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## Chapter Eight

# Ecuadorian Immigration and the Transformation of Religious and Civic Space in Madrid in *La Churona: Historia de una Virgen Migrante* by María Cristina Carrillo Espinosa

Maryanne L. Leone

The immigration of Ecuadorians to Spain has brought a contiguous migration of spiritual practices that have redefined public and religious space in the city of Madrid. María Cristina Carrillo Espinosa's documentary *La Churona: Historia de una Virgen Migrante* (2010, 82 mins.)<sup>1</sup> tells of the veneration of a Marian figure in Ecuador and the transfer of that worship to Madrid, where approximately 120,000 of the 400,000 Ecuadorian immigrants in Spain reside (Gobierno de España 18, 26, 33, 52).<sup>2</sup> Her film highlights Ecuadorians in the heart of Madrid, at the center of iconic spaces.<sup>3</sup> Through an analysis of the film *La Churona*, this chapter discusses Ecuadorians' active role in creating and asserting a place for themselves in twenty-first century multicultural Spain, resistance and acceptance of Ecuadorian immigrants in Madrid, and the impact of global migration on urban spaces, religious practices, and local and national identities.

Distribution of *La Churona: Historia de una Virgen Migrante* has been successful in alternative circuits to commercial theater. The film has been selected for inclusion at film festivals in seven different countries (Bolivia, Ecuador, Cuba, México, Colombia, Uruguay, Finland) and at events on Ecuadorian film in New York City, New Jersey, Connecticut, Georgia (Russia), Barcelona, and Paris. *La Churona* also has been shown at six universities, in the United States, Murcia, Spain, and in Quito, Ecuador, as well as

at commercial cinemas in Quito and in Loja, Ecuador, and at Casa de América in Madrid, Spain. Reception has been positive.<sup>4</sup> At Cine 8 y Medio [Eight and One-Half Cinema] in Quito, the film's run was extended by a week, and at Casa de América the one night showing at the one hundred-seat theater sold out with dozens of spectators still in line.<sup>5</sup> The migration from Ecuador of over one million people in the 1990s and 2000s has reshaped communities in Ecuador, in Spanish cities, and in other immigration destinations (Jokisch). Carrillo's representation of the impact of the figure of La Churona and the use urban space to create inclusion in an environment of exclusion for Ecuadorians in the diaspora has claimed the interest of audiences with direct and indirect connections to this transnational exchange.

Contemporary, postcolonial, and colonial migration and travel intersect in the figure of the Virgin of El Cisne, who appeared to the indigenous people of El Cisne, Ecuador, in 1594.<sup>6</sup> Today 150,000–200,000 people walk the three-day, seventy-two kilometer pilgrimage route from El Cisne to Loja that originated with a decree Simón Bolívar issued in 1829.<sup>7</sup> Worshippers call the Virgin of El Cisne “La Churona,” which means “The Curly-Haired One,” and she holds a military rank and the nickname “the General,” suggesting she symbolizes not only religious faith but also Ecuadorian independence and national pride. Fast-forward to Madrid, Spain, more than four hundred years after the miraculous appearance of the Virgin. An Ecuadorian family asks their parish priest if they may place a framed image of the Virgin in the church, and then Carmen Ballagán, an Ecuadorian woman residing in Madrid, asks if she may place a statue in the sanctuary. The priest agrees and Carmen returns to Ecuador to bring a statue of La Churona to Spain so that she and her compatriots may publically express their devotion to this Virgin in their new place of residence. This replica and La Churona's immigration to Spain transform the rituals and cultural practices at the Church of San Lorenzo in Lavapiés, a neighborhood generally associated with Spain's working classes and more recently with Madrid's immigrant population. As portrayed in the film, this Marian figure symbolizes the precarious position of Ecuadorian immigrants without legal status and the formation of community in the diaspora. She also provokes anxiety on the part of Spanish nationals from the more visible presence in Madrid of residents of foreign origin and changing cultural practices.

A symbol of the ambiguous situation of many immigrants, La Churona legally enters Spain, papers in hand, but then finds herself homeless and at the center of a local, parochial controversy about dominion over her. Carrillo's documentation of the statue's trajectory from factory to flight leads to reflection on national identity and the patrol of borders. Antonino Jaramillo, who works at a factory in San José, Ecuador, dedicated to the fabrication of religious iconography, describes what he calls “el procedimiento más adecuado” [the most suitable method] (24:06–24:08) to transport statues of the

Virgin. He carefully wraps her outstretched arm to protect it from breakage, covers her head in clear plastic, places the statue in a black plastic bag, and uses a second one to cover her head "para que no se vea" [so that she cannot be seen] (23:09–23:12). Antonino advises that travelers acquire permission from the airline in advance and that they inform check-in agents of their possession of the Virgin before passing through security, where she will be subject to X-ray examination. Highlighting control and suspicion at the borders, the artisan's suggestions insinuate that even if one has obtained permission, it is best not to call attention to oneself when emigrating.

Antonino's knowledge of the process to prepare a replica of the Señora del Cisne for air travel points to the commonality of the voyage and her transnational status. Indeed, a writer from Loja explains that the Virgin of El Cisne also is known as "la Viajera . . . porque es como si ella fuera a acompañar los que han emigrado" [the Traveler . . . because it's as if she traveled with those who emigrated] (21:43–21:54).<sup>8</sup> Alluding to her migratory identity, Antonino notes that the accessories—the baby Jesus and a crown, for example—easily fit in one's suitcase and, with the Virgin wrapped as he suggests, "llevas un bulto que es manejable" [you travel with a package that's easy to handle] (23:29–23:35). Nonetheless, reverence for La Churona is such that some travelers buy a seat for her rather than store her in the overhead compartment. The election to film the back of the person transporting the statue in the airport, later presented as Carmen, with the Virgin facing backward rather than forward toward her destination as she passes under the bright yellow "Migration" sign, suggests that this migrant's story is not hers alone; she represents the many Ecuadorians leaving their country despite their desire to stay and carrying with them their cultural identity and practices. The documentary also stresses impediments to immigration and the surveillance of migrating people and practices when Carmen later speaks about her journey with the Virgin and the steps she took to have her documents notarized to avert possible problems with migration. For Carmen, notarization also signifies authentication of the spiritual value of the replica and the cultural practice that she transports to Madrid. As we will see however, migration alters the rituals and significance of the Virgin to produce a transnational figure with spiritual and civic potency.

La Churona's migration to Madrid along with hundreds of thousands of Ecuadorians has contributed to changes in the space of the city. Henri Lefebvre argues that people produce space and that urban spaces in particular highlight this social production.<sup>9</sup> Although seemingly removed from twenty-first century Spain, parallels may be seen between Lefebvre's thirteenth-century example of a "newly engendered spatial relationship" (78) in the transformation of land use and production in Tuscany and the globalization of Madrid. As greater numbers of immigrants came to Spain in the 1990s and the first decade of the twentieth century than ever before in response to

economic demand and unfavorable situations in their home countries, foreign migrants occupied positions formerly filled with Spanish laborers and brought change to the use and character of social spaces.<sup>10</sup> At the same time that space is a tool to dominate and control, “the social and political (state) forces which engendered this space seek, but fail, to master it completely” (26). The documentary emphasizes La Churona and her followers’ alteration of public and spiritual social spaces— streets, squares, a park, and Catholic churches.

The filming of Ecuadorian migrants in the streets and squares of Madrid as well as in the internal spaces of churches stresses movement. Michel de Certeau contrasts the panoramic view of the city with the perspective from the streets, where people enact diverse uses of the urban spaces that escape the totalizing city seen from above: “one can follow the swarming activity of these procedures that, far from being regulated or eliminated by panoptic administration, have reinforced themselves in a proliferating illegitimacy, developed and insinuated themselves into the networks of surveillance” (96). In Carrillo’s *La Churona*, if the bird’s-eye view is of a fictitious hegemonic Spanish identity, the street view reveals a global city in which colonialist histories interact with the present, culture undergoes transformation, and power is multidirectional, collective, and individual, rather than emanating only from Spanish authorities and autochthonous citizens or only from Ecuadorians.<sup>11</sup>

The Virgin of El Cisne’s migration from Ecuador to Madrid revitalizes the Church of San Lorenzo and facilitates the creation of a spiritual and transnational space for Ecuadorians and other Latin Americans, yet the micro-view reveals that her transnational move also invokes interactions colored with colonialist undertones. According to Lefebvre, products mask the labor that produces them and “also the social relationships of exploitation and domination on which they are founded” (80–81). Carrillo’s film exposes the material production of La Churona statues, as previously described, and examines points of contact between Ecuadorians and Spaniards in contemporary Madrid to better understand the former’s experiences of migration and highlight the importance of familial and cultural ties to community formation.<sup>12</sup> Father Emilio Regúlez, a priest at San Lorenzo’s Church for eighteen years, expresses his desire to serve the needs of this new group of parishioners and he exhibits adaptability in the sermons and liturgies he delivers and rituals he develops. With broad smile and amiability, Father Juan José Arbalí, a younger priest at the parish, reaches out to Ecuadorians in numerous ways throughout the film, such as visiting homes to bless them and offer a portrait of La Churona to grace their walls and showing new immigrants the dresses and accessories for the Virgin, kept in a former broom closet the priests have transformed to house the collection. Without question, the priests welcome the Ecuadorian community to their church; yet, Carrillo’s

presentation also suggests their paternalism and simplification of a multicultural church and city. While Father Emilio adapts the use of space in the church, his words and gestures when he describes the introduction of the Virgin to the sanctuary at San Lorenzo—hands up as if holding a frame and bouncing up and down slightly—suggest that he infantilizes the Ecuadorians and their devotion rather than view their faith reverently: “Vamos a entrar, en lugar de ponerlo, un poco procesionalmente. Pues entramos allí, cantando un poquito, hasta ponerlo y colocarlo en un retablo” [Instead of just putting her there, we decided to do it with a little procession. We sang a little bit and then placed the image in an altarpiece] (32:38–32:47). Seated in a circle with a small group of parishioners, Father Juan José comments on the similarities of design among the small plastic flags linked in a chain under the image of La Churona and explains: “Esto es para mostrar que la iglesia es la misma en Nicaragua, Bolivia, Colombia, España. Todos sitios. . . . [T]e acogen en Nicaragua, te acogen en España” [This is to show that the church is the same in Nicaragua, Bolivia, Colombia, Spain. Everywhere. . . . They welcome you in Nicaragua the same way they do in Spain] (31:38–31:48). Despite good intentions, this scene immediately preceding Father Emilio’s description of his introduction of La Churona to the sanctuary suggests that the priests simplify or avoid a more difficult discussion of the frustrations that Latin American immigrants face in Madrid and express in later scenes when the priests are not present. Furthermore, Ecuadorians are agents of change in Madrid, reshaping practices and constituting religious space, not just filling pews; yet the priests seem to see themselves as the innovators and as shepherds of a naïve flock in need of guidance, a view that may not be limited to the Ecuadorian worshippers, but nonetheless brings to the surface a colonialist epistemology.<sup>13</sup>

Processions with La Churona place Ecuadorians and their spiritual practices in the city’s historic center and create a parallel with processions of Marian figures associated with Madrid, such as her female patron saint, the Almudena, whom some in the film assert has exclusive rights to proceed into the Plaza Mayor, and the more populist Virgin of la Paloma, whose accompaniment in her annual journey through the Latina district of Madrid by a squadron of the Corps of Firefighters recalls the military’s association with La Churona in Ecuador. New compositions of social space do not erase previous networks of relationships, market structures, and historical experiences, but rather build upon past layers: “Social spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves on one another” (Lefebvre 86–87). The procession of La Churona retains traces of the pilgrimage in Loja yet realizes a new ritual for Ecuadorians in the diaspora, and expands the virginal association with Madrid’s Plaza Mayor to include the Ecuadorian Virgin.<sup>14</sup> De Certeau argues that people assess what is possible, necessary, and prohibited as they walk known paths and create new ones: “Walking affirms, sus-

pects, tries out, transgresses, respects" (99). Walking alters spatial organization and meaning in the city. In the case of La Churona, her network of worshippers assigns new meaning and makes patent the visibility and vitality of Madrid's Ecuadorian population as they gather en masse to walk the city streets to the Plaza Mayor. The practice of a pilgrimage route in Madrid opens the city's historic central square to a symbolic association with Ecuadorian identity, faith, and culture that moreover reshapes cultural practices. Whereas de Certeau emphasizes that walking facilitates the manifestation of old and development of new expressions of identity, Lefebvre argues more generally that social space, "itself the outcome of past actions, . . . is what permits fresh actions to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others" (73). A journalist from the newspaper *Latino* notes her surprise at the high turnout and the diversity of attendees, who hail not only from Loja, but also from many regions of Ecuador and may not have worshipped La Churona in their home country. The presence of a city councilor from Madrid's central district (Luis Asúa Brunt), Father Emilio, and Carmen Ballagán on a platform at the veneration in the Plaza Mayor suggests that Ecuadorian migrants comprise a constituency worth courting to advance political or institutional agendas. The councilor recognizes the priest for his work on integration and elicits cheers from the crowd when he calls out: "¡Viva Ecuador!, ¡Viva!, ¡Viva Madrid!, ¡Viva!, ¡Viva España!, ¡Viva!, ¡Viva la Virgen del Cisne!" [Long live Ecuador!, Hurrah!, Long live Madrid!, Hurrah!, Long live Spain!, Hurrah! Long live the Virgin of El Cisne!, Hurrah!] (34:22-34:28) The call alludes to harmony and equality; nonetheless, the film exposes cracks in the veneer of integration, despite cheers from the crowd of Ecuadorian migrants celebrating in the Plaza Mayor.

Paralleling the reception that many immigrants experience in the diaspora, two years after her arrival the Virgin finds that she is not welcome in her new place of residence. As recounted by Spanish parishioners and the reporter for *Latino*, Father Emilio no longer allowed her in the church once Carmen, the woman who brought her from Ecuador, placed her in a glass case with a box whose donations she intended to collect for her private association in honor of the Virgin.<sup>15</sup> Carmen moves the statue to a bar that she owns in Lavapiés, a location whose incongruity with the Virgin's status highlights her dislocation.<sup>16</sup> Javier de Lucas argues that a guarantee of the rights of citizenship, education on mutual responsibility, and the recognition of cultural symmetry form the basis for a just intercultural society; yet that Spain's immigration and integration policies fall short.<sup>17</sup> The uprooting of the spiritual figure of La Churona implies that the Spanish national body, as individuals, institutions, and community groups, fails to offer a rightful place to immigrants. The Virgin's localization in Lavapiés, a social space in which a diversity of ethnicities have displaced the formerly Spanish working class identity of the neighborhood, relates to an identity in flux. Through the figure

of the seventeen-year-old Jonathan, whose mother left her three children with her parents seven years prior to seek work in Spain, the documentary connects the Virgin of El Cisne's lack of place to the impact of migration on families left in the country of origin. At the end of the film, the children leave Quito and reunite with their mother in Murcia, Spain; a subtitle at the end of the film, however, explains that Jonathan plans to return to Ecuador, suggesting his physical, emotional, and cultural dislocation. The subtitle that follows, which also provides the final words in film, communicates that the European Parliament has passed the "Shame Directive" (1:19:10), a policy that would return immigrants without residency permits to their home country. The closing words of the film underscore multilayered manifestations of global displacement, from the local context of a Madrid neighborhood to all countries of the European Union to the communities of those left behind in the country of origin.

The debate that ensues in the church and neighborhood about the Virgin of El Cisne's rightful place reveals tensions that result from anxiety among some Spanish parishioners over not only the place and space that the Virgin of El Cisne occupies, but also the Ecuadorians' place and influence at the Lavapiés church and in broader Spanish society. One parishioner comments that "we" moved our virgin, the virgin of los Colores, to make a place for the Ecuadorians' Virgin. Another woman alludes to the debt she believes immigrants owe the priests: "Si les han abierto los brazos, les dan de todo, les dan de comer, les buscan trabajo. . . . Quiero decirte que les han acogido con cariño" [They welcome them with open arms. They give them everything. Food, work, shelter . . . I'm saying that they have been given a warm welcome] (38:03-38:15). Not all the neighbors hold this view however. One woman interjects that the disagreement over the Virgin is separate from assistance received and an older man at the bar is skeptical that such a large church has no space for the Virgin. Javier de Lucas has argued that associating multiculturalism with current migration to Spain negates an already existing diversity in society and breeds the erroneous perception of a preexisting superior, homogeneous culture in the receiving society (36). Contrary to de Lucas's affirmation that "todos tenemos la palabra para proponer, negociar, decidir" [we all have a say, to propose ideas, negotiate, decide] (41), at least some of the neighbors view themselves as the *de facto* gatekeepers of the physical and spiritual space of San Lorenzo's parish.

While arguments for whether Carmen or Father Emilio had the right to donations given in honor of the Virgin within the bounds of the church can be made for each side, more importantly, the disagreement highlights the extra-spiritual benefits that the Virgin of El Cisne confers to persons associated with delivering her to worshippers. In addition to monetary rewards, the priests at San Lorenzo gain parishioners at a time of lower church attendance among Spaniards. The film highlights that the redistribution of power



to an Ecuadorian woman produces unease not only within the establishment at San Lorenzo, but also within the Catholic Diocese of Madrid. After a second church, María la Reparadora, located near the Gran Vía and the Plaza de España, accepted the Virgin and welcomed her with ceremony and applause, the Diocese ordered her removal. When describing major shifts in the social organization of space, Lefebvre notes the rise of conflict due to some who see "a new representation of space" and others who "continue to experience space in the traditional emotional and religious manner" (79). We see this division in *La Churona* among the parishioners at San Lorenzo's and in the bishop's reaction to worship of the Virgin of El Cisne and perhaps Carmen's competing power. The camera looks toward and foregrounds a spokeswoman for Carmen's association, who explains to a crowd of Ecuadorians with the same vantage point as the camera—that the bishopric threatened to put the Virgin of El Cisne on the street. In the background, the shot shows an official announcement on the church door from the Diocese that the bishop of Ecuador had to cancel his visit to Madrid for that same day. The contrast of the bureaucratic, impersonal tone of the notice, which speaks for an Ecuadorian bishop, with the spokesperson's plaintive voice, and the view from the Ecuadorians gathered on the street, suggests that *La Churona's* director empathizes with the Virgin's devotees. In the previous scene, a journalist for RTVE's social chronicle *España Directo* observes that *La Churona* has been called "la virgen de los sin papeles" [the virgin without documentation] (39:36–39:38) and, in this scene outside the Church of María la Reparadora, Ecuadorians compare the Virgin's situation to the treatment they themselves have received: "Vale si nos humillan a nosotros, pero no a la Virgen" [We don't mind if they humiliate us, but not the Virgin] (40:46–40:48). At this point, the camera points at the Ecuadorians, capturing the distress on their faces and their verbal protests. The film's silence on the Diocese's rationale further leads the viewer to side with the Ecuadorians while a camera shot of a parked police car and another one driving by alludes to the distrust with which Spanish authorities view immigrants and the prejudices immigrants face. When juxtaposed with the reason for their gathering, to worship a Marian figure, the officers' patrol and the Diocese's response appear unjust. The Virgin's rejection signals condescension, incomprehension, and anxiety on the part of Spaniards in response to a more ethnically diverse society.

While Carrillo exposes anxieties in the Catholic institution and among some Spanish parishioners over the political and spiritual power of the Ecuadorian community, she also confounds a duality that would elevate Carmen, the Ecuadorian woman responsible for the statue's migration to Madrid. Although Carmen claims: "Siempre he estado peleando por que se respete la fe de la junta ecuatoriana" [I have always fought so that people respect Ecuadorian community's religious beliefs] (41:30–41:35), the film casts

doubt on the singularity of her motives. While she indeed facilitates a transnational devotion to La Churona through bringing a carved image of her to Madrid, the film suggests that Ms. Ballagán also seeks renown within the Ecuadorian community.<sup>18</sup> Kept at her house after the disagreement, Carmen organizes a procession for La Churona at Our Lady of Lluç Parish in Ciudad Lineal, a working class neighborhood that also has seen a notable influx of residents from Latin America. The camera position transmits the sensation to the viewer that he or she is one of the pilgrims who walks from the church to festivities at a nearby park, recalling de Certeau's assertion that "practitioners of the city . . . compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator" (93). At the park's entrance, several women who sell tickets to the festival on behalf of Carmen's association complain that people are entering through another side of the park without paying. Although Carmen organizes the event, neither she nor the priests at San Lorenzo's nor the Diocese can direct all of the practices related to La Churona that unfold. Later, the film shows footage of Carmen stating that she seeks to show Spain and Europe the rich art and culture of Ecuador and then, highlighting her desire for popularity, cuts to a beauty contest that Carmen organizes as part of the festivities for the Virgin. The fact that the contest includes a question on how Spanish authorities should treat immigrants makes patent a common experience of discrimination. Carrillo's documentary attests to heartfelt devotion to La Churona and the merging of the popular with the spiritual, yet also to the use of the Virgin to bolster individuals' political ambitions. A still frame at the end of the film explains that Carmen ran the second beauty contest in 2009, with no homage to the Virgin of El Cisne, and that she ran for a seat on the National Assembly of Ecuador in Europe.

Carrillo's production presents the Virgin of El Cisne as a paradoxical force and symbol in relation to the contemporary migration of Ecuadorians to Spain. She enables her supporters to attain social power, from Carmen who seeks political office to the masses of Ecuadorians who, revering the Virgin, influence parish priests in Madrid to reform cultural practices in the spiritual spaces they oversee. The Virgin of El Cisne creates a home for Ecuadorians in the diaspora despite desire to return: "Mucha gente aquí nos miran como si fuéramos extraños, pero viendo a mi país, a la Virgen, qué bonito, es una casa donde uno se vuelve a vivir" [Many people here look at us as if we were strange, but when I see my country, the Virgin, how wonderful, it's familiar, like I've come home again] (1:08:59–1:09:14).<sup>19</sup> The documentary suggests, too, that La Churona enables reconciliation and a space of coexistence among Spanish and Ecuadorians. In an interview in the film, Father Emilio notes his conversion into a devotee of the Virgin of El Cisne and observes the powerful effect of union that the Virgin has had on the parish. Carrillo's filming supports this view, showing one of the women who criticized the Ecuadorians receiving communion at mass and following with a shot of a

letter from the sanctuary of the Virgin of El Cisne in Loja, Ecuador, offering blessings of the image to be venerated in Madrid. Father Juan José traveled to Loja to learn about the Virgin of El Cisne and the faith of her followers, take part in the pilgrimage, and bring back to his church “una copia lo más posiblemente exacta” [the most accurate copy possible] of the Virgin (44:12–44:17). We see this priest as well walking with Ecuadorians, enveloped in a procession through Lavapiés. The filming suggests, however, that venerating the Virgin of El Cisne in Madrid does not replicate the experience in Loja. A panoptic view of Lavapiés that leads into a scene of the dedication of this replica insinuates misinterpretations and recalls the colonizing project. Inside the church most—though not all—of the shots replicate Father Emilio’s view looking from the altar out to the people, who fill this religious space. Father Juan José, standing off-center on the altar, announces Ecuadorians of different regions—such as Cayambe, located 700 kilometers from Loja—in traditional costume who present food and dresses for the Virgin to a visiting monsignor from Loja. De Certeau speaks of a “misunderstanding of practices” and simplification of complexities from the voyeur’s view, which the folkloric offering suggests (93). La Churona’s audience widens, she brings exuberant parishioners and revitalizes the parish of San Lorenzo, and she broadens ritualistic ceremonies to include her cult and the cults of other Virgin Marys; yet Carrillo’s documentary implies that her welcome into this religious space is conditioned, at least in part, on her delivery of benefits to the parish.<sup>20</sup>

Outside religious spaces, the film connects La Churona to Ecuadorians’ assertion of their right to a political voice in civic Madrid and recognition as equal citizens. A sequence of scenes moves from La Churona’s transatlantic voyage to Carmen’s description of the notarized paperwork she carried for the Virgin to the director of an Ecuadorian community association’s observations on the emigration of memory and popular practices, and finally to a newscast announcing ETA’s bombing of the T-4 parking lot at Madrid’s Barajas airport and the search for two Ecuadorian citizens. Carrillo’s documentary juxtaposes the media’s implication of the Ecuadorians’ involvement in the December 30, 2006, bombing with a scene of protest and peace. The camera follows a man with an Ecuadorian flag draped over his shoulders as he walks along the Paseo de Recoletos, past the El Espejo restaurant, to Madrid’s Cibeles, with shots of the Telecommunications Palace (now called Centro Centro) and the Puerta de Alcalá in the background. The camera’s position gives the viewer the sense that she or he is with the Ecuadorian people on the street, sharing their perspectives, participating with them in asserting Ecuadorians’ rights. Staging the protest next to iconic architectural symbols of Madrid reinforces the verbal and printed messages of integration and solidarity with Spain. Signs read: “POR LA PAZ, CONTRA EL TERRORISMO” [FOR PEACE, AGAINST TERRORISM] while protestors

shout in unison: “Ecuador, España, unidos por la paz” [Ecuador, Spain, together for peace] and “¡Esos muertos no eran de segunda!” [Those who died were not second-class citizens!] (29:18–29:39). The calls of solidarity with *madrileños* and pronouncements of Ecuadorians’ civil rights and contributions to a diverse Spanish nation demand the kind of inclusive, plural, egalitarian, and collaborative society that de Lucas advocates (47). By holding the protest in Madrid’s Cibeles, a highly trafficked location that is a site for both public outcry and celebrations of local and national reach, from marches against budget cuts related to gatherings to revel in Real Madrid’s win of the Spanish title or Spain’s win of the Copa de Europa, Ecuadorians assert their voices to the discourse on citizenship to reshape the public narrative on Ecuadorian migrants.

Carrillo’s film documents the impact of Ecuadorian migration on socio-political relations in religious and civic spaces of urban Spain. This exploration of some layers of Madrid’s “flaky *mille-feuille* pastry” reveals the protagonism of a migrant Virgin in the realization of spiritual and public spaces in which Ecuadorian migrants inscribe their right of place, cultural and religious identities, and political voice in a shifting multicultural Spain.<sup>21</sup> As Ecuadorian migrants seek a place for their variation of *marianismo* in the capital city and articulate national pride and community through the figure of La Churona, some Spanish citizens manifest apprehension over the growing presence and power of the Ecuadorian community in Madrid and others negotiate a role for themselves in this cultural and spiritual expression. The film emphasizes tensions in a multicultural society under construction rather than the harmonious resolution asserted by the priests at the Church of San Lorenzo, *La Churona: Historia de una virgen migrante* also reveals new “constellations of social space” that cross national borders as a result of the global migration of people and their cultural practices (Prakash 2). While a panoptic view produces an asymmetric society, greater contact in everyday practices on Madrid’s streets may lead to an intercultural Spain in which the novel—La Churona and Ecuadorian citizenry—becomes convention, beats in the rhythm of global Madrid’s urban landscape.

## NOTES

1. I gratefully acknowledge María Cristina Carrillo Espinosa, director of *La Churona: Historia de una virgen migrante*, and Ecuador para Largo for allowing me to use direct quotes from the film.

2. Political crisis in Ecuador, a crash in oil prices, and the effects of El Niño hurricanes led to increasing poverty in Ecuador in the 1990s while demand for manual labor and favorable residency laws animated men and women from all regions of Ecuador to immigrate to Spain, a shift from mostly rural men migrating to Canada, the United States, and Venezuela in the 1970s and 1980s. For a description of stages of Ecuadorian migration to Spain, see Gómez Ciriano.

3. Carrillo was studying in Madrid and was struck by the ongoing process of Ecuadorians arriving to Spain and the surprise of Spaniards. She filmed *La Churona* between 2007 and 2009

(Carrillo, "Migrant"). Carrillo is completing a doctorate in anthropology at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and has published on the impact of migration on Ecuadorian families and on the role of photography in maintaining community bonds. She has a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador and in film from the Escuela de San Antonio de los Baños, La Habana, Cuba. She completed her master's degree in gender and migration from the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), Ecuador, to where she returns regularly to teach (Carrillo, Curriculum).

4. Carrillo facilitated a list of distribution venues and prizes. The official blog and website note some of this information and comment on public reception of the documentary (Carrillo, "La Churona," "Re: artículo"; "La Churona," Ecuador). See also Pérez, Puga, and Villarruel, and news articles "Esta noche," and "La Churona' regresa." In his brief review, Pérez commends the film for a multidimensional treatment of migration that exposes contradictions stemming from the colonial legacy with Spain and from desire to return to Ecuador.

5. Primary contributors to the film's \$150,000 budget include the National Council of Cinematography of Ecuador, Ecuador's Ministry of Culture, and Flacso (Latin American School of Social Sciences) (Villarruel). Carrillo's film has garnered two prizes, one from the National Council of Cinematography of Ecuador in 2007 for full-length documentary and the other at the International Festival of New Latin American Film in La Habana, Cuba, in 2009, for postproduction. Carrillo's script was granted a Development of Latin American Scripts Project scholarship from the Carolina Foundation and the Casa de América in Madrid to support production.

6. Lizardo Herrera provides a fascinating analysis of the significance of baroque and neo-baroque Latin American aesthetic elements to the film's representations of national identity, colonialism, popular customs, and social inclusion, and he concludes that *La Churona* exposes the failure of the Ecuadorian nation to provide a national home for its citizens.

7. According to the legend, when the Royal Court ordered the people of El Cisne to emigrate on account of famine, the Virgin came to them from Portugal and asked them to stay and build a church in her honor ("Romería a Loja"). As the film documents, contemporary faithful vividly display their devotion with street decorations, confetti, and the release of doves in the towns along the route.

8. In the diaspora, the spiritual function of the Virgin of El Cisne has expanded to a social one. The Ecuadorian Community Virgin del Cisne of Connecticut, for example, has a Facebook page that informs "friends" of religious ceremonies and of its soccer league.

9. "(S)ocial space is a (social) product," Lefebvre states (26). In dialogue with Marxist ideology, Lefebvre's theory of space accentuates the human labor and "repetitive gestures" (75) of production implicit in cities and the buildings, squares, roads, monuments, and other structures that compose them. He describes the shift from serfdom and slavery to a *métayage* system in which those who farmed the land kept a share of production and supplied agricultural products to growing areas. This change spurred a new spatial distribution, with the *métayer* houses circling the landowner's mansion, and symbolic imagery. The use of cypress trees as property markers not only changed the physical appearance of the land but also became symbols of wealth and contributed to artistic developments in perspective.

10. Although restaurants are of course used for the same purpose, the foods offered in neighborhoods such as Lavapiés have changed as a result of the ethnicity of residents. As another example, in parks such as Madrid's Retiro, one finds many families of Latin American origin picnicking on a Sunday and not many of Spanish origin eating lunch in that manner.

11. I thank Gema Pilar Pérez-Sánchez for her suggestion that de Certeau's theory on walking in the city would enhance my analysis and that Madrid's Virgin of la Paloma, discussed later, also might be compared with Loja's Virgin of El Cisne.

12. See Villarruel's interview of Carrillo.

13. Walter Mignolo proposed not only that globalization began in the colonial period rather than in the modern era and moreover constitutes a space in which local histories and peoples of "the colonial difference" (3) confront and revise Western paradigms of knowledge. I am grateful to Jill Robbins for suggesting this connection with Mignolo and recognize that this line of analysis merits more development than the extension of this article permits.

14. The first celebration in Madrid in honor of the Virgin of El Cisne, in 2005, included a ceremony at the Plaza Mayor, a procession from the Plaza to the Church of San Lorenzo, and a mass during which the statue was welcomed to the sanctuary. The events were repeated in 2006. In 2007 and again in 2008, because of a disagreement between Carmen and Father Emilio, discussed later in this chapter, processions and masses were held both at San Lorenzo, in Lavapiés, and Our Lady of Lluc, in Ciudad Lineal, a neighborhood with approximately 15,000 Ecuadorian residents at the time. A frame at the end of the film notes that, in 2009, the route from the Church of San Lorenzo grew in length (Paz y Miño; Rodríguez Hidalgo; Sánchez).

15. In her presentation of the film at Assumption College, Massachusetts, in October 2012, Carrillo explained that the priest refused to discuss the controversy with her, preferring instead to talk about unification. In the film, he alludes to the disagreement as "algunas cosas de estas, sin ninguna importancia" [one of those things, unimportant problems] (44:46–44:48).

16. I learned from e-mail correspondence with Carrillo that Carmen's bar is located on the same street as the Church of San Lorenzo, a spatial fact that heightens La Churona's dislocation. She was situated close to her destination, yet excluded. Carrillo also informed me that Carmen no longer owns the bar and has moved from Spain.

17. De Lucas, professor of law philosophy at the Universitat de València, where he founded and directed the Institute of Human Rights, has written extensively on immigration politics and immigrants' rights ("Francisco Javier de Lucas Martín").

18. Some of the people gathered outside the Church of María de la Reparadora also question Carmen's motives, wondering if she has taken La Churona to her bar to improve its profits.

19. The Church of San Lorenzo has become a spiritual home for people from other Latin American countries as well. During a visit in July 2013, in addition to the Virgin of El Cisne, I observed statues of Virgin Marys and accompanying letters on the altarpiece from parishes in Paraguay (the Virgin of the Miracles of Caupé) and Bolivia (the Blessed Virgin of Cotoca and the Virgin of Urcapiña), and a baby Jesus from Bogotá, Colombia.

20. Carrillo's training as an anthropologist appears to have conditioned the documentary's focus on popular practices and the implicit critique in this scene of the Westerner's simplification of folkloric customs and regional identity.

21. "Flaky *mille-feuille* pastry" is Henri Lefebvre's metaphor for the multiple, diverse layers of urban social spaces (86).

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