

Chapter 7: History of Virgen De Las Saleras in the Town of Los Navalucillos, Toledo, Spain
“The Miracle of Salt”

The Nuestra Señora De Las Saleras devotion in Toledo, Spain

In Municipality of Los Navalucillos, Province of Toledo, Castile La Mancha, Spain, held the devotion of Nuestra Señora La Virgen De Las Saleras since 1632 (Santoro 2011). Program of Fiestas (Fiesta of Nuestra Señora La Virgen De Las Saleras is on September 8) in Honour of the Virgen de Las Saleras in Los Navalucillos celebrated from 5th September to 10th September, 2022. These are the big fiestas in the municipality in honor of their patron saint, the Santísima Virgen de Las Saleras. Events include competitions, processions, cabezudos, and fireworks (Saleras Fiesta 2022).

The research team believed that Nuestra Señora La Virgen De Las Saleras (Los Navalucillos, Toledo, Spain) “*inspired the creation*” of Nuestra Señora De Las Saleras (feast day is on April 26) or Our Lady of Salt in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, Philippines: even they have a different Feast Day (Moreno 2023). The patron saint of Los Navalucillos represents her importance and deep faith of Don Aniceto Maria Muñoz, which became patron of the Parish of Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, Philippines.

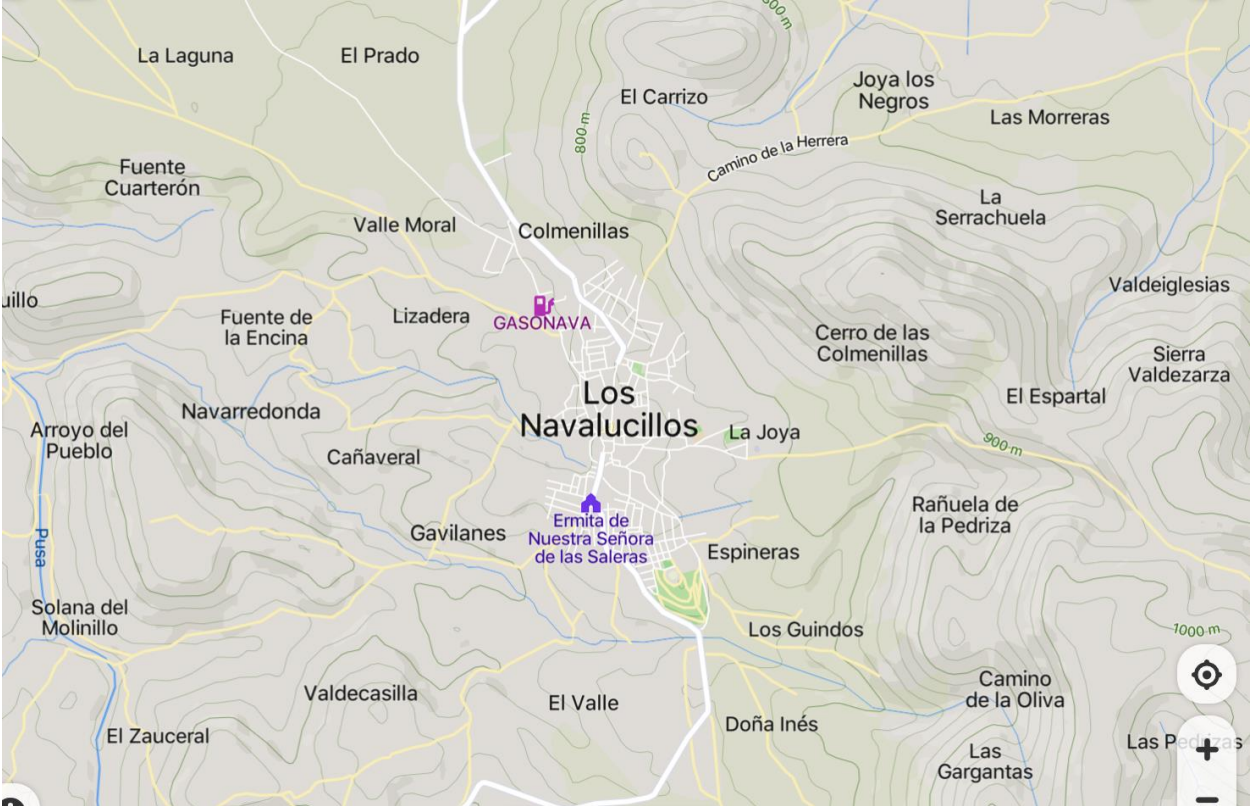
Image: Santisima Virgen de las Saleras, Los Navalucillos, Spain



History of Virgen De Las Saleras (Los Navalucillos, Toledo, Spain) and the Salt Miracle

Located in the square that bears the name “**Ermita de Nuestra Señora de las Saleras**” the Hermitage of the Virgen de las Saleras was inaugurated on April 14, 1632. Ermita de Nuestra Señora de las Saleras is a church in Los Navalucillos, Toledo, Castile-La Mancha: situated nearby to the square Plaza Mayor and the post office Oficina de Correos. The temple is in the Renaissance style with a latin cross plan. It measures 120 square meters and has undergone several renovations over time.

Map 1: Location of Ermita de Nuestra Señora de las Saleras in Los Navalucillos



Map 2: Location of Ermita de Nuestra Señora de las Saleras with near by towns



Map 3: Location of Ermita de Nuestra Señora de las Saleras with near by Provinces



Like the parish of San Sebastian in Los Navalucillos, the hermitage suffered extensive damage as result of the civil war. During the period from 1936 to 1939, the hermitage served as a school for which one of the walls of the central nave was demolished to open large windows which were later closed in 1943.

Its interior is accessed through double-leaf wooden door installed in 1963 if we advanced through the central hallway, bare of altars, we will quickly reach a small transept in the center of which stands a beautiful golden altarpiece from the late 17th century and in the center of the figure of the Patroness of Los Navalucillos is venerated, the Virgen de las Saleras.

Inside the temple, highlight the fresco paintings that decorate the dome, which were made in 1822 and are inspired by allegorical moments of the Holy Virgin. With major renovation in the early 90s.

Image: original piece altarpiece with Christ lying beneath



Miracle of the Virgen de las Saleras (Miracle of Salt)

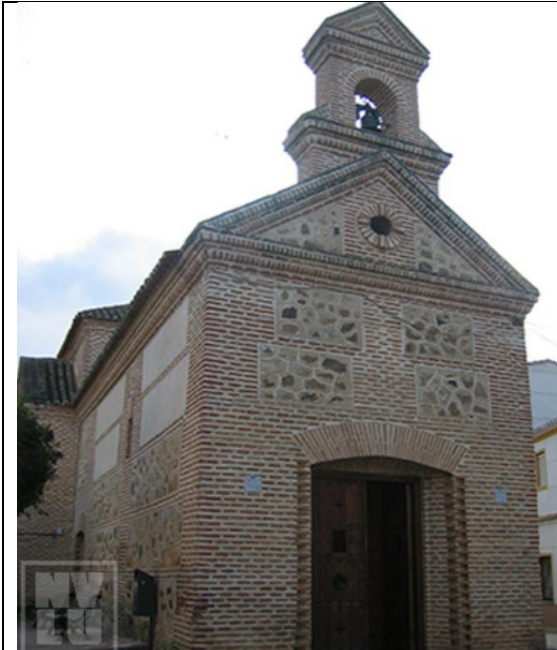
Until the middle of the 18th century the dedication of our Stma. Virgen de Las Saleras was called Our Lady of Grace, although over time the latter was forgotten. The name Las Saleras was given according to tradition, because the Virgin appeared to a shepherd who was giving salt to his goats, a deep-rooted custom in the area that compensates for the deficient supply of salts in the pastures.

Outstanding works at the Hermitage

On the altar you can see a modest monstrance with the original head of the Virgen de las Saleras. Looking at the Virgin, she finds her little shepherd with her goat that always accompanies her in her carriage, on September 8. To the left of the temple by the altar, there is a copy of painting by El Greco that he made of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian.

Since March 2013, as donation from the Bravo Caballero family, neighbors and visitors can pray to an image of the crucified Christ, whose name is “Christ of Faith”. This Christ is framed and located to the right of the nave, as soon as you enter the temple.

Insert Photos from the Hermitage



Church before renovation



Church after renovation





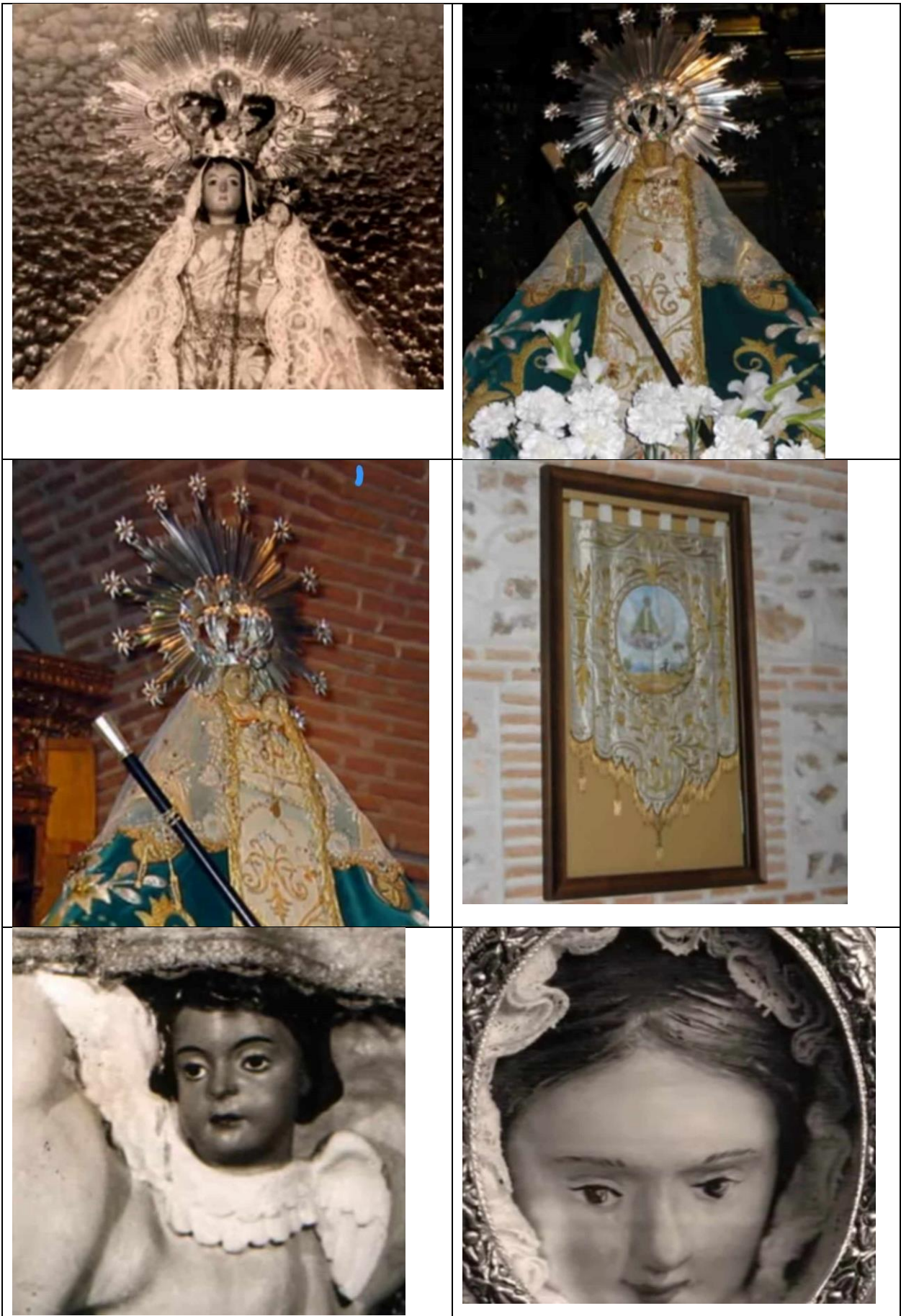
Altar before renovation

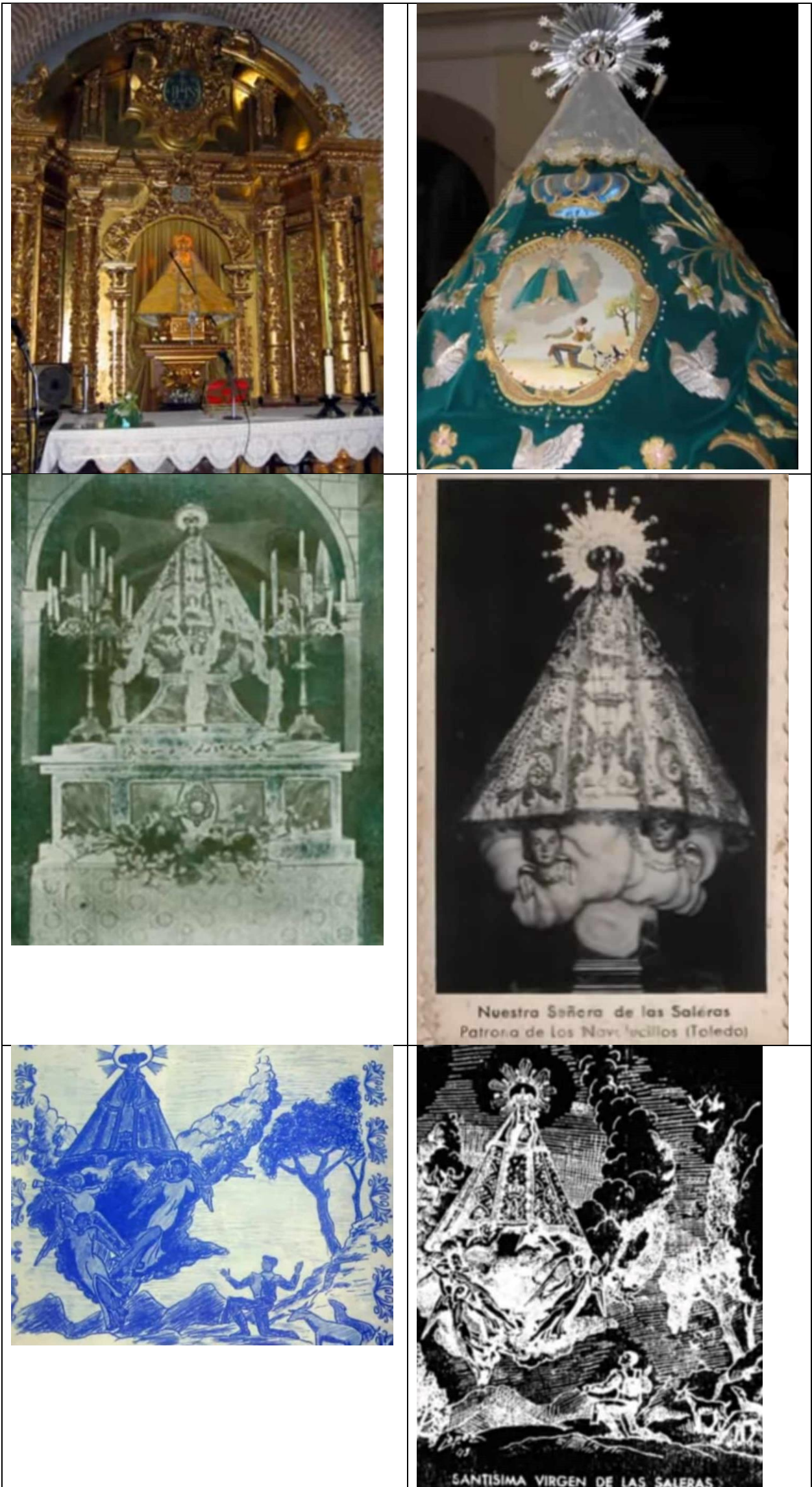


Altar after renovation



<p>Street view of the church</p>  <p>Dome with paintings</p>	<p>Entrance facing the altar</p>  <p>Sheperd and goat witnessed the visit of Virgen de las Saleras</p>
 <p>“Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian” by El Greco</p>	







Original Marian Image made in the Philippines: only one of its kind

Unlike Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras (Toledo-Spain), Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras (Aliaga, Philippines) is made of ivory not plaster cast. The characteristics of the certain images that were created specifically and were made locally such as Our Lady of Orani Bataan (Bataan) and Our Lady of Amorseco (San Fernando, Pampanga) could be an important lead to the creation of Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras (Aliaga, Nueva Ecija). The characteristics showed that these images have strong devotees in the local area. They do not spread to other part of the country unlike Santo Nino (Baby Jesus), Nazareno (Black Nazarene), and some other Marian images.

Under circumstances of Our Lady’s nomenclature, Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras has a unique origin story; her face, hands, and baby Jesus is made of ivory. She has the same age with Aliaga Local Government Unit (Aliaga LGU, Nueva Ecija founded since 1849) age 175 year old as of April 2024. There is a *possibility that she was carved locally* (Moreno 2023).