Especialmente Del de Indias. Competentemente Autorizada.*, vol. 26, Colección de Documentos Inéditos de Indias. (Madrid: Manuel B. de Quirós, 1864), 164.

fazer estancias de labranzas (the Spaniards need supplies [...] I allow and command that to remedy this, the Spaniards have placed or designated Indians, which can do farm work).” Here, Cortés shows the economic backbone of the encomienda; Indigenous people through their labor sustained the colonial financial system through their “farm work” which also included other labors like mining.¹²⁵

In Nueva Granada, the encomienda of Mongua offers a glimpse of the contradictory nature of the objective of the encomienda with the reality of the Indigenous people. There are accounts of the failure of these earlier conversion efforts and the conversion of Indigenous people to Christianity. Archival documents showcase the awareness of Indigenous leaders of the need to become a dual figure that intermediated figure between the European impositions and Indigenous people’s religion and culture. The account of the Christian captain Andres gives us a glimpse of the continuation of Indigenous religious practices (1577). He stated that in Mongua, the Muisca:

[...] exhibited a wooden tunjo (small figurine), four large snails, some crowns from other small and large snails; and that these came by order of the cacique and three of his captains, and what he showed came from his sanctuaries, and eleven santillos (small saint figures) and others with different forms and workmanship of gold things of different ways, and that everything seemed to be fine gold and weighed twenty-three pesos.¹²⁶

The *tunjos* were Muisca votive figures made from gold, wood, or cotton used as an offering to their gods, representing the continuation of Muisca religious practices well into the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Figure 1.57). These objects had a peculiar triangular ending that allowed the person putting the offering to easily bury the figure in a sacred site (Figure 1.57.1).

From early on, the Spanish connected these *tunjos* with the practice of idolatry, and actively tried to destroy them.

I cannot go from here without telling you how a cleric deceived the devil, or his jeque or mohán, in his name, and took from him three or four thousand pesos that had been offered to him (devil) in a sanctuary that was in the land of the old cacique of Ubaque; this was in my time, and as archbishop of this Kingdom, Fray Luis Zapata de Cárdenas, a great persecutor of idols and sanctuaries (El Carnero, 1638).¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Pacheco, Cárdenas y Espejo, and Torres de Mendoza, 26:165.

¹²⁶ Eduardo Londoño Laverde, “Santuarios, Santillos, Tunjos: Objetos votivos de los Muisca en el siglo XVI,” *Boletín Museo del Oro*, no. 25 (1989): 108; Real Hacienda, 21, fol. 781V, “Un Capitán de Monga, Cristiano, Llamado Andrés” (Tunja, 1577), Bogotá, Archivo General de la Nación.

¹²⁷ Juan Rodríguez Freyle, *El Carnero: conquista y descubrimiento del Nuevo Reino de Granada de las Indias occidentales del mar oceano, y fundación de la Ciudad de Santa Fe de Bogotá* (Santafe de Bogotá, Colombia: Panamericana Editorial, 1999), 31.

The caciques and Indigenous people were aware of the implications of the continual use of *tunjos*. At the same time, they became part of the framework for the imposition of Christianity in the colonies. Like the Spanish in the colonial period, scholars are fascinated by these objects because most of them were made of gold. This is why idols and sanctuaries were equated to a monetary value in the passage from *El Carnero*. The *tunjos* are similar to Christian votives; they are small objects used as a link with sacred figures, used as a form of devotion and offering to request personal favors or to give thanks. The paradoxical nature of the *tunjos* with idolatrous and Christian elements reflects the ambiguous position of the caciques. The Muisca caciques actively participated in the construction of the Catholic church through their patronage and presence found in their portraits and their god, the sun. *Tunjos* stand as the perpetuation of the Indigenous past, which subsisted in objects and rituals intertwined with the demands to convert to Christianity for their survival.

The 1577 account of the Spanish Captain Andres diverges from an earlier document from 1540 made on behalf of Doña Madalena-India. By contrast, the wife of the cacique of Mongua, Don Tobias, positions herself as a Christian believer. The unpublished manuscript is marked as a testament; however, it deviates from the usual listing of belongings. Instead, it reads as a petition of her desires for the afterlife (Figure 1.58): “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Blessed Virgin Mother [...] (If) our bodies have any illness at the time of death in the town of Mongua, my body should be buried in the main church of Tunja.”¹²⁸ This petition was made only a year after the official establishment of Tunja in 1539 and before the arrival and establishment of the Franciscans in Mongua in 1555. The testament is an enigmatic document that leaves more questions than answers. Was this a direct request of Doña Madalena? Did the Indigenous people in the area know Spanish, or did the Spanish understand the Indigenous language? If there was no means of clear communication, then what is the reason to write this document with a notary? This document exemplifies the rapid spread of the Spanish and their conversion practices in this territory and the awareness of the Spanish language and the caciques of the need to display their religious accommodation and understanding of Spanish bureaucratic institutions. Regardless of who made the document, it clearly shows awareness of the afterlife and the importance of the church as a sacred area for burial.

The power of the *caciques* Doña Madalena and Don Tobias after the Spanish arrived depended on their ability to lead the Indigenous people in their territory and collaborate with the Spanish. It is possible that when Francisco Salguero became the encomendero of Mongua, the caciques were different; nevertheless, alliances and control of the work of the Indigenous population through forced tribute became the economic backbone of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja). Even after Salguero’s death, the convent was allowed to keep the encomienda of Mongua. After the death of Juan de Borja, the president of the Audience of Santafé de Bogotá, the Marquis of Sofraga, petitioned to extend the Encomienda. His petition was granted in a Royal decree from the king in 1639 for eight more years.¹²⁹ The nuns were aware of the social position of their women. They used these connections to garner support to

¹²⁸ Notaria 1, Leg 1, Fol. 83-86, “Testamento Doña Madalena Cacica de Mongua” (Tunja, 1540), Tunja, Boyacá, Archivo Histórico Regional de Boyacá.

¹²⁹ Santafé, 171, N.6, “Confirmación de Encomienda de Mongua.”

keep the ties with Mongua: "They are daughters and granddaughters of the conquerors of the Kingdom, and for the services of their ancestors, they deserve any mercy that His Majesty grants them."¹³⁰ The early establishment of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja) did not have a direct conversion purpose. Instead, as mentioned above, it was a response to the need for female spaces for women that were not married or did not have a stable social position. In the case of Doña Juana Macias de Figueroa, she could not have children and lost her adoptive child. Her role as a wife was precarious, and the couple used the convent as a place for Doña Juana to devote her life to God.¹³¹

Most of the foundations of convents were enterprises initiated by those women who came from a high social standing and wanted to create an alternate place for the family's women to inhabit without the constraints of marriage or widowhood. The Convent of the Discalced Carmelites in Santafé (Bogotá) was founded by the widow Doña Elvira de Padilla in 1606.¹³² She used her financial and social connections to back her efforts. Like Doña Juana Macias, she was inspired by the writings of Santa Teresa and her need to create a female space for her two daughters and close family members.¹³³ By contrast, the convent of Santa Clara (Santafé) was founded in 1625 by Archbishop Hernando Arias de Ugarte, who requested the Royal license and gave the initial funding as "a pious work for virtuous, honest and pure-blooded maidens."¹³⁴ One of the salient differences between both convents was that the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja was dependent on the Encomienda of Mongua, and the Santa Clara Convent in Santafé depended on the money and land titles collected as a dowry to enter the convent. The convent had a solid economic backing, as accounted by the long list of *censos* (debts) and royal rents owed to the convent in the foundation titles (1691).¹³⁵ The convent was able to duplicate its resources and take the role of a financial institution, "they made census loans to generate an annual income, a part was dedicated to the support of the nuns, and the other money was loaned again."¹³⁶

The difference in the financial structure between both convents of Santa Clara (Santafé-dowry and Tunja-Encomienda) had a direct impact on their response to the visual program of their respective murals. This difference gave greater financial freedom to the nuns of the convent in Santafé, who had a different approach to the ornamentation of the convent. For instance, the abundant gilded wood panels extended through the church to the choir, and the choir included animals in the ceiling (Figure 1.35, 1.38). The depicted animals inhabited adjacent areas to Santafé, an inadvertent reference to the land owned by the convent. The animals in the ceiling created a fantasy world based on an inaccessible reality, which allowed

¹³⁰ Santafé, 171, N.6, Fol, 68.

¹³¹ Santafé, 124, N.8, Fol.3, "Informaciones: Francisco Salguero" (Tunja, 1574), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹³² Fajardo de Rueda, *Tesoros Artísticos Del Convento de Las Carmelitas Descalzas de Santafé de Bogotá*, 48.

¹³³ Fajardo de Rueda, 51–52.

¹³⁴ María Constanza Toquica Clavijo, "La economía espiritual del convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, siglos XVII y XVIII," *Fronteras de la Historia* 3 (December 23, 1998): 37, <https://doi.org/10.22380/20274688.729>. "una obra pía para doncellas virtuosas, honradas y de limpia sangre." Manuscript took by Toquica from the Private Archive of the Convent of Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá. A.C.S.C. (Santafé de Bogotá), *Fundación original del Convento*, Santafé, January 7 de 1792.

¹³⁵ Conventos, 56, fol. 177V, "Fundación Del Convento Carmelita Santafé."

¹³⁶ Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII*, 86.

the nuns to virtually transport themselves outside the convent, expanding the choir beyond the physical confines of the convent. The ornamentation and art of the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé represent their financial and aesthetic autonomy. The careful use of ornamentation by both convents of Santa Clara emerged in unexpected ways in other contexts.

The testament of Doña Madalena stands out among the notarial manuscripts written during the same period due to the highly stylized initial letter at the left upper corner (Figure 1.58.2). The curvilinear details create spontaneous shapes that transformed the manuscript from a legal declaration, into a visual declaration of faith. Curves in multiple directions create organic shapes that emulate singing books brought from Spain to Nueva Granada. Most of the choral books were moved or damaged, but a few survived, like the book of *Canto Llano* (Plainsong-liturgical chant) found in the nearby town of Mongui, brought from Spain in 1596.¹³⁷ Others were commissioned, like the *Canto Llano* book made by Francisco de Páramo for Archbishop Bartolomé Lobo Guerrero in 1608 (Figure 1.59).¹³⁸ Early legal manuscripts from the nearby area of Tunja were usually text-driven documents by the notary Joan de Ortegon. These documents usually address Indigenous issues such as complaints related to the treatment of the Spanish, land rights, religious donations, testaments, and accounts from caciques.

The mention of an Indigenous woman in a position of power was unusual, such as in the case of the testament of Doña Madalena. In the 1590s, a testament made by the same notary, Joan de Ortegon, for the Cacica Beatriz of Soata, a mestiza, focused on economic matters.¹³⁹ There is a modest attempt of decoration that does not match the care and intricacy shown in the making of the testament of Doña Madalena. The mural paintings, like Doña Madalena's testament, are a visual manifestation of female devotion where song and text are combined with ornamentation to display their faith. There were few female spaces during the colonial period, particularly for women linked with high social positions through their families or husbands. Their fragile social position was contingent on the performance of devotion, making the letter and the murals into a visual statement.

The Sound of Mural Paintings: Multicultural Musical Soundscapes

Silence is part of the imagery of a convent, where long hallways had women passing each other without uttering a word and in constant prayer, alienated from social and bodily desires. Women gave their lives to "rough and hard things by which they walk to God Our Lord."¹⁴⁰ The vow of silence was made part of the stipulations of convents like the Santa Clara in Santafé, where "continuous silence must be kept in such a way for all, that neither among themselves, nor with another person without a license, it is lawful for them to speak, excluding

¹³⁷ Diana Farley Rodríguez, "'Y Dios Se Hizo Música': La Conquista Musical Del Nuevo Reino de Granada. El Caso de Los Pueblos de Indios de Las Provincias de Tunja y Santafé Durante El Siglo XVII," *Fronteras de La Historia* 15, no. 1 (February 3, 2010): 22, <https://doi.org/10.22380/2027468887>.

¹³⁸ Egberto Bermúdez, Ellie Anne Duque, and Jorge Gamboa T., *Historia de La Música En Santafé y Bogotá, 1538-1938*, 1. ed, Música Americana (Bogotá, Colombia: Fundación de Música, 2000), 21.

¹³⁹ Notaria 1, Leg 70, Fol. 350r-351r, "Testamento Doña Beatriz Cacica de Soata" (Tunja, 1592), Tunja, Boyacá, Archivo Histórico Regional de Boyacá.

¹⁴⁰ Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), *Regla, Constituciones, y Ordenaciones de Las Religiosas de S. Clara de La Ciudad de S. Fé de Bogotá En El Nuevo Reyno de Granada, de Las Indias de El Perú*, RG 23606 (Roma: Lucas Antonio Chracas, La Gran Curia Innocenciana, 1699), 54.

[of these rule] those who have a position, or labor that cannot be done in silence, it will be permitted for them to speak among themselves of things related to their labor.”¹⁴¹ This clause illustrates that silence was a requirement that fulfilled the ideal state of cloistered women in closure and emphasizes speech as a marker of hierarchy. Only women in higher positions like abbesses, doorkeepers, and singers could speak on specific occasions. Their titles gave them a limited agency, while for the others, the expectation was to let go of their voice to submit to the religious community. There were some instances where these women were able to speak, “in feasts and in the solemnities of the apostles, and on days chosen by the abbess in the stipulated place for this purpose, from the *nona* (ninth) hour to the eve, and in some other hour the nuns can speak of Our Lord Jesus Christ [and] of the solemnity of that day.”¹⁴²

The desire for a quiet female space went against the reality of these spaces, where life was busy with women, families, servants, and music filling the space daily. Private and public spaces filled the convent with the energy of their voices and movements that brought awareness of their existence. Sounds permeated the convent's walls, even in the form of disagreements: “The ruckus and noise they brought were as if they had caught a robber. The things that woke me up are not to be said; I did not find where to shelter because the cell had been filled only with fear, and with anxiety, I could no longer stand up. My maids also had risen against me.”¹⁴³ In this passage of *Mi Vida*, Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo describes the terror she felt during the night due to the noise made by some nuns and maids on their way to her room, stating that a novice she was working with was not her maid.¹⁴⁴ Even though this chaotic scene was a rare occurrence, it does give us a glimpse of how this community was also subject to feelings such as rage and fear.

The anger of the nuns was fueled by gossip, conversations between these women about everyday matters strayed away from the stipulations of the convent. Nuns knew the power of their voice, and they actively used it to gain favors and control from their peers. In *Nuns Behaving Badly*, Craig Monson used the term “porous walls” to describe how the walls of the convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Pavia (Italy) carried sound throughout the dormitories allowing private movements, conversations, and prayers into an unwelcomed public domain.¹⁴⁵ The *porous wall* brings awareness to the existence of others obscured by walls, distance, laws, social position, fear, or plain indifference.

The permeable sound quality at Santa Maria degli Angeli (Pavia) can be compared with the layers of paint at the choirs of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja. The ability of sound vibrations to pass through physical barriers like walls and wooden screens underlines the paradox between the nuns’ enclosure and their ubiquitous public presence. These sounds allowed nuns to assert their presence during public religious events and private interactions. The sound of the nuns’ voices penetrated every single space of the church, boosted by the location of the high choir. Contrary to the ruckus described above in the nuns' rooms of the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja), the sounds that came out of the choir were controlled.

¹⁴¹ Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), 65.

¹⁴² Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), 65–66.

¹⁴³ Castillo, *Mi Vida*, 145.

¹⁴⁴ Castillo, 144.

¹⁴⁵ Craig Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art, and Arson in the Convents of Italy* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 142.

Unity was key for the clarity of their voices, which required ability from the singers.¹⁴⁶ Even though selected women were part of the choir, the collective quality of choral singing blurred individual women into a singular presence.

The nuns' presence depended on their ability to attenuate their personality and showcase their communal piety. The barriers used to make invisible these women also allowed them to give prominence to their voices and permeate the church space. For instance, the wooden screen limited the view of what is in the choir to the churchgoers, but its perforations allow the passing of air which carries sound waves produced by the women's songs in the direction of the nave.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the high position of the choir over the church allows sound to project to the ceiling vault, producing a higher reverberation.¹⁴⁸ The persistence of sound waves over the space was enhanced by the reflection of simultaneous short sound waves, the music was reflected into the ceiling and bounced back simultaneously into the nave producing a distinctive and extended sound of the nuns' voices (Appendix 2).¹⁴⁹ Through reverberation, music uses the church's walls and ceiling to enhance the sound's power, using the murals and retablos to strengthen the nuns' presence, allowing the vibration of their singing to envelop every single person in the church. The almost invisible presence of the nuns provokes a physical response from the congregation, intensifying their experience. Music provided a way for the nuns to actively participate in mass and to be part of a larger community. The various layers of murals, like the nun's voices, were displayed and concealed in a cycle of creation and erasure that mirrored the convent's dynamics. The past of this site did not disappear with the nuns; their songs, bodily movements, and murmurs survived in the paint fragments of the choir. The emphasis on decorative mural scenes in the choir interacted with the music.

The songs of the nuns filled the choral space. This sensorial relationship was usually unidirectional from the nuns to the parishioners, from the choir to the nave. However, churches and convents were an intrinsic part of the colonial scaffolding. The *fiestas* (celebrations) were used to consolidate their power through the façade of egalitarianism and democracy.¹⁵⁰ Every inhabitant of the colony could participate in communal activities where the "world was upside down," allowing everybody "certain freedoms," such as the public display of pre-colonial dances and music.¹⁵¹ The *fiestas* allowed the reversal of the cultural unidirectionality in churches and convents, allowing a switch of the sensorial relationship from the Indigenous, religious guests from other religious orders and lay population to the closure nuns. The popular character of the liturgical and governmental feasts celebrated during the colonial period included concerts as the central axis of these cultural events.¹⁵² The acoustic permeability of the choir allowed these women to listen to outside cultural expressions playing

¹⁴⁶ Sten Ternström, "Physical and Acoustic Factors That Interact with the Singer to Produce the Choral Sound," *Journal of Voice* 5, no. 2 (1991): 130, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997\(05\)80177-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997(05)80177-8).

¹⁴⁷ Marshall Long, *Architectural Acoustics*, Second edition (Boston: Elsevier/Academic Press, 2014), 4.

¹⁴⁸ Christine Guillebaud and Catherine Lavandier, eds., *Worship Sound Spaces: Architecture, Acoustics and Anthropology*, Research in Architecture (New York: Routledge, 2020), 17.

¹⁴⁹ Guillebaud and Lavandier, 18.

¹⁵⁰ Edgar Rey Sinning, *Fiestas, Fastos y Duelos: Orden y Conformación Social En Santa Marta, Siglo XVIII*, 1. ed, La Carreta Histórica (Medellín, Colombia: Carreta Editores, 2018), 184–85.

¹⁵¹ Rey Sinning, 186–87.

¹⁵² Martha Lilia Tenorio, *Los Villancicos de Sor Juana*, 1. ed, Serie Estudios de Lingüística y Literatura 42 (México, D.F: Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, 1999), 27, Apple Books.

in the nave of the church, which were not usually available to them. These exchanges included integrating European and Indigenous musical elements in the production of religious music.¹⁵³ The convent was not impervious to the efforts made by the church to use music as an intrinsic element of the newly established religious institutions in Nueva Granada. From the arrival of missionaries, they used music as a tool for indoctrination and as a way to incite devotion in the parishioners.

In the late 1600s, the Jesuit priest Pedro de Mercado, in *Historia de la Provincia del Nuevo Reino y Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, gave an account of the inclusion of musical education as part of the Jesuit conversion efforts of the Indigenous population in the town of Caxicá. Here, Jesuit priests undertook missionary work to make "their little Indians the first musicians of the Kingdom to officiate the masses and sing the divine offices."¹⁵⁴ After they learned how to read, the Indigenous young men were taught "plainsong and organ, they were instructed in the music of flutes, *chirimías*, violins and other sound harmony instruments."¹⁵⁵ The account of Fray de Mercado illustrates the inclusion of Indigenous instruments like the *chirimía* (small Muisca wind instrument) in the music played at the churches (Figure 1.60). The Muisca contribution influenced the sound of the European music arriving in Nueva Granada and had a significant impact on the local population, including the Spanish and Criollos: "It was indescribable how [the music of] the church of Caxicá increased the people who went to church on Sundays and holidays, thanks to the sound of the music with which these chanted masses were celebrated. It seemed that the [singing] voices attracted the Spaniards who had their haciendas in neighboring posts, and thus [they] left other towns [churches] closer to them and went to hear the chanted mass of the town of Caxicá."¹⁵⁶ The case of the Indigenous people of Caxicá was not an isolated case.

Phillip II's *Pacificación* decree of 1573 states, "If to cause more admiration and have more attention of the infidels [...] you could use music [...] and other media to tame and pacify the Indians."¹⁵⁷ The wave of music education included the influx and transcription of musical books, such as Books of Canto Toledano, requested by the first bishop of Nueva Granada, Fray Juan de Quevedo in 1513.¹⁵⁸ The nuns would have heard the music produced by Indigenous people in the convents while participating in religious feasts and special events. In the feast for the celebration of the prince Carlos José, later known as Charles II, Tunja celebrated for multiple days; this celebration included a literary contest on the fourth day.¹⁵⁹ These festivities were at the convent of Santa Clara la Real (Tunja): "The Academy will be held in the Convent of

¹⁵³ José Ignacio Perdomo Escobar, *Historia de La Música En Colombia.*, 3. ed. (Bogotá, 1963), 21, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/txu.059173023664751>.

¹⁵⁴ Pedro de Mercado, *Historia de la Provincia del Nuevo Reino y Quito de la Compañía de Jesús (Seventeenth Century)*, vol. 1 (Bogotá: Biblioteca de la Presidencia de Colombia, 1957), 101.

¹⁵⁵ Mercado, 1:101. Padre Mercado la escribió libro pero no alcanzo a ser publicado. Late 1600s.

¹⁵⁶ Mercado, 1:102.

¹⁵⁷ Rafael Altamira, *Ensayo Sobre Felipe II: Hombre de Estado, Su Psicología General y Su Individualidad Humana*, Publicaciones Del Instituto de Historia; 1. Ser., No. 16 (México: Editorial Jus, 1950), 278; Indiferente, 427, L. 29, Fol. 67R-93V, "Ordenanzas de Descubrimiento y Población Dadas Por Felipe II" (1573), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

¹⁵⁸ Perdomo Escobar, *Historia de La Música En Colombia.*, 28.

¹⁵⁹ The dates do not match the birth of any of Philip IV children. The closest one was Charles II, born on 1661, named king of Spain on 1665.

Santa Clara la Real of this city on January twenty-eighth, one thousand six hundred and sixty-three years in the eve, where the prizes will be given to the legitimate children of Apollo and to those who do not deserve it, humiliation will be given.”¹⁶⁰ The contest consisted of six events: a commentary, an acrostic with these initial letters —VIVE CARLOS JOSE, four-tenths of a Laudatory Exhortative giving thanks to Tunja, a Romance, four verses of song, and eight octaves.¹⁶¹ The royal ensign Alonso de Palma Nieto described this event in detail, including when the prizes were given to people that stood for the unknown winners: “The prizes were given to the sound of *chirimías*, giving them to the simulated persons who manifested the rubrics of the true owners.”¹⁶²

The nuns that inhabited the convent of Santa Clara (Tunja) are not mentioned in the account of de Palma Nieto. They probably witnessed the festivities from the choir that allowed them to be invisible while participating as hosts and listeners. Religious and public events were part of the activities of the convent: they participated by hosting, cooking, and singing. As mentioned above, feasts gave the nuns the possibility to talk, as is one of the exceptions to their vow of silence.¹⁶³ The festivities allowed the nuns to partake in the cultural scene of the time, which included the use of *chirimías* in religious and political events. Therefore, they knew their sound and their Indigenous origin.

The Crafting of Exceptional Women Through Music

Women in Nueva Granada were part of the musical landscape from an early age. Once the convents were established, they became a musical center of the colony, where women received a high-quality musical education. According to José Ignacio Perdomo Escobar, the convent of Santa Clara in Santafé had a portrait of the music master Martín Palacio Galán Figueroa, which had the inscription “Martín Palacio priest, a native of Santafé. Rosario. Sochantre. He was the teacher of the nuns of Santa Clara (Santafé), taught them music, arranged the choir, and served as chaplain. Then he went to Tunja.”¹⁶⁴ The current location of the portrait of Martín Palacios is unknown.¹⁶⁵ Palacio's work as a teacher and musician in different towns allowed him to circulate choral music among convents and churches. His influence was recorded in his portrait, his signature on sheet music, and the hagiography *he wrote in 1790, Colección de la Vida Ejemplar de Joanna de San Esteban* (Collection of the exemplary life of Joanna of San Esteban).¹⁶⁶ As noted by Constanza, the hagiography was done eighty years after the death of the nun based on notes and oral accounts Palacios collected while his work in the convent: “In this rich fabric of her life, I am discovering such intertwined beauties, that I admire, a piece of fabric, so beautiful, had been hidden for more than eighty

¹⁶⁰ Ozías S. Rubio and Manuel Briceño, *Tunja Desde Su Fundación Hasta La Época Presente, Obra Escrita Sobre Documentos Auténticos* (Bogotá: Impr. eléctrica, 1909), 90.

¹⁶¹ Rubio and Briceño, 89–90.

¹⁶² Rubio and Briceño, 102.

¹⁶³ Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), *Regla, Constituciones, y Ordenaciones de Las Religiosas de S. Clara de La Ciudad de S. Fé de Bogotá En El Nuevo Reyno de Granada, de Las Indias de El Perú*, 65–66.

¹⁶⁴ Perdomo Escobar, *Historia de La Música En Colombia.*, 46.

¹⁶⁵ It is not clear where this portrait is currently located. I visited the Museum of Santa Clara in Bogotá, the Colonial Museum, and the Miguel Urrutia Museum (MAMU) and could not find the painting.

¹⁶⁶ María Constanza Toquica Clavijo, “Joanna de San Esteban: peril hagiográfico de una vida ejemplar en los albores de la Independencia*,” *Análisis. Revista Colombiana de Humanidades* 79 (2011): 103–33.

years.”¹⁶⁷ Toquica's article does not give information on Joanna of San Esteban's ability and participation in the choir. However, the link of Palacios with the convent as a music coach emphasized the desire of the convent and church authorities to elevate the status of some women through music and hagiographical accounts.

It is likely that the music the nuns of Santafé learned was shared with the women of the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja. There were also instances of musical abilities for women outside the convent, such as Doña Rafaela Izasi de Lozano, the later marquise of San Jorge, known for her singing and piano.¹⁶⁸ Also, as a young lady from high society, Mother Francisca Josefa de Castillo's family learned music. She described this period: "I wasted my time; and life, learning music, reading comedies and taking care of galas and garments."¹⁶⁹ However, this knowledge was highly valued by the convents. Musical abilities, as life accounts, such as the one of Mother Joanna of San Esteban and Mother Francisca Josefa de Castillo, were analogous to exemplary lives. Through music and prayers, these women shaped ephemeral forms of devotion, memorialized through writing and painting. Singing and musical knowledge were skills that could be tested, giving nuns with musical talents immediate access to a higher position within the convent as veiled chorus nuns. These nuns had privileges such as exclusive access to the choral space, permission to talk, and a lower dowry.¹⁷⁰ In the convent of Santa Clara Santafé, novice María Gertrudis de Orjuela (1728) paid only half of her dowry due to her musical abilities.¹⁷¹

The choir's vicariate was a person of authority who was in charge of the nun's musical education. Their role as mentors included control over their day through music practices and their behavior as role models for the rest of the women and their community. The Rules of the Convent of Santa Clara, Santafé, describe the role of the vicar:

Great care belongs to it [vicariate], which must ensure that the ministry is sung, and the divine worship, and I watch everything with great devotion; making it run with the appropriate pause, beginning altogether, and ending at the same time, so that there is uniformity, and harmony, taking great care that the nuns help the choir, singing, and praying. And when one is careless, warn them with charity, also, if they do not keep silent.¹⁷²

This was a great responsibility done with utmost discipline; a position only available to black-veiled nuns. The nuns that belonged to the chorus were also part of the higher ranks of the convent. Learning and mastering music required a discipline that fitted well with the cloistered

¹⁶⁷ Toquica Clavijo, 118. A.P.M.S.C. Bogotá, Martín Palacios, Colección de la vida exemplar., f. 31r. Taken from an article written by Constanza Toquica, a historian that had exclusive access to the archive of the convent of Santa Clara in Bogotá.

¹⁶⁸ Perdomo Escobar, *Historia de La Música En Colombia.*, 46.

¹⁶⁹ Castillo, *Mi Vida*, 25.

¹⁷⁰ Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), *Regla, Constituciones, y Ordenaciones de Las Religiosas de S. Clara de La Ciudad de S. Fé de Bogotá En El Nuevo Reyno de Granada, de Las Indias de El Perú*, 65; "Libro de Las Profesiones de Las Monjas de Este Monasterio de Señora Sancta Ines, n.º 2 (Numeración Antigua), s. f."

¹⁷¹ Conventos, 17, 67, fols. 667r-688v. (Bogotá, 1728), Bogotá, Archivo General de la Nación.

¹⁷² Clarisas (Santafé de Bogotá), *Regla, Constituciones, y Ordenaciones de Las Religiosas de S. Clara de La Ciudad de S. Fé de Bogotá En El Nuevo Reyno de Granada, de Las Indias de El Perú*, 66.

living and was equivalent to the time dedicated to prayer. These nuns had strict schedules of practice, which occupied most of their time, avoiding wandering thoughts and exalting them among others for their piety. The constant musical practices fill the convent with sound, particularly the church and the choir area. Music became the background of these women's daily life, a counterpoint to their silent prayers. Their music, like the mural paintings, embellished liturgical sermons and brought awareness to the congregation of the presence of the nuns and their contributions.

It is unclear if some of the nuns of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja could read and write music notations; many of their books and manuscripts vanished after the nuns were forced to leave. The presence of Martín Palacios in the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé and Tunja shows a way of cultural exchange within the colony, where they probably exchanged music sheets and lyrics besides visual elements found in paintings, prints and books. Constanza Toquica's work in the archive of the Claires in Santafé uncovered musical sheets transcribed by hand from the Convent of Santa Clara (Santafé).¹⁷³ One is the handwritten transcription of a villancico (anthem sung in churches) *Aquella hermosa nube* attributed Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Figure 1.61).¹⁷⁴

In the seventeenth century, Sor Juana was well known throughout the viceroyalty of New Spain [Mexico], Spain, and elsewhere in colonial Latin America as a prolific writer, her work included poetry, plays and music.¹⁷⁵ Villancicos originated in Spain, inspired by vernacular poetry, and transformed into popular musical expressions.¹⁷⁶ The use of vernacular language in religious music "facilitated the communication of the message, by condensing it into a few rhymed verses, easy to memorize."¹⁷⁷ This musical genre was primarily heard in religious festivities such as Christmas celebrations.¹⁷⁸ Villancicos fitted the popular character of the *fiestas*. It gave the population at-large a shared cultural exposure accessible to most, as Tenorio explains in *Los Villancicos de Sor Juana*: "A part of the feast was the Villancicos concert, where the faithful went to hear good music and poetry. It was a para-liturgical act and a cultural event that was never entirely well seen by the Church."¹⁷⁹

Even though villancicos were sought after, Sor Juana was discouraged by her confessor, padre Núñez, from writing this type of popular verse.¹⁸⁰ In 1682, she wrote a letter that included an answer to his disdain: "I was also placated with the natural repugnance that I have always had to make them [villancicos], as is known to all the people who know me—but it was

¹⁷³ Toquica Clavijo, *A Falta de Oro: Linaje, Crédito y Salvación: El Real Convento de Santa Clara de Santafé de Bogotá, Siglos XVII y XVIII*, 317–23.

¹⁷⁴ Constanza Toquica and Luis Fernando Restrepo, "Las canciones del coro alto de la iglesia del Convento de Santa Clara," *Cuadernos de Literatura* 6, no. 12 (2001): 99.

¹⁷⁵ Emilie L. Bergmann and Stacey Schlau, eds., *The Routledge Research Companion to the Works of Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz* (London New York: Routledge, 2017), ix–xi.

¹⁷⁶ Alison Latham, *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011), Villancicos.

¹⁷⁷ Tenorio, *Los Villancicos de Sor Juana*, 77.

¹⁷⁸ Juana Inés de la Cruz, Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, and Alberto G. Salceda, *Obras completas de sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, 1. ed, Biblioteca americana; Serie de literatura colonial 18, 21, 27, 32 (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951), XI–XIII.

¹⁷⁹ Tenorio, *Los Villancicos de Sor Juana*, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Antonio Alatorre, "La 'Carta' de Sor Juana al P. Núñez (1682)," *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica (NRFH)* 35, no. 2 (July 1, 1987): 591–673, <https://doi.org/10.24201/nrfh.v35i2.651>.

impossible to observe it with such rigor without some exceptions, such as two villancicos to the Blessed Virgin that, after repeated requests, and an eight-year hiatus.”¹⁸¹ The popularity of the villancicos dominated the musical market, resulting in its prolific printing.¹⁸² The prospect of Sor Juana Inés as the author of villancicos found in Nueva Granada emphasizes the cultural exchange among colonies and the impact on their musical production. The Company of Jesus brought the printing press to Nueva Granada in 1738, compared with its arrival in Mexico City in 1539.¹⁸³ The late arrival of the printing press indicated a demand for imported texts, creating a cultural circulation based on foreign printed texts and a link between New Granada and the rest of the colonies. This dissemination of prints included a flow of texts from other churches and convents in places such as New Spain: “the repertoire of this collection is consistent with material from the same period found in the cathedral of Santafé and other American archives.”¹⁸⁴

Alberto Pérez-Amador Adam notes that there is no register in Mexico of *Aquella Hermosa Nube*; even though he doubts this attribution, he points to the fact that even if it is not Sor Juana’s song, the use of her name “was so well known that it was used to legitimize other texts.”¹⁸⁵ Even though she was subjected to the rules of the convent and the inability to leave, Sor Juana was able to break through the walls of her convent with her writings. George Antony Thomas points to the colonial use of imitating classical literature in the development of Baroque writing in New Spain and beyond. The case of the villancicos, Sor Juana adapted popular Spanish musical expressions.¹⁸⁶ Like Sor Juana, the nuns in Nueva Granada created strategies to be present in the community, where they were cultural consumers and agents of music, writings, and art.

The villancicos show the awareness of the cultural tastes of the inhabitants of the New World, and their proficiency in the use of the Spanish language to push their own cultural agenda. Most of the nuns that created and sang villancicos, including Sor Juana and Madre Francisca del Castillo, were *criollo* (both parents of Spanish origin).¹⁸⁷ The villancico music genre did not exalt the Spanish Empire, in contrast to Sor Juana’s program for a viceregal arch.¹⁸⁸ As stated by Thomas, Sor Juana’s writings fashioned a category of American-produced knowledge that came “from the peripheral position of the colonies, [Sor Juana’s writings] respond to the

¹⁸¹ Alatorre, 619.

¹⁸² Robert Stevenson, *Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey* (New York: Crowell, 1952), 139.

¹⁸³ Alfonso Rubio, “Los inicios de la tipografía neogranadina, 1738-1782. Letras y cajistas hacia un lenguaje impreso,” *Lingüística y Literatura* 38, no. 71 (January 19, 2017): 57–58, <https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.lyl.n71a03>.

¹⁸⁴ Bermúdez, Duque, and Gamboa T., *Historia de La Música En Santafé y Bogotá, 1538-1938*, 42.

¹⁸⁵ Alberto Pérez-Amador Adam, “De los villancicos verdaderos y apócrifos de sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, puestos en metro músico,” *Literatura Mexicana* 19, no. 2 (2008): 159–78.

¹⁸⁶ George Antony Thomas, *The Politics and Poetics of Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 39, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315554433>.

¹⁸⁷ Hollis Micheal Tarver Denova and Emily Slape, eds., *The Spanish Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Empires of the World (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2016), 208. During the formation of the colonies, the term *Criollo* was unique to the children of two Spanish parents. However, this term morphed with the complexities of further human interaction. These changes resulted in a switch from biological determinacy to social. The type of upbringing and behavior would entitle you to this categorization.

¹⁸⁸ Julie A. Bokser, “Reading and Writing Sor Juana’s Arch: Rhetorics of Belonging, Criollo Identity, and Feminist Histories,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (2012): 147.

imperial enterprise by articulating local perspectives and advancing personal concerns.”¹⁸⁹ These efforts by the criollos nuns advanced the erasure of the Indigenous peoples and their languages by furthering the use of Spanish as the principal language in the colonies.

Despite the political and social implications of the villancicos made by the nuns in the colonies, their choral music has a persistent religious dedication to Mary. Their singing was one of the few devotional practices that the nuns could share with the congregation, who did not have access to the art and murals in the confined area of the convent. The villancico *Aquella Hermosa Nube* illustrates the nuns’ devotion to Mary in juxtaposition to the local context of Nueva Granada. Regardless of who wrote this song, its presence in an archive in Nueva Granada illustrates the nuns’ familiarity with word play where metaphorical rhetoric serves a dual purpose, the exaltation of Mary and the Sun as a local power and religious symbol. Like the study of mural fragments, the breakdown of this villancico elucidates the possibility of multiple local understandings that complement its collective dissemination and exemplifies the use of literary resources as the metaphor to illustrate higher meanings.

Aquella hermosa nube
que cándida y vistosa
los ojos arrebató,
las almas enamora, enamora.

That beautiful cloud
how candid and splendid
the eyes overwhelm,
Souls fall in love, fall in love.

Del sol está vestida
y cómo se arrebola
en rayos y en belleza,
un mismo sol en toda, sol en toda.

Of the sun she is dressed
And how she blushes.
In rays and in beauty,
The same sun in all, sun in all.¹⁹⁰

The first two verses introduce Mary and her position near the highest star (sun). As pointed out before, the sun is part of the imagery of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Spirit as seen above in Baltasar Vargas de Figueroa's *Coronation of the Virgin* (Figure 1.49). Mary is suggested by the feminine noun *Nube* (cloud), which is high in the sky but not at the same distance as the sun. The song also uses gendered adjectives that relate to fertility and physical appearance to describe women.¹⁹¹ For instance, the word *cándida* (candid) simultaneously refers to naïve and, in poetry, is used as a simile for whiteness. This references Mary's purity, virtue, and Immaculate Conception, which attracts people into the Christian faith: *Enamora* (Souls fall in love). The Incarnation is subtly insinuated by *Del sol está vestida* (Of the sun she is dressed), sun rays (light) traverse the cloud, like the Holy Spirit with his power traversed Mary's body to implant the son of God: “The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he

¹⁸⁹ Thomas, *The Politics and Poetics of Sor Juana*, 39.

¹⁹⁰ Attributed to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Aquella hermosa nube*, sung by three nuns: Bonifacia, Isidarta and another whose name does not appear; 1761, Transcript made by Carmenza Toquica of the songs of the high choir of the Convent of Santa Clara in Bogotá found in Toquica and Restrepo, “Las canciones del coro alto de la iglesia del Convento de Santa Clara,” 106–7.

¹⁹¹ Alexander Miserlis Hoyle et al., “Unsupervised Discovery of Gendered Language through Latent-Variable Modeling,” in *Proceedings of the 57th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics* (ACL 2019, Florence, Italy: Association for Computational Linguistics, 2019), 1711–12, <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/P19-1167>.

will be called Son of God.”¹⁹² The mystery of the incarnation “the Word became flesh” indicated the human manifestation of God in human form.¹⁹³

Paintings of the annunciation were part of the artistic demand of Nueva Granada, where painter Gregorio Vásquez de Arce y Ceballos, one of the most salient painters of religious scenes in the area from 1650 to 1750, was part of this tendency. In his painting of the *Annunciation*, Vásquez depicts the moment the Holy Spirit manifested to Mary in the shape of a dove (Figure 1.62). As in the painting of Vargas, light emanates from the Dove (Holy Spirit) amongst the clouds into Mary, illuminating her face and chest and stomach. The archangel Gabriel at the left looks at Mary attentively; his body is in rotation, holding a branch with lilies with his right hand and pointing upward to the dove with his left (Figure 1.41). Vásquez's painting showcases the use of rays of light to guide the viewer's gaze and, most importantly, to depict a sacred mystery, where the supernatural requires the use of visual and literary motifs as light and shadow-simile and metaphor to convey a message or describe a complex scene (Figure 1.47).

The survival of *Aquella Hermosa Nube* and other villancicos allows a historical exploration of cultural exchanges and influences in Nueva Granada during the colonial period while expanding the knowledge of conventual choirs as a multisensorial site of devotion. In the high choir, fragments of mural painting intertwine with music, expressions of devotion (prayer), and the daily lives of enclosed women manifesting into a liminal space where visual gestures and sounds produced from the private confines of the choir manifest in the public area of the church.

The Choirs of Santa Clara: Beyond Painting Fragments

Exploring the choirs of the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé allows one to meditate over the remnants of mural painting in a small space on a constant verge of transformation. The chapter's focus on the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja is linked to the apparent straightforward use of mural painting as an ornamental tool. Once I had the opportunity to closely examine the photographs I took through my research and create digital reconstructions, these patterns came alive through constant and careful observations, with the memories of the women that inhabited the convents and the historical and social context. The geographical and cultural closeness between the convents shows shared visual expressions. Local expressions took the form of floral, animal, and organic shapes that virtually eliminated the ceiling's physical barrier in the choir, and the church turned into an extension of heaven.

This effect created a paradox between the sky's infinity and earthly life's limitations. Painted wall fragments become a witness to the lives of women (officially) destined not to have their voices heard. The choir, through its liminality, provided an auspicious space where women occupied a threshold between private (cloistered) and public (lay). The nuns could be seen through singing and shared visual details without breaking their closure. It also allowed a directionality shift where they were exposed to outside cultural expressions, in feasts, where the rules did not apply. The voice of Mother Francisca del Castillo guided me through the active life of the choir, where besides prayer and singing, there was intrigue, jealousy, hate, rejection,

¹⁹² Luke 1:35

¹⁹³ John 1:14

hierarchies, community, and love. The unexpected connections found during this research showcased women's repeated use of ornament to showcase their devotion. The testament of the *cacica* of Mongua, Doña Madalena, shows the early awareness of the use of ornamentation as a conceptual tool of colonial adaptation and participation (Figure 1.58).

The inclusion of Muisca-Indigenous visual elements in the study of the mural painting brings awareness to the lives and cultures lost or transformed by colonization and conversion. The missing parts stand as limitations and possibilities for reconstruction. Each mural layer represented multiple existences and associations that survived as a painting fragment. There was likely no active inclusion of Indigenous elements in the design and making of the murals. Still, the early cosmopolitan nature of Nueva Granada suggests a shared visual vocabulary that can go from the prominence of natural forms as a response to devotion to the sun as a sacred being or mythological figure, the survival of the testament of the Cacica Madalena, to familiar animals such as the jaguar at the ceiling of the Convent of Santa Clara in Santafé representing the diversity of Nueva Granada. Nowadays, Muisca descendants are in the quest to reconstruct their Indigenous identity from the fragments left by the colony.¹⁹⁴

The extinction of their language equaled the destruction of their culture, and awareness of their existence contributes to developing a view beyond the original purpose of the paintings. These convents were inhabited by nuns and their maids, which included Indigenous women. Churches were visited by mestizo and Indigenous people, who brought different perspectives and understandings of the mural paintings. The erasure of the jaguar in the *flying tiger* section, the Muisca language, the choir's murals, and the memory of the women that inhabited these convents transformed them into almost fictional figures that now exist through colonial accounts and visual allusions. Contrary to nuns' desire to become recognized saintly figures, most women who entered convents forged monotonous lives whose contributions were nameless or forgotten. Their lives are embedded in unexpected places like conventual mural paintings waiting to be uncovered.

Women in the colonial world were part of a social scaffolding where their behavior was under surveillance, and their worth was linked to their virtuosity, Christian devotion, and motherhood. The choir's mural paintings are a physical representation of the nuns' devotion and a representation of colonial juxtapositions. Each layer of paint with flowers, animals, and fauna showcases the nuns' understanding of the world. Music became a unifying force of the choir's paradoxical visual elements, allowing the nuns to share the spirit of the surrounding images with the church's congregation through their voices. The convent provided women in Nueva Granada a space to redeem themselves, as in the case of Juana Macias and her impossible task of growing her family, and to maintain or improve their social position. The survival and function of the choir was linked to the circulation of music and the nuns' singing ability. This talent gave these women the power of exposure and recognition, as in the case of Mother María Josefa del Espíritu Santo (Figure 1.45).

Musical skills were conflated with the social perception of exemplary women; music intertwined with the mural paintings to create a multisensorial space where the painted images were activated by the sounds of skilled women. Surviving handwritten villacinto transcripts

¹⁹⁴ Cabildo Indígena Muisca de Suba, "Los Muisca Un Pueblo En Reconstrucción," in *Foro Memoria e Identidad de Los Indígenas Muisca de La Sabana de Bacatá: Un Pueblo En Reconstrucción* (Bogotá, 1999), 10.

stand as witnesses of the cultural exchanges between the colonies and the appreciation of popular musical expressions that reflected the flexibility of mural paintings through their capacity to transform and adapt to the taste and desires of specific people and historical periods. The choir's theoretical and physical porosity shaped an exceptional confluence in a space where women were memorialized through their voices and the mural paintings that survived through time.

PART II

Imitation, Repetition, and Adaptation as a Path to Sanctity: The Devotional Visual Journey of the Nuns of the Carmelite Convent of San José (Carmen Alto)

Although unworthy, I recognize myself, my Sovereign Husband, of *having the joy of imitating* you, abandoned by your Father in the Altar of the Cross; my request is none other than to humbly ask you not to cease in me the blows from such a mighty hand.¹⁹⁵
-St. -Mariana de Jesús of Ecuador.

Imitation as a form of devotion was and is the foundation of conventual life for religious men and women from all denominations. Each order follows the teachings of exemplary people such as St. Teresa de Jesús and St. Francis of Assisi, whose actions and personal qualities allowed them to achieve sanctity. The urge to imitate saintly lives was integrated early on as a basic principle of the Catholic Church, with the call of Peter to follow Christ's steps: "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps."¹⁹⁶ The life of Jesús and Mary became a prototype for the foundation of the Christian religion, being a prominent tenet in the foundation of religious orders that, through their ministry, disseminated their teachings. In the New World, male religious orders became the leading driving force of the conversion of Indigenous peoples, providing a way to legitimize colonization and exploitation of American peoples and resources, while female orders centered on the emulation of Mary's virtue and sanctity. The Carmelite Convent of San José of Quito, later known as Carmen Alto, showcases a juxtaposition of Christ and Mary as living and spiritual guides reflected in the convent's murals and history (Figure 2.1).

The quote attributed to Mariana de Jesús (1618-1645), the first saint of Ecuador, at the beginning of this chapter showcases her eagerness to imitate the life of Jesús Christ, regardless of the difficulties this implied.¹⁹⁷ Mariana de Jesús did not belong to the Carmelite Convent of San José; however, her zeal to closely imitate a saintly life became the foundation for this convent. She fashioned her life around the suffering of Jesus Christ, and this yearning transmuted to abstract forms of devotion like singing. According to the biography by Father Jacinto Morán (1699), a verse she constantly repeated reveals her early spiritual inclination to become a bride of God: "Christ Jesus of my life, Beautiful lamb, with nuptial garments, He goes

¹⁹⁵ Jacinto Morán de Butron and Gabriel del Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito Que Broto El Florido Campo de La Iglesia En Las Indicas Occidentales de Los Reynos Del Perú, y Cultivò Con Los Esmeros de Su Enseñanza La Compañia de Jesús, La V. Virgen Mariana de Jesús Paredes y Flores ...* (Madrid: Don Gabriel del Barrio, 1724), 254, [my own emphasis]. Aunque indigna, me reconozco, Soberano Esposo mío, de tener la dicha de imitaros, desamparado de vuestro Padre en el Ara de la Cruz; pero no es otro mi ruego, que el pedirlos humildemente, que no cesen en mi los golpes de mano tan poderosa. Mariana de Jesús was the first saint of Ecuador (Beatified on 1853- Canonized in 1950).

¹⁹⁶ 1 Pet 2:21

¹⁹⁷ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 254.

out in love to heaven."¹⁹⁸ Later, love and praise took a physical form where repetition and emulation became pain and seclusion. Father Alonso de Rojas underscored Mariana's de Jesús behavior at her funeral sermon (1645): "She always brought a spiked belt, many times six together: some of the thistle and others of bristles, others with a thick wire and iron links, cords which she used to torment her arms and muscles and [also] wore a rough chain, which she used to throw over her neck as a stole and girded four times [a day] to the body."¹⁹⁹ The eagerness of Mariana de Jesús to take people's pain was embodied in repeated actions such as her constant mortification, which became the lynchpin of her consecration as a saint.²⁰⁰

Mariana de Jesús's recreation of Christ's suffering took the form of painted narratives surrounding the living space of the Carmelite convent of San José. These murals are now part of the Museum of Carmen Alto. The nuns that continued living there granted this section to the city of Quito to allow its study and access from local and international visitors.²⁰¹ Murals of the life of Discalced Carmelite founder, St. Teresa, fill the living area with a chronological progression of scenes that illustrate her life from before she took the habit until her death. As pointed out in the Museum of Carmen Alto, each scene was based on a printed narrative sequence titled *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, engraved by Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle and published in Antwerp in 1613 (Figure 2.2).²⁰² Each mural scene is paired with a matching engraving, allowing the visitors to see a direct connection between local artistic production and European visual circulation. This pairing is essential to understanding this painting and colonial artistic practices. However, emphasizing only the murals' iconography creates a unidirectional and imperfect appreciation of the images' intent and transmission.²⁰³ An iconographical focus implies that the main goal for the local artists was to mimic European art and for the patron to display European narratives and art forms that showcase their lineage and to recreate European conventual spaces. The focus on these elements negates local perspectives by assuming that these paintings were made by passive artists and patrons who did not have any input. Unexpected visual deviations and relationships were embedded with elements of the local nuance, which are crucial to the understanding of the convent's intimate setting and the desire to integrate visual tools to incite contemplation and exercise religious devotion in the limited close space.

This study explores details that hold important information about local inspirations and artistic contributions. The intricate nature of the mural program becomes apparent when examining the inventory of mural scenes alongside their corresponding map (Appendix 4). The

¹⁹⁸ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 21.

¹⁹⁹ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 123–24.

²⁰⁰ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 418.

²⁰¹ "Historia," Museo del Carmen Alto | Fundación Museos de la Ciudad - Quito, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://fundacionmuseosquito.gob.ec/museo-del-carmen-alto/>.

²⁰² Adriaen (engr) Collaert and Cornelius (engr) Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu Ordinis Carmelitarum Excalceatorum Piae Restauratricis. Illustrissimo Domino D. Roderico Lasso Niño. Comiti de Añover. Serenissimi Archiducis Alberti Œconomo supremo &ca. dicata* (Antwerp: Apud Adrianum Collardum et Cornelium Galleum, 1613), Book Cover, http://archive.org/details/wotb_8862177.

²⁰³ Aaron Hyman, *Rubens in Repeat: The Logic of the Copy in Colonial Latin America* (Los Angeles, California: Getty Research Institute, 2021), 15–16. Suggests that 'conformity' is the conceptual framework of the transmission from European prints to Latin American objects with "the expectation of sameness"; however, there is a reconfiguration of the original.

complexity of the mural program with the Life of St. Teresa in the Convent of San José compelled me to divide its study in two: *The Visual Influence of the Narrative of St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús*, with a focus on the background of the Convent, the program layout, and an examination of the “copy” with attention to the significance of narrative repetition and its association with performance and imitation. The following chapter, *Layers of Inclusion and Memory: Nuns of the Carmelite Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) as Artists and Curators*, focuses on the painting layers and how they are vestiges of the interactions of the nuns with the mural program. It explores the nuns’ desire to include themselves in the sacred narrative through physical interventions of the mural program and their artistic awareness and participation. Every mural painting and printed image discussed in this text will be accompanied by a reference key and a guide number (Mural #) to navigate this complexity. For instance, the mural depicting *Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo* will be followed by (Mural 3) (Figure 2.3). This guiding system will be consistent across the visual complementary material of this chapter, including the list of murals and paintings (Appendix 3) and the Floor Map (Appendix 4), and will only apply to the prints and respective murals in the convent of San José. Through a close visual study of the painted deviations of the original printed copy and the historical context and relationships found in archival documents, I delve into the idea of repetition as a spiritual instrument (Appendix 3). Repetition allowed the nuns to recognize their institutional history by including the life of their founder St. Teresa de Jesús, who had recently obtained the status as a saint in 1622. The murals showcase St. Teresa's life based on her autobiography, which was used as proof of her sanctity.

The placement of the painting incorporates the presence of Mariana de Jesús in the convent by inciting the nuns to circumambulate around the visual narrative in the same space that Mariana de Jesús used to recreate the stations of the cross.²⁰⁴ Convents provide a pathway for women to achieve a higher social standing for their families. Nuns were promised the possibility of becoming a saint and growing their devotion through spiritual guidance and physical closeness to Christian sanctity found in books, art, and consecrated spaces. This pledge was particularly true in the New World, where there were no historical Christian precedents, yet the Carmelite Convent of San José provided a unique overlap with a local saintly presence juxtaposed to European religious practices and representations. This intersection manifested in rich visual forms that in conjunction with archival documents, helped me to reconstruct the murals' historical context. Imitation was an act that required constant repetition to obtain knowledge, acquire a skill, and manifest the following of religious teachings as in the case of the convent. As noted by Richard Sennett in *The Craftsman*, “Physical acts of repetition and practice enable this *Animal laborans* to develop skills from within and to reconfigure the material world through a slow process of metamorphosis.”²⁰⁵ In the case of the convent, the place of the *Animal laborans* was occupied by the nuns, whose labor became the central axis of conventual life. Repetition gave and continues giving the women of the convent agency to manifest their religious aspirations by giving them access to a sacred path. The murals and the practices associated with them provided a guide to emulating

²⁰⁴ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 128.

²⁰⁵ Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 294.

the life of religious figures, to be a woman others wanted to emulate, and to achieve their highest aspiration: to become a saint.

The murals provide an overwhelming detailed narrative of St. Teresa, expanded through interesting details that connect with the colonial configuration of the convents in the Kingdom of Quito. Memories of the early life of the convent integrate familiar figures like floral patterns, and artistic expressions analyzed further in the following chapter (Figure 2.4). The use of prints for the making of the murals in the living quarters emphasizes the illustration of the historical narrative of St. Teresa, where the nuns became witnesses through their circumambulation around the space. The use of narrative mural painting in the heart of the convent and the conjunction of dissonant painting remnants in the scenes and other areas of the convents showcase the connection between history and mural painting represented in the composition, theme, and changes. Again, ornamental forms unexpectedly stood for local artistic practices that deviated from a straightforward reading of a set narrative. Land, fruits, animals, mountains, and textile patterns open the meanings embedded in the murals, integrating multiple perspectives as the desire to emulate the European religious idea of a devoted woman and the acknowledgment of their New World origin. Michelle Molina, in *To Overcome Oneself*, links the use of Jesuit Spiritual Exercises and the missionary role of the religious order in the New World as a “codified form of interior piety that resolved the tension between contemplation and action precisely because the Exercises offered a method for ministering to both “self” and many “others.”²⁰⁶ In other words Spiritual exercises gave agency to the women cloistered in the convents, allowing them to be active participants of the colonial enterprise that in the case of the Convent of San José in Quito was to be part of the “expansion of Christianity” through their devotional practices.²⁰⁷

This chapter explores the inherence of the repetition of forms, narrative, intention, and memory entrenched in the mnemonic and ornamental core of the mural programs at the Convent of San José. Like the nuns' consistent use of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* in the colonial New World, conventual mural paintings attempt to take both mind and body into a higher realm. Even though repetition implies a visual and ritual religious continuation, at the same time, it has the potential to be reinterpreted and transformed. Like a game of telephone, multiple replicas produce distinct reproductions that morph into unexpected forms. These changes showcase the artistic contributions of the women who inhabited these spaces and the influence of the artistic flourishing in Ecuador through the Quito School.

The Colegio de San Andres, founded in Quito by the Franciscans Fray Jodoco Rique and Francisco Morales in 1555, was the beginning of an artistic wave that is known today as the School of Quito.²⁰⁸ The Colegio was part of the missionary process of conversion, which had a humanistic brief that included the teaching of European art to the native population to “facilitate the understanding of western codes and values by the native society.”²⁰⁹ The

²⁰⁶ J. Michelle Molina, *To Overcome Oneself: The Jesuit Ethic and Spirit of Global Expansion, 1520-1767* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 31.

²⁰⁷ Molina, 21.

²⁰⁸ Andrea Lepage, “El Arte De La Conversión. Modelos Educativos Del Colegio De San Andrés De Quito,” *Procesos*, no. 25 (2007): 46.

²⁰⁹ Sonia Fernández Rueda, “El Colegio De Caciques San Andrés: Conquista Espiritual Y Transculturación,” *Procesos*, no. 22 (2005): 12.

practice of artistic teaching expanded to other orders, such as the Dominicans and the Jesuits, allowing the development of artistic guilds and confraternities composed mainly of Indigenous and mestizo men.²¹⁰ Friars in Quito and throughout Latin America used prints, books, and paintings as a template for the local artists reproduced in religious art as paintings, sculptures, and murals.²¹¹ A close visual examination of the historical, artistic, and visual details allows a better understanding of how the murals connect local art production and circulation with the past and present of the Convent of San José. Also, I consider how the images were part of daily conventual life and I explore the intricate relationship of mural painting with their practice of repetition and mimicry as an act of devotion and as a device the nuns used to realize their aspiration to attain a higher status through their *repeated* pious behavior.

²¹⁰ Carmen Fernández-Salvador, "Reflection on Painting in Colonial Quito: The Artists, Subjects, and Styles," in *The Art of Painting in Colonial Quito*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton and Judy de Bustamante, Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts Series, v. 6 (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2012), 4.

²¹¹ Hyman, *Rubens in Repeat*, 2.

Chapter 3

The Pursuit of an Exemplary Life: Repetition, Performance, and Imitation

The act of imitation and repetition became the center of religious life in the Spanish American colonies, taking unexpected forms through local input and interpretations. Susannah Brietz describes *repetition* as a "point of convergence" that "motivates religious rituals," which, in the colonial case, becomes an effective tool for the indoctrination of the Indigenous population.²¹² Repetition shortened the distance between America and Europe, and as a regular practice by Catholic institutions since its inception, repetition and mimicry are the bases of Catholic rituals and dissemination. Nevertheless, the danger of recurrence becoming an empty gesture was pointed out by Counter-Reformation thinkers such as Erasmus in *Praise of Folly* (1509): "What can be more ridiculous, than for some others to be confident of going to Heaven by repeating daily those seven verses out of the Psalms."²¹³ However, religious missionaries effectively used repetition to enforce Catholic practices on Indigenous people who did not speak the same language nor have the same culture and history. At the crossroads of the Counter Reformation, the solution brought by the Council of Trent was to present "intentional" repetition and mimicry as a route of access to the favor or status of a saint while attempting to address their dangers:

Through the saints, the miracles of God and salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful so that they may give God thanks for those things, may fashion their own life and conduct in imitation of the saints, and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety. Nevertheless, if anyone should teach or maintain anything contrary to these decrees, let him be anathema.²¹⁴

The latent possibility of sanctity has imbedded the potential to be transferred to sites and objects, which allowed the sacralization of churches and convents in the New World.

The mural paintings at the Convent of San José were not made exclusively for didactic purposes. Most of the convent's nuns knew how to read and write: "[The novices' teacher] sent by the prioress to help her teach them to read."²¹⁵ In the library of the convent, the nuns had access to a variety of books that include accounts of the lives of saints such as the *Libro de la antigüedad, y santos de la orden de Nuestra Señora del Carmen y de los Especiales Privilegios de su Cofradia* (1599), which regarded the lives of the saints of the Carmelite order including St. Teresa recognizing her missionary role as a founder of various monasteries, although she had not

²¹² Susannah Brietz Monta, "Repetition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and Religion*, ed. Susan M. Felch, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2016), 132, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781316160954.010>.

²¹³ Desiderius Erasmus, Hans Holbein, and White Kennett, *Erasmus in Praise of Folly*, In *Praise of Folly* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1876), 84, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001182247>.

²¹⁴ Henry Joseph Schroeder, ed., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Council of Trent, Rockford, Ill: Tan Books and Publishers, 1978), 216.

²¹⁵ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Las Moradas o Castillo Interior* (FV Editions, 2020), 21, Apple Books.

yet been named a saint.²¹⁶ The library also had multiple books on prayer and meditation, like St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* and the book about St. Teresa's *Autobiography* and *Interior Castle*.²¹⁷ Prayer and meditation were the focus of the contemplative life encouraged by St. Teresa: "All of us who wear this sacred habit of Mount Carmel are called to prayer and contemplation (because this was our beginning, we come from this caste, from those holy Fathers of Mount Carmel...)." ²¹⁸ The initiative to create accessible religious visual narratives began early on with the expansion of the printing press, as in the case of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, which was converted into an illustrated compilation selected by Jerome Nadal at the request of Ignatius of Loyola, engraved by Hieronymus Wierix, and published in Antwerp in 1593.²¹⁹ The engravings included images of the life of Mary and Christ's Passion, accompanied by encyclopedic visual references to guide the viewer through the scene (Figure 2.5). The reiteration of narratives, such as the stories of St. Teresa, incites the memory of the life of the saint, allowing the nuns to embody her experiences.

St. Teresa's past is simplified in the images replicated in the murals to recreate small moments of her life that are easier to follow. The large format murals act concurrently with the movement of the viewers, creating a mental image that can be accessed later even when the person is not in front of the images.²²⁰ The historian Francis Yates notes in *The Art of Memory in the Middle Ages* the use of images in the formation of "artificial memory" and their use as a path to avoid an undesired outcome: "imprint of memory of images of virtues and vices, made vivid and striking in accordance with the classical rules, as 'memory notes' to aid us in reaching Heaven and avoiding Hell."²²¹ Like prayer, memory, repetition, and performance serve as a gateway to Heaven, and even though not all the nuns were destined to become saints, they at least can channel their power to obtain favors, obtain spiritual guidance, and increase their devotion. The narrative and the viewer's immersion in each scene prompted an emotional reaction by creating a dual temporality: the narrative events inhabited by St. Teresa and the viewers present.²²² The mural paintings at the Convent of San José do not act as an imposed artistic copy but as a desire to capture some of St. Teresa's sanctity (Appendix 3). The purpose of this visual repetition was to expose the women of the convent every day to the narrative of St. Teresa and create an effect on their lives.

The detail and extension of the murals in the convent showcase the complexity of this visual system as a devotional tool, which exceeds the capacity of the copy by becoming almost incomprehensible by its magnitude (Appendix 4). The space overwhelms the viewer with an extended narrative that can only be comprehended by taking each scene individually. The rosary offers an excellent parallel on how repetition functions beyond a straightforward copy. Like the rosary, the murals serve as a narrative meditation organized consecutively. The rosary focuses

²¹⁶ Tomás de Jesús (O.C.D.), *Libro de la antigüedad, y sanctos de la orden de nuestra Señora del Carmen y de los especiales Priuilegios de su Cofradia* (en casa de Andres Renaut, 1599), 31.

²¹⁷ Noralma Suarez Litardo, "Inventario de Documentos Museo Carmen Alto," April 2023, Museo Carmen Alto, Quito.

²¹⁸ Teresa de Jesús, *Las Moradas o Castillo Interior*, 74.

²¹⁹ Jerome Nadal, *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines: Ex ordine Euangeliorum, quae toto anno in Missae Sacrificio recitantur, In ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae* (Antwerp, 1593), <http://archive.org/details/EvangelicaeHistoriaeImagines>.

²²⁰ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 61.

²²¹ Yates, 61.

²²² Monta, "Repetition," 137.

on reenacting the life of Jesus and Mary, while the paintings focus on the life of St. Teresa. The rosary is divided into five groups of ten beads representing five decades (Figure 2.6).²²³ Each group of beads corresponds to one of the fifteen mysteries used to meditate by the worshiper. These mysteries are divided into three core groups: joyful (the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation, and the Lost Child Jesus Found in the Temple), sorrowful (the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, and the Crucifixion), and glorious (the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven).²²⁴

The rosary can be a vocal or mental prayer form that begins by announcing the corresponding mystery of that day, followed by a meditation, and then the worshiper physically follows the ten beads of the rosary section with the fingers; the recitation of the Hail Mary prayer precedes each bead. Each area of ten is divided by a larger bead that, like the frames of the mural paintings of the convent of San José, serves to divide each scene, in the case of the rosary, a meditation followed by one *Our Father*. Five mysteries are evoked daily: fifty *Hail Marys* and six *Our Fathers*. The rosary is based on Latin texts simplified through narrative, making devotional practices accessible to a more significant portion of the population.²²⁵ Even though the rosary privileges over the visual, Anne Winston-Allen remarks on its visual origin: "Rosary meditations is not a written one at all but as a picture text."²²⁶ The *Vser lib en Frauen Psalter* (Our Lady's Psalter) showcases how each mystery is grounded on a religious narrative, and while a person is praying, they summon the image of the event in their mind. Most of these mental scenes are evoked by a familiar painting or print recalled during prayer (Figure 2.7).

The murals use familiar images spread worldwide and provide the nuns with a collective experience beyond the convent's walls; in this case, the image demands the recall of the textual narrative. Like the rosary beads, each scene contains a story accessed through bodily movement. The *Vser lib en Frauen Psalter* (Our Lady's Psalter), as the earlier printed version of the rosary made by the Dominicans, illustrates the use of the rosary visually. The Psalter was equated from early on to the Rosary because it refers to the modification of the psalms for easier individual and group reading, in the case of the rosary differentiated beads used to facilitate prayer.²²⁷ The illustrations of *Our Lady's Psalter* (1492) made by the Dominican monk Alanus de Rupe show the base structure of the rosary. Here, wreaths of roses encircle each vignette, while simplified figures subtly allude to the day's mystery for devout contemplation during prayer. The Joyful Mysteries begin with a scene of the Annunciation, where the Archangel Gabriel and the Holy Spirit point to Mary; a halo identifies her. Followed by the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation, and the *Lost Child Jesus Found in the Temple*; Jesus is seated on an altar overseen

²²³ Elizabeth A. Livingstone, "Rosary," in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford University Press, 2014), <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780199659623.001.0001/acref-9780199659623-e-5009>.

²²⁴ Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 3.

²²⁵ Winston-Allen, 3.

²²⁶ Winston-Allen, 32.

²²⁷ M. De Vos, Jan Collaert, and Thomas Worthington, *The Rosarie of Our Ladie. Otherwise Called Our Ladies Psalter With Other Godlie Exercises Mentioned in the Preface* (Antuerpiæ: Apud Ioannem Keerbergium, 1600), 3.

by four men who stand as the elders listening and interacting with him (Figure 2.7).²²⁸ Even though each wreath has limited space, each scene conveys the story with the efficient use of lines that suggest specific places like the Temple and the manger. Each bead group is an abstract allusion to an interchangeable moment depending on the mystery (narrative). The painted scenes in the convent and the mural's architectural arrangement of the living quarter's space emphasize the single figure of St. Teresa, providing concrete figural compositions that, like the rosary, are a conduit of devotion and memory.

The long hallway in the convent is adorned with murals, images punctuated by turns in the corridor that split them into six distinct sections (Appendix 4). As you enter from the right side, the initial set of images features scenes one to four, which serve as an introduction to St. Teresa. This group incorporates two paintings depicting events from her youth: *Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo* (Mural 3) and *Entry of Teresa Cepeda De Ahumada to the Convent of La Encarnación* (Mural 4) (Figure 2.3, 2.8). Paintings five to nine form the second group. It opens with *Teresa Being Left for Dead* (Mural 5), which marks a pivotal moment in St. Teresa's journey to sainthood, including depictions of saintly visions of Jesus (Figure 2.9). The third cluster comprises three murals from the Passion of Christ (Figure 2.10-2.12). It is important to note that these murals are not part of the primary mural program or within the central corridor space. These murals constitute an alternative group, an extension of the main program; these murals also inspire devotion while featuring St. Teresa. The fourth section of paintings includes two blank scenes (Mural 13-16) and concludes with the portrayal of the *Mystical Betrothal with Christ* (Mural 17). Unfortunately, this area has the most physical damage (Figure 2.13). Continuing to the fifth section, paintings eighteen to twenty-five form a series with the highest number of uninterrupted works. These murals depict the evolution of St. Teresa as a saint, highlighting events like *The Miracle of the Healing of Her Nephew* (Murals 18) and other saintly encounters related to the Eucharist and her religious work. The program ends with scenes of the final days of St. Teresa, such as her death (Mural 27) (Figure 2.14-2.15). The concluding mural is *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* (Mural 29), located at the stair landing (Figure 2.16). In the rosary and the mural paintings, each scene has a visual and textual duplicate elicited by the movement of the hands and body.

Like each rosary bead, each painted scene incites the viewer to remember the story and meditate with a dictated image order, developing a system that mediates between collective (religious stories, group prayer) and personal devotion (rosary handhold-mental prayer). A communal practice develops through the hand movements and the unison of the worshipers' voices from the continual recitation of the Hail Mary. Sound, in the case of the rosary, provides a sense of unity that, through the years, transformed into a female-led practice due to the Virgin Mary's prominence, connected with their spiritual journey. Barred from most religious

²²⁸ Elizabeth A. Livingstone, "Mysteries of the Rosary," in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford University Press, 2014), <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780199659623.001.0001/acref-9780199659623-e-3961>; Unknown, *Psalter Marie* (Germany: Konrad Dinckmut, 1492), 43, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Psalter_Marie/1kKnyzwhBPOC?hl=en&bshn=rime/1.

groups, women found a way to belong to the church in a more active role in the rosary.²²⁹ Since the Middle Ages, confraternities allowed women to participate in the rosary praying because it was seen as a practice that merely involved prayer.²³⁰ Later, the rosary acquired new features, including a mystical one believed to "protect them [women] against illness or misfortune."²³¹ The rosary became ubiquitous to female devotion, especially in the New World, where pious women like Mariana de Jesús would lead the women of her home in prayer, "Since she [Mariana de Jesús] could remember, she prayed the Rosary, and later she gathered the people of the house, and prayed in her niece Doña Juana's room, praying it first alone in the Church, one hundred and fifty Hail Marys, with deep meditation of the Mysteries."²³² St. Teresa had reservations about using the rosary: "Being bad one night, I wanted to excuse myself from praying; I took a rosary to occupy myself vocally, trying not to engage my understanding, while on the outside I was absorbed in prayer."²³³ Images and individual prayer mitigated reservations.

The murals mediate between the vocal and the contemplative, where the images encourage mental recollection and where the steps of the nuns throughout the hallways take the place of the shared practice. For the nuns at the Convent of San José, St. Teresa was the lynchpin among the murals, the written accounts, the prints, and their history as a Carmelite leader and reformer who instilled in her follower's self-discipline. The constant exposure to the same images and her narrative was shared to instill in the women of the convent a sense of religious purpose mediated by the images and their conduct. The paintings were in a private space, where the limited access addresses the nuns as the catalyst of the image's holy power. The rosary, on the other hand, had a smaller size that made it almost imperceptible, but this allowed the surge of its popularity among women and worshipers who could have access to the object at any place or time, adapting to the needs of the beholder. The rosary's popularity was also attached to the rise of indulgences as "insurance against purgatory," which invited "mindless repetition."²³⁴ The size and location of the murals incorporated the viewer as a witness and participant invited through mental and physical repetition to imitate the life of their patron saint, St. Teresa.

Besides being immersed in a visual and written narrative, the murals allowed the nuns to experience the hardships of a saintly life through *imitation*. The murals not only served to recall a story, but the constant repetition invited the viewer to acquire the characteristics of St. Teresa through continuous exposure to her life. Even though it would start as spiritual exercises that embed the viewer into each specific story, the end was not to mentally recreate it but to acquire saintly virtues through images.²³⁵ The improvement of the self through repetition creates patterns that make this arduous task more attainable through a spiritual transference. Meditation quiets the mind and allows an internal examination of the past and present to

²²⁹ Stephen Haliczzer, "Religious Life and Devotions," in *Between Exaltation and Infamy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 225, <https://doi.org/10.1093/0195148630.003.0011>.

²³⁰ Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose*, 117.

²³¹ Haliczzer, "Religious Life and Devotions," 225.

²³² Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 227.

²³³ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida* (Madrid: San Pablo, 2023), 487, Apple Books.

²³⁴ Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose*, 131.

²³⁵ Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), xx.

intercede in the future. The murals showcase these practices through the survival of clues in each scene, highlighted by a deviation from the source. There is also awareness of other forms of repetition as a spiritual exercise, used to become present and one with the Convent of San José. These expressions include writing and painting to insert themselves in saintly texts and images (Figure 2.17). The enclosure of the nuns limited how the nuns were to expand and construct their religious profession and devotion. The rosary is the remembrance of Mary's enclosed Garden that, like the walls and the frames of the mural paintings, delimits the narratives and the nun's lives. The movement of their bodies and constant repetition incentivize their memory and stimulate religious devotion among these women. The interweaving of St. Teresa's legacy with the memory of Mariana de Jesús plays a crucial role in shaping the presence and endurance of the mural paintings. The convent's historical narrative guides both the utilization and comprehension of these artworks.

The Origin of a Foreshadowing Convent: The intersection of St. Teresa de Jesús and the Mariana de Jesús at the Carmelite Convent of San José

By the way, this house and site are for the convent of Carmelitas Descalzas. Well, know that here it [the convent] will be founded in the future. Come with me, and you will see the layout of the offices...How pleased will the Carmelites live here!²³⁶

The history of the convent's foundation provides clues to comprehending the mural painting at the Carmelite Convent of San José beyond its European iconographical influence and meaning. The convent of San José was inadvertently founded in an already sacred and historical site, conferring the nuns a pre-disposed spiritual path. The inspiration from the lives of St. Teresa de Jesús and Mariana de Jesús created an intertwined spiritual duality embodied in the architecture and the convent's walls. The first Carmelite convent in the Audiencia de Quito, now Ecuador, was foreseen by Mariana de Jesús. In *Azucena de Quito* (1699), the Jesuit priest Jacinto Morán de Butrón (1668-1749) included the statement of María de Paredes-Mestiza, Catalina- Indian, and María Arias- Spanish, about the time Mariana de Jesús took them around her house and showed them where everything was going to be once the house became a Carmelite convent.²³⁷ The narrative framework of the prediction, which includes the declaration of witnesses and their movement in an existing space, suggests a local realization of sanctity. The ability of Mariana de Jesús to see the future became a sign of her virtuousness, a power ascribed to prophets of the church. Mariana's house -later Carmelite convent- was where her miracles materialized, extending the aura of sanctity to the convent.

Father Morán de Butrón included in the statements regarding the foreshadowing of the Carmelite convent the racial makeup of each woman: Mestiza, Indian, and Spanish; this remark provides a wide allusion to the demographic majorities in Quito. This racial distinction portrays Mariana de Jesús as a widely accessible figure whose local birth and spiritual formation

²³⁶ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 336. Que a propósito es esta casa y sitio para convento de Carmelitas Descalzas. Pues sepan que aquí se ha de fundar con el tiempo. Vengan conmigo y verán trazar las oficinas. ¡Que Gustosas vivirán aquí las Carmelitas!

²³⁷ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 336.

showcased the possibility of genuine religious devotion in the Audiencia of Quito. Also, it served Morán and other religious authorities with a way to increase their monetary collection from a more comprehensive portion of the population, as can be seen in the surviving documents with multiple accounts regarding the costs and collections made for the campaign for beatification.²³⁸ One is a letter to the Council of Quito, where a royal decree to "grant power to enact new processes for the Venerable Servant of God Maria Ana de Jesús y Paredes" is acknowledged and also states that Father Conosciuti, the priest in charge of these collections, did not have any available funds as they "all have been spent up to the present in the making of the processes that were sent to Rome, in whose production they were occupied for five years, [using] the alms that at that time they could collect," showcasing the constant need to collect funds for the sanctification process.²³⁹

The parallel efforts for the canonization of Mariana de Jesús and the foundation of the Carmelite Convent of San José go hand in hand with the desire to "consolidate the power of the church" during a challenging economic and social period.²⁴⁰ The launch of a local female saint, known for her reclusive behavior and willingness to take on the suffering of others by embodying suffering, provided the perfect example of obedience. Mariana de Jesús was a key force for the convent's foundation and influenced its initial configuration. The premonition of Mariana de Jesús and her life in the future convent became the guiding force of the convent's foundation, and the memory of Mariana de Jesús as an example of obedience and piety as a path to sanctity.

The initial efforts to establish a Carmelite convent in Quito came from archbishop Agustín de Ugarte y Saravia, who, through his post in various cities in Latin America, spearheaded the foundation of Carmelite convents in Cartagena de Indias (1624), Lima (1643), and Quito (1653).²⁴¹ In 1647, Ugarte sent a letter to King Phillip IV stating the need for a convent, and in 1649, Ugarte obtained the first Royal decree to begin the collection of money to complement his donation.²⁴² Agustín de Ugarte did not mention the prophecy of Mariana de Jesús, nor was he encouraged to establish the convent by her local fame; he even bought houses located in the main square, in front of the Cathedral, to lodge the first women that were going to inhabit the convent.²⁴³ This suggests there was no initial interest in locating the convent in Mariana de Jesús's home. The Carmelite convent in Quito was part of a self-imposed mission inspired by St. Teresa's writings, in combination with helping provide spaces for

²³⁸ Quito, 591, "Sobre La Beatificación de Sor Mariana de Jesús Paredes" (Quito, 1819 1752), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

²³⁹ Quito, 591, "Sobre La Beatificación de Sor Mariana de Jesús Paredes" (Quito, 1819 1752), sec. 1762, Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

²⁴⁰ Valeria Gordillo, *El Cuerpo Barroco: Mariana de Jesús Entre Lo Sagrado y Lo Profano*, Primera edición, Serie Magíster, volumen 182 (Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar Ecuador : Corporación Editora Nacional, 2015), 10.

²⁴¹ "Cedula de Creación del Monasterio de Carmelitas de San José de Quito, 1647, Archivo Carmen Alto Quito," in *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, by Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 39.

²⁴² "Cedula de Creación del Monasterio de Carmelitas de San José de Quito, 1647, Archivo Carmen Alto Quito," 39.

²⁴³ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 28.

daughters from prestigious families.²⁴⁴ In addition, convents offer a way to legitimize the status of women with unclear lineage or conceived out of wedlock.²⁴⁵ For instance, Sor Juana de Jesús from the Conception Convent was abandoned at the door of that convent in 1662 and was later accepted to profess at the convent of Santa Clara in Quito, where she became a venerable member, known today thanks to the hagiography written by her confessor Francisco Xavier Antonio de Santa María.²⁴⁶ Ugarte's devotion was such that he had a handwritten letter by St. Teresa dated 1575, which became a relic of the saint through physical transmission.²⁴⁷ The relic value of the letter is given by the act of writing, handling, and signing by St. Teresa, imbuing her sanctity into the paper. He wanted to inspire devotion among the women that first inhabited the convent by offering closeness to the saint. However, Agustín de Ugarte did not have the chance to see the completed Carmelite convent in Quito; he died before the founding nuns arrived in the city.

While in Nueva Granada, there was an early female impulse to fund convents. In Quito, the missionary work and financial support left by Ugarte set a precedent for Carmelite communities to collaborate in the expansion of the order throughout the Latin American colonies. For instance, the first convent in Nueva Granada, Santa Clara la Real in Tunja, Colombia, was founded by a wealthy woman Doña Juana Macías de Figueroa, in 1573. Doña Juana did not count on the support of European or New World-established female orders to guide her in her efforts; the petitions of her husband, Francisco Salguero, went unheard: "Four or five nuns to order the things of that monastery and do other necessary things [...] for the good doctrine of the other nuns of that monastery."²⁴⁸ The connections made by Agustín de Ugarte made it possible for nuns from the Carmelite convent in Lima to agree to begin the journey from Lima to Quito to become the first founding mothers.²⁴⁹ After Archbishop Ugarte died in 1650, his cousin Doña María de Saravia was responsible for the project. As noted by Adriana Pacheco, Doña María de Saravia was the "only close relative of the bishop residing in Quito."²⁵⁰ Doña María personally traveled to Lima to gain a license for her niece Mother María

²⁴⁴ Federico González Suárez, "Capítulo decimocuarto: Los presidentes don Martín de Arriola, don Pedro Vázquez de Velasco y don Antonio Fernández de Heredia," in *Historia general de la República del Ecuador*, vol. Tomo IV (Quito: Imprenta del Clero, 1890), 239–40.

²⁴⁵ Jenny Londoño, *Angeles o Demonios? : Las Mujeres y La Iglesia En La Audiencia de Quito*, 1. ed., Colección Todo Es Historia ; 3 (Quito, Ecuador: Universidad Estatal de Bolívar, 1995), 90.

²⁴⁶ Francisco Xavier Antonio de Santa María, *Vida prodigiosa de la venerable virgen Juana de Jesús de la Tercera Orden de Penitencia de Nuestro Seraphico Padre San Francisco. : Que florecio en el monasterio de Santa Clara de Quito*. (En Lima, : En la calle del tigre; por Francisco Sobrino y Bados., 1756), 4–5, <http://archive.org/details/vidaprodigosade00sant>.

²⁴⁷ Martina Vinatea Recoba, "Reliquias de Santa Teresa: la carta conservada en el convento de las Carmelitas descalzas de Lima," *Hipogrifo. Revista de literatura y cultura del Siglo de Oro* 4, no. 2 (November 22, 2016): 92, <https://doi.org/10.13035/H.2016.04.02.08>.

²⁴⁸ Santafé, 124, N.8, Fol.3, "Informaciones: Francisco Salguero" (Tunja, 1574), Seville, Archivo General de Indias. "quatro o cinco monjas para que ordenen las cosas de aquel monasterio y hagan las demás cosas necesarias [...] para la buena doctrina de las demás monjas de ese monasterio."

²⁴⁹ Pacheco Bustillos, *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 29.

²⁵⁰ Pacheco Bustillos, 28. Adriana Pacheco in *Historia del Convento del Carmen Alto* (2000) includes detailed transcripts from the Archive of the Carmen Alto-Quito (ACAQ); this private archive is not open to the public or researchers. Much of the information I include to reconstruct the history of the convent comes from her transcription of the original documents.

de San Agustín, to break her enclosure in the Carmelite convent in Lima and travel to Quito to fund the Carmelite convent in that city.²⁵¹

The participation of Ugarte de Saravia's cousin and niece in the convent's foundation follows the tendency of prestigious colonial families to create alternative spaces for unmarried women. The convent of Santa Catalina in Quito was founded in 1594 by the widower Doña María de Siliceo, a niece of the archbishop of Toledo, who became one of the first inhabitants in "the company of her three daughters and six orphan girls."²⁵² Doña María de Saravia never married. However, her mission to found the first Carmelite convent allowed her to have a place in society, and she was granted permission to live the last years of her life in the convent, which included the dispensation to "wear secular clothes and keep a slave girl."²⁵³ She did not have any direct descendants, and in her testament, she made sure to award the convent to be buried in it; "And considering that I have no heirs,[...] I name the said convent of Discalced Carmelites of this city as my universal heir so that whatever they may have, they may enjoy and inherit it with the blessing of God and mine; the nuns of this convent dispose of it as their own."²⁵⁴ The power of familial connections in the Convent of San José extended to the family of Mariana de Jesús. Her niece, Doña Andrea de Casso y Paredes became part of the Carmelite Convent on 1653. Doña Andrea de Casso y Paredes was the daughter of Doña Gerónima de Paredes (Mariana's older sister) and Cosme de Casso, who oversaw the care and education of the saint after the death of their parents.²⁵⁵

After the death of Mariana de Jesús, her brother-in-law Cosme de Casso took possession of her house; he and the family promised that it would go to the Discalced Carmelites to establish their convent.²⁵⁶ A promise that was hard to keep due to the economic difficulties that followed the family, "Mariana's brother-in-law Cosme de Casso, her sister Doña Gerónima, Captain Juan de Salazar [Doña Juana's husband], and her niece Doña Juana suffered; because they all ended up being poor."²⁵⁷ The family home passed to the hands of Captain Juan de Salazar as payment for some of Cosme Casso's debt. As his son-in-law, Juan de Salazar kept possession of the home until the unexpected opportunity to comply with Mariana's wishes materialized after a series of setbacks complicated the foundation of the Carmelite convent in Quito.²⁵⁸

After four months of travel, the nuns from Lima, on a road full of vicissitudes as noted in the expense ledger "Al barbero dos sangrias-2p. (To the barber two bleedings -2 pesos)" a

²⁵¹ Pacheco Bustillos, 29. (ACAO)

²⁵² José Gabriel Navarro, *Contribuciones a La Historia Del Arte En El Ecuador. Volumen III*, vol. III, 1950, 107.

²⁵³ Pacheco Bustillos, *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 29.

²⁵⁴ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, "Testamento de Doña María de Saravia (ACAO)," in *Historia del Convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 47.

²⁵⁵ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, "Documentos para la profesión de Doña Adrea de Casso y Paredes (ACAO)," in *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 79; Jacinto Morán de Butrón and Gabriel del Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito* (Madrid: Don Gabriel del Barrio, 1724), 18.

²⁵⁶ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito Que Broto El Florido Campo de La Iglesia En Las Indicas Occidentales de Los Reynos Del Perú, y Cultivó Con Los Esmeros de Su Enseñança La Compañia de Jesús, La V. Virgen Mariana de Jesús Paredes y Flores ...*, 336.

²⁵⁷ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 287.

²⁵⁸ Carlos Larrea, *Fundación Del Primer Monasterio Carmelita En El Ecuador* (Quito: Corporación de Estudios y publicaciones, 1974), 107.

convent of Santa Catalina was founded in 1594 and “A la curandera-2p. (to the healer-2pesos),” the nuns arrived to “a cold and musty house that made the property unsuitable for the foundation order.”²⁵⁹ They lasted “seven months in the site behind the Convent of the Merced” and moved to the former house of Mariana de Jesús as a temporary solution.²⁶⁰ The urgent need for a suitable site for the convent led to the fulfillment of Mariana de Jesús’ prophesy. In May of 1650, the transfer was official: “Juan de Salazar, [...] makes grace and a perfect and irrevocable donation [...] of some high and low houses covered with tile with what is attached to them belonging to this city.”²⁶¹

The property transfer presented a unique opportunity for the religious authorities and the Carmelites to launch a convent in an already sacred site and boost the sanctity of Mariana de Jesús to inspire devotion and set a close precedent of the possibility of sanctity for women in the emerging Audiencia de Quito. Therefore, the former presence of Mariana de Jesús and the realization of her foreshadowing gave fame to both the convent and the saint, making the convent a desirable and exclusive place to follow a religious path. While already established convents like the Convent of the Conception maintained the secular privileges of the women from high society, the Carmelite Convent of San José was able to follow the austere rules left on the Constitutions of St. Teresa. In the 1771 account of Quito written by Jesuit priest Mario Cicala *Descripción histórico-física de la Provincia de Quito*, he shows the contrasts between the convents.²⁶² The Convent of the Conception was the first and largest convent in Quito; Cicala described it:

I entered said Monastery, and it seemed to me like a small town or neighborhood, with so many little houses, which were the cells built by each one of the nuns, [...] there [at the convent] were at that time about one hundred nuns with about one thousand three hundred maids and servants, because each nun has five, six, eight, ten, and even twelve, all the young girls are Indians. Few are mestizas, and very few are black slaves.²⁶³

On the other hand, the convent of Carmen for Cicala was distinguished by their nuns' "virtue and perfection, flourishing in them the most pure and rigorous observance."²⁶⁴ Regarding their facilities:

There cannot be more than 21 religious. El Carmen Alto [Convent of San José] is a wonderful convent -I have been in it- and everyone exuded great devotion. [It had] The most beautiful cells. All splendid apartments, yes. But with a very subtle distinction.

²⁵⁹ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, “Memoria de lo que voy gastando en el viaje de esta ciudad de Lima a Quito (ACAQ),” in *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 48; Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, “Donación de las casas de Mariana de Jesús (ACAQ),” in *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 52.

²⁶⁰ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 339.

²⁶¹ Pacheco Bustillos, “Donación de las casas de Mariana de Jesús (ACAQ),” 51.

²⁶² Mario Cicala, Julián G. Bravo, and Marcos Gándara Enríquez, *Descripción Histórico-Topográfica de La Provincia de Quito de La Compañía de Jesús (1771)*, Descripción Histórico-Física de La Provincia de Quito de La Compañía de Jesús (Quito: Biblioteca Ecuatoriana "Aurelio Espinosa Polít", 1994), 3.

²⁶³ Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, 190–91.

²⁶⁴ Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, 191.

There is a very elegant patio. As well as beautiful little gardens, [and] peaceful water features, everything is perfect and distinguished.²⁶⁵

The differences between both convents are striking; they upheld their early frameworks even over a hundred years after their foundation. There was a difference in the number of nuns and the size of the rooms for the allowance of maids. The Carmelite convent was faithful to the predispositions of St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús, thus maintaining the austere spirit of this congregation. According to the witnesses in Morán's account, Mariana de Jesús even stated that twenty-one nuns were to live in the Carmelite convent that was going to be in her house.²⁶⁶ Since the early Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelite convents required a small number of nuns in each of their convents, as described in Portugal (1583) by the archbishop Theotonio of Evora: "This mother [St. Teresa] also wants her nuns to be few in number because a few are enough, and this will avoid the greatest danger that exists in religions, which is having more reckoning with the great dowry than with the spirit."²⁶⁷ St. Teresa saw a danger in accepting women based only on their financial contributions because it increased the possibility of having women lacking religious vocation or proper virtues, who could negatively influence their fellow nuns and the operation of the convent.

The small size of the Carmelite convent was supposed to facilitate the control of women in the convent, who, like Mariana de Jesús, lived a contemplative ascetic life based in a community, avoiding intimate relationships: "No sister hugs another or touches her face or hands, or have individual friendships, but all love each other in general, as Christ commands his Apostles many times. Well (being) so few, it will be easy to do."²⁶⁸ The colonial social structure of Quito permitted the continuation of the outside social hierarchy within the convent's walls. The prestige of the convent was endowed with the former presence of Mariana de Jesús, and her prophesy, in conjunction with experienced nuns from Spain and other parts of the colony. As noted by Cicala's account, "To the Carmelite convent only entered the flower of the nobility, daughters of titled: counts, marquises, Presidents, judges and people like that."²⁶⁹ However, the convent also adapted their strict observance of Carmelite rules to create a sense of differentiation and to accept women with less prestigious origins.

The convent was divided between black veiled and white veiled nuns. Black veiled nuns in the choir came from the most prestigious families, who learned how to read, write, sing, and play instruments.²⁷⁰ White veil nuns came from less prestigious families or women waiting for a place in the choir.²⁷¹ The convent also had "donates" who were women donated

²⁶⁵ Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, 191.

²⁶⁶ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 336.

²⁶⁷ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Tratado Que Escribió La Madre Teresa de Jesús a Las Hermanas Religiosas de La Orden de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen Del Monasterio Del Señor San José de Ávila, de Donde a La Sazón Era Priora y Fundadora* (Évora: en casa de la viuda de Andrés de Burgos, 1583), 5.

²⁶⁸ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Constituciones que la madre Teresa de Jesús dio a las Carmelitas Descalzas* (Linkgua Ediciones, 2021), 9, Apple Books.

²⁶⁹ Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, *Descripción Histórico-Topográfica de La Provincia de Quito de La Compañía de Jesús (1771)*, 192.

²⁷⁰ Pacheco Bustillos, *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 74–75.

²⁷¹ Pacheco Bustillos, 74–75.

to the convent who did not take the habit; they were dedicated to domestic tasks.²⁷² Positions in the choir only opened after the death of one of the choral nuns.²⁷³ The primary responsibility of black-veiled nuns was to pray and participate in the choir, while the white veiled nuns oversaw the domestic tasks of the convent.²⁷⁴ Even though Carmelite convents emphasized a contemplative life, this was only strictly followed by the higher-ranked women who wore black veils. The women who inhabited the convent of Carmen shared a cloistered life, which since the convent's inception, had a clear social objective in Quito. This split is reflected in convent spaces and the art that fills the place, creating a physical and spiritual link with the two Saints: Teresa and Mariana de Jesús. The convent, now known as Monasterio del Carmen Alto, continues its missionary work, even though fewer women are interested in following a religious life.

In 2012, the Carmelite mothers agreed with the city of Quito to adapt their facilities and make part of the convent accessible to all.²⁷⁵ They desired to share their history and the artistic treasures from the Museo del Carmen Alto. This space includes an exceptionally preserved mural program with the life of St. Teresa de Jesús and vestiges of ornamental mural paintings, which were daily witnesses of the life of the nuns, integrating the architectural space with their devotional practices. The murals contrast with the austere space and the museum exhibition rooms that showcase the rich cultural patronage over time, and most importantly, their artistic awareness and contribution, including hand-made garments, reliquaries, and collages such as the one of the *Beatas Mártires de Compiégne* (ca.18th-19th C) (Figure 2.18). This collage is a display of the nuns' artistic abilities in details such as the habits of the souls of the deceased martyred nuns hovering over a white sky, adorned with intricate brocade, which contrasts with the gruesome reality of their execution with a guillotine in the lower register. The predominance of the visual narrative in the Carmelite living quarters was echoed on the first floor in a group of paintings depicting the life of Mariana de Jesús. Painted by Víctor Mideros ca. 1926, these paintings were initially placed in the visitors' parlor to be admired by their guests (Figure 2.19).²⁷⁶ This juxtaposition between St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús creates palimpsests of overlapping stories and beliefs guiding the convent's pursuit.

Transformations and Additions: Evolution and Splendor of Murals at the Convent of San José

The nuns of the Convent of San José found a space of inclusion in the mural painting program of the life of St. Teresa. Mural transformations and additions are a memory of the order's sacred origin and the teachings of its founder. Also, the images stand as the manifestation of the nun's agency and local inclusion. The mural painting program has subtle

²⁷² Pacheco Bustillos, 74–75.

²⁷³ Pacheco Bustillos, 75.

²⁷⁴ Manuel Ramos Medina, *Místicas y Descalzas: Fundaciones Femeninas Carmelitas En La Nueva España*, 1. ed (Chimalistac, México: Centro de Estudios de Historia de México Condumex, 1997), 199.

²⁷⁵ "Museo del Carmen Alto | Fundación Museos de la Ciudad - Quito," accessed March 7, 2023, <https://fundacionmuseosquito.gob.ec/museo-del-carmen-alto/>. Chat with Noralma Suarez Litardo-Reservation coordinator, about the transition of the convent to the museum.

²⁷⁶ Manuel Polit Laso, *Una Obra de Arte En La Portería Del Carmen Alto de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta del Clero, 1926), 1.

differences and incorporates seemingly insignificant details, which can go unnoticed without awareness of Collaert's book. Unlike the book, which provides close access to all the images, the entirety of the mural program at the convent cannot be seen from a single vantage point due to the convent's narrow passages and sharp corners. The number, size, sequential order, and placement of the murals in the confined hallways incite spectators to examine each image closely. The conversion of a printed book into life-size murals heightened the visual program's complexity, exceeding the copy's capacity to offer an all-encompassing narrative, requiring the active circumambulation of the convent's passages (Figure 2.1) (Appendix 4).

The mural paintings are located on a second floor, but the mural scene of *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* is found at the stair landing, announcing the presence of the mural program to the nuns and their guests (Mural 29) (Figure 2.16). Even though it is the first mural on sight, this scene does not fit a chronological narrative order nor the image order of Collaert's book, found on page twenty-one. To avoid confusion, references to the mural scenes throughout this research follow the initial progression in *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*. However, the correspondence between the images of the mural program and the book is unsustainable due to the murals' alteration of the scene sequence, which morphs into unmatched narrative progression.

The first nine mural scenes at the Convent of San José closely follow the order from Collaert's 1613 prints. The mural program deviates in an adjacent hall with three images of the Passion of Christ (Murals 10-12) (Figure 2.10-2.12 and Appendix 4). Right after these images is a blank scene followed by murals of *The Investiture of St. Teresa* (Mural 14) to the scene of the *Mystical Betrothal with Christ* (Mural 17); this group of murals focuses on mystical apparitions of Christ to St. Teresa (Figure 2.12, 2.15). In the *Mystical Betrothal with Christ* (Mural 17), Christ holds St. Teresa's hand to inflict a wound with a large nail to symbolize their union (Figure 75). The original order is resumed with the mural of *Miracle of The Healing of Her Nephew* (Mural 18) and again disrupted at the mural *Saint Teresa Persuades Fray Antonio and Saint John of the Cross to Embrace the Reform* (Mural 21) (Figure 2.14, 2.21). These murals focus on events in St. Teresa's life that marked her pastoral work and subsequent canonization in 1622. This includes the reformation of the Carmelite order represented in the scene of Saint Teresa with the Carmelite Friars (Mural 21), where St. Teresa, in the company of John of the Cross and Father Anthony of Jesus, discusses the reformation, a discussion emphasized by the figures of a nun with two monks looking into the horizon (Figure 2.21). Afterward, the last scenes differ from the printed order except for the mural of *Saint Teresa is Guided by Angels After Getting Lost on the Way to Salamanca* (Mural 24), where St. Teresa and her companions are saved from a dark and dangerous path, as a manifestation of the importance of her pastoral work (Figure 2.22). There are two scenes in the engravings that are missing in the mural cycle: *Teresa Triumphant over the Demons* (Print 12) and *Teresa as Patron Saint* (Print 19) (Figure 2.23, 2.24). There is a retablo near the mural paintings with the scene of *Teresa as Patron Saint*, which maintains the configuration of the print. St. Teresa's robe covers Carmelite nuns and priests, while cherubim and angels crowning St. Teresa are painted with red and blue, highlighted by the gold that ties the painting to the gold leaf wood retablo (Figure 2.25). The two missing engravings possibly occupied the spaces of the blank murals (13-16) before they suffered irreparable damage, hence the surviving frame and painting replication that indicates the previous existence of a mural (Figure 2.26.1.2).

The architectural structure of the site dictates the paintings' differences in size, orientation, and position. The list of twenty-nine mural scenes begins with the humble *Monstrance Venerated by Angels* (Mural 1), which showcases the difficulties the artists had transforming the prints into mural paintings (Figure 2.27). A constrained space has been allocated for the image within the spandrel (space between the outer curve of two arches). Here, the print's cartouche with the book's title, patrons' information, and the authors are framed by classical Corinthian columns (Figure 2.2). In the murals, the long text and the cartouche disappear, substituted by a large monstrance over the text: *La Virgen Concebida Sin Pecado Original* (*Virgin Conceived Without Original Sin*). Two angels flank the mural image, while in print, they are secondary characters floating over clouds, adorning two male figures with crowns of flowers that stand as the allegory of PAX ANIME (peace of mind) and SILENTIUM (Silence) (Figure 2.2). In the lower part, at the pier of the arch, the illusion of an easel holds the Portrait of St. Teresa of Ávila (Mural 2). In the first edition of the book (1613), the portrait is identified as *Effigy of the B.V.*, this version was part of the efforts for St. Teresa's canonization, published a year before St. Teresa's beatification in 1614; this is why she is referred to as B.V. Beata Virgo (Blessed Virgin). In the later editions made after *St. Teresa's sanctification in 1622*, the text was changed to *Effigy of the S.V.*, and the title of the book to *Vita S[anctae] Virginis Teresiae*.

The portrait is differentiated from all the other scenes because the wood frame is decorated with subtle blue flowers at the corners and center of each side (Figure 2.28). The frame and size of the mural create the illusion of an easel painting, where the wall takes the place of the canvas (Figure 2.29.1). All the following murals follow the portrait composition, where the wood transforms into unassuming frames that consist of long straight branches with green leaves, interrupted by ovals at the corners and the middle of each beam (Figure 2.29.2). However, the remnants of paint left on the border of mural sixteen are like the final mural of *Saint Teresa Intercedes so that the Devils are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* (Mural 29), could indicate that all the mural scenes were enclosed by the same type of illusion of wood with undulated relief carving (Figure 2.29.3.4). The location of the mural Saint Teresa interceding at the landing of the main stairs that go into the private quarters and the damage to the blank mural was probably the reason why the nuns did not replace these frames later (Figure 2.29). The border emphasizes the medium of painting and images over the text, indicating that the local painters did not mindlessly copy the prints. Instead, they adapted the scenes, fully conscious of the impact that painting and color could bring to the narrative, considering the constraints of the available mural space.

The portrait is a close approximation to the printed version, with St. Teresa at the center circled by an oval with various undulations held by cherubim that embellish the portrait and emphasize her importance. The lower register of both printed and painted images refers to the life of St. Teresa (Figure 2.28):

Saint Teresa of Jesús, Virgin Reformer of the Order of Mount Carmel, was born in Ávila in 1515 and died in Alba de Tormes in 1582. She was beatified in 1611 by Pope Paul V

and canonized in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV. This monastery of her daughters was founded in 1653 [sic]. (Appendix 3-Mural 2).²⁷⁷

Effigy of the B.V. [S.V. post-1622 edition] Terese, Spanish native of Ávila, most illustrious of race, gift of celestial sapience and truth, verifiable in the experience of the divine affections by her writings of mystical theology for the suffering of several works of reformation of the Carmelite order, and several miracles (Appendix 3-Print 2).²⁷⁸

Both texts offer an introduction to the life of St. Teresa with two distinct approaches. The mural provides specific biographical information with dates, names, and sites, but the year of St. Teresa's beatification was 1614, not 1611: "She was beatified in 1611 by Paul V and canonized in 1622 by Gregory XV."²⁷⁹ The engraved book, instead, offers a glimpse of her intellectual capacity without any specific example or data: "gift of celestial sapience and truth."²⁸⁰ The difference in information is a link to the purpose and medium of the images. At the same time, the prints exalted the qualities of St. Teresa for her sanctification with short, evocative narratives written in Latin. Members of the church would be able to read them, and printing is an ideal medium to reproduce long texts. The mural took the information from the printed original and simplified it with precise details that offered elements regarding the narrative, giving the image the narrative weight. Even though the mural is larger, mural texts require more space to be discernible to the viewer and fit the proportions of the image, requiring the original text to be cut by the painter.

The pier (part of the wall where an arch rests) where the portrait is located does not have much space; the use of the wooden border allowed the artist to establish a shared visual configuration of the program, where each scene points to a different event, complementing a singular larger narrative, *The Life of St. Teresa* (Figure 2.28). The frame also serves a practical purpose; in the printed version, each scene occupies one page, while in the mural form, the scenes share wall space. The frame helped the painter(s) delimit the area, encapsulating each scene and allowing the viewer to follow the narrative easily. Also, there is a continuation of the frame in the paintings that do not relate to the life of St. Teresa. The painters and patrons were aware of the adjacent murals, or at one point, all the mural scenes follow the same narrative program. Out of the twenty-five mural scenes depicting the life of St. Teresa, only thirteen align with the sequential order and image number of Collaert's book. Half of these murals have been altered but maintain a similar spatial and size configuration in their new placement. The close similarity of the images to the prints showcased the nuns' discipline drilled through spiritual exercises, which permutated their daily life and religious practices. However, the mural scenes sometimes have incongruous print order and differ on some modified or customized elements.

²⁷⁷ Unknown, *Portrait of Saint Teresa of Ávila*, ca.17th-19th centuries, Temple, Vegetal pigments, ca.17th-19th centuries, Quito, Museo Carmen Alto.

²⁷⁸ Adriaen (engr) Collaert and Cornelius (engr) Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu Ordinis Carmelitarum Excalceatorum Piae Restauratricis*. (Antwerp: Apud Adrianum Collardum et Cornelium Galleum, 1613), 2, http://archive.org/details/wotb_8862177.

²⁷⁹ Unknown, *Monstrance Venerated by Angels*, ca.17th-19th centuries, Temple, Vegetal pigments, 0,92 x 1,28 m, ca.17th-19th centuries, Quito, Museo Carmen Alto.

²⁸⁰ Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 2.

Even if the prints used for the convent arrived as single sheets, each print was numbered at the lower left corner of the printed area, ascertaining a determined order to the narrative.²⁸¹

The murals' adherence to the convent walls influenced the paint's space and survival. As noted above, some of the murals are blank (Murals 13-16), and others have irreparable damage (Figure 2.26). The convent suffered multiple architectural changes that included the lowering of the ceiling, deterioration, fragmentation, whitewashing due to exposure, and artistic interventions, but the most destructive force, earthquakes, often came due to the surrounding volcanoes such as the Cotopaxi and Pichincha and were part of the religious Quiteño life. Earthquakes are present in the narratives about the life of Maria de Jesús; she made a pilgrimage to Pichincha's volcano when she was twelve years old, after its eruption in 1580 (registered officially in 1582 or 1587).²⁸² After the convent's foundation, Quito's most relevant earthquakes occurred in 1660, 1662, 1755, 1797, and 1859.²⁸³ The south part of the convent was the most affected by earthquakes; two mural scenes disappeared (thirteenth and sixteenth), and the only surviving part of the murals was the frame (Appendix 3-Figure 2.26).²⁸⁴ This area has the most significant deviation from the printed template in the order and the addition of the Stations of the Cross (Murals 10,11 and 12)(Figure 2.10-2.12). The mural program, painted in the eighteenth century, shows different stages of deterioration and adaptation to the architectural space. The impact of one of these earthquakes is noted in a letter to the king from the mayor of Quito, Joaquín Montufar, where he reports what occurred due to the earthquake of Riobamba:

On February 4 [1797], an earthquake occurred in this province [Quito] so horrible that it did much damage to the buildings of this city, especially to the towers of the Churches of La Merced, Santo Domingo, and San Agustín at the end of having had to send them. to demolish, also the beautiful Carmelite Church of the Antigua Fundación [Carmen Alto] and part of the Colegio San Fernando.²⁸⁵

There is an overlap between the changes in the sequential order of the murals and their structural damage, which is further emphasized by minor alterations done on each image. Small painterly details transformed this almost straightforward copy into scenes with local significance. For instance, the mural of *The Investiture of St. Teresa* (Mural 14) illustrates how the murals follow the composition from the print while at the same time transforming them into a display of Quito's artistic vitality, where the inclusion of carefully crafted details in their rendering of clothing showcases the skills of local artists (Figure 2.20). The garments of each

²⁸¹ To track the changes in the murals closely, see the side-to-side progression of the mural painting narratives next to the prints (Appendix 3).

²⁸² Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 58–60; Manuel Espinosa Apolo, ed., *Historia de Los Terremotos y Las Erupciones Volcánicas En El Ecuador, Siglos XVI-XX: Crónicas y Relaciones de Kolberg, Martínez, Whymper, Wolf e Tyrralde*, Colección Memoria 6 (Quito: Taller de Estudios Andinos, 2000), 9–40.

²⁸³ Inés Martínez and Hugo Yepes, "Apuntes Para Una Historia Sísmica de Quito," in *Centro Histórico de Quito Problemática y Perspectivas* (Quito: Editorial Fraga, 1990), 9.

²⁸⁴ From a conversation with the Museum of Carmen Alto registrar Noralma Suarez Litardo, 2021.

²⁸⁵ "Libro de Las Profesiones de Las Monjas de Este Monasterio de Señora Sancta Ines, n.º 2 (Numeración Antigua), s. f." (Santafé, 18th Century), Bogotá, Archivo Monasterio de Santa Inés de Montepulciano.

figure in the engravings are composed of multidirectional light and shadows that form folds in the fabric that obscure and insinuate each figure's body (Figure 2.31). The folds of fabric in the mural are reduced into softer creases. Like the garments of the saintly figures of Mary and Joseph, their garments are refined with intricate floret patterns and lacy hems in gold and complementary colors.

This type of ornamentation recalls the paintings of saints produced by local artists from the Quito School, like the painting of the *Apotheosis of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception* in the early eighteenth century, located in the convent of San José (Figure 2.32). In this painting, the Virgin Mary is dressed in delicate *estofado* (painterly imitation of gold brocade) garments, with gold lace that is showcased by the contrast of the white background. There is no information on the painter; Indigenous people and local priests worked concurrently as artists and were recognized for their artistic abilities, as seen in missives sent by visitors such as the Dominican Fray Miguel Martínez in 1640: " Father Fray Tomás del Castillo has not studied [painting], he took the habit as a forty-year-old man, he is a magnificent brush painter, born in the Indies."²⁸⁶ The painting of the Immaculate Conception alludes to two visual features found in the print and another in the mural. Like the print where St. Teresa is given a necklace (Print 14), the Virgin has lines that irradiate from her head, creating a halo, which transforms painting into golden lines (Figure 2.31). In the mural painting, the halo is replaced by a gold crown encrusted with jewels and paired with large matching earrings, while in the oil painting, the crown descends from heaven, held by two cherubim as a symbol of her union with God (Figure 2.20, 2.32). The emeralds and goldwork in this painting offer a unique example of the ability of the mural painter to take elements used in sculptures, goldwork, and easel painting, like the *estofado* of the garments and the repoussé illusion of the jewels (Figure 2.34). It was customary for confraternities, convents, and churches in Europe and later in the New World to bestow sculptures of the Virgin with gold and silver crowns. This practice was expanded by the Capuchin monk Girolamo Paolucci di Calboldi di Forlì in the early fifteenth century. He used this practice to encourage his parishioners to donate precious metals and jewels to make crowns.²⁸⁷ Later, in 1631, with the financial support of Count Alessandro Sforza, Paolucci expanded the custom of crowning images of the Virgin to other churches, gaining the support of the Vatican and making these an established practice.²⁸⁸

The state of the mural scene does not allow the viewer to appreciate the detail of the crown's painting completely. An illustration of *The Investiture of St. Teresa* completes the missing part of the crown, using the *Crown of the Andes* for inspiration (1660 diadem-1770 arches), a crown made for the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception in the Cathedral of Popayán (Figure 2.33, 2.34). The local confraternity of the Immaculate Conception in Popayán commissioned the Crown of the Andes. The town of Popayan was part of the Audiencia de Quito, and even though it is now part of Colombia, Popayan is known as the "sucursal de Quito

²⁸⁶ José María Vargas, *Arte Quiteño Colonial* (Quito, Ecuador: Litografía e imp. Romero, 1944), 116. *Archivo General de la Orden Dominicana*, libro K, págs. 873-883.

²⁸⁷ Michael P. Reyes, *Salve Regina: On Crowning Images of the Virgin Mary* (Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc., 2015), 11–13.

²⁸⁸ Reyes, 13–16.

(Quito Branch)." There was a well-known cultural exchange that included artistic influences.²⁸⁹ The crown was made with emeralds from Muzo, located in the heart of the previous Muisca territory (now Colombia); it was created as a "symbol of the Virgin's divine rulership."²⁹⁰ The splendor of religious sculptures and paintings served to attract parishioners and donations. As stated by Nancy Morán Proaño in Quito, "The different religious orders, brotherhoods, and the ecclesiastical chapter focused their attention on the 'ornament' inside the churches and chapels, profusely using gold and silver in the altarpieces, altars, images, and ornaments as a way of showing off their spiritual and temporal power."²⁹¹

Local elements like the crown and jewels in *The Investiture of St. Teresa*, among other variations from the print series, demonstrate that the mural painting program is not an exact copy but an adaptation in which the artistic flourishing of Quito through the work of local criollo, mestizo, and Indigenous artists. The mural paintings showcase an awareness of other artworks in the convent and other areas of the Royal Audiencia of Quito. The architectural deterioration due to earthquakes and spatial changes also influences today's appreciation of the murals, creating fragmentations and erasures, obscuring elements from the narrative. The obfuscation of the narrative is reinforced by a shift away from the order of the engravings that allows the prominence of selected scenes.

Paintings, sculptures, and gold objects circulated between Popayan and Quito, allowing the nuns of the Carmelite convent of San José to have access to similar images and be inspired to have paintings such as *Apotheosis of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception* and transform the austere Virgin Mary from the prints to a majestic queen (Figure 2.32). However, in the mural scene, the Marian figure is not manifested as a single figure of power; instead, the gold necklace's imposition on St. Teresa manifests a shared sanctity represented by the gold jewelry. The ornamental departures in the clothing and jewelry add to the moment's splendor, creating a hierarchical visual guide for the viewer.

The Perpetual Enactment of Sanctity in the Hallways of the Convent of San José: The Relentless Performance of the Passion of Christ.

St. Teresa is an omnipresent figure inhabiting the Convent of San José; the figures constantly reappear in the narrative of her life surrounding the living quarters, witnessing the nuns' daily life. St. Teresa's ubiquity in the walls coexists with the presence of the spirit of Mariana de Jesús. Both saintly figures used narratives as a form of divine manifestation: St. Teresa through her writings and Mariana de Jesús through her constant reenactment of the suffering of Christ. At the forefront of the convent's murals is the narrative of the life of St. Teresa, which shows her exemplary life that complements and contradicts the purpose of the convent and the expected behavior of the women inside. This study challenges straightforward

²⁸⁹ Alexandra Kennedy Troya, ed., *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito, Siglos XVII-XIX: Patronos, Corporaciones y Comunidades* (Hondarribia: Nerea, 2002), 107.

²⁹⁰ Kim N. Richter, *Golden Kingdoms: Luxury Arts in the Ancient Americas*, ed. Joanne Pillsbury and Timothy F. Potts (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum and The Getty Research Institute, 2017), 271.

²⁹¹ Nancy Morán Proaño, "El Lucimiento de La Fe. Plateria Religiosa En Quito," in *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito, Siglos XVII-XIX: Patronos, Corporaciones y Comunidades*, ed. Alexandra Kennedy Troya (Hondarribia: Nerea, 2002), 151.

readings of St. Teresa's murals and the clear printed inspirations into fragmented observations where odd visual details become sites of local artistic exploration and familiar sights.

The convent of Carmen of San José preserves different mural stages, divided by their thematic focus, their approach to the painting, purpose, and use of color and line. As noted in the introduction, this study does not attempt to dwell on the iconographic possibilities of the murals; here I want to offer an overview of the narrative of the life of St. Teresa, as it is the main mural program at the convent and exposes the visual and spiritual interest of the convent. Initially, the murals of St. Teresa might have an iconographic purpose linking the convent and its inhabitants to the order's founder, following a European narrative formula. The murals adhere to the frequent use of prints to represent Christian stories and saints adequately. The mural program of the life of St. Teresa of Ávila is in the former living area and offices of the Carmelite convent. The paintings are adjacent to the former dormitory doors on the second floor (Figure 2.1). In contrast, the first level holds areas such as the refectory, the kitchen, and the patio, where the nuns would share time and run their businesses. The mural program creates a visual divide between communal and private spaces. The narrative in the surrounding halls of the courtyard house forces the viewer to walk around to obtain the complete history. For the women who inhabited this space, these were part of their daily spiritual journey.

The mural program contains twenty-five scenes, which -with some exceptions- follow chronologically the prints made by Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle of the *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu* (Appendix 3).²⁹² As noted by María José Pinilla Martín, these prints were part of a book driven and promoted by Ana de Jesús, the prioress of the Discalced Carmelite convent in Brussels.²⁹³ The publication of St. Teresa's work and life was part of the canonization efforts; a year after Collaert and Galle engravings, Teresa de Jesús obtained her beatification in 1614. In a letter by the venerable Discalced Carmelite Ana de Jesús (disciple of St. Teresa, who drove the expansion of the order throughout Europe), she shares her efforts with Father Diego de Guevara of the San Agustín order in the convent of Salamanca (1610): "She [St. Teresa] helps me reach the prize she deserves. The charity that she does me, Your Fatherliness, in telling me what is done for her canonization. We console ourselves a lot with these papers and forms."²⁹⁴ Even though they were not the only prints made of the life of St. Teresa of Ávila, they became the template for later iterations of the narrative, including the murals at the Convent of San José. At first, the painted images in the convent are copies of the prints. In the New World, the "copy" of print was a common practice that aimed to communicate European visual conventions and, in the case of religious figures, to expand and incite devotion in the Indigenous population.

The copy has a significant visual weight in the case of the convent and drives a comparative study with the source. Even when you visit the new museum of Carmen Alto, each mural is accompanied by a caption with a matching print. There is no denial of the impact of the circulation of prints in the New World. However, a sole emphasis on the similitudes creates

²⁹² Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*.

²⁹³ María José Pinilla Martín, "Dos 'vidas gráficas' de Santa Teresa de Jesús: Amberes 1613 y Roma 1655," *BSAA Arte*, no. 79 (2013): 184.

²⁹⁴ Ana de Jesús and Concha Torres Sánchez, *Ana de Jesús Cartas (1590-1621): Religiosidad y Vida Cotidiana En La Clausura Femenina Del Siglo de Oro*, 1. ed, Acta Salmanticensia. Estudios Filológicos 259 (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1995), 88.

a unidirectional binary, where European art is positioned as the prominent art, relegating local contributions as inconsequential in this juxtaposition. Here, I propose an approach that focuses on visual details and the idea of mimicry and repetition as a space for local response. The passive copy of a print into a mural painting becomes an active repetition of a narrative through not just the nuns but the women that inhabit this space and now the visitors. This study explores the possibilities a close look at these mural paintings can bring to the understanding of the lives of the women of the convent of San José and the historical context of Quito.²⁹⁵

Spiritual exercises, prayers, and pilgrimages suggest the repetition of a saintly journey, which was the center of the convent's contemplative life. The repetition and mimicry were conduits of devotion, key for the spiritual formation of nuns, and aid for their missionary work. The Council of Trent issued in its response to the use of images in the text *On the Invocation, Veneration, and Relics of Saints, and on Sacred Images*, it was stated that:

From all holy images, not only because the people are thereby *reminded* of the benefit and gifts bestowed on them by Christ, but also because through the saints, the miracles of God and salutary *examples are set before the eyes of the faithful* so that they may give God thanks for those things, may *fashion their own life and conduct in imitation* of the saints and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety [my emphasis].

The murals of St. Teresa closely follow the edict as images of remembrance of the saint, which is a salient characteristic of the murals, and even today, museum visitors can familiarize themselves with St. Teresa's life through the murals. However, the fragments "fashion their own life and conduct in imitation of the saints" indicates an approach to the mural program inherent to the convent and influences how the nuns approach their devotional practices. The practice of imitation intertwined with performances, relics, and writings; St. Teresa encouraged prayer and imitation as a path to martyrdom; "[the devil] makes it seem arrogant to have great desires and want to imitate the saints and desire to be martyrs."²⁹⁶ The desire to obtain sainthood, or to at least be recognized by saint-like behavior, was part of the spiritual structure of convents and echoed in their strict daily schedule.²⁹⁷

The repetition and performance of religious stories were not new on the convent's grounds. Mariana de Jesús used performance and imitation to express her faith to such an extent that her unusual behavior was seen as a sign of her sanctity. She was versed in St. Teresa's texts and, as pointed out by Butron: "She had a special devotion to the Enlightened Mother Saint Teresa of Jesús; and so, her usual spiritual lesson was in the Books of this great

²⁹⁵ Other studies, such as Carmen Fernández-Salvador in *Historia, Arte y Música en el Manuscrito "La Perla Mystica" Del Monasterio de Santa Clara, Quito (1700-1718)* / Regina Harrison, Editora., Primera edición., Estudios Literarios ; 4 (Quito, Ecuador: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, 2019), and Alexandra Kennedy in *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito, Siglos XVII-XIX, among others*, explore female devotional objects as artistic creations and their relationship with conventual life.

²⁹⁶ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida* (Madrid: San Pablo, 2023), 152, Apple Books.

²⁹⁷ Santa Teresa de Jesús, "Libro de las Constituciones," in *Escritos de Santa Teresa*, vol. 1 (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1861), 6.

Doctor of the Church." ²⁹⁸ These books guided her on what behavior was deemed saintly; Mariana de Jesús lived through St. Teresa's canonization process, which, as pointed out in Ana de Jesús' letters, required revitalizing her writings, life stories, and image.²⁹⁹ The failed attempts of Mariana de Jesús to enter the convent of St. Catalina of Siena resulted in a severe response on her part.³⁰⁰ The impossibility of being part of the convent intensified her fervor for God, guided by her Jesuit confessors and texts that exhorted her to closely reenact the life of Christ and Mary through bodily pain: "She had in her memory a saying of the enlightened Mother Saint Teresa of Jesús, who, [when] spoke of perfection, said: That it does not consist in joy, but only suffering."³⁰¹

The use of mortification to get close to God is part of the convent's mural program; the scene *Vision of Demons* (Mural 7) illustrates St. Teresa's mortification practices (Figure 2.35). Here, St. Teresa, without her veil and with her arms exposed, surrounded by tools of mortification such as a discipline (flagellation whip), keys tied with a rope, and poison ivy branches, contemplates an image of Christ standing with his hands tied with string, half covered by a canopy curtain. Even though the lower text is almost unreadable, few words can be discerned: "...penitencia.... azotando... virgen su carne...aspereza...haziendo la sierba de su espiritu...[sic] (...penance whipping ... virgin her flesh... roughness... making the servant of her spirit...)." ³⁰² There is also the presence of three demonic figures. A demon similar to the ones depicted in this scene appeared to St. Teresa in a moment of prayer: "I was once in an oratory, and he [the demon] appeared to me on the left side, an abominable figure; I especially looked at his mouth, because he spoke to me, that it was terrifying."³⁰³ This mural showcases the use of the image of Christ as a conduit of devotional practices such as flagellation and prayer to acquire strength from God and overcome temptation represented by demons.

Like St. Teresa, the nuns of the convent of San José included images of Christ as part of their visual and spiritual journey, which included a reminder of Christ's suffering. Among the mural depictions of the life of St. Teresa, three mural scenes deviate from the original theme, with paintings of the Passion of Christ (Figure 2.10, 2.12, 2.13). These images transform St. Teresa from the main character into a historical witness, generating a juxtaposition between the story of Christ, St. Teresa, and Mariana de Jesús as spiritual guides and interlocutors, the lives of these figures integrated into the convent's architectural space and the nun's devotional practices. Mariana de Jesús is not explicitly part of the mural program. Still, her home life connects to the murals and departs from the prescribed Eurocentric narrative, suggesting an awareness of her former presence.

Mariana de Jesús transformed the hallways of the future convent into the path walked by Christ carrying the Cross, embodied through the repeated mimicry of Christ's pain and suffering: "Mariana would go out late at night with her Cross on her shoulders and in imitation of the steps that Christ took through the streets of Jerusalem, from Pilate's courtyard to the

²⁹⁸ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 239.

²⁹⁹ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 88.

³⁰⁰ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 65–68.

³⁰¹ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 137.

³⁰² Unknown, *Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa*, ca.17th-19th centuries, Temple, Vegetal pigments, ca.17th-19th centuries, Quito, Museo Carmen Alto.

³⁰³ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 378.

Calvary. She followed in his footsteps, and at each station, she contemplated one of the many steps that Christian piety meditates in the street of bitterness.”³⁰⁴ The high choir of the convent of San José holds a large wooden cross as a relic, which belonged to Mariana de Jesús and is evidence of her dedication to the reenactment of Christ's crucifixion (Figure 2.37). According to her niece's declaration, Mariana had multiple crosses “that she carried on her delicate shoulders [...] oppressed by their weight, she used to fall to the ground; to increase the pain she used to put a chickpea in her shoes.”³⁰⁵ Even if this account was a legend, the hallways of the convent were part of these types of accounts, which were used to amplify the fame of Mariana de Jesús in Quito and later served as evidence for her sanctification efforts. Like St. Teresa in the *Vision of Demons* (Mural 7), Mariana de Jesús identified pain as a way to embody the suffering of Christ: “In these Stations [of the Cross] her soul melted in the love of her husband, and all her powers were used to feel the pains of his Passion” (Figure 2.35).³⁰⁶

The location and full-scale size of the mural paintings, combined with the familiarity of the nuns with St. Teresa's writings and history, invited these women to be part of these sacred moments. These images offered a substitute for mortification acts such as Mariana de Jesús' performances in these hallways, where she embodied Christ's suffering inwardly. The scenes of the Passion of Christ are outside the primary circuit formed by the images of the life of St. Teresa in an adjacent hall that connects the convent with the museum (Appendix 3). The mural *Apparition of Saint Peter and Saint Paul* (Mural 9) is followed by a white wall without any mural remnants, the preamble of the murals of the Passion (Figure 2.38). I numbered the murals consecutively, following the order of appearance and most of the printed template order. The Passion of Christ murals are in an opposite narrative order. The mural next to St. Teresa's narrative is *Jesus Dying on the Cross* (Mural 10), the final episode of the Passion of Christ mural trio. The shift in direction indicates the disconnection between both mural programs (St. Teresa-Christ), the loss of scenes that continue with the story of the Passion, and the previous existence of earlier scenes on the closure side of the convent. These murals showcase three stages of damage, conservation, and restoration, indicating structural changes over time, possibly a wall or door that divided the mural programs and the space (Figure 2.10-74).

In the painting of *Jesus Dying on the Cross* (*Santo Cristo del Socorro*) (Mural 10), the right side of the crucified Christ is collapsed into an irretrievable image (Figure 2.10). At the lower part of the blank fissure, the torso of St. Teresa is distinguishable, in her Carmelite habit and black veil, with her hands clasped in prayer slightly turned towards Christ. At the center of the mural, there is Christ on the Cross, with a crown of thorns on his head, a blood-stained loincloth from the blood of the wounds on his hands and legs, the stigma at the right of his chest, and multiple bloody spots throughout his body. The excessive sores and blood emanating from Christ's body differentiate this painting from traditional depictions of five wounds, two at his wrists and feet and one at his side. This type of depiction is reminiscent of the sculptural work made by artists from the Escuela de Quito (Quito School), known for their realistic features that intend to evoke emotion in the viewer. The Crucifix, now titled *Christ of Agony* (1770-75), was made by the Indigenous artist Manuel Chilli, known as Caspicara, and

³⁰⁴ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 127.

³⁰⁵ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 25.

³⁰⁶ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 127.

exemplifies artworks from the Quito School (Figure 2.39). Caspicara is known for his polychrome religious statues with great anatomic detail that incited empathy and sorrow.³⁰⁷ These details are amplified by the emaciated body of Christ and a gushing wound at his back, extended by the blood emanating from the center over the sides with splashes formed by delicate threads of red that emphasize the violence Christ's body was subjected to (Figure 3.39.1.2). In *The Art of Painting Quito*, Adriana Pacheco notes the production in Quito of these types of images and sculptures of the Passion of Christ: "These were intended to intensify religious fervor, especially during penitential practices [...] Within religious houses, these representations were even more meaningful, for they inspired the communities's days of intense prayer and meditation."³⁰⁸ The artists of the murals at the convent of San José were part of the artistic development of the School of Quito; artists adopted uncommon elements, like the bloody body of Christ, and made it a distinguishing characteristic of their art.

The following mural is *Christ After the Flagellation* (Mural 11); this image is heavily damaged, and the painting is fractured on slabs of paint that simultaneously reveal critical elements of the scene and the base wall structure (Figure 2.11). St. Teresa is the best-preserved figure in the painting. As in the portrayal of Christ on the Cross, she looks towards Christ with her hands clasped in prayer and her body draped by a large white cape covering the Carmelite habit. St. Teresa's face is passive, entranced by the horrors of Christ's suffering; a passivity is replicated in Christ's face, which, even though it is on a fragmented painting surface, shows Christ with his eyes closed without a trace of pain, conflicting with the traces of blood covering his body. This mural invites the viewer to be like St. Teresa and use prayer and images as a gateway to "humble yourself and give away with Him." In her autobiography, she points to this specific moment of passion: "Well, returning to what I was saying about thinking of Christ at the column, it is good to reflect for a while and think about the sorrows he had there and why he had them and who it is who had them and the love with which he suffered them."³⁰⁹ Practicing meditation while contemplating Christ's image offers a means to empathize with his suffering and strive for personal improvement: "The crucifixion, as a symbol of pain, penitence, and suffering, became an example of the nuns' sacrifices."³¹⁰ The scene of *Jesus Bearing the Cross* (Mural 12) contrasts with the two images of the Passion of Christ across the wall, from fragmented, faded, and bodily tormented to a fully restored, bloodless image (Figure 2.12). Christ, fully covered by an ochre tunic, is carrying the Cross, while next to him, a replica of the figure of St. Teresa kneels with her right hand over her heart and the other open towards the incoming Christ. As noted above, this scene precedes the other two murals; the sky is dark and red, auguring the upcoming suffering.

The figure of the nun witnessing the suffering of Christ in the three mural paintings of the Passion has an ambiguous quality that allows her to be exchangeable; she can be St. Teresa,

³⁰⁷ "A Christ of Agony by Caspicara," *Renaissance Bronze* (blog), August 27, 2021, 2–3, <https://renbronze.com/2021/08/27/a-christ-of-agony-by-caspicara/>.

³⁰⁸ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, "Catalogue," in *The Art of Painting in Colonial Quito*, ed. Suzanne L. Stratton, Judy de Bustamante, and Carmen Fernández-Salvador, Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts Series, v. 6 (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2012), 155.

³⁰⁹ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 165.

³¹⁰ Asunción Lavrín, *Las Esposas de Cristo: La Vida Conventual En La Nueva España*, Sección de Obras de Historia (Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2016), 139.

Mariana de Jesús, or a nun from the convent (Figure 2.10-2.12). Contrary to the specificity of the scenes of her life, here, she is like the viewers of the murals, a witness to the sorrow of Christ. Female orders were founded on the principle of a mystical marriage between each of these women with Christ; mimicry allows them to become closer to their husband. The Passion of Christ allowed them to "be in contact with the body of Christ," their profession, like the offering of the body of Christ, was their ultimate sacrifice.³¹¹ As in St. Teresa's narrative, mimicry of the Passion of Christ was part of the foundational practices of Catholicism and church ritual. Like prayer, the promotion of performance and mimicry gained momentum during the colonial period, bolstered by the widespread dissemination of narratives to foster allegiance to the distant New World. In the library of the Convent of San José, various books recount the Passion of Christ, such as *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (1782) and multiple volumes of *De la imitación de Cristo Meditada* (Meditations of the Imitation of Christ) and of Thomas à Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ* (1678). Like the murals depicting St. Teresa, the murals of the Passion of Christ are part of a multimedia endeavor where the copy is not based solely on duplications that fade with every copy. Still, on the contrary, each reproduction creates the opportunity to add to the original. Kempis sums up perfectly in one of his meditations, where he eloquently encapsulates the rationale for the ceaseless repetition, emulation, and unwavering devotion to imitating the lives of Christ and revered saints until it became second nature: "The life of a good Religious is, in fact, a Cross, but it is also our guide to heaven."³¹²

Mariana de Jesús was actively involved in the performative practice of the Passion of Christ. The closeness with Christ was her consolation from what she considered an unworthy life: "I am a vile creature and a sinner unworthy of your gifts; I only want sorrows and labors that take me in your path to Calvary."³¹³ The hall of her house was used to repeatedly perform the passion of Christ, to imbue the Carmelite convent with sanctity. The case of Mariana de Jesús and the convent's foundation illustrates the power of constant repetition of saintly behavior and the narratives created afterward, nurturing a circle of holy aspiration. Like the nuns at the convent of San José who wanted to be witnesses and receivers of Christ's pain through the reenactment of the Passion of Christ, Mariana de Jesús accessed books with stories from other women like St. Teresa and was inspired to embody Christ through performance. In her biography, her confessor, Father Camacho, refers to Mariana's desire to imitate Doña María Vela, "a quien fue muy aficionada (who she was very fond of)."³¹⁴ Doña María Vela was a Spanish nun who belonged to the Convent of Santa Ana from 1576 until her death in 1614; her hagiography *La Mujer Fuerte* was first published in 1618 by her confessor Miguel Gonzalez Vaquero. Doña María's life was entrenched in the imitation of Christ; in *La Mujer Fuerte* Gonzalez describes the rigorous order she established to mimic the Passion of Christ used as a "continuous exercise to see herself [María Vela] in this mirror [Christ's life], this allowed her to see her defects and the virtues she was missing."³¹⁵ The awareness of Mariana de Jesús's

³¹¹ Lavrín, 140.

³¹² Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 221.

³¹³ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 299.

³¹⁴ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 251.

³¹⁵ Miguel Gonzalez Vaquero, *La Mujer Fuerte* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1674), 16.

performative devotion to Christ and his suffering is embodied in three of the convent's murals, translating the story of the Life of St. Teresa into a local narrative.

The three scenes of the Passion of Christ allow the convent and the artists to include themselves and their history. The convent and the artists intended to make the figure of St. Teresa indistinct and to allow the nuns to visualize themselves as part of the scene. The nun's habit and the presence of John of the Cross identify her as St. Teresa, but the out-of-context presence as a witness and the fact that even though Mariana de Jesús never became a nun, her portrayals consist of a young woman in a nun's habit. Mariana de Jesús was likewise venerated as a prominent figure associated with the convent. The mural of *the Vision of demons and the mystical communion of Saint Teresa* (Mural 7) provides a glimpse of the overlap between St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús (Figure 2.35). While all the prints follow the composition from the printed template, this mural is partitioned into two scenes that are not related. To the left, it follows the template described above, and at the left, there is a scene of Jesus conversing with a nun figure that appears to be St. Teresa in her Carmelite habit. The mural depicts the moment of mystical communion, where Jesus offers bread to the nun. The depicted food on the table is fragmented, hindering the view of all the elements; bread, garlic, and a red ají (pepper) are the only food items that are entirely recognizable (Figure 2.36.1). A similar scene is found in a mural at the Carmelite Convent of the Asunción in Cuenca, an important colonial enclave located in the south of Ecuador (Figure 2.40).

The mural in the Convent of the Asunción is located at the refectory adjacent to a mural of the Last Supper (Figure 2.41). The rectangular mural recreates a refectory, including a pulpit and tables with all the nuns eating, headed by St. Teresa. Jesus offers St. Teresa a small fruit of the many arranged all over the table. The cornucopia of fruits, such as chirimoyas, avocados, Greengages, and plums, contrasts with the sparse food at the table of the mural in the Convent of San José (Figure 2.36.1.2, 2.40).³¹⁶ The fruits on the table are American in origin, inferring that the miraculous encounter occurred in the New World, in this case, in their convent. In the case of the convent of San José, the local event is represented by the lowlily *ajís* (chili peppers), with their intense red and elongated shape demanding attention from the viewer (Figure 2.36.1.2) The Ají originally came from Ecuador about eight thousand years ago. It had a predominant place for Indigenous communities who used to create sauces and condiments for their food. It was even used as currency, as described by Josef de Acosta: "It is only to know that among the ancient Indians, it was highly prized, and they took it to parts where it does not grow in exchange for important merchandise."³¹⁷ The use of New World goods such as the ají was a common practice among colonial painters who used them to identify the site of the painting or the foreign origin of a person.

Before the full commencement of his botanical expedition, the priest and botanist José Celestino Mutis entrusted, the artist Vicente Albán with the task of creating a collection of six

³¹⁶ Lorenzo García, *El Monasterio Del Carmen de La Asunción: Publicación Conmemorativa Del Tercer Centenario de Su Fundación En Cuenca, 1682-1982* (Cuenca: Banco Central del Ecuador, Centro de Investigación y Cultura, 1986), 149.

³¹⁷ Jaime R. Pagán-Jiménez et al., "Early Dispersals of Maize and Other Food Plants into the Southern Caribbean and Northeastern South America," *Quaternary Science Reviews* 123 (September 1, 2015): 238, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2015.07.005>; José de Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (Sevilla: en casa de Juan de Leon, 1590), 246.

paintings depicting exotic fruits, plants, and "types" of people from the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada, symbolizing the New World. Each of Albán's series' paintings has a person standing next to a large bowl of fruit in front of a luscious landscape and a cartouche that, like an encyclopedia, names the "type" of person and fruit. In the painting *Yapanga o Prostituta de Quito* (1783), like the plate of the Carmelite convent in Cuenca, chirimoyas are showcased; in this case, Albán magnified opening them to allow a careful inspection (Figure 2.42). Contrary to the nun's inaccessible body diluted by her religious habit, the women in these paintings stand as subjects to be scrutinized (Figure 2.40, 2.42). The woman wears a transparent lace shirt with an A-line skirt, allowing the viewer to see her ankles and feet. Her necklace emphasizes her chest and matches with large gold chandelier earrings. Albán's paintings were sent to Spain as a scientific document. Even though Albán's paintings do not have the same purpose as the mural paintings, the survival of these three *ajís* showcases the influence of the Quito School and the desire to include local elements, which did not stop with the inclusion of the *ajís* (Figure 2.36.2).

In the mural of the *Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa* (Mural 7), the figure of St. Teresa overlaps with Mariana de Jesús (Figure 2.35, 2.36.3). There is an intention to make the nun figure indefinite, which might not be as evident in the scene of the Passion of Christ. The nun's ambiguity is elucidated by the small string musical instrument the nun holds on her lap, partially obscured by the painting's fragmentation (Figure 2.36.3). St. Teresa enjoyed music and wrote *coplas* (Popular short poetic compositions declaimed on song form): "The Saint [St. Teresa] was very fond of *coplas* and for her [spiritual] daughters and sons to write and sing them [...] she taught and accustomed her nuns to celebrate the main liturgical festivals with verses, couplets, and *villancicos*."³¹⁸ However, there is no record of her abilities to play musical instruments or registered encouragement from her learning in her writings. Drums, flutes, and castanets survive in the convent, but not instruments such as the violin, which require a teacher and constant practice to master it.³¹⁹

On the contrary, Mariana de Jesús was well known for her musical abilities that she developed from an early age: "Mariana was endowed with special ingenuity and ability [...] without much effort; she skillfully played the clave, the guitar, and the vihuela."³²⁰ Her musical abilities were incorporated into her hagiography as proof of her sanctity by comparing her with the first Latin American Saint Santa Rosa de Lima, canonized in 1671: "Santa Rosa composed at the age of five, and Mariana at seven."³²¹ The vihuela (Spanish string instrument) took center stage in Mariana's story because her vihuela still survives in the convent and is now seen as a relic of the saint: "She had no other jewels than a canvas of the Holy Trinity, a small Child Jesus, [...] some spiritual books, and Lives of Saints, many cilice, a large number of disciplines, three crosses, a coffin, and a vihuela with which perhaps she sang in the presence of a crucifix that he always kept in sight" (Figure 2.43).³²² The vihuela became a symbol of Mariana de Jesús and of

³¹⁸ Jesús María Emeterio de, "Ensayo sobre la lírica carmelitana hasta el siglo XX," *Revista Monte Carmelo* 54 (1949): 9, <https://montecarmelo.com/product/home/revista-monte-carmelo/1527-revista-monte-carmelo-volumen-54-html/>.

³¹⁹ Antonio Baciero, *El Órgano de Cámara Del Convento de La Encarnación de Ávila* (Madrid: Poniente-Consejo General de Castilla y León, 1982), 103.

³²⁰ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 20.

³²¹ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 39.

³²² Morán de Butrón and Barrio, 271.

the developing faith in the New World. The nun in the mural of *Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa* (Mural 7) scene is a visual testimony of the intersection of the European origin of the Carmelite order with St. Teresa as founder and Mariana de Jesús as the first Ecuadorian saint (Figure 2.35-2.36). Including the potential of the nuns that inhabited the Convent of San José to follow their path and perhaps become a saint themselves. The surviving mural paintings in the convent attest to the continuous use of the hallways as a commemorative site where the paintings took the role of the performer, showcasing a saintly path for inspiration. The nuns and visitors mentally activated the murals through their contemplation. The images offered visual guidance to circumambulate the hallways and enact their devotion. Unlike the other convents founded in Quito, the San José Convent, the use of these corridors by the Mariana de Jesús, gave its architectural spaces a prescriptive sanctity marked by the mural paintings in its halls. Through her pain, Mariana de Jesús imbued the hallways of the convent of San José with holiness, which became a template for inspiring devotion in the women that later inhabited this space.

The scenes of the life of St. Teresa, in conjunction with the three murals of the Passion of Christ and image alterations, showcase the intellectual, physical, and spiritual flexibility mural painting offers as a medium. There is not much documentation on the commission, the painters, or the cost of the mural paintings. This lack of information demonstrates that these paintings were less expensive than easel paintings. Still, at the same time, this allowed the nuns to fill their hallways and include ambiguity to enhance the viewer's experience with the narratives. There is a juxtaposition between the story of Christ and St. Teresa as spiritual guides and interlocutors; the lives of these figures are incorporated into the convent's architectural space and the nun's devotional practices. The scenes are organized throughout the living quarter's corridor, forming a square that provides a quick overview of the coming narrative. This awareness is reinforced nowadays by the captions provided by the museum with the prints. However, the promise of a straightforward narrative is shattered by the viewer's bewilderment in assessing the narrative's starting point. This visual immersion into this mural program begins with the last scene of the mural progression: *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* (Mural 29, Print 21) and culminates with the mural of the *Appearance of Saint Teresa to the Nuns of Her Order in Segovia after Her Death* (Mural 28, Print 25) (Figure 2.16, 2.30, 2.44, 2.45). The decision to place the mural of *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* on the stair landing between the communal and private areas of the convent gives this image a transitional quality. The location of this mural serves as evidence of the nuns' careful curatorial intervention of the printed narrative and their understanding of St. Teresa's use of metaphorical language. This mural scene included demonic figures with unanticipated connotations related to the local context of the convent, its visitors, and its inhabitants.

Demons Lurking in the New World: The Demand for Salvation and Sanctity Embodied by the Figure of St. Teresa de Jesús.

¿Qué sería, Señor mío, ver vuestra hermosura entre figuras tan abominables?
What would it be, my Lord, to see your beauty among such abominable figures?³²³

Demons are a recurrent character in the writings of St. Teresa de Jesús, a trickster with the mission to prevent prayer under a virtuous disguise, "The devil comes with some great subtleties and under the color of good."³²⁴ This emphasizes St. Teresa's interest in the cultivation of pious souls through contemplation. According to Facundo Macías, in the writings of St. Teresa, "the Demon tries to provoke doubts about the inner movements of her soul."³²⁵ The reappearance of a demonic character that challenges Christianity and faith present in the texts of St. Teresa is also part of her visual narrative. The text repeats the painted figures who, in one look, give the onlooker a summary of an episode of the saint's life, narrated by St. Teresa's *Book of Life* (1565). She wrote this book after moving from the Incarnation convent to the Convent of San José in Ávila.³²⁶ Like her book, each mural scene showcases her hardships and mystic experiences in a clear and almost didactic language, where specific examples are expounded in detail to lead the reader and the viewer into a personal journey that later contributed to her official canonization in 1622. However, the prints have three different scenes with demons lurking near St. Teresa: number seven (Teresa Doing Penitence by Chastising Herself), number twelve (Teresa Triumphant over the Demons), and number twenty-one (Teresa Praying for Divine Intervention) (Figure 2.46.1.2.3).

In the case of the murals with demonic figures, only one scene survives: *Saint Teresa Intercedes so that the Demons Move Away from the Sinful Priest (Mural 29)* (Figure 2.16). It is possible that all the scenes were part of the mural program at its start and later deteriorated or were whitewashed. The complete surviving mural with demonic figures offers an example of how the murals both follow and deviate from the original intention of the narrative, transforming St. Teresa's personal and institutional challenges into narratives that adapt to a colonial context. The mural with demons lurking over a priest is located on the landing of the main stairs, suggesting to the viewers the presence of an upcoming visual narrative (Figure 2.25). The configuration of the mural gives a preamble of a story presented with individual narratives that highlight important parts of the life of St. Teresa. Nevertheless, the first mural the visitors encounter on their way to the living quarters on the second floor is not the first one in the narrative of St. Teresa's writings about herself, nor the first from Collaert and Cornelius' prints (Appendix 3). The mural paintings assume that the viewer is familiar with the narrative, highlighting foreknowledge and the use of the murals as a mnemonic device. The primary

³²³ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 497.

³²⁴ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Las Moradas o Castillo Interior* (FV Editions, 2020), 133–34, Apple Books.

³²⁵ Facundo Sebastián Macías, "El Discurso Demonológico En Teresa de Ávila: La Construcción Del Endebledemonio Frente a La Contemplación," *Tiempos Modernos* 29 (2014): 14, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335101111_El_discurso_demonologico_en_Teresa_de_Avila_la_construccion_del_endeble_demonio_frente_a_la_contemplacion.

³²⁶ Tomás Álvarez, "Teresa de Jesús, Mujer Escritora," in *Castillo Interior: Teresa de Jesús y El Siglo XVI (Catálogo)* (Ávila: Catedral de Ávila, 1995), 232–33.

purpose of the paintings is to serve the spiritual edification of the women in the convent yet adapted to a local visual language. Hence, the changes in the mural paintings suggest that the alterations in the order, subtractions, and additions were purposefully made.

The mural *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* is a scene of a later stage of the life of St. Teresa when she already took the habit (Figure 2.16). This event is in chapter thirty-eight of *The Life of the Holy Mother Teresa of Jesús*. In this chapter, St. Teresa expounded on the visions she experienced and the effects of them on her body and soul.³²⁷ The mural, about 128.74 x 100.94 inches, has no adjacent paintings or spaces right next to it. The image's size and isolation transform the viewer into a witness of the moment when two demons have their arms entwined on a priest who holds a book in his hands. The priest wears a full liturgical vestment which includes an alb (long white tunic) with an ornate lace hem, enhanced by overlapping gold threads that build the illusion of an embroidered chasuble (outer vestiture) and maniple (a band that hangs over the left-hand). Delicate brushstrokes form the priest's investiture, his hands, and the pensive demeanor of his face, which contrasts with the dark forms of the demons are built with strong brushstrokes.

The demons have pointy noses, nails, toes, wings, horns, and tails, which extend their naked bodies into menacing lurking figures. The demon to the left of the priest approaches attentively the priest from his back with one leg over the carpet and the other just leaving the wooden flower, giving the viewer a full view of his body and serpentine tail; his demonic partner at the right is obscured by the priest's body. The priest and the demons are over a rug that extends under the altar that holds a covered Chalice, a book stand, and two candles that suggest a chiaroscuro effect and creates a warm light source that extends over the priest and fades over the devilish figures. In the *Book of Her Life*, St. Teresa describes this scene: "Once I was arriving to receive Communion, I saw two demons with the eyes of the soul, [which are] clearer than those of the body, [the demons] with a very abominable figure. It seems to me that their horns surrounded the throat of the poor priest [...] I understood that soul was in mortal sin."³²⁸

The demon at the priest's right spews spit from his mouth, indicating that he is talking to the priest, while he looks towards a spectator outside of the painting. In contrast, the priest has a doubtful face as if confronted by a difficult decision. Behind the priest, to the right of the painting, St. Teresa and an unknown nun stand observing the events. St. Teresa, identified by a soft halo, has her right hand on her chest as if she is about to speak while the other nun looks at her with her hands clasped in prayer. The murals register the devilish figures at a moment of action, emphasized by their color, pointy details, posture, and visible brush strokes. In contrast, the human figures of the nuns and the priest appear immobile; the three stand upright with their faces disengaged from the other figures, following the equivalent print example (Figure 2.46.3). In the image, the moment of Communion is not evident to the viewer; the chalice is covered, and the priest has his back turned towards St. Teresa, emphasizing a narrative of good against evil. Components of the painting are from other segments of St. Teresa's writings, such as Chapter thirty-one of autobiography that includes a mention of his dark figure: "The Lord

³²⁷ Santa Teresa de Jesús and Francisco de Ribera, *Vida de Santa Teresa de Jesús, Fundadora de Las Descalzas y Descalzos Carmelitas* (Madrid: Librería Francisco Lizcano, 1863), 496.

³²⁸ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, (23), 496.

wanted me to understand what the devil was like because I saw a very abominable *negrillo* next to me.”³²⁹ Furthermore, the demon's mouth, in this scene, approaches her side: "I was once in an oratory, and he [the demon] appeared to me on the left side, of an abominable figure; I especially looked at his mouth, because he spoke to me, that she was terrifying.”³³⁰ Visual motifs permeated the figure of the demons of all the scenes, who are the only survivors in the case of the murals.

The mural based on the print of *Teresa Triumphant over the Demons* (Print 12) is not currently found in the convent; nonetheless, it probably occupied the blank wall space of the mural program identified in Appendix 3 as (Mural 13) (Figure 2.23-2.46.2). There are only two blank wall spaces without a trace of the content: *Teresa Triumphant over the Demons* and *Teresa as a Patron Saint* (Print 19). *Teresa as a Patron Saint* is a scene of St. Teresa's subsequent destiny as a saint and fits better in the following blank space (Mural 16). In *Teresa Triumphant over the Demons*, St. Teresa confronts the demons with a cross, as described in the print's text: "Having experienced innumerable favors of God, and by the abundance of heavenly graces, she has overcome nature itself and won back various victories from the demons; scorning the same flies, and seizing the flag of the cross, she summons them to the implacable battle.”³³¹ The only surviving part of the mural was the frame that follows the floral pattern found in the other mural scenes. The erasure of the mural *Teresa Triumphant over the Demons* (Print 12) begs the question of the reasoning behind the change (Figure 2.46.2). Was the scene whitewashed due solely to structural damage, or was there a shift in its meaning or circumstances where the recovery of this mural became unwarranted? Why was it possible to rescue the mural's border but not any fragments of the scene? There are no records that can help us to answer these questions. However, it is noteworthy that of the three scenes with demons, one is fully restored, one whitewashed, leaving no hint of its existence, and the other, the demons, are illegible. The painting *Vision of Demons and the Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa* (Mural 7) has a peculiarity not present in the other paintings (Figure 2.35). This scene has a dual narrative; on the left, it follows the print configuration, and on the right, it includes an image of St. Teresa with Christ at the Last Supper. The second narrative does not adhere to any of the printed templates, but it does fit the mural program with the stations of the cross found at the side of the hallway.

The scene of *Christ Declaring himself to Teresa* (Print 10) was supposed to occupy the blank space (Mural 13) if adhering to the printed template order. Instead, *Christ Declaring Himself to Teresa* is located in mural space fifteen, modifying the prints' original order of the scenes. The altered order continued in the following scenes: *Teresa before the Holy Trinity* (Print 11), a scene that was moved towards the end of the mural program (Mural 22), the image of *Christ Showing a Nail from the Cross to Teresa as his true Bride* (Print 13), found at the end of the southern hall (Mural 17) (Appendix 4). This change of order does not consider the short departure from the template. After the ninth mural, the narrative shifted to three images with scenes from the station of the cross (Murals 10,11,12). The blank space (Mural 13) is followed by *The Investiture of St. Teresa* (Mural 14-Print 14), and the *Apparition of the*

³²⁹ Teresa de Jesús, 379.

³³⁰ Teresa de Jesús, 378.

³³¹ Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 12.

Resurrected Christ (Mural 15-Print 10) (Figure 2.20, 2.31, 2.46.1, 2.47). They are followed by the other blank space, which probably had the other missing scene, *Teresa as a Patron Saint* (Print 19). The blank spaces are located near the area that suffered more damage from earthquakes (Murals 13-16), which suggests the mural's disappearance due to natural disasters.

Nonetheless, the adjacent murals -even though damaged- survived. Fragments of the mural border stand, inferring the existence of the former scene, and this is the point where the narrative begins to deviate from the order of the prints. The erasure of this mural is a severe challenge to the conservation practices throughout the program; on the other murals, fragments of the paintings survive, and the nearby paintings, despite the damage, can be identified. The remnants allow the viewer to follow the story even after its sequential order and details were reformatted.

In the seventh print of *Teresa Doing Penitence by Chastizing Herself*, the demon to Teresa's left side is a visual interpretation from her life's account: "It seemed that a great flame was coming out of his body, which was all clear, without shadows" (Figure 2.46.1).³³² In the print, a demon is a large floating figure with rays of light emanating from underneath his torso, replacing his lower body with a ball of smoke coming out of his mouth; he was at the oratory threshold on his way out, while St. Teresa was on her knees with her hand over her heart, looking towards a painting of Christ. The demons had been scattered thanks to St. Teresa's prayers: "I was terrified and crossed myself as best I could, and it [demon] disappeared and returned later. Twice, this happened to me. I did not know what to do. I had holy water there, and I threw it towards that area [where the demon was located], and it never returned."³³³ St. Teresa is praying to the image of Christ at the Column, identified by the position of the tied hands and bare chest. This image is like an image that was stored at St. Teresa's home, mentioned in her autobiography: "It was very wounded Christ and [the image was] so devout that, looking at it, I was completely disturbed to see it, because it [the image] represented well what [Christ] went through for us. It was so much what I [St. Teresa] felt of how badly I had thanked those sores."³³⁴ In this mural painting, St. Teresa is prostrate in front of the Christ image, surrounded by tools of mortification such as whips of flagellation and a long branch of poison ivy as described above, one of the few elements still surviving in this painting (Figure 2.35). The other elements that survive and help to identify the scene are the body of St. Teresa and the altar with the painting of Christ. Still, there is no trace of the demons that were part of this mural.

Returning to the mural of *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest*, there is a notable difference from all the other mural paintings. The scene is framed with gold floral shapes with a brown background, imitating wooden frames with gold foil used in paintings during this period (Figure 2.16). The ornate larger frame creates the illusion of an easel painting matching with paintings found on the adjacent walls of the landing area. Right next to the mural, at the center of the landing, there is a small, very elaborate retablo with the image of St. Teresa, surrounded by mirrors and gold foil rosettes. Next are two paintings of the Trinity and an image of Christ at the upper center (Figure 2.25).

³³² Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 378.

³³³ Teresa de Jesús, 378.

³³⁴ Teresa de Jesús, 114.

Even though the frame is not connected to the narrative, this change showcases the artistic awareness of the convent's nuns. These women recognized the significance of small visual details like the frame to create a visual continuation for each space and, most importantly, how these details highlight a scene that otherwise would be read just as part of the narrative. Remember that this mural is well-preserved, and it is notable that it underwent the most successful painting reconstruction from the mural program. Its preservation is due to its privileged location, which protects the painting from environmental elements. It did receive direct sunlight and contact with the rain but was not as affected by subsequent architectural changes and earthquakes. It also appears to have not suffered significant changes -except for the frame- which had a painting coat to reinforce the image.

The text on the mural painting of *St. Teresa Interceding for the Priest* was well-conserved, providing more information about this mural's creation and importance. Inside the frame, under the scene, there is a lower banner that reads:

Acierto sacerdote que celebraba en pecado mortal le oyo sumisa y miro que los demonios le apretaban atrozmente la garganta pero rogando a dios por el al instante consiguio su conversion.

A certain priest who was celebrating in mortal sin [St. Teresa] submissively heard and saw that the demons were atrociously squeezing his [the priest's] throat; nevertheless, [She] prayed to God for him [and] he instantly achieved his conversion.³³⁵

In this text, the demons are physically acting, "squeezing his throat," implying that the demons threaten his life. Only St. Teresa's intervention saved him from this end. The painting closely adheres to the text and replicates the Latin at the bottom of the print.

She hears a certain priest, subject to a fatal injury, doing a sacred thing and sees in his mouth horribly groaning demons. However, she immediately obtained the admonitions from the Lord to deliver him, which she requested.³³⁶

Both accounts underline the control the demon took over the priest's voice, either by transforming his voice in "groans" or by obstructing air by "squeezing his throat." The priest cannot save himself due to his inability to pray and St. Teresa's intervention is needed. The text also points to the priest's sinful state, "celebrating in mortal sin" and "fatal injury,"; implying that even members of the church are subject to sin.

Nevertheless, even though both texts describe the same scene, there is a peculiar use of words that relate the statement in the mural to the colonial context of the convent and the Audiencia of Quito. "Pecado mortal (mortal sin)," "Rogando (begging,)" and "conversión (conversion)" fit the original account. The mural also alludes to the viewer as a potential sinner who, contrary to the priest in the scene, needs to act to achieve salvation. The mural scene of

³³⁵ Unknown, *Saint Teresa Intercedes so That the Demons Move Away from the Sinful Priest*, ca.17th-19th centuries, Temple, Vegetal pigments, ca.17th-19th centuries, Quito, Museo Carmen Alto.

³³⁶ Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 21. Approximate translation.

Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest confronts the viewer with the power of St. Teresa as an intercessor to avoid sin. Without the physical presence of St. Teresa, prayers become the means to summon her for protection. The use of the term *conversion* is the linchpin of the local colonial context, where colonial missionary work based on the possibility of converting Indigenous people, who lived in sin, to obtain salvation through: "Priest who must make the Indians understand the great errors of their infidelity and the pain and punishment that God gives to the infidels in hell."³³⁷ The mission of conversion needed to position Indigenous religious beliefs and practices as antagonists to Christianity, denominated as demonic, represented in the mural by demons that, as St. Teresa admonished, continuously pushed people away from praying.³³⁸

While the mural presents the configuration of the upcoming scenes of independently framed narrative scenes accompanied by text, it is not the first image of the mural and print sequence. The decision to locate this scene in a privileged site shows the awareness of the nuns of their condition as a colony in the middle of a conversion process. Also, this mural provides one of the prints' most memorable and shocking scenes. Like the sinful priest, the nuns and people in the New World were accosted by pagan practices of Indigenous cultures and were distant from sacred Christian sites. At the 1570 synod in Quito, religious authorities led by archbishop Fra Pedro de la Peña wrote a guide for priests scattered around the Audiencia de Quito with policies on indoctrinating the local Indigenous people and the dangers of their worldviews.³³⁹ This policy included the priest's fears in regard to the doctrine: there were many witchcrafts and superstitions that these Indians used, of which many people worthy of faith, clergy, religion, and cities have given us news [...] The sorcerers generally are a diabolical venom part that frightens and holds the Indians.³⁴⁰

As Kenneth Mills points out in *Idolatry and Its Enemies*, "the demonological system that had been inherited from early Christian commentators and the friars and inquisitors of medieval Europe, and refined by their Renaissance and early modern successors, could be used to incorporate the "idolatry" of America."³⁴¹ The New World represented an unexpected challenge to Christianity that forced the Spanish to look back to find a response that included early visual language that accommodated their need for conversion by transforming local Indigenous deities into demonic figures to solidify their control over the Indigenous peoples. In the mural the demons visually serve as a contrast to exalt the sanctity of the adjacent figures as described by St. Teresa: "What would it be, my Lord, to see your beauty among such abominable figures?"³⁴² The menacing depiction of the demon positions it as "the other," a character outside the accepted parameters, such as Indigenous and Black people within Spanish colonial control. As stated by Esther Cabrera, in the Americas "the Devil was identified with those social groups that constituted a threat due to the possible transmission of idolatry

³³⁷ Patronato, 189, R.40, "Pedro de La Peña, Obispo de Quito: Sínodo de Aquella Diócesis" (Quito, 1570), Seville, Archivo General de Indias.

³³⁸ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*.

³³⁹ Patronato, 189, R.40, "Pedro de La Peña, Obispo de Quito: Sínodo de Aquella Diócesis."

³⁴⁰ Patronato, 189, R.40, Fol. 15R-15V.

³⁴¹ Kenneth Mills, "Deception and Delusion," in *Idolatry and Its Enemies* (Princeton University Press, 2018), 216, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691187334>.

³⁴² Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 497.

and pagan practices, which would affect the consolidation of Spanish-Catholic customs.”³⁴³ The paradoxical nature of the demon as evil and evidence of the existence of God adapted well to the New World’s contradictory nature, where people lived between Indigenous and European epistemologies. The nuns of the convent of San José understood the complexity and multiple understandings of demonic figures in the context of the mural program. They took the opportunity to transform the meaning of the mural scenes by changing the order, which is evident in the positioning of the mural *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* at the stairs landing. This scene simultaneously follows the printed template through its composition while at the same time departing from the narrative to exalt elements that best adapt to the local reality.

The stairwell landing with the demons’ mural is a threshold between their dormitories, a quiet space that offered private contemplation to the lower floor, an active area inside their private space, which could be accessed by the other women who inhabited the convent. The scene marked a space in-between that reflects the transitional spiritual state of the Quiteños (people from Quito) and the dangers of past spiritual practices. The selection of the mural *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest*, warns that even a person occupying a position in the church can be deceived by a demon. The other two print scenes that include demons have a shared particularity; St. Teresa is alone confronting these figures; they showcase her as a powerful figure who, through prayer, overcame demonic distractions. However, the mural at the landing includes the priest that needs salvation and a nun who became a witness. The demon also is a reminder of the danger it holds with its ability to appear good through deception and imitation that can overtake even a priest. St. Teresa, through this demonic appearance, was able to acknowledge the power of God and the significance of his favor: “I understood well how much more priests are obliged to be better than others [...and] how masterful is the demon of the soul that is in mortal sin. It [the event] did me much good and gave me much knowledge of what I owed to God.”³⁴⁴ The women that inhabited the convent were from local families who encouraged them to be part of the Carmelite convent and follow the life example of St. Teresa. Through her teachings the nuns were able to pass through their initial spiritual and social standing and obtain a higher station. As noted before, the stairs landing adjacent to the living quarters was a space that connected their active life with their contemplative life. Prayer was the tool used by St. Teresa to confront danger, and the demon served to emphasize the importance of this practice. The presence of demons in the mural of the sinful priest showcases the importance of prayer as the core of Carmelite’s conventual life. For St. Teresa, the biggest danger that demonic figures presented was to trick you into not praying:

This was the most terrible deception that the devil could do to me under the appearance of humility; I began to fear to pray, seeing myself so lost; it seemed to me that it was better to walk like many since being dastardly was one of the worst, and to pray what was obligated vocally, than not having mental prayer and so much contact

³⁴³ Esther Cristina Cabrera Lema, “Representaciones del Demonio: miedos sociales vislumbrados en tres escritos conventuales neogranadinos,” *Revista CS*, no. 9 (January 19, 2012): 101, <https://doi.org/10.18046/recs.i9.1203>.

³⁴⁴ Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 497.

with God that what I deserved was to be with the demons, and that I deceived the people because on the outside I had good front.³⁴⁵

The demons in this painting are not trying actively to incite you to sin. Instead, they are trying to stop you from connecting with God through prayer, requiring contemplation of the words that go in your head, forming an indelible bond with Christ. As part of the creation, the demons provide a continuous reminder of the danger of a life with no spiritual contemplation for women who, like the Indigenous People who inhabited the New World, were believed to be more susceptible to sin. The priest and the two demons become a reminder of the power sacred words have: "The Lord himself told me to pray for him [priest], and that he had allowed it [the priest to consecrate] so that I would understand the force that the words of consecration have, and how God does not stop to be there no matter how bad the priest who says them is."³⁴⁶ The depiction of the demon is a reminder of the possibilities of spiritual improvement that the convent provides in contrast to the outside world, where idolatry and "the other" pose a danger to colonial society.

In the change of location of the only surviving mural with demons, *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest*, showcasing the awareness of the nuns in the local colonial context of Quito and the dynamism of mural images. This image occupies a paradoxical position; it is the first to be seen, while it takes the place of the concluding scene once the viewer ambulates through the space. The scene with the demons and priest immediately highlights the incongruity of the mural program with the printed European template—the repetition of the written and printed narrative of the life of St. Teresa transforms into a representation of the nuns' aspirations and the local dangers they confront. The painting of *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest*, is an introduction to how the mural painting program functions by calling the viewers to mentally translate the images into their minds to stimulate the brain to recall the life of St. Teresa. The act of memory and movement functions as a memory palace that aids in continuously reminding the nuns to pray and follow the life of their founder, St. Teresa, and women like Mariana de Jesús, whose behavior anointed them on the cusp of sainthood.

Local inclusions and interpretations go beyond the historical context of the convent and its relationship with the figures of St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús and the inclination to repeat and mimic their lives as an omnipresent narrative. The nuns of the Convent of San José saw in ignored elements such as ornamental patterns and the application of color an inconspicuous way to imbed themselves into the mural, becoming part of the story without altering it. The following chapter will delve into these relegated elements, closely examining the painting layers as remnants of the nuns' interactions with the paintings and their artistic awareness as patrons and artists.

³⁴⁵ Teresa de Jesús, 85.

³⁴⁶ Teresa de Jesús, 497.

Chapter 4

Layers of Inclusion and Memory: Nuns of the Carmelite Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) as Artists and Curators

The fragmentation of the murals at the Convent of San José uncovered hidden visual elements from previous paintings. Yet, the physical deterioration also created visual confusion, since there is no clarity regarding the order of the layers. When most mural painting programs change, the older scene is completely covered to give room for the new one, creating an overlap. However, in the case of the murals of the San José convent, some elements of the underlining paintings' elements have been carefully changed or preserved over time. The women of this religious community became the keepers of the paintings, a task that included their direct intervention in selected areas of the mural. The religious narrative continued, in parallel to peripheral ornamental elements like the flowers, cherubim, rugs, and ropes, creating an unexpected space of autonomy where the nuns were able to insert themselves into the paintings through imperceptible physical and compositional alterations (Figure 2.48). Painting flowers and ornamental details provided a safe space of autonomy for the nuns whose devotion went beyond their contemplative participation. The nuns of the convent of San José were not passive observers; they intervened in the creation process and the subsequent changes of the scenes. The alterations became evident in the palimpsest formed by the painted layers, which hints at the interventions' location and process. Besides praying and performing their everyday tasks, the women at the convent were versed in expressing their devotion through tangible artistic manifestations that included the creation of collages, drawings, quilling, and embroidery.³⁴⁷ These types of works are considered crafts without consideration for their artistic merits. The layers of the mural paintings reveal the nuns' constant involvement in the creation and the everchanging quality of the monumental images.

Blooming Angels: Flowers as a Site of Local Remembrance

Flowers transformed the printed template's flat garments and textiles into a sacred garden that guides the viewer through the extensive mural program, marking the role of the figures (Appendix 5). There are two mural scenes where the floral garment was bestowed to the central figure of the painting: *Entry of Teresa to the convent* (Mural 4) and *Apparition of the Holy Trinity* (Mural 22). In the *Entry of Teresa to the Convent* (Mural 4), a young St. Teresa wears an embroidered red garment, with a long voluminous skirt with floral patterns of white roses and red carnations interrupted at the bottom by two intricate bands of lace. Her top is a separated vermilion bodice with intricate embroidered details at the waist that mimic jewel

³⁴⁷ Yessica Porras, "Un Viaje En Papel a Un Mundo Sagrado: Manifestaciones Manuales de Devoción En El Nuevo Mundo (A Journey on Paper to A Sacred World: Manual Manifestations of Devotion in The New World).", in *Spolia Sancta: Reliquias y Arte Entre El Viejo y El Nuevo Mundo*, ed. Luisa Elena Alcalá and Juan Luis González García, Akal Arte y Estética 94 (Madrid, España: Ediciones Akal, 2023), 159–73. In this essay, I study a group of paper reliquaries located in the Carmelite Convent of Villa de Leyva, Colombia. Here, I explored the use of paper strips (quilling) to create paper landscapes that guide the viewer through reliquaries and how that practice extended to convents in Europe and the New World.

pieces with contrasting black and white details. Under the bodice, a voluminous white shirt creates the illusion of multiple layers of translucent fabric that balloon at the upper arms. The light weight of the tulle contrasts with the ruffled sleeve top that peaks on the neck,

giving young St. Teresa an ethereal quality. A delicate wreath with lined florets adorns her hair and contrasts with a large round flower formed by short black and white brushstrokes covering her ear. Underneath the large black and white flower, she wears a chandelier earring of gold with dangling pearls, which match the pearls on the chain of the gold cross she wears and the multiple pearl bracelets that take the place of the shirt's cuff. Vestiges of a longer chain are visible at the neck and fade over her shirt, leaving the large pendant floating in the middle of her torso. The oval pendant is a large white stone surrounded by tiny black strokes as jewel stones, which can be confused as part of the embroidery. The exuberance of the ornamental details, such as the jewelry, lace, and floral patterns, contrasts with the three nuns' plain garments receiving St. Teresa into the convent.

The next mural, *Teresa's Entry into the Incarnate Convent*, depicts when she began her life as a nun. Her pastoral work is intimated by two nuns walking with a cane in the background and the open hands of the nuns towards her (Figure 2.49). The prints describe the scene as follows: "At the twenty-ninth year of age, in the company of her German brother, the count, she left her paternal house. Having bravely overcome an attack, she entered the convent of the [...] Virgin of Mount Carmel, her Father was unaware."³⁴⁸ St. Teresa's brother and the saint's outward gaze denotes the transitional moment; he wears all-black clothing that matches the nuns' austerity, while the neck and the cuffs compose a delicate lace that mirrors St. Teresa's shirt, which stands for their family's noble past.³⁴⁹ The gaze towards the viewers is unique to this scene, an invitation to follow her steps by connecting the sacred moment when she entered the convent with the everyday life of the women that inhabit the convent. This, a deviation from the original engraving, focuses on St. Teresa's youth and her dress embellishments, where the flowers signify her sacred standing amid the other figures. The other scene with prominent floral patterns is the mural of the *Holy Trinity* (Mural 22) (Figure 2.50).

Flowers of red and cream rosettes adorn the mantle of God (the Father) in the mural of the *Holy Trinity* (Mural 22). In this case, the flowers are more structured, placed on connecting branches that float over a white robe with a red reverse that complements the flower of each branch. The figure of God contrasts with the solid red of Jesus's mantle and the Carmelite habit of St. Teresa. These figures are surrounded by cherubim, witnessing the moment the Holy Trinity summoned St. Teresa. The position of the leading figures deviates from the template engraving (Print 11), where the Father and Son are positioned on equal standing, with the Holy Spirit in the shape of a white dove above them, and St. Teresa is on her knees on a lower cloud. In the mural, God the Father is positioned under the Holy Spirit, overlooking Jesus and St. Teresa from a high orb painted in blue indigo with white lead pigments representing his power

³⁴⁸ Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiae a Iesu*, 4.

³⁴⁹ Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger. Steggink, *Tiempo y Vida de Santa Teresa*, 3. ed. corr. y aum., La BAC Maior ; 52 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1996), 10–12.

on Earth.³⁵⁰ God's floral tunic emphasizes a tiered hierarchical order of the figures; St. Teresa, with her Carmelite habit, occupies the lower spiritual rank. Jesus's role as intercessor is highlighted by his middle position between God and St. Teresa, with his right hand towards Heaven while the other holds St. Teresa's hand. The globe creates a separation with the elder figure that represents God, who, besides the differentiating floral tunic, does not directly interact with any other figure. God's eyes are closed, his right hand is raised in a position of blessing, while his left-hand holds an arrow.

The mural paintings of the *Entry of Teresa to the Convent of the Incarnation of Ávila* and the *Holy Trinity* have distinctive flower patterns that do not repeat. However, three mural scenes share the same flower pattern. In the images of *Jesus Crowns St. Teresa* (Mural 19), *St. Teresa Guided by Angels* (Mural 24), and *Death of St. Teresa* (Mural 27), archangels wear dresses with small flowers that appear to be falling from the sky, an illusion emphasized by the multiple directions of each flower and of the fabric (Appendix 5) (Figure 2.15, 2.20, 2.22). In each scene, the garment takes a different shape and position; therefore, to understand the pattern better, illustrations of the Mada were made to identify them better: pink and red carnations, white hydrangeas, and white roses, with their stems and leaves over a white background. This pattern is only worn by angels located in the foreground of each of the paintings. The scene of *Jesus Crowns Saint Teresa* (Mural 19) is the first of the angel series (Figure 2.48). At the lower right, the archangel Gabriel is recognized by the white lilies he holds in his right hand. He wears a tunic with a floral pattern that covers his body. Over the tunic is a red rope contrasting with the flowers' light color. The floral ensemble is complemented by a wreath of rosettes and the green and pink flowers on his sandal straps. Across from him to the lower left, the archangel Michael mimics Gabriel's body position and his gaze towards the onlooker. He is identified by his armor, cape, belt, sword, and the scale used to weigh people's actions in their final days. In this depiction, a diminutive St. Teresa is found on each side of the scale, unwavering to the sides.

The archangel Michael's presence fits the scene's narrative where St. Teresa is recognized for her pastoral work. The coronation marks the foundation of the first monastery in Ávila: "Having built the first new monastery of the reformation in the city of Ávila, in the same mental prayer, she was urgently freed by Jesus Christ, her Spouse, for the various labors suffered in his obedience. She was redeemed with the most brilliant crown."³⁵¹ The equilateral scale illustrates Michael's favorable judgment of St. Teresa; hence, Christ awarded her a crown. St. Teresa described this moment in her book of Life: "While I was praying in the church before I entered the monastery, almost in rapture, I saw Christ who with great love received me and placed a crown on me, thanking me for what I had done for his Mother."³⁵² In this passage, St. Teresa reveals self-awareness regarding her pastoral work and the recognition of future rewards. The archangel Gabriel, on the other hand, is a messenger who is known for his annunciation to Mary that she was going to bear the son of God: "In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man

³⁵⁰ Fernando Espinoza, Johanna Ramírez, and Carlos Vásquez, "Informe de resultados: Análisis de Pintura Mural (Visión de la Trinidad).," ed. Martha Romero (Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural, May 2023), 25, Quito, Ecuador.

³⁵¹ Collaert and Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 16.

³⁵² Teresa de Jesús, *El Libro de La Vida*, 467.

whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The Virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."³⁵³ Even though the archangel Gabriel was not mentioned in St. Teresa's account of the coronation, the vision she describes can be read as a message represented by Gabriel. In this scene, Gabriel bears the tasks of witness and guide. He is present at St. Teresa's coronation, but his outward gaze connects the sacred moment with the viewer. He guides the viewer to the scene, a role that is further emphasized in his latter apparitions. In this scene, the archangels have been marked by visual attributes that disappear, leaving the flowered pattern as a marker of the archangel's presence.

In *St. Teresa Guided by Angels* (Mural 24) and the *Death of St. Teresa* (Mural 27), the archangel's full floral dress transforms into a skirt, the upper part of the shirt is ochre, and the face becomes nondescript next to a similar face of the other angels (Figure 2.15, 2.22). On *St. Teresa Guided by Angels*, St. Teresa and a fellow nun are guided by two angels: "Going to the city of Salamanca to find a convent, on the road to Ávila, the night became dark, and they lost their way, and then the angels lit their faces and found the way" (Figure 2.22). When the nuns were in danger the angels miraculously offered St. Teresa guidance. Like many lost souls derailed by darkness, the angels' intersection saved the nuns, offering light to find the right path. The gaze of the archangel in the print solely focuses on St. Teresa, while in the mural, he looks outward toward the viewer. This shift alludes to the different relationships between the viewers with prints and murals. Prints offer an intimate relationship to the images. At the same time, murals are linked to a public-communal observation where the large size of the images invites the viewer to become part of the scene. The mural program of St. Teresa was primarily intended for the nuns, located in an area only accessible to them. The archangels are also present in the mural of *Death of St. Teresa* (Mural 27), with three archangels kneeling in prayer over St. Teresa's bed. Here, the archangel Gabriel focused on the heavens opening, where Christ on a yellow cloud, comes to take St. Teresa with him (Figure 2.15). The archangels are depicted with the same garments manifested by the floral skirt that creates a narrative continuation where the role of the archangel Gabriel as a spiritual guide, messenger, or intermediary is combined with the inclusion of flowers falling as an adaptation and survival of Indigenous festivals and paintings.

The large flowers on the garments of St. Teresa and God highlight the hierarchical arrangement of these scenes. In contrast, smaller, softer flower patterns over a white background allude to the presence of angels as witnesses and intercessors (Appendix 5). This pattern is repeated in three scenes, highlighting the intersection of the physical with the spiritual world. Single hydrangeas, roses, and carnations are depicted in suspension, creating the illusion of movement. There is no attempt to repeat the pattern precisely; the recurrence of the flowers serves as a visual guide. This type of illusion is found in conventual paintings, sculptures, and embroidered textiles as part of artistic collections throughout colonial Latin America and Spain. This type of floral pattern is also omnipresent in Ecuador, where painters from the School of Quito were particularly keen on perfecting this element, by recognizing the dynamism of their flowers. The flowers have similar shapes to the ones on the angels' textiles, with pink and red carnations and white roses. The painting of *Apotheosis of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*, in the convent of San Jose, is an example of the depiction of falling

³⁵³ Luke 1:26-28

flowers; in this case, the cherubim with floral bouquets throw down single flowers over the Virgin that is about to be crowned below (Figure 2.32).

The practice of throwing flowers over sacred figures is embedded in Ecuadorian culture and existed even before the arrival of the Spanish in 1534. The descending flowers resonated with Indigenous visual and ritual culture. The festival of Pawkar Raymi (polychromatic), also known as Sisa Pacha (flowering time), is a celebration of the harvest and blooming flowers celebrated by Indigenous Kishwa communities in the northern Ecuadorian Sierra at river streams (Figure 2.51).³⁵⁴ Silvia Chireac and Anna Devis Arbona described the festival: "Women collect flowers and water from other streams, sources of healing and positive energy; these ancient elements are also used in a child's first bath, in marriages, and the last bath of the deceased."³⁵⁵ This festivity is celebrated during the spring equinox (March 21st), which usually coincides with the Christian celebration of the Holy Week. Even though this is a pre-Hispanic celebration, it survived due to the repurposing of the festivity by the Spanish during the colonial period. Therefore, many elements of this festivity include Christian elements, such as the parade of religious statues decorated and showered with flowers along their route.³⁵⁶

The use of flowers to praise a religious figure is preserved in more recent religious celebrations, such as the *El Pase del Niño Viajero* in Cuenca, which began in 1961. A continuation of this ephemeral tradition of throwing flowers, in this case, at a statue of Jesus as a child (Figure 2.52). This sculpture is paraded through the city every December twenty-fourth,³⁵⁷ and is adorned with flowers. When people see it pass, they throw flowers as a sign of respect and devotion.³⁵⁸ This devotion was led by Rosa Palomeque de Pulla, who organized the festivity, which included community work in the form of offerings and music: "Each cart is a garden of wildflowers that sprout there."³⁵⁹ After the death of Mrs. Palomeque, the nuns of the Carmelite Convent of the Asuncion were bestowed with the responsibility of safeguarding the statue during the year.³⁶⁰ Flowers have the potential to exalt the sanctity of a religious figure, such as the statue of the Child Jesus, the river and streams, mural paintings, and the painting of the *Apotheosis of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*. At the same time, even briefly, the experience of flowers falling from the sky creates a shared moment where the figure's sanctity covers the spectator. The flowers do not have an iconographic role per se; their composition suggest Indigenous performative practices. The shared imagery between Catholic and Indigenous rituals is replicated in the mural paintings, where patterns become a moment where the viewer lets the figures guide them through the mural program.

³⁵⁴ Eudófilo Costales Samaniego, *Pawkar Raymi y El Carnaval* (Riobamba: Cemento Chimborazo, 2013), 1.

³⁵⁵ Faculty of Teaching Training University of Valencia, Spain, Silvia-Maria Chireac, and Anna Devis Arbona, "Andean Deities from Ecuador: Indigenous Rituals and Traditions in the Intercultural Classroom," 2017, 751, <https://doi.org/10.30816/ICONN4/2017/61>.

³⁵⁶ Raúl Clemente Cevallos et al., *La Cosmovisión ANDINA En Cotacachi* (Ibarra: Editorial UTN, 2017), 78.

³⁵⁷ Jorge Dávila Vásquez, "El Pase del Niño en Cuenca (Ecuador)," *América. Cahiers du CRICCAL* 27, no. 1 (2001): 98, <https://doi.org/10.3406/ameri.2001.1521>.

³⁵⁸ Dávila Vásquez, 98.

³⁵⁹ Juan Cordero Iñiguez and Marco Martínez Espinoza, *Signos de identidad cuencana*, 1. ed (Cuenca: Comisión de Educación, Cultura y Deportes del I. Concejo Cantonal [u.a.], 2011), 117.

³⁶⁰ Cordero Iñiguez and Martínez Espinoza, 116.

The Possibility of Nuns, Artists, and Curators

The inclusion of flowers in five of the twenty-nine mural paintings indicates an awareness of how to create visual signs to differentiate depicted figures and suggest their role in the painting. Flowers and ornamental details provide a safe space of autonomy for the nuns, whose devotion is embedded in the murals. The nuns' work as art keepers within the convents exposed these women to various artistic techniques and compositions. For instance, in the convent's accounts of 1653, there are constant references to the purchase of fine materials to create embroidered garments and flowers for their religious statues, which included: "More than two ounces of silver thread for the cross sleeve fringe, 4p. [...] First, gold thread to make some stitches for the baby Jesus' blanket and his Holy Mother's mantle, 4p. [...] More saffron, green-gray-blue, gum, and the rest bought to make the flowers for the four veils and the bouquets for the feast of Our Lady of Carmen, 4p."³⁶¹ Some of the garments made by the nuns can now be found in the Museum of Carmen Alto, where the value of their labor is recognized and displayed, like the exhibition of a banner next to two chasubles where the dominating gold color is combined with soft colors where the red serves as a contrast and brings dimension to the garment, highlighting the delicate stitches (Figure 2.53).

There was awareness in the Audiencia de Quito of the artistic handicraft abilities of the nuns at the Convent of San José. The Jesuit Mario Cicala, in 1771, described the labor of the nuns at the Convent of Carmen Alto: "As for the very rare skill in manual work and other crafts typical of the nuns, they are admirable in making flowers of all kinds, very fine and very eye-catching: they are very skilled in embroidery. They work the lathe, fixed and hand-held and in the air, wonderfully work with ivory (Tagua-Palm seed that when worked looks like ivory) and other precious woods."³⁶² Cicala's account emphasizes the work as manual. Nonetheless, there is also an awareness that these women had the skills to create "eye-catching" objects. It is possible they had a say in the order and adjustments of the mural paintings throughout the convent's history, where ornamental spaces like flowers and garments served as a place of inclusion through their physical and visual intervention. The scarcity of information on the making and history of the mural paintings at the Convent of San José has relegated the study of these mural paintings to an iconographic analysis where the relationship with the prints takes precedence over the local inclusions. The lack of acknowledgment of the murals' history and setting implies a passive reception by the women of the convent to these images. However, examples such as the writings of Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo in Nueva Granada and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in New Spain demonstrate that nuns were women who used the seclusion of the convent to initiate intellectual endeavors like writing, music, and theater.³⁶³

Alexandra Kennedy, in her essay *Mujeres en los Claustros: Artistas, Mecenas y Coleccionistas*, expresses the importance of the study of female convents as sponsors, keepers, and art creators.³⁶⁴ In this essay, Kennedy proposes that "women could have conceived themes of creation, 'composure' and the manipulation of images in a different way from those of the

³⁶¹ Adriana Pacheco Bustillos, "Apéndice II, Cuentas del Trienio de la Madre María de San Agustín, Jesús, María y Joseph 1653-1654 (ACAQ)," in *Historia del convento del Carmen Alto*, 1. ed (Quito: Ed. Abya-Yala, 2000), 109–13.

³⁶² Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, *Descripción Histórico-Topográfica de La Provincia de Quito de La Compañía de Jesús (1771)*, 192.

³⁶³ Lavrín, *Las Esposas de Cristo: La Vida Conventual En La Nueva España*, 392.

³⁶⁴ Kennedy Troya, *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito, Siglos XVII-XIX*, 109–27.

male world [...] Women seem to take real pleasure in dressing and 'preparing' images."³⁶⁵ The women who lived in convents had artistic practice and exposure to artworks, which made it possible for them to understand, intervene, and create art. In Cicala's account, he recognized the higher intellect of the nuns of the convent of Carmen Alto: "I once heard two nuns from Carmen Alto speak about matters of monastic and temporal government, and then about ascetic and spiritual points, and I heard them reason with eloquence and elegance, with such solidity of reasons, ruling with such prudence and discretion, that I was astonished and greatly amazed."³⁶⁶ With all the intellectual and manual work produced by the women in closure, why would it be implausible that these women were artists and created or intervened in painting or sculpture? The ambiguity of their position as women may have shielded them from the assumptions and critics of substandard artistic practices because their known work was relegated to crafts, domestic works and devotional labor. The murals of the Convent of San José offered them an opportunity to be part of an active artistic program, which was made to be seen only by them. The murals allowed the nuns to study and interact with images daily as a part of their intellectual formation, inciting repetition and mimicry.

Throughout this chapter, I have emphasized the importance and awareness of copying as a devotional practice; in this section, I want to underline repetition and mimicry as rudiments of artistic training. Imitation is a crucial part of Pacheco's *Arte de La Pintura, Su Antigüedad y Grandezas* (1649), a painting manual that, even though it was published posthumously, had an impact in Spain and Latin America, where it was distributed as a didactic tool.³⁶⁷ For Pacheco, "Painting is an art that teaches to imitate with lines and colors," a practice that includes careful observation of nature.³⁶⁸ In this manual, Pacheco states the importance of practice for the improvement of the artist's technique, for he used Vasari's *Technique* as a reference for this practice: "Design cannot have a good origin if it has not come from continual practice in copying natural objects, and from the study of pictures by excellent masters and of ancient statues in relief, as has been said many times."³⁶⁹ The discipline adopted by the nuns in the convent, demonstrated in their schedules, spiritual exercises, daily labor, and prayer, can be translated into artistic practices such as writing and painting.

Illustrated Transcription of the Discalced Carmelites' Ceremonial Book

An exceptional example of the nuns' discipline and use of the copy as an active form of devotion was found by chance inside a trunk in a velvet bag by the registrar of the Museum of Carmen Alto, Noralma Suarez. It is an example of the nuns' drive to reproduce religious writings while creating artistic works (Figure 2.54.1).³⁷⁰ Here, there was a printed ceremonial book titled: *Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen, conforme al*

³⁶⁵ Kennedy Troya, 127.

³⁶⁶ Cicala, Bravo, and Gándara Enríquez, *Descripción Histórico-Topográfica de La Provincia de Quito de La Compañía de Jesús* (1771), 193.

³⁶⁷ Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de La Pintura, Su Antigüedad y Grandezas* (Sevilla: Simon Faxardo, 1649).

³⁶⁸ Pacheco, 2.

³⁶⁹ Pacheco, 239; Giorgio Vasari 1511-1574, *Vasari on Technique* (New York (State): J.M. Dent, 1907, 1907), 210.

³⁷⁰ In a conversation during a visit made in 2022 to the Museum of Carmen Alto in Quito, Noralma Suarez told me how she found a book with drawings made in the eighteenth century. The book was in a trunk with other books and magazines shared by the nuns of the Convent of Carmen Alto to be part of the museum archive.

missal, y breviario reformados, y según las ceremonias, y costumbres antiguas de su religion (Ceremonial of the Discalced nuns of Our Lady of Carmen, according to the reformed missal and breviary, and according to the ancient ceremonies and customs of their religion) (1692).³⁷¹ The book, now part of the convent's library, is a handwritten copy of the 234-page printed text, transcribed word for word, and includes drawings that were not part of the original text (Figure 2.54.1.2). Birds, flowers, fruits, and baskets carefully adorn each chapter, going beyond the copying of the printer's ornaments, creating their narrative. The cover has a description made by the Discalced Carmelite Priest. Lorenzo Garcia O.C.D.:

This manuscript belongs to The Monastery of CARMEN ANTIGUO of San José in Quito. It is a CODEX of two centuries, which has an imponderable value. Its calligraphy, drawings, and vignettes in natural colors reveal a pen artist. For all of this, this MANUSCRIPT is a museum and archive piece that I have known and appreciated and which we now deliver in a blue velvet wallet. Quito, April 10, 1986.

The description alludes to the three accounts intertwined throughout the manuscript's pages. One is the text, which encompasses most of the space; in this case, the blockish printed text is transformed into sinuous cursive letters that showcase the penmanship of the writer with straight, balanced words that glide through the pages, creating a harmonic visual rhythm (Figure 2.55.1). Page one hundred and seventy-six, "De los oficios del Jueves Santo (Of the Occupations of Holy Thursday)," is an entirely written page that elucidates the command of the writer and her different approaches to creating a lively text. The upper cases are highlighted by more substantial twists, such as the M in the word "Maitines" in the upper paragraph. The initial letter of the subtitle is illuminated by three pomegranate flowers coming out of the inside of the letter D and being pecked by a yellow bird. The rest of the text is methodic without erasures, repetition, or disruption. Here, writing takes a dimension beyond the copy as a mere reproduction made to supply a demand. As pointed out by Gabriela Siracusano in her essay *Materiality Between Mind and Hands*, she regards the use of the copy as an initial point to produce a new image: "This act seems to display a physical instant of immobility, of stillness while observing the model: that "strange attention," an immobility that, in terms of European symbolic and iconographic gestures, had frequently stood as a symbol of melancholy, inspiration, and creativity. But in the New World, that same immobility would embody negative attitudes toward local creators."³⁷²

The Ceremonial book is a departure from the notarial and reports manuscripts, whose focus is on the information recorded without regard to aesthetics. I propose looking at writing as a mental exercise where the mind and the body, through hand movements, become a united response that navigates through the text as a prayer where ink and paper replace the figure of a saint as an intercessor. It is not clear who transcribed the text or who did the drawings. It is possible it was a collaborative work between the priest who requested the book and a nun in

³⁷¹ Unknown, "Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalsas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen Conforme al Misal y Breviario Reformado y Segun Las Ceremonias y Costumbres Antiguas de Su Religion y Ynstrucion de Novisias" (Paper-Ink, Quito, 1792), Quito, Museo del Carmen Alto.

³⁷² Gabriela Siracusano, "Materiality Between Mind and Hands," in *Materiality: Making Spanish America*, ed. Jorge Rivas, Readings in Latin American Studies (Mayer Center Symposium, Denver, CO: Denver Art Museum, 2020), 108.

this Carmelite convent. Through the careful construction of letters, whoever made this book embedded him or herself into the careful instructions of the book. It is not an attempt to introduce new text or to modify it. Writing without the burden of creation allows a deep introspection where the information becomes secondary to the consciousness attained. It is an exercise like embroidery, where meticulous work allows moments of intense concentration, where the mind goes to a different realm. The significance of the juxtaposition between the copy, writing, and meditation is manifested in a habit's cape found at the Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) (Figure 2.56). This cape is formed by a brown textile that, on the inside, is covered by pages of handwritten texts from letters, accounts, and inventories placed without the intention of following a specific order or giving a narrative meaning. It is a form of recycled paper; however, the cape's survival state indicates that it was barely used. I credit its current existence to the combination of text and textiles that made this cape special by having the ability to cover its wearer with the mark left by other nuns through writing. Like in the book copy, the book's importance lies in the act of writing itself.

The second component of this manuscript is the repeated depiction of the sun as a vignette of the *Arma Christi*, more than thirteen symbols associated with the Passion of Christ (Appendix 6). These images, which incite the recollection of the Passion of Christ, are enclosed in the beginning by the Sacred Heart with a Cross surrounded by the crown of thorns and at the end by a heart with seven swords representing Mary's seven sorrows (Appendix 6.1.13). The inclusion of Mary in the last chapter underscores the duality of the convent. As noted by Asunción Lavrín in *Las Esposas de Cristo*, "the crucifixion, as a symbol of pain; penance and suffering, became the example of sacrifice to which the nun should aspire with her entry into the cloister."³⁷³ This was no different in Quito's Carmelite convent, where Mariana de Jesús had left a legacy of bodily sacrifice to get closer to Christ.³⁷⁴ The constant presence of Christ in the mural paintings in the three images of the Passion or as part of St. Teresa's saintly life reinforced the aspirations and sacrifice of these women (Figure 2.10-2.12). The Carmelite order recognized the Virgin Mary as an intercessor and as an example of behavior, being both immaculate and mother: "Trust in the merits of his Son and the Virgin, his mother, whose habit I unworthily wear, and you wear. Praise Her, my daughters, for you are truly of this Lady. Imitate her and consider the greatness of this Lady and the goodness of having her as your patron."³⁷⁵

The symbols inside the sun were carefully made to be easily identified by the reader. The gold of the sun underlines the beginning of each chapter, allowing the reader to identify the chapters better and follow the adjacent narrative of the Passion of Christ (Appendix 6). Ink lines formed figures like the rooster over a column, where the rooster symbolizes the foreshadowing of Peter's triple denial, and the column of Jesus' torment, where he was mocked before his crucifixion (Appendix 6.2). These images do not relate to the text, which are instructions on how nuns and novices were to conduct themselves in ceremonies and religious rites. It is a comprehensive range guide that includes "Del modo de tañer las campanas al Oficio Divino, al capitulo, y otros Actos comunes (About the way to ring the bells to the Divine Office,

³⁷³ Lavrín, *Las Esposas de Cristo: La Vida Conventual En La Nueva España*, 139.

³⁷⁴ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 25.

³⁷⁵ Teresa de Jesús, *Las Moradas o Castillo Interior*, 22.

to the chapter, and other common Acts),” or “De la oración mental y disciplina (About mental prayer and discipline.” (Appendix 6.1.6).³⁷⁶ These instructions are specific on how to behave, including schedules and suggestions such as: “This day will be meditation [...] we will read something without stopping so that without spending a lot, there will be enough material for meditation.”³⁷⁷ The sun vignettes, like the murals of Christ crucified, are a reenactment of Christ's suffering, eliciting in the viewer's memory, and introduce mechanical movements in writing and drawing as a form of active meditation that embeds the maker into the recalled story.

The final element of the book is the depictions of animals and flowers that accompany each chapter title next to the sun vignettes and at the end of each chapter (Appendix 6-7). The printed text had only two distinct embellishments, while the manuscript has about twenty-six distinct instances of ornamentation (Appendix 6-7 and Figure 2.57). In these floral ornaments, we find a space of creative freedom where the nun who transcribed the book input her personality and showcased her ability to draw without a specific reference. Flowers and leaves in the book are intertwined with colorful birds: rectangular strips, organic vignettes, baskets, flower arrangements in baskets, or floating stems with leaves and large colorful flowers next to a standing bird. The use of color and the emphasis on the bird and the surrounding leaves and flowers illustrate the visual awareness within the convent. Some of these ornamental figures recall older mural paintings at the convent's entrance, such as the green and orange bird with scalloped strokes that form its feathers like the bird with flowers of the manuscript (Figure 2.58). These ornaments are located at the beginning and the end of the chapters, a blank space not utilized on the printed ceremonial. The use of the blank space can be compared to the garments of the murals, where the negative space of the garments worn by the angels, God, and young St. Teresa was given movement with the inclusion of a flower in mid-movement, a departure from the use of shadowed folds that insinuate a covered body. (Appendix 5)

The floral ornaments also provide a clue about the circumstances of the creation of this manuscript. The book has six floral vignettes with an inscription that is not part of the original text (Appendix 6.5.7.9.11, 7.2). The first inscription is found on page ten and says: “El Sacerdote que hizo escribir este Ceremonial ruega a las Madres lo encomienden a Dios nuestro Señor (The Priest who had this Ceremonial written asks the Mothers to entrust him to God our Lord)” (Figure 2.59).³⁷⁸ This inscription reveals that a priest commissioned the copy of this book “El Sacerdote que hizo escribir este Ceremonial,” and “ruega a las Madres lo encomienden a Dios nuestro Señor,” the use of the making of this book as a means of contemplation where he -the priest- indicates his desire to be included in these women's prayers. The following notations contradict the first notation with an implication of -Él-Him- as the maker of the book, maintaining the petition for prayers in his name:

Rueguen a Dios por la salvacion de él alma dequien há copiado este Ceremonial
Pray to God for the soul's salvation who has copied this Ceremonial (Intro).

³⁷⁶ Unknown, “Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalsas,” 12, 110.

³⁷⁷ Bernardo de Villadiego, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalsas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen: Conforme al Missal y Breviario Reformados y Segun Las Ceremonias y Costumbres Antiguas de Su Religion* (Oficina de Bernardo de Villa-Diego, 1692), 109.

³⁷⁸ Unknown, “Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalsas,” License.

Rueguen a Dios por quien hizo este ceremonial.
Pray God for the one who made this ceremonial (Page 99).

Rueguen a Dios por quien escribio este ceremonial.
Pray God for the one who wrote this ceremonial (Page 115).

Rueguen a Dios por quien les ha escrito este Ceremonial y asi lo espera de su Piedad.
Pray to God for the One who has written this Ceremonial as expected for his
Mercifulness (Page 168).

Por la Pasion de Jesucristo les pide el que ha escrito este ceremonial lo encomienden a
Dios.

Through the Passion of Jesus Christ, the person who wrote this ceremonial asks you to
entrust him to God (Page 210).

Without the first inscription, it can be assumed that a man, possibly a priest, made this text. However, the request to have this book made in combination with the request for prayers implies that the priest, through this commission, wanted to imbed himself in the mental exercises during the elaboration of this book. The continuous attributions to -Him- fulfill the priest's petition by textually including him in the third person, a reminder to the nuns on how to direct their thoughts and prayers. The priest, with his request, is positioned as the creator-maker of this project; it is possible that the nuns who worked on this project did not see themselves as authors, as is the case in most of their manual work; these women imbedded their presence through their work and meditations. It is also possible that this book became a collaborative work where different people did the writing and the drawing. Nevertheless, the commission and the similarities with visual elements from the convent imply a nun's participation.

Two drawings differ from the others in that they nod to the printed version by creating the illusion of a printed illustration. One is found right after the table of contents before chapter one, and the other is on page 189 above the heading for chapter ten (Figure 2.60, 2.61). The drawing inside the text above the beginning of chapter ten is a rectangular panel with a large flower flanked to the sides by an animal with large ears, elongated claws, and a long snout. There are two small birds like the larger multicolor birds found on the other pages; this scene is bordered by stems with elongated leaves and flowers. The color highlights and the overlapped trace lines give dimension to the larger flower and the animals. At the same time, it retains pictorial elements such as the floral composition and undulating lines interacting with the birds (Figure 2.61). The drawing located after the introduction diverts away from the type of composition and size of the rest of the drawings in this book. It occupies the entire page, surrounded by leaves and red flowers that crisscross to the lower side, providing the vignette for the second inscription, " Rueguen a Dios por la salvacion de él alma dequien há copiado este

Ceremonial (Pray to God for the salvation of his soul, he who has copied this Ceremonial).”³⁷⁹ It is a monochromatic image of the Virgin with her hands clasped for prayer, framed by a waxing crescent moon with a well-delineated face (Figure 2.60). This depiction is a copy of the print *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary* made by Johann Klauber in Augsburg, Germany in the 1750s (Figure 2.62).³⁸⁰ A Litany is an old type of prayer based on constant repetition. It is part of a volume of devotional engravings, where each drawing invokes a Litany of Loreto.³⁸¹ Like Collaert's prints of St. Teresa and their subsequent mural copies, these prints were made to invoke specific prayers.

This image closely repeats the lines from the engraving, except for the parallel lines that made the print's background. Mary's face mimics the stipple of the engraving with dots that in print create a light gradation, giving dimension to the face, which in the manuscript are uneven formations. On the other hand, her hair closely follows the intaglio lines of the print. At the edge of her cover, a carefully made cross-hatching gives it dimension (Figure 2.60). In Todd Olson's *Clouds and Rain*, he explores the attempts to mimic the use of “systematic hatching as a notation for differential illumination.” The circulation of prints in the New World created a familiarity, “as a result, cross-hatching largely became the presumed notation for tonal variation. This had consequences for the development of visual epistemologies in the process of colonization.”³⁸² The making of the mural paintings and the ceremonial book is a record of this circulation and appropriation.

The creation of this manuscript illustrates the appropriation of printed images and text as a way of contemplation, where the ornamental captions and the depiction of Mary are part of the realization of the promise made to the priest, repetition as a form of prayer, which was complemented with the transcription of the text. The *Ceremonial* showcases a visual awareness of the use of images to create a narrative, like the sun vignettes depicting attributes of the Passion of Christ. At the same time, ornamentation took a space of reflection and remembrance. The existence of this ceremonial manuscript emphasizes the convent's use of the copy as a spiritual tool, where the act of creation and contemplation activates the image as a private prayer. The floral ornaments in both spaces open an opportunity for inclusion, where the nuns' presence is achieved through reading, prayer, and the imprint of their manual traces. The conventual setting and the eagerness to perform devotional acts instilled in these women by the religious order and colonial society drove them to find contemplation, practice, and intervention in art and as an instrument to display their faith.

Close Look of the Mural Palimpsest as a Place for Sacred Immersion

The mural paintings at the convent of San José illustrate the nuns' awareness of the potential embedded in the dynamism of mural painting that offered them the opportunity to transform an image over time. Usually, mural paintings in convents and churches during the

³⁷⁹ Unknown, Intro.

³⁸⁰ “Print; Book-Illustration | The British Museum,” The British Museum, accessed October 31, 2023, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1878-0810-557-601.

³⁸¹ Johann S. Klauber, *Volume of devotional engravings with extensive commentary in French* (France, 1775), <https://jstor.org/stable/community.34136503>.

³⁸² Todd Olson, “Clouds and Rain,” *Representations* 104, no. 1 (2008): 111, <https://doi.org/10.1525/rep.2008.104.1.102>.

colonial period were subjected to modifications where images were covered by white plaster and then painted with a different program, as was the case of the murals at the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja in chapter 1, *Mural Encounters and Transformations*. Even though some murals included elements from the past layer, the new mural depended on the destruction of the previous one.

The serial quality of the Convent of San José mural program offers a unique mural example usually reserved for paintings of the passion of Christ, like the one found at the Recoleta of San Diego in Quito (Figure 2.63). The mural painting series in the Recoleta of San Diego was located around a patio in an area accessed by the Franciscan monks who lived there in the early stages of the convent, which was founded in 1597.³⁸³ Most of these murals are irretrievable; nevertheless, there are enough recognizable figures to assess that there was a pattern that adheres to engravings and paintings that circulated in the New World. The mural program at the Recoleta also had a second painting layer with a few surviving fragments such as the scene of the *Agony of Christ on the Calvary* (Figure 2.63). Alexandra Kennedy and Alfonso Ortiz Crespo identify these fragments as part of the first stage of the mural program, which possibly depicted scenes of “the life of San Diego de Alcalá, the patron saint of the Recoleta.”³⁸⁴ San Diego de Alcalá was a Spanish Franciscan friar who was sent to the Canary Islands as part of his missionary work “For the good of that land, and to make war against the devil, he was sent to Canaria [the Canary Islands], its people is barbaric, and do not know of God.”³⁸⁵

In the case of the Convent of San José, the order of the mural programs shifted; the narrative of St. Teresa was the most recent mural layer, and the scenes of the Passion of Christ were painted first. Regardless of the painting order, all of the scenes at the convent of San José and the Recoleta of San Diego in Quito intended to create a spiritual relationship with the religious viewer through visual narratives of paradigms to follow. The figure of Christ was a reminder of his suffering. The mural paintings of St. Teresa and St. Diego de Alcalá adapted to the missionary purpose of the convent and the Recoleta, overlapping St. Teresa’s biography as a standard of female virtue and St. Diego’s work as a missionary in the Canary Islands and his martyrdom (Figure 2.64).³⁸⁶ The state of the mural paintings of the Recoleta does not allow for an in-depth exploration of the overlap of the mural program. Still, the remnants recovered indicate the complete concealing of a painted layer by the following mural paintings. This was not the case with the Convent of San José mural program.

After a careful visual analysis, I noticed that the mural at the Convent of San José did not adhere to the usual layered approach; instead, it has an uncharacteristic layering where the overall visual theme of the mural is kept, but single elements like a cherub, a flower, or a figure were painted over while other elements were maintained. The changes made to the murals can

³⁸³ Alexandra Kennedy Troya and Alfonso Ortiz Crespo, *Recoleta de San Diego de Quito: historia y renovación*, ed. revisada y corregida, con nuevo prefacio, introd. e il, Biblioteca básica de Quito 36 (Quito: FONSAL, 2010), 35.

³⁸⁴ Kennedy Troya and Ortiz Crespo, 292.

³⁸⁵ Lope de Vega, *Comedia Famosa, San Diego de Alcalá* (Valladolid: Imprenta de Alonso del Riego, impresor de la Real Universidad, 1700), 15.

³⁸⁶ Carmen Fernández-Salvador, *Encuentros y Desencuentros Con La Frontera Imperial: La Iglesia de La Compañía de Jesús de Quito y La Misión En El Amazonas (Siglo XVII)*, Biblioteca Indiana 46 (Madrid : Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana ; Vervuert, 2018), 152. In this study Fernández-Salvador explores the use of images in the training of missionary friars to the Amazon.

be compared to a collage, where elements are cut and pasted rearranging the scene. These changes are revealed in uncanny figures with limbs that protrude from unexpected places, colors that do not quite follow the tone of the adjacent figures, and the removal of an area or figure found in the adjacent section of the Illustrated Transcription of the Discalced Carmelites' Ceremonial Book. Here I propose an exploration of the visual discrepancies as evidence of the constant intervention by the nuns in the mural paintings.

There is an unrecognized artistic awareness of the women who inhabited the convent. They were well-versed in literature, manual arts, and curatorship. They interacted with these murals daily and witnessed the paintings' deterioration due to exposure to natural elements, earthquakes, and architectural changes. It is likely even that these women in the cloistered spaces took upon themselves the task of restoration, conservation, and renovation. Kennedy, in *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito*, provides a survey of Quiteño art during the colonial period, including nun portraits and anonymous handicraft works such as *pesebres* (nativity scenes) found at convents.³⁸⁷ These works pose the possibility of women as an active part of the artistic process:

This direct manipulation seems to grant them certain rights over the religious works, which they transform, repaint, add a jewel, cut to fit in a smaller space or readapt into sets they make themselves. Thus, beyond the usual, many colonial works have always been transformed and re-symbolized, giving the image a permanent 'activating' character and why not repeat it, a seemingly exclusively feminine constant.³⁸⁸

Here, Kennedy suggests that through manipulation and repetition, women embedded themselves in the image with a process similar to Spiritual Exercises, prayers, and manual work. This understanding of conventual art also applies to the study of the making of the Ceremonial book and the mural paintings in this research, where the nuns directed their devotion through repetition and mimicry. The changes of color and details throughout the paintings of St. Teresa placed them as part of the re-worked religious scene.

There are at least two direct approaches to identifying changes made over time in mural painting: visual and scientific. The visual requires carefully observing the painting fragments, which reveal incongruous elements in the scene. The painting of the Holy Trinity (Mural 22) is comprised of various examples of the mural interventions made throughout time, with outstanding painting overlaps and erasures (Figure 2.50). The most relevant interventions are highlighted by a numbered rectangular white box over the image (Figure 2.65). On the lower-middle part of the mural, feet clad with brown leather sandals peek awkwardly over St. Teresa's robe, implying that there was another figure between Christ and St. Teresa, or the figure of St. Teresa was initially depicted in a different position (Figure 2.65.1). Over the sandal painting fragment and Christ's left foot, an almost transparent cherub peeks through the image, emphasizing disjointed elements. Like the sandals, the cherub appears out of place. However, it indicates the edge of the cloud where Christ sits, showing the painting's division between the sacred upper section and the temporal lower section where St. Teresa is positioned. Moreover,

³⁸⁷ Kennedy Troya, *Arte de La Real Audiencia de Quito, Siglos XVII-XIX*, 126–27.

³⁸⁸ Kennedy Troya, 127.

the cherub also indicates the repainting of the lower part of Christ. The juxtaposition of the cherub's delicate face with the foot and the brushstrokes that form the red robe, paired with the cherub's odd placement, implies that despite a change, the cherub was kept since it still fits the narrative. I selected this area because it illustrates a covered and repainted part (the feet with sandals) and the reuse of a figure (cherub). Two different approaches to pictorial modification imply the intervention of different persons.

These changes are emphasized at the midriff of Christ, where St. Teresa reaches to touch his wound. In this area, the transition between the red robe and the hint of a white undergarment muddled with his right hand disappears in the confusion between the repainting and the damaged part of the painting. Again, the red robe appears out of place in contrast to the white fabric with delicate folds and St. Teresa's hand (Figure 2.65.2). This area shows how multiple modifications can create visual confusion that refuses a successful restoration. An area that contrasts with the cherub holding a lily flower to the lower right (Figure 2.65.4), where the right hand of the cherub was successfully recovered through the process of *regatino*, which consists of a technique that uses lines with similar color painting to cover the missing area, creating the illusion of line continuation to refashion the figure.³⁸⁹ This attempts to recreate missing parts of the painting using legible surviving painting fragments as a guide.

The angel at the top left fits the theme of the painting and the adjacent figures. However, his upper body is distorted (Figure 2.65.5). His neck has no definition, merging the head with the body, and from his right shoulder, a short arm appears to extend, appearing like he has three arms. The gray wrap he holds rigidly extends, underlining what looks like an extra arm, which, when seen up close, has the same color and delineation as his wing. The angel's distortion demonstrates an attempt at restoration by an inexperienced person. A similar arm is found at the lower side of the Father figure (Figure 2.65.6). The body and surrounding area suffered significant damage, but the size of the limb suggests that it was one of the cherubim that filled the scene. This arm indicates a previous mural layer that follows a similar narrative where angels and cherubim surround the leading figures. Then, in the middle of the painting, at the left side of the Father, a ghostly figure of a small child can be identified by the outline of a white painting void (Figure 2.65.3). From a fold of the Father's vestment, a body with an extended arm launches upward. This figure was not covered with paint; instead, it was formed by the removal of paint. This is a unique example of the alterations made to the mural paintings because usually there is a uniform coverage of a section, and mural damage does not produce such specific outlines (Figure 2.65.3.6). The removal of this cherub was a choice that simultaneously erases and highlights the figure, ascertaining a conscious act of intervention.

Disjointed elements like feet, hands, and selective erasures do not take away from the central message of the mural painting; the awkward angels and cherubim point to a previous visual arrangement. Instead of erasing them, these innocuous figures were repurposed in the following scene. There was no uniform approach to the changes, indicating the possibility of multiple interventions done by different nuns. As demonstrated in the mural of the Holy Trinity, the painterly intrusions had different approaches and outcomes, such as the covering, repurposing, muddling, reconstructing, and erasure of the mural figures while retaining the

³⁸⁹ Carlos Vásquez, Johanna Ramírez, and Fernando Espinoza, "INPC Reporte de Resultados Mural: Visión de La Trinidad," *Analysis Mural Painting* (Quito, Ecuador: Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural, 2023), 6.

main visual program. The mural program incorporates the nuns into sacred scenes by allowing them to leave anonymous physical marks as inscriptions of virtue.

The anonymous quality of conventual artistic interventions, where no names or a single figure can be upheld, obfuscates art historical efforts centered on the monograph. Barbara Mundy and Aaron Hyman in “Out of The Shadow of Vasari” explore the focus on the monograph in Colonial Latin American scholarship and its pitfalls: “Absences leave art historians without an adequate paper trail on which the monograph, as a genre, necessarily depends,” these absences include Indigenous artists who are missing from the archives where “European names are the ones that are inscribed and that survive for us in the present.”³⁹⁰ There has been efforts by art historians such as Susan Webster in *Quito, Ciudad de Maestros*, to overcome archival challenges to bring to light Indigenous artists.³⁹¹ Although these efforts to search for individual artists help to increase awareness of the diversity of people who participated in the construction of the Latin American colonial society, this approach undervalues anonymity as an artistic value, which indicates community artistic interventions. The nuns at the Convent of San José provide an example of how communal artistic practices deserve art historians' attention. Devotional art required a selfless effort where the nuns subsumed their egos for an amalgamation of artistic interventions. Therefore, there was no interest in making these changes evident. Instead, a restraint makes their mark indistinct from each other. The use of painting as an intermediating space between the nuns and the sacred narratives is constantly reinforced in the convent, encouraging individual insertions that, over time, stand as a community practice.

This is not a unique practice of this convent, but it is unusual at this scale. Throughout the centuries, wall paintings have incited physical participation beyond the original artist's depiction. Pre-Hispanic cultures, such as the Moche in Northern Peru, had a close relationship with mural paintings, including the use of *sgraffito* over mural paintings located in sacred spaces known as *huacas*, described by Lisa Trever as a “widespread practice of visual response to the iconographic content painted in the walls” (Figure 2.66)³⁹² The murals of Huaca de la Luna have various *sgraffito* marks that include the replication of the painted shapes and the inclusion of figures that interact with the paint, like the profile of an animal figure, possibly a reptile, with a longitudinal mark as a pupil, and an elongated mouth, and the rhombus at the left possibly a fish or a shell. Interactions with wall paintings are also found in the colonial period, highlighting people's eagerness to imitate themselves in paintings related to sacred figures and sites. This continuation is found in Cusco, in a group of paintings on wood from the seventeenth century that cover the walls of the chapter house of the Convent of La Merced.

³⁹⁰ Barbara E. Mundy and Aaron M. Hyman, “Out of The Shadow of Vasari: Towards A New Model of The ‘Artist’ in Colonial Latin America,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 24, no. 3 (2015): 296–97, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10609164.2015.1086594>.

³⁹¹ Susan Verdi Webster, *Quito, Ciudad de Maestros: Arquitectos, Edificios y Urbanismo En El Largo Siglo XVII*, 1ra edición (Quito, Ecuador: Abya Yala : Universidad Central del Ecuador, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Instituto de Investigación y Posgrado, Centro de Estudios Patrimoniales : Comisión Fulbright, Ecuador, 2012).

³⁹² Lisa Trever, “The Artistry of Moche Mural Painting and the Ephemerality of Monuments,” in *Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World*, ed. Cathy Lynne Costin, Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Symposia and Colloquia (Pre-Columbian Studies Symposium “Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World,” Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2016), 270.

These paintings depicted moments in monks' lives and martyrdom from the Mercedarian order, including its founder Pedro Nolasco (Figure 2.68).

The images are covered with text that includes the career, academic, and current year, and the signature of the theology students who belonged to the Mercedarian order (Figure 2.68.3.4). In this case, theology students intervened in areas such as garments, landscapes, furniture, and the cherubim. In the scene of Pedro Nolasco held by two angels, his white robe is covered with small text; in the close-up of the figure, the text says: "F. Marcelino Florido teologo del primer año. F. Marcelino Florido teologo del segundo año. F. Marcelino Florido teologo del segundo año. F. Marcelino Florido teologo del tercer año. F. Marcelino Florido teologo pasando del año 1835 [signature]." ³⁹³ These commemorate the end of each academic year and the completion of the degree (Figure 2.68.3). These inscriptions allow the students to embed themselves by name, into the history of the convent with their name and to celebrate their academic accomplishments. Like the murals in the Convent of San José and the Huaca de la Luna, the impulse to intervene over painted walls lasted over time, reinforcing the potential intervention of the nuns of the paintings. They chose to use secondary details like flowers, cherubim, and textiles to introduce small changes and, in this way, imbed themselves into these paintings through physical marks that stand as a personal mediation between the nuns and the painting.

The drive to be part of the mural paintings at the Convent of San José was thoughtful and methodical and went beyond distinguishable marks. There was apparently a consensus about which figures or elements were acceptable to intervene and which provided better proximity to the saintly figures. Due to this unspoken compromise, this mural program maintained the artist's original narrative storyline. At the same time, many details morphed into disjointed figures, colors, and textures that rearranged the scene. The fragmented state of the mural program and the confusion between targeted intervention and lack of painting training can blur the understanding of the proposed involvement of the nuns in the mural painting.

Layers of Devotion

I was fortunate, however, to have the support of the National Institute of Heritage and Culture (INPC) of Ecuador to complete a multispectral and microchemical analysis that included a Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) to identify the compounds of the paintings. ³⁹⁴ The chemical analysis of the murals *Holy Trinity* and *The Investiture of St. Teresa* provides a close look into the paint palimpsests, validating the possible interventions done by the nuns. I have simplified the reports provided by the INPC in the appendix to provide an overview of the studies with a list of the pigments used and longitudinal images of each layer to analyze further changes done to these paintings (Appendix 8-9).

The microchemical analysis of the mural of the Holy Trinity was done at seven points. *The Investiture of St. Teresa* in ten points of the scene provides a comprehensive overview of

³⁹³ Unknown, *Pedro Nolasco*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Oil on Wood, ca. 17th-18th Century, Cusco, Convent of la Merced.

³⁹⁴ The analysis was performed in 2023 by the Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural of Ecuador (National Institute of Heritage and Culture) under the supervision of their lab director, Dr. Martha Romero, who, with her team, made this partnership possible.

this mural's different types of layers (Appendix 8). The overall mural has a pictorial calcium carbonate (lime) preparation to cover the porous wall. Most of the paintings are oil-based, with the sporadic use of a protein binder. From the seven samples taken from the mural painting, four have a consistent number of layers -between one and two- suggesting that there are no paintings underneath or an over-painted later in these areas. These four samples were taken from the figure of The Father: Red Mantle (Sample 2), Mantle fold (Sample 4), and Earth Globe (Sample 6). The importance of the figure of The Father is emphasized by its preeminent position, larger size, and higher placement over the other figures. Not all the elements of the figure of the Father are constant; the sample of one of the flowers of his robe uncovers eight pictorial layers with two salient color divisions: the first closest to the wall base is composed of brown-red-cream lead painting and followed by azurite-sienna and white-Prussian blue (Sample 3). These layers reveal a color change from cream-colored to blue. Gabriela Siracusano, in *Pigments and Power in the Andes*, mentions the early use of azurite in the Andes and the circulation in America “due to the number of copper mines,” which include mines in the province of Azuay in Ecuador, and Huamanga, Peru.³⁹⁵ In contrast, the Prussian blue was one of the first synthesized in Germany in the eighteenth century.³⁹⁶ The blue flower has a tonal variation produced by the later applied Prussian blue, adding dimensionality to the painting.

The other two samples from the green and pink angels' tunics (Samples 1-5) deviate from the other layers, showing a later intervention. The light green tunic from the angel at the upper left side shows five pictorial layers with a preeminent division between the layers. At the middle layer of the tree, there is a layer of translucent brown that later is covered with white and a green copper resin (Appendix 8-Sample 1). In the case of the pink cloth that covers the angel, the first pictorial layers that were applied were white-gray-brown, which matches with the color revealed in the lower painting cracks, like the color of St. Teresa's robe. A thick layer of lime covers the brown color to take the cream and red that compose the pink robe.

The Investiture of St. Teresa mural scene has the same painterly approach, where most of the scene has about the same number of painting layers from three to six. However, two samples show later interventions (Mural 14-Appendix 9). There are no preeminent color divisions throughout the painting. However, the larger number of layers showcases more attention to detail and possible retouch of color. The background area to the right showcases that the outside has a stable number of layers and pigment colors. The blue sky from sample five is made of two layers of azurite-lead blue and two of white calcium sulfate; the black railing is composed of iron oxide, and the forest is made of gray-green and yellow ocher. These areas use tonal changes to give dimension to the area, but there is no intent to transform or change the painting with the overlap of colors (Sample 4,5,9).

Contrary to the details of the Virgin and St. Joseph's garments, which are composed of multiple colors, including cinnabar for the reds and gold foil for the pattern details (Sample 2,3,6,8,10). One of the samples reveals the existence of a different figure on top of the head of St. Joseph; the colors of the six-layer sample are bright and solid, like brown, pink, red, and

³⁹⁵ Gabriela Siracusano and Ian Barnett, *Pigments and Power in the Andes: From the Material to the Symbolic in Andean Cultural Practices, 1500-1800* (London: Archetype Publications Ltd, 2011), 25.

³⁹⁶ Paolo Mora, Laura Mora, and Paul Philippot, *La Conservación de las Pinturas Murales* (Bogotá: Universidad Externado de Colombia: ICCROM, 2003), 114–15.

green (Sample 7). A crack in the paint reveals an amorphous shape that does not fit with the surviving figure. The incongruencies of this painting sample are increased by subtle vestiges from previous figures that lurk in the painting, like the eye of a cherub located at the lower left of the Virgin Mary (Figure 2.20-2.67). This figure fits the scene's theme and composition, located by the cloud holding Mary. In the top part of the painting is a glimpse of the previous border, like the one in the scene at the stair landing. *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest* (Mural 29), implying that this was the original border of the paintings and later changed into the green leaves pattern (Figure 2.16, 2.20).

The close study of the scenes of the *Holy Trinity* and *The Investiture of St. Teresa* demonstrates irregular changes to the paintings over time, which target specific figures or elements. The disparate number of layers throughout the mural and uneven overlaps and transformations reveal an incomplete replacement for the mural scene. Secondary figures like the cherubim were repurposed and erased in subsequent iterations of the scene, while some elements, like the landscape in the background from *The Investiture of St. Teresa* and the figure of the Father, did not change. The microchemical analysis conducted by the National Institute of Heritage and Culture (INPC) of Ecuador exposed the targeted use of color and the irregular covering and reveal of figures and ornamentation throughout St. Teresa's mural program. These changes demonstrate the active involvement of the nuns in the protection and alteration of the mural paintings, as well as their efforts to maintain the narrative of each scene. This study illustrates the intricate historical and artistic complexities involved in the creation and conservation of these mural paintings. Additionally, it emphasizes how elements such as the copy and narrative content alone do not provide a complete understanding of the site and the nuns' relationship with the mural paintings.

The Choir of San José of Quito: Beyond the Narrative and the Copy

The mural program of the Life of St. Teresa at the Convent of San José in Quito can be deceiving due to the prominence of its narrative context that prioritizes the mural paintings' original narrative intention, disregarding the multiple layers of interactions and transformations. My first instinct was to focus on the iconographical charge of the murals with the printed template from the *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, engraved by Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle (1613). This intention soon took a secondary role throughout my study. The theme of repetition and mimicry kept resurfacing throughout my research beyond the straightforward copy of a prescribed European religious image by local artists from the New World. The length and scope of the murals did not relate to the homogeneity and monotony of the fine black lines of the printed template. The large and different dimensions of each mural scene adapted to the architectural space of the living quarters, accompanying the viewer throughout the convent's long hallways with scenes full of color, patterns, and paint layers. The murals took a life of their own, where the visual deviations, inconspicuous contributions, alternative stories, and the viewer's relationship with the paintings acquired different meanings while sustaining a link to Collaert and Galle's prints.

The pages of the engraved book provided a self-contained narrative reinforced by the numbering of each image that allowed an easy following of the narrative in one sitting without the need for previous knowledge. This is contrary to the experience provided by the murals at the convent, where the order is dictated first by the direction the spectator takes (allowing for

a non-chronological order) and later by the viewer's capacity to absorb the details of each scene and their familiarity with the story. This became evident on my first visit to the convent, where I was overwhelmed by the mural program's complexity. This experience was reinforced by multiple visits and materialized during intense photographic sessions that forced me to embark on long journeys, capturing each detail and confronting the change of organizing the hundreds of photographs that soon accumulated, forming an overwhelming visual archive. I soon realized that the study of this mural program required an approach different from the one used in examining the choir of the convents of Santa Clara in Tunja and Santafé, Colombia.

The mural program at the Convent of San José is an example of various instances of repetition and imitation, which was the driving force of the painting-making, transformation, erasure, and replacement. As a researcher, I found that my work was part of this mural cycle of constant repetition, which incited a meditative state that replaced religious memories and prayers into art historical observations. Like a living organism, the complexity of the images draws the viewer while creating an ecosystem where the mural adapted to the needs and desires of the nuns who interacted with the paintings daily with a casual glance or with their own hands. This is why the first part of the study of the mural program of the life of St. Teresa begins with a deep analysis of the Repetition, Performance, and Imitation intertwined with the historical context of the images of St. Teresa and the link to the first Saint of Ecuador, Mariana de Jesús.

The copy in the study of colonial art is purported as proof of the European pressure on the local population of the New World to adapt to their visual epistemology, creating an unidirectional influence that leaves no room for “invention,” as noted by Aaron Hayman in *Rubens in Repeat*: “New Spanish artists were in the routine practice of creating conforming copies, which would seem to complicate claims to invention.”³⁹⁷ However, using visual templates from prints and other works of art was also widely done by European artists, and it was part of their training. Writer and painter Cennino Cennini recommended in his 1390 *Il libro dell'arte* to “always study and delight in drawing the best subjects which offer from the works of the great masters.”³⁹⁸ Like in the New World, the copy allowed European artists to have a model to practice from and eventually develop their own style. It was also common for patrons to request that artists include elements from other paintings or engravings in their commissions, especially for religious paintings, which typically followed predeterminate visual conventions. The deep-rooted practice of repetition and mimicry included Indigenous elements from their pre-Hispanic past, as noted by the mural studies pioneer Teresa Gisbert: “Pictorial mural decoration was a language used by Andean society since pre-conquest times that was not lost but was reinforced by the humanism that imposed the taste for mural painting.”³⁹⁹

The mural paintings at the Convent of San José are an example of the continuation of the use of image reproduction; however, as noted in the historical study of the convent's site, this place differed from other convents in the New World due to its association with Mariana

³⁹⁷ Aaron Hyman, *Rubens in Repeat: The Logic of the Copy in Colonial Latin America* (Los Angeles, California: Getty Research Institute, 2021), 126.

³⁹⁸ Cennino Cennini, *A Treatise on Painting*, trans. Mary P. (Mary Philadelphia) Merrifield (London: Lumley, 1844), 14.

³⁹⁹ Teresa Gisbert, “La Pintura Mural Andina,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 1, no. 1–2 (January 1992): 113, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10609169208569791>.

de Jesús. The nuns of the convent and local ecclesiastical authorities used the narrative of Mariana de Jesús' sanctity to push forward the effort of her canonization. Therefore, since its foundation, the convent counted on the holy quality other places sought. The images of the mural paintings at the Convent of San José were a place of memory where the story of both women -St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús- became intertwined with the use of the space as a performance site (Mariana de Jesús) and a visual account of saintly behavior (St. Teresa). This link becomes evident in the mural of *Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa* (Mural 7), where elements like the representative vihuela used by Mariana de Jesús and an ají are present, making the figures of both women interchangeable.

I propose that like the images of St. Teresa and Mariana de Jesús, the nuns who inhabited the convent of San José could participate in the image exchange through their prayers and subtle interventions in the paintings. Compositional changes and adding and removing paint replaced the nuns' figural presence in the mural program. The nuns were aware of the power of repetition and mimicry through their religious education and the convent's daily contemplative activities. These activities probably included manual labor, such as embroidery, that allowed them to understand the relationship of composition and color through the repetition of movements that, like the rosary, created a meditative space. The nuns' devotional practices encouraged the use of their creativity through the search for physical expressions of their faith represented in their interventions in the mural painting. Personal devotional conventual ritual transforms into communal practices with few instances of artistic recognition. This anonymous quality promoted the idea that most women who inhabited the convents had no artistic sensibility, equating their ornamentation work with female vanity. The Convent of San José's mural program offers a multidimensional perspective of the nuns' lives, their artistic capacities, and the convent's history as a place of reflection and sanctity.

Conclusion: Painting Palimpsest as Conventual Memory

My research on mural paintings took me on an unexpected journey, during which I visited convents and churches in Perú, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia. As in a religious pilgrimage, the sanctity of the site could only be transmitted through direct contact. In my case, the beauty and complexity of mural paintings can only be grasped by dwelling in these spaces, which, little by little, through their fragments and history, revealed themselves. I chose these three convents as case studies because of their striking differences. However, they all represent the memory of the women who resided in these spaces and their historical context. For Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, “Looking at images heightens a form of memory that focuses the senses [...] a memory of doing,”⁴⁰⁰ In the case of the choirs in the first part of this research, music intertwined with mural images reverberated sound into a space beyond their enclosure, indicating the nuns’ presence.

As part of my research, I recreated fragments of the lives of the women who inhabited these spaces. The mural paintings at the Convents of Santa Clara in Nueva Granada and the Convent of San José in Quito are a lasting remembrance of the women who once lived there. Although most of these women were *criollas* (born in the colony to Spanish parents), which enabled them to enter convents, they were also part of the developing New World society. Many of these women were seen as a burden by their families, and the colonial government found in conventual spaces a way to deal with these women who, in return, became part of a community obtaining a “surrogate family and an alternative lifestyle.”⁴⁰¹

The mural paintings in Nueva Granada were explored through the experiences of women such as Mother Francisca Josefa del Castillo, who was an active member of the choir of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja. Her commitment to religious life included a continuous use of the screened choir space overlooking the church’s nave, to the extent that she inhabited an adjacent room, which was also covered by mural paintings.⁴⁰² Mariana de Jesús in Quito, whose home became the Carmelite Convent of San José,⁴⁰³ used to circumambulate the hallways of the future Carmelite convent, imbuing the space with her sanctity. This space was later defined by the mural program of the life of St. Teresa de Jesús.

This study acknowledges convents as colonial spaces and, as such, subjected to European control, but they were also entrenched in the local community. Although the nuns lived in seclusion, they had access to information and ideas through paintings, engravings, sculptures, books, and rumors that kept them up to date with the outside world. The mural paintings in these convents served as a bridge between their religious aspirations, the enclosed space, and the world outside. The inseparable link of the murals with the walls and the convent's architecture created a space of memory. Even though these murals have undeniable European sources, which is acknowledged in this research, the palimpsest became a starting

⁴⁰⁰ Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Sociología de La Imagen: Miradas Ch’ixi Desde La Historia Andina*, Colección Nociones Comunes (Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón Ediciones, 2015), 22–23.

⁴⁰¹ Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America*, 2. ed, New Approaches to the Americas (New York, NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2015), 98.

⁴⁰² Francisca Josefa del Castillo, *Mi Vida* (Ministerio de Cultura: Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, 2015), 81.

⁴⁰³ Morán de Butrón and Barrio, *La Azucena de Quito*, 128.

point of inquiry, allowing me to move away from solely binary comparisons between provincial and European art and concentrate on local histories, artistic creations, and interpretation. The mural paintings of the convents of Santa Clara in Santafé, Tunja, and San José in Quito are evidence of the “memory of experience.”⁴⁰⁴ The women's interactions in the convents were linked directly and indirectly to bodily interactions.

The mural paintings not only unveil elements of the lives of the nuns but also allude to the presence of Indigenous people, who inspired elements such as the inclusion of the sun and jaguar in Nueva Granada and the flowers floating on the garments of saintly figures in Quito. Indigenous elements are not self-evident or mentioned in archives or history books. Using the palimpsest in the study of mural paintings creates a space “to tell an impossible story and to amplify the impossibility of its telling.”⁴⁰⁵ This quote by Saidiya Hartman in “Venus in Two Acts” expresses the difficulty of studying historically underrepresented cultures and the inadequacy of the archive to “listening for the unsaid, translating misconstrued words, and refashioning disfigured lives.”⁴⁰⁶ Each mural layer in this study has imbedded the presence of voiceless communities during the colonial period, such as women, Black, and Indigenous people. This approach challenges early scholarly approaches such as George Kubler’s proposal of extinction of the pre-conquest past: “The end of American Indian civilization came by total replacement in symbolic matters with significant residues surviving only in economically useful products.”⁴⁰⁷ Kubler’s position implies that artistic expression, such as colonial mural paintings, does not have a true bond with the Indigenous past and that once the Spanish imposed their culture in the New World, Indigenous cultures and expression ceased to exist. It also implies a cultural passivity, where the Indigenous and local populations such as Mestizos and Black people were constrained to adopt European culture without having any influence in the colonial world.

Although murals were not made with the intention of including Indigenous elements in the paintings. However, this work proves how these elements manifested as part of local visual understanding. The women who inhabited the convents were also part of a larger colonial community that included Indigenous peoples who were incorporated as cultural recipients and contributors. This dichotomy is represented by the Cacica Doña Madalena in chapter two. This Indigenous woman participated in the financing of the convent of Santa Clara la Real in Tunja through her position as an intermediary between the Muisca and the Spanish. At the same time, she was an active participant in the conversion process, as reflected in her testament.⁴⁰⁸ This document also reflects an early understanding of the use of ornament as a visual manifestation of devotion, a practice shared between Indigenous women such as the Doña Madalena with her ornate testament and the nuns that inhabited the convents in their mural paintings.

When I began this project, I searched for mentions of the mural paintings in the archives. I wanted to know who painted the murals. What were the costs? What was the

⁴⁰⁴ Rivera Cusicanqui, *Sociología de La Imagen*, 23.

⁴⁰⁵ Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” *Small Axe* 12, no. 2 (2008): 11.

⁴⁰⁶ Hartman, 2–3.

⁴⁰⁷ George Kubler, “On the Colonial Extinction of the Motifs of Pre-Columbian Art,” in *Essays in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), 32.

⁴⁰⁸ Notaria 1, Leg 1, Fol. 83-86, “Testamento Doña Madalena Cacica de Mongua” (Tunja, 1540), Tunja, Boyacá, Archivo Histórico Regional de Boyacá.

intention? However, the omnipresence of these paintings contrasted with the absence of information about their creation. These murals refuse the possibility of exploring the evolution of a single artist or workshop; instead, they pushed me to find the value of anonymous artistic work that can be intervened by multiple people. The palimpsest formed by the layers of the painting stands as evidence of a community effort where there was no intent for recognition. Instead, these women wanted to embed themselves not as named individual but as devotees into the mural program of the *Life of St. Teresa* through small, imperceptible changes as explored in chapter four, *Layers of Inclusion and Memory: Nuns of the Carmelite Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) as Artists and Curators*. These community efforts are also represented in the music produced in the choir, where the voices of each of these women permeate the choir and the church in unison. The ornamental quality of this space was prevalent in the mural paintings of the Convent of Santa Clara in Tunja. The combination of sound and organic forms creates a visual meditation that enhances the spiritual significance of the choral space. The juxtaposition of painting and music is explored in Chapter 2: *Flourishing Heaven: Music, Flowers, and Sun as Metaphorical Force*.

The Santa Clara convents studied in the first part of this research were in a deep state of disrepair and fragmentation, composed of small remnants of painting that did not form a narrative. Instead, the ornament was the compositional center of these spaces. I made digital reconstructions where fragments were digitally stitched together, enhanced, and duplicated to create a more complete sense of the choir and its relationship with the use of the space. For the Convents of Santa Clara, I used small pieces to create a whole image, while in the mural program of the Convent of San José of Quito, I was confronted by full narrative scenes where the details blurred as part of the story explored in the second part of this work. This is why I shifted my approach in Part II, and instead of reconstructing missing parts of the whole scene, I singled out details such as flowers and visual incongruencies with close-up photographs and hand-painted illustrations that reveal alternate readings of the mural program, such as the inclusion of local visual understandings, and repetition as a visual guide.

The close study of the mural program of San José allowed me to become aware of other readings of the “copy” thanks to the mural paintings’ intricacy compared to the printed template. During the visual analysis and the historical research, I met with various forms of repetition that deviated from the straightforward copy and revealed a religious purpose for constantly reproducing images. This is why it was necessary to begin this case study by considering how repetition, performance, and imitation have been embedded in Catholic practices since its inception. Most religious paintings follow a compositional pattern, and it was common to receive requests for paintings that required the artist to follow a previously established template from a print or painting. This practice was helpful for the missionary work of conversion in the New World by providing standardized visual forms that allowed for the control of their message while at the same time allowing rapid dissemination. These images provided a vehicle to imbue sanctity into the new religious spaces far away from holy places, such as Jerusalem and Rome, which were inaccessible to the colonial nuns due to prohibitions.

The palimpsest is a conceptual place of research that “involves rupture, forgetting, and renewed interest.”⁴⁰⁹ Throughout this research, mural paintings acquire their former vitality, where the forgotten are brought to the forefront. The layers and interventions of the mural programs in this study include physical and spiritual inscriptions formed by overpainting and prayer. The physical marks became evident in the chemical study of this mural, facilitated by the National Institute of Heritage and Culture (INPC), and the close collaboration with the Museo of Carmen Alto (Convent of San José) in Quito. The museum allowed me to make a 3D model of the space to recreate the spatial configuration of each painting. This approach allowed me to find details such as the effects of “cutting and pasting” in the murals at the convent of San José. On the other hand, illustrations allowed me to move from the macro perspective provided by the 3D model to a close-up that gives prominence to details like the flowers, breakage, and textile details, finding meaningful details and repetitions. I also created an archive of photographs that detail the changes in the murals over time, which allowed me to create digital reconstructions of the more fragmented walls, such as the choir at the Convent of Santa Clara in Tunja.

The potential for multidisciplinary collaborations only enriches the understanding of mural painting. For instance, the chemical analysis from the (INPC) without my art historical intervention, lacks a visual and historical understanding, becoming data without meaning or context. During my collaboration with the Museum of Carmen Alto, the partnership with the museum registrar allowed me to have access to the handmade Ceremonial Book, which expanded my vision of the handiwork produced in the convent and the nun’s artistic potential. The Museum has also been granted access to my digital materials, which they have used for international grant applications to obtain funding for its conservation and support its cultural mission. My approach also creates valuable teaching tools that give students access to different angles and viewpoints to share and explore the relationship of the images with the architecture. These types of collaborations will greatly impact the expansion of mural painting studies in the Northern Andes. The process of making this dissertation required a collaborative approach, that, like the collective mural interventions of the nuns of the convents of Santa Clara in Nueva Granada and San José in Quito, constructed a dynamic “organism” that grew with each living experience and interaction, creating layers of memory and history in these cloistered spaces of the northern Andes.

⁴⁰⁹ Newman, Sarah, “The Limits of Palimpsest: Architectural Ruins, Reuse, and Remodeling Among the Ancient Maya,” in *Palimpsests: Buildings, Sites, Time, Architectural Crossroads*, Vol. 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 89.

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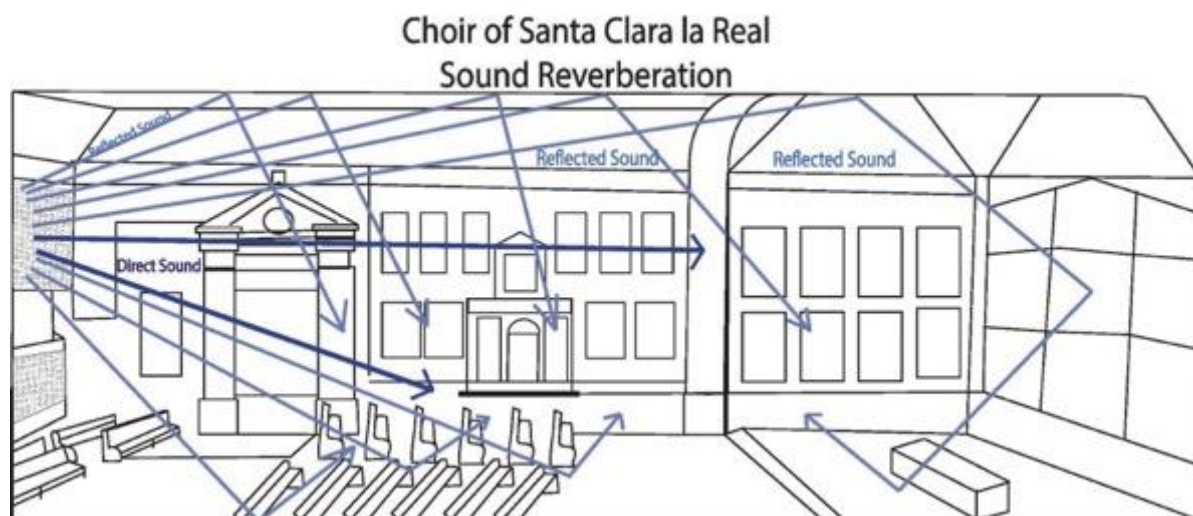
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Appendices



Appendix 1. BMR Williams, *Map Colombia and Ecuador*, 2022, Digital. Commissioned by Yessica Porras.



Appendix 2. *Reverberation Choir of Santa Clara la Real*, 2022, Digital Model Made by Yessica Porras.

Appendix 3. Mural Program of the Life of St. Teresa de Jesús, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto), ca. 18th-19th Century, Mural Painting. Quito, Museum of Carmen Alto. Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle, Vita B. Virginis Teresiae a Iesu, 1613, Print. Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.

Mural Program of the Life of St. Teresa de Jesús at the Convent of Carmen Alto	
Mural	Print
1. Monstrance Venerated by Angels	1. Vita B. Virginis Teresiae a Iesu Ordinis Carmelitarum Excalceatorum Piae Restauratricis
	
La Virgen concebida sin pecado original	Life of B. Virgin Teresa of Jesus of the Pious Restorative Order of the Discalced Carmelites
2. Portrait of Saint Teresa of Avila	2. Effigy of the B.V. Teresa.
	
Santa Teresa de Jesús, Virgen Reformadora de la Orden del Carmen, nació en Ávila año dieciséis, murió en Alba de Tormes año 1582 Fue beatificada en 1512 por Pablo V y canonizada en 1622 por Gregorio XV Este monasterio de sus hijas se fundó en 1653	Effigy of the B.V. Terese Spanish native of Avila, most illustrious of race, and gifts of celestial wisdom and truth, verifiable in the experience of divine affections on her writings of mystical Theology for the suffering of her several works of reformation of the Carmelite order, and several miracles.

3.Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo	3.Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo
	
Avno cumplidos los sete anos de su edad con el deseo ardentissim...padecer ma ...re los moros se partio con vn hermano syvo hallandolos su padre los bolvi a sv caza	She had not yet reached the age of seven, and [she] and her German brother secretly hastened to the Moors with a burning desire for martyrdom, when the mother [St. Teresa] returned with the uncle; finding him on the road, he brought them home.
4. Entry of Teresa Cepeda de Ahumada to the Convent of La Encarnación	4. Teresa Entering the Convent of the Mountain Carmel
	
...exmo las pati...riquezas contra los...de la carne...de santas religiosa	At the twenty-ninth year of age, in the company of her German brother -the count- she left her paternal house. Having bravely overcome a reluctant attack, she entered the convent of the[...] Virgin of Mount Carmel. Her father was unaware.
5.Teresa is Left for Dead	5.Teresa Imagined to be Dead
	
padeciendo...de todas...espíritu...todas las cosas...la santidad...asiande todas	Suffering from a severe illness for four days, she was believed to be dead; most of all, when she refers to her Order, She foretells in her mind the announcement of [her] sanctity and greet her parents.

Holy Spirit 	
6. Teresa Heard the Voice of Jesus	6. Teresa Hearing God's Voice and Talking with Angels while Praying
	
...te devnaimagen xpto lastimada...rogado por...gracia y de alli a pocas destas cosas comunicaras con los angel...	[St. Teresa] Before the image of Christ swollen with plagues, fervently praying for a change of life for the better, all the immediately unaltered grace gathered up after a few days, receiving God's voice. From now on, she will be in communion with the Angels.
7. Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa	7. Teresa Doing Penitence by Chastizing Herself
	
...penitencia....azotando...virgen su carne...aspereza...haziendo la sierba de su espiritu...	Touched by the desire of a violent penitence and excited to self-hatred, she began to regard the mortification of the body as a delicacy; hence, tearing the virgin flesh with nails, taming nettles, and the like with other roughness of that kind, she built her spirit.

8. Transverberation de Santa Teresa	8. Teresa's Heart Filled with the Love of God by the Arrow of a Seraphim
	
...hermoso trayendo un a...hdforolt atraveso el...r...abrazada en un amor...s...etodo el curso d...su esposo	With the beautiful faces of Seraphim, burning to the summit with a golden spike, drawing her heart and entrails to herself, and lighting the flames of the heavens, she experiences a wonderful experience; whence, with seraphic love, languishing throughout the whole subsequent course of her life, she yearns for her husband.
9. Apparition of Saint Peter and Saint Paul	9. Trust, Because You Will by No Means Be Deceived by the Devil
	
Los gloriosos padres de la Iglesia San Pedro y San Pablo de ordinario le asistían contra las visiones del demonio...con esta gracia para que en su mente benciera todas las asechadas del demonio	She often looked at the glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, standing by her, pledging against the devil's illusions, not an empty promise: she was divinely enlightened grace so that she could easily overcome all the devil's tricks.
10. Jesus Dying on the Cross	
	The following three mural paintings do not depict the life of St. Teresa and are not part of the prints. These murals also use framed scenes; however, they do not have any text.

11. Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



12. Jesus Bearing the Cross



13. Blank



10. Christ Declaring Himself to Teresa



For three years, almost continuously, she sees Christ the Lord at her right hand, [she is] outshined by his glory, and hears him uttering these sweet words, "You are now all mine, and I am all yours," she hears him uttering such things with great signs of love.

14. Investiture of St. Teresa	11. Teresa before the Holy Trinity
	
Establecida ya la antigua regla de las carmelitas estaban las religiosas mientras que Dios les inspirava el modo de vida pasandolo con grande est...has entonces se le aparecieron la siempre Virgen María y su esposo San... vistieron de una vestidura blanca y le adornaron ambos de una cadena preciosa	Among other excesses of the mind, which are the most profound mysteries of the mighty God, she scanned with the defiled mind's eye; on one occasion, she heard Jesus Christ say to her: Look, daughter, by which good faith sinners deprive.
15. Apparition of the Resurrected Christ	12. Teresa Triumphing over the Demons
	
Por tres años continuos anduvo Christo de ordinario a su diestra con resplandores de gloria diziendole a ella misma estas palabras suaves hija ya eres toda mia y io todo tyvo y otras semejantes pronunciaba co... amor.	Having experienced innumerable favors of God, and by the abundance of heavenly graces, she has overcome nature itself and won back various victories from the demons; scorning the same flies and seizing the flag of the cross, she summons them to the implacable battle.
16. Blank	13. Christ Showing a Nail from the Cross to Teresa as His True Bride
	
	Christ the Lord, having presented me with the ink of his passion, sealed the spiritual covenant of marriage with his wonderful way, and with the most tender signs of love, he addressed her with these words.

17. Mystical Betrothal with Christ	14. Teresa Given a Precious Necklace by the Virgin and St Joseph
	
sto sr nuestro sacandolos cavos d su...espiritualdposo...senal de amor teniendole a ds la dce...esposaelabas...ho	The ancient rule of the Carmelites had already wholly collapsed, while she, inspired by God, was trying to restore its former vigor among the nuns, the Virgin of God, his spouse, St. Joseph, appeared to her.
18. The Miraculous Healing of her Nephew	15. Teresa Holding the Suffocated Child
	
quando Dios la...la caida...na...earl...se lo encomendo a la...manos amenta as...	While she hastens to God as a guide to the construction of the first monastery, her infant cousin suffocated after the fall of a wall. The Virgin, exuberant with confidence, imploringly commends to God: She soon restores his life and comforts his grieving mother with a precious pledge.
19. Jesus Crowns Saint Teresa	16. The Coronation of Teresa
	
Instituido ya el primer monasterio de la nueva reformasion en la ciudad de avila se puso...vien...tal descansado con Jesucristo su esposo con varios obsequios de sus trabajos la presento...una lusidissima corona	Having built the first new monastery of the reformation in the city of Avila, in the same mental prayer, she was urgently freed by Jesus Christ, her Spouse, for the various labors suffered in his obedience. She was redeemed with the most brilliant crown.

20. Levitation of Saint Teresa During a Mass in the Convent of Santo Domingo in Ávila	17. Ignatius of Loyola in an Ecstasy Lasting for Seven Days
	
Abiendo resebido en el nuevo monasterio el santissimo sacramento de la eucaristia de las manos del o...i la presentes todas las monjas fu... arrebatada en el aire lo cual le era muy frecuente	The reception of the Augustinian Sacrament of the Eucharist from the hands of the Antistites of Abulenese to the present nuns in the new monastery, her body was taken up in the air, wonderfully lifted.
21. Saint Teresa Persuades Fray Antonio and Saint John of the Cross to Embrace the Reform	18. John of the Cross and Antony of Jesus at the Convent
	
Tambien moviendolo Dios sedemuele la... restaur... los religiosos carmelitas i por eso al venerable padre Joan de la Cruz y al venerable padre Antonio de Jesus los alento y instruyo al primer instituto del Carmelo en seño el modo de las reglas	In this way, the magnanimous Virgin moves God to restore the religious Carmelites, and at the end of this, B. P. John of the Cross and Venerable: P. Antonius, exhorted by Jesus to reform the institution of Carmel.
22. Apparition of the Holy Trinity	19. Teresa as Patron Saint
	
un dia despues de comulgar...	She planted the wildest vineyard and others from the fruit of her hands. The sex of the Carmelites, having produced a fruitful parentage, was not worshiped by great devout people of the world, and the reformation began by spreading day by day.

23. St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier-Sacred Heart	This scene is not part of the narrative of St. Teresa, and is not part of the printed narrative
	
24. Saint Teresa is Guided by Angels After Getting Lost on the Way to Salamanca	20. Angels sent by God Guide Her to the Road of Safety
	
Yendo a la ciudad de salamanca a fundar un convento en el camino de avila se le escurecio la noche y perdieron el camino y entonses los angeles administraron con luzes sus rostros y hallaron el camino	At Salamanca, to establish in that city the abbess of Avila, they [the nuns], falling in the darkness of the night, lost their way; however, the Angels of God sent in the service of men, brought forth bright torches, and took them to the road safely.
25. Appearance of a Saint of the Order	21. Teresa Praying for Divine Intervention
	
Un venerable santo de su orden se le aparecio... tenia en las manos un libro y en llegar hablo que decia en los tiempos venideros...esta religi3n aseran muchos los m...	She hears a certain priest, subject to a fatal injury, doing a sacred thing and sees horribly groaning demons in his mouth, but she immediately obtained warnings from the Lord to deliver him, which she requested.

26. Saint Teresa Writes Inspired by the Holy Spirit	22. The Future of her Order Shown to Teresa
	
Las luzes de divinos rayos ro...e...fvsá sinco libros e...los qvuales en varios idiomas español...se entendian	She beholds the venerable Saint of His Order, who, having written the following words in the book he held in his hands, gave it to her to read. In time to come, this religion will flourish, and there will be many martyrs.
27. Death of Saint Teresa	23. Teresa in Her Study Inspired by the Holy Spirit
	
Herida de un impetu ferbentissimo de amor murio el año de 1589 de edad de 68 y en su cama murio con una corona en compañía de muchos angeles y santos y abierto el cielo volando de la boca de la virgen una lindissima paloma	Suddenly overshadowed by the rays of divine light, infused by the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of the heavens imbues the mind with the knowledge of the five heavens, and she writes books fruitful in learning, which are carried around in various idioms, Spanish, French, Italian, Polish, and others.
28. Appearance of Saint Teresa to the Nuns of Her Order in Segovia after Her Death	24. The Death of Teresa
	
Después de su muerte mostrando su mucha gloria aparesio... monasterio de las descalsas de su orden en medio de tres... horo y les trato familiarmente	Wounded by the most fervent attack of love, she passed away alive in 1589, at 68 years old, and on her dying bed with the Angel: Christ is present with the crown of many saints, and in the expansive sky, a white dove is flying from the mouth of the Virgin.

29. Saint Teresa Intercedes so that the Devils are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest



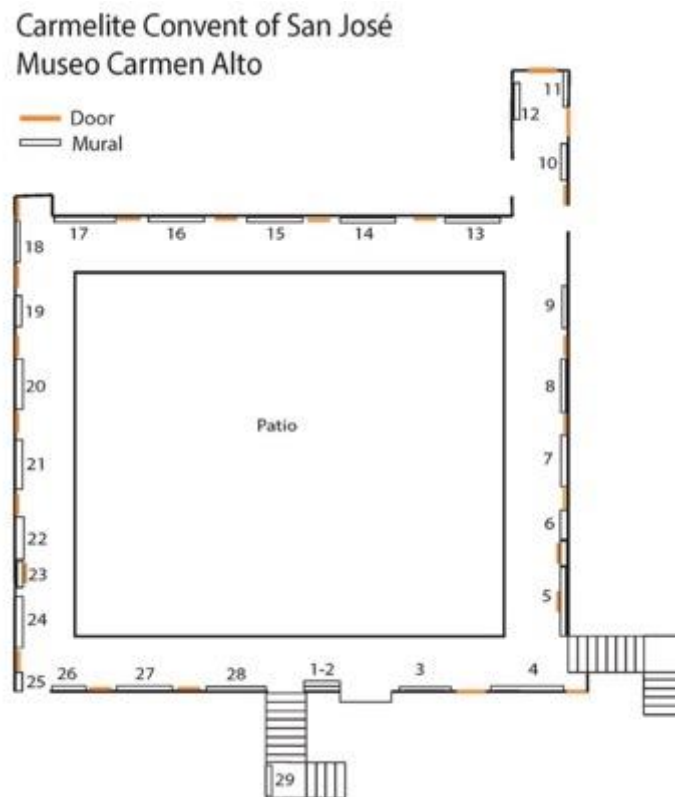
Acerto sacerdote que celebraba en pecado mortal le oyo su misa y miro que los demonios le apretaban atrozmente la garganta pero rogando a dios por el instante consiguio su conversion

25. Teresa Appearing After Death



From death, many illustrious people appear in shining glory, especially in her monastery of the Discalced Order of Segovia, with three nuns alike in the choir. She presents herself familiarly to be seen.

Appendix 4. Floorplan murals, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto), ca. 18th-19th Century, Mural Painting. Quito.



Mural Path Convent Carmen Alto	
1. Monstrance venerated by Angels 2. Portrait of St. Teresa of Ávila 3. Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo 4. Entry of Teresa Cepeda de Ahumada to the Convent of La Encarnación. 5. Teresa is Left for Dead 6. Teresa heard the voice of Jesus 7. Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa 8. Transverberation of Santa Teresa 9. Apparition of Saint Peter and Saint Paul 10. Jesus Dying on the Cross 11. Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross 12. Jesus Bearing the Cross 13. Blank 14. Investiture of St Teresa 15. Apparition of the Resurrected Christ 16. Blank 17. Mystical Betrothal with Christ	18. The Miraculous Healing of her Nephew 19. Jesus Crowns Saint Teresa 20. Levitation of Saint Teresa During a Mass in the Convent of Santo Domingo in Ávila 21. Saint Teresa Persuades Fray Antonio and Saint John of the Cross to Embrace the Reform 22. Apparition of the Holy Trinity 23. St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier-Sacred Heart 24. Saint Teresa is Guided by Angels After Getting Lost on the Way to Salamanca 25. Appearance of a Saint of the Order 26. Saint Teresa Writes Inspired by the Holy Spirit 27. Death of Saint Teresa 28. Appearance of Saint Teresa to the Nuns of Her Order in Segovia after Her Death 29. Saint Teresa Intercedes so that the Devils are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest

Appendix 5. Flowers from the Mural Program of the Life of St. Teresa de Jesus. Unknown, Murals Convent of San José, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) (Left). Daphney Saviotti Orozco, Flowers, 2022, Oil Painting. Berkeley (right).

Flowers from the Mural Program of the Life of St. Teresa de Jesús at the Convent of Carmen Alto		
Mural	Close-up	Flowers
4. Entry of Teresa Cepeda de Ahumada to the convent of La Encarnación		
		
22. Apparition of the Holy Trinity		
		
Angels		
19. Jesus crowns Saint Teresa	24. St. Teresa Guided by Angels	27. Death of Saint Teresa
		
		
		

Appendix 6. Unknown, *Chapter Ornament Header with Arma Christi, Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



1. Sacred heart: the crown of thorns around a heart, and the cross.



2. The rooster crowing after Pedro's denials over the pillar where Jesus was scourged.



3. Flogging whips



4. Holy face, Veronica



5. Rolling dice and the Holy Robe.



6. Stairs used to lower the body of Jesus from the Cross



7. Nails used in the crucifixion



8. Spear used to inflict five wounds on the side of Jesus Christ, and sponge.



9. INRI: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, and the hand of Caiaphas, who slapped Jesus.



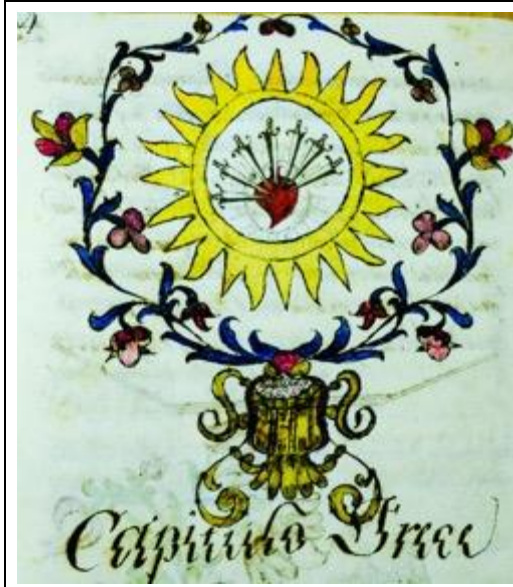
10. Pliers used to remove Christ nails



11. Three Crosses



12. Five wounds of Christ



13. Mary's sorrows

Appendix 2. Unknown, *Book Ornaments*, Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

1. 	2. 
3. 	4. 
5. 	6. 
7. 	8. 



9.



10.



11.



12.



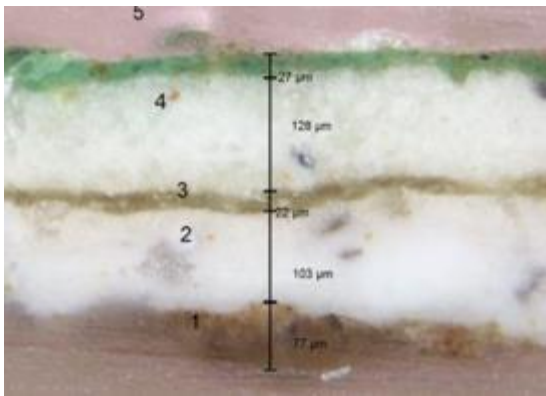
13.

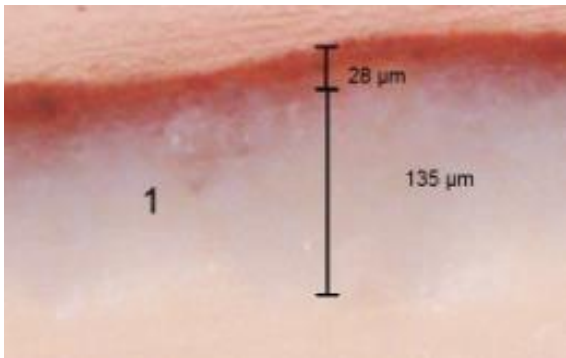


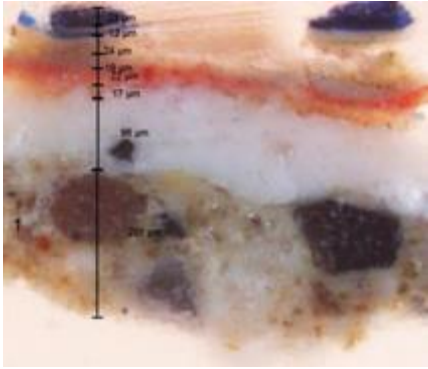
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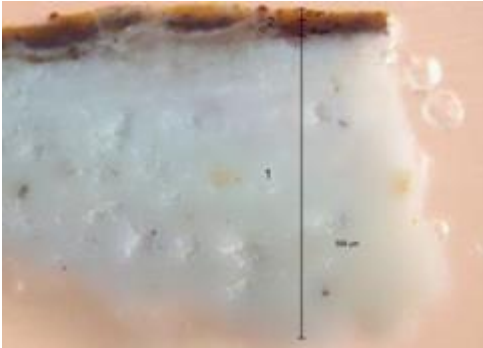
Appendix 8. Summary and translation of the report prepared by (INPC) National Institute of Heritage and Culture, Analysis of the Mural *Apparition of the Holy Trinity* (Mural 22), 2022, Multispectral and chemical analysis. Quito, Ecuador.

Report of the Scientific Analysis of the Mural Apparition of the Holy Trinity (Mural 22)		
		
	Sample Point	
1	Light Green-Angel Tunic	
2	Red Mantle-Eternal Father	
3	Blue flowers Mantle-Eternal Father	
4	Ocher Fold Mantle-Eternal Father	
5	Pink Cloth-Angel	
6	Blue-Earth Globe	
7	Cream-Incarnate Angel	

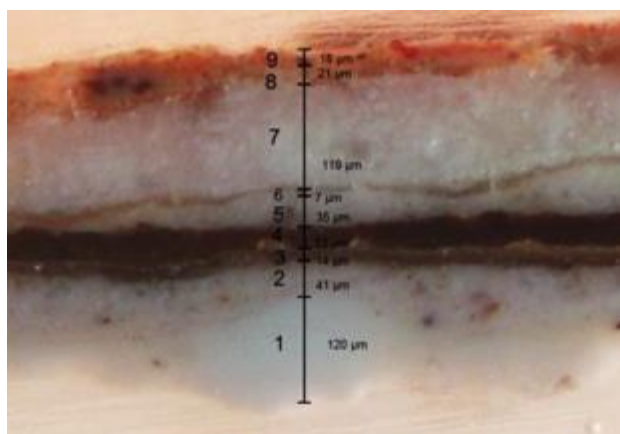
Light Green-Angel Tunic- Sample 1						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Green	27	Lead white, Copper resin	Oil
4	Preparation base	Porous	White	128	Calcium carbonate	Lime
3	Stratum	Compact	Translucent brown	22	-	Protein
2	Preparation base	Porous	White	103	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Support-Wall-	Porous	Brown	77	-	-

Red Mantle-Eternal Father-Sample 2						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
2	Pictorial layer	Compact	Red	28	Vermilion/Cinnabar Minium	Oil
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	135	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Blue flowers Mantle-Eternal Father- Sample 3						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
8	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	23	Prussian blue	Oil
7	Pictorial layer	Compact	White	12	Lead white-Natural sienna	Oil
6	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	24	Azurite	Oil
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	19	Massicot-Lead white	Protein
4	Preparation base	Compact	Red	22	Minium-Lead Target	Oil
3	Stratum	Compact	Brown	17	-	Protein
2	Preparation base	Porous	White	96	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Support-Wall-	Porous	Brown	201	-	-

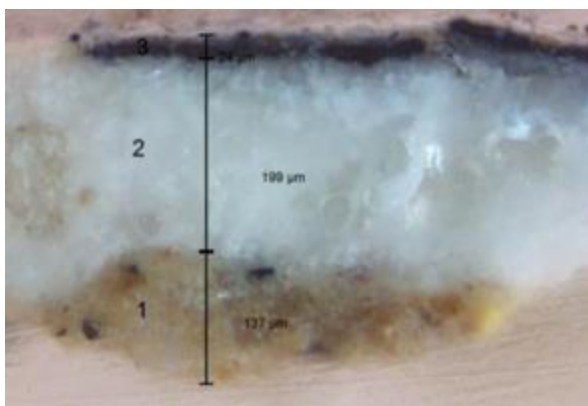
Ocher Fold Mantle-Eternal Father- Sample 4						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Yellow	22	Yellow ocher Lead white- Massicot	Oil
2	Pictorial layer	Compact	Red	30	Shadow/Earth Lead White	Oil
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	135	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Pink Cloth-Angel- Sample 5



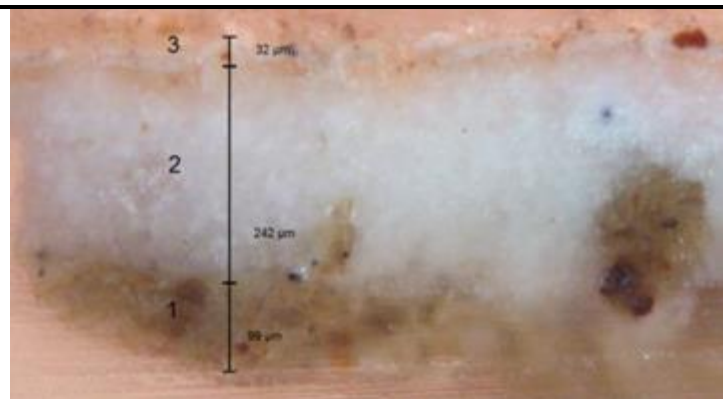
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
9	Pictorial layer	Compact	Reddish brown	18	Reddish earth-Cinnabar	Oil
8	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	21	Lead white	Oil
7	Preparation base	Porous	White	119	Calcium carbonate	Lime
6	Stratum	translucent	Brown	7	-	Protein
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	White	35	Lead white	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Porous	Brown	23	Earth of Sienna	Oil
3	Stratum	Compact	Grey	14	-	Protein
2	Preparation base	Porous	White	41	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	120	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Blue-Earth Globe- Sample 6



	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	24	Indigo led white	Oil
2	Preparation base	Porous	White	199	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Support-Wall-	Porous	Brown	137	-	-

Cream-Incarnate Angel - Sample 7



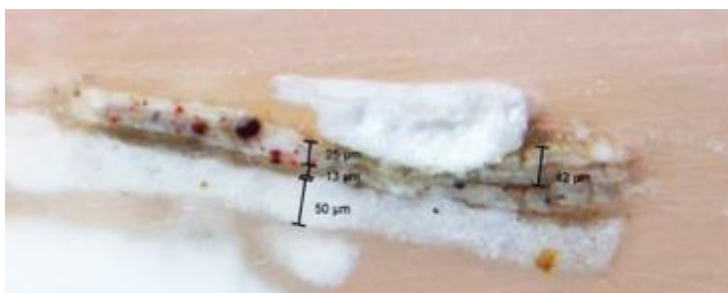
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	32	Lead white Cinnabar - Vermilion	Oil
2	Preparation base	Porous	White	242	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Support-Wall-	Porous	Brown	99	-	-

Appendix 9. Summary and translation of the report prepared by (INPC) National Institute of Heritage and Culture, Analysis of the *Mural Apparition of the Holy Trinity* (Mural 22), 2022, Multispectral and chemical analysis. Quito, Ecuador.

Report of the Scientific Analysis of the Mural Investiture of Santa Teresa (Mural 14)

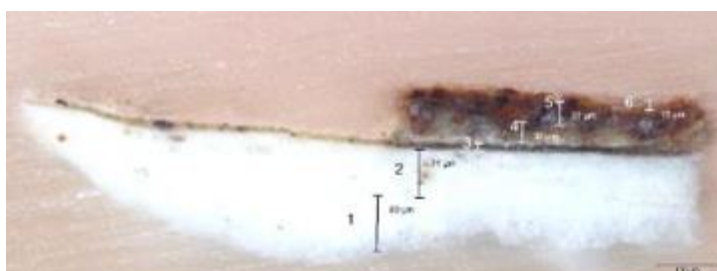
	Sample Point
1	Encarne - Foot of Saint Teresa
2	Red Mantle-Virgin
3	Encarne - Hand of Saint Teresa
4	Green-Trees
5	Blue Sky Background
6	Yellow Ocher Background
7	Green Background - San José
8	Green-Mantle with Gold Details
9	Black Railing
10	Blue Gray-Virgin Mantle

Encarne - Foot of Saint Teresa – Sample 1

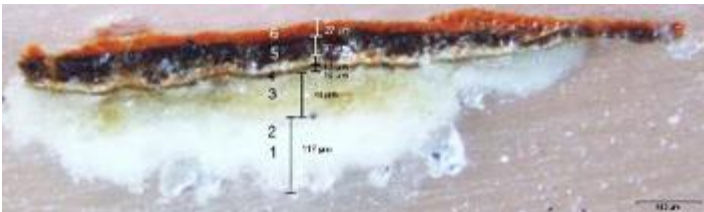


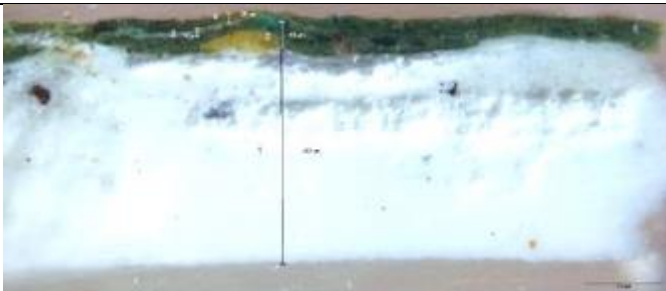
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	42	Lead white, Cinnabar – Vermilion iron oxide	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Light brown	25	Lead white, Cinnabar – Vermilion iron oxide	Oil
2	Layer	Compact	Translucent	13	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Compact	White	50	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Red Mantle-Virgin - Sample 2



	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
6	Pictorial layer	Compact	Red	15	Vermilion/Cinnabar Lead white	Oil
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Dark brown	37	Burnt sienna	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	30	Lead Minium	Oil
3	Pictorial layer		Dark brown	12	-	Protein
2	Layer	Compact	White	77	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Preparation base	Compact	White	89	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Encarne - Hand of Saint Teresa - Sample 3						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
6	Pictorial layer	Compact	Red	27	Cinnabar-Minium	Oil
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Dark Brown	31	Black vine-Burnt shadow	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	12	Lead white, Minium	Oil
3	Stratum	Compact	Cream	10	-	Protein
2	Preparation base	Compact	Translucent Brown	70	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	117	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Green-Trees - Sample 4						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLO R	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Green	26	Gray Verdi-Indigo Yellow ocher- Calcium sulfate	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Grey	16	-	Oil
2	Pictorial layer	Compact	Green	66	Gray Verdi-Lead white Indigo-Calcium sulfate Yellow ocher	Oil
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	543	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Blue Sky Background - Sample 5						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	12	Azurite-Lead white Calcium sulfate	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	73	Azurite-Lead white Calcium sulfate	Oil
2	Preparation base	Compact	Grey	8	Calcium carbonate	Lime
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	120	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Yellow Ocher Background - Sample 6						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (µm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Yellow	10	Orpiment-Natural Sienna-Lead white	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Yellowish Brown	95	Yellowish ocher- Orpiment-Lead white Calcium sulfate	Oil
2	Stratum	Compact	Translucent Brown	9	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	174	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Green Background - San José- Sample 7

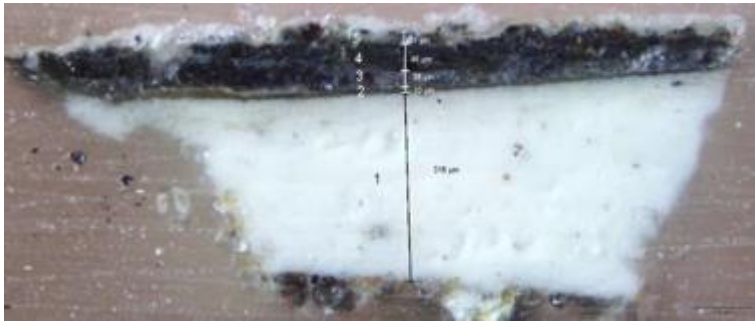


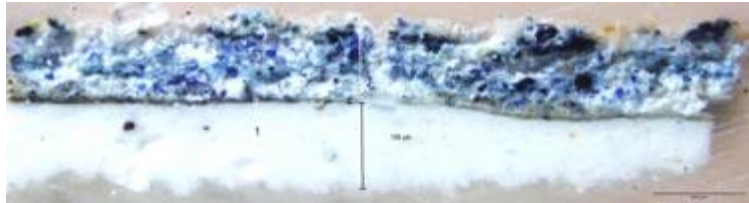
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
6	Pictorial layer	Compact	Green	41	Malachite Calcium sulfate	Oil/ Protein
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Red	38	Cinnabar-Yellowish ocher-Minium	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Pink	31	Lead white Lead minium	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Cream	26	Burn Siena	Oil
2	Stratum	Compact	Brown	11	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	180	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Green-Mantle with Gold Details - Sample 8



	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
7	Pictorial layer		Brown	48	Burnt Sienna	Oil
6	Foil	Compact	Gold	5	Gold	-
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Dark Brown	21	Burnt Sienna Cinnabar/Vermilion Minium	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Grey	15	Zinc sulfate Calcium sulfate	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Green	92	Copper resin	Oil
2	Stratum	Compact	Brown	10	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	331	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Black Railing - Sample 9						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
5	Pictorial layer	Compact	Negro	21	Indigo-Iron Oxide	Oil
4	Pictorial layer	Compact	Grey	46	Iron Oxide, Calcium Sulfate	Oil
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Black	28	Iron Oxide	Oil
2	Pictorial layer	Compact	Light Brown	10	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Compact	White	316	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Blue Gray-Virgin Mantle - Sample 10						
						
	STRATUM	ASPECT	COLOR	SIZE (μm)	LOAD/PIGMENTS	BINDERS
3	Pictorial layer	Compact	Blue	82	Prussian blue Iron oxide-Azurite	Oil
2	Pictorial layer	Compact	Grey	11	-	Protein
1	Preparation base	Porous	White	188	Calcium carbonate	Lime

Figures
Introduction



Figure 0.1. Unknown, *Oval Paper Reliquary*, 16th-17th Centuries. Museo del Carmen, Villa de Leyva.

Part I



Figure 1.1. *Choir*, ca.16th-17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.2. *Nave*, ca.17th-18th Century, Wood, gold foil. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.3. Gonzalo Angarita, Vestiges of a room from the male residences of the Pedagogical and Technological University, 2012, Escuela Taller Boyacá, previous living quarters of the Convent of Santa Clara la Real, Tunja.



Figure 1.4. Church-choir mural fragment, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.5. *Choir*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Mural painting al temple. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.6. *Nave with a view of the choir*, ca.16th-18th Century, Wood, gold foil. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.7. *Nave with a view of the choir*, 18th Century, Wood, gold foil, paint. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.8. Painting remnants: *Side door of the church's altar*. ca.16th-17th Century, al temple paint over wood. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.9. *Former quarters of Convent Santa Clara la Real*-under repair. Photograph of the Escuela Taller of Boyacá. 2013. Tunja, Casa Taller Boyacá.

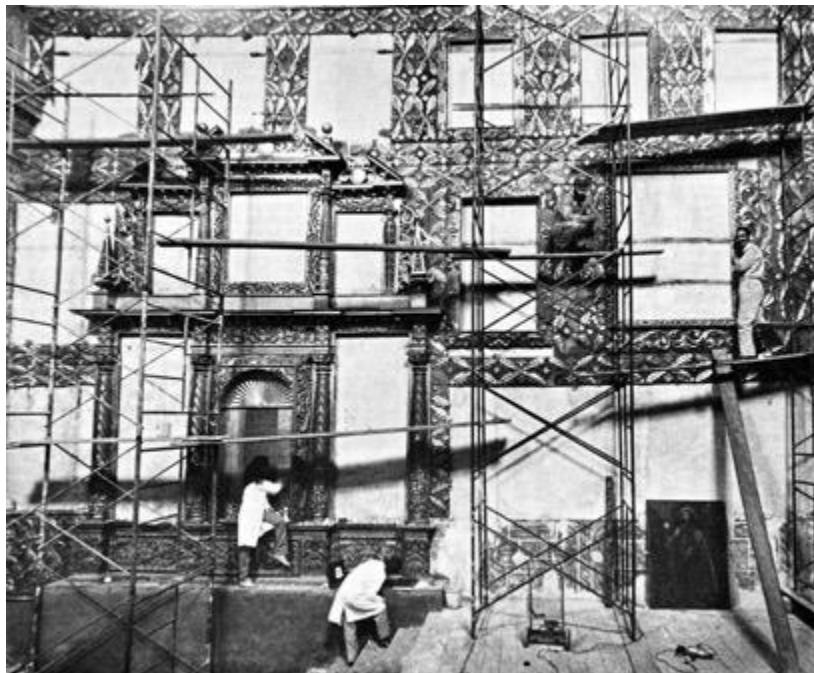


Figure 1.10. Restoration: *Convent of Santa Clara*, Bogotá. Photograph of the Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1987. In *Templo de Santa Clara, Bogotá*, by Franco Salamanca. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.11. *Choir's Ceiling*, 16th-17th Century, Painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



1. Digital reconstruction made by Yessica Porras.



2.



3.

Figure 1.12. *First mural layer-choir*, 16th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



1.



2. Living quarters. Santa Clara la Real, Tunja.



3.



4.

Figure 1.13. Digital reconstruction: *Second mural layer-choir*, made by Yessica Porras, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.14. *Cross fragment-living quarters*, ca.16th-17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.15. *S for Sala de Cirugía (Operating Room)- living quarters*, 19th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



1.



2.



3.

Figure1.16. *West wall second mural layer-choir, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.*



Figure 1.17. *Stone Retablo with elements from the second and third mural layer-nave, ca.16th-17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.*



1.



2.



3.

Figure 1.18. *Masonry retablo details with monochromatic second mural layer, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.*



Figure1.19. *Digital reconstruction: Third mural layer-choir*, made by Yessica Porras, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.20. Detail: *Third mural layer-choir*, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.

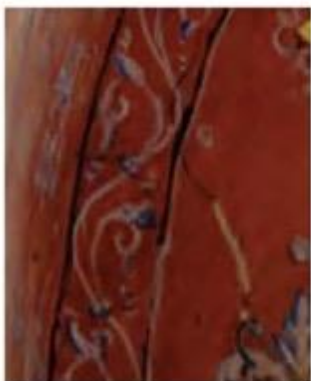
Repeated Pattern Elements Mural Paintings Santa Clara la Real		
First	Second	Third
		
		
		

Figure 1.21. Close-up: *Repeated pattern elements in the three layers of painting at the choir, 16th17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.*



Figure 1.22. Close-up: *Stone retablo-nave*, 17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



1. Retablo, Church



2. Third layer program, Choir



3. Retablo, Church



4. Ceiling, Choir

Figure 1.23. Close-up: *Stone retablo-nave*, angel third mural layer, flower ceiling, ca. 16th-17th Century, Mural painting al temple. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.24. *Nave and altar*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Wood, gold foil. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real



Figure 1.25. Close-up: *Ceiling, birds, ornaments, and carved golden flowers-choir*, ca. 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.26. Close-up: *Flower vases-choir*, ca.17th Century, al temple paint. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.

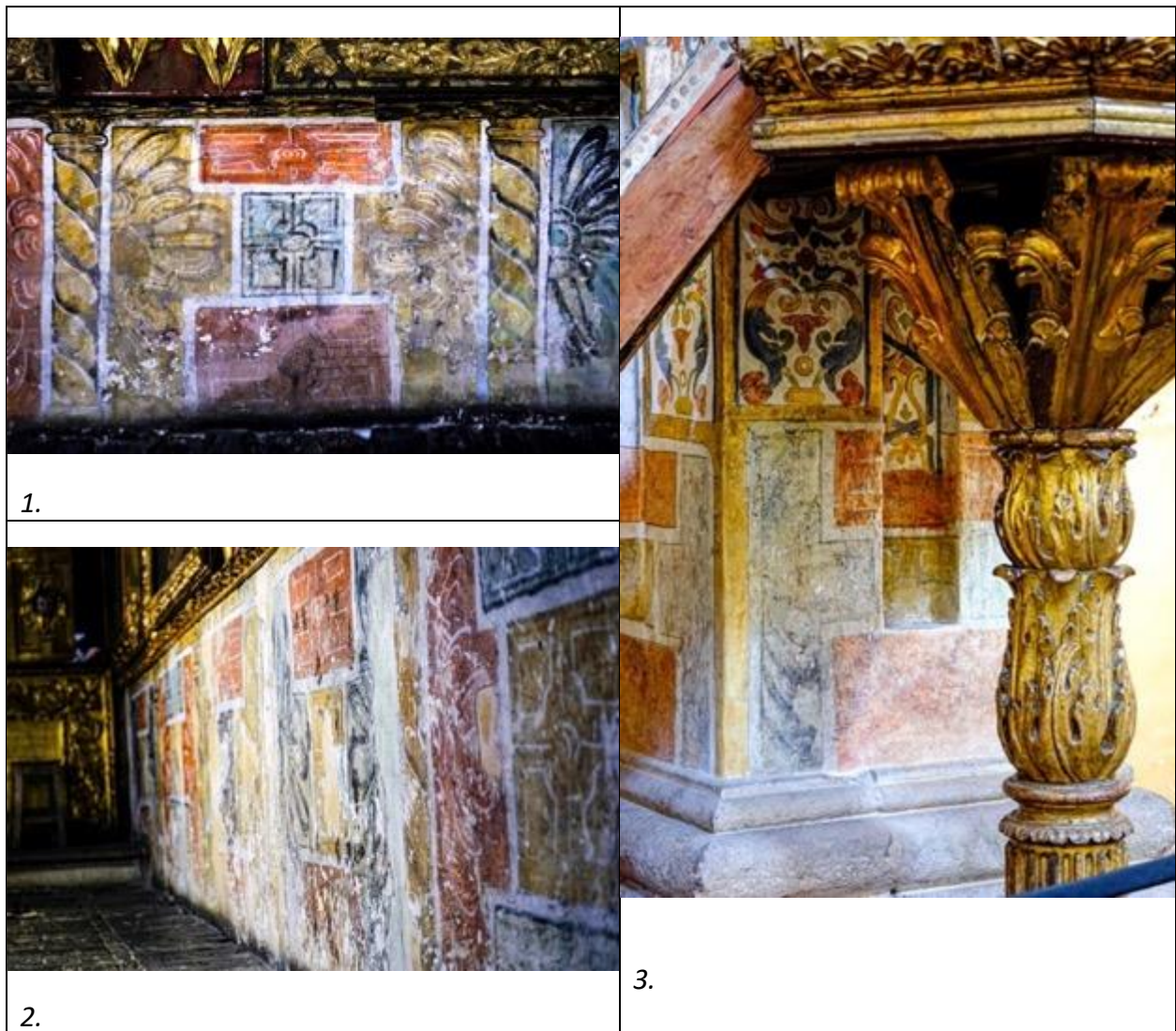


Figure 1.27. Close-up: *Painted architectural illusions-nave*, ca.17th Century, al temple paint. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.

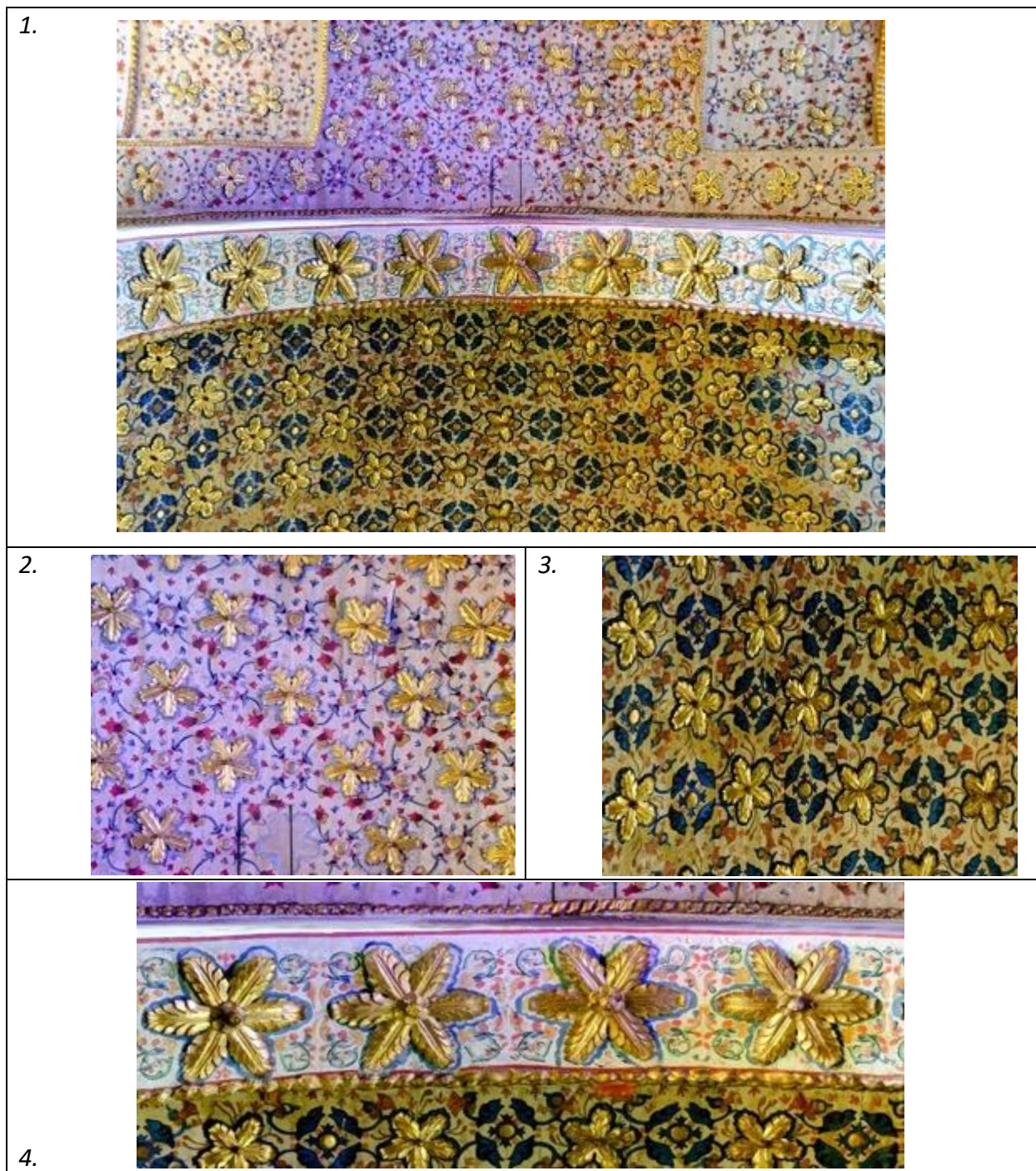


Figure 1.28. Close-up: *Ceiling nave and altar*, ca.18th Century, al temple paint. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.29. Close-up: *Ceiling nave and altar*, ca.18th Century, al temple paint. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.

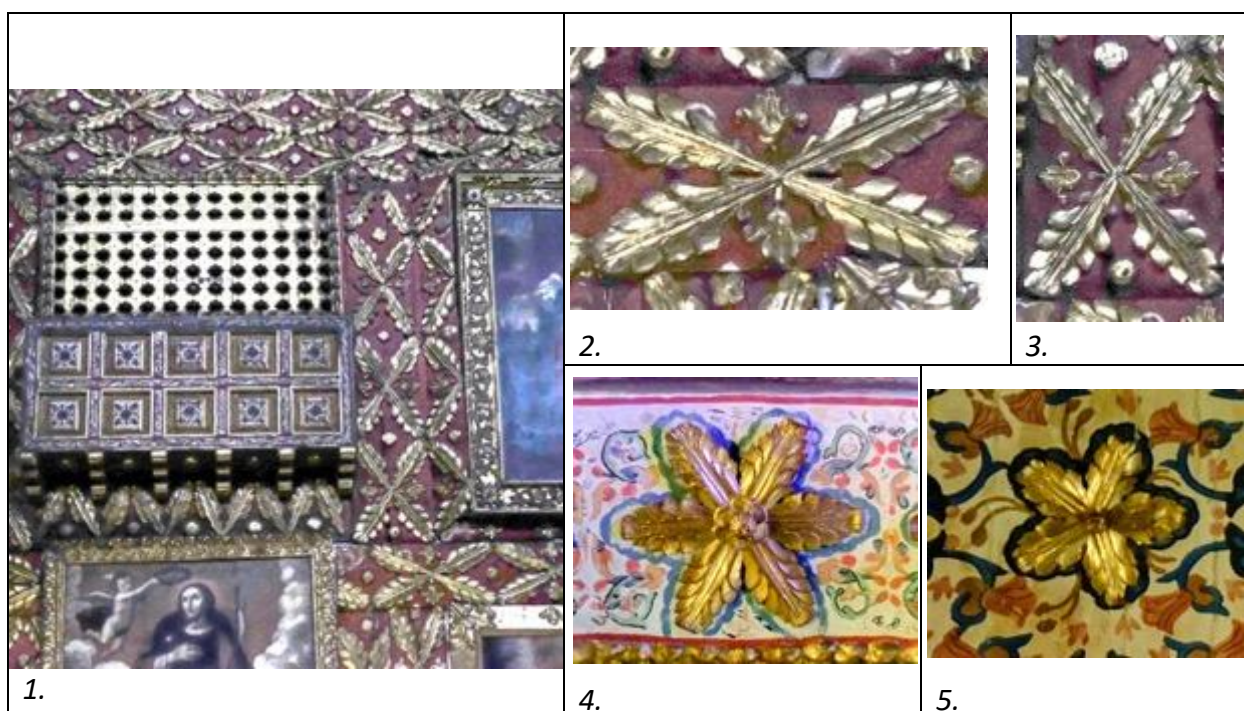


Figure 1.30. Close-up: *Column and retablo*, ca.17th-18th Century, al temple paint-wood retablo. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.31. Detail: *Arch column-nave*, ca.17th-18th Century, mural paint al temple. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.32. Close-up: *Wood retablo and paint remnants*, ca.17th-18th Century, al temple paint. Photograph of the Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1987. In *Templo de Santa Clara Bogotá*, Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.

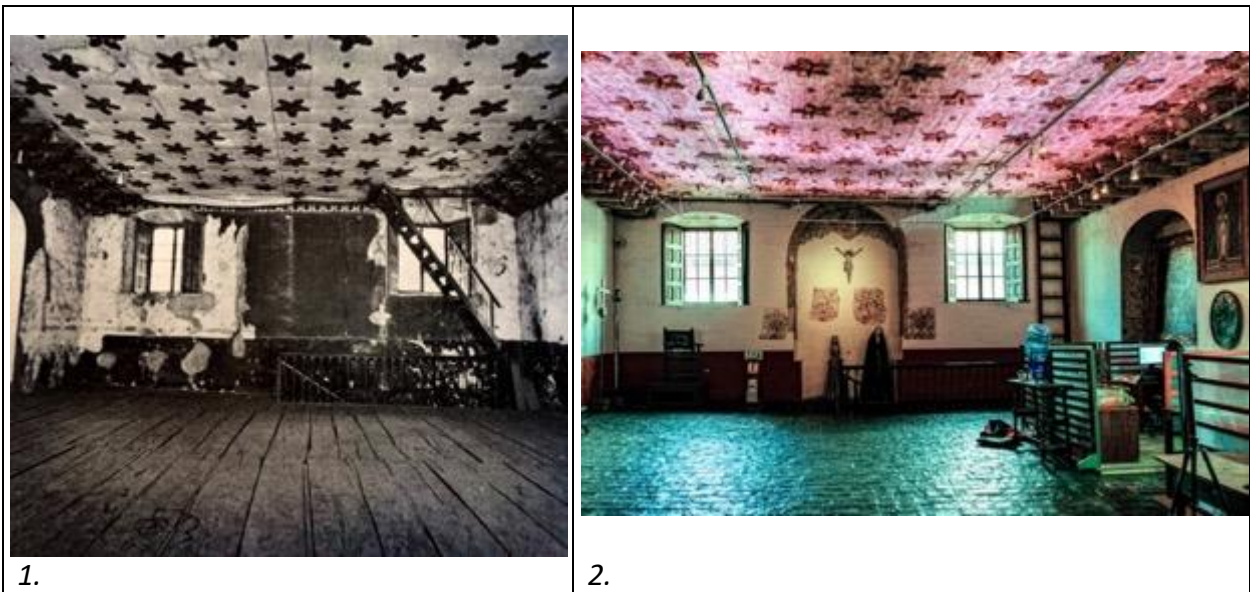


Figure 1.33. *Choir before and after restoration, 18th Century, mural paint al temple over wood, Photograph of the Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1987. In *Templo de Santa Clara, Bogotá*, by Franco Salamanca, Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.*



Figure 1.34. *Santa Margarita María de Alacoque, 19th Century, Carved wood and polychrome, 138 x 36 x 58 cm. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.*

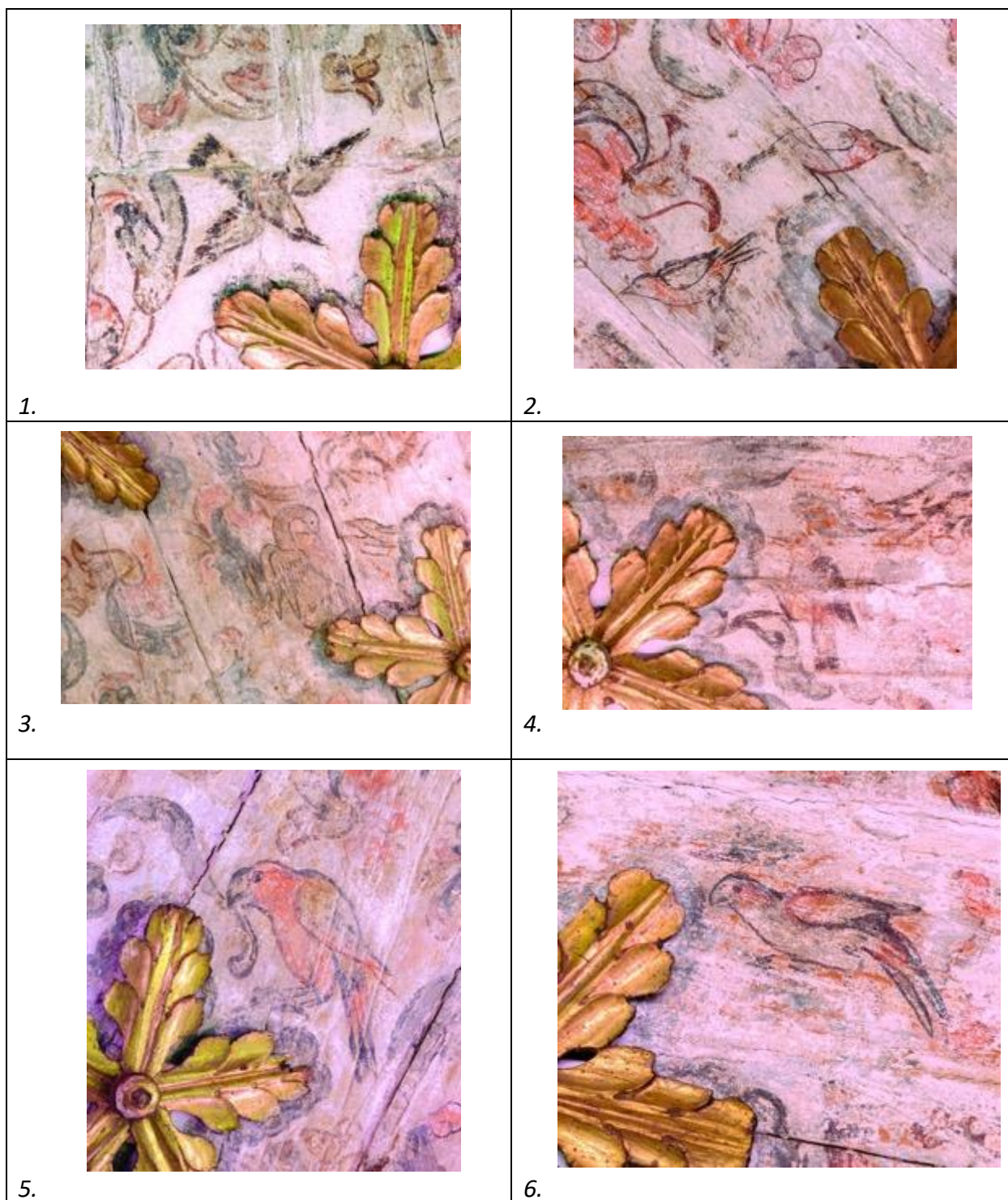


Figure 1.35. Close-up: *Ceiling birds-choir*, ca. 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.36. Close-up: *Jaguar*, 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.37. Close-up: *Ceiling archangels-choir*, 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



1.Armadillo



2.Rabbit



3. Hanging Monkey



Monkey Eating

4.



5. Fox



6. Bull



7. Deer



8. Goat

Figure 1.38. Close-up: *Ceiling animals-choir*, 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.39. Close-up: *Window ledge-choir*, 17th Century, Mural al temple. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.40. Anonymous, *Archangels Raphael and Michael*, 17th Century, Oil on canvas. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.41. Close-up: *Tigre-choir*, 18th Century, al temple paint over wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.42. Anonymous, *Battle scene of Mexica warrior*, Fresco, 16th Century. Photograph by Nicois (Wikipedia), Iximiquilpan, Church of San Miguel Arcangel. Photograph.



1. Ex-voto Milagro Virgen de Monguí-Tigre



2. Virgin of Monguí-Ex-voto



3. Virgin of Monguí



4. House of the Scribe Juan de Vargas-Tunja



5. Tiger

Figure 1.43.1-2. Anonymous, *Ex-voto Milagro Virgen de Monguí*, 17th Century, Tempera on wood, Monguí, Basilica of Our Lady of Monguí. 4.5. Anonymous, *Ceiling Wild Man with Tiger*, ca.1580. Tunja, Casa del Escribano Juan de Vargas.



Figure 1.44. Anonymous, *Sister Inés de la Trinidad*, ca. 1715, Oil on Wood. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.45. Anonymous, *Mother María Josefa del Espíritu Santo*, singing nun from the monastery of Santa Inés, ca.1843, Oil on canvas. Bogotá, Colección de Arte Banco del Banco de la República.



1. Altar ceiling



2. Altar pillar



3. Altar ceiling



4. Altar ceiling

Figure 1.46. Close-up: *Altar ceiling*, ca.18th Century, Wood, gold foil. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.47. Diego Velasquez, *Coronation of the Virgin*, 1635-36, Oil on canvas. Madrid, Museo del Prado.



Figure 1.48. Jean Massard, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, 1795, Taille douce: etching and engraving. Madrid, Museo del Prado.



Figure 1.49. Baltasar Vargas de Figueroa, *Coronation of the Virgin*, 17th Century, Oil on canvas. Bogotá, Universidad del Rosario.



1. Ceiling altar church of the Immaculate Conception, Ocaitá.



2. Sun and Moon, Nave, Santa Clara, Bogotá.



3. Ceiling Sun, Santa Clara la Real, Tunja.

Figure 1.50.1. *Sun at the ceiling's altar*, ca. 16th Century, Mural al temple. Ocaitá, Church of the Immaculate Conception. 2. *Sun and Moon-Nave*, 17th Century, Mural al temple. Photograph of the Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1987. In *Templo de Santa Clara, Bogotá*, by Franco Salamanca. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara. 3. *Ceiling Sun-Altar*, ca. 17th -18th Century, Wood-gold foil. Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.



Figure 1.51. *Ceiling of border between altar and nave ceiling, ca.18th Century, Wood, gold foil.* Tunja, Convent of Santa Clara la Real.

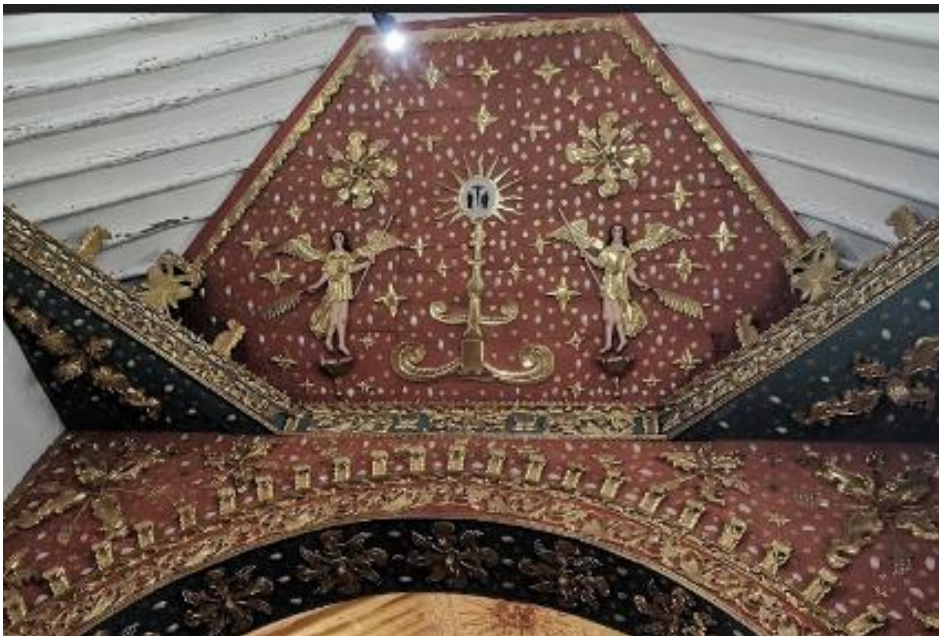


Figure 1.52. *Ceiling of border between altar and nave ceiling. ca.18th Century, Wood, gold foil.* Ocaitá, Church of the Immaculate Conception.



Figure 1.53. Anonymous, *Cacique*, ca. 17th Century, Mural al temple. Sutatausa, Church of St. John the Baptist.



Figure 1.54. Unknown, *La Cacica*, ca. 17th Century, Mural al temple, Sutatausa, Church of St. John the Baptist.



Figure 1.55. Anonymous, *The Last Judgment-Donors Inscription*. ca. 17th Century, Mural al temple. Sutatausa, Church of St. John the Baptist.



Figure 1.56. Bartolomé Estebán Murillo, *Archangel Michael Hurls the Devil into the Abyss*, 1665, Oil on canvas. Viena, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



1. *Woman with Child*



2. *Multiple Tunjos*

Figure 1.57. *Tunjos*, 10th–16th Century, Gold and alloy of gold, silver and copper. Bogotá, Museo del Oro.

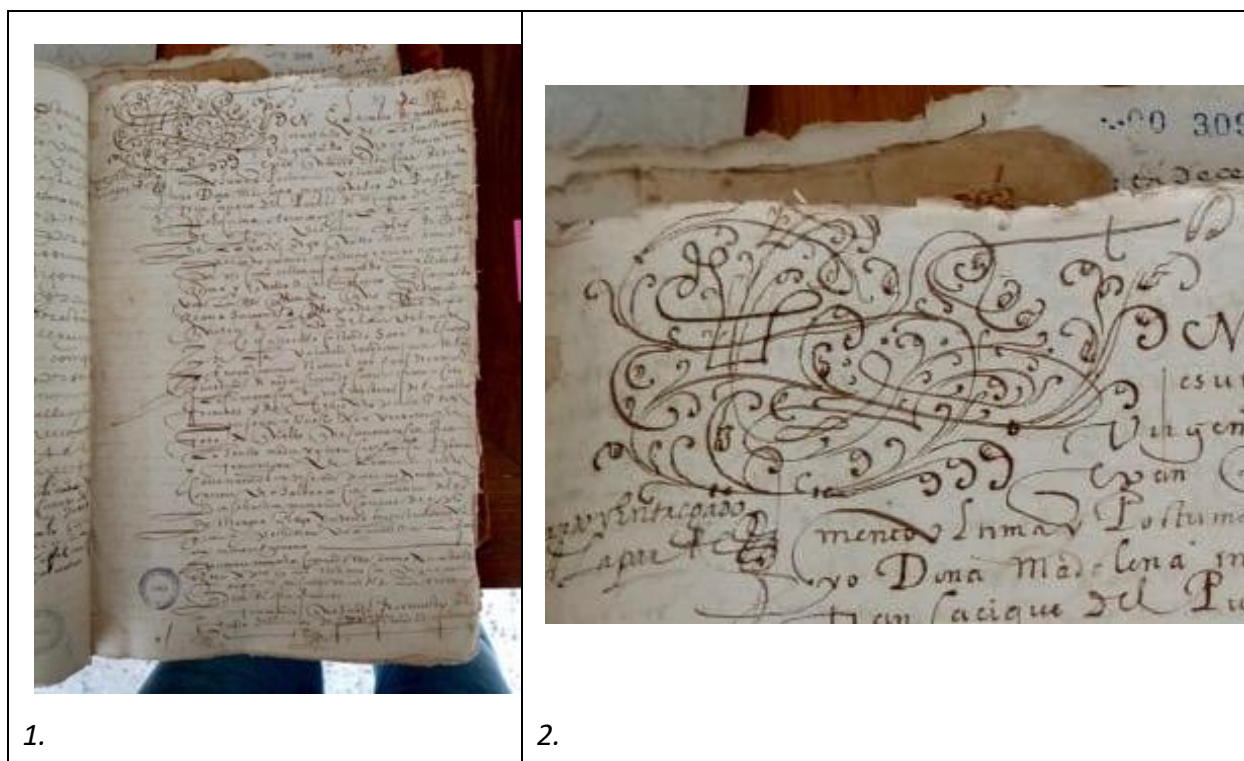


Figure 1.58. Notaria 1, Leg 1, Fol. 83-86, *Testamento Doña Madalena Cacica de Mongua*, 1540, Manuscript. Tunja, Archivo Histórico Regional de Boyacá.



Figure 1.59. Francisco de Páramo, *Canto Llano* book made for the Archbishop Bartolomé Lobo Guerrero, 1608, Manuscript. Bogota, Archivo Capitular, Catedral de Bogotá.



Figure 1.60. Muysca, *Chirimia* (Musical Instrument), 19th Century, Wood, metal, wax/rubber. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure 1.61. Attributed to Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Aquella Hermosa Nube*, 1762, Manuscript. Photograph by Constanza Toquica, 2001. In "Cuadernos de Literatura 6, no. 12. Bogotá, Convent of Santa Clara.



Figure 1.62. Gregorio Vásquez de Arce y Ceballos, *Annunciation*, 17th Century, Oil on canvas. Bogotá, Museo Colonial.

Part II

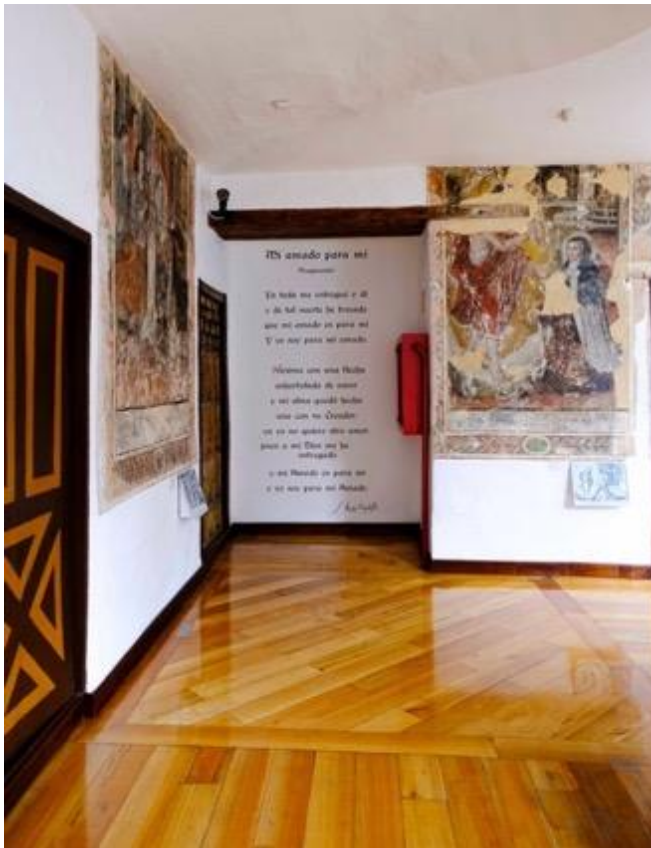


Figure 2.1. Living area, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural paintings. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.2. Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, Print. Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.3. Unknown, *Teresa Flees Her Home with Her Brother Rodrigo*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 3). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.4. Unknown, *Bird Detail Entrance*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.5. Jerome Nadal, *In Nocte Natalis Domini in Evangelicae Historiae Imagines*, 1593, Print. Antwerp, Getty Research Institute.

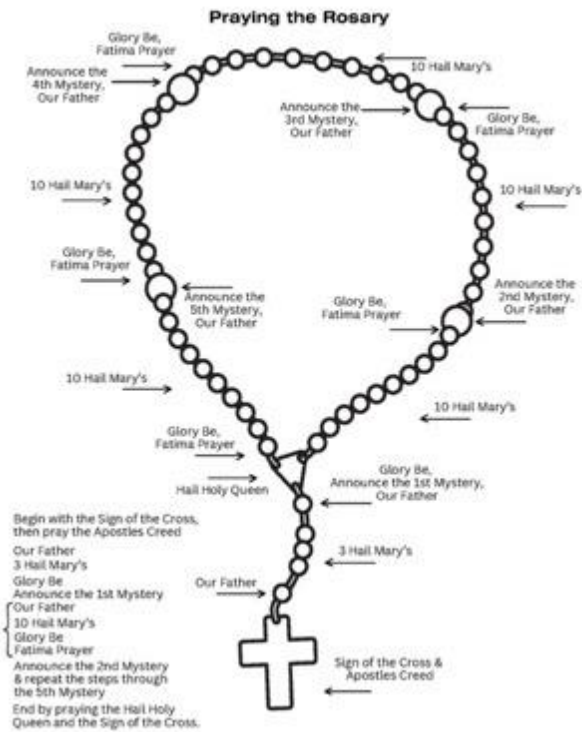


Figure 2.6. *Rosary structure*,2023. Digital. Faith Matters Design



Figure 2.7. Alanus de Rupe, *Psalter Marie*, 1492, Print. Germany, Bavarian State Library.



Figure 2.8. Unknown, *Entry of Teresa Cepeda de Ahumada to the Convent of the Incarnation*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 4). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.9. Unknown, *Teresa Being Left for Dead*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 5). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.10. Unknown, *Jesus Dying on the Cross*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 10). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.11. Unknown, *Christ After the Flagellation*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 11). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.12. Unknown, *Jesus Bearing the Cross*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 12). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

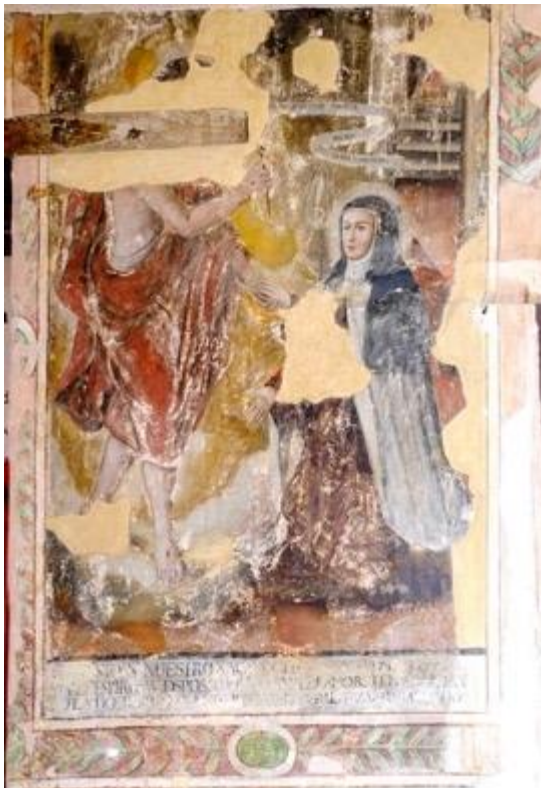


Figure 2.13. Unknown, *Mystical Betrothal with Christ*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 17). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.14. Unknown, *The Miracle of the Healing of Her Nephew*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 18). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.15. Unknown, *Death of Saint Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 27). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.16. Unknown, *Saint Teresa Intercedes So That the Devils Are Driven Away from the Sinful Priest*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 29). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.17. Unknown, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen* (Ceremonial of the Discalced of Our Lady of Carmen), 1792, Title Page, Paper on Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.18. Unknown, *Beatas Mártires de Compiégne (Blessed Martyrs of Compiégne)*, ca.18th-19th Century, Collage on paper and textile. Quito, Museo de la Ciudad.



Figure 2.19. Víctor Mideros, *St. Mariana de Jesús Carrying a Cross*, ca. 1926, Oil on canvas. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.20. Unknown, *The Investiture of St. Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 14). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.21. Unknown, *Saint Teresa Persuades Fray Antonio and Saint John of the Cross to Embrace the Reform*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 21). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.22. Unknown, *Saint Teresa is Guided by Angels After Getting Lost on the Way to Salamanca*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 24). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.23. Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle, *"Teresa Triumphant over the Demons" in Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, (Print 12). Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.24. Adrien Collaert, "Teresa as Patron Saint" in *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, (Print.19). Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.25. Unknown, *Retablo of Teresa as Patron Saint* (left), *Stair landing* (right), ca. 18th-19th Century, Oil on Canvas. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.26. Unknown, *Blank Frames*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 13-16). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.27. Unknown, *Monstrance Venerated by Angels*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 1). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.28. Unknown, *Portrait of St. Teresa of Ávila*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 1). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.29. Unknown, *Close-up Mural Borders*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 1, 13, 16, 29). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.30. Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle, "Teresa Praying for Divine Intervention" in *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, (Print 21). Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.31. Adrien Collaert, "Teresa Given a Precious Necklace by the Virgin and St Joseph" in *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, (Print 14). Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.32. Unknown, *Apotheosis of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*, ca. 18th Century. Oil on Canvas. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



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Figure 2.33. Unknown, *The Investiture of St. Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 14). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto). 2) Unknown, *Crown of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception (Crown of the Andes)*, Ca. 1660 (diadem) and ca. 1770 (arches). Gold and Emeralds, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/21698>

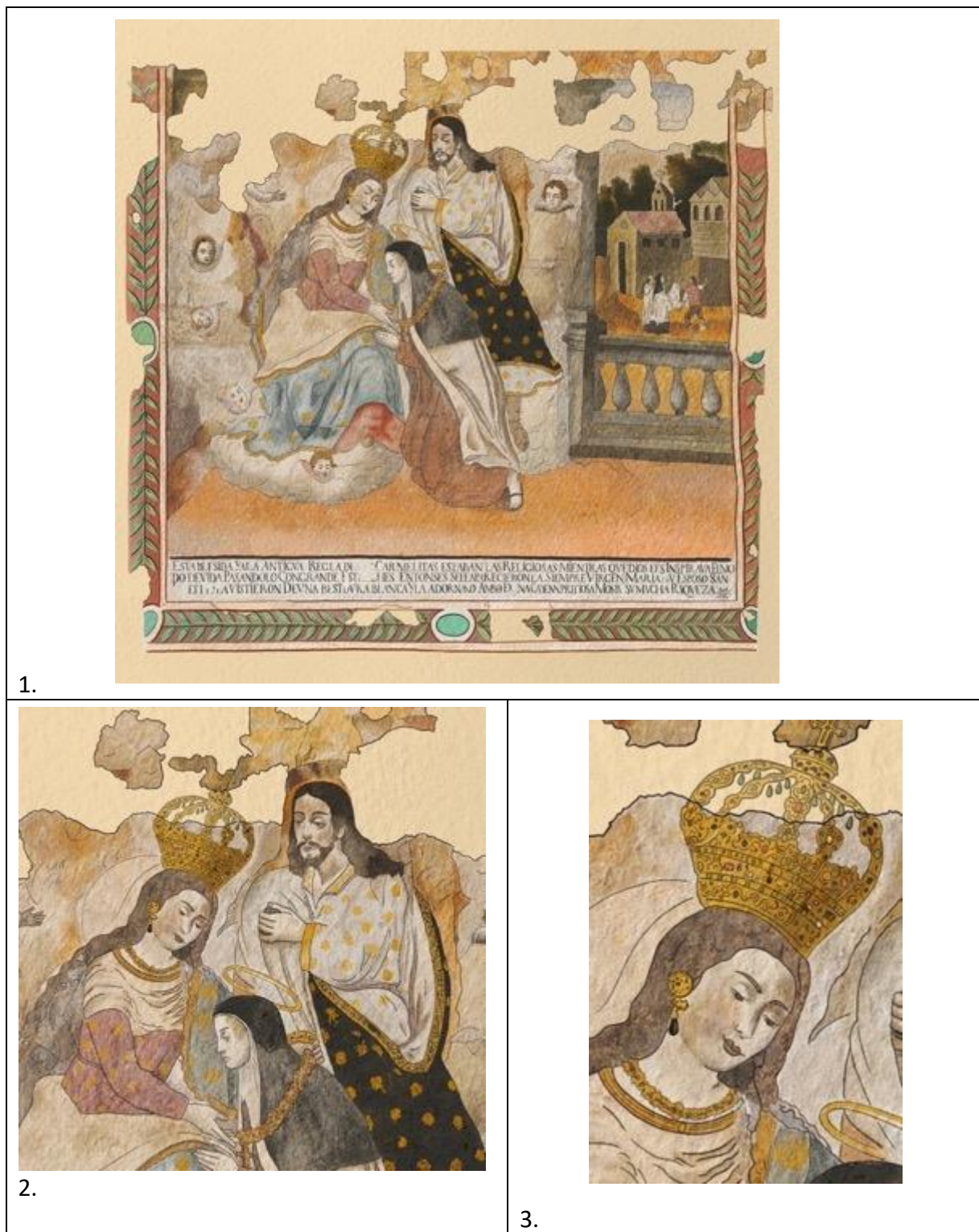


Figure 2.34. Burckan Burcustu, *Illustration of the Investiture of St. Teresa*, 2022, Digital Drawing. Madrid, Spain.



Figure 2.35. Unknown, *Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 7). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.36. Unknown, *Details of Vision of Demons and Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 7). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.37. Mariana de Jesús, *Cross Carried for Mariana de Jesús*, 17th Century, Wood. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.38. Unknown, *Apparition of Saint Peter and Saint Paul*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 9). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

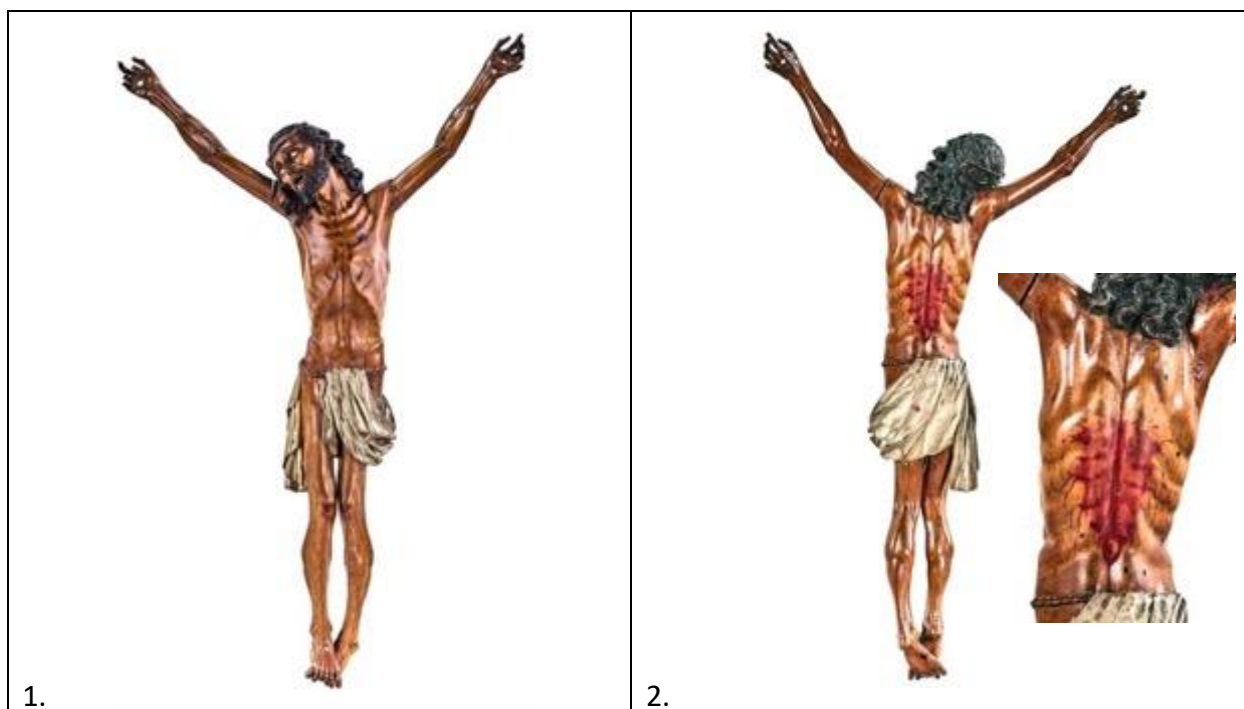


Figure 2.39. Manuel Chili, called Caspicara, *A Christ of Agony*, ca. 1770-75, Fruitwood. Private collection. Photograph from *Caspicara: A Christ of Agony* by Michael Riddick.



Figure 2.40. Unknown, *The Mystical Communion of Saint Teresa*, ca. Late 18th- Early 19th Century, Mural painting. Cuenca, Refractory of the Carmelite Convent of the Asuncion. Photograph from *La Pintura Popular del Carmen* (1983), by Juan Martínez Borrero.



Figure 2.41. Unknown, *Last Supper*, ca. Late 18th- Early 19th Century, Mural painting. Cuenca, Refractory of the Carmelite Convent of the Asuncion. Photograph from *La Pintura Popular del Carmen* (1983), by Juan Martínez Borrero.



Figure 2.42. Figure. Vicente Albán, *Yapanga o Prostituta de Quito*, 1783, Oil on Canvas. Museo de América, Madrid.



Figure 2.43. *Vihuela of Mariana de Jesús*, 17th Century. Quito, Church of the Society of Jesus. Photograph of Carlos González, <https://reconstruyendopasado.wixsite.com/website-1/post/la-vihuela-de-mariana-de-jesús-reliquia-musical>.



Figure 2.44. Unknown, *Appearance of Saint Teresa to the Nuns of Her Order in Segovia after Her Death*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 28). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.45. Adrien Collaert, "Teresa Appearing after Death" in *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613, (Print 25). Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



1. Teresa Doing Penitence by Chastizing Herself (Print 7).



2. Teresa Triumphant over the Demons (Print 12).



3. Teresa Praying for Divine Intervention (Print 21).

Figure 2.46. Adrien Collaert and Cornelious Galle, *Vita B. Virginis Teresiæ a Iesu*, 1613. Antwerp, John Hopkins University, Maryland.



Figure 2.47. Unknown, *Apparition of the Resurrected Christ*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 9). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.48. Unknown, *Jesus Crowns Saint Teresa*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 19). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.49. Unknown, *Entry of Teresa Cepeda De Ahumada to the Convent of La Encarnación*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 4). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.50. Unknown, *Apparition of the Holy Trinity*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 22). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.51. David Gramal, *Andean Ritual Pawkar Raymi*, access 2023. Peguche-Ecuador, Adobe Stock (Left). Unknown, *Tumarina Pukllay during Pakwar Raymi*, 2022. Peguche-Ecuador, La Hora (Newspaper) (Right).



Figure 2.52. Unknown, *Pase del Niño (Child Pass Parade)*, 2019. Cuenca, Cuenca Cathedral.



Figure 2.53. Unknown, *Banner and Chasubles*, textile, gold thread, embroidery, ca. 19th Century. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.54. Unknown, Title Page of the *Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) (Left). Bernardo de Villadiego, Title Page of *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen*, 1692, Printed. (Oficina de Bernardo de Villa-Diego, 1692), Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España (Right).

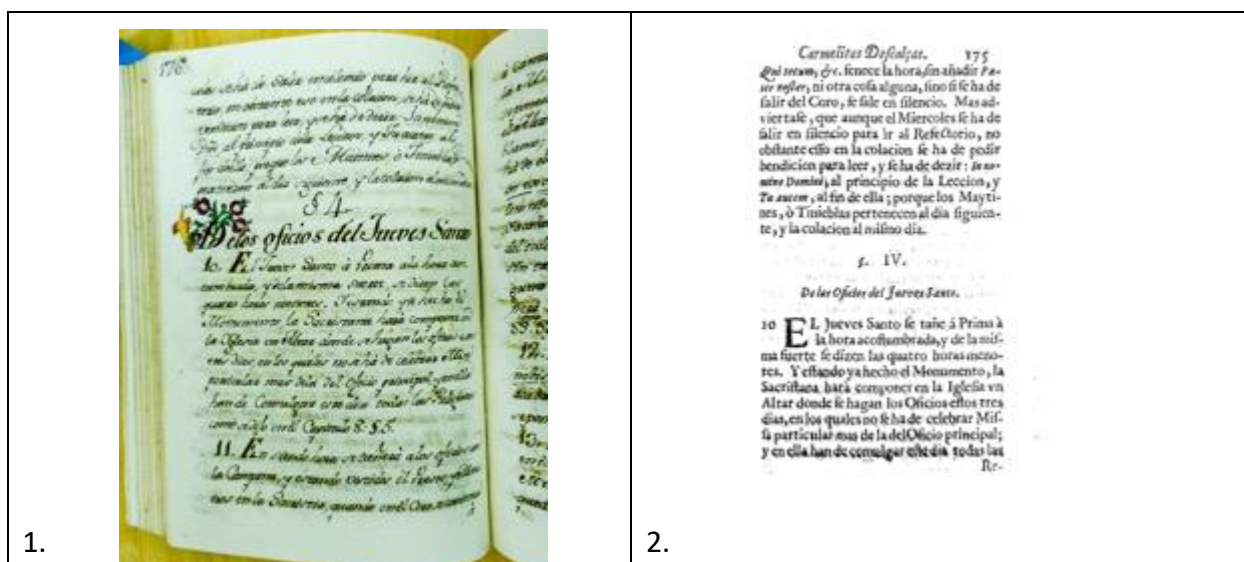


Figure 2.55. Unknown, “De los Oficios del Jueves Santo” from the *Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) (Left). Bernardo de Villadiego, “De los Oficios del Jueves Santo” from the *Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1692, Printed. (Oficina de Bernardo de Villa-Diego, 1692), Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España (Right).



Figure 2.56. Unknown, *Carmelite Cape*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Cloth, and paper. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).

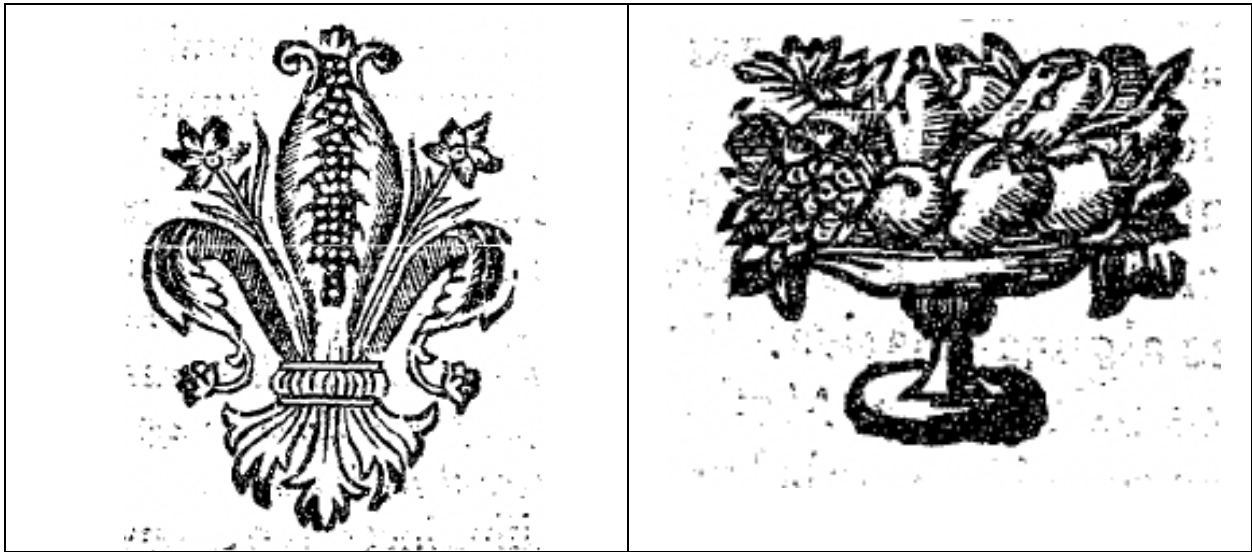


Figure 2.57. Bernardo de Villadiego, *Book Ornaments Prologo and Fin de la Tabla/Fin page 234 of the Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen*, 1692, Printed. (Oficina de Bernardo de Villa-Diego, 1692), Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España.

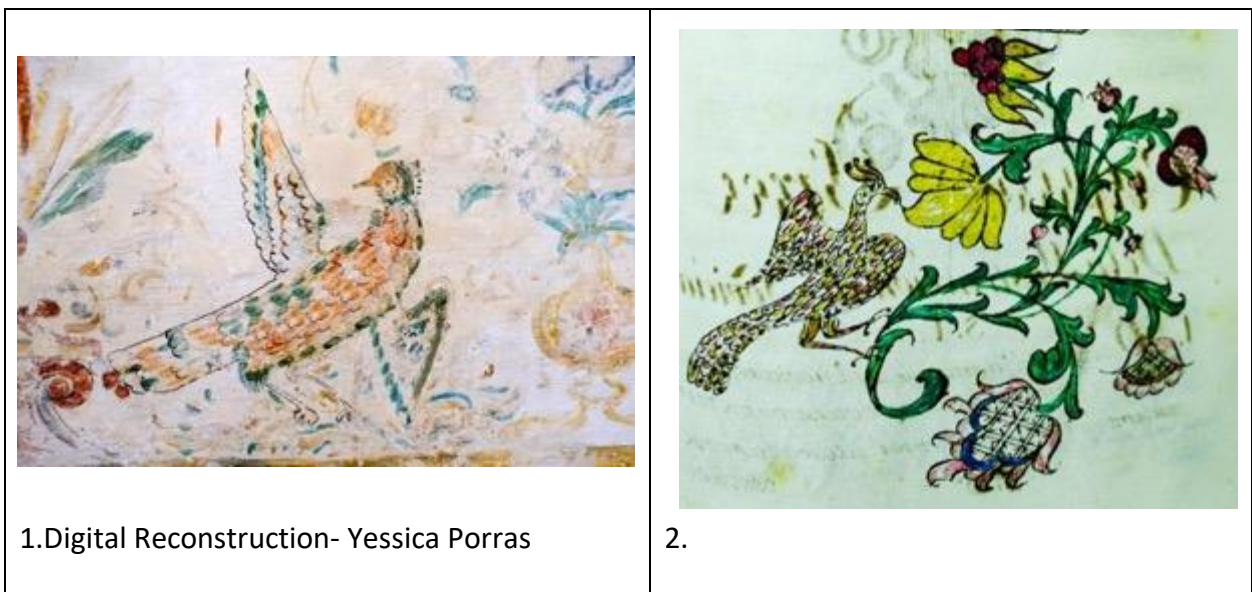


Figure 2.58. Unknown, *Digital Reconstruction-Bird Detail Entrance*, ca.18th-19th Century, Mural painting. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto) (left). Unknown, *Book Ornaments, Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink, Page 233. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



" El Sacerdote que hizo escribir este Ceremonial ruega a las Madres lo encomienden a Dios nuestro Señor"

Figure 2.59. Unknown, *Book Ornaments License*, *Ceremonial de las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, 1792, Paper and Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.60. Unknown, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen* (*Ceremonial of the Discalced of Our Lady of Carmen*), 1792, page 10, Paper on Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto). "Rueguen a Dios por la salvacion de él Alma dequeen há Copiado este Ceremonial" [sic]



Figure 2.61. Unknown, *Ceremonial de Las Religiosas Descalzas de Nuestra Señora Del Carmen* (*Ceremonial of the Discalced of Our Lady of Carmen*), 1792, page 189, Paper on Ink. Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.62, Johann Baptist Klauber, *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 1750s, Engraving, London, The British Museum.

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2. Digital Reconstruction made by Burckan Burcustu, 2022.

Figure 2.63. Unknown, *Agony of Christ on the Calvary*, ca.17th-18th Century, Mural painting al Temple, Quito, Recoleta of San Diego.



Figure 2.64. Unknown, *Franciscan Martyr*, ca.17th Century Mural painting - al Temple, Quito, Recoleta of San Diego.





Figure 2.66. Unknown, *Close-up Sgraffito Mural*, ca. 1st-8th Century, Mural Painting. Moche, Huaca de la Luna.



Figure 2.67. Unknown, Close-up detail: *The Investiture of St. Teresa*, ca. 18th-19th Century, Mural painting (Mural 14). Quito, Convent of San José (Carmen Alto).



Figure 2.68. Unknown, *Pedro Nolasco*, ca. 17th-18th Century, Oil on wood. Cusco, Convent of La Merced.

