

Indigenous Confraternities and the Stakeholder Church

In early March 1617 Juan Guabatiba presented a petition before the *Audiencia* on behalf of eight of his brothers and their families. Recently, Francisco Maldonado, a wealthy landowner and *encomendero* of the Indigenous town of Bogotá (modern-day Funza), frustrated with dwindling tributes as a result of continued demographic decline, had secured a rescript from the *Audiencia* empowering him to round up émigrés from his *encomienda* town who had made their homes in Indigenous towns and Spanish cities across the highlands. Guabatiba and several of his brothers had left Bogotá decades before and settled in the city of Santafé, while the rest had been born there to parents from the town, but now Maldonado wanted them all to return to Bogotá. In response they petitioned the authorities to exempt them from the rescript and to let them stay in Santafé, where they had built their lives, for which they provided a detailed report of the connections they had made and roots they had put down. They were all experienced and skilled in their trades – Guabatiba and two others were hatmakers, two were cobblers, two were tailors, and two were builders – so that removing them, they argued, ‘would deprive the republic of this city of its craftsmen’. Despite living in Santafé, they always paid Maldonado his *demora* and the king his *requinto*, ‘punctually, from what we earn’, and most of them had wives and children who relied on them. Most importantly, as was ‘public and notorious’, they were all members of the Confraternity of St Lucy of the cathedral church of Santafé, in which they participated diligently, looking after each other and processing proudly with their banners ‘in the processions of Corpus Christi and other solemn feasts’, contributing to the religious life of the city. It was in this way that they were brothers: they

were not blood relatives, but instead had formed bonds of *ritual* kinship through their membership of their confraternity and their support of one another in their lives in Santafé. For these reasons, they argued, they should be considered citizens (*vecinos*) of the city and left in peace – especially given that a recent royal decree sent to New Spain, Peru, and the Kingdom of Quito had apparently awarded such status to Indigenous migrants ‘resident in a given place for ten years, provided they still paid their obligations’, or so they had heard.¹

The petition of Juan Guabatiba and his fellows is a powerful reminder that the Spanish cities of the New Kingdom of Granada, like so many others across Spanish America, were also Indigenous spaces, home to diverse populations of Indigenous people who not only built their lives in them but through their labour made it possible for countless others to do the same. For decades Indigenous men and women, rich and poor, young and old, had been leaving their settlements and towns across the provinces of Santafé and Tunja in search of better opportunities in a rapidly changing world. Some, as we have seen, left the highlands entirely, others migrated to other Indigenous towns, and others still went to Spanish cities like Santafé – there joining a diverse community of Indigenous immigrants from across the New Kingdom and as far afield as Quito and Peru.² While legislation and the observations of colonial officials often characterised these immigrants as interlopers – likely ‘layabouts and vagrants’, antithetical to good order – they quietly navigated this period of intense change, putting down roots, overcoming linguistic barriers, acquiring skills and trades, creating new communities, and

¹ Petition of Juan Guatiba and his brothers, 4 March 1617, AGN Miscelánea 132 d 54, 617r–672v. On ‘vecindad’ and in colonial Spanish America, which in many places tended to exclude Indigenous people, see Tamar Herzog, *Defining Nations: Immigrants and Citizens in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 6–12, and especially ch. 3.

² As shown by surviving wills they drew up before Santafé’s notaries. An invaluable collection of these was edited and published as Pablo Rodríguez Jiménez, *Testamentos indígenas de Santafé de Bogotá, siglos XVI–XVII* (Bogotá: Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2002), which has made possible a variety of studies of Indigenous immigrants in the city, such as Monika Therrien and Lina Jaramillo Pacheco, *Mi casa no es tu casa: procesos de diferenciación en la construcción de Santa Fe, siglos XVI y XVII* (Bogotá: Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, Instituto Distrital de Cultura y Turismo, 2004), and Sandra Turbay Ceballos, ‘Las familias indígenas de Santafé, Nuevo Reino de Granada, según los testamentos de los siglos XVI y XVII’. *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura* 39, no. 1 (2012): 49–80.

renegotiating old communal bonds.³ Their wills, petitions, and litigation show how, for many, Christianity – and particularly participation in Christian social institutions such as confraternities – was central to these processes. So it was with the Confraternity of St Lucy, which appears in Indigenous wills as early as 1567, when, as we saw, Christianisation in Indigenous communities in rural settings had barely started.⁴ Through their membership in this and other confraternities in Santafé, generations of Indigenous immigrants offered each other support in life and in death, negotiated their places in the city, pursued their interests, and survived. After the reforms inaugurated in 1606, this engagement with confraternities also became possible for ever-growing numbers of people in rural towns and settlements across the region.

This chapter explores the aftermath of the reforms of the early seventeenth century. One part of the story was institutional: by the middle of the seventeenth century the Neogranadian church came to be better staffed, organised, and equipped than ever before. It could rely on ever growing numbers of secular and regular priests able to preach and teach in Indigenous languages, trained in increasingly advanced educational institutions, governed by comprehensive ecclesiastical legislation that drew from the most up-to-date and relevant contexts worldwide, and equipped with standardised texts and translations of catechetical materials. Another part was ideological, as the lessons of the Jesuit-led experiment of the early seventeenth century were applied around the archdiocese of Santafé in the decades that followed. While earlier evangelisation had been limited to the transmission of basic prayers and tenets of Christian doctrine, now the Catholicism of everyday practice, of private devotions, of public celebrations, of regular participation in the sacraments, and of social institutions came to be seen as the key to Christianisation. Underpinning these changes was a new vision of Indigenous peoples and their religiosity, new ambitions, and new priorities, which set the New Kingdom of Granada on a distinctive course.

³ ‘Ociosos y vagabundos’, to quote the language of the 1594 instructions issued by President Antonio González when he created the position of ‘Administrator for Indians, *mestizos*, and *mulatos*’ of Santafé to deal with them. See Santiago Muñoz Arbeláez, ‘Vagabundos urbanos. Las instrucciones para administrar indios, mestizos y mulatos en Santafé de Bogotá a fines del siglo XVI’. *Anuario de Historia Regional y de las Fronteras* 22, no. 1 (2017): 230.

⁴ As early as in the will of Juan Navarro of Tunja, who recorded his will on 19 August 1567, AGN Notaría 1a de Santafé 4, 215r–216v (also Rodríguez Jiménez, *Testamentos*, no. 1).

The third and most important dimension of these changes, however, was Indigenous. The shift in emphasis and concern of the kingdom's authorities away from punitive policies and towards a more inclusive interpretation of Tridentine reform, coupled with the implementation of a language policy actually tailored to the needs of the enormous linguistic diversity of the New Kingdom, created space and opportunities for people in Indigenous towns in rural areas to interact with Christianity in new ways. As a result the inhabitants of small towns across the provinces of Santafé and Tunja were able to begin to participate in the sorts of practices, devotions, and institutions that had long been central to the lives of Indigenous people in urban settings, like Juan Guabatiba, and to countless others across the Catholic world in this period. Many Indigenous authorities who survived the crises of the sixteenth century thus came to use participation in institutions such as religious confraternities, or the sponsorship of Christian art and devotional objects, to find new ways to maintain their positions of leadership in their communities and to offer support to their subjects. In other places, where traditional Indigenous leadership had collapsed, these same mechanisms allowed commoners to rise to positions of influence and responsibility, when new leadership was needed the most.

All around the region religious confraternities and other everyday devotions, in particular those related to poor relief and social assistance, came to be crucial sites for the transformation and reconfiguration not only of Indigenous communities but of the Neogranadian church itself. By the middle of the century, the fees, donations, and alms paid by Indigenous people engaged in these voluntary activities came to constitute a key portion of the funding of Indigenous parish churches and the salaries of their priests, fundamentally altering the relationship between the church, at a local level, and its Indigenous stakeholders. This went much further than the *Audiencia* and archdiocesan authorities had intended, as they learned when they sought to rein in and control the activities of Indigenous confraternities towards the middle of the century, only to discover that these changes had long since outrun them. To understand these shifts, we need to return to the first decades of the century and explore each of these three dimensions in turn.

THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH

Towards the end of his life, in March 1663, the scribe Rodrigo Zapata de Lobera compiled a detailed report of the state of the Indigenous parishes

of the archdiocese of Santafé according to the most recent visitation records available. Zapata de Lobera had been the principal scribe for the visitations carried out by *Audiencia* officials since setting off with Luis Enríquez on his visitation of the province of Tunja in 1599, and had participated in practically every visitation since – not only in Santafé and Tunja, which after Enríquez had only been inspected thoroughly once more in the late 1630s by the *oidores* Gabriel de Carvajal and Juan de Valcárcel, respectively – but also in those of other provinces carried out by command of President Juan de Borja and his successors.⁵ His report provides perhaps the first birds-eye view of the configuration of the archdiocese, allowing us to piece together the location of at least 118 Indigenous parishes in Santafé and Tunja, serving 247 Indigenous towns, villages, and other inhabited places (see Maps 2 and 3 in the Prelims), and is an excellent vantage point from which to examine the institutional development of the church of the New Kingdom by the middle of the seventeenth century.⁶

For a start each of these parishes had its own priest. This was a dramatic contrast to the sixteenth century, when one of the greatest obstacles successive reformers faced had been the lack of clerical manpower. In the 1550s, as discussed in Chapter 2, the ambitious claims of the first synod of Santafé had contrasted sharply with the small handful of priests actually present, even temporarily, in Indigenous settlements and communities. This changed only slowly, initially through the arrival of further cohorts of regulars, at least to Spanish cities. Their Atlantic crossings peaked in the 1560s, when 190 Dominicans and Franciscans were sent to the New Kingdom, and began a steady decline thereafter, in part as a result of Archbishop Zapata de Cárdenas's animosity towards them: from 131 dispatched in the 1570s (including the first cohorts of Augustinians), through ninety-one in 1580s, to seventy-five in the 1590s. In the seventeenth century new arrivals of mendicants continued to dwindle, with just seventy-one travelling to destinations in the New Kingdom in the entire century, even if the decline was partly made up by the arrival, in response to the enthusiastic requests of their supporters, of 279 Jesuits between 1604 and 1694 – of whom 112 arrived before 1650.⁷

⁵ On these visitations, see Ruiz Rivera, *Encomienda y mita*, 63–88.

⁶ If we include the glaring omission of Fontibón and nearby Techo, whose visitation by Gabriel de Carvajal in July 1639 he dutifully recorded (AGN VC 12 d 10). Zapata's report also contains information for the other provinces of the archdiocese, which brings the total of parishes up to 171. Report of the parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé, 10 March 1663, AHSB Caja 6A, 376r–492v.

⁷ Borges Morán, *El envío de misioneros*, 477–540.

These numbers, drawn once again from *Casa de Contratación* records of royally subsidised passages across the Atlantic to Neogranadian destinations, are necessarily inexact. They do not provide an indication of how many people actually reached the highlands or remained there, nor do they account for the ever-growing number of people joining the religious orders in different capacities in the New Kingdom. Reports from local authorities, although also patchy, offer some additional clues. In May 1609, for example, four months after Archbishop Lobo Guerrero left to take up his new position as Archbishop of Lima, the cathedral chapter of Santafé submitted a report to the crown describing the state of the regular church in the archdiocese, with details on the number of convents, their affiliation, and the number of friars attached to each one.⁸ The Dominicans, they reported, had by now eight convents, and a total of 107 friars, of whom seventy, they explained, were active in the provinces of Santafé and Tunja, although without specifying how. The Franciscans, for their part, had seven convents, with a total of seventy-three friars, of whom sixty were active in Santafé and Tunja. The Augustinians had another six, with fifty-one friars, of whom twenty-six were active in the highlands, nine as parish priests, while the Augustinian Recollects had set up an additional convent near Villa de Leyva that was home to ten friars.⁹ Still, to put things in perspective, while in 1609 there were 241 mendicants active in the entire archdiocese of Santafé, in the 1590s there were some 500 in the city of Lima alone, and some 4,500 regulars in monasteries in New Castile in the 1570s and 1580s.¹⁰ Over time these friars became less and less involved in the running of Indigenous parishes. In a letter of June 1620 the fifth archbishop of Santafé, Hernando Arias de Ugarte (in office 1616–1625), reported that the mendicant orders were in control of sixty-five Indigenous parishes: the Dominicans held twenty-eight, Franciscans twenty-four, Augustinians ten, and the Jesuits three.¹¹ By 1639 according to Zapata de Lobera's reports, this had dropped to fifty: nineteen held by

⁸ Cathedral chapter of Santafé to the king, 18 May 1609, AGI SF 231, no. 60.

⁹ Report by the cathedral chapter of Santafé on the houses and convents of the religious orders, 18 May 1609, AGI SF 231, no. 60a, 1r–1v.

¹⁰ See Juan Bautista Olaechea Labayen, 'Las instituciones religiosas de Indias y los mestizos'. *Cuadernos de investigación histórica* 16 (1995): 234. On New Castile, William A. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 15.

¹¹ In his letter to the king of 3 June 1620, AGI SF 226, no. 146, 1r.

Dominicans, eighteen by Franciscans, eleven by Augustinians, and two by Jesuits. The remaining sixty-eight were held by secular priests.¹²

By then the secular clergy had also seen dramatic growth, from numbering a handful under Barrios, growing with the 124 men that Archbishop Zapata ordained to the priesthood over his 17 years in office, and continuing to expand under their successors. By the time of Arias de Ugarte's letter of June 1620, the archdiocese could boast 240 secular priests: 170 employed in benefices, sacristies, and other tasks, and seventy unemployed.¹³ Eight years later his successor Julián de Cortázar (in office 1627–1630) reported that the number of unemployed secular priests had risen to 118, most of whom were 'sons and grandsons of conquistadors, and graduates in the faculty of arts and theology' and which he had ordained himself.¹⁴ In another letter of 1628 the cathedral chapter provided details for all of these men, of whom fifty-eight were resident in the province of Santafé and forty-two in Tunja, not including ordinands 'studying Latin and arts, who might number 300, give or take'.¹⁵ Even if we assume that the number of benefices and positions available to secular priests had remained constant in the eight years between the reports of Arias de Ugarte and Cortázar, then the total number of secular priests in the archdiocese of Santafé in 1628 was somewhere in the region of 278, and set to increase much further when the current crop of seminarians became ordained. This also meant that the clergy of the New Kingdom came increasingly to be composed of Neogranadian *criollos*, as envisioned by the *Cédula magna* of 1574. One of these *criollos*, born and raised in Santafé and ordained to minor orders by Archbishop Zapata, was Hernando Arias de Ugarte himself. The son of treasury official Hernando Arias Torero, Arias had left the New Kingdom in 1577 to study law at Salamanca and Lérida, before pursuing a career in the imperial administration, serving as *oidor* in the *audiencias* of Panamá, Charcas, and Lima, and later receiving major orders and rising through the ranks of the ecclesiastical administration.¹⁶

¹² Report of the parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé, 10 March 1663, AHSB Caja 6A, 376r–492v.

¹³ Archbishop Arias de Ugarte to the king, 3 June 1620, AGI SF 226, no. 146, 1v.

¹⁴ Archbishop Julián de Cortázar to the king, AGI SF 245 (unnumbered, dated 24 June 1628), 1r.

¹⁵ Report by the cathedral chapter of Santafé on the unemployment of the secular clergy, AGI SF 245 (unnumbered, dated 5 January 1628), 3r–3v. The remaining eighteen were resident in the other provinces under the jurisdiction of the archdiocese.

¹⁶ For a biography, see Ospina Suárez, *Hernando Arias de Ugarte*.

The re-establishment of a diocesan seminary, and the introduction of new educational institutions, was another key component in the new strategy to reform the church. Archbishop Zapata's first attempt at a seminary had opened in 1582, as a central part of his own designs, but struggled with financing from the start.¹⁷ Zapata had even sent a procurator to petition Madrid and Rome for this purpose in 1583, but funds were not forthcoming, not least because of growing opposition to Zapata's controversial ordinations.¹⁸ When in 1586 the archbishop placed additional duties on the seminarians, ordering them to serve and sing at the cathedral with no additional pay, the seminarians walked out, and the seminary was disbanded.¹⁹ It took nearly two decades for it to reopen, in 1605, when it was re-established by Lobo Guerrero with the support of the Jesuits as a key 'remedy for the idiocy and ruinous customs of the clergy of this archdiocese' – as Diego de Torres Bollo, its first rector, put it in a letter to the king of 1606.²⁰ For this the archbishop donated a house and used the synod of 1606 to require all holders of Indigenous parishes to pay eight pesos each to provide it with an endowment.²¹ In 1619 Arias de Ugarte issued the seminary with a new set of constitutions, and sought to bolster its financial security by requiring the holders of every benefice in the archdiocese, excluding Indigenous parishes, to contribute 'two percent of the real value of each benefice' – that is, of their endowments – plus 2 per cent of their income every year.²² To enforce it he compiled declarations of the endowments and rents of dozens of benefices in the archdiocese, which he remarkably managed to compel their holders to provide.²³ Moreover, after Gregory XV issued *In Supereminenti* in 1621, empowering Jesuit colleges in the New World to

¹⁷ Letter of Archbishop Zapata to the king, 12 April 1582, AGI SF 226, no. 40.

¹⁸ Instructions of Archbishop Zapata to Alonso Cortés, 2 April 1583, AGI SF 226, no. 46.

¹⁹ Report concerning the closure of the seminary, 21 January 1586, AGI SF 226, no. 57.

²⁰ Letter of Diego de Torres Bollo to the king, AGI SF 242 (unnumbered, dated 8 January 1606), 1r. The seminary's successor institution, the Colegio de San Bartolomé, traces its foundation back to 1604. Nevertheless, the date of its official establishment in the documentation of the diocesan authorities, including the constitutions issued for the seminary by Arias de Ugarte in 1619, date it to 1605 ('Constituciones originales', 7 January 1619, AHSB Caja 1, unnumbered, 11r).

²¹ 'Constituciones sinodales 1606', ch. 15, 251.

²² 'Constituciones originales', AHSB Caja 1, unnumbered, 11r.

²³ A large number of these, starting with those of the members of the cathedral chapter and continuing through to the beneficiaries of small chapels, have survived among the documents concerning the foundation and endowment of the school in AHSB Caja 1. Some inevitably failed to pay the requisite amount, and even in 1639 the then Archbishop Cristóbal de Torres had to issue legislation to compel reprobates to contribute their share,

grant degrees, their college in Bogotá began to supplement the diocesan seminary in the education of the clergy, offering teaching in moral theology, philosophy, rhetoric, grammar, and arts.²⁴

These developments also had a legislative component. In 1606 the effort by Lobo Guerrero and his allies to introduce the legislation of the Third Provincial Council of Lima, and with it its catechetical and pastoral materials, had been meant as a temporary measure, a pragmatic solution to the urgent need they identified to introduce reforms and the few resources that they had at their disposal. The need to hold a proper provincial council, to legislate on a much broader range of issues than the reformers had been able to get to in 1606, but also to consolidate and extend reforms to the suffragan dioceses of Cartagena, Popayán, and Santa Marta, did not, however, go away. It was inherited by Lobo Guerrero's short-lived successor, Pedro Ordóñez y Flórez, who arrived in Santafé in March 1613 but died in June of the following year before being able to do very much. The task then fell to Hernando Arias de Ugarte, fifth archbishop of Santafé, who on his arrival in 1618 began to make preparations – which for him meant conducting a marathon five-year visitation of his archdiocese, the first systematic pastoral visitation in the region's history.²⁵ This done, the First Provincial Council of Santafé was finally called in June 1624.²⁶ The diocese of Cartagena was vacant at the time and sent a representative, as did the bishop of Popayán, who excused himself owing to ill health, but the bishop of Santa Marta travelled to Santafé to participate, as did delegates from each and every city and province in the New Kingdom, in sharp contrast to the failed efforts of Archbishop Zapata half a century before. So too did President Juan de Borja, who was still in office. The Provincial Council began on 13 April 1625 and concluded on 25 May.

but the seminary was established and prospered. See the decree of Archbishop Torres, dated 21 June 1639, in AHSB Caja 1, 160r.

²⁴ On this Jesuit initiative, which would become the Universidad Javeriana, and on the Dominican Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás, see Germán Pinilla Monroy and Juan Carlos Lara Acosta, 'El aporte de la Arquidiócesis de Santafé a la educación, siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII'. In *Arquidiócesis de Bogotá, 450 años: miradas sobre su historia*. Edited by Jaime Alberto Mancera Casas, Carlos Mario Alzate Montes OP, and Fabián Leonardo Benavides Silva (Bogotá: Universidad Santo Tomás, Arquidiócesis de Bogotá, 2015), 133–162. On *In Supereminenti*, see the Jesuit *littera annua* for 1642–1652, ARSI NR&Q 12 I, 191r–238v, at 192r.

²⁵ Arias Ugarte to the king, 11 June 1618, AGI SF 226, n. 142, 7r. This was granted, for five years, by Paul V in the brief *Exponi nobis nuper fecit*, 7 August 1620, *Ibid.*, n. 154a.

²⁶ On its convocation, see Arias Ugarte to the king, 30 June 1624, AGI SF 226 n. 162.

The result was very different to the synod of 1606. The text of its constitutions is by comparison vast and comprehensive, made up of 362 detailed chapters touching on a much broader range of issues to earlier ecclesiastical legislation.²⁷ These incorporated many of the key reforms of successive archbishops of Santafé over the previous fifty years, extending them to regions beyond the highlands of Santafé and Tunja. It thus legislated on the production of standardised translations of catechetical materials and the use of Indigenous languages, as we saw in Chapter 5; on the importance of fostering Christian *policia* and eliminating impediments to catechisation, such as drunkenness, gambling, and clandestine celebrations; and on continuing the policy of resettling Indigenous people into gridded towns.²⁸ Much of this follows closely the legislation of the synod of 1606 and even the *Catechism* of Zapata de Cárdenas, if in a much more elaborate form. The same is the case with the constitutions related to the sacraments, which reflected the emphases and priorities of the reforms inaugurated by Lobo Guerrero and his allies and took them further. Reflecting their concern for frequent participation in the sacraments, and particularly in the Eucharist, the council ordered all priests of Indigenous parishes to make preparation for the sacrament a ‘frequent and important’ part of their teaching. It also further relaxed the requirements for admission to the Eucharist, doing away even with the watered-down 1606 requirement that Indigenous people obtain permission from one of the archbishop’s deputies, leaving it instead to the discretion of each parish priest.²⁹ Other constitutions concerned the sorts of everyday devotions and practices that the reformers had centred in their approach to Christianisation. It thus required priests to place the Blessed Sacrament on the altars of their churches, in properly appointed tabernacles, in every town and settlement with over twenty inhabitants, including Indigenous churches that were up to standard.³⁰

The council also legislated extensively about the ordination of candidates to the priesthood, defining every aspect and requirement clearly, and urging prelates to approach with ‘the greatest caution’, but, crucially,

²⁷ Reflecting the scope of its ambitions, these are arranged into five books following the structure of classical canon law (and, indeed, of Mexico III) – *iudex, iudicium, clerus, connubia, crimen*. On this see James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London: Routledge, 1995), 194–200.

²⁸ ‘Concilio provincial 1625’, 3.2.28 and 1.1.2 (560–561 and 337–339); 1.1.13 (350–351); 1.1.15 (354–355); and 1.1.14 (352–353).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.3.21 (388–389).

³⁰ Which was left to the discretion of each bishop to determine. *Ibid.*, 1.3.17–18 (388–389).

allowing the ordination of people of mixed European and Indigenous or African descent.³¹ This same thoroughness can be seen in the detailed constitutions that described and regulated the functions of a broad range of ecclesiastical officials, from bishops themselves, through vicars and judges, down to notaries and the lowest-ranking officials.³² Overall, it had a much greater institutional emphasis than earlier legislation, touching on a broad range of matters entirely absent in earlier texts. In this way the vast majority of its legislation was concerned with matters beyond the missionary project or Indigenous people, and instead with the minutiae of the ecclesiastical bureaucracy, the religious lives of Spaniards, and the behaviour of priests and nuns. To do this Arias de Ugarte and his collaborators drew on a much broader range of sources than their predecessors. The legislation of the provincial councils of the centres of the empire remained paramount but were now by no means alone. An exhaustive analysis of the sources of each of its 362 constitutions revealed that 93 were closely based on the legislation of Lima III, often materials already incorporated into the context of Santafé by the synod of 1606. But the bulk of its constitutions – 253 chapters – were in fact drawn from the Third Provincial Council of Mexico of 1585. And, through these texts, Santafé I also drew from a broad range of normative sources, ranging from classical canon law through to the influential legislation of Carlo Borromeo in Milan.³³

Like all other legislation of this kind there is much here that is undoubtedly aspirational. We have no sense, for example, of whether the dozens of chapters regulating every aspect of the archdiocese's judicial apparatus, dutifully adapted from its Mexican template, bore any relation to reality, and we do know, from the way subsequent archbishops saw the need to reiterate different decrees in the decades that followed, that nothing was accomplished at the stroke of a pen. The provincial council, in an important sense, laid out a series of goals and objectives to aim for over the following decades – but this in itself was a significant change, inaugurating a new phase of institutional development. Indeed Arias de Ugarte's successors would not see the need to hold another provincial council to replace these constitutions until the 1770s, and they remained

³¹ Ibid., 1.5.1–10 (401–415). The ordination of candidates of mixed descent is discussed in 1.5.5 (408–409).

³² Ibid., 1.6.1–20 (416–437).

³³ See Cobo Betancourt and Cobo, *La legislación*, which contains a paragraph-by-paragraph analysis of each of its constitutions and their sources.

in place until well after Colombian independence.³⁴ By the same token, the breadth and scope of this legislative project also marked the conclusion of a long phase of haphazard institutional development of the archdiocese of Santafé that had started in the days of Juan de los Barrios, with stop-gap legislation of limited scope quickly introduced in reaction to specific issues. Subsequent archbishops would continue to issue decrees and requirements in the future, to be sure, and to reiterate requirements of the provincial council or to modify or extend its norms as needed, but they had a firm legislative foundation on which to build. To see this more clearly, we must turn to another key institutional development, the introduction of regular, comprehensive pastoral visitations.

'TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND'

Pastoral visitations, as we have seen, were by no means new even for the New Kingdom. They had been promoted by the Council of Trent precisely as a key instrument for the introduction of reform and were used everywhere as a key instrument of episcopal government, not least as a visible manifestation of the jurisdictional power of the bishop.³⁵ In the New Kingdom, given the dearth of other instruments at the disposal of the bishop, they took on an additional significance. This was still a manuscript culture in an age of print, and there were few methods more effective to propagate legislation or ensure that their instructions were carried out than to do so directly. Because it involved an assertion of authority, the frequency with which they were carried out is also one measure of the growing ability of successive archbishops to bring their ambitions to bear onto the parishes.

Archbishop Zapata, as we saw, conducted a limited number of visitations over the course of his archiepiscopate, most notably in the late 1570s when his investigations in Fontibón and Cajicá ignited the violence,

³⁴ Under Archbishop Manuel Camacho y Rojas in 1773. See *Ibid.*, xlvi. This effort was nevertheless unsuccessful, and a new provincial council did not take place until 1868. On this, John Jairo Marín Tamayo, 'La convocatoria del primer Concilio neogranadino (1868): Un esfuerzo de la jerarquía católica para restablecer la disciplina eclesiástica'. *Historia Crítica* 36 (2008): 174–193.

³⁵ Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 23; Juan Villegas, *Aplicación del Concilio de Trento en Hispanoamérica, 1564–1600: Provincia eclesiástica del Perú* (Montevideo: Instituto Teológico del Uruguay, 1975), 72; Traslosheros, *Iglesia, justicia y sociedad*, 38. Recently Gabriela Ramos explored pastoral visitations in the Central Andes as spaces of interaction and negotiation between Andeans and ecclesiastical institutions in 'Pastoral Visitations'.

terror, and dispossession explored in Chapter 3. His successor Lobo Guerrero conducted more extensive visitations, but he was forced to abandon them during his conflict with President Sande. Nevertheless, these resumed through representatives later in the decade, and a set of instructions issued to visitors in 1608 provides some evidence of his priorities. These instructions issued by Lobo Guerrero reflected the concerns of the constitutions of the synod of 1606, which the visitors were required to carry with them. The synod had made frequent mention of them, and it is not unlikely that this was one of the principal means through which the instructions propagated to the localities at a time when they could not be distributed in print. Visitors were instructed to examine the interior of churches, their baptismal fonts, the parish's record books, and other objects. They were to inspect parish accounts, and they were to hear complaints made against priests by their parishioners. If necessary, they were also to examine parish priests on their ability to hear confessions, and issue licences.³⁶ The documentation of these visitations has either been lost or it is held in archives inaccessible to researchers, but because Lobo Guerrero employed Jesuits to accompany him or his visitors, some information about what they encountered has survived in their letters to their Roman superiors. These are so full of complaints about the scandalous ignorance and illiteracy of local priests, of consecrated hosts being cut with scissors to fit monstrances, and of other shocking practices that they perhaps have more to do with Jesuit narrative models than with their first-hand observations.³⁷

Lobo Guerrero's successor, Ordóñez y Flórez, does not seem to have conducted visitations, and his time in office was cut short by his death in June 1614, after a mere fifteen months in office. But his successor, Hernando Arias de Ugarte, conducted the most extensive pastoral visitations of any archbishop of Santafé in the seventeenth century, in order 'to know and understand' the state of Indigenous parishes.³⁸ These took place in three rounds, setting off shortly after his arrival in the

³⁶ These instructions were sent to the crown in response to a controversy over the legality of the practice by ecclesiastical agents of levying of pecuniary fines. Instructions to ecclesiastical visitors issued by Archbishop Lobo Guerrero, sent to the king on 26 February 1608, AGI SF 226, no. 123b, 1v–2r.

³⁷ For example, the Jesuit *littera annua* for 1608–1609, dated 20 September 1609, ARSI NR&Q 12 I, 36r–60v, at 43v.

³⁸ The most thorough study of these is Ospina Suárez, *Hernando Arias de Ugarte*, 22. The quotation is from Arias de Ugarte's standard *plática* at the beginning of each visitation, e.g. of Suta and Tausa, AHSB Caja 1, 172r.

archdiocese.³⁹ In the provinces of Santafé and Tunja, Arias de Ugarte visited Zipaquirá, Ubaté, Fúquene, Suta and Tausa, Ciénaga, Bogotá, Guateque, and Choachí between May 1619 and April 1620, before returning to the city for Holy Week.⁴⁰ After Easter he headed to the province of Tunja, visiting Soracá, Chivatá, Cocuy, and Chita, before heading down to the lowlands of the Llanos Orientales, and returning to Santafé.⁴¹ And in September 1621 he set out on a third round, visiting the towns of Fosca, Paipa, Monguío, and Tópaga, before entering the province of Pamplona, and then visiting the town of Chiquinquirá on his way back to Santafé in July or August of 1623.⁴² He was accompanied by the Jesuit Miguel de Tolosa, who also served as an interpreter.⁴³ Much of the resulting documentation has been lost, not least during the arduous progress of the visitation itself, during which the archbishop almost drowned, but detailed visitation records survive for ten parishes in the highlands, which provided valuable insights into questions of language in Chapter 5, and which we will examine again in a moment.⁴⁴

Apart from the documentation arising from the visitation themselves, which were kept by the diocesan authorities, records of visitations survive in the books that parish priests were required to keep in order to record births, deaths, access to the sacraments, parish accounts, and inventories of parish property, since these were examined in each round of visitations. Very few of these books have survived for the first half of the seventeenth century, at least in archives accessible to researchers.⁴⁵ One is a book for the parish of Oicatá for the years 1608–1649, which shows that the parish was visited nine times in this period. The town is located a mere eight miles from Tunja, so the frequency of the visitations is likely to be greater than that of more remote parishes, but surviving documentation makes clear that systematic programmes of visitation became a feature of the government of the church in the first half of the seventeenth century,

³⁹ On his visitations, see Pacheco, *La consolidación*, 67–79.

⁴⁰ Ospina Suárez, *Hernando Arias de Ugarte*, 32–71.

⁴¹ He described this part of his visitation in his letter to the king of 6 May 1622, AGI SF 226, no. 155, 1v. Ospina Suárez, *Hernando Arias de Ugarte*, 76–97.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 99–168.

⁴³ Letter of Arias de Ugarte to the king, 6 May 1622, AGI SF 226, no. 155, 1v.

⁴⁴ Pacheco, *La consolidación*, 75.

⁴⁵ Only one, from the parish of Suta (Sutatenza) in Tunja, dating to 1653, is available in manuscript form, at the Dominican archive in Bogotá (APSLB Parroquias Boyacá, 6/6/207/1-197). The AGN holds microfilms of a handful of others from parishes in the province of Tunja, cited later. It is unclear how many of these still survive, and how many others remain in parish churches elsewhere in the region.

becoming a biennial event in some parishes by the time of Archbishop Cristóbal de Torres (in office 1635–1654), conducted by carefully organised agents.⁴⁶ These visitations were occasions to examine priests in the conduct of their duties, to assess the implementation of the directives of diocesan authorities, to address the grievances of the laity, and to implement reforms.

The well-documented visitations of Hernando Arias de Ugarte provide the clearest illustration of how they worked. They adhered to a carefully choreographed model that was designed to highlight the significance of the occasion and the power of the bishop.⁴⁷ The entire town was called together and assembled to witness the archbishop arriving in splendour. He was received solemnly at the door of the parish church by the priest in vestments, his assistants singing, and bearing incense and holy water. The ceremony was calculated to be spectacular, not least because a visitation such as this was often the first time that most of the inhabitants of a town were likely to have seen their ordinary. Once inside prayers were said and the archbishop blessed the church and the town. The congregation followed him inside, and an edict was read in Spanish and through interpreters to convey the purpose of the visitation. This began by appealing to the authority of church councils and explaining that this was one of the functions of the ordinary, that the priest was to be examined, and that the purpose of the visit was to ensure that he was fulfilling his obligations properly, especially in what concerned the administration of the sacraments, his personal conduct, and his treatment of the laity. They were also told that the archbishop would also enquire about the public sins of the inhabitants of the town. A standard ceremony followed: the archbishop would change his vestments in the sacristy, and process around the church to inspect it, stopping to check the baptismal font, the holy oils, and the cemetery, where prayers were said for the dead. A more detailed visitation of the objects and ornaments of the parish was then conducted, checking everything against the records left in the parish book by the previous visitation, noting down any changes and additions. Often the archbishop said mass, and then administered confirmation to those among the laity who were able and eligible. The priest was then sent away, and the congregation was instructed to come

⁴⁶ In this case, in 1610, 1621, 1625, 1628, 1634, 1638, 1640, 1642, and 1644. See AGN PB, Oicatá, Libro 1, 86r, 14r, 92v, 94v, 48r, 107r, 115r, 122r, and 131r, respectively.

⁴⁷ A typical model is provided by Arias de Ugarte's visitation of the parish of Soracá on 24 November 1620 (AHSB, Libro 6, 5r–18v).

forward to make their complaints or present their petitions, over a longer period. Local notables and the elderly were also called and interviewed.

The text of the questionnaire that Archbishop Arias de Ugarte used in his interviews with witnesses is lost, but the answers that survive reveal it was a long and detailed list of at least sixty-one questions, touching all aspects of the administration of the parish and of the life of the town. It is revealing of the priorities of the archdiocese at the time that none of the questions were concerned with Indigenous heterodoxy. In his interviews with priests and witnesses Arias was far more interested in public sins, such as extramarital or incestuous sexual relations, usury, sacrilege, or other matters 'that have scandalised the inhabitants and people of the parish' – the sorts of concerns that will be familiar to scholars of a broad range of Christian contexts, across confessional divides, in early modern Europe and beyond, generally described under the rubric of social or church discipline.⁴⁸ So it was that Arias de Ugarte heard that Sebastián Duarte, a wealthy Indigenous man in Fúquene, had several illegitimate daughters with his servant Catalina, or that four Indigenous nobles in Saboyá were in incestuous relationships.⁴⁹

The principal focus, however, was to investigate parish priests themselves: whether they administered the sacraments properly, placed any illegal burdens or levies on Indigenous people, and indeed whether they fulfilled the language requirements and other legislation of the archdiocese.⁵⁰ Questions also concerned Indigenous assistants to the priest, the local *encomendero*, and other authorities. These served as opportunities to discipline miscreants – such as Gerónimo García, the parish priest of Fúquene, whom he found had often abandoned his post in the parish without leave.⁵¹ He also investigated local conditions, such as whether parish priests had copies of the texts required by the archdiocese, and tried to identify potential problems. In Moniquirá, for example, the

⁴⁸ To quote his *plática* in the visitation of Suta and Tausa, 22 November 1619, AHSB Caja 1, 172r. On social discipline, see Ute Lotz-Heumann, 'Imposing Church and Social Discipline'. In *The Cambridge History of Christianity. Vol. VI: Reform and Expansion, 1500–1660*. Edited by R. Po-Chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 244–260.

⁴⁹ See the visitations of Fúquene, 16 October 1619 (AHSB Caja 1, 179v) and Saboyá by Arias de Ugarte, 18 July 1623 (AHSB L6, 123v).

⁵⁰ A detailed example of answers to the questionnaire can be found in the documents pertaining to the visitation of Tópaga, AHSB, Lib. 6, 39r–60v, at 42r–47v.

⁵¹ Visitation of Fúquene by Arias de Ugarte, AHSB Caja 1, 178v.

archbishop learned that the priest was unable to obtain a copy of the Roman Catechism and a pastoral manual, owing to a shortage of these books in the archdiocese.⁵² Finally, as with their civil counterparts, these visitations concluded with the archbishop or his agent drawing up a list of charges against the priest or other people, who had a chance to answer them, before the issuing a sentence to condemn the guilty and to rectify whatever was wrong. The visitation ended with the production of a census of the inhabitants of the town and the settling of accounts before the archbishop or his representative moved to the next town.

As a result of their thoroughness, even the limited sample of the documentation of the visitations of Arias de Ugarte that survives provides a valuable glimpse of the state of the parishes of New Granada, and of the religious life of their Indigenous inhabitants. Chapter 5 considered some of the findings of this visitation concerning the knowledge of Indigenous languages. Other questions sought to establish, for instance, whether the priest provided adequate and regular religious instruction, or classes to teach parishioners how to read and write. In Soracá, for example, Archbishop Arias de Ugarte found the latter lacking.⁵³ Reflecting the new emphasis on the centrality of the sacraments, a crucial concern was whether the priest heard confessions and whether he prepared and admitted parishioners to communion. Most priests were found wanting on both counts, with a few questionable exceptions, such as the priest of Fúquene, Gerónimo García, who claimed to routinely hear the confessions of his parishioners, despite also admitting that he did not bother preaching to them because he did not know the local language.⁵⁴

Encounters of this kind shaped the production of norms and policies for use across the archdiocese, great and small. The visitation of Arias de Ugarte, for example, was designed to inform the archbishop of conditions in the parishes in preparation for the Provincial Council of 1625. His interviews with witnesses during the visitation revealed, for example, that the new policy of encouraging priests to admit their Indigenous parishioners to the Eucharist – after fifty years of forbidding it – was very slow to gain traction.⁵⁵ In Tópaga, for example, the parish priest, excused himself by saying that he had not yet catechised them sufficiently, because

⁵² Visitation of Monquirá by Arias de Ugarte, AHSB Libro 6, 100r–107v, at 104r.

⁵³ Visitation of Soracá by Archbishop Arias de Ugarte, AHSB, Libro 6, 8v.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 182v.

⁵⁵ He found that it was not administered in the parishes of Guacamayas, Tópaga, San José de Pare, and Saboyá. See AHSB, Libro 6, 19r–38v, at 234, 245, and 25v; Libro 6, 43r, 44v; Libro 6, 94r–99v, at 97v–98v; and Libro 6, 126, respectively.

he had not been in office for long.⁵⁶ In San José de Pare parish priest Fernando de Gordillo explained that he thought Indigenous people were incapable of the sacrament – a reminder that the controversies surrounding their admission were not limited to the highest echelons of the church.⁵⁷ Most priests also failed to administer the last rites, and the archbishop instructed several on how they were to go about taking the sacrament to the sick, down to providing guidelines for the production of special decorated bags to carry the consecrated host across difficult terrain to the homes of the dying.⁵⁸ These experiences were then reflected in the legislation of Santafé I – from stricter admonitions to admit Indigenous people to the sacraments to the design for these special bags.⁵⁹

Conversely these inspections were also opportunities to promulgate and implement legislation on the ground, giving us a glimpse of the continued development of the archdiocese's missionary strategy in the years after Santafé I. So it was in November 1636 when Archbishop Torres issued legislation to further reiterate the archdiocese's policy of fostering frequent participation in the Eucharist among Indigenous people – 'for these Indians will not finish becoming fully Christian if they are denied holy communion' – and chastising priests who continued to withhold it from them.⁶⁰ Not content with simply publishing the edict in Santafé, Torres ordered that it be taken by his visitors on their rounds 'and a copy stuck in a public place in the sacristy of every parish and *doctrina*', and announced that this was henceforth to be 'the most substantial point' that his agents were to investigate in pastoral visitations. While Torres's contemporaries in Lima and Mexico could distribute printed copies of their decrees and admonitions, Torres instead relied on what had by then become biennial systematic visitations of the archdiocese. When a few years later, in 1640, Torres issued legislation to foster a number of devotional practices in the archdiocese, this very quickly reached the parishes through what was by now an established system. Surviving parish books across the region show how his visitors required

⁵⁶ Visitation of Tópaga by Archbishop Arias de Ugarte, AHSB Libro 6, 52r.

⁵⁷ Visitation of San José de Pare by Arias de Ugarte, AHSB Libro 6, 97v.

⁵⁸ A typical example is Saboyá, where the archbishop gave instructions even on how this bag was to be made to carry the consecrated hosts, and how precautions were to be taken to ensure the homes of parishioners were clean and decent enough to receive it. Visitation of Saboyá by Arias de Ugarte, AHSB Libro 6, 126r.

⁵⁹ The latter in 'Concilio provincial 1625', 1.5.20 (386–387).

⁶⁰ Edict of Archbishop Torres concerning the sacraments, 28 November 1636, AGI SF 227, no. 17, 1r–3v, at 1r.

individual priests to copy the decrees they carried into their parish books and to read them to the laity before the visitor, dealing with the problem of dissemination, ensuring copies were accurate, and leaving a clear paper trail. Copies of Torres's 1640 edict can thus be found in the parish books for Oicatá, Pánqueba, and other parishes, alongside multiple others in the years and decades that followed, testament to how closely successive archbishops of Santafé came to involve themselves and supervise the affairs of Indigenous parishes and their priests, even despite the very material limitations of the resources at their disposal.⁶¹

It is tempting to focus on centrally directed efforts of this kind to explore the development of the reform movement that had been initiated by Lobo Guerrero and his allies in 1606. Legislation of this sort was, after all, a key way in which the new approach to Christianisation that centred quotidian devotions took root and expanded across the New Kingdom in the first half of the seventeenth century. Torres's legislation of 1640, for example, required the priests of Indigenous parishes to encourage their parishioners to adopt the devotion to the rosary, incorporating its mysteries and miracles into their teaching and preaching, and establishing confraternities dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary in every parish, 'so that the faithful can enjoy her innumerable and assured indulgences' by holding processions on the first Sunday of every month and other celebrations. The same decree also ordered priests to require Indigenous people to keep Christian images in their homes for their private devotions – 'at least a cross and an image' each – or face a two peso fine, to be applied to their purchase. Each priest was to answer to the archbishop's visitors on the edict's execution, and for this they were to visit their parishioners' homes every four months to check for images, in effect extending the reach of the archdiocese's policies – and of the inspection system – from sacristy to hearth.⁶² But legislation only tells one part of the story. Far more significant is what these and other contemporary records reveal of what Indigenous people themselves were doing with Christianity in this period; how they took advantage of the space afforded to them by the reforms. This brings us back to the Confraternity of St Lucy of Santafé, and to others like it that took root among Indigenous communities in urban and rural settings across the archdiocese of Santafé.

⁶¹ E.g. AGN PB, Oicatá, Libro 1, 115v–117r; AGN PB Pánqueba, Bautismos 1, [73r].

⁶² Edict of Archbishop Torres concerning the sacraments, copied 29 May 1640, AGN PB Oicatá, lib. 1, 116v.

'THE USAGE AND CUSTOM OF THE NATIVES OF THIS KINGDOM'

Religious confraternities or sodalities – variously known as *cofradías*, *hermandades*, *congregaciones* – were usually voluntary associations of laypeople structured around the promotion of a particular devotion, such as the cult of a saint, advocacy of the Virgin Mary, or a feast such as Corpus Christi, through works of piety. They tended to provide specific functions of care for their members, and none more important than commemorating the dead and pleading for their salvation through the periodic celebration of masses and the performance of works of charity on their behalf – something that took on an additional significance in missionary contexts such as this, in which they contributed to the Christianisation of practices surrounding death.⁶³ They also provided aid in times of need, helped the sick prepare for death, organised funerary rituals and associated ceremonies, aided impoverished dependents, and often also offered some element of charity to the wider community in which they were set. They were ostensibly self-governing, electing leaders for limited terms, and running their own affairs – at different times a source of considerable anxiety for the authorities of the New Kingdom. In most membership involved the payment of dues, whether on joining, regularly, or both, and many confraternities acquired endowments, lands, and other property as people gave them gifts and bequests. Because many of these funds were spent on the maintenance and provision of the images, altars, and churches associated with their activities, and particularly on hiring priests and the religious to officiate in their celebrations, say masses for their dead, and other activities, they frequently became key to the funding and upkeep of their churches and their priests, and some even major economic players in local contexts, holding property for their broader communities, providing loans, and distributing aid, as we will see.

These institutions have long been a focus of study by scholars of early modern Catholic societies in Europe and around the world in a variety of contexts.⁶⁴ Their broad features remained constant – ‘a common

⁶³ On this in the Central Andes, see Ramos, *Death and Conversion*; in Spain, Maureen Flynn, *Sacred Charity: Confraternities and Social Welfare in Spain, 1400–1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 64–74.

⁶⁴ For an outline of the field since the 1960s, see Christopher F. Black, ‘The Development of Confraternity Studies over the past 30 Years’. In *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*. Edited by Nicholas Terpstra (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9–29; and Nicholas Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna* (Cambridge: Cambridge

vocabulary of rituals structured by a common grammar of conditions, expectations and relations' – from medieval Europe to early-modern Spanish America, even as local conditions resulted in significant variations, so that this common vocabulary and grammar, to paraphrase Nicholas Terpstra, 'was always spoken in dialect', making them fertile ground for comparative study.⁶⁵ Spanish America has been no exception: scholars of different areas have long explored how confraternities were productive sites for the development and maintenance of new community identities and politics – not only among Indigenous groups, but particularly among people of African descent, enslaved and free, whose confraternities in different contexts have been the subject of important recent studies.⁶⁶ Perhaps owing to a comparative dearth of sources, however, the confraternities of the New Kingdom of Granada have received relatively

University Press, 1995). On Spain, see Maureen Flynn, 'Charitable Ritual in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain'. *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 16, no. 3 (1985): 335–348. Confraternities also featured prominently in discussions of religious reform and renewal in New Castile and the diocese of Cuenca, Christian, *Local Religion*, and Sara Tilghman Nalle, *God in La Mancha: Religious Reform and the People of Cuenca, 1500–1650* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

⁶⁵ Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*, xviii.

⁶⁶ Most recently, Javiera Jaque Hidalgo and Miguel A. Valeiro, *Indigenous and Black Confraternities in Colonial Latin America* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022). In the Central Andes, Gabriela Ramos explored the role of confraternities in the urban centres of Lima and Cuzco in *Death and Conversion*. More recently, Elizabeth Penry examined their part in the reconfiguration of Indigenous politics and community identity in rural contexts, in particular to contest and negotiate resettlement. See Penry, *The People Are King*. In New Spain, Laura Dierksmeier recently studied how Indigenous confraternities introduced by Franciscans served as a means to protect and reconfigure Indigenous governance, in *Charity for and by the Poor: Franciscan and Indigenous Confraternities in Mexico, 1527–1700* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, American Academy of Franciscan History, 2020). Laura E. Matthew reviews their role in the definition and development of group identities among the descendants of Mexican participants in invasion of Guatemala, in *Memories of Conquest: Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012). For a recent survey of these institutions in New Spain, see Murdo J. MacLeod, 'Confraternities in Colonial New Spain: Mexico and Central America'. In *A Companion to Medieval and Early Modern Confraternities*. Edited by Konrad Eisenbichler (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 280–306. An older overview of literature from both contexts is Susan Verdi Webster, 'Research on Confraternities in the Colonial Americas'. *Confraternitas* 9, no. 1 (1998): 13–24. On Afro-Mexican confraternities, see Nicole von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006). In Peru, Karen B. Graubart, 'So Color de Una Cofradía': Catholic Confraternities and the Development of Afro-Peruvian Ethnicities in Early Colonial Peru'. *Slavery & Abolition* 33, no. 1 (2012): 43–64.

little scholarly attention, and its Indigenous confraternities, at least before the eighteenth century, when they become better documented, even less.⁶⁷

The first confraternities established in the New Kingdom, from the 1540s, initially catered primarily to the city's most prominent Spanish citizens but broadened their membership over time. One was the Confraternity of the True Cross, established as early as 1543 in the cathedral church of Santafé, which came to admit at least one Indigenous member – Francisca Robles, a wealthy Indigenous woman – by the 1590s.⁶⁸ When Dominicans arrived in the city in the 1550s they too established confraternities in their convent, dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary. The Franciscans, for their part, tried to take the Confraternity of the True Cross to their church – as a disgruntled *Audiencia* complained to the incoming Archbishop Zapata in 1571 – along with a second, dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament, that had been established by then too. The Franciscans later had to make do with establishing their own confraternity, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, in 1584 instead.⁶⁹ So did the Jesuits, first for students at their college, then for Spaniards, and eventually also for enslaved people, 'Indigenous men and women, *morenos*, and *mestizos* in Indian dress'.⁷⁰ This final confraternity was dedicated to the Christ Child, and met every Sunday for catechism and preaching. Members participated in confession regularly, said the

⁶⁷ One exception is Juan Francisco González Acero, 'La cofradía de las Benditas Ánimas del Purgatorio en Fontibón 1683–1693' (MA dissertation, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2013), which considers confraternities in Fontibón in the 1680s and 1690s. Religious confraternities in the New Kingdom were the subject of a 1973 doctoral dissertation, Gary Wendell Graff, 'Cofradías in the New Kingdom of Granada; Lay Fraternities in a Spanish–American Frontier Society, 1600–1755' (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1973), which nevertheless paid little attention to their foundation, role, and development among Indigenous people. The most comprehensive study of Indigenous confraternities in rural spaces remains María Lucía Sotomayor, *Cofradías, caciques y mayordomos: Reconstrucción social y reorganización política en los pueblos indios, siglo XVIII* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2004), which focuses on the eighteenth century. For a recent outline of confraternity studies in Colombia, see Jerson Fidel Jaimes Rodríguez and Santiago Mendieta Afanador, 'Devociones católicas, prácticas religiosas, y cofradías – hermandades en Colombia (siglos XVI–XIX): Una aproximación bibliográfica'. *Anuario de Historia Regional y de las Fronteras* 25, no. 1 (June 2020): 173–203.

⁶⁸ According to her will of 20 October 1591, at AGN Notaría 2a de Santafé 8, 910v. On the confraternity, Graff, 'Cofradías in the New Kingdom of Granada', 40–44.

⁶⁹ Audiencia of Santafé to Zapata, 1 May 1571, AGI SF 16 n. 31, 1v. Ibid., 40–44.

⁷⁰ That is people of mixed descent living among their Indigenous, and not their Spanish, families. This they began to report in the Jesuit *littera annua* for 1608–1609, dated 10 September 1609, ARSI NR&Q 12 I, 44r–45r, 64v.

rosary together, pooled their resources to aid each other when they fell ill or their dependents when they died, and remembered and prayed for their dead. The confraternity was not limited to men, and most of its members by 1613 were women.⁷¹

Other urban confraternities, especially those of Indigenous people, are more difficult to trace, but here surviving Indigenous wills provide some light. Those published in Pablo Rodríguez's exhaustive compilation of wills from Santafé's notarial records document the participation and patronage of Indigenous people in twenty-nine separate confraternities in the city by 1640 through their bequests and funeral arrangements. These ranged from the bequests of Juan Navarro, an immigrant from Tunja who in 1567 left a little money to the confraternities of St Lucy and of the Virgin of the Rosary; through donations to Franciscan and Augustinian confraternities as these were established in the 1570s and 1580s, and later to Jesuit confraternities at the turn of the century; to a real flourishing of confraternities dedicated to dozens of other devotions across the city. By 1640 the city's four parishes – the cathedral and the churches of Santa Bárbara, San Victorino, and Las Nieves – were each home to multiple vibrant sodalities, involving broad swathes of the city's Indigenous inhabitants.⁷²

In addition to their central role in connection to preparations for death, funerary arrangements, and remembrance and intercession for the dead that their wills document, petitions and litigation by their members – such as that of Juan Guabatiba with which this chapter began – also speak to their centrality as spaces for sociability, solidarity, and celebration, often to the authorities' suspicion. So it was when Domingo de Guamanga, *mayordomo* of the Confraternity of the Virgin of Solitude of the cathedral church of Santafé complained of a civil official disrupting the preparations for one of their celebrations in 1640. In order to bring people together and raise some funds for a new mantle and silver band for their image of the Virgin, they had decided to organise 'a party, as is the usage and custom of the natives of this kingdom', for which they had ordered fifty vessels of *chicha* and mead 'so that our brothers would come and to share with them', explaining that 'otherwise no one would come'. Before the party, however, the overzealous official had come upon their preparations and spilled the drink and smashed the pots, ruining their

⁷¹ Ibid., 65r–66r. I am grateful to Larissa Brewer-García for a stimulating exchange about this early Jesuit confraternity in Santafé.

⁷² Rodríguez Jiménez, *Testamentos*.

celebration and leaving them liable to replace the vessels they had borrowed from the brewers.⁷³

Records for Tunja, which are scarcer, still reveal Indigenous patronage of at least three confraternities in its parish church of Santiago by the 1590s, dedicated to the True Cross, the Virgin of Solitude, and Santiago.⁷⁴ We know little of their activities in this period, except that by the early seventeenth century they seem to have become central to the financing of the churches of the city. When in 1620 the *cabildo* petitioned Archbishop Arias de Ugarte to create two additional parishes, Las Nieves and Santa Bárbara, to make proper provision for the growing populations of Indigenous migrants living in the periphery of the city, opponents of the proposal argued that this might lead to the ruin of the existing parish church and financial difficulties for the churches of the religious orders, 'for parishioners will cease to fund their confraternities', establishing new ones in the new parishes instead.⁷⁵

The visitation of Miguel de Ibarra to Chocontá in 1593 provides the earliest glimpse so far of a confraternity established in an Indigenous town in the New Kingdom. There, as we saw in Chapter 4, Ibarra found that the people of the town had 'already constituted among them a Confraternity of the Holy True Cross in the church of the town, and placed in it a very devout image of a Holy Crucifixion', which he rewarded when he allocated their *resguardo*.⁷⁶ Records of papal approval granted to Indigenous confraternities also suggest that two more were well established around the turn of the century – the Confraternity of the Souls of Purgatory of Ubaque, which was approved in October 1600, and that of St Agatha in Cocuy, approved in February 1603.⁷⁷ Unfortunately we know little else about these three or what they did. Better documented are the confraternities that the Jesuits began to introduce in their parishes after 1605, in the model of those they set up on their arrival in Santafé.

⁷³ Petition of Domingo de Guamanga, 15 July 1640, AGI SF 227, n 25g.

⁷⁴ See for example the wills of Gaspar, *cacique* of Soatá, of 5 April 1596 (AHRB AHT 30 d 10) and Gaspar, *cacique* of Chita, of 6 May 1596 (AHRB AHT 27 d 7), both of whom left bequests to all three. On these, and confraternities for Spaniards, see Abel Fernando Martínez Martín and Andrés Ricardo Otálora Cascante, 'Una tradición de larga duración: la Semana Santa en Tunja'. *Historia y Espacio* 17, no. 57 (2021): 75–114.

⁷⁵ So argued parish priest Sancho Ramírez de Figueredo in his letter to Arias de Ugarte, 25 August 1620 (AHRB E 1, n. 2, 31r).

⁷⁶ Visitation of Chocontá by Ibarra, 23 July 1593, AGN VB 11 d 11 295v.

⁷⁷ Josef Metzler and Giuseppina Roselli, *America Pontificia III: documenti pontifici nell'Archivio segreto vaticano riguardanti l'evangelizzazione dell'America: 1592–1644* (Vatican: Libreria editrice vaticana, 1995), 773, 800.

The first of these they founded in Cajicá soon after their arrival, to promote frequent communion and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.⁷⁸ They would later do the same in Fontibón and in Duitama. Few documents related to the inner workings of these organisations survive, and most of what we have comes from the reports the Jesuits submitted to their superiors in Rome. But the first confraternity they established in Fontibón, dedicated to the Christ Child, is an exception, for some of its internal documentation has survived, providing crucial insights into the purpose, social functions, and activities of these organisations in the parishes.⁷⁹

THE CHRIST CHILD OF FONTIBÓN

Even though in many contexts confraternities were largely self-governing and independent of the clergy, in the New Kingdom of Granada, as in other regions of Spanish America, this was a recurring cause of concern and anxiety among ecclesiastical authorities and reformers, who sought to limit their autonomy and to place them firmly under their supervision. For the Jesuits, the risks were worth taking, and the additional effort of closely monitoring the activities of the confraternities was a valuable investment, since in order to introduce reforms into their parishes they needed the support of influential members of the Indigenous laity. Despite these limitations and scrutiny, the institutions proved attractive to a broad range of Indigenous people, for a variety of reasons. This is abundantly clear from the experience of the Confraternity of the Christ Child of Fontibón, which served as a powerful vehicle for social mobility and political reconfiguration in the aftermath of enormous disruption.

It might be assumed that the most obvious constituency for the Jesuits to target with their new confraternity in Fontibón would have been the Indigenous nobility, particularly the *cacique* and his family. But by this point the Indigenous nobility of Fontibón had largely collapsed. The town was at the epicentre of many of the most significant developments wrought on Indigenous communities in the New Kingdom since the days of Archbishop Zapata. It was here, and in nearby Cajicá, that the violent seizures of *santuario* gold had begun in 1577, after all. A few years later, in the early 1580s, the community was consolidated into a gridded town

⁷⁸ Jesuit *littera annua* for 1608–1609, dated 10 September 1609, ARSI NR&Q 12 I, 51v.

⁷⁹ Documents of the Confraternity of the Christ Child, Fontibón, AHSB Caja 1, 373r–382v.

after its church was built.⁸⁰ The following decade, during González's *composiciones*, much of the land previously controlled by the inhabitants of the town was redistributed to its Spanish neighbours. Ample documentation survives of Indigenous authorities in the town who tried, unsuccessfully, to recover some of it. The *cacique*, don Alonso, attempted to do so on various occasions, even purchasing several tracts, only to lose them again in the years that followed or see the crops planted on them destroyed by the cattle of his Spanish neighbours.⁸¹

As with so many other Indigenous rulers, don Alonso's authority began to crumble under these pressures, while the balance of power and wealth in the town shifted rapidly as these changes affected different members of the community unevenly.⁸² The redistributive cycle of the town's Indigenous ritual economy that had kept the *cacique* at the head of the community began to collapse, and by 1590 several of Fontibón's inhabitants sued him before the *Audiencia* to demand that he pay them in currency for their work in his fields, which had traditionally been remunerated through the traditional means discussed in Chapter 1. Soon after don Alonso complained that many of his subjects had ceased to recognise him as their ruler and had instead installed one Alonso Saqueypaba, formerly one of his captains, as *cacique*, paying him tributes instead. Several of his subjects even accused don Alonso before the *Audiencia* of having poisoned one of the people involved, in a desperate attempt to cling on to his position of pre-eminence.⁸³

Things were worse for his successor, don Juan, who in November 1595 petitioned the *Audiencia*, as detailed in Chapter 3, to force his subjects to obey him, to little avail.⁸⁴ Three years later, as we saw, Lobo Guerrero's first visitation once again resulted in the confiscation and destruction of ritual objects in Fontibón, belonging to a broad section of the town's population. The Jesuits Medrano and Figueroa, who accompanied the archbishop, reported that 'there was hardly a single house where we did not find some idols', which they located 'hidden under ground and in the ceilings and walls of their houses', and that they punished more than eighty 'priests of the sun' who maintained them.⁸⁵ Whatever authority

⁸⁰ Report on the building of Fontibón, AGN FI 21, 880r–880v.

⁸¹ Suit over lands of Fontibón, 5 September 1590, AGN Miscelánea 6, n. 8, 254r–254v.

⁸² Visitation of Fontibón by Gabriel de Carvajal, 11 July 1639, AGN VC 19.

⁸³ As several witnesses reported in the suit of Lucía, India, vs. Alonso, *cacique* of Fontibón, 10 May 1591, AGN CJ 82 n. 33.

⁸⁴ Suit of Juan, *cacique* of Fontibón vs. his subjects, AGN C&I 9 n. 13, 451r–501v.

⁸⁵ 'Descripción del Nuevo Reino de Granada', c. 1600, ARSI NR&Q 14, 11r.

and support don Juan of Fontibón still derived from the sponsorship and direction of the town's Indigenous ritual economy finally collapsed. By 1613 political power in Fontibón had come to be exercised by a succession of Indigenous governors, reducing the role of the *cacique* further.⁸⁶ When the Confraternity of the Christ Child was introduced by the Jesuits, then, the people who joined it and rose to leadership positions were not members of the Indigenous nobility. The names of several members – *Pescador*, *Curtidor* – even hint at some of the humblest origins.⁸⁷ The Jesuits who administered the parish knew of Fontibón's recent history, but it is unclear whether they excluded the nobility from the confraternity deliberately or if it simply attracted a different section of the town's population.

For the Jesuits, the confraternity served to refocus Christianisation on the promotion of everyday devotional practices. Most immediately, it served to cultivate the Christianity of the confraternity's members, who were required to adhere to a strict code of behaviour that reflected Jesuit priorities. Confraternity records show, for example, how members were required to confess frequently, to take communion at least three times a year, and to come together regularly to hear sermons and participate in meditations. All were required to lead exemplary lives, according to the standards of the Jesuits, and the constitutions envisioned that they would supervise one another, aware that the penalty for breaking the rules was expulsion. The Jesuits, for their part, ensured that the men and women who made up the confraternity enjoyed special privileges that all could see. Their exalted status was visible each time anyone went to the church – where the Jesuits had hung big boards with the confraternity's constitutions and the names 'of confraternity officials and the indulgences they had earned, in both languages' – and in every celebration held inside, where the confraternity members sat in their own special pews.⁸⁸ The idea, for them, was to contribute to the creation of a Christian elite in the town who could aid the Jesuits in pursuit of their reforms, partly by serving as intermediaries – helping to prepare other people in the town for confession during Lent, for example – and partly as part of a

⁸⁶ Documents of the *protector de naturales*, 14 November 1613, AGN Miscelánea 132 d. 64, 791r.

⁸⁷ The only exception was one Hernando Capitán, who in 1614 was appointed as one of the *alféreces*. AHSB Caja 1, 373r–382v.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 373r–373v, 379v.

promotional strategy to showcase the success of their approach to Christianisation.⁸⁹

Exploring the motivation of the confraternity's Indigenous members is more difficult. These people were the object of observations, stories, and reports in Jesuit correspondence, but rarely speak for themselves, and, as commoners, have left few other marks in the colonial archive. We can only assume that participation in the confraternity served to satisfy their material and spiritual needs as individuals in important ways, given the great investment of time and resources they chose to make in the institution. We can, nevertheless, ascertain some aspects of their collective motivations. One, at least here, no doubt had to do with the opportunities the confraternity offered people outside of the Indigenous nobility to play central roles in the religious and ceremonial life of the town. This was especially the case for people from backgrounds traditionally excluded from the organisation of traditional celebrations that had earlier underpinned the positions of Indigenous elites. The constitutions may have focused primarily on the private activities of the confraternity and on policies directed at its members, but the real impact of institutions such as this is actually to be found in their public presence and activities.⁹⁰ This is clear from the roles they played in parish celebrations, not only those that were central to the confraternity itself – Christmas and Corpus Christi – which tended to be sumptuous occasions to which the Jesuits invited the inhabitants of neighbouring towns and even influential members of the diocesan hierarchy, but even on more everyday occasions. When the confraternity came together to say the rosary, for example, it did so by processing through the town, carrying a large gold cross, singing, and accompanied by a priest in full vestments.⁹¹ It was, in other words, impossible to live in Fontibón and ignore these people.

The confraternity offered its members a means of advancement and recognition within their communities. This included people who had been benefitting from the town's economic reconfiguration, but who had little claim to status or position. One such person was Juan de Bohorques, who served as *mayordomo* of the confraternity in the early 1610s. Documentation from Ibarra's visitation of 1594 showed that he was not one of the *principales* of the town, and that of Gabriel de Carvajal in the

⁸⁹ On the former, *Ibid.*, 376r.

⁹⁰ In common with confraternities in urban contexts, where these public functions took on a key role after Trent. See Black, 'The Public Face', 87–89.

⁹¹ Documents of the Confraternity of the Christ Child of Fontibón, AHSB Caja 1, 376r.

1630s showed his widow and children were merely members of one of the ten *capitanías* that made up the community.⁹² And yet, having left the confraternity a significant bequest, the anniversary of his death in 1614 was commemorated with two days of impressive celebrations to rival those of any Indigenous noble. They started with a solemn procession from his home to the church the previous evening, in which all members of the confraternity, and even visiting dignitaries from Indigenous confraternities in Santafé, accompanied his widow and his relatives to the church, for nocturns and responsories. The next day they reconvened for an elaborate mass in the packed church, featuring the music of choirs and instruments, all paid for by the confraternity, which also made a generous donation to the parish in his name.⁹³

Through their participation in the confraternity – and alliance with the Jesuits who oversaw it – commoners like Bohorques could come to play central roles in the life of their town from which they had previously been excluded. Within this it is worth noting that the confraternity also offered opportunities for participation and leadership to women, even if in subordinate roles limited by European and Christian gender roles. The confraternity's members included multiple women, presided by a '*priosta* of the sisters'.⁹⁴ Together these innovations could subvert traditional social and political hierarchies in the town, allowing for the consolidation of new structures of ritual kinship and opening new avenues for social mobility – in common with many other confraternities around the Catholic world in this period, and particularly welcome in Fontibón in the middle of this period of upheaval.⁹⁵ This is because the confraternity also offered its members the means to perform much needed charitable work, especially as new waves of epidemics reached the highlands and continued to devastate Indigenous communities, the worse of which hit the region in 1618 and 1633.⁹⁶ Confraternity officials included two whose job it was to visit and monitor the sick, and two nurses – in 1614, Juana Bautista and Francisca Mendoza – while the documentation

⁹² Visitation of Fontibón by Ibarra, 21 May 1594, AGI SF 17 n. 92b. Carvajal's visitation of 11 July 1639 confirms that his widow, Ana de Bohorques, and their descendants were all members of the *capitanía* of Tibasuso. AGN VB 12 d 10, 988r.

⁹³ Documents of the Confraternity of the Christ Child, Fontibón, AHSB Caja 1, 378 r.

⁹⁴ Ibid., AHSB Caja 1, 375v.

⁹⁵ On confraternities and 'ritual kinship', see Nicholas Terpstra, *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8.

⁹⁶ Measles and typhus, respectively. See Ruiz Rivera, *Encomienda y mita*, 104–105.

of the confraternity and the reports the Jesuits sent their superiors describe their role offering support and assistance to the inhabitants of the town.⁹⁷ As before this served a variety of purposes: it advanced the Jesuit missionary project, by aiding the Jesuits to prepare the dying for a Christian death, helping the dying ready their confessions, and dissuading them from turning to the sorts of Indigenous medicinal and healing practices that the Jesuits sought to remove, but it also provided much needed support and relief for the elderly and sick, contributing to the survival of their community and reinforcing their leadership within it.⁹⁸

This mutually beneficial arrangement was central to the success of the reform movement initiated in 1606, and not just in Fontibón. By providing new avenues for different Indigenous actors to interact with Christianity, the reformers made it easier for them to become stakeholders in the missionary project. This is very clear from the rapid proliferation of confraternities across the archdiocese in the years that followed.

‘JUNTAS Y CONVITES’

In the years that followed, the archdiocese’s authorities actively founded dozens of confraternities across the Indigenous towns of Santafé and Tunja. Some were founded by the archbishops themselves, on their visitations. In Cajicá priest Diego de Rojas reported in 1639 that in addition to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament that had been established by the Jesuits, one had been established by Lobo Guerrero, two by Arias de Ugarte, and another by his successor, Julián de Cortázar (in office 1627–1630), bringing the total to five.⁹⁹

Another driver of this expansion was their adoption by Indigenous leaders, who came increasingly to sponsor Christian institutions and celebrations in communities where they still retained positions of authority. So it was in the town of Pesca where, in 1607, the new *cacique*, don Pedro Pirascosba, petitioned the ecclesiastical visitor Nuño Fernández de Villavicencio, inspecting the parish on behalf of Lobo Guerrero, to allow him to establish a devotion to St Peter in the town, for which he requested permission to place an image of the saint in the parish church, to celebrate his feast day with ‘a sung mass, with vespers and a procession’, and to say a low mass for the devotion ‘every two weeks’. The visitor granted the

⁹⁷ Documents of the Confraternity of the Christ Child, Fontibón, AHSB Caja 1, 376r.

⁹⁸ Jesuit *littera annua* for 1611–1612, dated 6 June 1613, ARSI, NR&Q, leg. 12-1, 79v.

⁹⁹ Declaration of Diego de Rojas, 12 December 1639, AGI SF 227 25i, 8v.

request, ‘provided there are no *borracheras*, dances, parties, or disturbances’, and the *cacique* agreed to pay three gold pesos in alms for the main celebration and half a peso for each low mass, for a total of sixteen pesos a year.¹⁰⁰ Don Pedro had recently taken over the *cacicazgo*, after a legal challenge to remove an Indigenous governor who had ruled instead of his late predecessor.¹⁰¹ Around the same time, in 1605, Pesca had been amalgamated with the communities of Soacá and Tupia, and moved to their current site, where a church had recently been built.¹⁰² In addition to whatever personal relationship don Pedro had to the saint whose name – likely not coincidentally – he shared, through the sponsorship of this devotion the *cacique* also staked a claim to part of the new church and the ritual calendar of the town, for himself and his community. After all the same 1607 visitation noted that the communities of Soacá and Tupia had brought with them their confraternities of San Jacinto and the Virgin of the Snows, respectively. By 1620 when the parish was inspected by Arias de Ugarte, the devotion to St Peter had grown into a full-blown confraternity, headed by don Pedro’s successor don Cristóbal.¹⁰³

Many other towns that were also the result of the consolidation of disparate communities often adopted separate confraternities that served to maintain their individual identities and to stake a claim on the ritual and religious life of the new settlements. So it was, for example, in the town of Tópaga, which in 1601 had been created by amalgamating four communities.¹⁰⁴ By 1620, when the town was inspected by Archbishop Arias de Ugarte, even though one confraternity dedicated to Corpus Christi brought together the whole town, the three largest communities, Gótamo, Chipatá, and Tópaga, each had their own competing confraternities as well, dedicated to St Peter, the Immaculate Conception, and the True Cross, respectively.¹⁰⁵ This continued for decades after resettlement. A well-known example is that of the Confraternity of the Souls of Purgatory of the parish of Cómbita, with which this book began, created in 1601 by forcibly bringing together the people of Cómbita, Motavita, and Suta, and which was particularly associated with the

¹⁰⁰ AGN PB Pesca LI, 37v.

¹⁰¹ On this, see the petition of don Cristóbal, governor of Pesca, 19 March 1605, AGN, Archivos Privados, Enrique Ortega Ricaurte, Caciques e Indios 9, cr. 2, d. 11, 13r.

¹⁰² Decree for the resettlement of Pesca, Tupia and Soacá, 13 April 1605, AGN VB 4, 205r.

¹⁰³ AGN PB Pesca LI, 38v, 55v.

¹⁰⁴ See the decree for the resettlement of Gótamo, Chiaptá, Satova, and Tópaga, 30 December 1606, AGN VB 13, 255r–256v.

¹⁰⁵ Visitation of Tópaga by Arias de Ugarte, 10 December 1621, AHSB lib. 6, 43v.

people of the first.¹⁰⁶ As Mercedes López has shown in her study of the famous painting of St Nicholas of Tolentino and the Souls of Purgatory by Gaspar de Figueroa that it commissioned (Figure I.1), the confraternity’s leader and *cacique* of Cómbita, don Pedro Tabaco, used the confraternity and its sponsorship of religious art to assert the importance of the community of Cómbita in the life of the town, and through it his own, well into the 1650s.¹⁰⁷

The role of confraternities as spaces of sociability was not limited to religious celebrations. As early as 1604, for example, Lobo Guerrero had complained that the confraternities he had seen there were little more than covers for revelries and drunkenness, holding ruinously expensive parties ‘lasting 8 or 15 days each time’, allegedly bankrupting entire communities and serving as occasions for grievous sin, so that they should carefully scrutinised and limited – a requirement he also put the synod of 1606.¹⁰⁸ This was a dramatic exaggeration, but confraternity celebrations often did include gatherings in which a confraternity official – usually the *alférez*, or standard bearer – took the confraternity’s banner to his home or another place and there provided confraternity members and their guests food, drink, and entertainment. It was for this reason that the Jesuits watched their confraternities so closely, why visitor Nuño Fernández de Villavicencio had felt the need to insert those caveats into his approval for the devotion to St Peter in Pesca, and why successive archbishops of Santafé made a point of legislating to forbid confraternities from having banquets and even *alféreces* altogether. The parish books for Oicatá and Pesca record a decree to this effect, dutifully copied into them in during a visitation of 1614–1615, ordering the priest to keep hold of the confraternity’s banner.¹⁰⁹ Arias de Ugarte, who also used his visitation to promote the introduction of confraternities as part of the archdiocese’s Christianisation strategy, even produced model constitutions to be used as a template for new foundations, such as for the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception he established in Tibaguyas in July 1619, which expressly declared that ‘in no way shall an *alférez* be appointed’, and instead required members to draw lots to

¹⁰⁶ On creation of the town, see the decree for the resettlement of Cómbita, Motavita, and Suta, 9 October 1600 (AGN VB 14 d. 11, 749r–750r). On the number of confraternities in Cómbita, see the report of Bartolome del Río of July 1640 (AGI SF 227, no. 25h, 2v).

¹⁰⁷ See López Rodríguez, ‘La memoria’.

¹⁰⁸ Lobo Guerrero to the king, 4 May 1604, AGI SF 226 n. 91, 2r–2v; ‘Constituciones sinodales 1606’, ch. 18, 254.

¹⁰⁹ AGN PB, Oicatá, L1, 90r; AGN PB Pesca, L1, 42v.

determine who was carry the banner, and then promptly return it to the priest for safekeeping after the end of the procession.¹¹⁰

The practice did not go away. Arias de Ugarte included a question about these arrangements in the questionnaire of his visitation, which showed the practice was widespread. In Tópaga, for instance, Arias de Ugarte found that all four confraternities celebrated their principal feast day lavishly with '*juntas y convites*', gatherings and parties. Each celebration involved the appointment of an *alférez* to lead the procession with the confraternity's standard. The *alférez*, as witness Juan Banesta reported to the archbishop, funded the whole thing: 'he pays six pesos for the vespers, sung mass, and procession, and then takes the standard home and invites some of the Indians to a banquet, after which they drink and play'.¹¹¹ In other towns the *alférez* raised money for the celebration – in some across the whole the town, in others only from specific groups – and then hosted the party. Among the beneficiaries of this largesse were often the parish priests themselves. In Fúquene *cacique* don Juan explained the *alférez* there sent the priest a nice lamb and four chickens each time.¹¹² In Soracá the priest received 'roast chickens and venison and other little things, and a jar of wine' – *cacique* don Luis explained – 'for the honour of the celebration'.¹¹³ For the ecclesiastical authorities, at least in the early decades of the century, these festivities undermined the sacred and solemn character of the religious celebration and struck them as likely a continuation of some pre-Hispanic practice. Lobo Guerrero, in 1604, had gone as far as to speculate about whether, having lost their featherworks and other objects, 'they turned to making silk banners with which to adore their gods under the holy pretext of founding confraternities', as if these were functionally equivalent.¹¹⁴

Within a few decades, however, the ecclesiastical authorities had come to understand that these banquets and celebrations played central roles in these communities, or at least that trying to suppress them only served to make confraternities poorer – 'for without the *juntas* the alms they collect are reduced' as visitor Bartolomé del Río explained in 1640.¹¹⁵ It was thus that Archbishop Torres instead ordered that confraternities each

¹¹⁰ Constitutions of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception of Tibaguyas, 12 July 1619, AGI SF 227, n. 25d.

¹¹¹ Visitation of Tópaga by Arias de Ugarte, 10 December 1621, AHSB lib. 6, 43v.

¹¹² Visitation of Fúquene by Arias de Ugarte, 16 October 1619, AHSB Caja 1, 178v.

¹¹³ Visitation of Soracá by Arias de Ugarte, 24 November 1620, AHSB L6, 8v–9r.

¹¹⁴ Lobo Guerrero to the king, 4 May 1604, AGI SF 226 n. 91, 2r.

¹¹⁵ Bartolomé del Río to Archbishop Torres, 10 July 1640, AGI SF 227, 25a, 3r.

hold three such celebrations per year, with the priest in attendance, effectively bringing legislation in line with what was already common practice, and recognising that it was impossible, as well as undesirable, to turn back the clock.¹¹⁶ It was in this way that when Torres later sought to foster the devotion the rosary across Indigenous parishes, he turned to the establishment of even more confraternities to ensure it took root.¹¹⁷ It was easier, he decided, to ride the wave than to try to hold back the tide. What is clear, in any case, is that by the early decades of the seventeenth century confraternities had become key means through which people in Indigenous towns organised and held communal celebrations in which resources were redistributed within the community. Local elites – whether old or new – distributed their patronage and formed or reinforced bonds of reciprocity and obligation during these celebrations, and these came to be central to the consolidation and maintenance of group identities, reinforcing pre-existing ones or engendering new ones.

Tempting though it is to focus on this aspect, which so concerned the authorities, it is also worth reflecting on the important role that confraternities came to play in these communities as economic corporations that held and administered community resources. There are few sources that allow us to explore the internal finances of these institutions in the first half of the seventeenth century, but one exception is the account book for the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament of Sutatenza, in the province of Tunja, which records the multitude of small donations contributed to by its members to fund its activities. In 1636, for instance, the confraternity paid for at least thirty-three masses for the souls of its dead, each recorded with its individual benefactors – from the *caciques* and captains who funded many, to commoners Leonor, Miguel, and Pedro who each paid for one or two, and others still who gave just a few candles.¹¹⁸ These quotidian donations could be topped up by generous bequests by wealthier patrons, for multiple reasons. Surviving wills belonging to Indigenous leaders in the seventeenth century often include generous donations to confraternities that suggest that these had even become means to keep certain lands and resources in their communities, separate from the property they transmitted to their children and other heirs as per Spanish

¹¹⁶ As Archbishop Torres explained to Jorge de Herrera, 10 July 1640, AGI SF 227, n. 25a, 11r–11v.

¹¹⁷ As recorded, as we saw, in the parish book of Oicatá in May of 1640. AGN PB Oicatá, L1, 116v–117r.

¹¹⁸ Fourth Parish Book of Sutatenza, AGN PB Sutatenza, L4, 7r.

inheritance practices. So it was with don Andrés, *cacique* of Machetá and Tibirita, who had made his life in Santafé, and whose 1633 will ordered that his remains be buried in the Franciscan convent in the city, ‘even if I die in my town’. He nevertheless left generous landholdings to the parish church and confraternities of the two towns: two plots in Tibirita to the confraternities of St Anne, St Barbara, and St Lucy of its church, and another plot in Machetá to the Confraternity of St Lucy of that town. To the church itself he left a large cattle ranch, ‘to hold and keep and work and cultivate forever’.¹¹⁹ A few days later, in a codicil, he added a number of images, including a statue of St Lucy that was housed in the church, which had cost him fifty pesos – ensuring these resources stayed in the hands of the people of Machetá and Tibirita, even as his own descendants made new lives in Santafé.¹²⁰

In different towns, through subscriptions, membership fees, alms, and bequests, confraternities acquired significant capital and resources that served to meet some of the collective needs of their members, which increasingly also included elements of Christian practice. None was more significant than the operations of their parish churches themselves, which by the late 1630s had come to depend on the voluntary donations of Indigenous people, through their confraternities, for their very functioning.

‘WHERE THERE ARE NO CONFRATERNITIES EVERYTHING
IS IN TATTERS’

In addition to noting the location of the parish churches of the archdiocese, the affiliation of their parish priests, and the sizes and characteristics of the communities that they served, Rodrigo Zapata de Lobera’s account of the state of the parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé paid special attention to the perennial problem of parish finance. By the time of the visitations of Santafé and Tunja of Carvajal and Valcárcel, the standard stipend for a parish priest in an Indigenous parish was set at just over 344 *patacones*, silver pesos of 8 *reales*.¹²¹ Of the 106 parishes for which

¹¹⁹ Will of don Andrés, *cacique* of Machetá and Tibirita, 25 May 1633, AGN Notaría 3a de Santafé 38, 90r, 91r (Rodríguez Jiménez, *Testamentos*, no. 74).

¹²⁰ Codicil of don Andrés, *cacique* of Machetá and Tibirita, 27 May 1633, AGN Notaría 3a de Santafé 38, 97r (also *Ibid.*, no. 68).

¹²¹ These were actually recorded, in Zapata de Lobera’s calculations, as 306 pesos *corrientes* of 9 reales, an accounting unit. These are equivalent to 344.25 actual physical silver peso coins – *patacones* – of 8 *reales*. For a recent study of bimetallism in New Granada, see James Vladimir Torres Moreno, *Minería y moneda en el Nuevo Reino de*

records of stipends survive, however, only in thirty-five did the priest receive the full payment – usually in the parishes of royal *encomiendas* or places with large populations of tribute payers, like Ubaté and Ubaque.¹²² In the remaining seventy-one, priests were paid a fraction of the total expressed in terms of months. In Pesca, for instance, the priest received nine months' wages for a full year's work; in Cómbita, ten months; in Oicatá, eight; and in Gámeza, just six.¹²³ The average was 8.7, or about 250 *patacones* per year.

Shortly after these visitations, in 1640, Archbishop Torres ordered one of his visitors, Bartolomé del Río, to collate a report on the number of confraternities he had seen in the towns he inspected. In 45 towns, Río reported counting 125 confraternities, including one he had set up in Suta, 'at the request of the Indians, with some *fanegas* of farmland for an endowment'. These ranged from 8 confraternities in Siachoque and 6 in Turmequé, to a single confraternity in small towns like Tuta and Sotaquirá, with most having at least 2 and the average around 2.8. Only one, Oicatá, whose church was in terrible shape, lacked a single one, proving – in Río's words – 'that where there are no confraternities everything is in tatters'.¹²⁴ Each of these confraternities paid an annual fee to the parish priest for the celebration of the feast of its devotion, plus additional fees for masses said over the course of the year for various purposes, particularly for the funerals and anniversary masses of its members.

The amounts could be substantial, even in parishes with just one or two confraternities. So it was in Bojacá, a town composed of three communities, Cubia, Bobasé, and Bojacá, which had two confraternities between them. In 1639 its parish priest, Andrés Millán, explained how the Confraternity of St Lucy – associated with Cubia and Bobasé – hired him to say '24 low masses a year, giving a *patacón* in alms for each, plus 6 for the sung mass, procession, and vespers for the day of the feast', in addition to the funeral masses they paid for when their members died, at a peso each. He also noted how 'the mayordomos are quick to disburse aid to the sick, without which they would be in terrible shape'. The Confraternity of John the Baptist – associated with the community of

Granada: el desempeño económico en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2013), ch. 3.

¹²² Report of the parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé, 10 March 1663, AHSB Caja 6A, 376r–492v.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 466r, 485v, 386r–386v, 384v.

¹²⁴ Bartolomé del Río to Archbishop Torres, 10 July 1640, AGI SF 227, 25a, 1v–2v.

Bojacá – paid him a further 30 pesos for 24 low masses and a sung mass each year, bringing his 9-month stipend of about 258 *patacones* up to nearly the full amount. Both, crucially, offered much needed poor relief from the income of two herds of 400 sheep, whose income provided ‘for the many needs of that some Indians suffer for their poverty’.¹²⁵ Even in the town of Chocontá, whose parish priest enjoyed a full stipend, the payments of confraternities represented a substantial portion of his income. As don Marcos, brother of the town’s *cacique*, reported to crown prosecutor Jorge de Herrera in 1640, his town had ten active confraternities. ‘From each of these the *doctrinero* receives 6 *patacones* per year, plus another 6 *reales* each month for the mass he says for each confraternity’, for a total of 150 pesos. In addition, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament paid a further 2 pesos each month in alms, and those of the Virgin of the Rosary and the Souls of Purgatory 1 peso each – bringing the total to 198 *patacones* of additional income, increasing the priest’s pay by almost 60 per cent – not counting the fees the confraternities paid ecclesiastical visitors and other officials for inspections, or the candles and other small items they gave throughout the year.¹²⁶

One reason why there are such detailed figures for this period is that the diocesan authorities compiled a number of reports on confraternities across the archdiocese in the early 1640s in response to a renewed challenge against these institutions, this time led by the *fiscal* of the *Audiencia*, Jorge de Herrera, who wrote long complaints to the crown about the apparent evils of these institutions – likely covers, in his view, for ‘terrible crimes, sins, and incest’.¹²⁷ By now, as with their gatherings and celebrations, Archbishop Torres had come to realise that trying to limit confraternities was counterproductive, and that it was better to take advantage ‘of the great utility that these confraternities bring to their churches’. And not just to the parish churches: as multiple witnesses explained, and Torres certified, confraternities were integral to the financing of his biennial visitation programme. Each confraternity paid the visitor 6 pesos each time it was inspected – ‘as per the immemorial custom of this archdiocese’.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Declaration of Andrés Millán, *doctrinero* of Bojacá, 17 December 1639, AGI SF 227 25i, 5v–7r.

¹²⁶ Don Marcos of Chocontá to Jorge de Herrera, 6 July 1640, AGI SF 227 25c.

¹²⁷ Herrera to the King, 30 June 1640, AGI SF 227 23a, 1r.

¹²⁸ Torres to the Herrera, 10 July 1640, AGI SF 227, n. 25a, 1v, 1r.

In addition to providing much-needed additional income from their voluntary donations, confraternities were also key to the provision of parish churches with the objects, ornaments, and art they required. In his defence of the archdiocese's confraternities in 1640 Archbishop Torres forwarded examples of the inventories of several of these across the two provinces, testament to the enormous investment of their members in the decoration and appointment of their churches. The inventories are replete with expensive textiles, such as vestments of Chinese silk damask of the Confraternity of St Peter in Tenjo; processional objects and instruments, like the new scarlet banner, complete with silver cross, that the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament of Cajicá had recently purchased, or the 18-peso trumpet of the Confraternity of the Virgin of the Rosary of Tabio; or devotional objects like the silver lamp that the Confraternity of St Lucy of Bojacá had provided to illuminate the Blessed Sacrament at the cost of 137 *patacones* 'provided by all of the brothers', or that which its counterpart in Sopó had commissioned at similar expense.¹²⁹ The sums involved could be staggering. In Susa, near lake Fúquene, in December 1638 priest Diego de Sanabria showed visitor Gabriel de Carvajal around their church, pointing out all the things 'provided by the Indians with their own money': in the sacristy were expensive vestments made of imported silks and other materials, impressive silver plate and gold ornaments, multiple paintings, including of new devotions, such as the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, and even a set of three *chirimías* worth 300 *patacones*. Around the church Sanabria showed the visitor altars dedicated to the devotions of each of the confraternities of the town, decorated with images 'which cost them over 1,500 *patacones*', and on the walls murals 'painted in the atrium and inside the church, which cost over 300 *patacones*', depicting scenes from the life of Christ and scripture.¹³⁰

The murals of Susa may be lost, but fragments of contemporaneous murals were rediscovered in from the late 1980s in the parish churches of Turmequé and Sutatausa. The first, which Eduardo Valenzuela and Laura Vargas date to the turn of the seventeenth century, much like the description of the murals of Susa, features a cycle of images of the Gospel interspersed with images of Old Testament scenes and portraits of saints

¹²⁹ Torres to the King, 14 August 1643, AGI SF 227, n. 251, 6r, 9r.

¹³⁰ Visitation of Susa by Carvajal, 14 December 1638, 85r, 87r–88v. This Susa is not to be confused with the settlement of the same name located in the Valley of Ubaque and discussed in Chapter 1.

of the congregation's devotions.¹³¹ The second, in the town into which the communities of Suta and Tausa were resettled in the 1590s, is a much better preserved cycle of murals depicting scenes from the Passion, as well as the remains of a vast scene of the Last Judgement on the Gospel side, likely dating to the 1630s.¹³² Underneath it an inscription still declares that 'this Judgement was painted at the devotion of the people of Suta' – and not, interestingly, Tausa – 'under *cacique* don Domingo and captains don Lázaro, don Juan Neaetariguia, don Juan Coruta and don And[rés]'. Some of these men are perhaps pictured, in Spanish dress, in the portraits that once surrounded the scene, and which still adorn the chancel arch. Most striking of all is the famous figure of a woman, holding a rosary, dressed in a beautiful *manta* decorated with geometric designs – reminiscent of those that had been so central in another ritual context – at the very front of the nave, for all to see (Figure 6.1).

A CHURCH OF STAKEHOLDERS

The parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé had undergone a dramatic transformation by the end of the 1630s, as a result of the participation, patronage, and involvement of their Indigenous parishioners. The civil visitations of Gabriel de Carvajal and Juan de Valcárcel – the last the *Audiencia* would carry out until the 1690s – are testament to how much had changed even in the seventeenth century. Detailed records survive for seventeen parishes in Santafé and eleven in Tunja, revealing, in most towns, thoroughly equipped and well-appointed churches, all staffed by resident parish priests conversant in Indigenous languages, in which Indigenous people played central roles.¹³³ All had programmes of

¹³¹ Laura Liliana Vargas Murcia and Eduardo Valenzuela, 'Kerigma en imágenes: El programa iconográfico de los muros de la iglesia de Turmequé en el Nuevo Reino de Granada (Colombia)'. *Artefacto Visual: Revista de Estudios Visuales Latinoamericanos* 3, no. 4 (2018): 81–109.

¹³² On these murals and their possible sources, see José Manuel Almansa Moreno, 'Un arte para la evangelización: Las pinturas murales del templo doctrinero de Sutatausa'. *Atrio: Revista de historia del arte* nos 13–14 (2008): 15–28; and Alessia Frassani and Patricia Zalamea, 'El templo doctrinero de Sutatausa y su pintura mural'. In *El patrimonio artístico en Cundinamarca. Casos y reflexiones*, 72–87 (Bogotá: Gobernación de Cundinamarca, Universidad de los Andes, 2014). The Last Judgement inscription includes the text 'Año 163', with the final digit cut off.

¹³³ The exceptions were towns like Bogotá, where the church was unfinished (AGN VC 8 d 2, 212v), or Tuta, where the church operated out of a temporary building after the old one had collapsed (AGN VB 4 d 7, 595r).



FIGURE 6.1 Anonymous, mural portrait of Indigenous donor, Church of San Juan Bautista, Sutatausa, Colombia, c. 1630. Photograph by the author

religious instruction, and in almost every town witnesses declared that ‘no Indians have died without confession or children without baptism’ – as they did even in dilapidated Oicatá.¹³⁴ In many parishes, as Pedro Cabra, governor of Tibaguyas declared in 1639, ‘many Indigenous men and

¹³⁴ Visitation of Oicatá by Gabriel de Carvajal, 3 July 1636, 425v.

women take communion'.¹³⁵ By now some of the devotions of the inhabitants of a number of Indigenous were also becoming regional devotions, adopted more widely across the archdiocese. The best known, of course, is the devotion of the Virgin of the Rosary of Chiquinquirá, which became particularly well known across the archdiocese during the epidemic of 1633, and would, after independence, be proclaimed patroness of Colombia.¹³⁶ Less well known, but to its devotees no less significant, was the cult of another miraculous image, of the Virgin of Perpetual Succour, in the small town of Monguú, near Sogamoso, which by the time of its visitation by Valcárcel in 1636 was emerging as a regional pilgrimage centre, with richly painted murals and a complement of ornaments and images, complete with indulgences granted to pilgrims established by Torres's immediate predecessor, Archbishop Bernardino de Almansa, who had made several gifts to the parish during his own visitation a few years before.¹³⁷

These inventories of parish property contrast sharply with the penury of earlier visitations, and it is striking just how much was donated by Indigenous people themselves, whether through confraternities, as we saw, or individually, through gifts and bequests of different kinds. The sponsorship of the sacred by a broad variety of Indigenous actors – traditional leaders, new elites, commoners, and others – served to transform their relationship to the Christian institutions in their midst. To be clear, the entire ecclesiastical apparatus had always depended on Indigenous labour: their *encomienda* tributes had paid for the wages of priests (or their lay substitutes) even before there were parishes; provided the wealth that allowed *encomenderos* to meet their obligations to contribute to fund the building, maintenance, and appointment of churches; and formed the basis of the tributary system that allowed the monarch's officials to oversee it all. Their churches, moreover, had been built by their hands, even if it is the names of Spanish master builders and other craftsmen that

¹³⁵ Visitation of Tibaguyas by Carvajal, 22 March 1639, AGN VC 1 d 2, 299v.

¹³⁶ Scholarship on the Virgin of Chiquinquirá is considerable, but three recent studies that reflect on its place in Indigenous religiosity are Karen Cousins, 'Shapes of Love in the Miracle Testimonies of the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, New Kingdom of Granada, 1587 to 1694', *Colonial Latin American Review* 28, no. 3 (2019): 396–423; Max Deardorff, 'The Politics of Devotion: Indigenous Spirituality and the Virgin of Chiquinquirá in the New Kingdom of Granada', *Ethnohistory* 65, no. 3 (2018): 465–488; and Alessia Frassani, 'La Virgen de Chiquinquirá y la religión muisca', *Historia y sociedad* no. 35 (2018): 61–86.

¹³⁷ Visitation of Monguú by Valcárcel, 15 April 1636, AGN VB 8 d 2, 402r, 246r–246v.

appear in the deeds and contracts that survive in the bureaucratic archive. What we see by this period, however, is an ever-increasing voluntary sponsorship of the church and its activities, on top of, and in addition to, any required tributary obligation. This was much more than a quantitative change. Indigenous people had long been required to fund the kingdom's missionary project – but what they funded now were their own churches, local institutions firmly ensconced in their lives, in which they were active and central stakeholders.

This is all the more remarkable given the unrelenting catastrophe of demographic collapse and new waves of epidemics, which in addition to causing vast disruption also meant that tributary obligations had to be shouldered by ever smaller numbers of people, even as *corregidores* scrambled to keep their population figures up to date. In 1602 Luis Enríquez had estimated that there had been some 20,000 tributaries in Tunja, and a total population of about 80,000 – already a dramatic collapse from the 52,564 tributaries that López had counted in 1560. The records for Valcárcel's visitation of 1635–1636 show the collapse had only intensified, for he counted a mere 10,144 tributaries and a total population of just 20,545 people – a collapse, as Michael Francis notes, of over 80 per cent.¹³⁸ Figures for Santafé, although less complete, are no less dramatic. Figures survive for Carvajal's visitation of 1638–1639 for only forty-three parishes in the province, excluding key sites like Fontibón, preventing us from comparing them wholesale to those of the visitation of Miguel de Ibarra in 1593–1595.¹³⁹ At the level of individual towns, however, the collapse is still precipitous: Ubaté collapsed from 938 tributaries to just 440, Chocontá from 765 to 345, Bogotá from 673 to 292, and Cajicá from 201 to 130.¹⁴⁰

The tone and emphasis of the visitors had changed too. Civil questionnaires still included a question on so-called idolatry, answered perfunctorily by Indigenous witnesses who in every case, bar one, were keener to discuss more relevant matters, like disputes over land or the repair of a church roof. The one exception was the town of Oicatá, where they denounced an elderly couple, Isabel Toisaga and Andrés Cuchitamga,

¹³⁸ Francis, 'Tribute Records', 309.

¹³⁹ Report of the parishes of the archdiocese of Santafé, 10 March 1663, AHSB Caja 6A, 376r–492v.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. 'Report of the encomenderos and Indians of Santafé' by Miguel de Ibarra, 1595, AGI SF 164 n 8.

who still maintained an old *santuario* in their fields.¹⁴¹ Ecclesiastical visitors, for their part, were far more interested in pursuing reports of public sins, such as incest and concubinage, than anything to do with Indigenous heterodoxy. In 1643, for instance, Bartolomé del Río compiled a report of the sentences he had issued in his visitations, showing he had disciplined 298 couples across 55 Indigenous towns – admonishing those eligible to marry to do so and separating the rest. Revealingly this is also what he did in the cities of Spaniards, disciplining thirty-nine couples in Tunja alone – including some of the city's most prominent Spanish citizens.¹⁴² These are ripe for further study, no doubt, but they are part of a new chapter – with new concerns, dynamics, and priorities – in the story of the kingdom.

For now the visitations of the late 1630s speak of endings of a different sort too. Among the new kinds of business pursued by the authorities on visitation were testamentary disputes, involving the distribution of estates. These provide a handful of those rarest of texts, the wills of rural Indigenous people, who made arrangements for disposing of their property and their remains not before the notaries and officials of Spanish cities, but before their priests and local notables. So it was with don Juan, *cacique* of Guasca, who, on his deathbed made arrangements for the disbursement of his possessions to his family and neighbours, settled his debts – including eight pesos ‘owed to the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary’, which he had borrowed ‘to make up the *demoras* and *requintos*’ – and dictated detailed instructions for his funerary procession, vespers, prayers, and mass, and for anniversary commemorations. To each of the confraternities of the town he left two silver pesos, plus a little more to the church for the souls of people he had known and ruled over.¹⁴³ And how, after all of this, could it be otherwise?

¹⁴¹ Visitation of Oicatá by Valcárcel, AGN VB 2 d 2, 428r. This case is cited in Colmenares, *La provincia*, 13.

¹⁴² Reports on the visitations of Bartolomé del Río, 1 July 1643, AGI SF 246, unnumbered, 1r–8v.

¹⁴³ Will and codicil of don Juan, *cacique* of Guasca, 15 April–24 July 1625, AGN VC 7 d 17, 921r–923v.