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Elizabeth Teresa Howe

Women and Gender in the Early Modern World

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ELIZABETH TERESA HOWE
Tufts University, USA

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For Bruce W. Wardropper, whose example as a scholar is more than worthy of imitation, and to those women who educated me from my youth until the present day, especially the Sisters of the Presentation and the School Sisters of Notre Dame, whose example I have tried to honor and to imitate.

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Contents

List of Figures *viii*
Preface *ix*
Acknowledgements *xv*
Journal Abbreviations *xvi*

1 Athena and the Amazons: Examples of/for the Education of Women 1

2 The Spanish Zenobia: Isabel la Católica and Her Court 31

3 The New Judith: Santa Teresa de Jesús as Conventual Example 59

4 Anne and the Virgin Mary: Home (and) School(ing) for Girls in Spain and New Spain 91

5 Muse(ing)s on Women's Learning 129

6 Phoenix, Tenth Muse, and Other Epithets: the Example of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 157

Conclusion 187

Bibliography *191*
Index *223*

List of Figures

1 Anonymous, La Virgen con los Reyes Católicos y dos de sus hijos, c. 1490. Museo del Prado, Madrid. 42

2 Anonymous, Beatriz Galindo, La Latina, 16th century. Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid. 46

3 Francisco de Zurburán, Santa Teresa, Cathedral of Sevilla, Spain. Photo courtesy of Arenas Fotografia Artística, Seville. 77

4 Proba, Wife of Adelphus, Giovanni Boccaccio, Des clères et nobles femmes, f. 64v, c. 1470, France. Courtesy of the Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundation. 92

5 Justice receiving the Virgin Mary and other saints into the City. Christine de Pizan, Cité des dames, Ms. Harley 4431, f. 361. British Library, London. 93

6 Frontispiece, Juan Luis Vives, Instrucción de la mujer cristiana. Alcalá de Henares 1529. 95

7 Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Santa Ana y la Virgen, 1655–1665. Museo del Prado, Madrid. 97

8 Sandro Botticelli, The Madonna of the Magnificat, c. 1485. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy. Photo courtesy of Scala/Art Resource. 98

9 Page one, Cartilla para enseñar a leer. Mexico Pedro Ocharte, 1569. 114

10 Frontispiece, Cartilla para enseñar a leer. Mexico: Pedro Ocharte, 1569. 119

11 Miguel Cabrera, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, 1751. Courtesy of the National Historical Museum, Mexico, D.F. 165

Preface

Needles or Pens?

> Any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly have gone crazed, shot herself, or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the village, half witch, half wizard, feared and mocked at.
>
> Virginia Woolf[1]

As recently as the early 1970s, a student of literature written in Spanish during the early modern period would have been hard-pressed to find women authors present in the canon. While they were not entirely missing as Woolf's comments suggest, still they were few, indeed. With the exceptions of Santa Teresa de Jesús, possibly María de Zayas, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, women were remarkable for their absence rather than their presence among the writers of Spain and New Spain's *siglo de oro.*[2] Even this handful of authors was viewed as an exception to the generally accepted view that women were, by and large, illiterate and invisible in the masculine world of arms and letters. Those few queens or noblewomen whose accomplishments drew note were more often considered *mujeres varoniles* [manly women or viragos] set apart from the silent and submissive models admired by the majority of male writers.

With the advent of women's studies, scholars began to question the assumption of absence and exceptionality attributed to women's writing. To do so they tacitly responded to Carl Degler's rhetorical question, "is there a history of women?" in the affirmative.[3] What scholars such as Judy Long believe is "that the invisibility of women results from an active process of omission operated by human judgement and human agency" (*Telling* 106). In attempts to recover these women and their works, only the most notable survive, and these are few, indeed. In 1903 Manuel Serrano y Sanz contributed to the recovery process with publication of his *Apuntes para una biblioteca de Escritoras Españolas.* By bringing together names, titles, and,

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1 *A Room of One's Own* 51.

2 Citing Melveena McKendrick on women writers in Spain, Anne Cruz points out that "four women alone remained in the public's memory: Santa Teresa, María de Zayas y Sotomayor, Sor María de Ágreda, and Mariana Carvajal y Saavedra." Even among these four, Santa Teresa "has received the greatest attention of any Hispanic woman writer" ("Studying Gender" 210). Lipking (96) casts the net further when he comments that "until the last few centuries, not many female authors achieved great names."

3 "Is There a History of Women? An Inaugural Lecture." Although Degler cites nineteenth and twentieth-century writers, his overall thesis addresses the question of perceptions when it comes to women's history. Gilbert and Gubar ("Ceremonies of the Alphabet" 23) note that "history itself would seem to have been constituted by precisely that alphabet that has denied women a place in history."

where possible, selections from their works, he began to fill in the missing pieces of the puzzle regarding women's literary production in Spain. He demonstrated in the process that, rather than isolated or exceptional figures, Santa Teresa and her like were but the more successful of those women writing in the *siglo de oro.* To accomplish his task, he gathered examples of women and their writing representative of various classes of society and the full range of literary genres. Yet, he also noted that many of their works had either never been published or had disappeared altogether.[4] Those that did survive were usually to be found in court or convent, the familiar venues for women's learning throughout the Middle Ages.

The presence of literary texts by women necessarily suggests the authors's access to some level of education. That fact, in turn, invites a series of questions. How, where, and how much education did any one of these women receive? Who was responsible for teaching her? What was she taught? What influence did she exercise over other women to invite imitation of her achievements whether educational or literary? Since most men considered needle and loom the appropriate implements to occupy women's time, how did some women take up the pen instead? More importantly, in doing so, in what sense did they advocate for the education of their own sex by word and deed?[5]

While Renaissance humanists generally embraced the restrictive male view regarding a woman's proper sphere of study, still, at least some scholars acknowledged the presence of educated women in their midst. They often did so, however, with a sense of the woman scholar's exceptional, even "virile" status. However accomplished women such as Isotta Nogarola in Italy, Christine de Pizan in France, or Margaret Roper in England might be, they were still viewed as anomalies to most male humanists. Their cultivation of learning was seen as both fascinating and useless, since none of them could reasonably expect to take up the profession of letters in the opinion of their male correspondents and admirers (Jardine, "'O decus Italiae virgo'" 815–18).[6]

In spite of the societal restrictions imposed on women, some humanists began to advocate for the education of girls as well as boys.[7] Drawing on exceptional female figures from antiquity to the present, they incorporated their examples into their treatises on right conduct and childhood education. How these exemplary figures were presented and interpreted by writers, both male and female, of early modern

4 Cruz ("Studying Gender" 211) cites Serrano y Sanz's list as one indicator "that there are many more women writers in the Golden Age whose names have been all but forgotten."

5 In a recent study, Vollendorf remarks on the absence of research that "synthesizes the roles women played in the educational sphere." This study attempts to fill that gap. See Vollendorf, *The Lives of Women* 169.

6 That a handful of Spanish women may have lectured at university suggests that the general rule of women's absence from the profession of letters was not strictly observed in Spain. See Chapter 2 for more on this point.

7 Joan Kelly poses her own question in an article entitled "Did Women have a Renaissance?" Her answer is both "yes" and "no." Yes, because humanists initially sought to reintroduce classical views of women to argue for their education and, no, because women did not have equal access to education, most notably at university.

Spain and its colonies in the New World, especially in terms of women's education, is the focus of this study.

When the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives looked back to classical antiquity, he found among the literary texts examples to imitate and inspire his own efforts. Among the most influential of these was the *Institutio oratoria* [*Institutes of Oratory*] of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (Quintilian), a work that both theorized about imitation as a vehicle for education and offered examples to those aspiring to emulate the accomplishments of their predecessors. In the context of humanism, imitation focused not only on style—whether literary or oratorical—but on the use of exemplary figures whose lives might inspire right conduct. Among earlier classical authors who provided *exempla* for imitation were Plutarch and Juvenal. When the exemplary figures proffered were female in fact or by tradition, the nature of the lesson provided as, indeed, the audience to whom it was directed created sometimes contrary readings. When addressed to men, female *exempla* could be inspiring or ridiculous depending on the misogyny or lack thereof assumed by the author. For women, the vehicle of transmission, whether sermon or written text, had much to do with reception of the lesson. Yet, as Caroline Bynum warns, we must avoid "the assumption that women simply internalized the rhetoric of theologians, confessors, or husbands" (*Holy Feast* 29). In a larger context, the implications of exemplary figures of women of learning became more complex as Renaissance writers began to utilize them in arguing for or against the education of contemporary women.

Part of that complexity derives from the dearth of texts by women on which aspiring female scholars might draw for guidance and inspiration. More problematic is the dismissal of those few works by women that do survive as "not great" or as marginal to the canon (Long, *Telling* 25–6). Although the principal examples of educated women considered here are familiar, the practical effect of their presence on other women of their times is instructive. It shows how the theories espoused by Renaissance humanists early in the sixteenth century resulted in flesh-and-blood examples of educated women in Golden Age Spain. It also demonstrates that these notable exemplary figures from the past, simultaneously admired and dismissed as exceptional by men, served as examples worthy of imitation by many of their female counterparts who eventually joined their ranks.[8] More importantly, what becomes apparent is the embrace of their exemplarity by those women writers who first cite female examples from both their past and their present and then offer themselves as worthy *exempla* in their own right.

The present study begins with an overview of imitation and *exempla* in those classical works that later writers drew on and transformed for their own devices. From Plato and Aristotle through Juvenal, Jerome, and the Fathers of the Church, the arguments for and against the education of women appear and swing between paternalism and open misogyny. By the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, the latter held sway as the *querelle des femmes* debate on the continent makes clear.

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8 See Long (*Telling* 42), who further contends that "female readers search literature for the inscription of a female destiny that is heroic, that inspires them, that certifies a life of worth."

When Boccaccio produced his two Latin compilations in imitation of Plutarch's *Lives*, he unwittingly initiated a dialogue with one of the first women writers in European letters, Christine de Pizan, that examined both the nature of exemplary literature and the question of women's education. In *De casibus virorum* [*The Fates of Illustrious Men*] and *De claris mulieribus* [*Concerning Famous Women*], Boccaccio presents female figures of learning and power as examples of manly virtue. In her *Book of the City of Ladies* and *Treasure of the City of Ladies*, Christine consciously evokes Boccaccio but also recasts his masculine view into an arguably feminist interpretation. In both the selection and ordering of the *exempla* as well as in the language of composition, Christine provides a resolutely female perspective on strong queens and learned women—of Amazons and Athenas—among whom she eventually places herself as worthy of imitation. The influence and presence of both Boccaccio's and Christine's texts in Spain is evident overtly in works by Álvaro de Luna, which imitate in form, language and content those of both predecessors. Covertly, the works of the Spanish Franciscan Sor Teresa de Cartagena present a woman's life as exemplary, albeit one lived in reclusion.[9]

In Isabel la Católica, Spain witnessed a veritable Zenobia or Carmenta reincarnated, comparisons made by any number of contemporary writers and later historians. As queen, Isabel embraced both arms and letters, achievements chronicled in works written in her honor, such as the *Jardín de nobles doncellas* [*Garden of Noble Maidens*], or at her behest, such as the *Diálogo sobre la educación del príncipe* [*Dialogue concerning the Education of the Prince*]. In the former, Fray Martín de Córdoba delineates what he perceives to be the appropriate education of a princess or a noblewoman. He dedicates it to the young queen who, in her own right, expanded her education and concerned herself with that of her children. In Alonso Ortiz's *Diálogo*, she functions as student and interlocutor in an extended dialogue concerning the education of her son and of her daughters as well. While the male authors of both works sought to circumscribe the extent of the education of girls, the queen broadened it to include not only her own family members but also the daughters of the nobility. Her example transcended the literary confines of ancient *exempla* by inspiring such contemporary women as Beatriz Galíndez, Francisca de Nebrija, and Luisa Medrano to pursue the life of the mind. Isabel also influenced the education of children in other royal courts through the marriages of her daughters with kings of Portugal, England, and Flanders. Her daughters, in turn, earned praise for their accomplishments as scholars and queens.

What Isabel accomplished as queen in the secular sphere, Santa Teresa de Jesús mirrored in the cloistered world of contemplative nuns. As a veritable Spanish embodiment of Judith, Teresa successfully reformed both the men and women of the Carmelite order, setting in motion the eventual formation of two new religious orders of Discalced Carmelites. As part of her efforts, she composed a number of works from autobiography to mystical treatise and simple epistles addressed to the powerful and the ordinary. Her multi-layered example as reformer, writer, and foundress was embraced by the women who followed her. Many of them took

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9 Gilbert and Gubar ("Ceremonies of the Alphabet" 43) call attention to Christine's "revising myths of linguistic origin to valorize female originality."

up the pen to write works very similar to hers. They also continued her reform by attending to the education of novices as she had directed. More importantly, in their own writings they transformed Santa Teresa into an *exemplum* of the *mujer varonil* unafraid of the powerful forces arrayed against her in her spiritual and practical endeavors.

What occurred in court or convent affected the lives of only a handful of women in early modern Spain. Yet, in both instances, the responsibility to educate girls was cast as the mother's task, one that both artists and humanists celebrated. The model of Saint Anne teaching her daughter, Mary, and the Virgin, in turn, educating Jesus, inspired the plastic arts in much of Europe. While these artistic works served as visual texts meant to inspire the viewer, written treatises addressed to parents and to civic and religious leaders sought to codify the necessary intellectual and spiritual upbringing of children of all classes. Theory soon turned to practice in the establishment of primary schools, which initially served orphaned and abandoned children. The curriculum of many of these schools combined the domestic skills of sewing, weaving, and cooking with rudimentary reading and writing as well. The schools offered girls needles and sometimes pens during the course of their instruction.[10] The examples of Anne and Mary as mother and daughter served as models not only for mothers in intact families but also influenced the constitutions and practices of numerous *colegios de niñas huérfanas* [*Schools for Orphaned Girls*] established throughout Spain and the New World through the course of the early modern period.

The literary transformation of figures such as Santa Teresa from "madre" to "capitana" and "milagra" by her own nuns moved her from the realm of religious reformer to that of mythic status as an exemplary figure worthy of imitation. It also reflects secular literature of the period, which grapples with the presence of both learned women and viragos in equal measure. Much of this literature—whether philosophical treatise, theatrical production, or short story—addresses the anxiety of male writers when confronted with intelligent and independent women. At the same time, a number of women writers join the debate and provide alternative readings of these "Athenas" and "Amazons." All of these works also consider directly and indirectly the nature and even the appropriateness of educating women.

The myriad issues regarding the education of women and the example of them giving voice to their concerns coalesce in the figure of the Mexican nun and writer, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, called by her contemporaries the Tenth Muse and the Phoenix of the Americas for her prodigious literary talents. In Sor Juana, as woman, nun, and writer, one finds the classical, religious, exemplary, and literary currents evident in the preceding chapters converging. Indeed, in her writings, she recalls some of the very figures already mentioned as she addresses the issue of a woman's right to education, her place in a male-dominated ecclesiastical world, her debt to her female foremothers, and her resolve to imitate and eventually to emulate them. That Sor Juana does so from the vice-regal court of seventeenth-century Mexico attests

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10 Gilbert and Gubar ("Ceremonies of the Alphabet" 32–3) note that the "sampler … was used to teach generations of girls how to sew and … almost always included a representation of the alphabet, the first nine letters, and either a monogram or an autograph."

to the reach of humanist theory over the course of the Spanish Golden Age and to its practical application in the lives of women.

The present work attempts to address a concern raised by Lisa Vollendorf in her recent study of the lives of women in Spain. She questions whether the literate women of inquisitional Spain "operated in a vacuum, reinventing responses to a culture that insisted on their inferiority" (169). What becomes apparent in the study of the educated women included in this book is that they not only had access to learning on a personal level, but that they also advocated for the education of other women as well. In some cases, this advocacy was patent. Such was true of Isabel la Católica, Santa Teresa, María de Zayas, Sor Juana, and the anonymous headmistresses of *colegios* and *amigas*. Each of these women either proposed a curriculum for girls in their charge or taught them directly. In other cases, such as the opinions expressed by Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Luisa Sigea, María de San José, Oliva Sabuco de Nantes, and Ana Caro de Mallén, the message is more subtle, but no less present. At the same time, many of these writers are conscious of and refer to their "foremothers" even as they join them. They prove that women are capable of learning and should be given the opportunity to do so. That learning included both domestic arts and written texts. In short, women could and should wield both needle and pen.

Elizabeth Teresa Howe

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Journal Abbreviations

BCom	*Bulletin of the Comediantes*
BRAE	*Boletín de la Real Academia Española*
BHS	*Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*
BICC	*Boletín del Instituto Caro y Cuervo*
BSS	*Bulletin of Spanish Studies*
CA	*Cuadernos Americanos*
CHA	*Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos*
ELN	*English Language Notes*
HR	*Hispanic Review*
Ibero	*Iberoromania*
JHP	*Journal of Hispanic Philology*
MLR	*Modern Language Review*
NRFH	*Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association*
RCEH	*Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*
RABM	*Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos*
REH	*Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*
RI	*Revista Iberoamericana*
RLC	*Revue de Littérature Comparée*
RomN	*Romance Notes*
RR	*Romanic Review*
RF	*Romanische Forschungen*
Sph	*Studies in Philology*

Chapter 1

Athena and the Amazons: Examples of/for the Education of Women

> For so many marvelous inventions, antiquity, the dispenser of divinity, made Minerva the goddess of wisdom. Moved by these reasons, the men of Athens took their name from her because that city seemed to have a natural tendency for those studies which make one wise and prudent.
>
> Boccaccio, *Concerning Famous Women* 15

> Just as you heard, for a long time the Amazons strongly maintained their dominion, over which ruled queens in succession, one after another, all valiant ladies.
>
> Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies* 1.17.1

The history of women's education in the Spanish Golden Age begins in ancient Greece. It is there that evidence for the education of girls may be found.[1] It is there that Plato suggested educating a particular class of women. It is also there that exemplary figures of women—some mythological and some historical—were marshalled as object lessons, either in favor of or in opposition to the very notion of women's education.

While the seeds of Plato's proposals regarding the education of females fell on infertile ground in some instances or were choked by a crop of counterproposals from such subsequent philosophers as Aristotle, nevertheless, some theories and practices regarding education first proposed in ancient Greece took root and eventually flourished later in other parts of Europe. More importantly, the methods and examples first sown in the classical world came to fruition in the Renaissance.

Proponents of the new humanism revivified and reinterpreted proposals set forth in the classical texts that survived. For those Renaissance scholars who endorsed the premise that women should be educated, the works of classical antiquity and Scripture served a variety of purposes. First and foremost, they provided the humanist with the authority of the ancients on which to base his argument. Next, the very texts cited formed the core of the curriculum endorsed for study and, more importantly, for imitation. Finally, the classics presented examples, both stylistic and biographic, for students to imitate in writing and in conduct. For female students, classical and later Scriptural and patristic sources provided numerous object lessons in the form of exemplary women whom both teacher and student might look to as role models to justify the pursuit of learning.

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1 Golden (Children 73–4) examines pictures on vases to argue that some level of education for Greek girls occurred in antiquity.

For Plato, the foundation on which education is built is a moral one regardless of gender, for "our aim in life should be goodness and the spiritual virtue appropriate to mankind" (*Laws* Bk. 6, 248). As Marrou observes, Plato "was less concerned with the education of the ordinary citizen than with the problem of how to train [those who] could act as advisers to kings or as leaders of the people" (65). He called this group the "Guardian" class and devoted a major part of the *Republic* to suggestions concerning the training of it. In this work, he proposes educating men and women of the Guardian class physically as well as intellectually, since "to turn a woman into a Guardian we presumably need the same education as we need to turn a man into one" (Pt. 6, Bk. 5, 210).[2] Expanding on this proposal in the *Laws,* he writes: "girls must be trained in precisely the same way [as boys], and I'd like to make this proposal without any reservations whatever about horse-riding or athletics being suitable activities for males but not for females" (Bk. 7, 293). Plato thus suggests a woman of the Guardian class who embodies the attributes of the Amazons as well as those of Athena.[3]

The kind of education described approximates that offered in traditional upper-class "finishing" schools of the time (Graff 24). Yet, in spite of the implied sexual equality contained in his proposals, Plato neither considers women equal to men nor advocates education of any save a single class. By educating the "weaker partners" of the Guardian class, he expects to achieve the betterment of the entire society.

The starting point for educating the children of the Guardians is literature or stories. As he explains:

> These are of two kinds, true stories and fiction. Our education must use both and start with fiction … [W]e begin by telling children stories; These are, in general, fiction, though they contain some truth. And we tell children stories before we start them on physical training .... Then it seems that our first business is to supervise the production of stories, and choose only those we think suitable, and reject the rest. We shall persuade mothers and

2 What he proposes to the Athenians was already the norm in rival Sparta, as Saxonhouse, 58, points out. Allen ("Plato on Women," 134–5) explains that "Plato develops two separate arguments to support this claim. The first is based on metaphysical and the second on pragmatic considerations."

3 The figure of the Amazon has undergone change from its initial appearance in Greek mythology to the present day. In his book, Tyrrell explains the original mythology surrounding the Amazons as a means to affirm the primacy of men over women as heads of families in ancient Athens: "There was no need for a myth to explain the impossibility of such a revolution, for there was little likelihood that Athenian women would replace men as heads of families and state. But tensions over women and marriage with them had constantly to be relieved" (113). The ahistorical sense that transforms these mythic figures into tropes of warrior or "manly" women is evident, however, in the examples cited by homilists as, indeed, it will be in the exempla presented by Boccaccio and Christine de Pizan. In these later authors, Amazon queens are depicted in terms of their perceived masculine attention to strength and prowess in combat.

> nurses to tell our chosen stories to their children and so mould their minds and characters rather than their bodies. *Republic* 3.2.i[4]

The myths to which he refers are the underpinning of Greek religion. While their historical authenticity is dubious, their ability to convey moral truths remains paramount. Equally important in the passage cited is the proposition that mothers and nurses serve as the first teachers of their children. Hence, the stories they relate must be chosen for their moral worth, since they will be vital in forming character (Nettleship 38).

Lest one think that education was restricted to men and boys alone, in seventh-century Lesbos, Sappho provided girls with an education in a community setting described as "'the abode of the disciples of the Muses'" (Marrou 34). In many respects, it anticipates the conventual life of women found much later in the monasteries of Medieval Europe, since, "juridically, this [school] took the form of a religious fellowship … dedicated to the goddess of culture." Yet, as Marrou also points out: "Lesbian education was not merely artistic; the physical side was also cultivated" (34). Nor, apparently, was Lesbos an aberration, since he goes on to mention competing boarding schools for girls extant during the period (35).

In contrast to Plato's and even Sappho's ideas regarding women's education, Aristotle envisions a far more traditional role for wives and mothers. In the *Politics* he states that the "courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying" and, further, that "silence is a woman's glory" (Bk. 1, Chap. 13.22–5). Still, he concedes that "women and children must be trained by education with an eye to the constitution, if the virtues of either of them are supposed to make any difference in the virtues of the state. And they must make a difference; for the children grow up to be citizens, and half the free persons in a state are women" (23–4). Only in the *Oeconomica* does Aristotle sketch the duties of a housewife that presuppose some attention to the domestic arts (Bk. 3.i–ii.401–3). At the same time, his proposals suggest an important role for woman in the cooperative venture of the family unit, a role that humanist writers of the sixteenth century seized upon and expanded.[5]

Women might constitute half of humankind in Aristotle's world, but in Athens, at least, their literacy rate would reflect more closely that of slaves or foreign residents than that of male citizens.[6] Both physical and intellectual training were available to men and women, yet the curriculum remained rudimentary, consisting of reading, writing, and counting. Equally basic were the teaching techniques employed:

> Rote learning, repetition, and recitation were the mainstays of classroom procedure, as the pupils were slowly taught their letters first, then the syllables and the words, before they confronted texts. … Reading and writing were taught together and in the same manner. … The principle was the imitation of the teacher. (Graff 25)

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4 In his edition of the Republic, Lee (114, note 1) points out that "the Greek word pseudos … meant not only 'fiction'—stories, tales—but also 'lie'—fraud and deceit." On the other hand, Nettleship (34) uses the word "myths" instead of "stories."

5 See Saxonhouse 87.

6 See Levine, *The Social Context* 50.

Imitation of the teacher also presupposed imitation of worthwhile examples. Thus, just as Plato before him, Aristotle suggested using examples that he divided into two categories: historical facts and fictitious stories utilized in support of an argument. Among fictions he distinguished comparisons (*parabole*) from fables (*logos*) (Lyons 7). In Plato's work, the suggested use of stories concerned the first lessons to be taught to children. In contrast, Aristotle's focused on preparation of the orator, a public career not open to women. These differences notwithstanding, from texts to techniques, the principles laid down in ancient Greece would find receptive audiences later in Hellenistic Greece, Rome, and eventually among Renaissance scholars.

Roman society imitated the example of Hellenistic Greece, where "it seems to have been the normal thing for all freemen's children to go to school" (Marrou 144). Boys and girls from the more privileged classes still went on studying together, so that "from the Republic to the late Empire there was a constant supply of highly educated aristocratic women" (Marrou 274). Even though Roman aristocrats might educate their sons and daughters together as children, girls did not normally study outside the home. Rather, tutors taught them to read, write, and count. Girls also learned the practical arts of spinning and weaving, skills they would employ as mistresses of their households. Customarily, brides carried spindle and distaff as part of the Roman marriage ceremony, emblems of their future domestic responsibilities.

Although intellectual and artistic achievement in a woman represented an enhancement to reputation rather than a detriment for many Romans, the dichotomy of opinion on the subject found among the Greeks began to emerge in Rome as well. Thus, while Plutarch (c.46–120 A.D.) urged his readers to admire the example of the goddess Isis since she "was exceptionally wise and a lover of wisdom, to whom ... knowledge and understanding are in the highest degree appropriate," in his Sixth Satire Juvenal (c. 60 or 70–128 A.D.) ridiculed the very notion of a wise woman."[7] Although both authors offered examples in support of their respective arguments, the approach taken by each was radically different. "Juvenal sought to teach by exaggerated vices [in order that] a person might be persuaded to avoid the vice and to seek instead the corresponding virtue" (Allen, *Concept* 182). In contrast, in his *Mulierum virtutes*, Plutarch presented examples of courageous women of history in order to praise them in terms not unlike those afforded men who had distinguished themselves in battle (McLeod, *Virtue* 20; Allen, *Concept* 99). The approaches and points of view regarding women found in Juvenal and Plutarch would resonate in those writers of Medieval and Renaissance letters who continued the debate concerning women's virtue and learning.[8]

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7 See Allen (*The Concept of Woman* 184–5), who cites the relevant passages from Juvenal and Plutarch (197–8).

8 Allen (*Concept* 182) comments on Juvenal's influence on Walter Map and Jean de Meun while McLeod (*Virtue* 21–2) notes that of Plutarch in the Renaissance. Plutarch (*Moralia* CCLXXI–II, 30–31) mentions the distaff and spindle as part of the Roman marriage ceremony. See also Bonner (*Education in Ancient Rome* 7, 107, 135–6), who reviews the opinions of these same writers.

Of the Roman pedagogues, one of the most influential among Renaissance theorists was the Spanish-born Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (c. 35–95 A.D.). In his *Institutio oratoria* [*Institutes of Oratory*], Quintilian provided a textbook outlining the instruction necessary to form the orator. Those to be taught were, of course, boys, who, as grown men, would occupy positions of power and authority in society. In spite of this focus on a quintessentially male education, Quintilian was the first authority invoked by the Spanish Renaissance writer, Juan Luis Vives, in his own treatise, entitled *De institutione feminae christianae* [*Instruction of the Christian Woman*]. Since Vives as, indeed, his fellow humanists, never advocated educating women to be orators, his reliance on Quintilian's text throughout his own suggests that some other idea present in the classical work informs that of the Renaissance scholar.[9]

In Book 10 of the *Institutes of Oratory*, Quintilian remarks that "a great portion of art consists in imitation, since, though to invent was first in order of time, and holds first place in merit, yet it is of advantage to copy what has been invented with success" (Bk. 10.2.i). Like Plato and Aristotle before him, he advocates imitation of both historical as well as rhetorical models, but he also stresses that mere imitation of earlier models was not sufficient. Rather, he urges that one "try to excel, than merely follow [one's] predecessors; for he who makes it his object to get before another, will possibly, if he does not go by him, get abreast of him" (Bk. 10.2.lx–x). It is, then, emulation [*aemulatio*] that Quintilian recommends. While he has the orator in mind, scholars such as Vives and others who later write in support of women's education accept the idea of emulation proposed by Quintilian.[10]

Patristic writers also tended to embrace and extend the ideas found in classical and Biblical sources regarding women and their place in society. Saint John Chrysostom (c. 347–407 A.D.) might be echoing Aristotle's *Oeconomica* as well as Saint Paul when he writes that "a wife has just one purpose: to guard the possessions we have accumulated, to keep a close watch on the income, to take charge of the household" (Migne, *PG* 51.230).[11] Saints Cyprian (3rd century A.D.) and Augustine (354–430 A.D.) also drew on Scripture in the treatises they authored concerning the three traditional states of a woman's life: virginity, marriage, and widowhood. Among the Fathers of the Church, however, it is Saint Jerome (c. 340–429 A.D.) who most clearly articulates the aim and content of a woman's education.

Jerome's works offer both theory and practice concerning women and their lives, including opinions regarding their education. His *Adversus Jovinianum* reflects some of the tone and approach found in Juvenal, for, in the work, Jerome differentiates between women of virtue and those of vice. In support of his argument, he offers examples of manly virgins, continent widows, and faithful wives then contrasts them

9 See *The Education of a Christian Woman* Fantazzi ed., 53/ *Instrucción* Howe ed., 37, where Vives cites Quintilian in the first sentence of his text. See, also, Smail's introduction to *Quintilian on Education* (lii–lv) for more on Quintilian's influence in the Renaissance.

10 Struever (153) shows the debt of the humanists to Quintilian. Pigman (19, 26), explains *aemulatio* in poetry and in the Institutes. Greene (*Light in Troy,* Chapter 4) discusses *imitatio* and *aemulatio* in literature.

11 Cited in Clark, *Women in the Early Church* 36.

with their opposite number: unchaste virgins, widows who remarry, and unfaithful wives (McLeod, *Virtue* 39–40). He bases his examples on figures drawn from classical antiquity and Scripture. Yet, where the *Adversus Jovinianum* criticizes women's behavior, Jerome adopts a more conciliatory approach in other works.

In spite of his well-deserved reputation as a misogynist, Jerome actually enjoyed the company and confidence of a number of noble Roman women.[12] His letters to female disciples can be as harsh in scoring their shortcomings as his criticisms are of fellow monks who fail to lead exemplary lives. Nevertheless, his epistles to Laeta concerning the education of her daughter, Paula, make a case that the humanists will reiterate: a woman's best guarantee of virtue is a sound education. The curriculum he outlines reflects and extends that developed in the Greek and Roman models that preceded his. Paula's education includes reading and writing both Greek and Latin as well as the study of psalmody and Scripture. Initially, Jerome offers practical suggestions ranging from the use of block letters for early instruction to the selection of a tutor and the companions suitable for company. The list of recommended readings is almost exclusively scriptural and patristic in nature (Letter CVII.35).[13] Even as he delineates a curriculum for Paula, however, Jerome also enumerates strictures on her conduct and her studies. He condemns the use of cosmetics and jewelry, recommends seclusion from the outside world, and rails against teaching her to play a musical instrument. In short, the course of study he sets forth describes a cloistered life suitable for raising a daughter for marriage or the monastery.

Even though Jerome's letter outlines a course of study for Paula, he does not broaden his proposals to include all girls. In Paula's case, he makes clear early in the letter that she has been predestined for the life of a chaste virgin.[14] Other recommendations appear in a later letter (LIV), addressed to the widow Furia. In this work, Jerome repeats his condemnation of cosmetics and finery. In order to underscore his point, he offers Furia the example of two Biblical figures, Judith and Deborah. In the former he sees "her hand armed with a sword and stained with blood, [and he] recognize[s] the head of Holofernes carried in triumph from the midst of the enemy. A woman conquers men, chastity beheads lust" (*Select Letters* LIV, 261). In contrast, Deborah was "rightly … called 'the bee,' for she fed on the flowers of Scripture, she was steeped in the fragrance of the Holy Spirit, and with prophetic lips she gathered the sweet juices of the nectar" (LIV, 261).

Paramount in Jerome's assessment of each of these female figures is their embrace of chastity. Ironically, his choice of the virago (Judith) and the prophetess (Deborah) also suggests other interpretations. In her courageous defense of Betulia, Judith

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12 In his 16th-century Spanish biography, Fray José de Sigüenza (352) credits these Roman women with making him the "great personage the Church celebrates today." Kelly (*Jerome*) describes Jerome's relations with this group of women, while Wiesen (*St. Jerome as Satirist* 164) explains the seeming contradiction between his contacts with women and his misogyny.

13 *Select Letters* 35. Ferrante ("The Education of Women" 13) summarizes the curriculum followed by Paula.

14 "It is my intention … to direct my discourse to a mother, that is, to you, and to show you how to bring up our little Paula, who was consecrated to Christ before she was born" (343).

manifests the military acumen of the Amazons as well as the virtues found among the *mulierum virtutes* praised by Plutarch. In her wisdom and courage, Deborah becomes a veritable Biblical manifestation of Pallas Athena. In short, Jerome may wish to constrain the lesson to be drawn from these exemplary women to their chaste lives, but in their embrace of arms and letters, Judith and Deborah offer more tantalizing lessons to both authors and readers who follow.

The effect of Jerome's writings on the lives of women was far-reaching. The principles he enunciated regarding the education of women affected the evolution of monastic practice for nuns as well as the preparation of girls in the monastery. On the one hand, his writings influenced the *Regula monacharum,* an early rule for nuns falsely attributed to him. On the other, his works were esteemed by Renaissance theorists, who placed his letters alongside classical works that espoused the education of girls and women.[15]

The manner in which Jerome utilizes these and other exemplary figures in his works reflects the homiletic style of patristic authors who present Biblical or hagiographical examples with the avowed purpose of teaching a moral lesson (Welter 1, 23–4; Lyons 9).[16] By invoking Scripture, the Church Fathers and later preachers based their teaching on the authority of precedents. Imitation of the authority, whether it was the source invoked or the interpretation of the figure presented, was central. In the case of women, the nature and tone of the precedents and their interpretation adopted an increasingly anti-feminist attitude (Blamires, intro. 6). To Scriptural and patristic sources, preachers began to add examples from classical literature (especially from Ovid and Juvenal) in order to ridicule the very notion of women's education (Ricard, "Aportaciones" 202). Eventually, sermon literature constituted a body of works "that later satirical catalogers mined as a fertile source of material." Over time, "women were a favorite target of the medieval pulpit, and since sermons were delivered in the vernaculars, these orations reached a much broader audience than did the Latin texts of the clerks" (McLeod, *Virtue* 52).[17]

With the emergence of the universities in the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, the disjunction between the education of men and women was exacerbated. Access to higher education was effectively closed off to women. As a result, the study of Latin as preparation for the university began to function as much as a rite of passage for young men into a masculine world of power—in Church, state, and academe—as it did for its practical value as a vehicle of expression (Ong, "Latin Learning" 106–9). As such, it denied women access to that power even as it advanced men. Those few women who studied Latin independently or with the aid of a tutor thus operated at a disadvantage to their male counterparts from the outset since they were denied the opportunity to participate in the give-and-take of scholastic disputation that characterized scholarship in the universities.

15 See Rice (*Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* 128, 84) for a more detailed consideration of his influence on Renaissance writers.

16 Both Welter and Lyons provide extensive discussions of exemplum.

17 Ricard ("Aportaciones" 209) also points out that "el exemplum es, sobre todo, un procedimiento de predicación popular" [the exemplum is, above all, a method of popular preaching].

The power of misogynistic examples in late Medieval literature underscores the limits circumscribing women's access to education. Educated men had at their disposal compilations of collected passages from ancient authors, collections that eventually became a staple of publishing (Lyons 12). These compilations served as models for both Latin style and moral conduct appropriate for imitation.[18] In contrast, for women Latin culture was quite literally a closed book. They relied on vernacular sermons for instruction, powerful instruments that often presented female examples either notorious for their failings or exceptional for their "manly" deeds (Blamires 10). Too often, "male admirers … likened learned women to the Amazon queens and to other female warriors of myth and history" as King makes clear ("Book-Lined Cells" 79). Behind such visions of female warriors lay that of Athena, "martially armed, unnaturally born, coldly virginal, and, though female, defined not by sex but by intellect" (King, "Book-Lined Cells" 80).[19] In short, in the view of many male writers, women of accomplishment were not really women at all.

The ambivalence toward female *exempla* on the part of a male writer is patent in the works of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) in fourteenth-century Italy. In *De claris mulieribus* [*Concerning Famous Women*] and *De casibus virorum* [*The Fates of Famous Men*], he produced his own compilations of examples in a form and language that consciously imitated Plutarch. *Concerning Famous Women,* as the title makes clear, focuses exclusively on eminent female figures of antiquity. While Boccaccio's avowed purpose was to praise them, nevertheless, he temporizes that praise in the dedicatory preface to the work. There he contrasts the praise of men with that of women:

> If men should be praised whenever they perform great deeds (with strength which Nature has given them), how much more should women be extolled (almost all of whom are endowed with tenderness, frail bodies, and sluggish minds by Nature), if they have acquired a manly spirit and if with keen intelligence and remarkable fortitude they have dared undertake and have accomplished even the most difficult deeds? (xxxvii)

In *Il Corbaccio* his tone is far harsher, one evocative of Juvenal and the more misogynistic works of Jerome. Boccaccio chooses to ridicule what he perceives to be women's pretensions to learning in this work.

> Wretched students suffer cold, fasting and vigils, and after many years they find that they have learned very little. Women, even if they remain in church one morning just long enough to hear Mass, know how the firmament turns; how many stars there are in the sky and how big they are; what the course of the sun and the planets is; how thunder, lightning, hail, rainbows, and other things are created in the air; how the sea ebbs and flows; and how the land produces fruit.[20]

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18 Hampton (23–9) explains the emphasis in the Renaissance on imitation of both style and conduct.

19 As Tyrrell (126–7) also points out, Athena's birth from the mind of Zeus and not from a mother contrasts her with the Amazons, while also furthering Athenian men's sense of their autochthonous origins.

20 Cited in Blamires 170.

In both of his works, Boccaccio participates in the *querelle des femmes* debate popularized by such works as his and that of Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Roman de la Rose,* a satirical critique of society and especially of women and marriage.[21] Interjecting herself into this rather one-sided condemnation of women was Christine de Pizan (1365–1430?), one of the first women whose writings challenged the blatant misogyny found in Jean de Meun and Boccaccio. More significantly, in both her life and her writings she proffers examples that directly challenge the negative stereotypes of women to be found in works by her male contemporaries. In the process, she introduces a feminine voice into what had heretofore been a resolutely masculine discussion. She also extends the sense of exemplarity that women might learn from and imitate, for her very life serves as an example for subsequent generations to follow.

Christine was born in 1365, the daughter of an Italian father who assumed a post in the French Valois court.[22] The importance of her father's influence is made clear early in her *Book of the City of Ladies* (1404). There the allegorical figure of Lady Rectitude pays homage to him and his role in her education: "Your father, who was a great scientist and philosopher, did not believe that women were worth less by knowing science; rather, as you know, he took great pleasure from seeing your inclination to learning" (2.36.4).[23] Educated at home, she knew French, Italian, and possibly Latin. In 1380 at the age of 15 she married a French nobleman and bore him three children. His death in 1390 threw her on her own resources, as she explains in *L'Avision-Christine:*

> After these things had happened during my youth as well as my greatest occupations outside, I returned to the life that pleased me the most. That is to say, solitary and calm, and so in solitude first came to me ruminations on Latin and the orators of beautiful learning and various sententiae and polished rhetoric that I had heard in the past when my friends, my father and husband were alive, although I retained but little of these because of my youthful frivolity.[24]

After devoting herself to further study, she turned to the profession of letters, first as a copyist and then as a writer, "a daring way of life, unheard of for a woman of her time."[25]

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21 Jean de Meun[g] (c. 1250–c. 1305), a critic not only of the mendicant orders but of women as well, wrote a continuation of the *Roman de la rose*, a French allegorical poem which presents the love philosophy of the troubadours. In his contribution, Jean satirizes the society of his time, reserving much of his condemnation for women and marriage. He thus added to the *querelle des femmes* [quarrel concerning women], which repeated misogynistic opinions that considered women inferior to men. See Bloch for a summary (2–3) and for the place of Jean de Meun[g] in the debate (48).

22 See Kelly, *Women, History and Theory* 70.

23 Christine de Pizan, *Book* 154. All references to this work are taken from the Richards translation and will be cited in the text.

24 In "Selections from the Works of Christine de Pizan," trans. Nadia Margolis 338.

25 "Introduction" to *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, trans. Sarah Lawson 18. Shahar (*Estate* 157–8) adds details concerning her education.

Even more daring was her criticism of the misogynistic texts circulating in her society. Principal among these was Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Roman de la Rose*, which she strongly condemned. The authority she invoked in her critique was nothing less than her own gender:

> And may folly, arrogance, or presumption not be imputed to me for daring, I a woman, to take up and refute such a subtle author and whittle down the praise of him, when he, only one man, dared to undertake the defamation and blasphemy, without exception, of an entire sex.[26]

In attacking Jean de Meun, Christine fired an opening salvo in defense of women and their contributions to culture. It was the beginning of a battle she would wage with increasing vigor in subsequent works.

Christine de Pizan's more positive interpretation of the lives of illustrious women serves a dual purpose. It refutes the misogyny of male writers such as Boccaccio, even as it offers models for women to imitate. Christine does so in Quilligan's opinion in order to "inspire [female readers] with confidence about the prior achievements of women, and therefore with a confidence about their own history which she hopes will be the basis for their own increased sense of self worth" ("Translating Dismemberment" 253). Much of that self worth is built on the bedrock of moral wisdom. Throughout her works, Christine thus underscores the moral aim of education. The *Book of the City of Ladies* expresses amazement at "the opinion of some men who claim that they do not want their daughters, wives, or kinswomen to be educated because their mores would be ruined as a result." Lady Rectitude dismisses this unfounded fear by pointing out that "there is not the slightest doubt that moral education amends and ennobles [women]" (2.36.1). The indispensable virtues of a girl remain sobriety and chastity.[27] Yet, in spite of the examples of learned and virtuous women cited in the *Book of the City of Ladies,* the work does not articulate a complete curriculum for women of all walks of life.

Although she cites Mathéolus as the author who first causes her anguish at the beginning of her *Book,* she groups his work with the "treatises of all philosophers and poets and from all the orators [who]… speak from one and the same mouth. They all concur in one conclusion: that the behavior of women is inclined to and full of every vice" (1.1.1). Against this chorus of negativity she proposes to counter with a woman's perspective and experience. One of the principal works that she chooses to reinterpret and replace is Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus.*

Neither Boccaccio nor Christine composes an educational tract *per se.* Rather, each presents a series of female *exempla* who embody qualities worthy of note.[28]

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26 "Christine's Response" trans. Nadia Margolis, 346. Reno, ("Feminist Aspects" 271) claims that "Christine was already attempting, in the Epistre d'Othéa to sway her readers' minds in favour of women by means of subtle literary techniques."

27 Gabriel ("The Educational Ideas" 3–21) discusses the educational principles in all of Christine's works. Phillippy (172) claims that moral studies are at the heart of Christine's educational theories.

28 Lyons examines the changing definitions of the term from classical times to the humanists. I am using it here in the sense of a short narrative used to illustrate a moral point

Among these are Amazonian women of action—queens and warriors—as well as others who, like Athena, manifest learning or introduce useful skills. In a number of instances, both authors comment on the same exemplary figure, yet the lesson derived from it often differs. Furthermore, Christine's inclusion of a broader selection of examples drawn from Scripture and history serves to extend and refocus the overall message of her book.[29] So, too, does the frame story that structures the work.

While Boccaccio ostensibly writes his work in praise of famous women,[30] the manner in which he does so militates against its usefulness to women. First, his decision to write in Latin necessarily limits his female readership significantly. Next, his stated intention to emulate Petrarch by doing for famous women what his "master" had done for men in his *De viris illustribus* (xxxvii), further supports the notion that Boccaccio is "writing a learned book for a learned, humanist, and hence, by definition largely male, audience" (Meale 59). By including predominantly pagan examples,[31] he pointedly excludes women found in the Bible or hagiography, who, he maintains, have had their stories told by others. Significantly, the lessons to be learned from this excluded group reside almost entirely in their chaste lives:

> we know that their virginity, purity, saintliness and invincible firmness in overcoming carnal desire and the punishments of tyrants have been described in special books, as their merits required, by pious men outstanding for their knowledge of sacred literature and for their venerable greatness. (xxxix)

Finally, in contrast to many of his misogynistic predecessors, Boccaccio promises to focus on his "heroines' deeds rather than their nature" (McLeod, *Virtue* 68). Since the "nature" of women is to be subservient to men, a focus on the "deeds of heroines" suggests that his intended audience is male rather than female. Men may safely imitate deeds without becoming feminized in the process. In all of these decisions, Boccaccio implicitly establishes himself as an authoritative recorder and interpreter of the examples which appear in his work.

In contrast to this essentially male-oriented text concerning famous women, Christine counters with one that relies on female experience and interpretation as its

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(9) and as a particular instance which demonstrates a general rule (12). Lyons also points out that "most poetic theorists who speak about example in the sixteenth century either attribute to it the function of providing specific models of conduct for imitation by the readers or shift the discussion from worldly reference to models for writing. The emphasis on proposing models of conduct is a consequence of the general moral outlook of many humanists" (13).

29 In her forward to the *Book of the City of the Ladies*, Warner (xxix) contends that "Christine expands her defense of women to past and future so that she can expose the utter falseness of 'masculine myths' once and for all." What she produces in the Book is a "universal history of women, which encompasses the experience of pagan and Christian women up to Christine's present" (xxx).

30 McLeod (*Virtue* 7) points out the ambiguity of the word *claris* in the title, one which "indicates an interest not in illustrious (in the sense of admirable) but in famous (with the sense of notorious) women." Later (65) he remarks that "even Boccaccio's admirable heroines are viragolike, that is, atypical of their gender."

31 The handful of exceptions include Eve, with whom he begins the work, and Pope Joan and other Christian queens, with whom he concludes it.

authority. Her choice of the vernacular in which to write not only distinguishes it from Boccaccio's Latin but also makes it accessible to women who were far more likely to read French than they were the classical languages. Similarly, by writing in the first person (in contrast to Boccaccio's third-person account) and by casting herself as an intimate participant in the dialogue that is the *Book,* Christine establishes herself as an authoritative voice equal to those male critics who condemned women unjustly. She appropriates their means to her ends: "Her use of the discourses of misogyny—her interpolation of misogynist topoi into her text so that they become pivot points of her argument—is part of her mastering of the 'master discourse,' her turning it to speak her own ends" (Quilligan, *The Allegory* 204).[32] She continues to differentiate her own work from Boccaccio's by other decisions on style and content. Thus, when she chooses to include exemplary figures from Scripture and hagiography in addition to those from the classics, she adopts a "genre which insists upon a parity between male and female passion" (Quilligan, "Allegory and the Textual Body" 235). It implicitly attests to a broader range of reading on her part as well.

Christine's use of an allegorical frame and a dialogue format also establishes a fundamental structural difference with Boccaccio's collection of biographical sketches. At the same time, the frame helps to contextualize the *exempla* that follow into an overarching defense of women and their contributions to history and culture.[33] Lastly, by interweaving her own experience into her text, she offers herself as an *exemplum* equal to those whom she cites. In doing so, she strengthens her own claim to authority. Thus, as Quintilian had recommended, Christine de Pizan does not simply get abreast of Boccaccio but, rather, goes beyond him in the scope of her undertaking in defense of women.

The underlying allegory of the *Book of the City of Ladies* is construction of the city itself. Encouraged by the ladies Reason, Rectitude, and Justice, Christine begins the work by first clearing the "Field of Letters" of those misogynistic texts that initially upset her (1.8.1). Once the field is prepared, she may lay the foundation of the walls. For the cornerstone of her city, she chooses the figure of Semiramis.

Christine admires the Assyrian queen because "she undertook and accomplished so many notable works that no man could surpass her in vigor and strength" (1.15.1). This is a subtle, but important, change from Boccaccio, who praised Semiramis for "manly spirit," yet also decried her "feminine wiles" and her "womanly deceit" (5). He admits that she ruled with "skill and intelligence," but he also faults her, because "with one wicked sin this woman stained all these accomplishments" by her incestuous relationship with her son (6). For Boccaccio, skill and intelligence in

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32 Earlier (15–16) Quilligan comments: "uniquely Christine de Pizan not only names herself as author but makes her own gendered subjectivity, indicated by the signature, the fundamental authority subtending her text." Kelly (*Women, History and Theory* 66–7) contextulizes Christine in terms of other women writers who defended their sex against misogynistic writings. See also Phillippy ("Establishing Authority" 167–9) for more on the significance of Christine's use of the vernacular; and Stecopoulos and Uitti (49) for her use of misogynistic texts.

33 Jeanroy ("Boccace et Christine" 93–105) shows Christine's reliance on Boccaccio. Blanchard ("Compilation" 235–9) examines the structure of the *Book* in comparison to Boccaccio.

governing are masculine qualities, while chastity remains the preeminent feminine virtue even for queens. In contrast, Christine recognizes Semiramis's relationship with her son, but she excuses it by noting that society observed different rules in those times. If written law is a male creation, then "Semiramis represents a freedom which is unscripted and unbounded by law at its most radical, originary foundation" (Quilligan, *The Allegory* 84).[34]

A more telling example of a strong queen cited by both authors is the figure of Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra. She was a woman noted both for her military prowess as well as for her learning. In his description of her, Boccaccio presents a picture of the quintessential virago: "from childhood she scorned all womanly exercise [and] … having overcome feminine softness, she was so strong that by her strength she surpassed the young men of her age in wrestling" (226). She also controlled the terms of marital relations with her husband (228) and, again in Boccaccio's opinion, set herself apart from other women. When she assumed the throne as regent for her children after her husband's death, she ruled "better than women are expected to" (227). To these "manly" traits of courage and wisdom, Zenobia also added learning:

> [S]he did not fail to learn Egyptian letters, and she also learned Greek under the philosopher Longinus. With this training, she read with great care and committed to memory all the Latin, Greek, and barbarian histories. This was not all, for some believed that she made summaries of them. In addition to her own language, she knew Egyptian and Syrian, and her children were ordered to speak Latin. (228)

For Boccaccio, Zenobia was a figure of such protean accomplishments that he also included her among the exemplary lives in his *The Fates of Illustrious Men,* where her descent from the Ptolemaic kings accounts for her "eloquence, charm, judgment, bodily strength, and learn[ing] in the arts of war" (207).

For Christine de Pizan, Zenobia was a woman of "great courage … and chivalrous inclination," who was also "supremely chaste" (1.20.1). Of far greater importance, however, "was … her profound learnedness in letters, both in those of the Egyptians and in those of her own language" (1.20.2). Christine goes so far as to credit Zenobia with "organiz[ing] and arrang[ing] all historical works in concise and very careful form." Most especially, Zenobia is admired for the attention she pays to the education of her children and the care of her subjects. Christine concludes her paean with a rhetorical challenge: "note and recall if you have ever seen or read of any prince or knight more complete in every virtue."

While Christine clearly anticipated a resounding "no" to her question, she omits from her account any reference to Zenobia's inglorious end as a captive in Rome, stripped of her armor and forced to give up the scepter for the distaff. In contrast,

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34 Dulac ("Un mythe didactique" 315–43) contrasts the two representations of Semiramis more fully. Delany ("History, Politics, and Christine Studies" 193–4) points out that Christine ignored other, more positive versions of the Semiramis legend. In "Rewriting Women Good" Delany (78) argues that Christine "has to rewrite woman good in order to provide herself with role models." See, also, Stecopoulos and Uitti (51), who comment on Christine's vindication of these "bad women."

Boccaccio seems to delight in describing these same ignominious details in *The Fates of Illustrious Men* (209), leading Di Marco to comment:

> Zenobia, who dared, Amazon-like, to eschew what Chaucer's Monk terms the 'office of women' in favor of the masculine pursuits of hunting and warfare, and who likewise manishly dictated to her husband the condition of their sexual relations, can be most appropriately punished by being reduced to the status of a mere woman. (17)

Where Boccaccio and others portray the virago as a person of "manly"—even Amazonian—attributes and, thus, deny her her womanhood, Christine emphasizes her deeds as consonant with her roles as queen and mother. Strong women like Zenobia manifest courage and wisdom akin to Athena's when they rule even as they care for and educate their children. In taking this approach, Christine subtly emphasizes the viragos' exemplarity rather than their exceptional status as "manly women" (McLeod, *Virtue* 124–5).[35]

While Christine establishes her city on the foundation of warrior queens, she constructs the walls with women renowned for their creativity and learning. In this respect, Zenobia represents a transitional figure, a queen both strong and wise as well as chaste. For both Boccaccio and Christine, the goddess Minerva (or Pallas Athena) embodies some of these same qualities but also offers more for admiration.

Each author first remarks on the "foolish" belief in Minerva's mysterious origins as a figure sprung full-grown from the head of Jupiter. In addition to her great wisdom, each also comments on her practical discoveries, such as woolmaking, weaving, and armor, as well as her invention of numbers and a shortened Greek alphabet (*Book 1.34.1–5;Concerning Famous Women* 14–15). In their subsequent praise of Nicostrata (Carmenta) for her learning in Greek literature and her invention of the Latin alphabet (*Book* 1.32.2; *Concerning Famous Women* 53), Boccaccio and Christine manage to credit women with inventing "both of the classical languages and thus the literary cultures of Greece and Rome" (Quilligan*, The Allegory* 100).[36]

Other *exempla* manifest both practical and intellectual talents, such as Thamyris, the painter, and even Sappho. Boccaccio writes of Thamyris that "she had such marvelous talent that she scorned the duties of women and practiced her father's art" (122). Christine echoes him but temporizes that "women are equally well-suited and skilled to carry out [the speculative sciences and the manual arts] and to put them to sophisticated use once they have learned them" (*Book* 1.41.1). In fact, Lady Reason asserts that if girls attended school as their brothers did, their scientific abilities would equal those of men, a sentiment echoed later by writers such as María de Zayas and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[37]

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35 See also Case ("Christine de Pizan" 79), who elaborates on the exemplary versus exceptional nature of the women presented. She concludes (89) that "Christine and other feminists insist that their own achievements, like those of all other 'extraordinary' women should be seen as exemplary, not exceptional."

36 McLeod (*Virtue* 73) interprets Boccaccio's comments concerning Nicostrata as part of his "lavishly praised basis of Italian superiority."

37 Quilligan (*The Allegory* 88–90) believes that these examples of strong queens "are narrated specifically to answer the question Christine had asked Reason about Aristotle's

Both Boccaccio and Christine describe the breadth and depth of Sappho's learning, yet the former qualifies his praise, remarking that "all these things seem very difficult even for well-educated men. Why say more?" (99). Of Sappho, Christine states that "she was expert and learned in several arts and sciences, and she was not only well-educated in the works and writings composed by others but also discovered many new things herself and wrote many books and poems" (1.30.1). She goes on to cite Boccaccio's encomium of the poetess "possessed of sharp wit and burning desire for constant study in the midst of bestial and ignorant men [who] frequented the heights of Mount Parnassus, that is, of perfect study." Interpreting Boccaccio's comments, Christine concludes that "from what [he] says about [Sappho], it should be inferred that the profundity of both her understanding and of her learned books can only be known and understood by men of great perception and learning, according to the testimony of the ancients" (*Book* 1.30.1). While Boccaccio allows that Sappho "kept company with the Muses," still, neither he nor Christine acknowledges the coterie of women who inhabited the figurative City of Ladies that was Lesbos. According to legend, Sappho did not live in splendid isolation on the isle but, rather, surrounded herself with like-minded women.[38] Where Boccaccio considers Thamyris and Sappho exceptions to the rule regarding the intellectual possibilities of women, Christine finds a natural curiosity and talent that leads women to explore even "masculine" fields of inquiry. Her evocation of these learned women of antiquity buttresses her argument in defense of women of her own time.

In contrast, Boccaccio continually hedges his praise of eloquent women:

> … [H]is histories reveal his fear that a woman's cultivation of eloquence jeopardizes the least stable of the two specifically womanly virtues: silence. In part, he also recognizes that eloquence is the skill that might enable women most directly to participate in public life. The simplest of his strategies is to term the eloquent woman a 'man' and thus to deny her sex. (Jordan, "Boccaccio's In-Famous Women," 29)[39]

In fact, in virtually all of his biographical sketches of illustrious women of antiquity, Boccaccio first recapitulates their claim to fame, then invariably editorializes or moralizes about them. He effectively undercuts their positive qualities when he claims that they "surpass the endowments of womankind" in accomplishing notable deeds even as he attributes their success to "manly courage" (Stecopoulos and Uitti 49).

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arguments that women are unhappily possessed of 'le corps foible'." Quilligan ("Translating Dismemberment" 259) provides more detail on the example of Thamiris.

38 De Jean in *Fictions of Sappho* chronicles the treatment of Sappho in French fiction from mid-sixteenth century to the present. She comments (1–2) on the lack of biographical detail concerning Sappho among her contemporaries. Boccaccio's suggestion of Sappho as the "Tenth Muse" is a tactic that both praises and isolates her as inspiration of others. Later writers use the epithet to describe other talented women, such as Christine herself, Luisa Sigea, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

39 See also Guarino's introduction to Boccaccio's work (xxvi–vii), where the editor states: "To lavish praise on a woman, Boccaccio can think of no better adjective than 'manly' and his greatest condemnation of sluggish and insignificant men is to call them women."

When Christine expands her selection of exemplary figures to include women from Scripture and hagiography, she not only continues the categories established in the first section of her book, but she also draws closer parallels for her readers to admire and to imitate. Thus, the Old Testament examples of Judith and Esther recall the strong queens who form the foundation of her City of Ladies, even as they base their strength on virtues in keeping with Christian views of womankind.Lady Rectitude describes Judith as "the noble lady and widow [who] saved the people of Israel" (2.31.1). Similarly, Esther is "noble, wise, and [a] good maiden" (2.32.1). Both prefigure the Virgin Mary since they, like her, save their people. Both also rely on their intelligence and eloquence to bring about that salvation.

When the Assyrian king, Holofernes, first sees Judith, he "greatly admire[s] her knowledge, beauty, and poise." She takes advantage of his lust by "tormenting him with fair words" until her goal is in sight. As she prays for the strength to carry out her plan, she "beseech[es] God to give her feminine heart the boldness to deliver His people from the evil tyrant." Christine then trumpets Judith's success: "the people of God were delivered from the clutches of Holofernes thanks to Judith, the honest woman, who will forever be praised on this account in Holy Scripture" (2.32.1). Unlike Semiramis who lived out her life as a captive, Judith first triumphs and then happily returns to her reclusive and chaste widowhood.

Although Esther does not take up arms in defense of Israel, she does save her people by virtue of her beauty, intelligence, and eloquence, as had Judith. In both cases, the women vanquish their more powerful opponents by assessing the situation, convincing the men to cooperate with their plan, and then acting decisively. Implicitly, each uses oratory when appropriate to move men to action. More importantly for Christine, each is able to succeed because of her virtuously chaste life.

As she moves to Christian *exempla,* Christine reiterates the themes of courage, strength, and intelligence among the women she presents. The case of Saint Catherine of Alexandria is one that combines "manly" courage with great learning and heroic virtue. When Catherine confronted Maxentius in Alexandria, she

> began to reprimand the emperor with learned arguments. As a well-lettered woman, versed in the various branches of knowledge, she proceeded to prove on the basis of philosophical arguments that there is but one God, Creator of all things, and He alone should be worshipped and no other. When the emperor heard this beautiful, noble, and authoritative maiden speak, he was completely amazed and utterly speechless. (3.3.2)

The emperor challenges her "authoritative" argument by gathering a panel of fifty philosophers to refute her. They, in turn, are "overwhelmed … with her arguments … [and] confounded and unable to answer her questions." Finally, "they all converted, thanks to the divine grace in the holy words of the virgin."

Christine effectively establishes Catherine of Alexandria as a woman of both learning *and* eloquence, who, no less than Judith and Esther, triumphs in the face of adversity. The closest parallel with her to be found in Boccaccio's *exempla* is Hortensia, daughter of the Roman orator, Hortensius. Although she was a woman who appropriated the "male" role of orator by speaking in defense of other women, Boccaccio virtually immasculates her. He describes how she followed in her father's

footsteps and "pleaded so effectively and with such inexhaustible eloquence that to the great admiration of the audience it seemed that she had changed her sex and was Hortensius come back to life" (185). Whereas the "manly" Zenobia was subdued and eventually silenced by putting on female clothing and living among women, Hortensia loses her feminine self entirely by becoming her own father "come back to life."[40]

In contrast, Christine does not immasculate Catherine to the extent that Boccaccio does Hortensia. Rather, she overlays her learning and eloquence with the equally "manly" virtues of courage and endurance. The martyrdom that Catherine suffers at the hands of the irate emperor is described in gruesome detail in the *Book.* Instead of breaking Catherine's will, however, it has the unexpected effect of winning over the emperor's wife, who "was converted and attacked the emperor for what he was doing" (221).

The power of Catherine's example is efficacious even in her lifetime, first among learned men, and then among strong women.[41] After death, she continues to exude the power to effect change in an essentially feminine fashion, as Christine explains:

> … So she finished her martyrdom, and milk poured from her body rather than blood. And the angels took her holy body and carried it to Mount Sinai, located some twenty days' journey away from there, and buried it. At her tomb, God has performed many miracles, which I will omit in order to be brief, except to say that an oil flows from this tomb which heals many illnesses. (3.3.2)

The flow of milk instead of blood underscores both her femininity and the power of her example. Although she died childless, she can still nourish others as a mother nurses her child. The nursing image also continues in the effusion of oil from the tomb, oil that has the power to heal those who approach it, whether male or female.

Christine's choice of Catherine of Alexandria is significant for other reasons, for, by the ninth century, the saint had become the patroness of female scholars and of all Christian philosophers (Allen, *Concept* 214). Her example thus validates women's embrace of learning. Yet, it also offers a powerful lesson of a woman's courage equal to a man's in the face of adversity, so much so that Catherine of Alexandria "was credited with having helped shape the history of France by appearing to Joan of Arc several times during her efforts to lead France to a military victory over England" (Allen, *Concept* 217).[42]

One of the last exemplary women whose story Christine recounts is that of her own patron saint. Like Catherine of Alexandria, Saint Christine defied male authority—from her father to the emperor—in proclaiming her Christian faith. In the face of tortures that were at once similar to but more extensive than those suffered

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40 Jordan ("Boccaccio's In-famous Women" 31–2) comments on Boccaccio's attitude toward eloquent women in general.

41 See Allen (*Concept* 218) who comments on Catherine's disobedience to man. The empress has certainly imitated her in this regard.

42 Quilligan ("Allegory and the Textual Body" 240–42) comments on Christine's *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc* and the power her own example may have had on the acceptance by the French court of Joan.

by Catherine, Christine held firm. Her example inspired men and women to convert to Christianity and, again like Catherine, milk flowed instead of blood from her wounds.

Saint Christine's vociferous statements in defense of her faith caused her torturers to cut out her tongue, not once but twice. In spite of this dismemberment, she was still able to speak and even to blind her tormenter by spitting the remains of her tongue in his eye. For Quilligan, the inclusion of the example of her patroness and, most particularly, the details of this particular act extend the example to Christine de Pizan herself:

> … By putting out the eye of the torturer, St. Christine's tongue reveals the literalization of the 'voice' which is here not only an emblem of the power of martyrdom and of the peculiar dynamics of Christian physical suffering, it is emblem [sic] most profoundly of all of Christine de Pizan's own authority. In dramatizing St. Christine's story, Christine turns her name and its authorized tongue, into an allegory of her own authority. ("Allegory and the Textual Body" 265)

What the allegorical figures strongly imply from the beginning of the *Book of the City of Ladies* is here brought into sharp focus: namely, that Christine is herself an exemplary figure equal to those whom she and Boccaccio present. Like her patron saint, Christine gives voice to women in her work, using the very examples and forms employed by the misogynists to refute their arguments critical of women. Read as a defense of women's learning, the *Book* implicitly adds the author to the line of exemplary figures from literature and history worthy of admiration and, more importantly of imitation. For McLeod, the work thus serves as "a natural bridge between the medieval catalog's exemplification by authority and the Renaissance catalog's assertion by debate." As such, it "recommends that its female readers follow a similar path of self-definition as a defense against detractors" (*Virtue* 112).[43]

In her next book, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (1405), Christine expands and alters her approach concerning advice to women by combining elements found in etiquette books, practical guides to daily life, and even the *speculum principis.*[44] In contrast to the earlier work, the *Treasure* does not rely solely on exemplary figures from the past. Rather, the author concentrates on the duties, responsibilities, and upbringing of women of her time and place. While the major part of the work focuses on the princess and noblewoman, the book also addresses women of other social classes. In doing so, it outlines for them the means at their disposal to gain access to the City of Ladies.[45]

Dedicated to Marguerite de Bourgogne, wife of the Dauphin, the *Treasure of the City of Ladies* reminds its readers of the added responsibility of princesses to set an example for others, "for nothing influences the common people so much as what

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43 Huot ("Seduction and Sublimation" 361–2) disagrees, asserting that "Christine nowhere suggests that other women should aspire to similar independence, or even that women should be given education equal to that of men." See also, 372–3, for similar observations.

44 Willard ("Christine de Pizan's Livre," 96, 102) examines its practical suggestions and also contrasts it with earlier works.

45 Willard ("A Fifteenth-Century View" 99–100) comments on the book's uniqueness.

they see their lord and lady do" (1.9). Consequently, the lengthy first part describes particular virtues appropriate to the princess, especially sobriety and chastity. It recommends reading "instructive books about good manners and behaviour and sometimes devotion" and avoiding "those about indecency and lubricity" (1.10). As stated clearly in the *Book of the City of Ladies* and reiterated in the *Treasure*, the reading of moral literature is intended to result in moral living.

The emphasis on the moral focus of education reflects the tenets espoused by earlier writers even as it extends to the preparation of all classes in society. When describing the princess's duty regarding the education of her children, therefore, Christine urges that "she … ensure that they … learn first of all to serve God, and to read and write, and that the teacher … be careful to make them learn their prayers well" (1.14). On this moral foundation she constructs the intellectual life of study, which includes practical science, mathematics, management, and the ubiquitous domestic skills (Gabriel 12). In suggesting "books of devotion and contemplation or ones dealing with good behaviour" (1.24), Christine lists readings often available in the vernacular. She envisions an education for girls different from that of their brothers, one that does not require the study of Latin.[46]

Although the limited curriculum suggests an equally limited role for women in Christine de Pizan's world, nevertheless, implicit in her *Treasure of the City of Ladies* is the responsible preparation of women at all levels of society to serve as key players in marriage. Since "home, social life, the rearing of children, the practice of charity and religious obligations were still considered [women's] essential duties" (Willard, "Pizan's *Livre*" 96), Part Two of the *Treasure* advises wives to be wise and sound administrators of their estates when their husbands are away on business (2.10). Whether noblewoman or artisan's wife, therefore, a woman "should be involved in the work to the extent that she knows all about it" (3.8). Even though she devotes the major portion of her book to the conduct of noblewomen, Christine states clearly that "everything that we have laid down for other ladies and young women concerning both virtues and the management of one's life [applies] to every woman of whatever class she may be" (3.1). In the conclusion, she hopes to "distribute many copies of this work throughout the world whatever the cost, and [desires that] it be presented in various places to queens, princesses, and great ladies, so that it might be more honoured and exalted, for it is worthy of it, and it might be spread among other women" (3.13).

The works of Boccaccio and Christine de Pizan enjoyed translation and distribution in countries well beyond their own, including those of the Iberian Peninsula. Whereas Boccaccio's books garnered relatively wide circulation in their Latin originals as well as in translation,[47] those of Christine appear to have survived principally in the collections of queens and aristocrats. Nevertheless, it is clear

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46 Richardson (*The Forerunners of Feminism* 32) believes she may have wished to please Jean Gerson with this more conservative stand.

47 Boscaini (109ff.) traces Boccaccio's works in Spain. Haebler (1.24) notes a translation of *De claris mulieribus* published in Zaragoza in 1494. Valera (75) mentions his works in the prologue to his own.

that the *querelle des femmes* debate continued and found willing imitators among Spanish authors.

Christine had already experienced success in her literary endeavors as she acknowledges in *L'Avision-Christine* (339), yet acceptance and distribution of the *Treasure* was even more widespread. Copies of her works appeared in the libraries of noblewomen throughout Europe, including that of Isabel la Católica.[48] Queen Leonor of Portugal sponsored a Portuguese translation of the *Treasure,* which was published in Lisbon in 1518.[49] In addition, the existence of paper, as opposed to vellum, copies of her work suggests a much wider distribution to readers in non-aristocratic circles. Given the fragility of these editions, however, few have survived.[50] Lastly, Christine's influence is also evident in subsequent publications dealing with women, including that of Juan Luis Vives's *Instruction of the Christian Woman.*[51]

While Christine's works appear in manuscript form in libraries on the Iberian Peninsula, the influence of Boccaccio was far more direct. Both Il Corbaccio and *De claris mulieribus* circulated in Spain and found imitators among Spanish writers. The Arcipreste de Talavera embraced the misogynism of *Il Corbaccio* in the tone and title of his own *Corbacho.* In contrast, Don Álvaro de Luna, the Condestable of Castile, ostensibly imitated the model set down in *De claris mulieribus* in his *Libro de las claras e virtuosas mugeres* [*Book of Illustrious and Virtuous Women*] (1446). Certainly in the *proemio* he acknowledges the influence of both Boccaccio and Petrarch on his own composition (10). Thus, in structure as well as title, Álvaro evokes Boccaccio's work; yet, in other respects, he also suggests interesting parallels with Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies.*

As Christine had done, Álvaro begins his work by proposing to answer those critics who have attacked women in the past (11–12). Although more dispassionate than Christine in his opening remarks, still Álvaro argues that men and women are equal in their capacity for virtue or vice. Consequently, he asserts that women should not be depicted as inherently evil (12–13). In order to buttress his opinion, he draws on philosophy, scripture, and theology to defend them. All of this serves as preamble to the female *exempla* that will follow.

In a further evocation of Christine, Álvaro uses the vernacular rather than the Latin of Boccaccio's text, thereby assuring that his work will be more accessible to a female reader. Similarly, he divides his book into three parts in which he groups

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48 Clemencín ("Elogio" 55–617) inventories Isabel's library, indicating that she owned a copy of the *Treasure*. See also Willard ("Anne de France," 59), Kibre ("The Intellectual Interests," 271), Campbell ("Christine de Pisan en Angleterre," 659–70), and Solente ("Deux chapitres," 27–45) for the names of some owners and Christine's influence on other writers. Willard (*Christine de Pizan. Her Life and Works* 218) also notes that the Rouen edition of the *Epistre d'Othéa* "is preserved in the Columbiana Library in Seville, Spain, once the property of Fernando Columbus."

49 See Willard ("A Portuguese Translation" 459) and Bernard ("The Intellectual Circle of Isabel of Portugal" 51).

50 Willard ("The Manuscript Tradition," 439–40,) believes the existence of paper manuscripts of Christine's work attests to its popularity in non-aristocratic circles.

51 See, for example, Willard ("The Three Virtues of Christine" 304) and Sommers ("Marguerite de Navarre as Reader" 72–3), who comment on her influence beyond France.

examples from the Old Testament, classical antiquity, and Christian hagiography, as had Christine.

In spite of the similarities noted between Álvaro's book and those of his literary predecessors, the Spaniard does not offer a slavish imitation of either. Rather, he evinces his own individual style and presentation of exemplary figures. While the amassing of biographical sketches reflects the form used by Boccaccio, Álvaro occasionally cross-references his examples as had Christine. Similarly, his inclusion of Scriptural and hagiographical *exempla* also recalls Christine's selection, but he orders them differently by beginning with Old Testament figures before moving on to the classics and ending with the saints. Even though many of the examples he chooses coincide with Boccaccio's and Christine's, he also omits others found in their works and, conversely, includes some not present in theirs. For example, Álvaro does not offer Semiramis as an exemplary figure, but he does include Zenobia. Unlike either Boccaccio or Christine, Álvaro begins his book with the twin figures of the Virgin Mary and Eve in a very traditional pairing. It is in those instances in which congruence among the authors occurs in their use of the same figures of strong and intelligent female *exempla* that the evolution of examples concerning women's education is evident.

Álvaro's temporizing approach to the figure of Zenobia is a case in point. In the *Libro* she first appears as a huntress, who "fue enduresçida en fuerça varonil, que podía más que todos los otros mançebos de su edad, en luchas y en otros juegos de palenques" [was hardened in manly strength, so that she excelled more than all the young men of her age in contests and other games in the arena] (189).[52] Álvaro summarizes her accomplishments in arms and letters when he describes her as "muy valiente en las fuerças del cuerpo … muy sabia en la disçiplina de la caballería, e alcançó muy mucho en los otros saberes e çiençias" [very courageous in physical exertion … very wise in the discipline of horsemanship, and she accomplished much more in the other arts and studies] (191). Even as he acknowledges her scholarly prowess in Egyptian hieroglyphics, Greek, and Latin, (190), he omits her role as teacher of her children. She is an "honorable woman, and very worthy of praise," one admired for her "courageous heart" and for her "virtuous study of letters."[53] Álvaro presents her as the quintessential virago or *mujer varonil,* so much so that her "womanly" qualities as mother and teacher disappear altogether. He suppresses both the praise of Zenobia's attention to her children's education to be found in Christine's account as well as Boccaccio's description of her eventual defeat and captivity in Rome where she was stripped of all "masculine" adornments.

In many respects, Álvaro de Luna's portrayal of Zenobia reflects what he has done earlier in his book with the figure of Judith. He begins his account of the Old Testament matriarch by first offering a brief genealogy through the patriarchal line and then by equating her deed with the heroic actions of famous men who also revolted against tyranny. He compares her to Brutus, Quintus Mucius, Horatius Cocles, and Scipio Africanus (41, 47) and then suggests that it is her manly courage

52 Translations of Álvaro de Luna's work are my own.

53 A contemporary of Álvaro's, Pérez de Guzmán, reverses the order of praise for Zenobia when he first commends her erudition and then her "corazón varonil" (67).

which he admires and will praise. Judith implicitly serves as a model for men to imitate rather than women.

Nevertheless, her "manly" courage is tempered by traditional views of appropriate female conduct. Álvaro describes in detail Judith's life of reclusion and penance following the death of her husband. (43–4). When Betulia is besieged, she prays in private and resolves on a course of action, which she carries out even as she "siempre guard[a] su castidad con gran prudençia, e honestidad" [always guards her chastity with great prudence and honesty] (44). When she returns to the city with the head of Holofernes, "todo el pueblo ... se pusieron en armas, e salieron por mandado e ordenanza de Judic contra los Asyrios" [the entire city … took up arms and sallied forth under the command of Judith against the Assyrians] (45). She is thus portrayed as a veritable Old Testament Amazon. Citing the authority of Jerome, Álvaro credits Judith's success to her virtuous and chaste life. Even though he asserts that her example is a lesson for both men and women (45–6), the lessons to be drawn are ambiguous at best.

Even as he ostensibly places Judith on an equal footing with men by his comparison of her with other heroic figures and by extending the reach of her prefiguration beyond the bounds of the Biblical descendants with whom she is usually associated, still he also strongly suggests that courage remains a predominantly masculine virtue. It is an opinion that he reinforces with the genealogy that begins the example and the male heirs to it whom he cites at the conclusion. Implicitly, it is Judith's chaste and penitential life that Álvaro seems to offer women for imitation as behavior appropriate for grieving widows. It is the traditionally restrictive mould assigned most women. It is, therefore, ironic that when Álvaro de Luna was arrested for treason and beheaded in 1453 with the active approval of Queen Isabel de Portugal, mother of the future Queen Isabel la Católica, one of his enemies hailed her as a "heroine—another Judith, another Esther, and worthy of comparison to Holy Mary" (Liss, *Isabel* 40).

In neither Christine's nor Álvaro's presentation of Judith is to be found the voluble student of history revealed in the Old Testament source. In the Biblical account, Judith is not only a beautiful and virtuous widow; she is also a woman unafraid of upbraiding her countrymen for their pusillanimity. She reminds the men of Betulia of the history of God's intervention on Israel's behalf in the past, then boldly asserts that she "will do something the memory of which will be handed down to the children of our race from age to age" (Jud. 8:32–3). Her prayer for divine assistance in her endeavor begs for "needful courage [to be given] this widow's hand." She goes on to request "by guile of my lips strike slave down with master, and master with his servant." Her final demand underscores her realization of her exemplary status. "Break their pride by a woman's hand" (Jud. 9:12–15).

The Biblical account of Judith reveals a woman who couples oratorical skill with martial courage. In the *Libro*, Álvaro effectively suppresses the first attribute then highlights the second as instructive for men. It is an approach that he also adopts in his presentation of Hortensia. Like Boccaccio before him, Álvaro marvels at Hortensia's defense of Roman women but wonders aloud: "non se podía onbre determinar qual cosa le más plugiese, es a saber, o auer grand sabor de oyr sus palabras, o de mirar la onestad de su gesto e acatamiento" [a man couldn't determine

which pleased him more, that is, the joy of hearing her words or the admiration for her demeanor and respectful manner] (140). Where Boccaccio found Hortensius reincarnated in his daughter, Álvaro concurs and goes even further.

Just as the heirs to Judith's courage were Roman males, so, too, is it the case with Hortensia, who died childless, thereby leaving no direct heir to her oratorical skills. In Álvaro's account, these skills pass to Julius Caesar, who "continued the eloquence and speechmaking of the orator Quintus Hortensius" (139–40). Implicitly, a woman attains a "manly" eloquence only at the expense of her "womanly" generative faculty. In the same way, courage, fortitude, and the like are evidence of a "*corazón varonil*" in women. For both Boccaccio and Álvaro de Luna, therefore, women are most womanly in silence and submission. Whatever "manly" virtues they possess should inspire male rather than female readers.

As the final example in the *Libro de las claras e virtuosas mugeres*, Álvaro presents Catherine of Alexandria, whom he describes as "esclareçida por disçiplina de todas las artes, e por marauillosa fermosura de cuerpo, e por señalada santidad" [famous for her mastery of all of the arts, and for her marvelous physical beauty and for her remarkable sanctity] (351). Just as Christine de Pizan before him, he reiterates the story of the learned virgin who confounds the philosophers and scholars engaged by the emperor (351–2). Yet, he also amplifies the account by recording the conversations that he imagines between the saint and her opponents. They confidently respond to the emperor's challenge by demanding: "Venga acá la Virgen, porque conozca que nunca fabló con hombres valientes en çiençia" [Let the virgin come here, that she may know that she never spoke with learned men] (353–4). Once vanquished, they admit "que nunca ninguno pudo ir contra nuestras razones; mas esta moza cuyo entendimiento está alumbrado por lumbre de dios, assí nos ha tornado en pasmo" [that no one could refute our reasoning; except this young maid whose understanding is illumined by divine light, so that it has left us awestruck] (355). He concludes by describing the miraculous effluence of milk and oil that flows from her tomb, "which even today … cures all illness" (358).

While Catherine of Alexandria serves both Christine de Pizan and Álvaro de Luna as proof that chastity and learning may coexist in a woman without detriment to either, her martyrdom also attests to a "manly" courage that even Boccaccio might have admired had he included Christian *exempla* in his work. Still, Catherine and Judith also serve as cautionary examples for quite different reasons.

Since both women die childless, their examples may be manipulated to provide different lessons for different readers. Thus, Álvaro underscores Judith's chastity as the appropriate lesson for women to imitate, while her manly courage ties her to future generations of male defenders. Similarly, Catherine of Alexandria manifests "masculine" oratorical skill and fortitude in the face of adversity. After death, however, her tomb assumes traditionally female roles of nurse and mother by exuding both oil to cure the sick and milk to nourish the hungry.

It remained for a contemporary of Álvaro de Luna to approach one of these exemplary figures in a novel fashion and to find in her a lesson for other women to

imitate in all facets of their lives.[54] In the person of Sor Teresa de Cartagena, fifteenth-century Spain produced a writer who, in spirit if not in fact, proved a worthy heir of Christine de Pizan. Although few details of her life are known, Teresa, like Christine, was a member of a family prominent in politics, religion, and the literary life of its time.[55] In the *Arboleda de los enfermos* [*Grove of the Infirm*], the first of the two books she authored, Teresa alludes to her studies (Hutton, ed., 103; Seidenspinner-Núñez, ed. 80). Undoubtedly, she took advantage of her family's large library and its network of literary and academic friends in order to educate herself.[56]

In many respects, however, Teresa de Cartagena was an isolated figure, a veritable interior exile in her own time. As an educated woman in a time when few women were, as a member of a prominent *converso* family in an increasingly anti-Semitic setting, and as a deaf person in a hearing world, she found herself on the margins of Castilian society.[57] Representing her sense of isolation at the beginning of the *Arboleda de los enfermos*, Sor Teresa likens it to a metaphorical shipwreck that has cut her off from others. In response to her circumstances, she decides to recreate her world through the medium of books and writing (Hutton, ed., 37–8; Seidenspinner-Núñez, ed. 23–4).

When she occupies the figurative space of the copse of good advice and spiritual consolation in the form of books, Sor Teresa situates herself in a setting much like the book-lined study of Christine's *Book of the City of Ladies.* While her choice of texts follows a more traditional line encompassing standard religious and devotional works appropriate to the monastic life she has embraced, she shares with Christine a desire to defend a woman's ability to learn and to manifest that learning through the medium of writing (Marichal 44).[58]

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54 In the introduction to her edition of Teresa de Cartagena's works, Seidenspinner-Núñez (7) examines the Cartagena family's connections with Álvaro de Luna, especially his imprisonment and execution.

55 Her father, Don Pedro de Cartagena, was both a scholar and a poet. Equally illustrious forebears included her grandfather, Don Pablo de Santa María, who, as rabbi of Burgos was known as Salomo Ha-Levi, until his conversion and baptism in 1390. Subsequently, he served as bishop of both Cartagena and Burgos. Her uncle, Alfonso de Cartagena, also served as bishop of Burgos and was himself a scholar who translated works by Cicero and Seneca as well as composing his own in Latin and the vernacular. See Hutton's introduction to his edition of her works (15) as well as Seidenspinner-Núñez's (1-11) translation of them for more on the family. The latter also compares her to Christine de Pizan (125–6). See, also, Cantera Burgos (Álvar García 536–8) and Deyermond ("The Convento," 20, 28) for additional information on the family.

56 Dedication of her second book to the wife of the poet Gómez Manrique suggests her use of these family connections.

57 A number of authors comment on her isolation, including Marichal (42–4), Deyermond ("The Convento," 26–8). Surtz ("Image Patterns" 301–3) and Hutton (33–4).

58 Deyermond ("The Convento," 23) describes her as "intelligent, moderately well-read, but not a prodigy of learning." In her combined works she cites the Bible, patristic sources such as Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great, and Bernard of Clairvaux, as well as Boethius. She also includes popular refrains and poetry in her works. See Hutton ed. (31–2) and Seidenspinner-Núñez, ed. (114–17), for a summary of her sources.

Sor Teresa's defense came about because of doubts cast on her authorship of the *Arboleda de los enfermos*. After its appearance, a number of people questioned whether a woman, especially one who was deaf, could have written a work that drew on Scripture and religious sources as this one had. Her response took the form of the *Admiraçión operum Dey* [*Wonder at the Works of God*].

As she had in the *Arboleda,* she dedicates the *Admiraçión* to a woman, Doña Juana de Mendoza, wife of the poet Gómez Manrique.[59] Both author and patroness thus enjoy identity as educated women: one able to write and the other capable of supporting and reading the finished product.[60] As if to underscore the ability of both, Sor Teresa assures Doña Juana that her good judgment will enable her to follow the author's reasoning:

> ... sy consyderardes, virtuosa señora, las enfermedades e corporales pasyones que de continuo he por familiares, bien conosçerá vuestra discreçión que mucho son estoruadoras de los mouim[i]mentos de la voluntad e no menos turbadoras del entendimiento, el qual fatigado e turbado con aquello que la memoria e natural sentimiento de presente le ofresçen, asy como constreñido de propia neçesydad, recoje en sy mesmo la deliberaçión de la voluntad con todas ynteriores mouim[i]mentos. (111)
>
> [... If you consider, virtuous lady, the illnesses and physical sufferings that I have continually for companions, you will readily acknowledge that they are real obstacles to the intentions of my will and to my understanding, which, fatigued and disturbed at present with memories and emotions and constrained by its own need, draws unto itself the deliberations and inner desires of my will.] (Seidenspinner 86)[61]

References to her patron's discretion counterbalance the author's "weak judgement" and her "weak, womanly understanding." The weakness of her own understanding stems from the effect of her physical disabilities on the functioning of her powers of the soul. In fact, she asks her reader twice to consider "¿qué palabra buena ni obra devota deveys esperar muger tan enferma en la persona e tan bulnuerada de ánima?" (112) [what good words or devout works can you expect of a woman so infirm in her body and so wounded in her spirit?] (87). Hidden in this lament of her own deficiencies is the assurance that what will follow will lay both Juana's and others' doubts to rest.

In contrast to Christine de Pizan, Sor Teresa invokes both divine assistance and heavenly guidance to minimize her shortcomings and to justify her creation. Commenting on initial reaction to the *Arboleda,* she explains that "algunos de los prudentes varones e asy mesmo henbras discretas se marauillan o han marauillado de vn tratado que, la graçia divina administrando mi flaco mugeril entendimiento, mi mano escriuió" (113) [some prudent men and also discreet women have marveled

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59 Although she does not identify the "virtuous lady" to whom she dedicates the *Arboleda*, Seidenspinner-Núñez (*Writings* 12) explains that she is "commonly thought to be Juana de Mendoza."

60 Seidenspinner-Núñez, ed. (114–16, 130–32) explores the nuances of Sor Teresa's style.

61 Unless otherwise indicated, English citations from Teresa de Cartagena will be taken from Seidenspinner-Núñez's edition and Spanish from Hutton's. Page numbers will refer to these respective editions.

at a treatise that, with divine grace directing my weak womanly understanding, was written by my hand] (87). She dismisses masculine doubt concerning her authorship by opining that men are simply not accustomed to writings by women but only those by other men (Hutton, ed., 115–16/Seidenspinner 89–90).[62] Their limited vision rejects the admirable power of God to manifest itself as easily through the instrument of woman's intellect as it does through man's (Hutton, ed., 121–2/Seidenspinner 93). Implicitly, her reader's *discreción* precludes misreading of either work.

Indirectly invoking Aristotle, Sor Teresa acknowledges the differences between the sexes: "el onbre es fuerte e valiente e de grande ánimo e osado e de mas perfecto e sano entendimiento; por el contrario, [la mujer] es flaca e pusilánimi, de pequeño coraçón e temerosa" (116) [males are strong and valiant and of great spirit and daring and of more perfect and sound understanding, and women, to the contrary, are weak and cowardly, faint hearted and fearful] (90–91). In order to illustrate her point, Sor Teresa employs an image drawn from the natural world. A tree's bark or *corteza* is "very robust and strong and resistant to the weather," while the core or *meollo* "is weak and delicate" (Hutton, ed., 117/Seidenspinner 91).[63] The bark, like the husband, protects the core (and household) from the vagaries of weather and other threats so that it might sustain the overall health of the tree. In the human sphere, therefore, man and woman are complementary partners, each of whose contributions sustain the vitality of the whole.

To support her argument in favor of both her authorship of the *Arboleda* and, by extension, her right to intellectual pursuits, she invokes the example of Judith. According to Surtz, the attraction of Teresa de Cartagena to Judith is understandable on a number of levels:

> There are, to be sure, a number of parallels, some superficial, others less so, between the two women. The Bible calls attention to the fact that the widowed Judith lived in chastity. Teresa, as a nun, has made a vow of chastity. Judith was a Jew; Teresa is of Jewish lineage. Judith saw herself as the humble instrument of God's will. Teresa portrays her act of writing as the product of divine grace. The high priest Joachim praised Judith for having acted 'manfully' (Jud. 15:11). Teresa in performing an activity deemed the prerogative of men, has similarly acted as a man. (*Writing Women* 31–2)

Beginning with the rhetorical question "¿quál varón de tan fuerte e valiente persona ni tan esforçado se pudiera hallar en el tinpo pasado, ni creo que en este nuestro llamamos, que osara llevar armas contra tan grande e fuerte (e) prínçipe como fue Olinfernes, cuyo exérçito cobría toda la haz e término de la tierra, e no ovo pavor de lo fazer vna muger?" (119) [What man could be found in past times or present of such strong and valiant character or fearless heart that he would dare

62 Male skepticism concerning female authorship plagued Christine as well as she acknowledges in *L'Avision Christine*, when Dame Opinion observes: "Some say that clerks or priests forged [your works] for you and that they could not come from the wit of a woman," cited in McLeod and Wilson ("A Clerk in Name Only" 75).

63 In her study and translation of this work, Seidenspinner-Núñez (134–5) comments on the author's reversal of gender when discussing the relationship of *corteza* to *meollo*. Surtz (*Writing Women* 27–30) also considers this image.

to bear arms against such a great and strong general as Holofernes, whose army covered the surface and extent of the land, and yet a woman had no fear of doing this?] (93), she provides the answer proffered by men: that Judith succeeded because of God's grace and blessing. Yet, in doing so, Judith proved herself more than a *mujer varonil* since the *varones* declined to challenge the tyrant.

Expanding on the point, Sor Teresa draws the analogy between Judith's act and her own accomplishments as author of the *Arboleda.* She asserts that it is patently clear that it should be easier to accept eloquence in a woman than physical strength. Similarly, it is easier for a woman to wield a pen than the sword. Therefore, "deven notar los prudentes varones que Aquel que dio yndustria e graçia a Iudit para fazer vn tan marauilloso e famoso acto, bien puede dar yndustria o entendimiento e graçia a otra qualquier henbra para fazer lo que a otras mugeres, o por ventura algunos del estado varonil no s[ab]rían" (120) [prudent men should note that he who gave the skill and grace to Judith to accomplish such a marvelous and famous act can well give ingenuity or understanding and grace to any woman to do what other women and perchance some of the male condition might not know how to do] (93).

Like Christine de Pizan, Sor Teresa does not allow the obstacles placed in her path to dissuade her from pursuing her commitment to writing. Where Christine attacks the false premises of those misogynistic "authorities" who denied to women both virtue and voice, Sor Teresa answers those "prudent men" who questioned her authorship. Both women turn the methods employed by their critics against them. In Christine's case, she recasts Boccaccio's work in order to give voice to women who were otherwise silenced or ignored. In Sor Teresa's, she utilizes the sources and forms of argument usually the province of men to refute their denial of her abilities.

Conspicuously absent from her examples is any explicit reference to the Virgin Mary as, indeed, evocation of this example does not occur in Christine de Pizan's work either. As Vicente García explains, "Teresa wishes to defend woman's right to write, and the Virgin [Mary] is precisely the model of the traditional, obedient woman removed from active knowledge" (my translation).[64] Furthermore, Sor Teresa contends that if one man can impart knowledge to another, surely God can teach whatever He wishes to whomever he chooses (*Admiraçión* 127–8).

In dismissing critics of her first book, Sor Teresa explains that in it she did not pretend to treat of philosophy or theology, subjects pursued by men in universities. Rather, she wrote of the insights granted by God in the silence of the cloister and her deafness, where solitary study and meditation were her guides. In this spatial and social cloister, it was God who clarified what was obscure or difficult for her "womanly understanding" (95/129).

In contrast to the theologian, the doctor of laws, or the canon lawyer who utilizes his memory to recognize and scrutinize divine gifts, women must learn in a different way. By implication, the men she describes have had access to learning

64 [Teresa quiere defender el derecho de la mujer a escribir, y la Virgen es precisamente el modelo de la mujer tradicional, obediente, y apartada de todo conocimiento activo.] (Vicente García 101). He compares Sor Teresa to Pedro de Luna, Álvaro de Luna, Diego de San Pedro and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in her attitude toward the Virgin as example for women.

in the university, an education denied to women by custom rather than by nature. Refused admittance to the schools, women such as she turn to private study and to God, who treats souls such as hers differently. He manifests his interest in her and her like when "por su grand misericordia e bondad nos enseña e ynfluye en nuestros entendimientos e ánimas aquella sola sabiduría que para conosçer e amar e cobrar los verdaderos bienes avemos menester" (128) [His great mercy and goodness instruct us and instill in our minds and souls the wisdom we need to recognize and love and earn true blessings] (100). In spite of her physical disabilities, she argues, the Lord elected her to commence her literary endeavors when He "cerró las puertas de mis orejas por donde la muerte entrava al ánima mía e abrió los ojos de mi entendimiento, e vi e seguí al Saluador" (137) [closed the doors of my ears through which death was entering my soul and opened the eyes of my understanding, and I saw and followed my Savior] (108). The means she employs is denial of her own will and acceptance of God's. While men might expect her to submit to male authority, she has chosen God's will as a means of liberation. Her cloistered existence thus becomes the route to freedom, to hearing more clearly the word of God and to communicating with others.

In her closing comments, Sor Teresa presents a clear evocation of the powers of the soul as described by Saint Augustine. She explains how memory, understanding, and will become more highly attuned to their proper work when the bodily senses are brought under strict control. To illustrate the point, she falls back on a simile that depends on the perceived differences between the sexes outlined earlier. When the senses are given free rein, the powers of the soul are like some common women who forsake their domestic responsibilities to go wandering from house to house (138).[65] The one power of the soul indispensable to both theologian and humble nun in the struggle to control the senses is *entendimiento.*[66] Significantly, by her reckoning it is also the power of the soul most analogous to the proper place of women in her society; for

> asy como las henbras estando ynclusas dentro de las puertas de su casa se exerçen en sus propios e onestos ofiçios, asy el entendimiento, retraydo de las cosas de fuera y ençer[r]ado dentro de las puertas de secreta cogitaçión, se exerçe [con] más vigor en su propio ofiçio.) (138)
>
> [just as women enclosed within the doors of their home exercise their proper and honest duties, so understanding, withdrawn from outside things and confined within the doors of its secret meditation, exercises with more vigor its proper duty.] (109)

By stressing the interiority of understanding, she lays special claim to it as the province of women. As she apparently bows to the conventional strictures imposed by society on women, she also turns this seeming weakness to strength. The physical interiority of a woman's cloistered existence—whether as nun or wife—is the ideal setting for the exercise of the understanding. Earlier she had juxtaposed the formal

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65 Hutton ed. (22) suggests Pedro de Luna as the source of this analogy.

66 See my article, "Sor Teresa de Cartagena and Entendimiento," *Romanisches Forschungen*, for more on this argument.

education acquired in the schools with "the science and wisdom that God teaches to any man or woman." She then argues: "sy queredes saber qual es la escuela donde se aprende e loa esta verdadera çiençia, digo que es la continua menbrança de los benefiçios de Dios" (128) [if you want to know the school where one learns and praises this true science, I say it is the continuous remembrance of God's blessings] (100). Where books are lacking, God may serve as both text and teacher to the soul undisturbed by the distractions of the outside world.

In anticipation of the debate between acquired and infused learning, Sor Teresa argues forcefully for the legitimacy of the latter. It is, of course, the learning most accessible to women who were otherwise excluded from the universities. Thus, by a dexterous bit of writing and argumentation, Sor Teresa de Cartagena both refutes her critics and defends the right of women to study and to write. Even as she manifests her own erudition, she also demonstrates the source of her understanding and the appropriateness of education for women as well as for men. At the same time, she bows to the conventional strictures of society on women by accepting the limited sphere of action imposed on her sex. Nevertheless, she also turns this apparent weakness to strength by tying the physical interiority of a woman's place (and uniquely hers by virtue of her deafness) to the intellectual interiority characteristic of "entendimiento." She intimates that the sheltered, cloistered life of women might restrict their movements, but it need not confine their minds.

In their respective handling of female *exempla* as subjects in their works, Boccaccio and Álvaro de Luna speak to predominantly male readers and see in the *claras mujeres* lessons to inspire men to action. Not surprisingly, the same *exempla* in the works of Christine de Pizan and Sor Teresa de Cartagena are offered as figures for women to imitate. At the same time, these women authors take exemplarity a step further, for each of them indirectly offers herself as an example as well. When Christine engages the Ladies Reason, Rectitude and Justice, they, in turn, allude to her experiences as instructive. When she ends the *Book of the City of Ladies* with the story of Saint Christine, she implies a connection with her beyond the shared name. Christine de Pizan virtually assumes the voice of the mutilated and martyred saint.

In similar fashion, Sor Teresa de Cartagena evokes the figure of Judith not simply as an example of divine power working through a woman, but also, one surmises, because of the congruence Teresa perceives between her own life and that of the Biblical matriarch. By extension, she draws a clear analogy between herself and Judith when she argues that it is easier to accept eloquence in a woman (Sor Teresa's example) than it is physical strength (Judith's). Simply put, it is easier for a woman to wield a pen than a sword. Since men had claimed both eloquence and physical prowess for themselves, Sor Teresa's argument confronts this male prerogative head on.

Her use of the example of Judith is most instructive in how it differs from Álvaro de Luna's. As noted, he saw Judith in her active, warrior, Amazonian persona as an example for men to imitate. He implies that her passive qualities of prayer, penance, and reclusion are appropriate for women. In contrast, Sor Teresa virtually ignores Judith's widowhood and focuses instead on her courageous act of killing the tyrant—an act that places her above most women *and* men. God makes it possible for her to do the deed and, as Sor Teresa shows, He can make it possible for a woman to write as well. In short, women are capable of arms and letters, of imitating the

Amazons and Athena, or Judith and Catherine of Alexandria. By juxtaposing her act of writing with Judith's act of arms, Sor Teresa offers her own life's work as exemplary, one to be imitated by other women endowed by God with the gift to write. She demonstrates in the process that the pen is not only mightier than the sword, but, just possibly, more frightening as well.

Lastly, where Boccaccio or Álvaro de Luna might admire the female *exempla* whom they present in their respective books, too often they present them as at once exemplary yet exceptional. For them, Zenobia or Judith or Athena or Catherine of Alexandria are examples for men to imitate in their active deeds of "manly courage." But for their female readers, they are exceptions to the general rule governing women's lives. Implicitly, women who read or hear of these "illustrious figures" should continue to ply the distaff and spindle or pray in seclusion. In contrast, both Christine de Pizan and Sor Teresa de Cartagena suggest a wholly different lesson to be learned. The exemplary women of antiquity serve as lessons for imitation by women who read their works. But even more, the authors themselves include their own lives along with the *exempla* as instructive for their female readers. Neither they nor the figures they cite are exceptions to the norm for women. Rather, they are examples to be imitated.

Chapter 2

The Spanish Zenobia: Isabel la Católica and Her Court

> ¿Non vedes cuántos comienzan a aprender admirando su realeza? Lo que los reyes hacen, bueno o malo, todos ensayamos de hacer.… Jugaba el Rey, éramos todos tahures; studia la Reina, somos agora studiantes.[1]

However much Christine de Pizan and Sor Teresa de Cartagena implicitly proposed a woman's right to education by word and example, the extent of their influence was necessarily limited. In Christine's case, translation and distribution of her writings assured the spread of her ideas at least to those with the means to acquire them and the requisite education to read them. Sor Teresa's reach was far more restricted, both because of the circumstances of her life and because her works were not published until the twentieth century. The ability of either author to inspire other women, therefore, was constrained by the historical realities in which they lived and wrote.

In contrast to Christine and Sor Teresa, the example of a queen, such as Isabel la Católica, enjoyed far greater notice and, potentially, influence. Where they might only hope to serve as examples to other women, Isabel did so by virtue of her position as monarch. The lessons to be learned from that example by her subjects—both male and female—delineate the nature and extent of education for women in the Isabelline court and beyond.

Where Christine de Pizan had postulated a city of ladies established on the firm foundation of strong-willed, warrior queens, Spain produced a flesh-and-blood example in the person of Isabel la Católica. She first rallied her followers to support her claim to the throne of Castile; then, with her husband, Fernando de Aragón, she acted as a veritable warrior queen against their common enemies.[2] Once she and Fernando had consolidated their hold on power, she turned her attention to

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1 ["Do you not see how many are beginning to learn in admiration of her majesty? Whatever the king and queen do, good or bad, everyone else tries to do … The King played cards; we were all gamblers; the Queen studies; now we are all students"] (My translation). Juan de Lucena as cited in Rodríguez Valencia, *Isabel la Católica* (1.338).

2 A number of scholars point to Isabel's arrogation of certain masculine symbols of war. Both Aram (*Juana the Mad* 18) and Weissberger (*Isabel Rules* 44–5) comment on her parading through the streets of Segovia "with the naked sword of justice raised before her." Weissberger (119–20) attributes to "Marian monarchal encomiasts [the] masculinization of Isabel … in the image of [her] as *virgo bellatrix*" while also calling attention to a work comparing her to Joan of Arc. Finally, Liss (*Isabel* 116–17) cites Palencia's account of her "impassioned harangue" of the army's retreat from Tordesillas. While she did not actually lead troops in battle, she followed the course of the wars closely with Fernando.

other matters, including the education of her own children. With her support, the figurative walls of Christine's city in the person of eloquent and artistic women could be raised.

Although Isabel was not brought up with the expectation of reigning over her own kingdom, her early education owed much to the influence of her parents. In this respect, her upbringing mirrored that of Christine de Pizan and Sor Teresa de Cartagena, both of whom acknowledged the extent of parental influence in their formative years. By the same token, her early education was similar to that of other Spanish aristocrats, such as the daughters of the powerful Mendoza family, all of whom were taught the requisite skills to manage a large household (Nader, *Power and Gender* 6).

The future queen was born in 1451, the daughter of Juan II of Castile and his second wife, Isabel of Portugal. Her father enjoyed a certain reputation for learning (but not for governing), leading at least one historian to describe his court rather grandiloquently as a perpetual academy.[3] In his *Generaciones y semblanzas*, Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, summarized the king's literary interests:

> sabía fablar e entender latín, leía muy bien, plazíanle mucho libros y estorias, oía muy de grado los dizires rimados e conocía los vicios dellos, avía grant plazer en oir palabras alegres e bien apuntadas e aun él mesmo las sabía bien dezir. (39)
>
> [He knew how to speak and understand Latin, read very well, enjoyed books and stories, listened with great pleasure to poems and was familiar with their vices, took great pleasure in hearing cheerful and noteworthy words and knew himself how to use them.] (My translation)

The king's influence extended beyond the court in his encouragement of learning among the Castilian nobility, an example that his daughter would emulate when she ascended the throne in 1474.[4]

A taste for learning was not the exclusive preserve of Don Juan, however, for his sister, Doña María de Aragón, evinced a similar interest in promoting culture within the court of her husband, Alfonso V, king of Aragón and the Two Sicilies. Her personal library contained a diverse list of titles most of which were in the vernacular, suggesting that she could actually read them.[5] Like many royal brides,

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3 Pérez de Guzmán, "El libro y la biblioteca en España" 128.

4 See Lawrance ("The Spread of Lay Literacy" 166), who describes Juan II's reign as "the turning point, the period when accelerating literacy achieved the momentum to pivot Castilian culture around and set it facing the new direction which leads to the modern world." Round ("Renaissance Culture" 205–14) is far less sanguine about the scholarly climate of the court of Juan II. Pagden ("The Diffusion" 293–4) believes that Bruni d'Arezzo sought the patronage of Juan II without success.

5 Among the works and authors represented were the Bible and the Book of Hours, the latter a staple of women's reading. The Arcipreste de Talavera lists some of these works in his condemnation of women's actual choices in reading matter when he notes: "todas estas cosas fallareys en los cofres de las mugeres: oras de Santa María, syete Salmos, estorias de santos, salterio de romance, ¡nin verle del ojo! Pero canciones, dezires, coplas, cartas de enamorados, e muchas otras locuras, esto sy" [Will you find all of these things in women's

María de Aragón served as a conduit for the movement of books, art, and even religious ideas to her new kingdom.[6]

Isabel was thus born into a family predisposed to the spread of culture at a time when Spain's contact with the flowering of the Italian Renaissance was growing. Nevertheless, the education that she received as a child was more in keeping with medieval models than that enjoyed by such Italian noblewomen as Isotta Nogarola and Laura Cereta, who studied the full spectrum of a humanist curriculum in the fifteenth century.[7] With the death of her father, her half brother, Enrique IV, assumed the throne and initially relegated the rearing of both Isabel and her brother, Alfonso, to the care of their mother's retinue, which took up residence in Arévalo. Under the terms of his will, Juan II stipulated that the young *infantes* should be subject to the tutelage of their mother.[8] Actual instruction of Isabel and Alfonso, however, fell to other, more reliable courtiers than the mentally unstable dowager queen. One of those appointed to take charge of the youngsters was Gonçalo Chacón, who had served as chamberlain to Don Ávaro de Luna (Azcona 48; Weissberger 29). While little documentation exists describing this early education, at least one historian asserts that Isabel "was acquainted with several modern languages, and both wrote and discoursed in her own with great precision and elegance" (Prescott 2.170–171).[9]

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trunks: the Hours of Our Lady, the seven psalms, saints' lives, the psalter in the vernacular? Not a chance! But songs, sayings, couplets, love letters and many other foolish things? You bet!] (*Corbacho* 135). Lawrance (79) indicates that "a respectable matron might be expected to have a library of devotional works—Books of Hours, the Seven Penitential Psalms, saints lives, and vernacular translations of the psaltery" besides the "secret hoard of erotic and romantic trifles" condemned by the Arcipreste.

Doña María's library also included texts by Jerome, Gregory the Great, Boethius, Seneca, Eiximenis, and Catherine of Siena, all works in keeping with the expectations of a noblewoman's literary and devotional interests. *Inventari dels llibres* lists all of her collection. T. and J. Carreras Artau ("Las bibliotecas españolas" 90–91) and Kibre (271) describe the contents of her library.

6 Bell ("Medieval Women Book Owners" 763–4) points out that "by the fifteenth century brides brought romances, grammars and educational treatises as well; but devotional works remained a part of the literary trousseau." Parsons (*The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile*) lists the books owned by Eleanor of Castile. See, also, Farmer ("Persuasive Voices" 541), who contends that "many noble women [of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries] were literate or patronized literary artists." Clanchy (*From Memory to Written Record* 194) also points out how demanding the reading was.

7 See King ("Thwarted Ambitions" 283), who describes Nogarola's interactions with male humanists of her day. Laura Cereta (1469–1499) studied mathematics, astrology, and philosophy. According to tradition, she presented philosophical treatises publicly at 18 and later taught philosophy for a number of years. See Rabil, *Laura Cereta quattrocento Humanist* (3;5). Rabil also points out that "her classical learning is primarily literary despite the fact that she calls it philosophy" (7). Hare (*A Queen of Queens* 58–9) compares Isabel's education unfavorably with that of Cecilia Gonzaga.

8 *Testamento* de Juan II de Castilla en Valladolid a 8 de julio 1454. En *Memorias de Enrique IV*, 2.118, as cited in Rodríguez Valencia (1.8).

9 Fernández-Armesto *(Ferdinand and Isabella* 26) asserts that "the obvious implication was that her conversation was less so." Both Liss (*Isabel the Queen* 17–22) and Pérez (*Isabelle*

In this as well as in other attempted reconstructions of her early schooling, historians clearly rely on the example of the mature Isabel's interests and achievements for their model.

The picture that emerges of the early education of the young princess, therefore, depends in large part on what is known of the mature queen. She obviously learned to read and write in her own language, but she did not initially study Latin. As was the case with most young noblewomen, her elementary schooling concentrated on practical domestic skills such as embroidery, spinning, and weaving, activities Isabel engaged in throughout her life.[10] It probably also included some basic notions of medicine, music, and art. Yet, the foundation of all her formal education remained the acquisition of virtue and probity. In short, her early schooling was essentially traditional and domestic, especially in its emphasis on the acquisition of characteristically feminine skills and virtues, an education mirroring that of other medieval princesses.

The contrast between the *speculum principis*, which proposed to outline the appropriate education of a prince, and those works aimed at the upbringing of a princess clarifies the different roles each was expected to fill in adulthood. It also explains the rationale behind Isabel's early education. While the prince was trained to rule, the princess's future usually had less to do with governance than it did with her own conduct and the example that it might set for others.[11] Such an emphasis is apparent in Christine de Pizan's *Treasure of the City of Ladies*, addressed to "all great queens, ladies and princesses" (1.35), a work that Isabel possessed. In the first book, Christine outlines the conduct and virtues she deems appropriate for a woman charged with managing a large household or a royal court. Invoking royal exemplars from French history, Christine praises each in turn for her piety and her attentiveness to family, including the extended family formed by the ladies of her retinue.[12]

Even those Italian humanists who advocated the education of women conceded that the upbringing of a future queen must encompass a broader range of subjects than that normally available to ordinary women. Still they also "cautioned a woman destined to rule not to study so hard that she neglected her husband or the running of her household" (Grendler, *Schooling* 88). In short, the queen is first a wife and mother and only in extreme cases a ruler. Given Isabel's insistence on sewing and mending all of her husband's clothing herself, it is clear that she heeded such advice in her own life.

From her father Isabel inherited both a love of reading and, for the times, a

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et Ferdinand) concur about the details of her early education, however Azcona (49) states simply that we do not know at all how, when and with whom Isabel had her first lessons.

10 In contrast, Nader (*Power and Gender* 12) observes that women in the Mendoza family learned Latin. She also contends that "clerical fulminations against female learning seem to have exercised little or no influence in noblewomen's education."

11 Not all authors of such treatises agreed, as Van Deusen (23) points out when she cites Antonio de Guevara's *Reloj de príncipes*. Guevara defends the education of princesses and noble ladies in all subjects, including the sciences.

12 The figures she cites are Saints Clotilde, wife of Clovis I, Badour, wife of Clovis II, and Elizabeth of Hungary (Lawson, ed., 46). Later, she offers the example of Blanche of Navarre (51). I am grateful to Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski for pointing out these examples.

considerable library that she augmented during her own reign (Cannon 74–5). The contents and condition of her personal library indicate both her interests and her level of education. Since the majority of the books listed were written in the vernacular rather than Latin, one may surmise that Isabel actually read them rather than merely collected them. The inclusion of such domestic items as "cinco cartapacios borrados de cuando al Principe se mostraba latin" [five crossed-out notebooks from when the Prince was learning Latin] (my translation) as well as the fine, yet well-worn leather bindings of many volumes also attests to the personal nature of the queen's library (Fray Martín, *Jardín*, Goldberg, ed., 44). The titles themselves demonstrate the breadth of her interests, for they cover a spectrum of subjects ranging from translations of Sacred Scripture to imaginative literature, including copies of the *Libro de buen amor* [*Book of Good Love*] of Juan Ruiz and the *Novelas* of Boccaccio. There are a large number of prayer books, moral treatises, and devotional readings as well as standard works on government, law, and history. Also present are the basic texts of Latin grammar and translations of such classical authors as Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, Virgil, Sallust, and Seneca. Practical volumes of courtesy literature, treatises on hunting and games, and specific conduct books for women, including the *Treasure of the City of Ladies* of Christine de Pisan and the *Libro de las virtuosas y claras mujeres* of Álvaro de Luna, round out the collection.[13]

One conduct book curiously missing from the inventories of Isabel's private library is the *Jardín de nobles donzellas* [*Garden of Noble Maidens*], written by the Augustinian monk, Fray Martín de Córdoba. Its absence is remarkable because it is dedicated to the queen herself as "hija legitíma y progénita del clementíssimo & de resplandeciente memoria el Rey Don Juan, postrímero deste nombre" [legitimate daughter and progeny of the most merciful and gloriously remembered King John, the last of this name] (Fray Martín, Goldberg, ed., 135).[14] Although first published in 1500, well after Isabel's succession to the throne, the text itself was composed much earlier (1468). In a *prohemio* probably intended to win the queen's favor, the author refutes those who challenge the legitimacy of her reign (136), then outlines briefly the responsibilities of the ruler. He concludes with advice to the new queen:

> Enestas presentes razones & enlas que porné después, como en jardín de donzellas, mire vuestro vivo entendimiento & tome deleyte por que, pues que la sucessión natural vos da el regimiento que no fallezca por defecto de sabiduría moral; antes la vuestra aprouada sabiduría vos haga digna de regir, como vos haze digna la real & primogénita sangre. Donde, Señora, quise tomar este trabajo de hazer vna breue escriptura que hable dela generación & condición, compusición delas nobles dueñas, en especial de aquéllas que

13 In addition, works by Augustine, Curtius, Julius Caesar, Plato, Jerome, Lactantius, Boethius, and Bruni d'Arezzo may be found in her library. Clemencín ("Elogio de la Reina Católica Doña Isabel" 55–617) inventories her entire library. Pagden ("The Diffusion" 295) enumerates the classical texts in it. More recently, Fernández-Armesto (*Ferdinand and Isabella* 109–12) offers another summary of her library's contents.

14 García, ed. (introduction, *Jardín de nobles doncellas*, xiv) makes the claim that Fray Martín de Córdoba served as tutor to the young Isabel. Goldberg (introduction, 36–47) refutes García's claim. Goldberg's edition will be cited in the text. Unless otherwise indicated, English translations are my own.

> son o esperan ser reynas, esperando por este trabajo de sólo Dios galardón, por el qual los reyes reynan & los sieruos son dignos de ser reyes. (Fray Martín, Goldberg, ed., 140–41)
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> [On these present reasons and on those that will follow, as in a garden of maidens, focus your lively understanding and take delight so that, should you by natural succession be given governance, you may not fail by defect of moral wisdom before appropriate learning may make you worthy to reign, as your royal, first-born blood {already does}. Therefore, my lady, I wish to use this work to create a brief text that may speak of the lineage, background, and preparation of noblewomen, especially of those who are or hope to be queens, hoping for this work only the blessing of God, on behalf of whom kings rule and whose servants are worthy to be kings.] (My translation)

Implicit in this statement are the twin concerns of the author. On the one hand, he suggests that the work is a kind of *speculum principis* written to guide the queen as she assumes the responsibilities of ruler. On the other, he composes a conduct book for women that partakes of equal measures of praise and blame for their perceived virtues and vices. Even though he anticipates the inevitable reign of a woman, still Fray Martín also attributes to her the limitations of her sex. As Lehfeldt explains: "a woman could rule, but only by acknowledging her shortcomings and by perhaps having checks (like a husband) on her power" (35–6). Near the end of the work, Fray Martín defends this juxtaposition by observing that if his advice applies to all women, it is doubly so for the princess "que es más muger & en cuerpo mugeril, *deve traer ánimo varonil*" [who is more woman{ly} and, although in a female body, *should have a masculine spirit*] (251) (emphasis added).[15]

Like Christine de Pizan and Álvaro de Luna before him, Fray Martín anticipates a dual audience for his book, the princess on the one hand and noblewomen on the other. As a result, at times his advice appears contradictory. Since the princess needs to possess the requisite "*ánimo varonil*" of a potential ruler, she is urged to inculcate suitably "manly" virtues. In contrast, those women not destined to reign should acquire the "feminine" or passive attributes deemed more appropriate to the submissive role envisioned for the majority of women by male authors, especially ecclesiastics such as Fray Martín. Throughout the *Jardín*, the author "frequently states a general moral rule and then observes that if the rule holds true for ordinary women, then certainly it is much more valid when applied to princesses, queens, or noble ladies" (Goldberg, ed., 34).

Recommendations concerning "piedad" elucidate the distinction. For Fray Martín, the role of the princess establishes her in a social position where "ella es madre & abogada & es escudo" [she is mother and advocate and shield] (199).[16] As mother of her people, she must serve as an example to her children-subjects. Similarly, as advocate and shield she must mediate on their behalf and defend them from assault. In so defining the role of both queen and mother, Fray Martín reiterates

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15 Weissberger (I*sabel Rules* 35) notes the underlying misogyny of Fray Martín's formulation here. Earlier (30–31) she challenges the "two main critical assumptions about *Jardín*—that it is profeminist and that its immediate goal is the defense of female sovereignty."

16 See Fray Martín, *Jardín*, Goldberg, ed., 135, which comments on these qualities.

the received wisdom concerning the role of women in Spanish society even as he juxtaposes it with that of the quintessential queen and mother, the Virgin Mary.[17]

Echoing the *mulier economica* model found in Aristotle, Fray Martín insists that women need to be obedient, explaining that "en el regimiento doméstico & casero, los oficios del varón & de la muger son repartidos, ca el marido ha de procurar lo defuera de casa & la muger lo de dentro de casa; ca natural cosa es ala muger estar sienpre en casa" [in domestic and household governance, the duties of the man and the woman are apportioned, because the husband must procure for outside the house and the woman for inside; for it is natural for the woman always to be in the house] (206–7). Fray Martín thus reiterates the common opinion already presented by the ancients that woman's proper sphere of activity is the home or cloister regardless of her royal status. In doing so, he also compliments Isabel, who continued to oversee domestic matters of the royal household and to engage in feminine labors such as embroidery and weaving. At the same time, he stipulates that "esto no cabe enlas altas dueñas que tienen su estado aparte de sus maridos" [this does not befit highborn ladies who have their estate separately from their husbands], a caveat that allows Isabel more leeway than ordinary women. Given her "*ánimo varonil*," however, it is a calculated exemption.

In Book Three, Fray Martín marshals a list of female *exempla* in order to illustrate specific recommendations. Although he had urged the princess to rely more on her "*ánimo varonil*" to offset the implied weakness of her "*cuerpo mugeril*," the first examples he offers for her imitation are not the warrior queens found in earlier works but, rather, the learned women of mythology. He presents the briefest of tag lines to identify the accomplishments of each. Thus, he asserts that Carmentis discovered Latin letters; the Sibyls wrote songs and poems about the future; Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, discovered the art of weaving according to pagan books; and Arachne discovered woolmaking, which is the art of weaving (Goldberg, ed., 241–2). In the face of these predominantly literate examples, Fray Martín questions why no women of his time devote themselves to the arts and sciences. His answer is a description of Neptune's threefold punishment of the women of Athens:

> la vna que dende adelante no fuesen llamadas a consejo público; la otra que nunca el hijo tomase el nonbre dela madre; la otra que ninguno no las llamase atheneas. Destas tres puniciones, especialmente dela primera, paresce quel estudio les es vedado. (244)
>
> [The first that from then on they would not be called to public council; second that no son would ever take his mother's name; {and} third that they would not be called Athenians. These three punishments, especially the first, seem to mean that study is forbidden to them.] (My translation)

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17 Lehfeldt (49—51) examines the comparison of Isabel to the Virgin Mary in greater depth. In contrast,Weissberger (32–4) contends that Fray Martín "is more concerned with the first term of the Eva/Ave opposition. It is the legacy of that ignoble *donzella* Eve, that is, the weakness, irrationality, and sinfulness innate in all females … that preoccupies the author as he addresses the woman who was most likely to become queen."

From this proscription, Fray Martín extrapolates: "Pues no han de entrar en consejo, no han menester ciencia para ello, ca los consejeros han de ser philósofos morales & theólogos, otra mente no podrían bien aconsejar esto" [since they are not to engage in counsel, they need not master the science of it, because counselors must be moral philosophers and theologians, otherwise they would not be able to advise] (244). The friar thus echoes the observation of the Italian humanist, Bruni d'Arrezzo who, in his *De studiis et literis*, also proscribed the study of the *quadrivium* by women:

> My chief reason is the obvious one, that I have in view the cultivation most fitting to a woman. To her neither the intricacies of debate nor the oratorical artifices of action and delivery are of the least practical use, if indeed they are not positively unbecoming. Rhetoric in all its forms—public discussion, forensic argument, logical fence, and the like—lies absolutely outside the province of women.[18]

These restrictions notwithstanding, princesses occupy a privileged place so that their education might deviate from the norm. Citing the example of Saint Catherine of Alexandria (also a king's daughter and well educated in the liberal arts), Fray Martín contrasts the princess with plebeian women. Missing from his example of Saint Catherine are the gruesome details of her martyrdom and the miraculous powers of her tomb found in Christine and Álvaro de Luna's accounts. Rather, he focuses on the saint's scholarly pursuits when he urges Isabel to "captar a algunas oras del día en que estudie y oya tales cosas que sean propias al regimiento del reyno" [to take some hours of the day in which to study and to heed all of the things appropriate to ruling the kingdom.] (Goldberg, ed., 244). In spite of this advice, he offers the queen no specific suggestions of books or areas of study save for the few authorities whom he cites in the course of the *Jardín* (Koros 18).[19]

The preeminence given to learning over ruling is itself significant. In contrast to earlier compendia of *exempla*, Fray Martín appears to favor letters over arms when he relegates strong, warrior queens to second place in his work. He chooses but three examples of strong women: Semiramis, Judith, and the Amazons. In the first instance, he suppresses entirely Semiramis's incest and her ultimate defeat, fixing instead on her military powers. He considers Judith a prefiguration of the Virgin Mary (247) and, like Mary, sees her as the handmaiden of God, for it is God who "assí libró … su pueblo por la mano de Judic del tirano & cruel Olofernes" [thus freed … His city by means of Judith's hand against the cruel tyrant, Holofernes] (249). Both Judith and the Amazons embody the daring and strength of womankind when they defend their people from their enemies. In each instance of these warrior women, Fray Martín concentrates on their valor and their military prowess even as he suppresses the more lurid details ascribed to their lives. Since Isabel was known as much for her virtue as she was for her courage, it is an understandable omission. By the time the *Jardín* was published, "the royal chroniclers had portrayed the campaign [against the Moors] as Isabel's war" (Lehfeldt 44). Although she did not actually lead troops into battle, she stayed in close contact with the army during

18 Cited in Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre* (126).

19 Among these are Aristotle, Seneca, the Bible, Saints Anselm, Ambrose, Bernard, and Jerome, and, not surprisingly, Augustine. There are passing references to Plato, Cicero, Varro, Terence, Horace, and Valerius Maximus as well.

the Granada offensive. By associating her with these valiant *exempla* Fray Martín underscores the legitimacy of a queen who has figuratively taken up arms in defense of her inheritance and in destruction of her enemies. He also adds Isabel la Católica to this formidable pantheon of warrior women.

Nevertheless, throughout the *Jardín de nobles donzellas*, the author emphasizes the exceptional status of princesses vis-à-vis other women. While the latter have no need of learning since their role encompasses only home and children, princesses and queens are expected to practice the heroic virtues. "The princess is, as it were, a man by virtue of her birth, and hence the masculine standard of morality applies to her" (Maclean 62). Implicitly, Isabel is a new Zenobia because she is at once chaste, learned, and valiant. When other male authors explicitly compare the queen to Zenobia, however, it is her sexual restraint more than any other characteristic she may have embodied that elicits their highest praise.[20]

As Fray Martín's *Jardín de nobles donzellas* indicates, Isabel's dedication to both arms and letters elicited praise from her contemporaries that equated her with the classical women of antiquity who filled the conduct books in her library. Juan de Lucena lauded the personal and public qualities he discerned in the queen by equating her with two of these classical figures:

> Todos callemos ante la muy resplandeciente Diana, Reina nuestra Isabel, casada, madre, reina, y tan grande asentando nuestros reales, ordenando nuestras batallas; nuestros cercos parando; oyendo nuestras querellas; nuestros juicios formando; inventando vestires; pompas hablando; escuchando músicos; toreas mirando; rodando sus reinos, andando, andando, y nunca parando; gramática oyendo, recrea. ¡O ingenio del cielo armado en la tierra! ¡O esfuerzo real, asentado en flaqueza! ¡O corazón de varón vestido de hembra, ejemplo de todas las reinas, de todas las mugeres dechado, y de todos los hombres materia de letras! ¿Quién tan torpe, tan rudo, que non las aprenda? La muy clara ninfa Carmenta letras latinas nos dio, perdidas en nuestra Castilla, esta diva serena las anda buscando. Si al su resplandor miramos todos por ellas, non puede ser que non las hallemos. Si las manda su grandeza pregonar; ¿quién sabe de las letras latinas que perdió Castilla? Véngalo a decir a su dueño, y habrá buen hallazgo; por cobdicia del premio, más presto se hallaran que se perdieron.[21]

> [We are all silent before the resplendent Diana, our Queen Isabel, wife, mother, queen, grandly ruling our kingdoms, organizing our battles, relieving our sieges; hearing our petitions; forming our judgments; inventing our garments; speaking {at} pageants; listening to music; watching military exercises; going about her kingdoms, traveling, traveling and never stopping; she delights in learning grammar. Oh heavenly talent armed on earth! Oh royal courage founded on weakness! Oh manly heart clothed in femininity, example for all queens, model for all women, and literary subject for all men! Who is so dull, so unpolished, that he cannot learn from these? The famous nymph Carmenta gave us Latin letters, {which were} lost in our Castile, {until} this serene highess {went}

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20 Such is the case with Gracián in *El Criticón*, who claims that Isabel exceeds Zenobia in virtue (in Rodríguez Valencia 2.35). Vives in his *Instrucción* also focuses on her sexual continence rather than her courage. See Wayne ("Zenobia" 55–7) for more on interpretations of this controversial example.

21 Juan de Lucena, *Epistola exhortatoria a las letras* in Rodríguez Valencia (1.337).

> searching for them. If we all regard her splendor by means of them {i.e. letters}, can we not then find them? If her majesty commands them to be proclaimed, who {would} know about the Latin literature that Castile lost? Go tell your master and you will have your reward; by coveting the prize, so much more quickly will what was lost be found.] (My translation)

His allusions to Diana, chaste goddess of the hunt, and Carmenta, who introduced writing to Italy, attempt to capture the breadth of Isabel's activities by placing her squarely in the company of exemplary women of antiquity. In her embrace of arms and letters, the queen also fits the mould of the legendary Zenobia. In contrast to Zenobia, who dressed as a man in order to command troops in battle, Isabel is a "varón vestido de hembra" [man in female form]. Lucena's contemporary, Pedro Mártir de Anghiera, echoes these sentiments when he describes the queen as "fuerte, mas que hombre mas fuerte" [strong, stronger than the strongest man].[22]

In their avowed admiration of Isabel's accomplishments, Fray Martín, Lucena, and others ascribe her success in an avowedly male environment to her "masculine" qualities of leadership. Although they accept these qualities in a queen who must rule, they just as surely deny them to virtually all other women. Rather, the latter are most womanly in their embrace of the characteristically "feminine" virtues of chastity and prudence, qualities present in the figure of Diana. Women who overreach themselves through manifestations of erudition (Cornificia), eloquence (Hortensia), or chivalric courage (Zenobia) are aberrations with virile hearts yet unfeminine attributes. They may be admired, but they are also feared.

More telling is the transformation of Isabel from warrior queen to faithful wife and mother evident in the hands of contemporaries of Fray Martín. When Fray Iñigo de Mendoza also compares the queen to Judith, he focuses on the latter's virtue far more than on her courageous act. Similarly, Isabel's confessor, Fray Hernando de Talavera, describes the queen "como sapientíssima Debora con su consejo, su ayuda y su entrega" [like a very wise Deborah in her counsel, her help and her intervention] and "como otra bellísima Judith con sus ruegos y oraciones elevadas a Dios" [like another very beautiful Judith with her petitions and prayers raised to God].[23] From women possessed of *ánimos varoniles* in *cuerpos mugeriles*, Deborah, Judith, and, by association, Isabel herself become essentially passive figures of reclusion and prayer, helpmates to men of decision.

In Christian tradition, these Old Testament *exempla* prefigure those of the New. Similarly, Isabel was soon perceived to embody the estimable qualities discerned in her New Testament forebears. In Talavera's restatement of his 1485 sermon, he used the metaphorical figure of the eagle to symbolize the theme of renewal he perceived the queen to embody. His choice was important on a number of levels. As Lehfeldt

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22 Pedro Mártir de Anghiera, Ep. VI, f. IIr., "A Pomponio Leo" in Rodríguez Valencia (1.175). See Wayne ("Zenobia," 55), who observes that "while the Middle Ages celebrated Zenobia for deeds writers thought of as masculine, Renaissance writers gave more emphasis to her typically feminine qualities." She cites Vives's interpretation of Zenobia (56–7).

23 *Oficio de Deditione Urbis Granatae*, Lección III in Rodríguez Valencia 1.371–2. Liss (123; 125) discusses Talavera's advice to the queen and the examples he cites, as does Lehfeldt (37–41).

points out, the eagle is the symbol of Saint John the Evangelist, Isabel's patron saint and a link to her father, Juan II (38). It is also the "embodiment of all the qualities of the strong ruler" (Lehfeldt 39). Equally important, the eagle figures in the royal coat of arms, which Ferdinand and Isabel commissioned in 1475 and were quick to affix to public buildings throughout their kingdom as a symbolic claim to their legitimacy as monarchs.[24]

To Andrés Bernáldez Isabel was "secunda Elizabet continentis … muy feroz y enemiga de malos e de las malas mugeres" [a second chaste Elizabeth … a fierce enemy of evil {men} and women].[25] With the birth of her son and heir, the Infante Don Juan, the conflation of Isabel with her Biblical patrons was complete. Pulgar celebrated the birth of the prince by claiming that "the other Isabel [Elizabeth] is another Isabel [the queen]" (in Liss 154–5). The prince, named for both of his grandfathers, combined the attributes not only of John the Baptist but also of John the Evangelist. They, in turn, were "closely identified with Christ … heralding the first and second coming of the Messiah" (155–6). Thus, by association, Isabel also came to be identified with both Elizabeth, the mother of the Baptist, and with Mary, the mother of the Lord (see Figure 2.1).

Speaking of the queen, Pedro Mártir de Anghiera posed this rhetorical question to the Archbishop of Granada: "fuera de la Virgen, Madre de Dios, ¿cuál otra podréis señalarme entre las que la Iglesia venera en el catálogo de las santas que la supera en la piedad, en la pureza, en la honestidad?" [beyond the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, what other woman could you point out among all those that the Church venerates in the catalogue of saints who exceeds {her} in mercy, purity and virtue?][26] In similar fashion, Diego de Valera addressed the queen:

> in truth it can be said that just as our Lord wished that our glorious Lady might be born in this world because from her would proceed the Universal Redeemer of the human lineage, so he determined that you, My Lady, would be born to reform and restore these kingdoms and lead them out from the tyrannical government under which they have been for so long. (Cited in Liss 157)

Both men admire Isabel for her virtue and piety, qualities that put her on a par with the queen of heaven. At the same time, even as Valera cedes to her an active part in restoring Spain, he first recognizes her most important contribution to be that of mother to a prince who, by implication, will function as a virtual messiah of Christian Spain.

Before Prince Juan could deliver Spain from its enemies, his parents were already engaged in the task. They completed the reconquest of the peninsula in 1492 with the fall of the last Moorish stronghold in Granada. Even as she assisted in that task,

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24 See Liss (111–12) and Weissberger (47–54) for a description of the symbolism of the coat of arms.

25 *Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos* (Madrid: 1562) 484–90, in Rodríguez Valencia (1.115).

26 Ep. CCLXXIX, "Al Arzobispo de Granada y al conde de Tendilla. La muerte y la vida de la Reina" in *Opus epistolarum* 159–60, cited in Rodríguez Valencia (1.192).

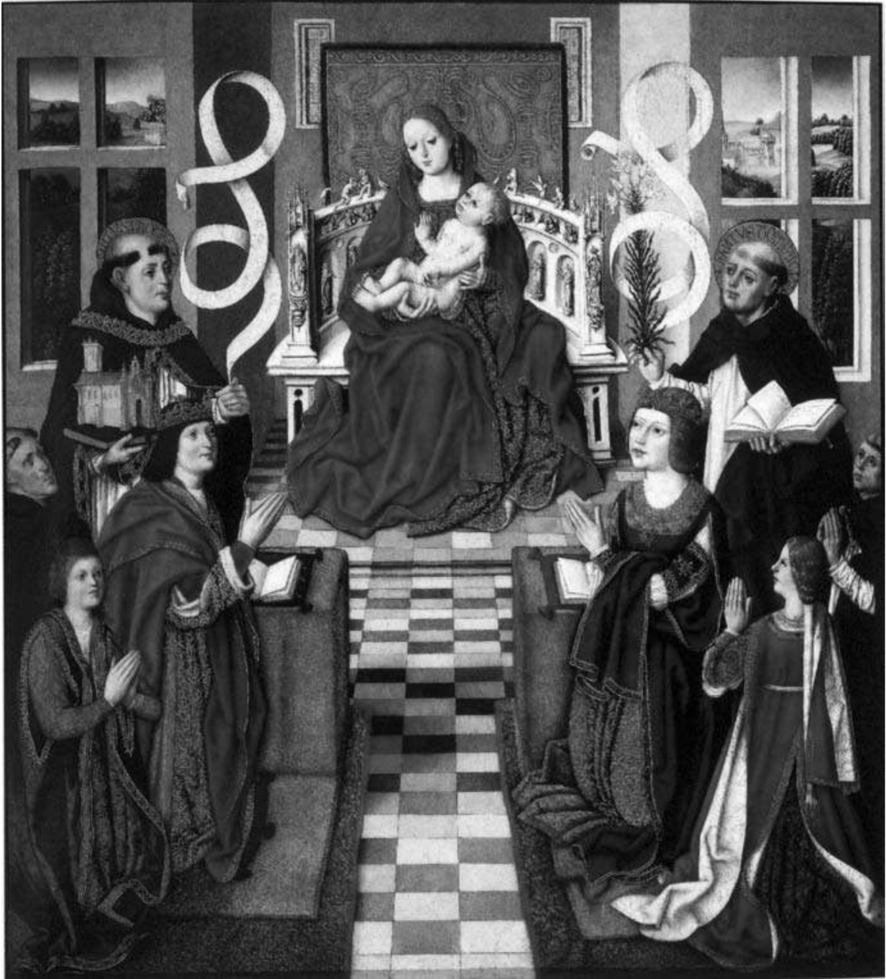

Figure 1 Anonymous, La Virgen con los Reyes Católicos y dos de sus hijos, c. 1490. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

the queen devoted herself fully to rearing her children and to ruling jointly with her husband.

Once it became clear that she would, in fact, rule alongside Fernando, Isabel sought to remedy the deficiencies of her own early education. Her approach was initially sporadic because of the demands made upon her by motherhood, war, and constant travel.[27] In the course of fulfilling this myriad of responsibilities, she received practical training in diplomacy and statecraft. At the same time, she undertook the

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27 The dates and places of birth of her children attest to her travels and travails. The princess Isabel was born in 1470 in Dueñas in the province of Palencia; Don Juan in Sevilla in 1478; Juana la Loca in Toledo in 1479; María in Córdoba in 1482; and Catarina in Alcalá de Henares in 1485.

study of Latin so that she could "scan the texts of treaties and charters, and to read with pleasure the Vulgate and Caesar's Commentaries—enough to be determined that her children should have what she (and Ferdinand) had missed" (Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* 17).[28]

As part of her own interest in Latin and as a means of encouraging imitation of her educational endeavors among the members of the court, the queen sponsored publication of a number of practical texts. Among these were Alonso de Palencia's *Universal Vocabulario en Latín y en romance* [*Universal Vocabulary in Latin and in Romance*] and an interlinear edition of Antonio de Nebrija's *Introducciones latines* [*Introduction to Latin*]. These works along with Nebrija's *Gramática castellana* [*Castilian Grammar*] were especially aimed at instructing ladies of her court.[29] Nebrija's *Grámatica* established rules that facilitated the study of Castilian, while his *Introducciones* made possible private tutoring in Latin.

From the education of herself and the ladies surrounding her, Isabel next directed her attention to that of the young within her court, including her own children. Her interest in education had consequences beyond self-advancement or preparation for the future of her offspring. In fact, she undertook the creation within Spain of a climate of intellectual inquiry through public acts. Private and public interests coalesced when she contributed a large portion of her library to San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo.[30] Her action reflected both her desire to regularize the education of young noblemen as well as other royal prerogatives. In pursuit of these ends, she also established a school of classics within the palace, and then invited Italian and Spanish humanist scholars to staff it. Fray Diego Deza came from Salamanca to serve as tutor and guide to the Crown Prince. Later, at her request, Pedro Mártir de Anghiera and Lucio Marineo Sículo taught the young courtiers (Paul, *Catherine* 62–3).[31]

Although praise of the queen by members of her court may be suspect since they owed their positions to her patronage, a number of the scholars whom she employed lauded her contribution to the furtherance of humanistic studies. As noted earlier, Juan de Lucena contrasted the activities of the monarchs, pointing out that since the Queen studied "we are now all students." Pedro Mártir de Anghiera noted the queen's personal contribution by complimenting her as such a great lover of letters. Lucio Marineo Sículo went further when he compared her to Fernando and concluded that "a juicio de muchos, la Reina era de ingenio más vivo, de corazón más grande y de

28 Fernando Pulgar ("De la Letra XI" in Rodríguez Valencia [1.88–9]) wrote to the queen in 1482 inquiring of her progress in the study of Latin.

29 Menéndez Pidal (*La lengua* 20–21) indicates that she ordered the publication of Alonso de Palencia's book. Prescott (2.182–3), remarks that Nebrija's *Gramática* was "designed particularly for the instruction of the ladies of the court." According to Pérez, (*Isabelle et Ferdinand* 402), however, the queen did not know what to make of Nebrija's work until Archbishop Talavera suggested its usefulness in the conquest of "barbarous" people.

30 Most of this collection was later lost in a disastrous fire. Other books and manuscripts initially held in the royal chapel in Granada were later transferred to the Escorial by decree of Philip II. See Ballesteros Gaibrois (*La obra de Isabel la Católica* 205) and Antolín ("Los libros de Isabel la Católica" 201–2). Pagden (312) contrasts Isabel's library with that of Philip II.

31 See also Prescott (2.175–7) and Lynn (*A College Professor* 78; 109).

mayor gravedad" [in the judgment of many, the Queen has a livelier talent, a larger heart and greater seriousness] (My translation).[32]

By establishing a palace school for young noblemen, Isabel gave practical form to her interest in education. She also continued the well-established custom of rearing the daughters of the aristocracy within the court, a practice court historian, Fernando de Pulgar, succinctly summarized: "a doncellas huérfanas doctaba, y a otras con grandes doctes las casaba" [she educated orphaned maids and married them to learned men] (My translation).[33] Although a common occurrence in royal courts, Mariejol asserts that "never had there been such a numerous and select retinue of ladies under previous sovereigns" (237–8).[34]

Beyond the court proper, the queen's example influenced other women to undertake study besides the traditional domestic arts that heretofore constituted a woman's education. Isabel de Vergara, sister of the humanists Juan and Francisco de Vergara, was herself an Erasmist and learned in Latin and Greek; Cecilia Marello knew philosophy and languages; and Álvara de Alba authored a treatise on mathematics. While Italy might boast of its learned women, they "did not lecture regularly on the poets at the great universities as did Doña Lucía de Medrano at Salamanca and Doña Francisca de Lebrija [daughter of Antonio de Nebrija] at Alcalá." In fact, "the fuller participation of women was one of the chief differences of the Spanish Renaissance" (Mattingly 18).[35]

Marineo Sículo particularly praised Doña Lucía de Medrano for her eloquence as a lecturer at the University of Salamanca. In a letter to her he calls her a "very cultured young woman," comparing her to familiar female *exempla*:

> Ahora ya me es fácil creer lo que antes dudaba, que fueron muy elocuentes las hijas de Lelio y Hortensio, en Roma; las de Stesicoro, en Sicilia, y otras. Ahora es cuando me he convencido de que la Naturaleza no negó sus dones a la mujer, pues eres tú una buena prueba de ello, con la ventaja que sacaste a los hombres de nuestro tiempo. Maravilla es que una joven, casi nina, maneje con tanta diligencia y afán, no la lana sino el libro; no el huso, sino la pluma; no la aguja, sino el estilo.[36]

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32 Ep. XIII, f. IIIr., año 1488, "A la reina" in Rodríguez Valencia (1.176); and Marineo Sículo, *De rebus Hispaniae*, Libro XXI, as cited in Menéndez Pidal ("Significación del reinado de Isabel la Católica" 2.22).

33 "De las grandes excelencias de la Reina Doña Isabel" in Rodríguez Valencia (1.93). See also Marineo Sículo, *De Rebus Hispaniae memorabilibus*, fols. 105v; 122r; y v, in Rodríguez Valencia (1.202–3).

34 Morán Samaniego (*El humanismo español* 58) and Ballesteros Gaibrois (210) also comment on her influence on the cultural life of Spain.

35 Guernelli (*Gaspara Stampa* 57) credits Isabel's influence for the appearance of educated women in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. For a longer list of notable women scholars of the period, see Cannon (*The Education of Women*), Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes*, 4 vols.), and Gómez Molleda ("La cultura femenina" 137–94).

36 *Epistolarum familiarum*, lib. XIII, epistola 82, s. 1., s.f., as cited in Gómez Molleda (187). See Oettel ("Una catedrática" 289–360), for a more detailed account of Medrano's life and achievements.

> [It is now easy for me to believe what I doubted earlier, that the daughters of Lelius and Hortensius in Rome; those of Stesichorus in Sicily and others were very eloquent. Now I am convinced that nature did not deny to womankind her gifts, since you are proof of it, with the advantage that you derived from the men of our time. It is a marvel that a young woman, almost a girl, can manage with such diligence and eagerness, not wool but the book; not the spindle but the pen; not the needle but the stylus.] (My translation)

Even as he equates her with the orator Hortensia, he also suggests the example of the poetess Cornificia. Like her Roman *exemplum*, Medrano has preferred scholarly pursuits to the more womanly activities common to her sex. Thus, she favors "libro … pluma … [y] estilo" over "lana … huso … [y] aguja." In her preference for the stylus over the needle and the pen over the spindle, Doña Lucía has overtaken even the queen who spun as well as studied.

One of the more intriguing examples of a woman of erudition who resided for a time in the Isabelline court is that of Beatriz Galíndez, known as "la Latina," who purportedly served as Isabel's Latin tutor (See Figure 2).[37] One scholar describes her fulsomely as "el más alto exponente de la intelectualidad femenina … [cuya] figura alcanza uno de los vértices más altos de la historia de España" [greatest exponent of femenine intellect … whose figure reaches one of the highest vertices of Spanish history] (My translation) (Jiménez, "¿Fue ecijana?" 139). Marineo Sículo described her as a "mujer muy adornada de letras y santas virtudes. La cual, así por sus virtudes como por la doctrina singular, fue muy privada y bien quista en la casa real y por la lengua latina, que hablaba sueltamente, fue dicha por sobre nombre la Latina" [a woman well adorned with letters and holy virtues. Who, as much for her virtue as for her singular learning, was a court favorite and well-received in the royal house and because of her Latin, which she spoke fluently, she was known by the name, 'la Latina'] (My translation).[38] While her exact role in the royal household remains the subject of debate, her reputation for erudition does not. The chronicler Santacruz praised her learning, and the Salamancan historian, Gonçález Dávila, called her a "muger de gran seso, [quien] supo mucho de erudición, y con eminencia la lengua Latina" [a woman of great intelligence, who possessed much erudition and was noted for her {knowledge} of the Latin language] (My translation).[39]

Lope de Vega included her in his *Laurel de Apolo* [*Apollo's Triumph*] summarizing the paradoxes of her life:

> aquella Latina
> que apenas nuestra vista determina
> si fue mujer o inteligencia pura,

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37 Llanos y Torriglia (*En el hogar* 78) and others so designate Beatriz Galindo, while Antonio de la Torre ("Unas noticias" 255–61) disputes the claim. Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 1.2.420–43) offers a biography of Galíndez and documents pertinent to her life.

38 *Cosas memorables de España* (Alcalá de Henares, 1530) as cited in Gómez Molleda (177). See also Cristina de la Cruz Arteaga (*Beatriz Galindo*) and Llanos y Torriglia (*Catalina de Aragón* 26–7) for more on her life.

39 *Theatro eclesiástico*, 1.23. Santacruz (*Crónica de los Reyes Católicos* 1.244) also comments on her erudition.

Figure 2 Anonymous, Beatriz Galindo, La Latina, 16th century. Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid.

> docta con hermosura
> y santa en lo difícil de la corte.[40]
>
> [that ‘Latina’ who our vision can hardly determine whether she was a woman or pure intelligence, beautiful, learned and holy amidst the difficulties of the court.] (My translation)

Evidence of her virtue and erudition does not rest solely on her mastery of Latin nor on her “santidad” in the royal household. She is credited with authoring two works, the *Comentarios de Aristóteles* [*Commentaries on Aristotle*] and the *Notas sabias sobre los antiguos* [*Learned Notes about the Ancients*]. Although no copies survive, their titles suggest the humanistic interests of their author as do her charitable works, for Beatriz Galíndez had a hand in the establishment of various foundations dedicated to religious and social works.

First among her foundations was the Hospital de la Concepción in Madrid, followed by a school for poor young ladies. Later she established a Hieronymite convent in the house her husband bequeathed to her and to which she retired in the last years of her life. While engaged in these charitable works, Beatriz continued to study and to teach in the school she had founded. She credited the influence of Isabel’s example and encouragement in her last will and testament:

> Todo lo que he gastado en los edificios y dotaciones de los dichos monasterios y hospital ha sido de algunas mercedes que la reyna Doña Isabel nuestra señora, que aya santa gloria, me hizo, así para los dichos edificios y dotaciones como para el gasto de mi persona y casa, del qual gasto yo me retraxe todo lo que pude, viviendo pobre y estrechamente después que el secretario mi señor murió.[41]
>
> [All that I have spent in the buildings and gifts to said monasteries and hospital has been because of some favors shown me by Queen Isabel, our sovereign, may she rest in peace, so that for said buildings and gifts as well as the expense of my household and my person, I retreated as much as I was able from that sale, living in strict poverty after my husband, the secretary, died.] (My translation)

Clearly, the queen had created a climate favorable to the likes of a Beatriz Galíndez and to other women of similar talent and interests. That other women engaged in both scholarship and charity under her reign testifies to the efficacy of her efforts and example.

Besides the encouragement of learning among members of the court and in society, Isabel also undertook private initiatives on behalf of her children. In contrast to her own more limited education, the queen determined on a much broader one for her children. For that purpose, she employed a number of Italian educators to serve in the royal household. The brothers Antonio and Alessandro Geraldini brought to Spain the classical erudition of the Italian Renaissance in their capacity as tutors to Isabel’s children. As a result, the prince, Don Juan, and the *infantas*, Isabel, Juana, María, and Catarina learned not only Latin but also theology, natural

40 *Laurel de Apolo*, Silva quinta 98.
41 Cited in Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes* (1.2.436).

sciences, literature, music, and fine arts. From their mother, they also learned the art of government by example and practice.

Initially, attention focused on teaching the young prince. To that end, Pedro Mártir de Anghiera arrived in Spain in 1487 with the express intention of establishing a palace school for the prince and a select group of young noblemen. In a letter to the Archbishop of Braga, he describes the difficult conditions he encountered:

> Tengo todo el día la casa llena de bulliciosos jóvenes de la nobleza, que dando demano a los frívolos devaneos, a los que—como muy bien sabéis—estaban acostumbrados desde pequeños, poco a poco se van volviendo hacia las letras y ya están convencidos de que éstas, lejos de ser un estorbo—según los antiguos falsamente les habían hecho creer—, son más bien eficaces auxiliares para la profesión de las armas. Me esfuerzo en llevarles al convencimiento de que nadie, ni en paz ni en guerra, puede de otro modo llegar a ser ilustre. Tanto ha agradecido esta academia nuestra a la Reina—ejemplar viviente en el trono de toda clase de virtudes—que ha mandado a su primo-hermano, el Duque de Güimeares y al Duque de Villahermosa, sobrino del Rey, que frecuenten mi casa y estén todo el día en ella sin salir más que cuando lo requiera un motivo urgente. En pos de estos han venido todos los jóvenes herederos de los potentados de ambas Españas.[42]
>
> [I spend all day {in} the house full of boisterous young noblemen, given over to frivolous pursuits, who–as you well know–were accustomed {to do so} from their childhood; little by little they are coming toward letters and already are convinced that these {i.e. letters} far from being a hindrance–as the ancients had led them to believe–, are very efficacious for the profession of arms. I am striving to bring them to the conviction that no one, neither in peace nor war, can become illustrious any other way. This academy has so much pleased the Queen–a living example on the throne of all kinds of virtues–that she has commanded her first cousin, the Duke of Güimeares and the Duke of Villahermosa, nephew of the King, that they frequent my house and that they spend the whole day without leaving except when urgent matters may require it. After them have come all the young heirs of the most powerful in both Spains {i.e. Castile and Aragon}.] (My translation)

As the pedagogue remarks, the queen was the moving force behind this palace school, one intended to raise the educational level of the nobility as much as that of her son. To accomplish this goal, other tutors were employed to instruct the prince in grammar, history, the humanities, and the military arts.[43]

The *speculum principis* literature that proliferated during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe influenced some of the endeavors undertaken on behalf of the royal children. Certainly a number of these works occupy a place in Isabel's library, yet one is of particular interest both because it is dedicated to the queen and because it was intended as a guide in the education of her son. As humanist scholar and chaplain to the royal family when they resided in Toledo, Alonso Ortiz composed his *Liber de educatione Johannis Serenissimi Principis* (*Diálogo sobre la educación del Príncipe Don Juan, hijo de los Reyes Católicos*) [*Dialogue on the*

42 Ep. CXV, 64–5, "Al Arzobispo de Braga y al Obispo de Pamplona" in Rodríguez Valencia (1.179–80).

43 Cotarelo Valledor (*Fray Diego de Deza* 77–8; 80) offers background on the tutors to the royal children. Lynn (158–9) provides evidence that girls as well as boys were encouraged to learn in the Isabelline court.

education of Prince John, son of the Catholic Kings] some time between 1492 and 1497 and presented it to the queen as a complete treatise on education.[44]

In spite of the dedication, the work appeared only after the premature death of Don Juan. At the same time, its composition and presentation to the queen virtually coincided with that of Fray Martín de Córdoba's *Jardín de nobles donzellas*. By juxtaposing the two texts, the differences between the education recommended for princes as opposed to that deemed suitable for princesses are more clearly delineated. Also apparent is the extent to which Isabel embraced the ideas of one as opposed to those of the other in the education of her children. Lastly, the role that the queen plays in the work proper casts her in a dual role.

In contrast to the *Jardín*, the queen takes an active part in the *Diálogo* as she converses with an unnamed cardinal (probably Pedro González de Mendoza), who serves as interlocutor for Ortiz. Implicitly, the queen's responsibility as mother and first tutor of her children justifies her assumption of the role of conversant with the cardinal. It is a subtle evocation of Quintilian on the part of the author. In the course of the *Diálogo*, the cardinal will effectively educate the queen as much as her children, for she is the student who poses questions to the cardinal-turned-educator and the one who summarizes his lengthy musings.

From the outset, the queen indicates her desire to prepare her son for his princely responsibilities:

> Tanto deseo formarlo en la costumbre e instruirlo en la doctrina desde su infancia, de forma que reluzca en el la gloria de sus antepasados, pues con palabras de Salomón: 'El hijo sabio es la gloria del padre.' Se me ocurre por esto este pensamiento: nada los príncipes tiene que cumplir con mayor diligencia, con mayor firmeza que procurar que los hijos sean buenos y sabios, en la vida de los cuales la salvación de los pueblos se robustece o desmaya. (Ortiz, ed., 42)
>
> [I so much wish to form him in habits and to instruct him in doctrine from his infancy, so that he may shine in the glory of his ancestors, so that in the words of Solomon: 'The wise son is the glory of the father.' Therefore this thought occurs to me: there is nothing that princes have to accomplish with greater diligence or firmness that to make sure that their children are good and wise, in the lives of which the salvation of the people may {either} thrive or be faint-hearted.] (My translation)

At the same time she manifests her familiarity with some of the authorities on whom the cardinal will draw: "Advertí, oh cardenal, de las cosas que están escritas en los libros anteriores, que es mayor el trabajo que sobrellevan los reyes de cuanto creía" [I took notice, oh Cardinal, of the things that are written in earlier books, that kings overlook greater work than one would believe] (41). In the questions she subsequently poses, she confirms this knowledge of sources, sources for the most part found in Isabel's own library. While her familiarity with them implies a broad education of her own, the queen's ability in the *Diálogo* to synthesize the cardinal's points also suggests a quick and supple mind. As the encomia by the humanist scholars of the court suggested, Ortiz's portrayal of the queen may owe as much to

44 Bertini, ed., introduction, Alonso Ortiz, *Diálogo sobre la educación* (30).

calculated flattery as it does to a realistic depiction of her erudition. Nevertheless, by casting her as he does, Ortiz emphasizes that it is the queen more than the king who will appreciate and implement his recommendations regarding the education of the prince.

Use of the dialogue format is a conscious imitation of classical style, especially of Plato, whom the cardinal invokes virtually from the outset (44). Similarly, his references to classical and Christian sources to buttress his arguments tangentially provides a humanist's reading list of authors and works to guide the queen and the princely reader. In form and practice, therefore, Ortiz utilizes *imitatio* to full effect.

Although the main focus of the *Diálogo* is the education of the prince, certain principles espoused are equally relevant to that of the princesses. Much of what the author presents concerns notions regarding education in general without specific reference to gender. Indeed, when speaking of the earliest lessons for her children, the proposals of the Cardinal concerning nursemaids, the use of block letters and the like work equally well for either sex. Only occasionally does his advice appear to apply only to the son. Thus, he recommends that "si el joven dirige su alma hacia las hazañas militares … es aconsejable que vengan ejercitados en la caza y a pie para adquirir agilidad y robustecer los miembros y ejercitar los músculos" [if the youngster sets his heart on military deeds … it is advisable that he be trained firmly in the hunt in order to acquire agility, to strengthen the body, and to exercise the muscles] (167). While such advice would seem to pertain to boys alone, Aram notes that the princess Juana was also given military training, albeit not at the same level as her brother (26). Similarly, Ortiz remarks that the ancients recommended that both boys and girls be trained in virtue in the gymnasium (173). Implicitly, the suggestions made in the *Diálogo* are intended to guide the education of the prince, but they just as easily serve to inform the queen herself as well as the princesses who are equally her children.

In contrast to the tripartite divisions of the *Jardín*, the *Diálogo* comprises but two books, the second almost three times longer than the first. As is the case in the *Jardín*, the inculcation of virtue goes hand in hand with the acquisition of knowledge. The cardinal suggests three forces within life that militate against right living: "los astros nos inclinan, el hechizo de los demonios nos empuja hacia los vicios y los embustes de los hombres malos nos seducen" [the stars incline us, the spells of the demons push us toward vice and the deceptions of evil men seduce us] (43). In order to counteract the inclination to vice caused by supernatural as well as terrestrial powers, he recommends appropriate study of a variety of works ranging from moral theology to astrology. Unlike Fray Martín, Ortiz quotes extensively from Scripture, patristic literature, and classical texts to support his arguments.

Book Two continues to address the formation of character, but, at the same time, widens the focus to more specifically pedagogical concerns, including such fundamental issues as the age at which education should commence and the background of the teachers employed (151, 185). In his reliance on Quintilian for many of the recommendations found in this book, Ortiz manifests his humanistic background even as he joins his work to the continuum of educational treatises that eventually influence Vives and other pedagogues.

Recapitulating the underlying principles enunciated in Book One that the acquisition of virtue is integral to his educational plan, the author restates the ancient

belief that the character of the child is literally formed at the mother's breast where virtue or vice is imbibed with her milk. Consequently, nursemaids should be screened carefully before infants are put in their care. In the case of royal nursemaids, even greater care is needed, for, as Heath Dillard points out, "Castilian royal nurses, unlike their counterparts in the towns, were hired for ten or twenty years as governesses, and their importance to royal children is attested by the gifts of land many received at their retirement in recognition of devoted service" (*Daughters of the Reconquest* 156).[45]

As the child matures, the characters of both the tutor and the royal companions demand equal attention (174). As first teacher of her children, the queen must choose the tutor with care since he will build on the foundation she has set in their infancy. The author stresses that "conforme la opinión del príncipe conviene que los hijos de los reyes, que deben ser educados, sean acompañados por preceptores y por amigos de tal calidad que destaquen por su índole, su doctrina y sus costumbres" [in conformity with the opinion of the prince it is agreed that the sons of kings, who ought to be educated, be accompanied by preceptors and by friends of such quality that they may be conspicuous for their disposition, their learning, and their habits] (180). It is advice that Isabel seems to have heeded as evidenced by the employment of tutors and the establishment of a palace school.

Balancing the heavily moral tone of much of the *Diálogo* are the practical pedagogical considerations that the author also proposes. He emphasizes that education should be an enjoyable experience (151). Echoing proposals made by Jerome and Quintilian, he suggests offering students block letters made of gold or ivory as a diversion with the intention that the infant enjoy learning (153–4).[46] Imitation of great writers will improve the style of the students (154), while repetition and story-telling will advance their skills in reading (155, 159). Citing Plato, Ortiz advocates physical education as a healthy balance to the intellectual pursuits of formal study (166–7), when he points out that "tenemos … que cultivar el hábito del ejercicio, pero no orientado hacia una sola costumbre de los atletas, y más bien dirigidos hacia las obras liberales bien para el hombre, bien para la mujer" [we have to cultivate the habit of exericise, not just oriented toward athletics as such, but directed toward the liberal arts as much for men as for women] (172). He proposes that the curriculum adjust to individual differences among students since some like the quiet of meditation while others take pleasure in action (168). Lastly, he suggests periods of rest and diversion in order to renew the student's energy for scholarly pursuits (181).

Pre-eminent in both the *Jardín de nobles donzellas* and the *Diálogo sobre la educacion del principe* are the moral prerogatives considered the foundation of

45 Fray Martín de Córdoba (*Jardín*, Goldberg, ed., 207) also urges care in choosing *amas*. Concern with the character of the nursemaid recurs in later authors, such as Vives and Fray Luis de León.

46 Aram (24–5) notes that the *infanta* Juana "received a box for carrying letters and a large book of hours, embellished with a silver lock and gold-line pages" in her first year of lessons. She goes on to describe Juana's education, calling it "rather modest – in public ritual" compared to that of her older brother and sister (26).

education. Both authors perceive a direct correlation between the virtue of the ruler and the social harmony of the ruled. For Ortiz "la salud espiritual del Rey es medicina para el pueblo. La intranquilidad moral y la infelicidad del príncipe se resuelven en confusión y luego en ruina del mismo pueblo" [the spiritual health of the King is medicinal for the public. Moral restlessness and unhappiness in the prince result in confusion and ultimately ruin for his people] (42). Likewise, in Fray Martín de Córdoba's opinion the princess must serve as an example to the nation as a whole. In Isabel, both writers found a receptive audience. As a corollary to the moral focus of both works, each author also stresses good conduct as an equally desirable end of education.

Although both works are dedicated to the queen and ostensibly address her as the principal reader, significant differences in composition suggest a wider audience of divergent background envisioned by each author. By composing his *Diálogo* in Latin, Alonso Ortiz effectively limits his readers to those literate in the classical language. Although the queen presumably pertained to this select group since, by the time of the book's presentation she had, from all accounts, studied Latin, the vast majority of women of her time had not. Thus, the larger audience capable of reading Ortiz's treatise consisted primarily of men of similar interests and education to his, whether scholars or princes. Consequently, Isabel's decision to educate both her son and her daughters in Latin guaranteed that they would be able to read texts that were not commonly accessible to most women of the time.[47]

In contrast, Fray Martín de Córdoba's use of Castilian in the *Jardín de nobles donzellas* insured a much wider audience of both men and women readers. The use of the vernacular enhanced the likelihood that more women could read the text and, in doing so, imitate the examples set forth. Beyond the principal audience of their patroness, each author defines a different readership by his choice of language as had Boccaccio and Christine de Pizan when they chose to write in Latin or the vernacular respectively. As a consequence of that initial choice, each text also presents divergent lessons targeting different readers.

Both writers imply that the virtues deemed suitable to young women are rarely ever appropriate to young men. Rather, the distinction made between each sex defines the nature of the education proposed. In the case of the *Diálogo*, the emphasis falls on preparing the prince and the queen to govern and to lead by act and example. In the *Jardín*, however, the author enumerates passive characteristics usually associated with a woman's role. Thus, while Fray Martín allows for the possibility of a princess ruling some day, his main emphasis is on the exemplary conduct required of her regardless of her exercise of power.

Clearly, Isabel did wield power. In doing so she provided an example to her daughters—all future queens—that they could emulate. The foundation on which she built was their education. Dissatisfied with the inadequacies of her own early schooling, the queen proceeded to educate her daughters with vigor equal to that exercised in the preparation of her son. As one historian comments, "in his position as heir to the Spanish dominions, it was natural that Prince John's life should stand

47 Nader (*Power and Gender* 11) remarks that "to a greater degree than in other parts of Europe, [learning Latin] was limited in the Iberian Peninsula to clergy and the university."

more in the limelight of publicity than his sisters'; but their education was in fact scarcely less considered and planned than his. The queen had always possessed an intense admiration for classical learning" (Plunkett 332). The resources of her library attest to that admiration. From the varied literary sources found in it as well as the example of the queen's own education and that of other women of the Renaissance, the schooling of the *infantas* took shape.

Although she desired that her daughters receive a more extensive education than she had enjoyed, still Isabel did not ignore the domestic arts deemed essential to any well-bred lady. Just as their mother had done, the *infantas* learned music, drawing, embroidery, and sewing, to which they added cooking, weaving, and spinning as well as the courtly arts of riding, falconry, and the chase. Their intellectual preparation included study of Scripture and devotional literature as well as the classics, including the Christian poets Prudentius and Juvencus, the Latin fathers, and the works of Seneca, authors regularly included by humanist scholars such as Vives as appropriate for women to study. Lastly, they also learned Latin, history, and civil and canon law. Their accomplishments in Latin enabled them in later life to extemporize in the language in reply to ambassadorial speeches. It was this level of erudition and command of Latin that earned Catherine of Aragon the praise of those scholars who came to know her as Queen of England.[48]

While Zenobia's influence waned after her capture and imprisonment in Rome, that of Isabel endured throughout her reign and even extended beyond her own realm. The example she set in Spain clearly affected the royal courts occupied by her daughters. Catherine of Aragon engaged in activities as queen and mother that reflected the lessons learned in her mother's court. These lessons also influenced the education she demanded for her own daughter, one outlined by the Spanish expatriate, Juan Luis Vives, in his *De ratione studii puerilis* and his *De institutione feminae christianae*.[49]

The influence of Isabel's example on the Portuguese court was more complex. The queen's daughter and namesake, Isabel de Aragón, imitated her mother when she demanded the expulsion of Portuguese Jews as a condition of her marriage to Manuel I, the uncle of her first husband (Rubin 362). Following her death, her sister, the infanta María de Aragón, married Manuel in 1502 (Liss 333). She brought to the marriage a different outlook and different lessons learned in the parental household.

From the union of María and Manuel came eight children, among them the next king of Portugal, João III, and a future wife to Carlos V, yet another Isabel (Liss 336, 338). The education of these royal children reflected that which their mother had received from her mother, Isabel la Católica. An equally intriguing indication of

48 Mattingly (*Catherine of Aragon* 17) describes the education of the princesses as does Bouissounouse (*Isabelle la Catholique* 236–7). Fraile (*Historia* 1.214) and Morán Samaniego (37) record the impressions of Erasmus and More concerning Catherine of Aragon.

49 Vives dedicated his *De Institutione* to the queen and indicated in his prefatory letter that he intended it as a guide in the education of the Princess Mary. See the Fantazzi ed. (45–50). The *De ratione* was also dedicated to Catherine and delineated a very practical plan of education for the princess.

the extent of the Spanish queen's influence may also be found in the person of Luisa Sigea (1522–1560), a companion to the princess María in the Portuguese court.

Born in the province of Toledo, probably in the maternal city of Tarancón, Luisa was the daughter of Diego Sigeo, a French-born scholar who had studied at the University of Alcalá de Henares, and Doña Francisca de Velasco.[50] While a student at Alcalá, the father mastered classical languages and literatures under the tutelage of Nebrija, Alfonso de Zamora, Pablo Coronel, and Estúñiga (Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes* 2.396; Bourdon and Sauvage 40). Subsequently, he served as tutor to Don Teodosio, Duke of Braganza, and his sisters, and then to the prince Don João, son of Don João III of Portugal.

The first lessons taught to Luisa, her sister Angela, and her twin brothers were the responsibility of their mother (Bourdon and Sauvage 44). Early on the girls showed promise as scholars, so, much as Christine de Pizan's father before him, Diego Sigeo devoted his attention to the education of his children. In the case of Luisa, he found a child with exceptional gifts for learning languages. Consequently, the father imitated Nebrija in providing his daughters with a humanist's curriculum as detailed as that of his sons.

In 1542 the entire family moved from Spain to Portugal where Diego assumed his tutorial post in Lisbon. Under his guidance, Luisa mastered Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. With the help of other scholars, she also learned Syriac and Arabic (Bourdon and Sauvage 46–7).[51] In her scholarly achievements, she embodied the examples of other learned women found in Spain under Isabel's rule.

Her fame as a scholar eventually led to a place in the Portuguese court as "*moça de camara*" [lady-in-waiting] of the queen and member of the entourage of the princess, Doña Maria, daughter of Don Manuel and Doña Leonor de Austria.[52] With the succession of Don João III to the Portuguese throne, the court in Lisbon imitated that of the Reyes Católicos in Spain by encouraging learning. The young *infanta*, great-granddaughter of Fernando and Isabel, found herself surrounded by learned men and their daughters intent on forming the princess in the humanist tradition (Bourdon and Sauvage 47–8; Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes* 2.395–6). To that end, Luisa Sigea played a role not unlike that of Beatriz Galíndez.[53]

For Luisa, life at court proved a less than satisfying experience in spite of the considerable royal library which she consulted regularly. Her dissatisfaction is apparent in the theme and tone of her longest work, *Duarum virginum colloquium de vita aulica et privata* [*Colloquy of the Two Virgins concerning Courtly and Private Life*], completed in 1552 but never published in her lifetime (Bourdon and Sauvage 52). In the dialogue, Blesilla attempts to convince another woman, Flaminia, of the

50 Bourdon and Sauvage ("Recherches" 36–60) provide details on her life and family. See, also, Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 1.2.394–403) and Sauvage (introduction, *Dialogue des deux jeunes filles*), for more on her life and writings.

51 She quotes all of these languages in her writings. See the letter of Pope Paul III (6 January 1547) to her in Bourdon and Sauvage (83). See also her letter to Philip II (1559) in Bourdon and Sauvage (115–18).

52 See Michaelis de Vasconcelos (*A Infanta D. María de Portual* 28–31; 39–40), for more on the court of Doña María and the part Luisa Sigea played in it.

53 She alludes to such a role in the aforementioned letter to Philip II.

benefits of country over courtly living. In both theme and style, the author imitates Antonio de Guevara's *Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea* [*Contempt for the Court and Praise of the Country*] even as she anticipates similar opinions in the works of Fray Luis de León.[54] Coincidentally, in the same year that she wrote the *Colloquium* she married a Spaniard, Francisco de Cuevas and, in 1555, moved with him to his ancestral home of Burgos (Sauvage, introduction 19).

In the *Colloquium*, Luisa Sigea found a vehicle ideally suited to demonstrate her considerable erudition. Written in Latin, it also contained numerous quotations in Greek and Hebrew that the author translated (Sauvage, introduction 52). As the dialogue unfolds, Blesilla argues strenuously for the life of retirement as the only suitable one for a virtuous young woman. Marshalling authorities from Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, Blesilla adopts a tone reflective of her sources, including Isaiah, Ezechial, Solomon, Tertulian, and Cyprian (33; 37). Much like the author herself, Blesilla dominates her sources and uses them effectively to support her thesis (31).

In addition to the Bible and the Fathers already mentioned, the *Colloquium* also cites Jerome's letters, works by Augustine, Plutarch, Cicero, Seneca, Plautus, and Quintilian (Sauvage, introduction 47–9).[55] Among the exemplary women whom Blesilla offers as models to imitate are the Old Testament figures of Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, Esther, Judith, and Naomi. She also reminds Flaminia of countless others who prefigure the Christian era (*Secundus die* 138). By emphasizing the moral life of retirement over the political intrigues of court, Blesilla argues that women may more easily secure their most precious dowry, their virtue (168).

In sharp contrast to Christine de Pizan, Luisa Sigea clearly aims her work at an educated audience more likely to be male than female. By writing in Latin and drawing on the diversity of sources in the original languages as she does, she lays claim to a place of equality with her male contemporaries. While the subject matter opts for feminine retirement, the theme, tone, and sources clearly position her *Colloquium* among the humanist dialogues concerned with women, family, and virtue.[56]

By the same token, the *Colloquium* provides both parallels and contrasts with the *Diálogo* of Alonso Ortiz. Both are written in Latin. Both are also written as dialogues between members of the court, but Ortiz casts the queen in a subordinate role to that of the cardinal who outlines the rules of conduct and education for the prince. The cardinal is the teacher of the student-queen. For Luisa Sigea, however, two women are able to engage in a scholarly debate about their own lives and ambitions, citing texts with which they are familiar to support their viewpoints. The *Colloquium* thus suggests proof of the advances in women's education, albeit one only available to a favored few.

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54 Sauvage (introduction 36) suggests such an influence. Fray Luis expresses the argument poetically in his Ode I, "Vida retirada."

55 See, for example, the *Secundus die* portion of the work where she quotes from these other sources.

56 Sauvage (introduction 33–5) argues that Luisa Sigea reflects the advance of humanistic thinking in the sixteenth century.

Even though the *Colloquium* was not published during her lifetime, Luisa Sigea's fame as a scholar among her contemporaries was well established. Andres de Resende called her a "virgo admirabilis" [an admirable virgin], an opinion with which Juan Vaseo concurred (Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes* 2.400). In a letter to her, Juan de Vergara echoes the sentiments expressed by Thomas More to his daughter Margaret (*Selected Letters* #108) when he commends her grasp of classical languages. Like More, Vergara had to convince learned friends that a woman had composed a letter to him that manifested great erudition. He reiterates his response to the dubious with an argument similar to that put by Sor Teresa de Cartagena a generation earlier (Bourdon and Sauvage 76). While few questioned her authorship of letters and poems written in Latin, nevertheless, like women before and after her, Luisa Sigea was unconsciously relegated to exceptional rather than exemplary status. She was the "Tenth Muse," the "Christian Cynthia," and the "Portuguese Heloise" (Michaelis de Vasconcelos 41; Sauvage, introduction 21, note 46). Even after her death, praise of her scholarship was inevitably coupled with recognition of her virtue, a less than subtle refutation of those who forbade women's education in order to protect their morals.[57]

A similar diminution of the importance of Isabel la Católica's contributions befell the queen after her death. During her lifetime, men had compared her to Judith and Semiramis for her manly courage or to Diana and Carmenta for her wisdom and learning. After her death, however, the exemplary figures with whom she was associated were more often passive rather than active players in their world. Such a change of focus is evident in the eulogy written by Alonso de Santa Cruz where the classical figures with whom he compares the queen are paragons of fidelity and chastity rather than women of action.[58]

The shift of emphasis regarding the queen's example is also evident in Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* (1518). Even as he praises her for her prudence and piety—traditionally "feminine" virtues—as well as for her wisdom, courage, and statesmanship, the "manly" characteristics—he also stresses that the queen is exceptional rather than exemplary as far as other women are concerned. By virtue of her royal office, she may possess an "*ánimo varonil*." In contrast, other women should embrace the life of reclusion appropriate to their sex.

Among those humanist writers who addressed the question of women's education more directly, the example of Isabel evoked sometimes contradictory interpretations. Thus, Juan Luis Vives includes Isabel among his exemplary figures in the *Instruccion de la mujer cristiana*, but the lesson to be learned from her is a surprising one. Commenting on a verse from Proverbs (31:13), he cites the examples of the queen

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57 See, for example, her epitaph in Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 1.2.399) and a poetic elegy by Pedro Lainez in Bonilla y San Martín ("Charorum Hispaniensium" 301–8). After her death, she suffered the added indignity of having her work plagiarized and rendered pornographic by Nicholas Chorier. See Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 2.2.401), who mentions the plagiarism. In the introduction to [Chorier], *Dialogues* 9, the translator and editor states: "There really was no Luisa Sigea who composed the dialogue." One surmises that he refers to the supposed authorship of the pornographic version published by Chorier.

58 In *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, he compares her to Lucretia, Dido, and Penelope. Cited in Rodríguez Valencia (1.141).

and her daughters, who knew how to spin, sew, and embroider (Howe, ed., 46). Like latter-day Penelopes, Isabel and her daughters exemplify faithful wives and mothers busy with distaff and spindle rather than their reading or statecraft.[59] Even when he proposes teaching girls to read by noting that the daughters of Isabel were "*doctas y doctrinadas*" [learned and indoctrinated], it is to assure his readers that moral rectitude is not threatened by learning in a girl.

The power of Isabel's example embodied in her personal and public accomplishments demonstrates the limits and the possibilities for women's education in the Spain of her time. Even as male writers praise her, the recurrent emphasis on her "*ánimo varonil*" imprisoned in a weaker "*cuerpo mugeril*" actually robs her example of much of its force. By ascribing Isabel's accomplishments to the presence of a masculine spirit or, conversely, by focusing only on her "feminine" interests in sewing, weaving, and childrearing, the men who utilize her as an example effectively marginalize this remarkable woman. Like her classical forebears, Zenobia, Nicostrata, and Hortensia, Isabel is often portrayed as an aberration by male writers, an extraordinary woman quite apart from the general rule for women of her time and place. Only as an "*ánimo varonil en cuerpo mugeril*" can they explain her achievements without advocating that other women follow her lead in the wider arena of intellectual or political life. For them, she may remain a safe exception rather than become a disturbing rule.

Yet, where men might seek to constrict the boundaries of female learning, Isabel had expanded them for women of her kingdom by her actions. Unlike the very classical figures with whom she was associated, she was able to extend her example through her children and the women of her court. By pursuing her own studies well into adulthood and by broadening the opportunities for learning within the court, the queen did not simply imitate earlier models, such as her father's, but exceeded them by including women. Her influence extended from her immediate family, to the ladies of the court, and, ultimately, to the children of other nobles and commoners within her realm as well as in the courts of her daughters. As subsequent writers invoked her example to justify their recommendations concerning women's education, others would imitate her directly. Beatriz Galíndez acknowledged the power of the queen's example in her last will and testament. The daughters of scholars within the Spanish court, such as Francisca Nebrija and Luisa de Medrano, embraced learning, thus confirming Lucena's observation concerning the queen's example. Luisa Sigea demonstrated the extent of that very influence both by her presence in a Portuguese court modeled on Isabel's own and by her own contributions to scholarship. Men might attempt to circumscribe Isabel's exemplarity by domesticating it or by ascribing it to her status as a virago queen. In contrast, by their actions women imitated her example as it affected the life of the mind.

Because of her example, one historian ambitiously asserts that "surge el nuevo concepto del espíritu femenino que ha de imprimirse a la mujer … que sabe lo mismo gobernar sus estados y traducir latín que cuidar de su hogar y familia e hilar en la rueca" [the new concept of feminine spirit arises that must imprint itself upon the

59 It is a comparison also found in Fray Luis de León (*La perfecta casada* 53) and Baltasar Gracián (*El Criticón*, 597–8).

woman … who knows equally how to govern her estates and translate Latin as {she does} to care for her home and family and to spin at the wheel] (Entrambasguas, "Espejo" 84). Certainly her accomplishments transcended her own time and place. The extent of her influence by personal example and, more importantly, in concrete advancement in the education of other women of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, remains to be explored.

Chapter 3

The New Judith: Santa Teresa de Jesús as Conventual Example

Puedo decir enseñaros porque, como madre, con
el oficio de priora que tengo es lícito.
Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Camino de perfección*[1]

When Isabel la Católica chose to pursue her education further as an adult, she built on that which she had received as a child. Because of that experience, she opted to demand for her own children a much broader and deeper preparation for their roles as monarchs than she had enjoyed. At the same time, she provided for the women of her court and country a vital example, one that they could imitate in their own intellectual endeavors, however modest these might prove to be. The power of that royal example alternately impressed or intimidated those who knew and praised her in life and even after death. What Isabel accomplished in the secular sphere was matched in the religious world of sixteenth-century Spain by Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada, known to the world as Santa Teresa de Jesús. In "la Santa," as she is still called in contemporary Spain, society encountered a woman whose works transcended the narrow confines of her time and place and influenced writers around the world. At the same time, her example inspired both men and women long after her death in 1582.

Like her predecessor, Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Santa Teresa lived as a cloistered nun, writing of and from her experiences in obedience to male authority figures. Unlike Sor Teresa, however, Santa Teresa's works were published soon after her death and earned for her fame as an author and praise as a saint.

Still, the two Teresas had much in common. Both were daughters of *converso* families. Both chose the monastic life of virginity. Both wrote of their interior lives and credited God with inspiring and, ultimately, authorizing their works. Each in

1 "I might even say, to teach you (for, as your mother, and by the office of prioress which I hold, I have the right to do so.)" CP. 24.2/39.8, *Obras completas*, 270. *Way of Perfection*, Chap. 24, 2.101. Spanish citations from the works of Santa Teresa are noted in the text and refer to the Editorial Católica edition unless otherwise indicated. English translations are from *The Complete Works of St Teresa*, Peers, ed., unless otherwise indicated. Abbreviations are as follows: *Camino de perfección/Way of Perfection* (CP); *Constituciones/Constitutions* (Const.); *Cuentas de conciencia/Spiritual Relations* (Cuentas); *Fundaciones/Foundations* (F.); *Meditaciones sobre el Cantar de los Cantares/Conceptions of the Love of God* (Med.); *Las moradas o el castillo interior/The Interior Castle* (M.); *Vida/Life* (V.).

her own way also emulated the heroic virtue of Judith and the scholarly attainments of Catherine of Alexandria.[2] By giving voice to their ideas through the medium of writing, each woman also implicitly rejected the recommendations of Aristotle and Saint Paul that called for women to keep silent.

The future saint was born in 1515 to a merchant family in Avila. From the very beginning of her life, Teresa faced obstacles to success in the society of her time. First, she was a woman in a male-dominated society. Secondly, she was of Jewish descent in a Spain where Old Christians were in the ascendancy. Lastly, she came from a provincial, bourgeois background when honors normally accrued to the nobility.[3] In spite of these apparent drawbacks, Teresa triumphed as a writer and a reformer, a woman who met opposition to her social "deficiencies" and to her works with a skillful blend of indirection and bravado.

In contrast to Sor Teresa de Cartagena, whose family of scholars afforded her access to a library of texts and a coterie of educated friends, Santa Teresa's contact with literature was more modest and more typical of bourgeois interests. It also indicated the level of education available to women like her. As was the case with girls of her time and station, Teresa was initially educated at home. Her early moral and religious instruction probably adhered to the norms laid down by Hernando de Talavera, who had served as bishop of Avila before moving to the see of Granada (Efrén and Steggink, *Santa Teresa y su tiempo* 1.92–7).[4] In her autobiography, she reveals that her mother instructed her in her religious and domestic duties while her father saw to her intellectual and moral upbringing. Although her grandmother did not know how to read, her mother did and was fond of the popular chivalric romances (Efrén and Steggink, *Tiempo y vida* 200).[5] The influence of the chivalric ideal on the young Teresa's imagination is evident in her *Vida* [*Life*] where she describes her and her brother's determination to run away from home in order to "irnos a tierra de moros, pidiendo por amor de Dios, para que ellos nos descabezasen" [to go off to the country of the Moors, begging our bread for the love of God, so that they might behead us there] (*V.* 1.5; Peers, ed., 1.11). In this childish attempt at martyrdom and glory, she also demonstrated early on her willingness to emulate the example of the saintly women whose lives she read.

Although her father disapproved of the chivalric romances, he apparently purchased some of them as well as other books for his family. Among the latter were to be found primarily Castilian translations of moral and devotional texts, which suggests that he intended his children to read them. The inventory of his first

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2 See Surtz's book, *Writing Women*, especially Chapter 1.

3 Saugnieux (*Cultures populaires* 45–6) points out these obstacles. See Bilinkoff (*The Avila* 53–77) and Teófanes Egido ("The Historical Setting" 122–82), who both describe the family's *pleitos de hidalguía* [petitions of nobility]. Egido (132–46) also explains how effectively Santa Teresa hid her *converso* background from even her closest associates. For a more extensive consideration of the converso background of Santa Teresa's family, see Egido, *El linaje judeoconverso* and Gómez-Menor Fuentes, *El linaje familiar*.

4 See, also, Fray Hernando de Talavera ("De cómo se ha de ordenar el tiempo" 93–103) for the text of Talavera's advice.

5 See, also, Rothe ("Padre y familia" 137). García Figar, O.P. ("Formación intelectual" 171) likens the presence of chivalric romances in the home to a clandestine library.

wife's goods indicates the kinds of books found in the home. The library included Talavera's *Devoto tractado*; the *Retablo de la Vida de Cristo* of Juan de Padilla; a book of religious poems by Fernán Pérez de Guzmán; Cicero's *De officiis* and Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* in translation; the *Sentencias morales* or *Proverbs* of Seneca and Encina's translation of the *Bucolics* of Virgil; the chivalric *Gran conquista de Ultramar*; the *Coronación* of Juan de Mena; a *Lunario*; and a translation of the Gospels and sermons.[6] While the number of titles is relatively modest, they are the sorts of works found in the libraries of noblewomen of the early sixteenth century, including those of the Cartagena family and of Isabel la Católica. They were undoubtedly available to the young Teresa as she grew up in her father's house.

In addition to reading, Teresa also learned to write. Her handwriting suggests the intervention of a tutor at some stage in her early education. Yet by her own admission, she did not learn Latin, a gap in her education she later regretted.[7] Although she does not amplify on the full range of her studies, some scholars infer that she had a smattering of astronomy, natural history, and even philosophy and theology (García Figar 170). Her musical training was limited to playing the tambourine, although she did know how to dance (Efrén and Steggink, *Santa Teresa* 1.122). She was also familiar with the game of chess. In short, she possessed the learning and skills common to women of "good" society in her day. Yet, her culture was, as Saugnieux contends, one of things heard and seen more than read ("Santa Teresa" 753).[8]

After the death of her mother, Don Alonso placed her briefly in the Augustinian monastery of Santa María de Gracia in Avila where she spent a year and a half under the tutelage of Sor María Briceño and the Augustinian chaplain, Fray Francisco Nieva.[9] While details are few, it is probable that the education she received from the Augustinians mirrored that which she enjoyed in the paternal home. Save for the religious and spiritual direction she received as a novice in the monastery of La Encarnación, her experiences at home and with the Augustinians comprised Teresa's formal schooling.

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6 "Inventario de 1507" in Efrén and Steggink, Santa Teresa (1:164–7). See also García Figar (171) and Saugnieux (*Cultures populaires*, 53–4). See Saugnieux ("Santa Teresa y los libros" 2:751) for an interpretation of this collection.

7 In the *Vida* (26.5), she states that a lack of Latin prevented her from reading some favorite devotional texts. See also Med. (prólogo, 1 and 1.2), where she again claims ignorance of Latin.

8 She says as much in her works where she often prefaces her remarks with the phrase "he oído o leído" [I have heard or read]. For more on this aspect of Santa Teresa's culture, see G[arcía] de la Concha (*El arte literario* 48–9), Saugnieux (*Cultures populaires* 51; 57), and Castela ("Mystique et autobiographie" 152). See, also, Orozco Díaz (*Expresión* 78), who analyzes Santa Teresa's style, stating that she writes at times as if, in fact, she were speaking directly to everyone at once.

9 See de la Fuente (*Historia de las universidades* 2:510–11), Rodriguez Baños ("Santa Teresa de Jesús y los Agustinos" 82), and Cerezal ("Santa Teresa de Jesús y la Madre María Briceño"). Vollendorf (169–70) compares home schooling and convent education of the time.

Although popular opinion ascribes to the monasteries of men and women the major role in providing education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the practice of placing children in religious houses solely for the purpose of educating them was frowned upon. Santa Teresa's experience with the Augustinians flew in the face of recommendations made by Fray Hernando de Talavera some 70 years earlier. In his "*Suma y breve compilación de cómo han de vivir y conversar las religiosas de San Bernardo que viven en los monasterios de la ciudad de Avila*" ["*Summary and brief compilation of how the nuns of Saint Bernard, who live in the monasteries of the city of Avila, should live and converse*"], he outlined strict rules for convent life and the admission of girls for instruction. The prelate opposed accepting girls solely as students if they were not being presented for profession as nuns.[10] Although she considered the option of joining the Augustinians while a student, Santa Teresa clearly was not sent to Santa María de Gracia with the intention of professing. In this respect, she does not seem to have been exceptional.

Despite protestations to the contrary, neither does she appear to be unique in the scope of her educational attainments as a woman of her time and place. Rather, she is a product of the kind of education considered appropriate to a young woman of her background as described in the treatises circulating in Spain at the time (Furlong Cardiff 16). In comparison with some of those eventually attracted to her reform of the Carmelites, she represents a middling level of education. In short, rather than an exception to the norm concerning women's education, Santa Teresa actually serves as an example of the nature and extent of it in her time.

In late 1535, she entered the Carmelite monastery of La Encarnación on the outskirts of Avila and professed her final vows two years later. While her education did not entirely cease once she entered the convent,[11] it continued in an altered, far less formal fashion. In his proposed reform of conventual life, Hernando de Talavera had mandated spiritual reading as an important component of the daily and weekly routine (García Oro, "La vida monástica" 339–40). One nun among those "que más saben y mejor leen y con mejor gracia y mejor voz" [who {possess} a good voice and know how to read well] was delegated to read at meals. All who could read were required to select "algún libro consigo muy familiar en que a menudo lea los tiempos que le vagare, y en el que lea a las que no saben leer" [some book with which they are familiar so that they may read now and then during leisure times, and that those who do read do so for those who do not know how to] (in González Hernández 15–16).

The nature of Teresa's reading shifted from chivalric romances to books of prayer, devotion, and monastic practice consonant with her new station in life. Of those texts which influenced her own writing, she acknowledges reading the letters

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10 Cited in González Hernández, "Fray Hernando de Talavera" 29. See, also, García Oro ("La vida monástica femenina" 342).

11 In popular usage, convent "is made to mean in particular the abode of remale religious, just as 'monastery' denotes that of men, though in reality the two words are interchangeable" *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "convent." Since the Encarnación is always referred to as a "monasterio," I, too, will use both convent and monastery interchangeably in this work to refer to women's foundations unless specifically indicated otherwise.

of Saint Jerome, the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine, Saint Gregory the Great's *Moralia*, the lives of the saints, the Cartujano's *Vita Christi*, and the *Contemptus mundi* [*Imitation of Christ*], works also cited by Sor Teresa de Cartagena in her *Arboleda* and *Admiración.* Besides these standard texts, she also mentions Francisco de Osuna's *Tercer abecedario espiritual* [*Third Spiritual Alphabet*] and Bernardino de Laredo's *Subida del monte Sion* [*Ascent of Mount Sion*], two works which would have a profound effect on the direction of her own mystical prayer life.[12]

The result of both her reading and her deepening spirituality was an attraction to a stricter lifestyle than that which she had enjoyed heretofore within La Encarnación. She was soon joined by like-minded nuns in the monastery drawn to contemplative prayer and stricter observance of the primitive Carmelite rule. Teresa came to realize that she and her followers could not achieve their ideal within the larger community, which embraced a laxer interpretation of monastic life. Consequently, she formulated her plan to establish a new house with a much smaller group of nuns dedicated to the contemplative apostolate of prayer, reclusion, and the mystical life (Weber, "Spiritual Administration" 132). In spite of opposition from ecclesiastical and secular authorities, she was finally able to lead her first followers to the first house of the Carmelite reform, San José de Avila, on 24 August 1562 (Bilinkoff, *The Avila* 108). Earlier in that same year, she had finished writing her *Vida.*

Santa Teresa described her first few years at San José as the "most restful of [her] life" (Peers, ed., 3.1/*F.* 1.1). Yet, they were also productive years in which she began to write increasingly for the benefit of her fellow nuns. She began to compose the *Camino de perfección* in December 1562 and completed the *Constituciones* by August of the following year. In 1567, during the visit of the General of the Carmelites, she was authorized to found more houses of the reform (*F.* 2.5–6; Peers, ed., 3.5–6). The first of these new foundations was established in Medina del Campo, then a thriving commercial center not far from Avila. As the number of new houses increased, the foundress kept in touch with her sisters through her copious correspondence.

The saint's own reading had placed her squarely in the religious and cultural climate of her times, for her favorite authors were the products in fact or in spirit of the reforms initiated at Alcalá de Henares by Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Cardinal-Primate of Spain and confessor to Isabel la Católica. At Cisneros's behest, Brocar's press at Alcalá published devotional texts translated from Italian and Latin. Among these were the lives and works of Angela of Foligno, John Climacus, and Catherine of Siena. The press also published missals, catechisms, a biography of Thomas à Kempis, and the *Vita Christi* of Ludolf of Saxony (known as the Cartujano in Spain). One avowed purpose the Cardinal expressed in sponsoring translation and publication of these works was to assure that the nuns of his diocese have access to

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12 Numerous writers examine the works Santa Teresa read. For example, see G[arcía] de la Concha, especially Chapter 2. See also Bizziccari, L'umanesimo. Silverio (*Historia del Carmen Descalzo* 7.609) contends that the saint must have read more extensively than the books she cites. He also asserts that in La Encarnación's library there were to be found all of the books which were currently available in the vernacular dealing with spirituality and the cloistered life.

spiritual tomes so that they might read in the choir and in the refectory, attend to their duties, and avoid idleness (Martínez de Velasco 171–2).[13]

The extent of Cisneros's efforts to reform the Church in Spain and to provide appropriate reading for nuns and laywomen alike went beyond sponsorship of publication. Francisco de Osuna had been a student at the University of Alcalá before becoming an Observantine Franciscan. It is ironic, therefore, that the very works that spurred the reform of the orders under the aegis of Cisneros were later suppressed, beginning in 1559 with the Index of Fernando de Valdés. The date is significant in the history of the Teresian reform since many of the books affected were the very texts that had inspired Santa Teresa to a deeper spirituality.

Besides books that were proscribed outright, others were heavily censored. Virtually all devotional works published in the vernacular, especially those that promoted affective spirituality, were no longer allowed (Steggink, "Teresa de Jesús" 122). Works that had circulated freely due to Cisneros's initiative were eventually condemned because of their perceived pernicious influence on lay spirituality (Nieto, "The Heretical Alumbrados" 309; Andrés Martín, "La teología" 227). For nuns and other laywomen, the effect was particularly profound. Clerical opposition to women's learning echoed the sentiments found in Juvenal's *Satires* and in the misogynistic sermon texts that proliferated in the Middle Ages. In contrast, those who defended women's education, such as Teresa and her confessors, cited the authority of Saint Jerome's letters when they urged women to read and to write. Not surprisingly, the Dominican theologian Melchor Cano challenged invocation of Jerome's letters to Paula and Eustoquium in defense of women's learning, stating testily of contemporary women and their confessors: "ni ellos son jherónimos ni ellas eustochios … assí es peligro confiar a mugeres y gente indocta la lección de la divina escriptura" [the {confessors} are not Jeromes nor are the women Eustoquiums … so it is dangerous to confide lessons from Scripture to women and the illiterate] (Frémaux-Crouzet, "L'Antiféminisme" 155). What remained of spiritual texts after the Index of 1559 were Latin tomes of theology inaccessible to the non-scholar, a category that included most women. Santa Teresa felt the loss deeply, as she indicated in her *Vida* (26.6/Peers, ed., 1.168). Promulgation of the Index and its later expansion not only deprived her of many of her favorite texts, but it also precluded recommendation of them to her fellow nuns. One simple solution to the dilemma was to write books for them herself, as, indeed, she did at San José. In doing so, she adopted the twin roles of teacher and example to her readers.[14]

The focus of virtually all of Santa Teresa's works was the cloistered life of a Carmelite nun. In one respect, she described her own experiences as examples to

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13 Aubernas and Ricard (305) list other titles. Santa Teresa was familiar with the works of Catherine of Siena and the Cartujano as was Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The rule proposed by Archbishop Talavera for nuns as well as his advice to married women included these and other titles (González Hernández, "Fray Hernando" 1.93–103). Numerous works consider the effect of printing on Europe in general and Spain in particular. See, for example, Bohigas, Beardsley, Chartier, and Eisenstein among others.

14 See Kavanaugh ("St. Teresa" 98–9) for the impact of these prohibitions on Santa Teresa. See, also, Muto ("St. Teresa of Avila" 4–5) for more on the saint's decision to write.

be imitated by those of her readers interested in deepening their spiritual lives. In other instances, she considers the lives of her followers in the Carmelite reform as she recommends practices and reading that will further that cause. Although no single work addresses specifically educational concerns, still, in her letters to followers, her history of the foundations, and in the *Constituciones*, she describes her expectations for admittance of women whose education was consonant with the life she envisioned in Carmel.[15]

Her books were not written with a general audience in mind, nor were they published during her lifetime. Although some of her longer works were recopied and circulated in manuscript form while she was alive, they did so only after passing the scrutiny of ecclesiastical authorities. As was the case with most nuns, she wrote in response to the demands of her confessors or at the request of her own followers. With the exception of her letters, she submitted all of her works to her confessors for editing.

Despite the sometimes-intrusive hand of the confessor turned editor and censor, the works of Santa Teresa manifest a woman's voice and often a woman's concerns. When her complete works were published after her death under the editorial direction of Fray Luis de León (Salamanca: 1588), he appended a *Carta dedicatoria* [*Dedicatory Letter*] to this first edition in which he acknowledged the twin accomplishments of Santa Teresa's life: "yo no conocí ni vi a la Madre Teresa de Jesús mientras estuvo en la tierra; mas agora que vive en el cielo la conozco y veo casi siempre en dos imágenes vivas que nos dejó de sí, que son sus hijas y sus libros" [I did not meet or even see Mother Teresa of Jesus while she was on this earth; but now that she resides in heaven I know and see her almost always in the two living images that she left of herself, which are her daughters and her books] (*Obras completas castellanas* 1.904). Both Fray Luis and Ana de Jesús, the prioress of the Carmelite convent of Madrid to whom the letter was addressed, discerned the ineluctable presence of Santa Teresa in her books as well as in the convents she founded. Indeed, as a later witness in the beatification process, Ana de Jesús testified that in reading her foundress's books, she "oye hablar a la dicha Madre, por ser muy conformes a lo que ella hablaba y oraba" [hears the said Mother speak, inasmuch as they {that is, her books} are very similar to the way she used to speak and pray] (G[arcia] de la Concha 126).[16]

In effect, Santa Teresa imitated the role of two exemplary women of the past. On the one hand, she was a new Judith, willing to confront those male authorities who wished to silence women's voices by invoking the Pauline dictum, "*mulieres in*

15 Note that "Carmel" is used to refer to the order of Carmelites as well as to its foundations. See Vollendorf (173), who describes "religious women's writing [as] ... insistent in its pedagogical and reformative messages."

16 Orozco Díaz (*Expresión* 78) claims that the saint, when composing her works, "piensa en que sus palabras pueden ser no sólo leídas aisladamente como hablando al oido a cada una de sus monjas, sino, sobre todo, dichas a viva voz y escuchadas por todas ellas colectivamente en el refectorio y también en los momentos de descanso y horas de recreación" [she is thinking that her words can be not only read in isolation as if speaking into the ear of each one of her nuns but, above all, spoken aloud and listened to by all together in the refectory as well as during rest periods and the hours of recreation].

ecclesia taceant" [let women keep silent in church]. On the other, she became for her nuns a veritable Catherine of Alexandria, a woman who inspired and nourished other women, who, themselves, took up pen and paper to write as she had.

Ana de Jesús's claim of hearing her foundress's voice in her works attributes to these texts an exemplarity manifest in more than one sense. In her adoption of an apparently disorderly style rife with misspellings and grammatical errors, Teresa appears to imitate the colloquial speech of her convent audience (Bernabeu Barrachina, "Aspectos vulgares" 359–60; 365). At the same time, she presents her own life as exemplary of the spiritual favors available in mystical prayer. Lastly, she demonstrates the need and justification for women to write for other women. In all respects, therefore, she offers her own example as worthy of imitation by her readers.

Even as she does so, she quite consciously eschews any claim to *letras*, adopting instead a "feminine" style that speaks most convincingly to her principal audience, her fellow nuns. Yet, as Weber points out:

> The assertion that Teresa 'wrote like a woman' needs to be made with numerous qualifications ... Teresa consciously adopted, as a rhetorical strategy, linguistic features that were associated with women, in the sense that women's discourse coincided with the realm of low-prestige, nonpublic discourse. Teresa's feminine rhetoric was affiliative, but this does not mean that it was especially tender or delicate. Rather, by selectively adapting features from the language of subordinate groups, Teresa hoped to create a subversive discourse that was at once public and private, didactic and supportive, authoritative and familiar. (*Teresa of Avila* 96–7)

Weber explains further that "disorder, digression, and imprecision … are the tactics that disguise a charismatic text as women's chatter" (109).[17] By adopting this "disguise" Santa Teresa was able to communicate to her main audience while alternately confounding or lulling her male readers into a sense of complacency. Furthermore, the net result of "Teresa's rhetoric of feminine subordination … [was to produce] the desired perlocutionary effect. Her words were taken as an ingenuous act: 'This woman is not a deceiver'" (Weber, *Teresa of Avila* 159). In a broader sense, however, she is a deceiver by virtue of her ability to hide in plain sight. Her overtly "feminine" style still communicates the radical notion that women can teach other women. In some instances in her letters, she adopts cryptograms to protect both herself and her correspondent as she criticizes the actions of more powerful men.[18]

Resistance to her message almost silenced her from the start of her reform. In spite of the usual invocation of the Pauline proscription against women's speech, Santa Teresa herself recognizes the irony of her selection in the *Fundaciones* where she comments that "comenzó la Divina Majestad a mostrar sus grandezas en estas

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17 Mandel ("El 'Yo' narrador" 237) agrees, contrasting Santa Teresa's style with that of men's rhetorical games.

18 Moreyra (*Los criptogramas*) examines her use of code especially in her correspondence, finding in them evidence of quasi-heretical notions in concert with the *alegoristas*. He identifies some of the subjects of her correspondence by interpreting the names she adopted, including that of "Angela" for herself.

mujercillas flacas" [His Divine Majesty began to show forth His greatness in these poor weak women] (*F.* 4.5/Peers, ed., 3.16).[19] Where so many learned men had failed, Fray Luis asserts that God wished "que una muger alumbrase los entendimientos y ordenase las costumbres de muchos" [that a woman might enlighten their understanding and reorder the customs of many] (1.905).[20] Consequently, Teresa "is made to represent a female 'experience' that is at once inaccessible to men and unworthy of them" (Smith, "Writing Women" 228). Like her literary predecessor, Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Santa Teresa credits God with inspiring, even authorizing, her teachings. While she assumes the role of interlocutor between God—whom she claims to know intimately from her mystical experiences—and those of her followers who would imitate her example, she unconsciously presents herself as exemplary but not exceptional. Even as she employs personal anecdotes to illustrate levels of mystical advancement, she also asserts that such experiences are not unique to her. Rather, they are accessible to others from whom she has learned. As scrutiny of her works grew more intense, moreover, she modified the more personal examples found in the *Vida* and began to use a rhetoric that increasingly objectified the illustrative examples of later works.[21]

In spite of her rhetorical precautions, Santa Teresa still drew unwanted attention from church authorities.[22] When an exasperated Papal Nuncio described her as a "femina inquieta y andariega" [a restless woman and a gadabout], his choice of the term "*inquieta*" [restless] placed her among the restless followers of suspect *alumbradas* [the "enlightened"], who foreswore conventional religious practices within the church and claimed to receive divine illumination directly through prayer (Ferguson, *Encyclopedia* 11). The same prelate excoriated her for violating enclosure and for "setting herself as a teacher in defiance of Saint Paul's dictate that women should not teach" (Anselm, "St. Teresa" 16).[23] The theologian Francisco de Pisa, horrified at the "doctrine of an unlettered woman," even proposed destroying her books, "since there are many other books from which one can safely and profitably learn of the spiritual path, without having a woman come along and teach, for women are not given this office, but should wait in silence, as the apostle Saint Paul said" (in Weber 161–2). Santa Teresa herself would seem to concur, when she deprecates her own abilities: "me vi mujer y ruín y imposibilitada de aprovechar en nada en el

19 Weber (32–3) explains the significance of the term "*mujercillas*."

20 His choice of the verb *alumbrar* in asserting Santa Teresa's orthodoxy is doubly intriguing. It is a term which inevitably evokes the checkered history of the heterodox *alumbrados*. By alluding to a movement dominated by women and *conversos*, Fray Luis, perhaps unwittingly, suggests Teresa's own *converso* background even as he juxtaposes her teaching with the suspect spirituality of the illuminists.

21 In her study of Santa Teresa's rhetoric, Weber cogently elucidates the evolution of the saint's style through her major works. Bynum (*Holy Feast* 293–5) cautions against "taking the ideas of male theologians and biographies about women as the notions of women about themselves."

22 See Llamas Martínez for a thorough look at the scrutiny of the Inquisition regarding Santa Teresa.

23 Cueto ("On the Significance" 42) comments on the term *inquieto*.

servicio del Señor" [And, seeing that I was a woman, and a sinner, and incapable of doing all I should like in the Lord's service] (*CP.* 1.2/Peers, ed., 2.3).

Throughout her works, Santa Teresa repeatedly stresses the value of a good *maestro* [teacher], one who inculcates both "*letras*" and "*oración.*" Such a combination in a confessor is especially valuable for nuns, since "las mujeres y los que no saben letras le havríamos [al confesor] siempre de dos infinitas gracias, porque haya quien con tantos travajos haya alcanzado la verdad que los ignorantes ignoramos" [we women, and those who are not learned, ought always to give Him infinite thanks, that there are persons who with such great labour have attained to the truth of which we ignorant people know nothing] (*V.* 13.19/Peers, ed., 1.82). She appreciated "letrados verdaderos" [true scholars] whom she acknowledges: "y siempre fui amiga de ellos, que aunque algunos no tienen experiencia no aborrecen el espíritu ni lo ignoran, porque en la Sagrada Escritura que tratan siempre hallan las verdades del buen espíritu" [I have always got on well with them; for, though some of them have no experience, they are not averse to spirituality, nor are they ignorant of its nature, for they study Holy Scripture, where the truth about it can always be found] (*V.* 13.18/Peers, ed., 1.81).[24] The apologetic tone she adopts in this passage to excuse her own lack of formal learning recurs in other works. Nevertheless, she balances it with equally provocative assertions of a woman's right to discuss and to teach other women.

While Santa Teresa bows to the authority of male confessors and *letrados*, she does not abrogate completely her right to teach. In the *Camino de perfección* she proposes to instruct the nuns of the newly established monastery of San José in Avila in prayer and the conventual life. As she sets forth her intention, she neatly turns her apparent shortcomings as a woman to her advantage:

> podrá ser aprovecho para atinar en cosas menudas más que los letrados, que, por tener otras ocupaciones más importantes y ser varones fuertes, no hacen tanto caso de las cosas que en sí no parecen nada y a cosa tan flaca como somos las mujeres todo nos puede dañar, … Yo, como ruín, heme sabido mal defender, y ansí querría escarmentasen mis hermanas en mí. (*CP.* Pról. 4)[25]
>
> [It will make me more successful in writing about small matters than learned men can be. For these, being themselves strong and having other more important occupations, do not always pay such heed to things which in themselves seem of no importance but which

24 Her choice of those men who initiated the reform of male houses reflects the combination of learning and experience. Egido ("The Historical Setting" 130–31) considers her statements here as "tactical maneuvering adopted to allay suspicions, since Madre Teresa, 'spiritual' woman, descendant of 'judeoconversos,' had more in common with the contrary party [i.e., those who were not scholastic theologians]." Comas (94) finds the saint contradictory in her opinions concerning letrados. Steggink ("Teresa de Jesús" 120) asserts that she preferred 'learned' men as confessors and spiritual directors and esteemed them more than 'spiritual' men of experience.

25 She expresses similar ideas in her *Meditaciones sobre el Cantar* (1.2; Peers, ed., 2.359). See also Slade, "Saint Teresa's Meditaciones" 28, who believes that in her Meditaciones she establishes "her own intepretative power through application of a hermeneutics defined as distinctly feminine [thus making] an argument for her right to teach the word of God."

> may do great harm to persons as weak as we women are … I, being a wicked woman, have defended myself but ill, and so I should like my sisters to take warning by me.] (Peers, ed., 2.2)

Having converted her very weakness to strength, she goes further when she defends her use of the term *enseñar* as licit because of her office as prioress (*CP.* 24.2/39.8/ Peers, ed., 2.101).[26]

Santa Teresa's role as teacher and example to others—both male and female—took a variety of forms. First were her administrative efforts at reform of both men and women in the Carmelite order. As part of the efforts toward a new form of governance, she envisioned a role for prioresses as "spiritual teachers, healers, and guardians for the nuns under her charge" (Weber, "Spiritual Administration" 125). In their capacity as teachers, she also expected the prioresses to help select the confessor and to work closely with him in guiding the members of the community (128–9).[27] The foundress was able to project her ideas concerning the reform through her writings, whether formal treatises on prayer and mystical experience, such as the *Camino de perfección* and the *Castillo interior*, or informal correspondence with a broad spectrum of society. Most important were the *Constituciones*, which she helped to draw up in order to govern the houses of the reform and to regulate the preparation of those women who chose to enter them. As Weber explains, the saint embraced the notion of "a flexible constitution based on broad principles to be interpreted according to the discretion of the prioress within the variable circumstances of each community" ("Spiritual Administration" 134).

In practical terms, Santa Teresa recognized that the Carmelite reform could succeed only if the nuns were able to instruct each other in the ways of prayer and the cloistered life. While composing the *Constituciones*, therefore, she paid close attention to the necessary preparation of novices for the life they would lead and of those women in positions of responsibility within the convents. Like the prioress, the novice mistress played an important role in initiating her charges into the ways of prayer and recollection ("Spiritual Administration" 130). In the spirit of reform, Santa Teresa advocated a return to the primitive rule of Carmel, which called for strict enclosure, limited community size, and an intense prayer life. To guide her in formulating the Constitutions for her reform, she consulted the *Institución de los primeros monjes* [*Instruction of the First Monks*], a copy of which was in the library of La Encarnación.[28]

The *Constituciones* of the Discalced reform begin with an explanation of the *horarium* or daily schedule in a chapter entitled "De la orden que se ha de tener en las cosas espirituales" [On the Order to be Observed in Things Spiritual] (1.1–12/ Peers, ed., 3.219–21). Near the end of the chapter the author advises:

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26 Márquez Villanueva (*Espiritualidad* 191–2) and Muto (5) comment on the saint's intentions in this work.

27 Weber ("Spiritual Administration" 139) cites Jean Gerson's *De probatione* as a source of inspiration for Teresa's vision for the prioress.

28 Steggink (*La reforma* 357–8) indicates that a fifteenth-century copy of this rule was in La Encarnación's library.

> Tenga cuenta la priora con que haya buenos libros, en especial, *Cartujanos*, *Flos sanctorum*, *Contentus Mundi*, *Oratorio de Religiosos*, los de Fray Luis de Granada, y del padre fray Pedro de Alcántara, porque es en parte tan necesario este mantenimiento para el alma como el comer para el cuerpo. (1.13)
>
> [Let the prioress see to it that there are good books, especially the Carthusian, {that is, Ludolf of Saxony's *Life of Christ*}, the *Lives of the Saints*, the *Imitation of Christ*, *the Oratory of Religious*, and the works of Fray Luis de Granada and Fray Peter of Alcántara, for sustenance like this is in many ways as necessary for the soul as food for the body.] (Peers, ed., 3.220–21)

Although modest in length, her recommendations for the convent library are not exclusive of other works.[29] Each house also contained a copy of the rule that the nuns were to read and study weekly (*Const.* 15.5/Peers, ed., 3.237–8). In addition, recitation or chanting of the Divine Office (1.4/Peers, ed., 3.219) presupposed an ability to sight read or sing aloud in Latin by at least some members of the community.

The primary purpose for recommending specific titles in the Constitutions was to emphasize the importance of spiritual reading for the nuns. Although some of the reading occurred in common, such as meals, Santa Teresa also stipulated many hours of solitude for community members. While secluded in their cells, the nuns prayed, engaged in manual labor, and read (Steggink, *La reforma* 396; 407). Since there were strict prohibitions on one nun entering the cell of another, much spiritual reading appears to have been done alone.

The *Constituciones* also address the methods of preparing new members of the community and of governing it. Among the officers for each house, Santa Teresa specifies a prioress, sub-prioress, mistress of novices, portress, sacristan, and bursar. The bursar or *clavarías* should know how to "escrivir y contar, a lo menos los dos" [must be able to read {sic} and keep accounts] (9.1/Peers, ed., 3.229). In contrast to other orders, Santa Teresa's reform did not impose a statute of *limpieza de sangre* [free from any 'taint' of Jewish or Moorish blood] on prospective members. Rather, only two preconditions for profession were spelled out: that, if possible, a candidate have a dowry and that she know how to read.[30]

The saint's reforms of conventional monastic practice of her time inevitably influenced the type of woman who embraced Carmel. Rejecting the aristocratic trappings she had found at La Encarnación, she eliminated dowries and titles for the rule governing the first houses of the reform.[31] Practical necessity eventually resulted in modification of the first proscription, but other decisions led to a distinctly bourgeois community in most Carmelite monasteries.

Emphasis on admitting candidates with some skills in reading effectively eliminated most but not all women of peasant origins (Egido, "The Economic

29 See García Figar (183) and Gil Ambrona ("Entre la oración y el trabajo" 63).

30 Saugnieux, "Santa Teresa" 751. See, also, Saugnieux, *Cultures populaires* (55). Even the dowry could be waived in certain instances, as the *Constituciones* indicate. Caminero (43) claims that Saint Teresa favored intellectual ability over lineage and the size of the dowry.

31 Gil Ambrona 61 and Egido, "The Economic Concerns" (156–7). Egido ("The Historical Setting" 159–61) explains more about the saint's strained relations with the nobility.

Concerns" 158). It also assured a predominantly urban rather than a rural community. Nevertheless, for those postulants who entered as illiterates, the Constitutions ordered the prioress or the mistress of novices to teach them to read (9.7). The exceptions to this rule were the extern sisters or "*hermanas de velo blanco*" (Ruiz Soler 174–5; Gil Ambrona 61–5).

In general terms, Santa Teresa recommended accepting candidates who manifested sufficient "*entendimiento*" [understanding] and talent for the rigors of the life (*CP.* 21/14.1; Ruiz Soler 167–8). She did not look kindly upon anyone with pretensions to learning, however. When one would-be novice asked permission to bring a Bible with her to the convent, the foundress scolded her: "¿Biblia, hija? No vengáis acá, que no tenemos necesidad de vos ni de vuestra Biblia, que somos mujeres ignorantes y no sabemos más que hilar y hacer lo que nos mandan" [A Bible, child? Don't come here, for we have no need of you or of your Bible, since we are ignorant women and only know how to spin and to do what we are commanded] (in Deneuville 53–4).

In one respect, her actions indicate a degree of caution. Using language evocative of Melchor Cano's *Censura* of the *alumbradas*,[32] she appears to reject Scripture study outright, aware that anything that might connect the nuns of her reform with the enlightened or *luteranos* [Protestants], who advocated interpretation of the Bible, was best avoided. Valdés's Index of 1559 had sought to preclude such heretical tendencies by banning vernacular translations of the Bible altogether. Thus, even though she herself had profited from reading translations of the Gospels and Psalms in her youth, her caution at this point was well advised. Yet, ironically, selected passages from the Psalms, Gospels, and Epistles do appear in Discalced Carmelite houses in later years for use by the nuns in prayer.

Santa Teresa manifested an equal ambivalence toward Latin learning in her nuns. In a letter to Doña María de Mendoza, she suggests that two postulants "deprenderán bien a leer latín, porque está mandado no se reciba nenguna sin saberlo" [would have to learn to read Latin well, for we are forbidden to take any one who is unacquainted with it].[33] Sufficient Latin to recite the Office but not enough to study Scripture or theology seems to have been the ideal, for in a later letter to Madre María de San José she writes: "Dios libre a todas mis hijas de presumir de latinas … Harto más quiero que presuman de parecer simples, que es muy de santas, que no tan retóricas" [God preserve my daughters from parading their Latinity .… I would far rather have them parade their simplicity, which is very proper to saints, than be such rhetoricians].[34] Her apparently blanket prohibition of "*letras*" in a letter to María de San José is especially ironic since she often referred to this particular nun affectionately as "*mi letradilla*" [my little scholar] (Saugnieux, "Santa Teresa" 754; Deneuville 54–5). In fact, María de San José Salazar was but one of a number of well-educated women

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32 For more on Melchor Cano and ecclesiastical reaction to the *alumbrados*, see Beltrán de Heredia (577–98) and Bataillon (*Erasmo y España* 699–715).

33 Carta 37.12, "A Doña María de Mendoza," 7 marzo 1572. Peers has collected the letters of Saint Teresa in two separate volumes from the *Complete Works.* See Peers, ed., *Letters* (1.102).

34 Carta 146.3, "A la M. María de San José," 19 noviembre 1576. Peers, ed., *Letters* (1.347–8).

drawn to the future saint, one for whom the foundress served as an example to imitate both in writing and in actively spreading the reform.

Not all of those drawn to the Teresian reform boasted an education comparable to that of María de San José or, for that matter, of Teresa herself. In fact, two early members of the order demonstrate the diverse backgrounds of those who joined Santa Teresa as well as the importance the foundress attached to mastering basic skills in reading and writing. First among them was Ana de San Bartolomé, a woman of peasant origin. Her social opposite was the noblewoman, Catalina de Cristo, who entered after Ana. Each exemplifies the minimal levels of education available to some women of the time both in the monastery and outside it. Each also reflects the practical influence of Santa Teresa on women's education within the context of the reform.

Ana García was born in 1549 in Almendral, the sixth child of parents described as "'mui limpios,' anque labradores" ['very holy,' although peasants]. Despite their humble origins, they were sufficiently well off to afford the services of "vn maestro que los enseñase a unos a rezar y a otros estudios" [a teacher who taught some of them to pray and other lessons].[35] Ana's parents died when she was quite young. As a consequence, she was relegated to the task of tending the family's flocks from an early age. At some point in her youth, however, she learned to read a little Spanish. Overcoming familial resistance, she entered San José de Avila and professed her vows as the first lay sister of the reform in August 1572, taking the name of Ana de San Bartolomé.

Her skills as a cook and nurse brought her to Santa Teresa's side when she nursed the foundress through a serious illness. In testimony on behalf of the saint's beatification, Ana de San Bartolomé described how she miraculously learned to write:

> … estando vn día la Madre en Salamanca, a do auían ydo de Valladolid en la jornada que tiene dicho, hallándose la santa Theresa de Jhs fatigada por tener muchas cartas a que rresponder le dijo a esta declarante: 'Si tú supieras scriuir, ayudaráseme a rresponder a estas cartas.' Y ella le dixo: 'Deme Vuesa Rreuerencia vna materia por donde deprenda.' Diola vna carta de buena letra de vna rrelixiosa descalça, y díxola que de allí aprendiese. Y esta testigo la rreplicó que la parezía a ella que mijor sacaría de su letra, y que a (y)mitación della scriuió vna carta esta testigo aquella tarde a las hermanas de Santa Joseph de Auila. Y desde aquel día las scriuió y ayudó a rresponder a las cartas que la Madre rrecibía, sin auer, como dicho tiene, tenido maestro ni aprendido a escriuirlo de persona alguna, ni auerlo aprendido jamás. (Urkiza ed., 1.50)[36]
>
> […. one day the Mother was staying in Salamanca, where she had gone from Valladolid on the journey already mentioned, {and} Saint Teresa of Jesus, finding herself fatigued because she had many letters to respond to, asked this witness {i.e. Ana de San Bartolomé}:

35 "Relación de María de San Jerónimo sobre Ana de San Bartolomé" in Urkiza, ed. (1.733). My translation.

36 As part of her reform of the Carmelites, Santa Teresa eschewed the common practice of maintaining class distinctions in the community. Her followers abandoned the title of "Doña" and assumed that of "Madre" for professed nuns and "Hermana" for lay sisters. They also adopted new, religious names rather than retaining their family names.

> 'If you knew how to write, you could help me respond to these letters.' And {I} told her: 'Your Reverence, give me something from which I might learn.' She gave {me} a letter neatly written by a Discalced nun, and told {me} to learn from it. And {I} replied to her that it seemed to {me} that it would be better to have a sample of her handwriting, and that by imitating it {I} wrote a letter that afternoon to the sisters of Saint Joseph in Avila. And since that day {I} wrote and helped to answer letters that the Mother received, without having, as {I} testified, had a teacher nor {having} learned from any person, nor having ever learned it.] (My translation)

Henceforward, she served Santa Teresa as nurse, traveling companion, and secretary until the foundress's death in Alba de Tormes in 1582.

Ana's account of her "miraculous" acquisition of an ability to write reveals the power of Santa Teresa's example on a number of levels. When she acknowledges that the saint gave her a neatly written writing sample by another nun to copy, she suggests that such examples were ready to hand. Next, she admits that by imitating another hand—in this case, Santa Teresa's own—she was able to produce legible letters for others. This admission indicates a tried-and-true method of teaching writing by imitation, even as it provides a literal demonstration of *imitatio* derived from the exemplar of Santa Teresa's own handwriting. Lastly, by insisting that she had no formal training, Ana emphasizes the miraculous nature of her newly acquired skill. At the same time, she unconsciously validates Santa Teresa's assertion in the *Camino de perfección* that as mother to her spiritual daughters, she has a right and a duty to teach them.

Even as Ana de San Bartolomé literally and figuratively imitated the saint through her writing, she also followed her example by establishing Carmelite houses outside of Spain. Embracing the technique of *imitatio* further, Ana offered the example of Santa Teresa to her readers as one appropriate for others to follow. In her "*Conferencias espirituales*" [*Spiritual conferences*], she urges that the nuns "lean los libros y exemplos de sanctos, y sacarán dellos la ymitación de sus virtudes … y particularmente a nuestra sancta Madre, adonde hallaremos todo exemplo de virtud y buena ensenañça, porque resplandecían en ella las virtudes" [read the books and examples of saints, and take from them the imitation of their virtues … and particularly of our holy Mother, where we will find every example of virtue and good teaching, because in her all the virtues shone] (in Urkiza, ed., 1.565).[37] Significantly, it is an example of both virtue and good teaching that Santa Teresa affords her nuns, one eminently worthy of imitation.

Whether Ana de San Bartolomé learned to write because of divine intervention or simply because she possessed an agile mind and a deft hand, she proved an apt student. She subsequently wrote at length, if inelegantly, in her native tongue, earning the praise of the Carmelite historian José de Santa Teresa as "segunda S. Teresa en

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37 In "Formación de novicias y ejercicios de piedad" (Urkiza, ed., 1.642), she also recommends reading the *Constituciones* and other books by Santa Teresa. According to Arenal and Schlau (32), "the constant companions of her spiritual life were major characters in her writings … Madre Teresa plays the role of mother, companion, prophet, and—as intermediary—almost supplants the role of Mary."

la santidad y en la pluma" [a second Saint Teresa in her sanctity and in her writing] (in Urkiza, ed., 1.74*).

As noted earlier, in contrast to the peasant background of Ana de San Bartolomé, that of Catalina de Cristo was decidedly noble. Born Catalina de Balsameda y Bustamante in 1545 in Madrigal de las Altas Torres, she led a very sheltered childhood. Fearful of heretical writings, her parents would not allow their daughter to learn to read or write in the questionable belief that her ignorance would protect both her virtue and her orthodoxy.[38]

When Catalina applied for admission to the Carmelite house in Medina del Campo, her illiteracy caused some hesitation within the community. At the time of her profession, she requested the white veil of a *freila* [or 'house' sister], but Santa Teresa and the community decided to profess her as a choir nun. Such a decision required a special dispensation precisely because she was illiterate (Rodríguez, *Santa Teresa* 224). Shortly after her profession, she was appointed *tornera* [doorkeeper] and then *portera* [portress]. When Santa Teresa began to organize the new foundation at Soria, she wished Catalina de Cristo to serve as prioress, a decision that caused consternation among some of her followers, including her young confessor and protegé, Fray Jerónimo de la Madre de Dios Gracián. He later explained his opposition:

> Tratándose de quien llevaríamos priora de Soria, dejóme la Madre que pensaba llevar a Catalina de Cristo, que a la sazón era tornera en el monasterio de Medina del Campo. Yo me espanté mucho de su determinación, y le dije: '¡Jesús, Madre! ¿Cómo quiere hacer tal cosa? No sabe escribir, y leer muy poco, y ninguna cosa sabe de negocios, ni es dispuesta para poder entrar en cosas de gobierno.'[39]
>
> [Concerning whom we should take to Soria as prioress, Mother {Teresa} left {it} to me to consider taking Catalina de Cristo, who once was doorkeeper in the monastery of Medina de Campo. I was very shocked by her determination and told her: 'Heavens, Mother! How can you do such a thing? She doesn't know how to write, and only reads very little, and knows nothing about business, nor is she disposed to be able to take on the task of governing.'] (My translation)

Santa Teresa brushed aside these objections, citing both Catalina's virtue and the possibility of teaching her the practical skills necessary to govern.

Catalina de Cristo eventually did learn to read and write, serving as prioress in Pamplona and Barcelona after her term in Soria. Her story indicates the attention paid to literacy among nuns elected to governing positions within convents by community members as well as ecclesiastical authorities. Precisely because of her illiteracy, convent and church officials hesitated to admit her to the ranks of the choir and to place her in positions of authority. Clearly, some level of educational attainment—even the basic ability to read and write—was crucial in the eyes of those associated with the reform. Their willingness to accede to Santa Teresa's decisions

38 Peers, *Handbook* 136. See Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 1.283) for the extraordinary precautions undertaken by the Balsamedas.

39 Cited in Rodríguez, *Santa Teresa in Valladolid* (224–6).

in handling the case of Catalina de Cristo suggests that the remedy to her particular deficiencies was readily available. The Constitutions already stipulated that the Mistress of Novices teach her charges to read and write before they professed their vows. Thus, Catalina de Cristo could have learned to "leer muy poco" as a novice. Similarly, as the example of Ana de San Bartolomé shows, she could also learn to write from those in her congregation already adept in this skill.

In contrast to both Ana de San Bartolomé and Catalina de Cristo, who received a very elementary education as adult women in the convent, the examples of María de San José Salazar and the Sobrino sisters, María de San Alberto and Cecilia del Nacimiento, present very different pictures of educated women in the Carmelite reform. In their particular educational attainments prior to entering the convent, these women surpassed even Santa Teresa. In their writings, however, they looked to the example of the saint for inspiration.

Born in Toledo in 1548, María de Salazar entered the service of Doña Luisa de la Cerda, a Toledan noblewoman related to the Mendoza family and supportive of Santa Teresa's activities. In 1570, the young Salazar joined the newly established Carmelite foundation at Malagón, where she professed her vows a year later, taking the name of María de San José.[40] Subsequently, she assisted in the foundations at Beas, Sevilla, and Lisbon, and eventually served a stormy tenure as prioress in Sevilla (Perry, *Gender* 85–6). Throughout the remaining years of Santa Teresa's life, the two corresponded frequently concerning foundations and affairs of what came to be known as the Discalced reform.[41]

Santa Teresa's earlier reference to María de San José as a *letradilla* derived from the latter's perceived erudition. In her own *Libro de recreaciones* [*Book for the Hour of Recreation*] (1585), she displays her knowledge of the Bible, patristic works, the history of monasticism, and theological disputation (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 37). She also incorporates an extensive knowledge of architecture, painting, music, law, and natural science into the work (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 41). One Carmelite historian describes her as "one of the best classicists of our Golden Age, although unknown" (Alberto, *Historia* 123).

The *Libro de recreaciones* manifests some of that classical background both in its citations and in its structure. As many didactic texts before it, including the works of Christine de Pizan and Luisa Sigea, it employs a dialogue format to advance an argument.[42] During the hours set aside for recreation, three nuns, Justa, Gracia, and Atanasia, discuss their lives in Carmel. In the course of their conversation, they refer often to the life and works of another nun, Angela, who is, in fact, a thinly veiled representaion of Santa Teresa. As her mentor before her, María de San José adopts

40 Ms. 3.537, fol. 478. See Peers, *Handbook* (199). Not to be confused with María de San José Dantisco, younger sister of Padre Jerónimo Gracián. See also Manero Sorolla (12) for a summary of her education in the house of Luisa de la Cerda.

41 Those who followed Santa Teresa's reform were identified as *descalzas/os* [Discalced] because they foreswore the wearing of shoes in favor of sandals or *alpargatas* as a sign of their penitential lives. Those who kept to the mitigated rule were, by custom, therefore, called the "calced" or shod.

42 Manero Sorolla (123) points out that the *Libro de recreaciones* is "the first spiritual dialogue composed by a woman in the Spanish language."

a particular format and style that allows her fellow nuns to discuss their communal experience. In the course of that dialogue, she also addresses more directly the question of learning than had Santa Teresa.

In the first *recreación*, Gracia, who represents the author's background and views, first laments the restrictions imposed on women's learning, then appears to accept them:

> … what most daunts me is being a woman, who by the law that custom has created seems to have been forbidden to write; and with good reason, for it is women's proper task to spin and sew, since having no learning, they tread perilously close to error in whatever they might say. (Weber, ed., 37; Arenal and Schlau, eds., 94)

Justa ostensibly agrees but offers a telling proviso:

> 'I admit,' answered Justa, 'that it would be a very great error for women to write about or meddle in Scripture, or in learned things; I mean, for those women who know no more than women, for there have been many who have been equal and even superior in learning to a great many men. But let us leave that aside; what harm can there be if women write of household things? For they also have the duty as do men, of recording the virtues and good works of their mothers and teachers concerning things that only those women who tell of them could know, that are perforce hidden from the men. Besides which, it may be that such writings, though written in ignorance and without style, will be better suited to the women in days to come, than if they were written by men. For when it comes to writing and speaking of the courage and virtue of women, we usually consider men to be somewhat doubtful, and at times they may indeed do us harm; for it is impossible that the heroic virtues of so many weak women should not cause them bewilderment, as we indeed see, by God's mercy, in these flowering times of renewal.' (Weber, ed., 37; Arenal and Schlau, eds. 94–5)

On a number of counts, María de San José argues for women's rights to teach, even to "meddle in Scripture." First, those who have the proper learning (such as she) are implicitly equal to men in their ability to elucidate Scripture. It is an extension of Sor Teresa de Cartagena's argument in the *Arboleda* and an anticipation of both María de Zayas's claims in her *novelas* and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's in the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea.* Women become *mujeres varoniles* by virtue of their erudition. Next, in a recapitulation of Santa Teresa's statements in the *Camino de perfección*, María de San José contends that women are better qualified to teach other women by temperament and training than are men. Lastly, her references to "heroic virtues" reiterate the argument, if only tangentially, that women, too, can exemplify the "manly" virtues found in the strong queens and valiant martyrs of earlier works. They, too, may be Judith or Deborah if circumstances demand it.

In the spirit of those earlier texts, María de San José marshals her own list of exemplary women to buttress her arguments in favor of women's education. In the third *recreación*, Justa recalls the figures of Catherine of Siena, Angela of Foligno, and Saints Elizabeth and Brigid as worthy examples for the nuns of Carmel (Weber, ed., 59; Arenal and Schau, eds., 101). In addition to these contemporary *exempla*, Gracia conflates the Old Testament examples of Deborah and Abigail with that of

Figure 3 Francisco de Zurburán, Santa Teresa, Cathedral of Sevilla, Spain. Photo courtesy of Arenas Fotografia Artística, Seville.

Santa Teresa in order to emphasize the foundress's role as mother and teacher.[43] Thus, by association with the Scriptural prefigurations of Mary, Santa Teresa ranks with the Blessed Virgin as "madre y maestra" (mother and teacher), a quintessential example of female power (see Figure 3.1).[44]

In subsequent *recreaciones*, Justa continues to remonstrate Gracia for her "meddling" in doctrinal matters. Yet again in the fourth *recreación*, Gracia defends her erudition, then complains of Justa's role in the dialogue: "because at the start I appointed you judge, not only are you performing that office, but also that of prosecutor, accusing me whenever I say anything." Justa grudgingly relents, admitting "that it was not good to write, but you, Sister, who think yourself a lady scholar, which is what we consider you, you certainly will be able" (Weber, ed., 67; Arenal and Schlau, eds., 101).

In two later works, María de San José repeats arguments presented in the *Libro de recreaciones* and modifies them for practical application in the daily lives of the nuns of Carmel. The *Instrucción de las novicias* [*Instruction of novices*] (1602) again involves a dialogue between Gracia and Justa concerning the particular lessons appropriate in the formation of novices. The two also consider the question of women's authority to teach other women.[45]

Citing Saint Paul, Gracia defines the role of the religious woman as "tener oficio de pensar en Dios" [having the office {duty} of thinking about God] (*Escritos espirituales*/*Spiritual Writings*) 472). She immediately compares this task to the "masculine" pursuit of knowledge in the secular sphere:

> ¿Cómo enseñan los preceptores de la gramática? ¿Cómo es uno letrado? Cursando las escuelas y usando los libros. ¿Cómo seremos espirituales? Tratando de cosas de espíritu. ¿Bastar que se trate de esto cuando la campana nos llama al coro para decir los salmos? No, por cierto, que no dice el Apostol que la virgen hable sólo de Dios, sino que cogite en Dios. (*Escritos espirituales* 473).
>
> [How do the preceptors of grammar teach? How is one a scholar? Taking courses at school and using books. How do we become spiritual? Dealing with things of the spirit. Is it enough that one deal with this when the bell calls us to the choir to chant the Divine Office? No, certainly not, for the Apostle does not say that the virgin only speak about God, but, rather, that she meditate on God.] (My translation)

While she implies that the two methods of learning are necessarily distinct in means and end, nevertheless, she also suggests through juxtaposition that they are equally

43 She also likens Santa Teresa to a captain, a dove, and a prophet. See Arenal and Schlau, eds. (39–40; 96). The editors (38) also compare María de San José to Christine de Pizan in her recourse to exemplary women.

44 Iconography associated with Santa Teresa further extends her role as exemplary woman. While variations of the Bernini sculpture based on the rapture she describes in the *Vida* are common, so, too, are art works depicting the saint with open book and quill in hand, attentive to some heavenly voice. See Figure 3. The latter suggests a connection with paintings of the Virgin instructing the Child Jesus from a book open on her lap. See Chapter 4 for examples.

45 See Vollendorf (178–9), for further comment on this particular work.

valuable. More importantly for the nun, she intimates that prayer alone will not suffice but must be accompanied by careful reflection. In fact, as Vollendorf points out, María de San José "disparage[d] those who neglect[ed] their studies in favor of other kinds of devotional practices" (178).

In order to "deal with spiritual things" the novices must learn from their mistress, whose task it is to prepare them for the monastic life. Imitating Santa Teresa's rhetoric of humility, María de San José also imitates her mentor's use of everyday activities by women to explain the stages of mystical prayer to the novices by comparing them to needlework:

> Esta oración os doy por dechado, para que comencéis a aprender los primeros puntos, entendiendo que no está el negocio ir como oración de ciego, sino que vais pegando al alma lo que la boca dijere. … y en esto trabajéis hasta que seáis diestras y por vosotras mismas sepáis poner los matices a la labor." (*Escritos espirituales* 448)
>
> [I give you this type of prayer as a sampler, so that you might begin to learn the first points, understanding that it isn't your task to engage in blind prayer, but rather that you go along fastening the soul to what the mouth might say … and in this way you may work until you are dextrous and you yourselves may know how to color your embroidery.] (My translation)

She goes on to reassure her readers that she is speaking "en este lenguaje que es propio de mujeres" [in this language proper to women] (448).

Precisely because of her mastery of "women's" speech, Maria de San Jose is eminently qualified to instruct other women. In her *Consejos de prioras* [*Advice for Prioresses*] (1585), she even goes so far as to claim greater expertise in this endeavor than holy and learned men who have written on spiritual topics, much as Santa Teresa had done in the *Camino de perfección.*[46] After the saint's death in 1582, a struggle between the men and women of the Discalced Reform revolved around this very issue, as the then General, Nicholas Doria, sought to wrest control of the spiritual direction of the nuns from the prioress and to place it with the confessor (Weber, "Spiritual Administration" 143; 145–6).

Two sources of instruction remained readily available for the nuns to use, however: the printed word and the "living Rules" that are the devout women of the congregation. Principal among the "living Rules" who serve María de San José as *exempla* for novices and prioress alike is the foundress herself, who "recibió … poder de *imprimir su espíritu* en las que crió y escogió para gobierno" [received … the power to *imprint her spirit* on those she nurtured and chose for governing] (*Escritos espirituales* 411) {emphasis added}. Santa Teresa guides her nuns both

46 "[Q]ue sus levantados espíritus no se aplican a tendencias de mujeres, porque sin duda es necesaria esta ciencia y artificios para encaminarlas en paz y aprovechamiento; y pues nosotras lo somos, tendremos licencia de advertirnos y enseñarnos" (*Escritos espirituales* 231). [Since their exalted spirits do not apply themselves to women's tendencies, because without doubt this knowledge and {these} devices are necessary in order to move them {i.e. women} forward peacefully and profitably; and since we women are {familiar with these tendencies}, we have permision to advise and teach ourselves] (my translation). See Weber ("Spiritual Administration" 138), who comments on this work as well.

by the example of her life and by the written doctrine or teaching that she left them (449). Her writings include the works on mystical prayer, the rules for the Carmelites, and, for María de San Jose, the correspondence exchanged between the two women. Thus, the daughter has been "imprinted" in both senses by the example of the mother-foundress. María de San José provides the living evidence of the extent of Santa Teresa's influence as noted by Fray Luis de León.

Other examples may be found in those nuns who "son de naturales perfectos, inclinados al bien de buenos entendimientos" [are of perfect disposition, well inclined to good thoughts] (*Escritos espirituales* 412). By the same token, there are other written texts of value. Indeed, María de San José admonishes her readers not to "dejar la lección de los libros santos en el tiempo que la Constitución nos obliga por desvanecerse en otras devociones a su albedrío" [leave aside the lesson of holy books in the time that the Constitution obliges us in order to indulge in other devotions of {your} choosing] (419). While it may not always be necessary to read before praying, nevertheless, the rule mandates designated periods for spiritual reading in the *horarium* [daily schedule], a practice that should not be treated cavalierly by nun or novice (460).

Since the Mistress of Novices bears initial responsibility for the education of new members of the community, her first task is to instruct those who enter in the articles of the faith, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's prayer, and the Rule of Carmel (414; 417). With the exception of the last item, it is clear that she serves as catechist first and then as spiritual guide to her charges.[47] Gracia likens Justa's task to that of a nursemaid "que con la leche de las santas leyes las alimient[a] y en [s]us brazos las crí[a], y como salidas de [s]us entrañas las deb[e] amar y con toda solicitud criar hasta que se forme en ellas Cristo" [who with the milk of the holy rules feeds them and in her arms raises them, and, as if they were born of her own body, ought to love and with complete solicitude to raise them until she may form them in Christ] (441). The juxtaposition of the nursing image with the responsibility to instruct the novices in prayer, practice, and reading if need be, recalls the effluent of milk and oil from the tomb of the scholar and martyr, Catherine of Alexandria.[48] By implication, women may instruct other women as mothers give sustenance to their infants.

Although María de San José amplified Santa Teresa's ideas concerning the instruction of novices, the *Instrucción* was not actually published until the twentieth century. Rather, it circulated in manuscript form in Carmelite convents, a fate that befell the writings of many nuns (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 43; 139). Still, the existence of these texts testifies to a continuing tradition of learning within convent walls.

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47 Grendler ("The Schools of Christian doctrine") and Nalle (*God in La Mancha*) describe the practices of the confraternities of Christian doctrine in utilizing catechisms to teach both doctrine, the basic prayers of the Church, and reading. Grendler points out that "children learned to read in order to know the prayers and commandments of God; they read prayers in order to learn to read" (326). The practices mandated by the Carmelite Constitutions would appear to embrace this pedagogical approach as well. See Chapter 4 for more on these approaches

48 Santa Teresa named one of the hermitages at San José de Avila in honor of Saint Catherine, as Medwick (99) points out.

In the early years of the post-Teresian reform of the Carmelites, other educated women entered Discalced houses. Among them were two of the daughters of Cecilia Morillas and Antonio Sobrino, secretary of the University of Valladolid. The two sisters belonged to a family celebrated for its humanistic background. Much like Isabel la Católica and Beatriz Galíndez, Cecilia Morillas (1539–1581) had undertaken her own education when her eldest child, Francisco, began his studies. The mother eventually learned Latin, Greek, and the vernacular romance languages. She also studied philosophy, theology, painting, architecture, and music, even as she combined these interests with the usual domestic skills associated with a housewife (Alonso Cortés 8–11). Clearly, in the scope of her studies, she exceeded the learning of her royal and courtly predecessors as well as that of Santa Teresa.

Cecilia Morillas had a dual purpose in pursuing her education. On the one hand, she satisfied her own intellectual curiosity. On the other, she prepared herself to become the teacher of her other eight children, whom she eventually taught to read and write in Spanish and Latin. Later she introduced them to the full range of the liberal arts. Simultaneously, she handled her husband's official correspondence in French and Latin (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 132). At her death in 1581 she left a family indebted to her powerful intellectual curiosity (Vollendorf 175).

While Cecilia Morillas is remarkable in her own right, she is equally impressive in her decision to instruct her sons and daughters in a curriculum similar to that of Isabel la Católica and Diego Sigeo. The two daughters made good use of their education once they entered the Discalced Carmelite convent in Valladolid, where they took the names Cecilia del Nacimiento and María de San Alberto. There they often collaborated on projects, including a lengthy, family chronicle. Each also exhibited different styles and talents (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 133). In addition, both held various convent offices, ranging from prioress to mistress of novices and *tornera* (Alonso Cortés, 39–40; 61).

The principal focus of their literary and artistic works was convent life. They competed in poetic *certamenes* [disputations], composed theatrical pieces, painted portraits, wrote prose concerned with mystical and spiritual topics, and penned autobiographies (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 134). They also translated the Magnificat and selected Psalms for their fellow nuns. In the process, their works "can be viewed as constituting their own educational enterprise of woman-to-woman instruction" (Vollendorf 176).

Cecilia del Nacimiento proved to be an accomplished artist, musician, and poet, complementing her elder sister's talents as a dramatist.[49] Cecilia was the sister with the broader humanistic education, for, besides music and painting, she had also studied grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy. She read Scripture and the works of the Fathers, especially those of Saint Jerome (Emeterio, "A la madre Cecilia" 134).[50] In addition to her translations of the Psalms, she authored two brief commentaries on the texts "Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem" and "Dilectus meus mihi."[51]

49 Some of Cecilia's portraits still hang in the convent at Valladolid. See Gil Ambrona 64.

50 See, also, Díaz Cerón, ed., *Obras completas de Cecilia del Nacimiento* (36).

51 The texts of both may be found in the *Obras completas* (339–61).

María de San Alberto wrote theatrical works as well as prose and poetry (Valentín, "Apuntes" 7; Crisógono, *La escuela* 179–80). Just as Santa Teresa and Sor Teresa de Cartagena before her, she attributed her ability to write to God rather than to her own talent. Nevertheless, Arenal and Schlau contend that María de San Alberto "transformed the games [*certamenes*], a popular form of entertainment among the learned, into a major statement about the power and place of women in society" (135). As was the case in the writings of María de San José, the example of Santa Teresa played a crucial part in articulating María de San Alberto's statement. For her and Cecilia, the foundress served as subject and model of feminine power.

Although Santa Teresa apologized for her frailty as a woman who dared to write and teach, the Sobrino sisters cast her as an extraordinary *exemplum* of strength and learning. María de San Alberto calls her "propheta y doctora" [prophet and doctor] (94); "patriarcha divina" [divine patriarch] (163); "la maestra de maestros" [schoolmistress of schoolmasters] (175); and "Doctora que a los Doctores/enseñais el fundamento/de toda ciencia divina" [Doctor, who teaches the foundation of all divine knowledge to the {other} doctors] (184).[52] Whereas Santa Teresa deferred to the wisdom and guidance of *letrados*, her nuns reverse roles and cast her as teacher and guide of men. At the same time, they view her as both virgin and mother. María de San Alberto writes:

> Madre que me engendra
> Y sin amargura
> Quel amor se açendra
> Y el parto asegura
> Siendo virgen pura
> Mi madre es tanbien
> Que ser virgen y madre
> La viene muy bien. (Schlau, ed., 199)
>
> [Mother who engenders me and without bitterness, so that love purifies and insures [my] birth; being a pure virgin she is also my mother, so that being virgin and mother becomes her very well.] (My translation)

The poet also discovers in the saint qualities similar to the exemplary women praised by Christine de Pizan, Boccaccio, and Don Álvaro de Luna. She is "la muger varón fuerte/la bella y famosa/la Judith valerosa" [the strong, manly woman/beautiful and famous/the courageous Judith] (164), an "alferez capitana/del capitán [Jesús] de çielo y tierra" [Captain's ensign/of the captain of heaven and earth {Jesus}] (125). In the same poem, María de San Alberto describes a veritable squad of female warriors: "mas vençen, escuadrones/de virgines, que espanto/causa su valor fuerte y pecho santo" [but they conquer, squadrons of virgins, {whose} strength and courage cause amazement] (126). Hence, figuratively, she is an Amazon warrior, a teacher in the tradition of Athena and Nicostrata, and a virginal mother like Mary. Yet, she is even more, for, as Arenal and Schlau point out:

52 Page numbers refer to Schlau's edition of María de San Alberto's selected works. See *Viva al Siglo* (93–214) for many of María de San Alberto's poems to the saint.

> [Madre María] playfully and defiantly inverts the gender of an abstract noun before announcing what was no miracle to her: 'si gran milagra te muestras/un mujer hombres adiestras … (48f). She had seen a "woman who trains men' in her own mother, so the use of '*milagra*' is probably ironic. The author accompanies the lighthearted but pointed irreverence with the masculine form of the indefinite article, '*un,*' to modify '*mujer*' (woman). (139)

The irony is even more pointed if one accepts that Madre María suggests an inversion of a "*mujer varonil*," who may serve as a positive exemplar for the nuns of Valladolid, but also as a cautionary example for the Carmelite men who, under Doria's guidance, sought to control the lives of the nuns of the order.

Each of the Sobrino sisters plays on phraseology found in Santa Teresa's own works when they liken her to a "mujer varón fuerte" or an "alferez capitana."[53] Evocations of the *Camino de perfección* leave little doubt that the two sisters have inculcated the foundress's admonitions to her nuns: "no querría yo mis hermanas pareciesen en nada sino varones fuertes, que si ellas hacen lo que es en sí, el Señor las hará tan varoniles que espantean a los hombres" [I want you to be strong men. If you do all that is in you, the Lord will make you so manly that men themselves will be amazed at you] (7/9.8/Peers, ed., 2.35). Just such an evocation is clearer still in María de San Alberto's description of the foundress as "varona que a los varones habéis dado/su fuerte y varonil, varonilmente" [manly woman who has given men your strength and virility, manfully] (Schlau, ed., 114) or when Cecilia del Nacimiento calls her "la Patriarca divina" in a poem that begins: "Teresa sale vestida/de Jesús, Sol de Justicia" [Teresa comes forth dressed with Jesus, the Sun of Justice] (*Obras* 69]). In another poem, Cecilia describes Santa Teresa's role among the Carmelites:

> De esta grande compañía
> la Capitana es Teresa
> que haciendo mil maravillas
> maravillosa se muestra.
> Compone sus escuadrones
> de varones y doncellas
> que fuertes y valerosos
> que el infierno dellos tiembla. (692)

---

53 The syntactic and gendered word play found in María de San Alberto's poem is echoed in Luis de Góngora's "En la beatificación de Santa Teresa," where he writes:

> Patriarca, pues, de a dos
> dividida en dos fue entera,
> medio monja y medio fraile,
> soror Angel, fray Teresa
> Monja ya y fraila, Beata. ...

[{Female} patriarch, since, from two divided into two you were whole, half nun and half friar, Sister Angel, Fray Teresa., Nun and friar both, blessed …]. See *Obras completas*, ed. Mille y Giménez (191)..

> [Of this great company the Captain is Teresa, who, performing a thousand marvels, shows her marvelousness. She composes her squadrons of men and maidens who, strong and valiant, make Hell itself tremble.] (My translation)

From the example of the foundress as writer and guide of the earliest years of the reform, as portrayed in the works of María de San Jose, Santa Teresa assumes an even more powerful role in those of the Sobrino sisters. They present her as a veritable *virago*, a new Judith, who manifests that "masculine" power that could give men pause. Even more, they move her to a position that nearly rivals that of the Virgin Mary. Cecilia del Nacimiento sings the praises of "la Virgen Teresa … Madre del Carmelo y patrona de España" [the virgin Teresa … Mother of Carmel and patroness of Spain] (*Obras* 708). In yet another poem, she claims:

> siendo virgen, es madre
> mártir, doctora, profeta,
> seráfica, ermitaña,
> humilde, santa y discreta. (*Obras* 693)[54]
>
> [Being a virgin, she is mother, martyr, doctor, prophet, seraph, hermit, humble, saintly and discreet.] (My translation)

The nuns of Carmel add Santa Teresa to a long line of female *exempla,* stretching back to Deborah and Judith and, by implication, continuing forward in the person of their foundress and those who follow her.[55] It was not her nuns alone, however, who found inspiration in the life and works of the saint.

At the time of Santa Teresa's beatification and canonization, a number of works by eminent writers of her day appeared to celebrate the events. Among these were poems by Luis de Góngora and Francisco de Quevedo,[56] as well as a play and poems by Lope de Vega in which the popular dramatist added his own encomia to the saint. As had the nuns of Carmel, Lope associated Teresa with exemplary women found in Scripture and hagiography.

In his play, *Vida y muerte de Santa Teresa de Jesús* [*Life and Death of Saint Teresa of Jesus*] (1622),[57] Lope uses the allegorical figures of *Envidia* [Envy] to situate Teresa alongside Judith, Esther, and the Virgin Mary (vv. 161–7), before comparing her to Catherine of Alexandria in her quest for martyrdom (vv. 185–8). Ironically, these women of the Bible (*the* book) and the *Flos sanctorum* are not the figures whom Teresa first admires. Rather, *Envidia* and later *Vanidad* [Vanity]

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54 Consider similar comparisons made by María de San Alberto, as cited in Arenal and Schlau, eds. (141)

55 Not surprisingly, the Sobrino sisters and other nuns of the reform proved instrumental in the beatification and canonization of their foundress, as Arenal and Schlau, eds., (138) point out. Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes*) also includes many of the *declaraciones* made by Carmelite nuns in Santa Teresa's cause.

56 See Góngora's "En la beatificación de Santa Teresa" cited above; and Quevedo's "Su espada por Santiago" cited below.

57 See my article, "La Teresa dramática," and Gitlitz, "Infralirismo," for more about this play.

use Teresa's predilection for reading chivalric romances to attempt to lure her away from spirituality (vv. 251–5). They are initially successful, for the young girl pages through "libros en quien a ratos/divertía [su madre]" [books, which, at times her mother enjoyed] (vv. 283–4), among them the "*Amadises*" [*Amadís de Gaul* and its sequels] and "*Orlando furioso*" (vv. 290–304). Only when *Amor Divino* [Divine Love] replaces these worldly books with the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine is Teresa ready to embrace religious values. As proof of her conversion, she relegates the profane books to a bonfire (vv. 494–500).

Since a principal aim of Lope's hagiographical plays is to dramatize exemplary lives of the saints represented, his selection of events from Teresa's life is instructive on two levels. One, of course, is the simple presentation of actual events from her life mentioned in the *Vida* and repeated in the canonization process. Another is the validation of reading by a woman, first as entertainment and then as instruction. By implication, other women may imitate Santa Teresa as much for her reading as for her virtue. Indeed, in the play, her reading makes her turn to virtue.

As the play continues, Lope introduces a conversation between Teresa and her brother in which the playwright builds on the power of the written word over her actions. She explains that her decision to enter La Encarnación results from reading Jerome's letter to Eustoquia (vv. 580–581). Her brother's reaction to the decision repeats familiar assumptions about women such as she, even as it hints at the misogyny evident in much of Jerome's work: "En nada fuiste mujer,/pues lo mejor apeteces" [you were never a woman, because you longed for the best] (vv. 636–7). By implication, most women settle for something less than "lo mejor." In addition, as was true of Isabel la Católica and other "valiant" women, Teresa's "*valor*" (v. 623) is proof of a "manly" virtue that overcomes her "womanly" weakness. Implicitly, the female figures with whom Lope compares her also supersede their feminine nature as they become exemplary.

In the final act, Lope enumerates Teresa's foundations (vv. 2586–627) then focuses on her death. Near to hand are a book and a pen, emblematic of her works. Her endeavors in reform and in writing have touched both men and women as the character of Amor Divino observes:

> mira consagrar sus vidas
> a Dios hermosas doncellas
> que como Dios vela en ellas,
> viven al mundo dormidas.
> Advierte santos varones
> que con divinos asombros
> sustentan el monte en hombros. (vv. 2621–67)
>
> [You see how beautiful young maids consecate their lives to God, who, since God keeps vigil over them, they live asleep to the world.Take note that holy men, with divine amazement, hold up the mountain on their shoulders] (My translation)

Lope's recognition of Santa Teresa's exemplary power over both men and women confirms her place among such predecessors as Judith and Diana. It is a sentiment that he repeats in this poem, where he equates Teresa with the Virgin Mary:

Teresa, virgen prudente,
tantos hijos engendró,
que el nombre se le quedó
de madre por excelente.
Con esto, y saber que es ella,
tendréis por posible vos
que, después de la de Dios,
hay una Madre doncella. (Blecua, ed., 100)

[Teresa, the wise virgin, engendered so many children, that she fittingly bears the name of mother. With this fact, and knowing how she is, you have, after the Mother of God, another virgin mother.] (My translation)

Lope de Vega was not alone in his praise of the saint, for poets both inside and outside of Spain composed works recognizing her accomplishments.[58] Together these writers confirm Fray Luis de León's observation in the *Carta dedicatoria* to his edition of the saint's complete works. Teresa's example can be read in her nuns and in her writings, both of which endure after her death. For these men as for María de San José, Ana de San Bartolomé, and the Sobrino sisters, Santa Teresa serves as a cautionary example to men and an exemplary model to women. She reminds men that God elects to distribute his gifts as he will. For women, she is *madre* and *maestra*, mother and teacher. Her accomplishments—both the houses of the reform as well as her books—are proof and guide to other women of what they may achieve.

Even though the saint led a peripatetic life as she crisscrossed Spain establishing new houses of the Reform, she did all in her power to maintain some semblance of strict enclosure in the process.[59] She desired as much for her followers, rejecting the active apostolate gaining currency among some religious women of the time in favor of a cloistered life of prayer (Lehfeldt 194). Nevertheless, she carefully selected members of established foundations to accompany her to new houses and continued active correspondence with her prioresses from afar. During her lifetime, new Discalced Carmelite convents were established by other nuns of the Reform with the knowledge, consent, and encouragement of the foundress. Even after her death in 1582, the influence of her works spread throughout Europe and eventually to the New World. While men and women turned to her writings as guides to mystical prayer,[60] others sought to extend the Carmelite Reform to new foundations.

The model that Santa Teresa had outlined in the *Constituciones* was that which was imitated in the houses established in Spain's American colonies. Among the

58 The power of Santa Teresa's example to inspire both men and women extended beyond Spain, as the English metaphysical Richard Crashaw attests in his poems in her honor. See, especially, his "Hymn to … Saint Teresa" in Williams 58. See, also, Francisco de Quevedo's "Su espada por Santiago," in *Obras*, Guerra y Orbe ed., where he cites her role as "matrona" to argue against those proposing her for "patrona" of Spain. (Estrofa 19, 451).

59 She and her companions traveled in a mule cart with canvas sides that effectively enclosed them. At the hours of prayer, the driver would stop while the nuns prayed the office. See Medwick 118.

60 See Serrano y Sanz *Apuntes* and Valentín de la Sagrada Familia for the names of many Discalced Carmelite nuns who wrote.

first Discalced Carmelite houses in the New World were those in Bogotá, Colombia (1601), and in Puebla, Mexico (1604), inspired in large part by the writing of the saint. The foundress of the first Colombian Carmel, Doña Elvira de Padilla, was "una lectora asidua y una enamorada de la santa; más afortunada que sus hermanas de Puebla, logra obtener la Regla y Constituciones en 1607" [an assiduous reader and admirer of the saint; more fortunate than her sisters in Puebla, she managed to obtain the Rule and Constitutions in 1607] (Mesa González 195). For the nuns of Santa Fe de Bogotá as, indeed, in all Discalced Carmelite convents in the New World, the reading of Teresa's works, whether in manuscript form or in Fray Luis de León's *princeps* edition "excitab[a] el fervor de la observancia en los monasterios ya existentes de la capital del virreinato" [incited the fervor of the observance in the existing monasteries in the viceregal capital] (Polit 301).[61]

In the city of Mexico, the first Discalced Carmelite convent of women also owed its foundation to the influence of Teresa's writings and her Spanish monasteries. Sor Inés de la Cruz and Sor Mariana de la Encarnación first professed as Conceptionist nuns in the Real Convento de Jesús María, then, in 1616, founded the Carmelite convent of San José de México (later called Santa Teresa la Antigua).[62] In their family backgrounds and education, the two women exemplify the characteristics found in both Santa Teresa's early upbringing and that of her early followers. They also represent the tensions straining the Church in Mexico.

Inés de la Cruz Castillet y Ayala was a Spaniard, born in Toledo in 1570, who immigrated to Mexico with her parents at the age of 14. In her own autobiography, she describes her early contact with the Carmelites: "vivían mis padres en Toledo, muy cerca del convento de carmelitas descalzas. No merecí tomar allí el hábito por venirse ellos a las Indias siendo yo de catorce años" [my parents used to live in Toledo, very close to the Discalced Carmelite convent. I was not worthy to take the habit there because they came to the Indies when I was fourteen] (Muriel, *Cultura femenina* 65). In 1591, she professed her vows in the Conceptionist convent of Jesús María.

Like Santa Teresa, Inés also wrote a life and an account of the foundation of the Mexican Carmel of San José. In her *Vida* she chronicles the course of her early education:

> Iba con mi hermana mayor a la maestra donde enseñaban a leer, y labrar, y aprendí muchas oraciones, y en brazos me llevaban por toda la vecindad … parecíame tendría entonces cuatro o cinco años, porque una cuesta que había bajaba a gatas por no caer. Aprendí con gran brevedad a leer, de codicia de saber la pasión de Nuestro Señor, y la lloraba mucho. (Sigüenza y Góngora, "Vida" 69–70)
>
> [I used to go with my older sister to a {female} teacher where we learned to read and embroider, and learned many prayers, and they used to carry me in their arms throughout the neighborhood .… I think I was about four or five years old, because there was a steep

61 See, also, Van Deusen (116–18), who comments on the influence of Santa Teresa's writings on *beatas* in Lima, Peru, during the seventeenth century.

62 See Muriel, *Cultura femenina* 54–5. Polit (301) and Muriel put the date of foundation in 1616.

> grade that I used to descend on all fours so as not to fall. I learned very shortly how to read, from a great desire to know the Passion of Our Lord, I used to weep because of it a lot.] (My translation)

In an act similar to that of the youthful Santa Teresa, Inés also ran away from home in order to live the hermit's life, but soon returned to her parents. Later, she remarks that her father taught her Latin and encouraged her study of music (72–3).

Although tone deaf, she continued to study music, spurred on in part by defiance at the objections raised by her tutor (73). Despite his doubts, she proved an able musician and mathematician (Muriel, *Cultura femenina* 55). Her biographer and fellow foundress, Mariana de la Encarnación remarks on Inés's accomplishments:

> y sabiendo [Inés] antes de que entrase lo que se estimaba en aquel convento [Jesús María] entonces a loas que sabían música, recibiéndolas de buena gana, la aprendió con tanta eminencia, que alcanzó consumadamente toda la ciencia que pudo saber un maestro de música. (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 363–4)

> [And knowing even before entering what was valued in that convent at that time {were} musical prologues, receiving them with good grace, she learned {music} so well, that she completely acquired all of the knowledge that a musical teacher could know.] (My translation)

While she imitated Santa Teresa in her writing and her foundation of a new Carmelite house in Mexico, Inés de la Cruz also made her own mark as an educated woman in areas distinct from those of the saint.

In contrast to Inés's background, Mariana de la Encarnación was born a *criolla* [a child born in the colonies to Spanish parents] in Mexico in 1571. Her parents, Alonso Herrera and Inés de Pedroza, placed her in Jesús María at its opening in 1580 as an *educanda* [pupil]. In 1587 she professed her vows and soon proved to be an accomplished musician herself (Muriel, *Cultura femenina* 55). She also became an avid student of Santa Teresa's works, as she reveals in her "*Relación de la fundación del convento de San José de México*":

> … trayéndome a este tiempo para despertador, unos cuadernos de la Vida de nuestra Santa Madre Teresa de Jesús, misericordias todas no merecidas. Eran de mano estos cuadernos que sus libros aun no estaban impresos, y si lo estaban, no habían llegado a mi noticia. Leyendo en ellos hicieron tan mi propósito, que me parecía con mi ignorancia tenía alguna semejanza con mi camino, que eran de los principios de su vida. (Arenal and Schlau, eds., 363)

> […bringing to me at this time as a 'wake-up call,' some notebooks of the Life of our Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus, all undeserved blessings. These notebooks were handwritten since her books were not yet in print, or, if they were, they had not come to my attention. Reading them confirmed my decision, that it seemed to me that my ignorance had some similarity to my path, that they were like the beginning of her life.] (My translation)

Just as Santa Teresa before them, Mariana de la Encarnación and Inés de la Cruz channeled their fervor in two directions. First, they established San José de México

in the face of stiff opposition from both male and female adversaries.[63] Later, each composed a chronicle of the foundation that combined autobiography and history in a way not unlike that found in Santa Teresa's *Vida* and *Fundaciones.*

While the Carmelite foundations in Spain attracted women of bourgeois and even *converso* background, the convents of Mexico housed daughters of some of the most powerful and distinguished families of the viceroyalty. Dowries paid to support San José de Mexico were considerable yet, true to the Constitutions promulgated by Santa Teresa, girls were not turned away for lack of one (Muriel, *Conventos de monjas* 367). In fact, the financial success of the first house made possible the foundation of a second for those without dowries (Bénassy-Berling, "Mineurs" 62).[64]

As was also the case among the Spanish Discalced Carmelite foundations, the rule prohibited the acceptance of lay boarders solely for the purpose of educating them. Nevertheless, young girls destined for the cloistered life by their parents were accepted and educated by the community. Parents placed their daughters in the convent and provided their clothing and living expenses usually with the expectation that they might eventually profess. These girls received instruction similar to that found in other convent communities.

In addition to the writings of Santa Teresa describing the cloistered life of these convents, other works of a similar nature began to appear in Mexico. Among them was the *Cartilla de la doctrina religiosa*, authored by a Jesuit. As with so many instructional texts before it, this work also employed a dialogue format in order to explain to its readers the rules and governance of the nuns (Muriel, *Conventos de monjas* 1.374). Octavio Paz speculates that the author of this work may have been the Jesuit Núñez de Miranda who served for a time as confessor to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (*Sor Juana* 452). If true, this may explain in part why Sor Juana entered the Discalced Carmelite house of San José de México in 1667. Although she left a short three months, Sor Juana later included Santa Teresa among the female *exempla* in her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea* (Peden, ed., 82/83).[65] As will become clear in a subsequent chapter, Sor Juana was not only inspired by Santa Teresa, but like her, became an exemplary figure of female erudition in her own right.

In her words and in her deeds, Santa Teresa embodied the qualities found in Judith and Catherine of Alexandria. Her youthful enthusiasm for chivalry and martyrdom was channeled as an adult into the struggle to reform the Carmelite men and women. Her ability to lead and inspire both sexes in this endeavor made of her a *mujer varonil* in every sense, a new Judith who rallied others to her cause. The vigor

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63 Mariana de la Encarnación describes some of the resistance from her own community, from prelates in Mexico, and more surprisingly, from the Discalced in Puebla. See Arenal and Schlau, eds., 364–8.

64 Lavrin ("Unlike Sor Juana" 75–6) compares nuns' dowries with those of laywomen in Mexico. Bénassy-Berling (*Humanisme* 52–3; 59) describes strategies for getting a dowry.

65 Bénassy Berling ("Une intellectuelle" 15–16) identifies a bout with typhus as the cause of Sor Juana's withdrawal from the Carmelites and her decision not to return. Others, including Salazar Mallén (*Apuntes* 44), Leonard (*Baroque Times* 174), and Paz (98), put it down to misgivings about her vocation or fear of the rigorous Carmelite rule. See Chapter 6 for more on Sor Juana.

of her example also encompassed those in the secular sphere as the works of Lope and others attest. Each of these poets admires her "virile" strength.

Each of them also recognizes the paradox of her "virginal motherhood," a woman dedicated to the chaste life of a nun but one capable of inspiring others to imitate the life she led. In their praise of her, these poets unwittingly place her in the company of Catherine of Alexandria, whose tomb extrudes nourishment to the faithful as Teresa's works and example give birth to sons and daughters in Carmel. Yet, she is also like Catherine in her ability to teach, a power she claimed for herself and one she passed on to those nuns who imitated her example by writing themselves and by founding new houses of the reform in Spain, France, Belgium, and the Americas. For one of the greatest writers of New Spain, she was "mi madre Teresa," a woman who engendered new followers even as she inspired other women to write in defense of all women's learning.

Chapter 4

Anne and the Virgin Mary: Home (and) School(ing) for Girls in Spain and New Spain

> Que haga maestras en el dicho Colegio para que enseñen a las dichas doncellas a labrar y coser y otras labores que convengan saber ... y que también se tenga cuenta con enseñarlas a leer y escribir.
>
> (Real Cédula, #38)[1]

As the process of Santa Teresa de Jesús's beatification and canonization progressed, images of her, usually in the form of paintings, began to appear in Carmelite churches and monasteries. While at least one well-known portrait was painted from life by Fray Juan de la Miseria, many others followed after her death. Some represented the saint in an ecstatic pose much in the manner found in the Coronaro Chapel by Bernini, but just as many portrayed her with open book in one hand, quill in the other, listening attentively to the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove[2] (see Chapter 3). Although the manner of depiction is in keeping with standard hagiographical renderings of saints, on another level it also provides mute testament for the viewer of a woman quite literally engaged in the act of writing. The subject matter might be infused from above, but the actual composition is achieved by her hand.

Artistic representations of women reading, writing, and even teaching certainly occur before the time of Santa Teresa. They do so in contexts both sacred and secular. Accompanying the illuminated manuscripts of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* and Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies* in the fifteenth century, for example, are miniatures in which women and books figure prominently (Driver, "Mirrors" 78–9) (see Figure 4.1). Books lay open or closed; on desks or shelves; carried, read, or written in; but always near to hand for the female figures who populate the text. This intimate connection between the two is established in the *incipit*, wherein Christine appears with a book open before her.[3] Later, in the miniature which precedes Book Three of the text, Lady Justice and Christine wait at the gate of the City of Ladies

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1 *Exposiciones ... del Colegio de Doncellas de Ntra. Sra. de los Remedios, vulgo Doncellas Nobles* 34. [That there be women teachers in said colegio so that they may teach said young women to embroider and sew and to do other kinds of needlework that it behooves them to learn … and that someone see to teaching them to read and to write] (my translation).

2 See *Avanti con Dio* for numerous examples of these portraits in the original foundations.

3 Quilligan (*The Allegory* 47) reproduces this image.

Figure 4 **Proba, Wife of Adelphus, Giovanni Boccaccio, Des clères et nobles femmes, f. 64v, c. 1470, France. Courtesy of the Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation.**

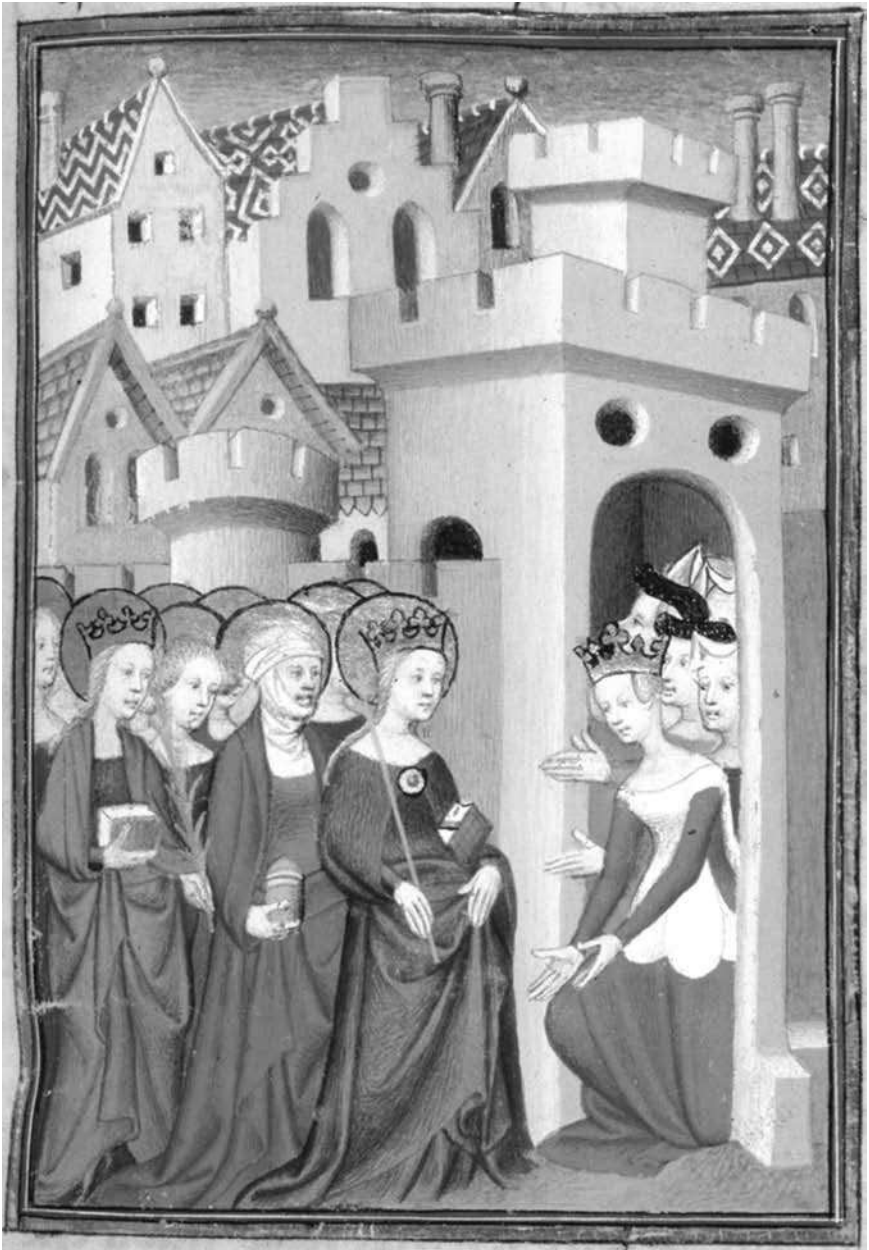

Figure 5 **Justice receiving the Virgin Mary and other saints into the City. Christine de Pizan, Cité des dames, Ms. Harley 4431, f. 361. British Library, London.**

ready to greet the Virgin Mary who carries a book as she leads in a group of saintly women (see Figure 5). As Blanchard describes the scene:

> In her right hand, the Virgin is carrying a closed book while the finished city stands before her. This arrangement of the picture focuses the reader's attention on the destiny of the book, the event that it constitutes, for the book that the Virgin, that supreme dedicatee, carries is situated at the center of the book, over the city. The closed book and the finished city—two architectural designs—are thus superimposed. (Blanchard 244–5)

Even though the Virgin Mary does not appear among the exemplary figures about whom Christine writes, she takes pride of place artistically in wedding the book and the *Book*. These miniatures as well as all of those found in the work provide visual adumbrations to the underlying message of the entire text. Women are authorized to read and study as well as to write and teach.[4]

The use of iconography to illustrate texts or to provide representations of exemplary figures to educate both the literate and the illiterate is of long-standing. One need look no further than the decorations of churches and cathedrals for examples.[5] Even in the specific instances of artwork depicting women, examples predate those found in Christine or Boccaccio. For example, as early as the ninth century, artists depict nuns at work in a variety of scholarly endeavors, while in the later Middle Ages, there are portrayals of women reciting the Latin Psalter or handling Books of Hours. In the case of the Virgin Mary, a number of common motifs are apparent. By the twelfth century, representations of the Annunciation show Mary with a book, usually a Book of Hours, either open before her or nearby when the angel appears (see Figure 6).[6] Beyond the suggestion of a prayerful pose in which the event takes place, the book also symbolically represents the Word made flesh rather than a mere object of study.

By the fourteenth century, artists began to expand on the motif of the Virgin Mary with a book by including her with her mother, Saint Anne. When Mary as a child is portrayed in painting or sculpture engaged in a potentially educational relationship with her mother, further levels of interpretation obtain (Orme, *Medieval Children* 244). Such representations cast the mother in the role of teacher of her daughter (see Figure 7).[7] Likewise, when Mary appears in a similar pose with the Christ Child and an open book or with pen and ink, the role of mother as teacher is underscored.

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4 See Quilligan (*The Allegory*), where many of the miniatures found in Christine's works are reproduced. See also, Smith and Taylor (*Women and the Book*), which reproduces others. There are depictions of women writing in Christine's works as well. See, for example, Smith ("Scriba , Femina" 27–8), who notes that a number of Christine de Pizan's books depict her writing. In the *Epistre d'Othéa* one miniature shows "Io directing a scriptorium of men," a figure undoubtedly modeled on Christine's own activities. Willard (*Christine de Pizan. Her Life and Works* 218) points out that a copy of the Epistre "is preserved … in Seville."

5 See Yates (*The Art of Memory*) for the use of figures, architecture, and painting as memory aids and instructional decorations.

6 Smith, "Scriba, Femina" 22. See also *Annunciation*, which reproduces a number of works of art on the subject from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century.

7 Luna ("Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" 59) points out that Francisco Pacheco, who served as inspector of paintings for the Inquisition in Seville, dismissed the idea of Anne as teacher of

Figure 6 **Frontispiece, Juan Luis Vives, Instrucción de la mujer cristiana. Alcalá de Henares 1529.**

In later works, all three figures—Anne, Mary, and Jesus–are represented engaged in examining a book, a motif that extends the pedagogical role from grandmother to mother in the education of the young.[8] As Smith points out, these images seem "frequent and straightforward enough to suggest that it was the usual practice for a mother to teach her daughter her letters" ("Scriba, Femina" 22).

Equally suggestive are those paintings in which the Virgin is depicted writing. For example, the "*The Madonna of the Magnificat*" by Botticelli shows Mary with the Child Jesus on her lap. In her right hand she holds a pen that she is dipping into an inkpot while her wrist rests on an open book (see Figure 8). In other works, she appears to be teaching the Christ Child how to write. These portrayals of women reading and teaching others to read, especially in Books of Hours, provided exemplary models for men and women to imitate in their own homes, where mothers were often the first teachers of their children. In time, the Book of Hours and the Psalter came to serve the dual purpose of prayer book and primer in the early education of children. Thus, as Penketh observes: "the representation of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read becomes all the more understandable and touching" ("Women and Books of Hours" 270). Iconography suggests, therefore, the dual capabilities of women of the period: first, an ability to read—and sometimes to write; and, second, a duty to instruct their children.[9]

Availability of the Psalter, whether in Latin or in a bilingual edition, provided the earliest primers for teaching reading. Grendler has shown that "Italians ... described the earliest stage of learning to read as 'reading the psalter.'"[10] He also points out that hornbook and primer were often incorporated into school texts, such as grammars (153). Furthermore, what is true of the contents of primers in Italy seems to hold for similar texts in other European countries as well (155–6). With the advent of printing, introductory primers became a mainstay of publishers' and stationers' inventory (Levine 68). Hence, the presence of Books of Hours and Psalters as a virtual constant

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the Virgin Mary in his book, *Arte de la pintura de 1649*, since he believed that Mary learned directly from the Holy Spirit and not from any earthly teacher, least of all another woman.

8 For example, see "Seated Anne, with the Virgin and Child" in *A Handbook of the Collection* http://www.museum.cornell.edu/HFJ/handbook/hbl08.html. See also Clanchy ("Looking back …" 14); (*From Memory to Written Word* 191–2) and Bell ("Medieval Women Book Owners" 761–2), who reproduce other examples.

9 Vollendorf (174) notes that the "role of mothers—metaphorical and biological—in the instruction of girls figures prominently in many texts produced in convents." Luna ("Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" 65), also observes that "la falta de maestras ancianas y sabias a las que se refiere sor Juana en su Respuesta, supone un grave problema para las mujeres de la época: de ahí que se fomente abiertamente el modelo cultural de Santa Ana, madre y maestra, especialmente durante el siglo XVII" [the lack of mature and knowledgeable teachers to which Sor Juana refers in her Reply, assumes a grave problem for women of the time: from this the cultural model of Saint Anne as mother and teacher may openly be encouraged, especially during the seventeenth century] (my translation).

10 Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy* 143. See also, Saenger ("Books of Hours" 71–3), who makes an argument for the silent reading of Books of Hours in the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance as well as the close connection between the availability of these books and the evolution of reading habits.

Figure 7 Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Santa Ana y la Virgen, 1655-1665. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

in women's personal libraries suggests that the owners had both the means and the opportunity at hand to learn to read and to teach their children to do so.

Dissemination of these basic examples from painting and the printed page is evident not only in the miniatures accompanying Christine de Pizan's works or those found in Books of Hours. In addition, one might look to artwork depicting Isabel la Católica with the ever-present Book of Hours in her hands or, as noted above,

Figure 8 Sandro Botticelli, The Madonna of the Magnificat, c. 1485. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy. Photo courtesy of Scala/Art Resource.

Santa Teresa in the act of writing her works. By the seventeenth century, the nun and scholar Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is shown with quill in hand at a desk in her library surrounded by books. More telling still is the large medallion or *escudo* adorning her chest which depicts Mary at the Annunciation with a Book of Hours open before her (see Chapter 6).[11] Hence, in the space of a few centuries, artwork had moved from depicting the Virgin Mary with the Book of Hours beside her to a figure carrying the

11 See Tapia Méndez for reproductions of a number of these paintings. See also Kirk (*Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* 150–58) for an analysis of the evolution of each of the portraits of Sor Juana.

book into the City of Ladies and, finally, to that of a figure iconically validating Sor Juana's presence among an entire library of books on a wide range of subjects as both reader and author.

In contrast to artwork showing the Virgin Mary and her family, portraiture of Isabel, Teresa, and Sor Juana usually depicted them alone with books, subtly suggesting in the process their exceptional status as queen, saint, or scholar. Yet, each woman also acted in the capacity of actual or virtual mother to her natural or spiritual daughters. Isabel had continued the custom of educating the daughters of the nobility within her court and had insisted on the education of her own daughters for their roles as future queens. Santa Teresa in her capacity as foundress and prioress consciously assumed the role of mother as teacher of her spiritual sons and daughters. As a member of the Hieronymite community in Mexico City, Sor Juana not only studied but also taught a group of young boarders in the *colegio* annexed to the monastery (Paz 124–5). Thus, whether the subject be saint, queen, or nun-scholar, artistic representations of women with books or quills provided visual testimony of educated women and women as educators. More importantly, it communicated to viewers the possibility of imitation of the figures shown. Nevertheless, while Christine, Isabel, Teresa, and Juana Inés found or created educational opportunities for themselves, women not privileged to reside in royal court or literate convent had to look elsewhere in order to imitate the examples of Saint Anne, the Virgin Mary, or their Hispanic daughters.

Those women who received some level of education in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries generally did so within the confines of their own homes. In some cases, tutors might be hired; in others, the parents would serve as teachers to their children. Beyond the direct but limited examples provided by saints, queens, nuns, or noblewomen, other sources of guidance in the instruction of young girls may be found in a number of conduct books and pedagogical treatises published through the course of the period devoted to family life and the instruction of the young.[12]

One of the more influential of these is the *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* [*The Education of a Christian Woman*], the Spanish translation of Juan Luis Vives*'s De institutione feminae christianae*. The Latin text was first published in 1523 and was dedicated to Catherine of Aragon as a guide in the education of her daughter Mary. The Spanish translation by Juan Justiniano, published in Valencia in 1528, appeared in seven more editions throughout Spain during the course of the sixteenth century.[13] While the initial audience was the queen, the work was equally applicable to other women in both their personal conduct and in their responsibilities in educating their children.

The *Instrucción* became one of the principal theoretical manuals for the education of women and girls in the first half of the sixteenth century. As such, it

12 Vollendorf (170) suggests study of these informal sources as an appropriate starting point to discuss women's education in the early modern period.

13 See Noreña (Juan Luis Vives 347–53) for a list of the editions of Vives's works published during the *siglo de oro*. Justiniano rededicated the Spanish version to Doña Germana de Foix, the second wife of Fernando el Católico. See *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana*, Howe, ed. (27).

marks a transition from medieval, conventual education to the humanistic approach characteristic of the Renaissance.[14] Nevertheless, Vives differs significantly from some of his humanist contemporaries, such as Erasmus and Thomas More, on the issue of education for women (Jones and Seibel 69–70). In particular, his near obsession with the issue of feminine chastity and the draconian strictures he recommended to circumscribe women's movements in public and at home struck Erasmus as too "Spanish" (Entrambasaguas 35–6). His advocacy of enclosing women and girls to protect their virtue made of their homes virtual monasteries.[15] Yet, in another sense, he simply codifies what Christine de Pizan had proposed in her two books regarding womanly virtue.

In the *Instrucción*, Vives explains that "la doctrina que [él] querría que fuese propuesta a todo el linaje humano es la sobria y la casta, la que instruye y hace mejores; no aquella otra que arma y que acucia a las malas pasiones del alma" [The learning that I should wish to be made available to the whole human race is sober and chaste, it forms our character and renders us better. It is not one that arms us or spurs us on to the wicked desires of the mind] (1.996/Fantazzi, ed., 64).[16] In a similar work addressed to husbands entitled *De officio mariti* (*De los deberes del marido*) [*On the Duties of the Husband*], he qualifies his expectations for women further:

> nadie espere que la mujer vaya a cambiar en otra la condición que sacó consigo del vientre de su madre. Podrá volverse mejor y llegar al dominio de sus pasiones con la educación y la costumbre; pero no podrá echarlas de sí radicalmente, como no podrá dejar de ser mujer, o, mejor, de ser individuo humano. (1.1276)
>
> [No one may expect that the woman is going to change the nature that she took with her from her mother's womb. She may be able to become better and to manage to control her passions with education and manners; but she will never be able to erradicate them completely from herself, just as she cannot cease being a woman, or, for that matter, an individual human being.] (My translation)

While he anticipates the biological determinism of a Huarte de San Juan, Vives also argues for education as the best surety of a woman's virtue, opining that education that improves souls is in all respects necessary to both sexes (1.1308).

To buttress his case, Vives provides examples of educated women, ranging from Sappho to Isabel. He contends that ignorance in a woman inhibits her acquisition of virtue since it precludes her from reading edifying works such as the Fathers of the Church (1.995–1001). Still, the nature and content of the education he deems adequate to attain virtue are severely circumscribed. Thus, even as he dedicates

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14 Watson ("A Friend" 548) so describes the work.

15 See Van Deusen (23), who comments on Vives's ideas concerning *recogimiento* [enclosure].

16 *Obras completas*, Riber edition. This Spanish edition of Vives's works will be cited throughout unless otherwise indicated. English translation of the *The Education of the Christian Woman* is that of Charles Fantazzi and will be cited in text as well. Maclean (51) comments on the use of the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle as an authority cited by Renaissance writers to justify associating women with the "imperfect virtues of … chastity, modesty and long-suffering."

the *De institutione* to Catherine, who had received a good education as a princess, he clearly distinguishes between what is suitable for a future monarch and what is appropriate for an ordinary woman.[17]

Given the social strictures of the time, the nature of a woman's education necessarily differed from that of a man's, as Vives explains:

> Empero en la mujer nadie busca la elocuencia, ni el talento, ni la prudencia, ni el arte de vivir, ni la administración de la República, [Queen Catherine notwithstanding] ni la justicia, ni la benignidad; en suma; nadie reclama de ella sino la castidad, la cual, si fuere echada de menos, es igual que si al hombre le faltaren todas. (1.1010)
>
> [... in a woman, no one requires eloquence or talent or wisdom or professional skills or administration of the republic or justice or generosity; no one asks anything of her but chastity. If that one thing is missing, it is as if all were lacking to a man.] (Fantazzi, ed., 85)

By foreclosing eloquence to womankind, Vives extends the Pauline dictum from church to public life. Indeed, like Lionardo Bruni d'Arezzo before him, the Spaniard perceives no need for eloquence in a woman since nature has dictated silence and subservience as her role. In contrast to Christine and Don Álvaro de Luna, classical and contemporary examples of eloquent women, such as Hortensia or Catherine of Aragon herself, do not sway Vives. His work reflects the unease of most male writers, including More and Erasmus, with the notion of assertive women as a rule rather than the exceptions who might be explained away as "virile women."[18]

In order to understand her obligations, Vives proposes an early education for the girl within her home. There she should learn lessons concerning "cultivation of the mind and the care and management of the home" (Fantazzi, ed., 58/1.992). Even princesses should learn to spin, weave, and cook in order to occupy their hands in useful work and thus avoid idle chatter and dangerous associations (1.993/Fantazzi, ed., 59). Vives clearly draws on the advice found in Aristotle's *Oeconomica* and

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17 See McKendrick (*Woman and Society* 8) and Wayne ("'Some Sad Sentence'" 20). See also Wiesner (*Women and Gender* 127), who points out that Vives "restricted the class of women for whom a humanist education was proper to those who might be forced into public service, such as Princess Mary Tudor." In contrast, Holm (280) remarks: "interpreting these passages as evidence that publicly active women may hold their exceptional places only by being so extraordinary that they are more extraordinary than extraordinary men, a 'middle-class' reader might have been led to view public life for women as a very remote possibility but to see the possibilities for essential womanly virtue as fortunately closer to home."

18 See Greenhut ("'Persuade yourselves'" 44) for more on Vives's unease. Even as he enjoined eloquence in women, however, Vives wanted wives to be congenial conversationalists, claiming: "no hay nadie que no prefiera conversar con su perro que con su mujer importuna y feroz" [There is no one who would not prefer to converse with his dog rather than with an oppressive and surly wife] (1.1107/Fantazzi ed., 223), an insulting notion to be sure. Although he reiterates these ideas in the *Deberes* (1.1315; 1322), he also urges husbands to teach women silence as the most agreeable adornment of their sex (1.1313). See also Wiesner (127), who notes the resistance of Vives and other humanists to a full humanistic education for women.

Plutarch's *Conjugalia praecepta*, but he constrains women even more than had his classical sources (Maclean 58–9).[19]

Within the confines of the home, Vives dictates that the mother serve as principal teacher of her daughters in preparing them to govern their own households some day as, according to tradition, had Saint Anne with the Virgin Mary. Examples from literature and history, including Isabel and her daughters, underscore the lesson (1.994/Fantazzi, ed., 69–70). While some of his contemporaries suggest that fathers see to the education of sons and mothers to daughters, Vives advocates the mother as the one responsible for the religious education of all of her children (Maclean 59)

This education begins at the breast. Citing the authority of Quintilian and Saint Jerome, Vives believes that "we imbibe with our mother's milk not only love but also a disposition toward certain behavior" (Fantazzi, ed., 54/1.990). As the child grows, the mother is encouraged to "teach her children when they are small so that they have the same person as mother, nurse, and teacher. They will love her more and learn more readily with the help of the love they have for their teacher"(Fantazzi, ed., 270/1.1140). Lest women neglect the responsibility of instilling virtue in their offspring, Vives also reminds them that they are liable if their sons turn out badly (1.1143/Fantazzi, ed., 275). In short, women carry heavy responsibilities that are best met with sufficient education.

In addition to practical lessons in housecraft, Vives also proposes teaching girls to read and write in the vernacular rather than Latin, unless a particular student shows an aptitude for the classical language.[20] Again, he recommends specific learning aids, including the use of notebooks and memory exercises (Paul 65; Watson, "Vives y sus doctrinas" xxii–iii). At this juncture, however, he insists that a male tutor rather than the mother serve as teacher of academic subjects (1.1001/Fantazzi, ed., 71). Even as he advocates some Latin learning for select women, Vives also prevents them from advancing their own causes. In contrast to medieval monasteries, the cloister of Vives's home is subject to male authority. As Kelly explains:

> the girl of the medieval aristocracy, although unschooled, was brought up at the court of some great lady. Now her brothers' tutors shaped her outlook, male educators who, as humanists, suppressed romance and chivalry to further classical culture, with all its patriarchal and misogynous bias. (*Women, History* 35)

Vives, no less than his humanist compatriots, selects texts carefully for women, always keeping his focus on the inculcation of virtue, especially chastity, as the aim of their education. Foremost among the works he proposes are the New Testament and the moral treatises of the Fathers of the Church. Principal among the latter are

19 Kelly (*Women, History and Theory* 21–2) contends that the Renaissance writers achieve a "veritable 'renaissance' of the outlook and practices of classical Athens with its domestic imprisonment of citizen wives."

20 Ong (*Fighting for Life* 130–31) points out that "in the West in the sixteenth century, and even later, it was not possible, for example, to learn grammar or metaphysics or medicine or most other academic subjects unless one knew Latin, for there was no effective way to set forth academic subjects in the vernaculars, which had no adequate vocabulary or semiotic (interlocking language-and-thought processes) for such technical matters."

the letters of Saint Jerome. In addition, he suggests the moral precepts to be found in certain classical works by Cicero, Seneca, and Plato. The *Acta Sanctorum* and Christian poets also merit attention (1.1003–5/Fantazzi, ed., 78–9).[21] Ironically, the author cites a number of classical authorities to support his theses—such as Juvenal, Terence, and Ovid–all of whom he carefully excludes from the readings he recommends for the maiden's instruction.

Even before he enumerates approved readings, Vives devotes considerable space to those works he absolutely proscribes. These include "pernicious books like those popular in Spain ... that deal with nothing but battles and love," among them the ever popular *Amadís de Gaula* and its sequels; the *Celestina* and *Cárcel de amor*; and Boccaccio's *Decameron* (Fantazzi, ed., 74–6/1.1002–3). In his condemnation of chivalric romances and other "perncious books," Vives reflects an attitude shared by his fellow humanists. Although it is a proscription that applies to men as well as to women (*Deberes* 1.1308), still it suggests that secular literature enjoyed a growing popularity and ever wider readership.[22]

In his use of exemplary women to support the lessons for conduct that he endorses, Vives also deviates from the practices of his literary predecessors. To the chagrin of some, including Erasmus, he presents his own mother, Blanca March (1.1099–1100/Fantazzi. ed., 212), as a model of maternal authority and his mother-in-law, Clara Cervent (1.1090–92/Fantazzi ed., 200–202), as a paragon of wifely devotion. The highly personal nature of such examples stands in marked contrast to the more objective models employed by earlier authors of exemplary literature, such as Boccaccio, Christine de Pizan, and Don Álvaro de Luna.

Even when he cites classical *exempla*, Vives marshals his references as virtual footnotes to his narrative. He does so by combining a number of examples to support his argument. Thus, when defending education for women, he enumerates more than 30 examples, ranging in time from ancient Greece to contemporary England and Spain. Absent from his work are the longer, self-contained lessons of his predecessors. Rather, he offers little more than a tagline to each of his exemplary women with the exception of his own kinfolk whose stories he tells in understandably greater detail.

The reduction of the majority of classical *exempla* to the status of *topoi* for the purpose of argumentation reflects the rhetoric of humanistic writing in the Renaissance (Bantock 14). While such a concentration allows Vives to employ numerous examples without a great deal of elaboration, it also eliminates any nuance or complexity from the women whom he mentions. At the same time, it presupposes a certain familiarity on the part of the reader with the literary and historical examples cited.

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21 Noreña summarizes the entire curriculum (230). In the *Deberes* (1.1312), Vives recommends "libros piadosos" [pious books] (my translation) but forbids the study of theology and moral philosophy by women.

22 See Varela (180), Wayne ("'Some Sad Sentence'" 21), and Nalle ("Literacy and Culture" 65–96), on reading preferences in sixteenth-century Spain. The Arcipreste de Talavera, Alfonso Martínez de Toledo (*El Corbacho* 36–7), claims that licentious reading shares space in the lady's *cofre* with a whole panoply of cosmetics.

The *Instrucción* was by no means the only conduct book extant in Spain during the *siglo de oro*. Rather, a number of works dealing with family life, which suggested or delineated the education of children within the home, appeared throughout the period.[23] In many respects, the education offered Santa Teresa in her father's house is in keeping with the suggestions to be found in these works—the presence of chivalric romances notwithstanding. While the daughters of the well-to-do might enjoy these educational benefits, what of orphaned or abandoned children? How did these girls learn in the absence of nurturing parents invested in raising and educating them?

In yet another work entitled *De subventione pauperum* (*Del socorro de los pobres*) [*On Assistance to the Poor*] (Bruges 1526), Vives addresses the special needs of poor children in the city of Bruges.[24] In it he recommends the foundation of schools to teach "'letters, morals, Christian duty, and proper values."[25] His proposals include girls as well as boys:

> Y tómese todo esto por dicho de la escuela de niñas en que se les enseñen los primeros rudimentos de las letras, y si alguna tuviere vocación para las letras y el estudio, déjesela en este punto pasar un poco más adelante, siempre que todo ello se enderece a la mejora de las costumbres. (1.1397–8)
>
> [I repeat the same thing regarding girls' schools, in which first the rudiments of letters should be taught, and anyone who shows talent and interest in letters should be allowed to progress further as long as it all contributes to her moral improvement.] (Matheeussen and Fantazzi, eds., 109)

As he had in the case of princesses and noblewomen in the *Instrucción*, Vives emphasizes that girls also learn spinning, sewing, weaving, embroidery, skill in cooking, and domestic chores. He reiterates the need to inculcate the appropriate virtues of "modestia, templanza, afabilidad, pudor y lo principal de todo: aprendan a guardar castidad" [modesty, sobriety, politeness, a sense of propriety, and above all to guard chastity] (1.1398/Matheeussen and Fantazzi, eds., 109).

Vives's proposals for poor relief, including those regarding schools for the young, derive as much from a desire to maintain social order as from charitable motives. As Varela observes, the *De subventione* appeared not long after the *comunero* [commoners] uprisings in Castile and the *germanías* [brotherhoods] in Valencia, so that to ignore the poor threatens the stability of the powerful (238). Consequently, Vives envisions schooling that clearly delineates class distinctions even as it controls the wilder impulses he associates with the poor and, most especially, with homeless, orphaned, and helpless children.[26]

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23 See, for example, works by Astete, Cerda, Eximenis, Guevara, Luxán, and Valera, to name a few.

24 Spanish citations are taken from the Riquer edition and English from that of Matheeussen and Fantazzi. At this time, Bruges was home to a large Spanish community. The city as well as the rest of Flanders came under Spanish control with the ascendancy of Charles V as Holy Roman Emperor.

25 *Obras completas*, 2.1397, as cited in Graff (132).

26 [{V}agabundos, huérfanos y niños desamparados] (Varela 240), who is citing a petition by the Cortes de Valladolid to the king. See also Houston (*Literacy* 42) who cites Diego de Simancas's concerns regarding the poor in society.

In the case of girls, Vives makes some allowances for extending the education of those who "show a vocation for letters and study," but he returns to the domestic skills and "feminine" virtues he believes crucial for women to acquire. The inculcation of virtue is not the purview of women alone, however, for he is equally adamant that boys, too, be taught "letras y religión" (1.1410/Matheeussen and Fantazzi, eds., 141). The emphasis on learning practical skills provides a young man or woman with useful training for employment and marriage. The object of this education is social harmony and comity constructed on Christian humanist principles. It recognizes the inherent dangers—both civil and moral—if society ignores the plight of the poor.[27] Clearly, as Houston avers, "education for the masses was not a way of opening up avenues of social mobility but of preserving rank and degree in society" (18).

In a larger sense, the impetus for establishing schools for the purpose of catechizing the laity and preparing youngsters for the priesthood predates the sixteenth-century focus on poor relief. The second Council of Toledo in 527 had already called upon bishops "to provide school[s] on church premises for the instruction of children destined for priesthood" (Cipolla 39). Later, the Lateran councils of 1179 and 1215 proposed schools for poor children regardless of their interest in holy orders. While these schools were principally concerned with boys, in a few instances, the education of girls also influenced the foundation of some.

One of the earliest examples of such schools for girls in Spain may be found during the primacy of Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros in Alcalá de Henares. As he established a university in the city (1508), the prelate also turned his attention to the welfare of girls and women within the archdiocese (Rummel 56). He did so for both altruistic and pragmatic reasons. Concerned as much for the morals of his young male students as he was for the females of Alcalá de Henares, the cardinal founded a number of institutions in the town for women and girls. Observing that many women were driven by poverty and hunger to prostitution while others were forced into convents by family members for economic reasons, Cisneros determined to remedy the situation for both groups through the foundation of a unique double institution.

The Convento de San Juan de la Penitencia began as a *beaterio*, housing devout laywomen [*beatas*] who lived a quasi-monastic life without taking vows. Eventually the house became a monastery of 33 nuns who followed the rule of the Third Order of St. Francis.[28] Cisneros established the Colegio de Santa Isabel adjacent to the convent to serve as a school that accepted poor girls from the age of nine who remained until they were old enough to choose either marriage or the convent. Those who opted for the latter entered the attached monastery. All of the girls received a dowry when they left the school.[29]

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27 Perry (*Gender and Disorder* 53–4) recognizes Vives's proposals in the context of Sevillian society. Flynn (*Sacred Charity* 92) sees their relationship to Zamoran ordinances. See also Graff (124), who views these proposals as a means of "power, control and hegemony over the poor."

28 Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid) Ms. 7.899, "Annales complutenses y historia de Alcalá de Henares," fol. 698.

29 Merton (135–6) describes the arrangement and Cisneros's motives. Meseguer Fernández ("El Cardenal Cisneros" 94) explains admission standards. Flynn (*Sacred Charity*) points out that caring for orphans and educating the young were considered spiritual works of mercy.

In order to finance both institutions as well as a hospital for women, the prelate provided funds and property for rental income.[30] He also made provision in his will for their continued support after his death. Subsequently, Philip II increased the endowment, adding both money and prestige to the school by his interest. Even during the cardinal's lifetime, however, the reputation of the *colegio* was such that well-to-do noble families sought admission for their daughters. Cisneros eventually acceded to the requests under certain conditions. Space must be available and the nuns must consent to receive the applicant. The girl must be at least nine years of age and could remain no more than three years so that another might fill her place. She would be subject to the same regulations governing poor students even though her parents paid a set fee each year that she attended.[31]

Less clear is the content of the instruction that the girls received. While the constitutions spell out the daily schedule of work and prayer, they say little or nothing about the curriculum. At a minimum, the students learned to read, sew, spin, and cook. They also learned the rudiments of religious instruction. One suggestive anecdote describes a *corregidor* who requested admission for his daughter, pointing out that she could already read Latin at the age of eight (Meseguer Fernández, "El Cardenal Cisneros" 94).

The success of the *colegio* in Alcalá de Henares led Cisneros to found a similar institution in Toledo in 1514 called the Colegio de Doncellas Pobres de San Juan de la Penitencia, which was also annexed to a Franciscan monastery.[32] After the death of the primate, his longtime friend and confidant, Fray Francisco Ruíz, bishop of Avila, assumed responsibility for this foundation, both extending and enlarging it.[33]

The rules for the Toledan school were similar to those of the original institution in Alcalá. The student must be "de linaje noble, o a lo menos que sea hijadalgo, y pobre y que aya nueve años complidos" [sic] [of noble lineage, or at the very least an *hidalga*, poor and nine years of age] (Abad Pérez 58). Once she attained puberty, she could elect marriage or the monastic life assured of a generous dowry regardless of her choice. The girls learned domestic skills, prayers, and how to read. The rule specifically forbade music, however: "ni por locutorios se pueda enseñar o aprender canto de órgano, tocar arpa o otro qualquier instrumento, ni por la reja del chorro" [neither in the parlors may they be taught or learn polyphony, or to play the harp or any other instrument, nor to sing loudly at the grille] (Abad Pérez 60–62; 85). Although no explanation is proffered for this rule, it seems to emphasize the notions of modesty that informed most of the constitutions of this type of school, even as it reflects Saint Jerome's aversion to musical education for Paula. No inventory of the books available for reading or study survives for either institution.

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30 See Meseguer Fernández ("El Cardenal Cisneros" 37) for a description of revenues.

31 Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid), Ms. 18.646.5, and Meseguer Fernández ("El Cardenal Cisneros" 95) describe these arrangements. Abad Pérez ("San Juan de la Penitencia" 2) and Hefele (*The Life of Cardinal Ximénez* 222) comment on the popularity of the *colegio* among the nobility.

32 Parro, *Toledo en la mano* 2.412–13.

33 Cannon (93) and Fuente (*Historia de las Universidades* 2:7–8). Merton (11) describes the friendship between Cisneros and Ruíz.

In spite of the lack of detail concerning the curriculum of these two schools, the little that the records do reveal is instructive. The emphasis on domestic skills, religious instruction and practice, some level of literacy, and modesty, as well as the rejection of contact with music and men, describe the bare essentials for female instruction spelled out by Vives in his *Instrucción*. Save for the anecdote of the *corregidor*'s daughter, no expectation for Latin instruction exists, nor is there a suggestion that other subjects of the humanist curriculum find their way into these *colegios*. In fact, the schools seem to have provided the level of instruction a young woman—even one of the petty nobility of *hidalgas*—might receive at home prior to her marriage or admission to a convent. While it is a far cry from the university education available to a young man, nevertheless, the one skill taught to both sexes that potentially opened a wider arena of learning was reading.

One of the most famous of the *colegios* for girls as well as the longest-lived of those founded in the sixteenth century was that established by Juan Martínez Guijarro, better known by the Latinized surname of Siliceo, which he later adopted. As successor to Cisneros in the archiepiscopal see of Toledo, Siliceo continued and expanded the charitable work initiated by his predecessor.

In June 1551 in collaboration with Felipe II, Siliceo established the Colegio de Doncellas Vírgenes de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, popularly known as Nobles Doncellas.[34] Concerned with the moral education of Christian mothers, Siliceo provided for the admission of one hundred girls drawn principally from the archdiocese of Toledo.[35] The name "*Nobles Doncellas*" notwithstanding, the school did not restrict admission to the daughters of the nobility. Rather, the Constitutions prohibited admission only to those who were not of Christian blood or who were illegitimate.[36] As an early advocate of the *estatuto de limpieza*, Siliceo thus equated nobility with purity of blood in the "old Christian" sense.[37] Representatives of the

34 *Enciclopedia Universal* (1930) 33.552–3; and Domínguez Ortiz (*Los judeoconversos* 30–31). See, also, Pedraza Ruíz, "El Colegio de Doncellas Nobles" 3–4. (I am grateful to Doña Esperanza for allowing me to read the text of her speech.) Fuente (*Historia de las Universidades* 2.511) notes that Siliceo is interred in the chapel of the Colegio de Nobles Doncellas.

35 *Exposiciones* ... 10; Francisco de Pisa, *Descripción de la imperial ciudad de Toledo* fol. 261.

36 "[L]as que tuvieran sangre no cristiana, o fueran de nacimiento ilegítimo," Porres Martín Cleto, *La desamortización* 389; *Exposiciones* (#3, 13). Selke ("El iluminismo de los conversos 631, n. 10) calls Siliceo "[el] más fanático promotor" of the *Estatutos de limipieza de sangre*.

37 Not all founders of *colegios* embraced the *estatutos de limpieza*. A notable exception is that of Don Pedro González de Mendoza and his brother, don Álvaro, who established the Colegio del Remedio in Guadalajara (Layma Serrano 335–6). On the other hand, an early foundation in Salamanca specifically admitted "donzellas hijas de nobles padres a quien[es] la pobreza traxo a menor fortuna" [maiden girls of noble parents who have suffered ill fortune and poverty] (González Dávila 455–6). This Colegio de las Once Mil Vírgenes (1518) was the charitable work of Francisco Rodríguez Varillas, who also established the *colegio mayor* of San Millán. The head of San Millán appointed the rector of the girls' school and ascertained the *limpieza de sangre* of those admitted (Villar y Macías 2.295). Nevertheless, Domínguez Ortiz (160) points out that the University of Salamanca "admitió grandes contingentes de marranos

Cardinal and the king selected prospective students, examining the proofs of *limpieza* submitted by local parish priests. At the same time, they reserved a certain number of places for relatives of the Cardinal and for families in the king's service (Moreno Nieto, *Diccionario* 111).

Examination of a representative matriculation list for girls admitted in 1600 supports the contention that *noble* was used in a very loose sense. Of the 24 names listed, 13 are *doñas*, while 11 are not. Of these 11, 6 are relatives of men associated with the Cardinal's family or minor royal office holders. The other 5 are simply listed by town of origin and parents' names.[38]

In sharp contrast to Cisneros's dual foundation of school-*cum*-convent, Siliceo disavowed any interest in preparing his young charges for monastic life. Rather, his was a strictly lay institution aimed at preparing girls for marriage. The secular status of the school extended to the staff, who did not belong to religious orders. To that end, the Cardinal provided dowries only for those girls who chose to marry and specifically forbade the dowering of graduates who opted for the convent.

One unique stipulation in the Constitutions concerned the number of years a *colegiala* might remain. Girls normally matriculated between the ages of seven and ten, but, unlike other *colegios*, residents at Nobles Doncellas could spend the rest of their lives in the school if they so desired (*Exposiciones* 14). Older residents often assumed the duties of tutors and mentors to the younger students, thus augmenting the instruction provided by the professional staff.[39] The Constitutions provided for the employment of an *escribano* (12), a *rectora*, an *administrador*, teachers, and domestic help (27).[40] An intriguing position for a reliable, older woman to serve as "listener" was also recommended (31). This college chaperone sat with both students and staff in the visitors' parlor and made sure that "ni de lugar a que se hablen ni traten cosas deshonestas, ni en perjuicio de las dichas doncellas ni del dicho Colegio".

Teachers instructed the girls in useful domestic skills while older residents under the rector's direction taught reading and writing (38). Criteria for selection as a tutor depended on the religious, moral and civic education of the student and not on the social background of the girl or her family. Great store was set on the tutors' "moralidad ... y prudencia" (*Santa visita* 19–20).

Reading consisted of the predictable "libros de santos y otros libros de santas doctrinas que les señalare ... el dicho Rev. Arzobispo de Toledo" [saints' lives and other books of holy doctrine that the reverend Archbishop of Toledo might indicate for them] (24). When engaged in their ordinary duties as well as during meals, the

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portugueses hasta la separación de Portugal en 1640" [admitted large numbers of Portuguese marranos {Jewish converts} until the separation of Portugal in 1640] (my translation).

38 Archivo de Simancas, Patronato Eclesiástico, "Plazos del Colegio de Nobles Doncellas de Toledo" 152.

39 Mora del Pozo, *El Colegio de Doctrinos* 22. Houston (75) disparages the role of women teachers as "little better than that of child-minder."

40 *Exposiciones* #31–33. Numbers refer to articles of the Constitutions.

students also listened while another student read aloud (50). Finally, strict rules concerning dress and proscriptions on imbibing wine suggest a daily schedule not appreciably different from that of cloistered nuns (43; 45). Neither are the rules significantly at variance with the recommendations found in Vives's *Instrucción* or his *De subventione pauperum*.

The success of the Colegio de Nobles Doncellas apparently inspired Felipe II to found two more schools for girls in Madrid. The first, called Loreto, was established in 1581, but lasted for only a short time on its original site. The second, named Santa Isabel, was founded in 1592 and placed under the auspices of a convent of Augustinian nuns.[41] Loreto accommodated 33 girls between the ages of eight and twelve.[42] Those admitted were the orphaned daughters of faithful retainers and soldiers.[43]

Initially, the Constitutions of Santa Isabel were less restrictive about admissions. Yet, they suggest motives similar to those that moved confraternities to establish like-minded institutions:

> Don Philipe, por la gracia de Dios, Rey de Castilla, ... quiso prevenir, y cortar este mal por la raíz, y enderezar las plantas tiernas de Niños, y Niñas, destituídas, y desamparadas, que por ser huérfanos, o hijos de tan pobres Padres, vivían sin Dios, Ley, ni Doctrina, a sus anchuras, y perniciosa libertad, fundando, y dotando una Casa de Recogimiento, para Niños y Niñas pobres, huérfanas, y desamparadas, que por las Calles, y Plazas se hallassen, o con tan Pobres Padres y Madres, que no los pudiessen criar, y sustentar; y a contemplación de la Sereníssima Infanta Doña Isabel, su hija, quiso se llamasse el Recogimiento de Santa Isabel, Reyna de Ungría, aplicándole quinientos Ducados cada mes, para su manutención, y pagados de su bolsillo: cuya piadosa obra tuvo principio en seis de Agosto del año de mil quinientos y noventa y cinco. (Const. fol. 1)
>
> [Don Philip, by the grace of God, King of Castille, ... intended to prevent and cut out this evil by the root and to set right these tender plants of girls and boys, destitute and forsaken, who are orphans or children of such poor parents, living without God, law or teaching, at wide and pernicious liberty, by founding and endowing a house of reclusion, for poor, orphaned and forsaken boys and girls who may be found in the streets, squares, or with such poor fathers and mothers, that they may be unable to raise, and to support them; and in memory of the most serene princess, Doña Isabel, his daughter, he intends that this house be called Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, allotting five hundred ducados each month, for its maintenance, and paid from his purse; which work of mercy began on the sixth of August in the year fiteen ninety-five.] (My translation)

They did stipulate that the main purpose of the school was to care for poor girls and not for the reclusion of widows, nor married or other women (fol. 5). In contrast to Nobles Doncellas, therefore, girls were encouraged to move on when they reached an age to marry or to enter a convent.

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41 Cannon (93) and Fuente (*Historia de las Universidades* 2.512). See also Varela (268).

42 Archivo de Simancas, Gracia y Justicia, Leg. 977, "Constituciones del Real Colegio de Niñas Huérfanas de Ntra. Señora de Loreto, de esta Villa, y Corte de Madrid," 399, fol. 5.

43 Archivo de Simancas, Gracia y Justicia, Leg. 977, "Constituciones del Real Colegio de Niñas Huérfanas de Sta. Isabel, reina de Ungría, de esta corte y villa de Madrid," fol. 4.

Like the constitutions of other *colegios*, those of Santa Isabel spelled out the daily schedule, requirements of the *rectora* and staff, and some of the lessons for students. Strict control of incoming and outgoing mail was maintained (fol. 9). A suggested list of books appropriate for the school library included the *Flos Sanctorum*, the works of Fray Luis de Granada, as well as those of Alfonso Rodríguez. In addition, each student was to be given her own copy of a catechism and "un Librito del Padre Villacastín, u otro semejante, para leer el punto de la Meditación antes de la Oración" [a little book by Father Villacastín, or something similar, to read the point of meditation before prayer] (fol. 9). It is a list more modest than that of Santa Teresa's reformed convents, but it demonstrates the focus of the education for the girls.

The responsibilities of the superior and principal underscore the similarities between the Colegio de Santa Isabel and the later schools of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The *rectora* should be of recognized virtue and prudence. In addition, she should "know how to read well, and to write, and have the other corresponding gifts of intelligence."[44] One of her main tasks was to instruct the girls in Christian doctrine. She was also charged with the responsibility of monitoring the reading matter in the school, making sure "que no aya en el Colegio, ni tengan las Niñas, ni otra persona alguna Libro de Novelas, Comedias, ni otros profanos, ni permitirá que ninguna los lea, zelando sobre esto todo lo posible" [there are not in the college nor that the girls or any other person have any novels, plays, or other profane {books}, nor allow anyone to read them, guarding against this as much as possible] (fol. 13). Absent as well were any texts devoted to grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, logic, or the like, since these studies were deemed unnecessary if not inappropriate "a las mujeres y a los idiotas" [to women and idiots].[45]

In 1582, Don García Girón de Loaysa (1542–1599) proposed the foundation of the Colegio de las Vírgenes in Guadalajara under the tutelage of Discalced Carmelite nuns and the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Toledo (Peers, *Handbook* 101). A graduate of the university at Alcalá de Henares, Loaysa was then serving as archdeacon in Guadalajara. Eventually, he became chaplain to Philip II and one of the tutors of his son. Named Archbishop of Toledo in 1598, he died before assuming the post (Aldea Vaquero, et al., *Diccionario* 975).

Loaysa succeeded in establishing the proposed *colegio* in Guadalajara in 1591 with two nuns and a dozen students.[46] Initially, he planned to educate the daughters of poor *hidalgos*, but he also harbored a secret hope that some would choose the life

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44 The Constitutions also recommend hiring "un Maestro … que sepa escribir bien, el qual enseñará a las Niñas a leer, y escribir, dando las lecciones en presencia siempre de la Rectora, o alguna de las Maestras" [a male teacher … who knows how to write well, who will teach the girls to read and write, always giving lessons in the presence of the Rectora or one of the women teachers] (fol. 16).

45 Varela 278. Earlier (273–4), the author compares the restrictions on women's education to those imposed on the natives of the New World.

46 Layma Serrano, *Los conventos antiguos* 410. González Dávila (*Historia de las antigüedades* 543) describes a similar institution founded in Salamanca in 1600. The "colegio de Donzellas niñas, con título de la Concepción de nuestra Señora," cared for poor girls between the ages of seven and sixteen. The first administrator was the Discalced Carmelite

of the Carmelite Reform (Layma Serrano 411–12). Although intended for poor girls, the school actually admitted both paying and non-paying students. By 1605, the roster of students comprised many daughters of the aristocracy as well as members of the Loaysa family (Layma Serrano 413). By the middle of the sixteenth century, other laymen and women had embraced poor relief as a manifestation of the works of mercy demanded of devout Christians by the Council of Trent. As Cisneros had done before them, many chose to establish schools for the poor, to care for orphans and widows, and to dower young women for marriage.[47]

It is significant that Loaysa established his school after Santa Teresa's death, since the experience of the Discalced Carmelite convents of the Reform presents examples of the variety of problems and solutions to the early education of girls in Spain. Even though Santa Teresa provided for the educational deficiencies of her own novices and professed nuns, she hesitated to accept young boarding students in her convents. Her own experience at Santa María de la Gracia and later as a young nun at La Encarnación may have influenced her decision, for she viewed the presence of boarders as detrimental to the strict, contemplative life she envisioned for the reformed houses of Carmel.

Although the saint resisted the admittance of students, still, some very young novices found their way to Carmelite houses. Among them was her own nine-year-old niece, the daughter of her favorite brother, Lorenzo. Teresita (1566–1610) had been born in Ecuador and lost her mother when she was still quite young. In spite of the limited facilities available in the colony at the time, the girl learned to read and write in Castilian, to do simple arithmetic, and to speak some phrases in Quechua. In addition, she was also taught her catechism and to read some scriptural verses in translation (Polit 100). When her father returned to Spain with his children, Santa Teresa took an immediate liking to her namesake. With special permission, Teresita was allowed to join the community at San José de Avila, where she resided for a number of years before taking the habit and professing her vows as a Carmelite in 1582.[48] Teresita proved an exception to the stricter rule that Santa Teresa advocated for most of her convents, at least during the saint's lifetime. Her general resistance to boarding students is most evident in her dealings with an early benefactress of the Reform.

Doña Elena de Quiroga and her daughter helped to finance the second house of the Carmelite Reform at Medina del Campo. At the same time, they proposed establishing a school for girls that would be staffed by the nuns. Although Santa Teresa did not reject the project out of hand, she did raise a number of concerns, including the size of the student body and the financing.[49] The school for girls at

friar, Fray Bartolomé de Gois, originally from Lisbon. See also Villar y Macías, *Historia de Salamanca* (2.331–2).

47 See Bilinkoff (*The Avila of Saint Teresa* xii–xiii) for activities in Santa Teresa's Ávila of a charitable nature; Flynn ("Charitable ritual" 336) for motives and membership in lay confraternities; and Flynn (*Sacred Charity* 47) for "works".

48 See Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink (*Santa Teresa y su tiempo* 2.1.479), who describe the special circumstances surrounding Teresita's residence in the house.

49 In doing so, she alluded to Cardinal Siliceo's Colegio de Nobles Doncellas in Toledo. See "Carta a P. Juan Ordóñez," 27 julio de 1573, in Peers, ed., Letters (1.113–22). See also Rodríguez and Urrea (91–2).

Medina del Campo never materialized, but the Quirogas later bequeathed a part of their dowries to the foundation of a school for girls patterned after one at Alba de Tormes.[50]

Similarly, a school for peasant girls formed part of the charitable endeavors of the two sisters who established what would later become the Carmelite foundation in Beas. According to Santa Teresa, the well-to-do Sandoval sisters, who adopted the lifestyle of *beatas* in their local community, had "engag[ed] in a most virtuous practice, though one quite foreign to their rank—namely the instruction of little girls in sewing and reading, not for profit for themselves, but only so as to teach them habits of prayer and the rudiments of the Faith" (*F.* 22.12/Peers, ed., 3.112). In the examples of the Quirogas, Sandovals, and even Loaysa, the influence of the Counter-Reformation is apparent.

Examples of schools such as these that served *in loco parentis* for foundlings and orphans could be found in Spain as well as in other European countries. They ranged from grammar schools teaching the rudiments of Latin to work schools devoted to the trades. Some impetus for the establishment of cathedral schools aimed at the preparation of future clergymen resulted from the Council of Trent (Varela 260). At the same time, the Council's reforms led indirectly to the establishment of municipal and primary schools where the basics of religion and reading were taught (Varela 279–80; Houston 15, 41). The Council also promulgated stricter rules for boarding girls in convents for the purposes of education (Grendler, *Schooling* 97), a restriction honored more in the breach than in practice.

As part of the response to the Protestant Reformation, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, established in Rome in 1562, formalized proposals set forth in the Council of Trent concerning the religious instruction of the laity. The aims and methods of the Confraternity schools in Italy are instructive when compared to similar endeavors in Spain. As Grendler describes them, "the Schools of Christian Doctrine taught the fundamentals of Catholicism, and reading and writing to a large number of boys and girls in sixteenth-century Italy" ("The Schools" 319).[51] The rules for the schools indicate that teachers of the catechism, reading, and writing were employed (323–4). The primer used to teach reading was invariably a catechism (or *cartilla* in Spain) that combined the alphabet with religious symbols and the texts of the essential prayers and commandments (326) (see Figure 9). In short, "children learned to read in order to know the prayers and commandments of God; they read prayers in order to learn to read" (326).[52]

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50 See "Carta P. Jerónimo Gracián," November 1576, in Peers, ed., *Letters* (1.342, note 4). Boyd (*Cardinal Quiroga* 20–21) describes the work done in Cuenca along similar lines by Doña Elena's uncle.

51 Nalle (*God in La Mancha* 101–14) briefly describes catechesis in Spain in the period.

52 Nalle (*God in La Mancha* 115-18) describes the publishing of catechisms as both primers and doctrinal tools in Spain. Grendler ("The Schools" 327–8) also describes a more advanced catechism designed to instruct both boys and girls. Wiesner (121), remarks that "learning to read was viewed as a part of religious instruction, and political and religious authorities encouraged the opening of girls'elementary schools to teach girls who could not learn at home."

In Spain the work of catechizing the young had already become an integral part of the charitable endeavors of *cofradías* (confraternities) of men and women. In the case of poor children, the members simply combined religious instruction with food, shelter, and the teaching of marketable skills (Flynn, *Sacred Charity* 124).[53] The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thus witnessed the establishment of a number of charity schools throughout the peninsula, which in fact and in spirit functioned *in loco parentis* and which, as the images of Saint Anne and the Virgin Mary suggest, used prayerbooks as primers.

Foundation of schools for the poor was not exclusively the work of confraternities as the examples of Cisneros, the Quirogas, the Sandovals, and Loaysa attest. Rather, a number of clerics and laymen were instrumental in endowing *colegios de niñas huérfanas* in many cities. Among these founders were some men who had come in direct or indirect contact with either Cisneros and his efforts in Alcalá de Henares or with authors of conduct books, such as Gaspar de Astete.[54] There were also individuals—both male and female—who endowed these institutions. New schools or *colegios* for young girls appeared in, among other locations, Salamanca, Madrid, Santiago de Compostela, Burgos, Valladolid, Zaragoza, Sevilla, Córdoba, and Guadalajara.[55] For the most part, these institutions began as schools for orphaned girls, hence their collective title of *colegios de niñas huérfanas*. Strictly speaking, however, not all were orphans since often one parent was still alive but unable to care for the children. In other cases, the girls had been abandoned as foundlings at the doors of convents or monasteries. For practical as well as spiritual reasons, these children were raised in *colegios* that taught them the essentials of the faith and some skill that would serve as useful employment in later life.[56] In the case of girls, a dowry assured a suitable marriage or acceptance in a convent when they reached puberty.[57]

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53 Lynn (*A College Professor* 2) claims that public schools had existed in one form or another in Spain since Roman times. Flynn (*Sacred Charity* 46) traces the instruction of the young as a spiritual work of mercy to the *Siete partidas* (Part. II, título XXXI, leyes i–xi). Kamen (*Inquisition and Society* 203–4) describes religious instruction in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain; and Grendler (*Schooling* 333–62 the CCD schools in Italy. Viñao Frago (582–3), describes the efforts in Spain, but he emphasizes the oral nature of the instruction. On the other hand, Varela's descriptions of the *cartillas* used for catechesis (260) suggest that the instruction included reading.

54 Varela (276–7) describes Astete's proposals for such schools. Houston (25) describes the varied background of the founders.

55 Furlong Cardiff (*La cultura femenina* 15), Malaxechevarría (*La compañía de Jesús* 138–9), Perz ("Secondary Education in Spain" 19–20), Varela (268, 281), and Fuente (*Historia de las Universidades* 2.512) list a few of these institutions.

56 The proposals for curriculum in these schools are very similar to those made by Luther for German institutions. See Green, "The Education of Women" (96–7,103) and Houston (22, 38).

57 Flynn ("Charitable Ritual" 340–41) shows that dowering orphans was a popular work of mercy. In *Sacred Charity* (79), she explains how the dowering became, in some respects, coercive.

✠ A a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r ꝛ ſ
s t v u x y z & ꝛ ꝯ ꝰ.

Letras vocales son estas. a e i o u

Ba be bi bo bu. ça ce çi ço çu. Da de di do du. Fa fe fi fo fu. Gua gue gui guo gu. Ha he hi ho hu. Ja je ij jo ju. La le li lo lu. Ma me mi mo mu. Na ne ni no nu. Pa pe pi po pu. Qua que qui quo qu. Ra re ri ro ru. Sa se si so su. Ta te ti to tu. Va ve vi vo vu. Xa xe xi xo xu. Ya ye yi yo yu. Za ze zi zo zu.

Bam bem bim bom bum. çam cem çim çom çum. Dam dem dim dom dum. Fam fem fim fom fum. Guam guem guim guom gum. Ham hem him hom hum. Jam jem jim jom jum. Lam lem lim lom lum. Mam mem mim mom mum. Nam nem nim nom num. Pam pem pim pom pum. Quam quem quim quom quum. Ram rem rim rom rum. Sam sem sim som sum. Tam tem tim tom tum. Vam vem vim vom vum. Xam xem xim xom xum. Yam yem yim yom yum. Zam zem zim zom zum.

¶ Bã bẽ bĩ bõ bũ. çã cẽ çĩ çõ çũ. Dã dẽ dĩ dõ dũ. Fã fẽ fĩ fõ fũ. Hã hẽ hĩ hõ hũ. Jã jẽ jĩ jõ jũ. Lã lẽ lĩ lõ lũ. Mã mẽ mĩ mõ mũ. Nã nẽ nĩ nõ nũ. Pã pẽ pĩ põ pũ. Quã quẽ quĩ quõ qũ. Rã rẽ rĩ rõ rũ. Sã sẽ sĩ sõ sũ. Tã tẽ tĩ tõ tũ. Vã vẽ vĩ võ vũ. Xã xẽ xĩ xõ xũ. Yã yẽ yĩ yõ yũ. Zã zẽ zĩ zõ zũ.

¶ El pater noster en romance,

Padre nuestro, que estas en los cielos. Sanctificado sea el tu nombre. Venga a nos el tu reyno. hagase tu voluntad assi en la tierra, como en el cielo. Danos oy nuestro pan cotidiano, y perdona nos nuestras deudas, assi como nosotros las perdonamos a nuestros deudores. Y no nos dexes caer en tentacion mas libra nos de mal. Amen.

Figure 9 Page one, Cartilla para enseñar a leer. Mexico: Pedro Ocharte, 1569.

The sketchy details of the curriculum evident in the Constitutions of the Toledan *colegio* recur in those rules governing other institutions like it in Spain. Thus, the *colegio de niñas huérfanas* of Santiago de Compostela was founded as "una cassa donde se recoxieran algunas doncellas pobres y de buena bida y costumbres y alli les enseñasen la doctrina cristiana y otras labores de por casa y les doctrinasen para que después de enseñadas pudiesen servir en cassas onradas" [a house where there might be gathered some poor girls of good habits and there be taught Christian doctrine and other household tasks so that after their instruction they might be able to serve in honorable homes].[58] The number of orphans provided for was 18, but their numbers were augmented by paying students (*pensionistas*) as well (López Ferreiro 8.345).[59] Proof of *limpieza* and legitimate birth were required for admittance. In contrast to Nobles Doncellas, however, the Santiago school accepted girls at an older age, between twelve and sixteen (Ortiz de Latierro 102–3).

Lessons included honest handiwork and unspecified devout tasks.[60] Rules against card games, dancing, as well as "comedias [y] libros de ellas" [plays and books about them] suggest the girls learned to read (Ortiz de Latierro 106). So, too, the admonition to the *rectora* to screen carefully incoming and outgoing mail implies that they also learned to write (Libro 629).[61] In contrast to Siliceo's *colegio,* there was no objection to dowering girls who entered convents. Rather, for those who chose religious life the dowry was half again as much as that provided prospective brides.[62]

Qualifications for the *rectora* suggest a wish on the part of the founders that some level of instruction emanate from the woman in charge. In Santiago de Compostela, the Constitutions call for a woman of "conocida virtud, entendimiento, y discreción para saver criar, y enseñar alas Niñas Huérfanas en toda buena educación y sea de hedad de cuarenta Años a lo menos, muger soltera, sin hixos, christiana viexa, y de lexítimo Matrimonio" [recognized virtue, understanding and discretion {who knows how} to raise and teach orphaned girls in all appropriate subjects, at least forty years of age, single, without children, an 'old Christian,' and legitimate] (Ortiz de Latierro 99). These criteria for employment are similar to those stipulated in the Constitutions of the majority of *colegios de niñas huérfanas*, although some variation occurs.

While the details of age and marital status imply a need for maturity as well as sexual abstinence, the educational qualifications indicate that the *rectora* would both teach and govern the school. Such a post for a woman who, presumably, had demonstrated her abilities either by raising her own children or in some other way, indicates that such candidates were to be found.[63] At the same time, they suggest

58 *Escritura* in Ortiz de Latierro (176).

59 The paying students apparently came from noble families, although the Constitutions forbade any favoritism. See "Papeles referentes a diversos Colegios compostelanos" (Santiago).

60 "Libro Quarto de la tercera parte de el Árbol Chronológico Seráfico" (630, 625).

61 Similar precautions may be found in the rules for the Colegio de Remedios in Guadalajara. See Layma Serrano (344).

62 See Ortiz y Latierro (118).

63 In the case of Santiago de Compostela, one of the early *rectoras*, Madre Constancia or Costanza, was known as a woman of great talent and virtue. See "Papeles referentes a diversos Colegios compostelanos" and "Libro Quarto" (621, 636).

an acceptance of women in a position of responsibility not found in Vives's recommendations in either the *Instrucción* or the *De subventione pauperum*. Rather, he stipulated that a married man govern even girls' schools.

The *colegios de niñas huérfanas* were to be found in most of the large cities of Spain until well into the seventeenth century. There were such schools in Madrid, Zaragoza, Santander, Valladolid, Córdoba, Murcia, and Sevilla.[64] Although enrollments remained relatively modest at most of these institutions—usually numbering between 20 and 40—, still, they suggest a commitment to instruction at some level for poor girls. If, as the constitutions clearly imply, the schools stand *in loco parentis* for those children who were orphaned, then one may surmise that what was considered appropriate learning for orphans was equal to or, perhaps, slightly less than the level of learning received in a family setting. This, in turn, suggests that reading and possibly writing in the vernacular—enough to read devotional books and to be tempted by profane ones; learning the prayers and simple moral lessons of the catechism; and mastering the womanly domestic skills were well within the reach and expectation of at least some women in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain.

The model of the *colegios de niños huérfanos* was eventually carried to the Americas by missionaries and episcopal appointees as the colonization of the New World advanced. In the spirit of the Cisnerian reforms already undertaken in Spain, many of the earliest Franciscans arrived in the New World with the expectation of proselytizing among the natives of the Caribbean islands and the mainland.[65] Conversion of the Indians followed a pattern already established in the reconquest of Muslim Spain with its attention to the non-Christian population (Kobayashi 218). At the same time, it eventually transferred to the New World some of the charitable organizations and catechetical practices that had begun to appear in sixteenth-century Spain.

Within a few short years of the discovery of the New World, the Reyes Católicos had ordered the Governor, Nicolás Ovando, to attend to the catechizing of the inhabitants of their newfound possessions:

> Otrosí mandamos al dicho nuestro gobernador que luego haga hacer en cada una de las dichas poblaciones y junto con las dichas iglesias una casa en que todos los niños que hubiere en cada una de las dichas poblaciones se junten cada día dos veces para que allí en dicho capellán los muestre a leer y a escribir y santiguar y signar y la confesión y el Paternoster y el Avemaría y el Credo y Salve Regina. (cited in Kobayashi 218)

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64 González García-Valladolid (*Valladolid* 673), Albuquerque (*Constituciones del Colegio de Nuestra Señora de la Piedad* 4–5), Araña de Varflora (*Compendio histórico descriptivo* Parte 1a, 62–3), and Fuente (*Historia de las Universdades* 2.513) mention each of these locales and their *colegios*.

65 See Ricard ("Fr. Juan de Zumárraga" 556, 561–2), Kobayashi (229), and Gonzalbo Aizpurú ("Paideia cristiana" 187–8), all of whom cite the influence of Cisneros on these friars.

[We also command our said governor that he then establish in each of the aforementioned towns and next to said churches a house in which all of the children, who may be in {these} towns meet twice each day so that the chaplain may show them how to read and to write and to make the sign of the cross and {to pray} the confiteor, the Lord's prayer the Hail, Mary, the creed and the Salve Regina.] (My translation)

This initial royal command was later codified in the Leyes de Burgos, which stipulated that *encomenderos* [land owners] be responsible for catechizing and educating their Indian charges (Kobayashi 218–19).

Among the earliest Franciscan missionaries to Hispaniola, the royal command assumed concrete form. These friars proposed to educate the sons of the Indian elite within their religious houses. The curriculum imitated that found in Spanish *colegios* (Borges, *Métodos misionales* 394–5). The purpose was to prepare future catechists who would extend the proselytizing effort beyond that which the friars could accomplish alone.[66] This approach made allowances for girls as well, for the friars also proposed gathering "en los patios de las iglesias a todas las niñas, ansí hijas de macehuales como de principales, [para que] sean enseñadas por sí, dentro de las escuelas, primero la doctrina cristiana, y después a leer, escribir y las demás cosas de policia y buenas costumbres" [in the patios of the churches, all of the girls, especially the daughters of the *macehuales* [peasants] as well as those of the nobility, so that they may be taught by themselves, inside the schools, first Christian doctrine and then to read, write, and the other things necessary for good breeding and customs] (My translation).[67]

One of the first Franciscan missionaries to Mexico, Pedro de Gante (c.1480–1572), arrived in 1523 with two other friars and immediately began ministering to the native populations (Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest* 208). In Texcoco he converted the gift of a former Indian palace into a monastery that eventually housed the first school in Mexico (Vega and Vega 15). After moving to present-day Mexico City, he founded the Colegio de San José de Belén de los Naturales next to his church. In it, he instructed Indian boys in Latin, music, and even the liberal arts—in short, a curriculum like that found in European schools.[68] In 1531 he also established a *colegio* for the daughters of *mestizos* and *caciques* at the urging of Hernán Cortés and his wife, the Marquesa del Valle.[69]

Other charitable foundations followed, including *cofradías* modeled on those in Spain as well as a Hospital, established in 1529 to house hundreds of the natives in a self-contained community (Alegría 107). After mastering the Nahuatl language, Fray Pedro produced a catechism, the *Doctrina cristiana* of 1547, intended to

66 See Varela (229–30).

67 Cited in Bayle, *España y la educación popular* 122–3. Becerra López (*La organización de los estudios* 67–9) describes the relationship of this approach to pre-Columbian Indian society. See also García Icazbalceta, "El colegio de niñas de México" (2.427).

68 Liss, *Mexico under Spain* 71. She also states that "Gante displayed a Christocentric faith and a renovating spirit not unlike that of his fellow countryman Desiderius Erasmus" (70–71). See also Massebieau (*Les Colloques scolaires* 188) and Van Deusen (27).[AU Please provide bibliographic entry for Massebiau.]

69 Fuente (*Historia de las Universidades* 2.495) and Cannon (94).

spur the catechizing of the indigenous population and, tangentially, to speed their assimilation into Spanish governance and cultural values (Alegría 104–5) (see Figure 10). In sum, Pedro de Gante's efforts partook of Cisnerian reform models first applied to the Franciscan communities and then to educational and religious practices spreading through Spain.[70]

Equally notable were the foundations undertaken by another bishop, Vasco de Quiroga, who had come to Mexico in 1531 as a member of the second *Audiencia* (Greenleaf 44). A layman educated in canon law, nevertheless, Quiroga was consecrated as bishop of the Tarascan diocese of Michoacán in 1538 by his friend, Juan de Zumárraga.[71] Long before his consecration, however, he had begun organizing his Hospital de Santa Fe as a community of Indians under the direction of Spanish priests.

Influenced by the humanist ideas set forth in Thomas More's *Utopia* and Erasmus's political writings, Quiroga translated theory into action by establishing a community that embraced a structure much like that envisioned by the English humanist.[72] At the same time, he apparently learned from the experience of Pedro de Gante in his decision to gather the native population in one place in order to provide housing and education (Liss, *Mexico under Spain* 83). For Quiroga, the *hospitales* were to be self-sustaining communities in which the Indians would imitate the early Christians by working together and sharing goods. They would also be protected from exploitation by the European settlers (Liss, *Mexico under Spain*, 84; Méndez Plancarte 253–4).

Part of the foundation included the Colego de San Nicolás, where men and boys received instruction (Alegría 151–2; 157). For girls in the community, the emphasis continued to be more pragmatic than scholarly. In the *hospitales*, Quiroga urged families to teach their daughters the skills appropriate to wives and mothers. He also established a *colegio de niñas huérfanas* in Patzcuaro for orphaned and *mestiza* girls where the students learned both their catechism and domestic skills (Alegría 163; 166–7). Unfortunately, the Colegio de Vírgenes did not survive the death of its founder (Gutiérrez Casillas, *Historia* 55; Lacas 81–2).

In December 1527, the Emperor Carlos V had recommended to the Holy See that the Franciscan friar, Fray Juan de Zumárraga, be appointed as the first bishop of Mexico.[73] In addition to his episcopal duties, the Emperor also charged him to

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70 Valtón, ed., attributes authorship of the *Cartilla* to Pedro de Gante. In spite of these positive steps, Van Deusen (30–31), also points out that "although the Franciscans were convinced by humanist thinkers such as Erasmus to champion female education and kept the works of the *recogido* Francisco de Osuna in the library of Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, they also taught that women were 'sick animals' and the embodiment of evil."

71 Lietz ("Vasco de Quiroga 28) and Zavala (*Ideario de Vasco de Quiroga* 41).

72 Warren (*Vasco de Quiroga* 34–5) and Zavala (*New Viewpoints* 113–14) describe the political structure of the *hospitales* in detail. Lacas ("A Social Welfare Organizer" 70) indicates that Quiroga was also influenced by Lucian's *Saturnalia*. Lietz ("Vasco de Quiroga" 14) mentions Zumárraga's copy of the Utopia which Quiroga may have read. Dealy (*The Politics*) argues that Quiroga was more heavily influenced by Erasmus than by More.

73 Magner ("Fray Juan de Zumárraga" 266) and Castañeda ("Fray Juan de Zumárraga" 298). See García (*El clero* 27) for the text of the letter. Chauvet (*Fray Juan de Zumárraga* 283–4) describes the origin of the post of Protector.

Figure 10 Frontispiece, Cartilla para enseñar a leer. Mexico: Pedro Ocharte, 1569.

take on the office of Protector of the Indians. Zumárraga complied with the imperial request and set off for the New World the following year.

On a subsequent trip to Spain in 1533, Zumárraga recruited missionaires and laymen to accompany him on his return to his diocese (Castañeda 305; Magner 269). Among his many petitions to the crown was a request that eight laywomen join the group "para que entiendan en la ynstrucción y enseñanza de las yndias niñas de aquella tierra" [so that they may assist in the instruction and teaching of the Indian girls of that land] (my translation) (Ortega, "Las primeras maestras" 275). His plans to instruct native girls and boys derived in great part from his conception of his duties as Protector of the Indians. Nevertheless, as is evident from the work of his predecessors, he was by no means the first Spanish missionary to dedicate himself to this task.

It was in a climate of experimentation and exploration that Zumárraga came to Mexico some five years after Pedro de Gante. Building on the foundation of his predecessors, the new bishop devoted his energies to a multitude of activities that would further the catechetical, pedagogical, and cultural domination of Spain's new conquests. In doing so, he perceived that women would play a vital role in the "conversion" of Mexico.

Like Pedro de Gante and Vasco de Quiroga before him, Zumárraga initially concentrated his energies on the Indian population of his diocese. Envisioning a future that would include the natives in the ministry of the church and the state, he established his own Colegio de Santa Cruz de Santiago de Tlatelolco in 1536 for noble Indian boys (Gonzalbo Aizpurú, "Paideia" 193; Ricard, "Fr, Juan" 560). In the following year, he petitioned to establish a university in Mexico City "en la que se lean todas las facultades que se suelen leer en las otras Universidades y enseñar, y sobre todo artes y teología, pues dello hay más necesidad" [in which they may learn all of the subjects that are usually read in other universities and to teach above all the arts and theology, because there is a great need for these] (my translation) (Ricard, "Fr. Juan" 559). Some three years after his death, approval arrived in the form of a *cédula real* [royal decree].[74]

While Santa Cruz de Santiago de Tlatelolco and the university were institutions dedicated to the education of boys and men, Zumárraga also founded schools for girls "junto al hospital real de las bubas que el hizo .... donde se solían doctrinas las niñas hijas de caciques y principales" [next to the royal plague hospital .... where the daughters of chiefs and noblemen used to be taught] (my translation).[75] Although the site was less than salubrious, the intent was at once calculated and high-minded. Zumárraga intended to prepare the daughters of the elite among the natives as Christian wives for the newly converted sons of *caciques* and Indian nobility (Greenleaf 48). The schools were not confined to Mexico City alone. Others were established wherever the Indian population was large enough to justify a foundation.

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74 Picón-Salas (*A Cultural History* 50) comments that the Universidad de México "attracted what might be called a lettered elite."

75 Madrid 1546, cited in García, *El clero* (103).

The bishop of Guaxaca soon joined Zumárraga in urging the Spanish monarch to authorize the foundation of additional schools "para las niñas . … en las que sean doctrinadas, y mujeres de buena vida y doctrina que las enseñasen" [for girls . … in which they may be indoctrinated and {that} women of virtue and learning teach them].[76] The total number of such foundations is not clear, but the bishop of Santo Domingo mentions at least eight by 1536.[77]

Initially Zumárraga's efforts on behalf of Indian education went smoothly, but he soon experienced difficulties with the women whom he had chosen as teachers. The laywomen recruited in 1534 had no connection to a religious order while those who came in 1530 and 1535 were *beatas* of the Third Order of Saint Francis (Ortega, "Las primeras maestras" 262). At first, the bishop treated the latter as something akin to nuns and, consequently, bound by vows of obedience to religious authorities. In fact, they were under no such obligation so that, like their secular counterparts, they "left when they pleased and ended by abandoning the schools entrusted to them, finding in private households more interesting employment" (Ricard, *Spiritual Conquest* 211).[78]

Troubled by the economics as well as by the independence evinced by some of the women whom he had recruited, Zumárraga compounded his difficulties by attempting to exercise more ecclesiastical control. In spite of their decidedly lay status—some were wives and mothers—the bishop decided to enclose them in religious houses and to enforce his will by means of visitations by his Franciscan brothers (Vega and Vega 37–8). The women responded by electing one of their own, Juana Velázquez, to return to Spain and to present their complaint before the royal court (Vega and Vega 38). The success of her plea is contained in the royal decree sent by the queen to the *Audiencia* in Mexico:

> Juana Velásquez, beata, por sí y en nombre de las otras beatas, sus compañeras que residen en la ciudad de México, me hizo relación que ya sabíamos lo mucho que habían servido a Nuestro Señor en doctrinar las hijas de los caciques y personas principales de esa tierra, y el recogimiento y honestidad que tiene[n] en su casa; y que, pues ellas no son religiosas están sujetas a visitación, siendo mujeres honestas, me suplico y pido por merced, mandase que no fuesen visitadas de los frailes de la Orden de San Francisco, ni las pusiese en estricta regla, proveyendo que fuesen visitadas por vosotros y que los dichos frailes no tuviesen que hacer en la visitación de la dicha su casa; y [si] alguna cédula o provisión se hubiese dado a los dichos frailes, la mandásemos revocar y dar por ninguna, o como la mi merced fuese. Por ende, yo vos mando que si las dichas beatas

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76 My translation. Archivo General de Indias 96-4-10, cited in Furlong Cardiff, *La cultura femenina* (37).

77 They were in Mexico City, Texcuco, Otumba, Tepeaculpo, Goaxoncingo, Tascala, Chilula, and Cuyoacán. Torquemada adds to this list schools in Xuchimalco, Quanthitlan, Tlalmanalco, Tepeacac, and Teutihucán. See Ortega, "Las primeras maestras" (369). See also Gonzalbo Aizpurú ("Tradición" 39) and Gómez Cañedo (130).

78 Furlong Cardiff (*La cultura femenina* 34–5) compares the *beatas* of Mexico to the beguines of Belgium and Holland, stating that "aquella agrupación femenina, que nada tenía de monjil, *tenía mucho de varonil*" [that group of women had nothing nun-like about it, {but} *it had much that was manly*] (emphasis added). See also Van Deusen (28–30), for Zumárraga's change of heart regarding *beatas* as educators.

> no tienen dada obediencia a alguna orden o religion, porveáis que de aquí adelante no sean más visitadas de los dichos frailes franciscanos, no embargante cualquiera carta y provisión que en contrario haya; y vosotros proveréis lo que os pareciere que conviene para [que] no sean visitadas y miradas.[79]
>
> [Juana Velásquez, *beata*, on her own behalf and in the name of the other *beatas* who reside in the city of Mexico, has given me an account {so} that we now know how much they have served Our Lord by teaching the daughters of the *caciques* and principal people of that land; and they maintain reclusion and virtue in their house; and that, although they are not religious {i.e., nuns} they are subject to visitations; being virtuous women, she beseeched me and asked for {my} help, that I command that they not be visited by the friars of the Order of Saint Francis, nor that they be put under strict rule, providing that they be visited by you and that the said friars have nothing to do with the visitation of said house; and {if} some decree or provision has been given to said friars, we order that it be revoked and that no other be given, or only with my permission. Furthermore, I command you that if said *beatas* have not vowed obedience to any order or religious {congregation}, you will make sure that henceforward they not be visited by said Franciscan friars, whatever letter or proviso that states the contrary notwithstanding; and that you provide whatever seems appropriate so that they are neither visited nor watched.] (My translation)

As these women asserted their independence from ecclesiastical control, Zumárraga grew more disillusioned. He finally resolved to continue his plans for educating Indian girls by employing nuns rather than laywomen as teachers (Gómez Cañedo 111). He explained his reasons in a letter to Carlos V:

> Parécenos cosa provechosa y muy necesaria aber enesta cibdad de México un monasterio sumptuoso de monjas profesas de la manera de Castilla, con que ellas tengan cuidado de las hijas de los naturales y las doctrinasen y tuviesen en todo recogimiento y encerramiento, porque desta manera serían enteros xpianos ellos y ellas y tomarían doctrina de la honestidad y recogimiento de las dichas monjas, y sus padres las darían de mejor voluntad que las dan en estos monasterios, donde no ay esa guarda y encerramiento ni paredes altas ni lo puede aber de la manera que agora están, y por esto las dan de mala gana, porque en su gentilidad las solían tener muy encerradas y como nadie las viese, y haciéndose asy allende de la doctrina que tomarían en las cosas de nuestra sancta fe cathólica para quando de allí saliesen a se casar enseñarían a sus maridos e casas las cosas de nuestra sancta fe y alguna politica honesta y buen modo de vivir.[80]
>
> [It seems to us a very necessary and beneficial thing to have in this city of Mexico a sumptuous [sic] monastery of professed nuns in the Castilian manner, who may care for the daughters of the natives and indoctrinate them and keep them enclosed and recollected, because this way they would become completely Christian and would absorb the virtuous

79 La Reina a la Real Audiencia, 27 de noviembre de 1534, cited in García, *El clero* (33–4).

80 Carta de 4 noviembre 1536, cited in Ortega, “Las primeras maestras” 377. In his letter to the Real Consejo de Indias, he expresses harsher criticism of the women: “de las mujeres seglares no vimos la doctrina y fructo que las religiosas han plantado” [we didn’t see among the laywomen the doctrine and virtue that the religious {women} had instilled] (cited in Ortega 373).

> teaching and reclusion of said nuns, and their parents would give them over willingly [rather] than place them in those monasteries, where there is no enclosure or protection nor high walls nor can they have such where they are now and for that reason they hand them over unwillingly, because in their paganism they were used to having their daughters enclosed so that no one could see them; and {by} becoming thus, beyond the doctrine that they would take away concerning the things of our holy, catholic faith, when they leave there to marry they would instruct their husbands and households the tenets of our holy faith and some virtuous manners and ways of living.] (My translation)

The bishop's reasoning is clear. In the spirit of his fellow Franciscan, Cisneros, he wishes to imitate those institutions in Spain that housed both professed women and their young charges in order to further their education and to protect their virtue. He justifies his plan on two counts. First is the expected cooperation of the parents who, following Aztec tradition, were accustomed to guarding their young daughters by cloistering them prior to marriage. Their practice complemented Zumárraga's own views on the protection and education of girls. Secondly, he intends to use the monastic setting to indoctrinate the girls with the aim of arranging Christian marriages for them with the young, Indian men studying in his *colegios*. By this means, he could further extend the proselytizing efforts of the church in the New World (Kobayashi 284–5; Vega and Vega 17).[81] On a more subversive note, he also achieves control over both the nuns and the girls in the schools at the expense of the laywomen who had previously taught them.

The curriculum of these schools was, in all respects, similar to that found in Spanish *colegios* for girls (Ortega, "Las primeras maestras" 261). Robert Ricard criticizes them by observing that "these establishments were hardly even primary schools, where the teaching of manners took precedence over (other) instruction." He goes on to claim that "it is not certain that they were taught reading and writing" (*Spiritual Conquest* 210). Ricard's contention contradicts the observations of contemporaries, however. Fray Bernadino de Sahagún describes the women residing in these establishments, remarking that "fueron instruídas en las cosas espirituales y muchas de ellas supieron leer y escribir" [they were instructed in spiritual things and many of them knew how to read and write].[82] The works of Mendieta also mention instruction in reading and writing. Further indications of some expectation of literacy are suggested by the purchase of 300 catechisms "para que lleven las dichas beatas para mostrar a las indias" [so that said *beatas* might carry them in order to show them to the Indian women] (my translation).[83]

Regardless of the curriculum, the time that most girls spent in the *colegios* was too brief for more than the simplest instruction. As was the case with the *huérfanas* in Spanish *colegios*, girls were admitted to Zumárraga's schools between the ages

81 Burns (27, 30) describes a similar aim of acculturation in Peruvian *colegios* in the seventeenth century.

82 Relación no. 19, cited in Vega and Vega (22–3).

83 See Gómez Cañedo (102,126).

of 7 and 15. Indeed, the bishop considered them ready for marriage by age 12 as he notes in a letter to Juan de Samano.[84]

Unfortunately, the bishop's plans foundered because of the resistance of his Indian male students to marrying those young women educated in the *colegios* (Van Deusen 31). Increasingly, parents also refused to allow their daughters to be placed in the monastery-schools. Hence, after a ten-year period (1530–1540), dropping enrollments and economic difficulties eventually led to the disappearance of schools dedicated solely to the instruction of native girls.[85] Nevertheless, "female education endured [in the Americas] but in a racialized and exclusionary manner" (Van Deusen 34).

Besides schools for the indigenous population, other institutions targeted different groups of students. The Colegio de Nuestra Señora de la Caridad opened in 1538 under the sponsorship of the Cofradía del Santísimo Sacramento y Caridad. It was intended for *mestizas*.[86] Specifically, its constitutions called for some thirty students comprised of "huérfanas hijas de españoles, y *en defecto de haber de [éstas] ...* huérfanas hijas de españoles y de mujeres naturales de esta tierra" [orphaned Spanish girls, and in the absence of these ... orphaned Spanish daughters and of native women of this land] {emphasis added} (Gómez Cañedo 294). Although established for foundlings and orphans, the school also admitted paying students in order to defray some of the operating costs.[87] Eventually the number of students rose as high as one hundred or more and, like the *colegios* of San Juan de la Penitencia and Santa Isabel in Spain, soon began to attract the daughters of the well-to-do. From a school for *mestizas*, it soon became an institution with rules admitting only Spanish girls who could provide certificates of *limpieza* (Gonzalbo Aizpurú, "Paideia" 205; "Tradición" 50).[88]

The purpose of these *colegios* was similar to that which inspired Cisneros and others in their foundations. On the one hand, establishment of schools targeting abandoned or orphaned children allowed the exercise of the works of mercy that ostensibly underlay the confraternities' existence. When the students were drawn from the native population, the purpose was rapid assimilation to Spanish religious and cultural practices. On the other hand, as the focus moved to *mestizas*, *criollas*, and Spanish-born children, these institutions removed a potential social problem by gathering destitute children under one roof where they might be sheltered,

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84 "Y las hijas de los naturales no salgan del monasterio hasta que venidas a edad de doce años sean desposadas … y desta manera que se plantea la christiandad" [and that the native girls not leave the monastery until they reach the age of twelve and are engaged {to be married} … and that way Christianity may be established.] Cited in Ortega, "Las primeras maestras" (379).

85 See Gonzalbo Aizpurú, "Tradición" (39–40).

86 Gómez Cañedo 294. Alegría (206–8) suggests a much earlier date for the initial foundation which was taken over later by the *cofradía*.

87 See also Van Deusen (102, 108–9), who describes similar schools in viceregal Peru.

88 Gutiérrez Casillas (55–6) comments on the curriculum. Gómez Cañedo (303) cites the delivery of "seis tomines de cartillas para enseñar a leer a las muchachas" [six tomines of catechisms in order to teach the girls to read] (my translation) to argue that the girls learned their letters. Muriel (*Las indias caciques* 49) adds arithmetic as well.

catechized, and taught a trade before choosing marriage or religious life.[89] In all respects, these schools embraced the notions of religious orthodoxy, racial "purity," social harmony, poor relief, and the inculcation of virtue in the young espoused by the humanist thinkers of Europe. Under the guidance of Zumárraga and others, these theories could be put into practice in the New World.

While members of religious orders first focused their efforts on educating the Indian and *mestizo* populations, the secular clergy and the *cabildo* saw to the schooling of Spanish and *criollo* children (Liss, *Mexico under Spain* 89; 115–16). For girls, whether Indian or Spanish, the focus of education remained domestic and rudimentary at best. As was true in Spain, there existed neither *colegios mayores* nor places at the university for females in the New World.

Other means of learning besides the convents and *colegios* existed, however. One intriguing development was the foundation of schools for girls called *amigas*, a term initially applied to the teachers but later corrupted to *migas* or *amigas* for the schools themselves (Furlong Cardiff 41). First established in rural areas, these schools ministered to girls between the ages of three and ten, offering the usual limited curriculum.[90] The original *amigas* were, in many cases, the very *beatas* who rebelled against Zumárraga's strictures and chose to go their own way (Vega and Vega 45). Out of these nursery-primary schools there eventually emerged the Colegio de Niñas in Mexico City, which was also staffed by laywomen. From an initial enrollment of some 30 students it soon counted close to 500. The teachers were women of good reputation able to teach arithmetic, reading, and writing (Vega and Vega 60).

In addition to the formal education, however limited, provided by the *amigas* and *colegios*, other avenues to education for girls in Mexico included private tutoring and convent training. In the latter case, those girls admitted for education in the convent were almost exclusively Spanish-born or *criollas*.[91] One early foundation was the Real Convento de Jesús María endowed by Philip II for the daughters of *conquistadores* (Bénassy-Berling, *Humanisme et religion* 40). Other convent-monasteries, which accepted young *educandas*, followed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Vega and Vega 79–81). Within the convent, the young girl could expect to receive a higher level of education than that available to her lay counterpart (Lavrín, "In Search of" 241). Lavrín describes them:

> The majority of nuns in colonial Mexico knew how to write, if hesitatingly, as shown by conventual records. Reading must have been almost universal, since nuns were supposed to use part of their leisure time in the reading of exemplary books. Many convents required that the nuns should know enough Latin for the prayers, although dispensation from this requirement could be obtained. The highest examples of literary achievement

89 Varela (224–5, 239–41) draws parallels between Spain and Mexico in its approach to the poor.

90 Giraud, "Mujeres y familia" 65. Gonzalbo Aizpurú ("Tradición" 49) and Muriel (*Cultura femenina* 19) concur in this currciculum. Vega and Vega (53), dispute the teaching of reading and writing in the *migas*. Earlier (52) they cite Torquemada's comments about these schools.

91 Jiménez Rueda (*Historia de la Cultura* 130) and Lavrín ("Values and meaning" 369).

> among women in colonial New Spain were accomplished by a handful of nuns. ("Values and Meaning" 382–3)

As was true of convents in Spain, Mexican communities expected the professed nuns who occupied positions of authority and responsibility (abbess, prioress, mistress of novices, cellarer, and the like) to be at least minimally literate. In addition, an ability to sing or play a musical instrument and to sight read Latin were also valued (Gonzalbo Aizpurú, "Tradición" 49–50).

For young girls placed in the convents for education, the quality of instruction depended on the level of education of the nun in whose charge they lived. Each nun took a number of young girls in hand and taught them their catechism as well as reading, writing, and the domestic arts (Vega and Vega 78; Jiménez Rueda 132). Additionally, they might also learn music or accounting from a nun versed in these skills (Lavrín, "Values and Meaning" 371). In the case of the Hieronymites, a *colegio de niñas* was annexed to the convent where girls could be instructed, a model like Cisneros's foundations in Alcalá de Henares and Toledo (Muriel, *Conventos de monjas* 1.255).

What is evident in the practice of educating girls in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in both Spain and New Spain is the very limited scope available to the majority and the tenuous nature of the institutions providing it. Artwork suggests both possibilities and limitations for the examples most often shown—queen, saint, or Virgin Mary—are devout women praying from a Book of Hours or showing their children how to do so. Even the depiction of Sor Juana attests to the solitary and autodidactic nature of her education in contrast to the collegial experience of university denied her because of her sex.

The instruction of girls spelled out by the likes of Vives and his fellow humanists in their treatises advocated educating daughters but never to the extent comparable to that afforded sons. In the *colegios* established for the poor in Spain and, later, for various classes and races of girls in New Spain, the curriculum focused as much—if not more—on the domestic rather than the erudite. Enough learning to sign one's name and say one's prayers sufficed for most of those in these schools. Nevertheless, however limited in vision and restrictive in nature, opportunities existed in Golden Age Spain and New Spain for women to obtain an education. Whether at home, in convent, at a *colegio*, or in the company of other women, a certain level of education was within reach. Clearly, the level available never or very rarely matched that open to male members of society. Throughout, the availability of education for women and girls depended too often on the willingness of fathers, husbands, and clerics as well as on the financial solvency of the institutions that provided it. It proved unstable ground on which to build.

Although the nature and place of women's education differed sharply from that available to men, still, it is apparent that enough women learned to read in Golden Age Spain that it percolated into popular consciousness. Not just moralists but other men as well rued the existence of educated women or longed to control their intellectual lives. One example is a male character who laments a woman's aspirations to intellectual pursuits when he opines in Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *No hay burlas con el amor*:

> Unas "Horas" en romance
> le bastan a una mujer.
> Bordar, labrar y coser
> sepa solo: deje al hombre
> el estudio.[92]
>
> [Some Books of Hours in Castilian are sufficient for a woman. To embroider and to sew is all she should know; leave study to men.] (My translation)

Such a view hearkens back to Medieval notions of a woman's proper upbringing even as it indicates to what extent the connection of women to Books of Hours had advanced. When Calderón intimates that some level of education for women, however minimal, was a given in his time, he also suggests another vehicle for unwittingly advocating the education of women of the period: that is, popular culture.

92 Calderón de la Barca, "No hay burlas con el amor" in *Obras completas* (2.510).

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Chapter 5

Muse(ing)s on Women's Learning

> ¿El alma no es la misma que la de los hombres? Pues si ella es la que da valor al cuerpo, ¿quién obliga a los nuestros a tanta cobardía?
>
> María de Zayas, "*La fuerza del amor*"[1]

Court, convent, home, and school represent the traditional venues for the education of women from the late Middle Ages through the *siglo de oro* in Spain. Yet, while Isabel la Católica and Santa Teresa might inspire their ladies-in-waiting or the nuns of their order respectively, they are also seen as exceptional rather than exemplary. Queens and saints stand outside the norm for ordinary women. At best, those who benefited from the education inspired by either woman were more often aristocratic in class or few in number. The example of a royal personage or an abbess might influence those around her, but, one might also argue, such examples rarely reached the artisanal or lower classes in any meaningful way.

Certainly, the *exemplum* literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the royal correspondence, the writings of the Carmelite nuns, and humanistic treatises were directed to a very small audience. In many cases, the majority of these works were written by and for men. With the exception of Santa Teresa's complete works, which were published posthumously in 1588, other writings by nuns generally remained unpublished and circulated, if at all, in manuscript form principally among members of the community or male confessors.

Even then, as the example of Beatriz Galíndez demonstrates, the written texts sometimes disappeared, leaving only titles as evidence of their existence.[2] While a handful of women writers did publish, virtually all of those whose works survive were members of the nobility. What, then, of the vast majority of women and girls denied access by gender or class to the kind of education available to their male contemporaries or the few women fortunate enough to acquire an education along the lines of an Isabel or a Teresa? One avenue of inquiry that suggests the parameters of educational *exempla* for a broader cross-section of female society is that of popular literature. Another is the spate of treatises, generated by humanist scholars early in the sixteenth century and redefined in the seventeenth by clerics, that focused on family life in general or on the lives of women in particular. In these divergent literary texts, ranging from exemplary novels to theatrical productions and from moral guidebooks to scientific treatises, the issue of women's education is a

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1 *Novelas amorosas*, ed. Julián Olivares 364. ["Isn't our soul the same as a man's soul? If the soul is what gives courage to the body, why are we so cowardly?"] ("The Power of Love," *The Enchantments of Love*, ed. and trans. Patsy Boyer, 175).

2 Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes*) includes numerous examples of this phenomenon.

constant subtext, one that directly and indirectly presented examples for or against its implementation.

The power of literature to *enseñar y deleitar* [instruct and to entertain], as medieval writers put it, is evident in the poetic and dramatic works cited earlier. Hagiographical plays, such as Lope's about Santa Teresa, offer their principal characters as estimable exemplars of virtuous living. In the same way, the poetic *certamenes* celebrating the saint's beatification present her as an example to imitate. In the introductory "*Oración y discurso*" written by Lope for this collection of poems, he situates Santa Teresa within a continuum of other "*damas doctas*" from classical to contemporary times. His encomium to learned women recalls

> Valerosas mugeres [que] tuvo Italia;
> Notables Grecia, Hypólitas, Zenobias,
> Artemisas, Nicostratas y Aspasias:
> Bien merecen lugar dos Españolas
> De nuestra edad, (entre otras) celebradas.[3]
>
> [Italy had courageous women; Greece notable {women}, Hippolitas, Zenobias, Artemisas, Nicostratas and Aspasias: two Spaniards of our own time well deserve a place {among these other} celebrated women.] (My translation)

One of the two Spaniards enjoys an attenuated connection to Santa Teresa—she is Cecilia de Morillas, mother of Cecilia del Nacimiento and María de San Alberto of the Valladolid Carmel. The other is Juliana Morell, who, according to Lope, "leyó en público Cátreda [sic]/De todas las siete artes Liberales" [read in {a} public university chair all of the seven liberal arts.] In this respect, she enjoys a reputation similar to that of Nebrija's daughter, also credited by some with lecturing at the university in her father's place.

As he does in the "*Oración y discurso*," so, too, in other works, Lope praises the accomplishments of learned women by referencing their classical foremothers. The *Laurel de Apolo* contains numerous examples, as does the *Peregrino en su patria* [*A Pilgrim in his Homeland*], where Lope integrates exemplary figures of men and women of arts and letters into his encomium.

> Doña Isabel Esforçia fue ilustrísima
> en letras y virtud, y en Milán fenis;
> Doña Oliva de Nantes, Musa décima,
> y Doña Valentina de Pinelo
> la cuarta Gracia, o verso o prosa escriba.
> (*Peregrino* Book 4, 691)
>
> [Doña Isabel Sforza was very distinguished in letters and virtue, and in Milan a phoenix; Doña Oliva de Nantes, the Tenth Muse, and Doña Valentina de Pinelo the fourth Grace, whether writing poetry or prose.] (My translation)

3 Cited in Vosters, "Lope de Vega" (915). My translation.

Lope's praise of these women connects each to a classical antecedent almost as taglines that place them alongside the feminine models of the past. Thus, Valentina de Pinelo is the "fourth Grace" and Isabel Sforza, the phoenix. Left unsaid is the similarity of each of these women to more contemporary *exempla*. Valentina de Pinelo resembles Santa Teresa in some respects and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in others. All three of these women appear in other works by Lope, including the hagiographical play about Santa Teresa noted earlier and his *Laurel de Apolo*.

Valentina spent most of her life in the cloister, where she studied Latin literature and Scripture.[4] While her erudition exceeded that of both Santa Teresa and Sor Teresa de Cartagena, in contrast to them her reputation as a scholar was generally positive. On the other hand, that of Doña Oliva Sabuco de Nantes, with whom Sor Valentina is paired in Lope's poem, has suffered through the centuries.[5]

Whereas Valentina is the "fourth Grace," Doña Oliva is the "tenth Muse," a conventional appellation for learned women. The basis for Lope's praise is her presumed authorship of two works, the *Nueva filosofía de la naturaleza del hombre* [*New Philosophy of the Nature of Man*] and the *Vera medicina* [*True Medicine*].[6] In the laudatory poems that introduce the first work, Don Juan de Sotomayor plays on the name "Oliva" by inferentially equating her with Minerva because of her virtue and her knowledge. Sotomayor believes Doña Oliva is able to reveal to mankind unknown secrets (331).[7] Given the remarkable appearance of these works from the hand of a woman who, by her own admission, never enjoyed a formal university education ("Carta dedicatoria" 329), the comparison with the goddess Minerva sprung fully grown from her father's head seems wholly appropriate. Both Minerva and the Muses serve as inspirations to men, more so because they have no identifiable mother to give them birth. Ironically, what eventually transpired between Doña Oliva and her own father casts doubt on her authorship of the very texts attributed to her.[8]

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4 See Luna ("Sor Valentina" 93), who provides a biography and a brief analysis of her works. She also detects a maternal line derived from Saint Teresa and culminating at the end of the seventeenth century with Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Vollendorf (177) remarks on Pinelo's attitude toward raising children within convents and educating them there.

5 Vosters (912) explains that public opinion of the time did not accept a woman in any role outside the limits of the home and the duties appropriate to marriage. He does not consider the example of the two Teresas by their contemporaries, however.

6 In Castro, ed., *Obras escogidas* (332–72).

7 Buxó ("Sabiduría" 21) makes the association of Oliva with Minerva.

8 Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes* 2.1.171) cites D. José Marco Hidalgo, who presents documentary evidence challenging Doña Oliva's authorship of this work and the *Vera medicina*. Marcos (*Miguel Sabuco*) expands on the argument, even as he cites an extensive list of critics through the centuries who either defend or repudiate her as author. Waithe (280–81) provides a very different interpretation of the documents on which Marco Hidalgo rests his argument and presents her own case in defense of Doña Oliva as author of both works. See Abellán (*Historia* 215), who suggests reasons for the confusion. Waithe also points out that no edition of either work has ever been published under Miguel Sabuco's name. Otero-Torres relies on the "Carta dedicatoria" to argue for Doña Oliva's authorship and suggests her pre-emptive rejection of her father's claim.

The defense of Doña Oliva's authorship and, indeed, of her authority to write is found in the "Carta dedicatoria" addressed to Philip II that introduces the *Nueva filosofía*. In it, Doña Oliva adopts the humility *topos* characteristic of many female authors, when she describes herself figuratively as prostrate on the ground. For Otero-Torres, however, the voice she adopts is one "disfrazada de una aparente humildad" [disguised by an apparent humility], not unlike the rhetoric of humility to be found in Santa Teresa's works ("Una humilde" 14–15).

Doña Oliva goes on to compare herself to "aquella cautiva de Getulia" [that captive woman of Gaetulia {i.e., northwest Africa}] who fled captivity and found solace among the lions. Doña Oliva, too, seeks acceptance of her work by the king, whom she calls "el gran León, rey y señor de los hombres" [the great lion, king and lord of men] (329).[9] More than a book, what she claims to offer the king is "mi hijo, que yo he engendrado" [my child, whom I have engendered], confident that he will recognize its uniqueness: "aunque la Cesárea y Católica Majestad tenga dedicados muchos libros de hombres, a lo menos de las mujeres pocos y raros, y ninguno de esta materia" [although {your} Imperial and Catholic Majesty may have many books by men dedicated {to you}, even less so and rarely by women, none deal with this subject]. It is at once a claim to authorship ("que *yo* he engendrado") and to authority, since she places her work alongside the many books written by men in the king's possession. Unlike those books, she offers the monarch a text "as strange and new … as is its author."

Beyond the novelty of Doña Oliva's gender, the book purports to elucidate areas of self-knowledge and human nature that the great scientific minds of antiquity, such as Galen, Plato, Hippocrates, and Aristotle, failed to explicate. Even as she acknowledges her familiarity with these and other ancient authorities, she hastens to point out that she never studied medicine formally. Instead, she has relied on observation and reflection to arrive at her theories. Hers is an education acquired "desde la ventana" [from the window], as Carmen Martín Gaite describes that of women even in the twentieth century, one that depends on reading, thinking, and observing rather than one pursued in the university.[10] In this respect, she reflects the auto-didactic approach found in her literary predecessors, Christine de Pisan and Sor Teresa de Cartagena, even as she foreshadows the interest in scientific observation to be found in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz some 50 years later.

Near the conclusion of the "Carta dedicatoria," the author appears to anticipate the counter-claims to authorship of the work that follow. At the same time, she reaffirms her own claim:

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9 Commenting on this passage, Otero-Torre ("Una humilde" 17) observes that since she lacked a sophisticated intellectual formation, she populated her epistolary discourse with imagery related to fauna.

10 Buxó ("Sabiduría" 22) speculates that she attended *tertulias* in which she learned much from the humanist Pedro Simón Abril. Martín Gaite includes Santa Teresa and María de Zayas among those women who learned through observation. Otero-Torres ("Una humilde" 21) comments that "la habilidad femenina para observar los fenómenos que afectan el entorno individual supera los frutos del entendimiento académico de los profesionales de la salud" [the feminine ability to observe the phenomena that affect the individual environment surpasses the fruits of academic understanding of the health professionals] (my translation).

> Y si alguno, por haber yo dado avisos de algunos puntos de esta materia en tiempo pasado, ha escrito o escribe, usurpando estas verdades de mi invención, suplico a vuestra Católica Majestad mande las deje, porque no mueva a risa como la corneja vestida de plumas rojas. (330)
>
> [And if someone, by my having given advice on some points of this material in times past, has written or writes {now}, usurping these truths of my own invention, I beg your Catholic Majesty command them to leave them be, so that he may not be moved to laughter like the crow adorned with red feathers.] (My translation)

She urges both the king and her readers to look for the truth in the philosophical text that follows (Otero-Torres, "Una humilde" 24–5).[11]

In another letter preceding the *Nueva filosofía*, Doña Oliva offers to submit to a public examination by wise men chosen by the king in order to show that "lo que se lee en escuelas no es así, y traen engañado y errado al mundo con muy grandes daños" [what is read in schools is not thus, and they bring confusion and error to the world {resulting in} very great harm] (330). At the same time, such an examination will prove that she alone is author of what appears in the *Nueva filosofía*.

By inviting public scrutiny of her learning, Doña Oliva aligns herself with such female predecessors as saints Catherine of Alexandria and Christine. Although she does not anticipate a physical martyrdom akin to theirs, she intimates a willingness to submit to an intellectual trial in order to affirm her authority to speak. Whether such an examination took place is unknown, but the very desire to submit to it strongly suggests Doña Oliva's embrace of her exemplary forebears and her belief that she, by extension, is one of them.[12]

As suggested in the "Carta dedicatoria," the *Nueva filosofía* draws on a wide range of classical, patristic, and Renaissance texts in philosophy and medicine in order to propose a novel theory concerning the physiological and psychological nature of humankind (Waithe 268; Abellán, *Historia* 217).[13] Even as she cites the ancient view of the human body as a microcosm of the larger world, Doña Oliva

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11 One early defender of her authorship bases his opinion precisely on the "Carta dedicatoria." In the 1728 edition of the Nueva filosofía, Doctor Don Martín Martínez, then royal physician observed: "... hay quien dice que esta obra no fue de mujer; yo estoy persuadido a que sí, porque el soberano a quien se dedicó fue demasidado y grave y circunspecto para que, en materia tan importante y seria, nadie se atreviese a hablarle disfrazado." [There are those who say that this work was not a woman's; I am persuaded that it is, because the sovereign to whom it was dedicated was much too serious and circumspect so that, on such an important and serious subject, no one would have dared to address him in {such a} disguise] (my translation) (Castro, ed., *Obras escogidas* 332–3).

12 Buxó ("Sabiduría" 21) points out that "el examen público de una mujer con el fin de comprobar la verdad o falsía de sus concocimientos ... es, en principio un extendido tópico de la literatura didáctica y hagiográfica" [the public examination of a woman for the purpose of proving the truth or falsehood of her knowledge is, in principle a lengthy topic of didactic and hagiographic literature] (my translation). As we shall see in the next chapter, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz also apparently underwent a public examination in the vice-regal court of Mexico.

13 She cites from Plato, Pliny, Seneca, Thomas à Kempis, Cicero, Aristotle, Horace, Ovid, Aelian, Homer, Theophrastus, Ascelapius, Aulo Gelio, the Bible, Augustine, Ambrose,

locates the center of its governance in the brain, describing the "ánima que mora en la cabeza, miembro divino y capaz de todos los movimientos del cuerpo, como dijo Platón" [animating spirit that resides in the head, a divine member capable of all of the bodily movements, as Plato said] (Título LXII, 362). The brain exercises its control over the body by generating and exuding a substance called *quilo*. Doña Oliva likens the body to an "árbol al revés, la raíz arriba y las ramas abajo" [upside-down tree, the roots above and the branches below] (Título LXVII, 367–8). The root of this tree is the brain, whose three lobes house the powers of the soul.[14] *Quilo* functions as a kind of "nerve sap," not unlike the sap that courses through the fibers of a tree. In the human being, this sap controls all aspects of mental, physical, and moral well-being (Abellán, *Historia* 218; Waithe 268–78).

Through mastication and digestion, the body is able to absorb nourishment that sustains it and, in combination with *quilo*, maintains its health. Doña Oliva compares the process of transforming food and drink into *quilo* to three servants or chefs preparing a "caldo o potaje [que] pueda ser chupado y atraído" [stew or porridge {which} can be sipped and absorbed] (Título LXVII, 367). These three cooks are the liver, the spleen, and the heart; that is, the internal organs that in the Galenic system produce the humors. In its waking state, the brain exudes a steady stream of *quilo*, which regulates the mind and body of the individual, making him or her "wise, happy, and more intelligent, by slowly drying the cerebral fluids to the proper extent" (Waithe 271). *Quilo* returns to the brain "por dos vias que son esta dicha en la vigilia, y otra, que es evaporación, via lata que causa el sueño" [by two routes that are this {one} in wakefulness and the other, which is evaporation, a slower way that causes sleep]. During sleep

> con la frialdad del celebro se tornará la forma del jugo o quilo que subió hecho vapor, y á éste sucede otro y otro vapor; y así está subiendo miéntras dura el sueño y la frialdad del celebro, volviéndolo en quilo y tomándolo para sí y para sus ramas. (Título LXVII, 368)
>
> [with the coolness of the brain it will turn into juice or *quilo* that rose as vapor, and to the latter another and another vapor follows, and thus it is rising while sleep and the coolness of the brain endure, changing it into *quilo* and taking it for itself and for its branches.]

Doña Oliva's use of a simile derived from cooking as, indeed, her later couching of her argument in terms of medicine, subtly draws on traditionally "women's learning" or expertise for analogies. In this respect, she unconsciously imitates writers such as María de San José, who used embroidery as the basis for arguing for women's spiritual education. She also anticipates a similar strategy in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who mentions the scientific observations she made in the kitchen.

In those instances in which Doña Oliva actually mentions women, the examples prove revealing. Strong emotions of anger or melancholy may result in physical or

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Boethius, Thomas Aquinas, Castiglione, Luis de Granada, Luis de León, Garcilaso de la Vega, and many others.

14 Waithe (274–5) summarizes these: "common sense, understanding and the will in the frontal region of the brain; imagination and perception occupy the central lobe, while memory, the warehouse for past images, is located in the posterior lobe."

even moral danger to women, including miscarriage (Título IV, 334) or despair at the death of a spouse (Título VII, 336). She provides examples from classical antiquity, such as Evadne, Orestila, and Portia, to illustrate the point. Jealousy exudes bad, melancholic humors from the brain, however, like those that led Ninfa, Procris, and others to their deaths (Título XX, 341–2).

Whereas the *Nueva filosofía* portrays women as inherently frail creatures compared to men, the *Vera medicina* suggests a means for them to become educated and thereby author books as she has. It is an extension of the idea presented in the "Carta dedicatoria." Waithe describes the process in her analysis of the dialogue between "Antonio," the peasant, and "Doctor," the physician, which comprises the text of the *Vera medicina*. The physician wonders aloud how an uneducated peasant could have acquired the knowledge Antonio manifests in their conversation.

> Antonio responds that what he's muttered between his teeth really came from God .... Through Antonio Oliva says that it *is* possible to become self-educated, to study philosophy and medical theory independently, and to teach philosophy to the practitioners. (282)

It is an argument echoing that of Sor Teresa de Cartagena in the *Admiraçion*, who answered those who doubted her composition of the *Arboleda*.

The decision to write in the vernacular when composing the *Nueva filosofía* and the *Vera medicina* assured a much wider audience for both works. Yet, it is also a conscious choice on the part of the author who decries the use of Latin over the vernacular by contemporary writers:

> de aquí todo el daño de ser tanto y estar en Latín […] y más nos da otro trabajo que como lo escrivieron en Latín hemos de estudiar primero y gastar nuestra vida y hazienda en los estudios, y al fin fue un arbitrio y un juicio de hombres vivos como nosotros. (372)

> [From here all the harm {comes} of so much being in Latin … moreso since it gives us another work in Latin {so that} we must first spend time and treasure studying {Latin} and, in the end, it was an arbitrary judgment by men just like us.] (My translation)

Besides the practicality of the vernacular over Latin as the language of composition, the position taken by the author of the *Nueva filosofía* also suggests the influence of Pedro Simón Abril, a friend and neighbor in Alcáraz. In his *Apuntamientos de cómo se deben reformar las doctrinas y la manera de enseñallas* [*Notes on how one should reform lessons and the way to teach them*], which he also dedicated to Philip II, Abril argues that it is a mistake to teach the sciences in "'lenguas extrañas y apartadas'—esto es, en griego o en latín—y no en la lengua propia de cada nación" [foreign and separate languages–that is in Greek or in Latin–and not in the language appropriate to each nation] (Abril 292–3). Clearly one advantage to using Castilian as the language of composition was to assure that literate women could more easily read the work.

The preference for the vernacular over Latin also characterizes the work of the other great theorist concerning human nature to be found in Spain at the time. In the *Examen de los ingenios* [*Study of the Talented*], Juan Huarte de San Juan argues that

> ninguno de los graves autores fue a buscar lengua extranjera para dar a entender sus conceptos; antes los griegos escribieron en griego, los romanos en latín, los hebraicos en hebraico, y los moros en arábigo; y así hago yo en mi español, por saber mejor esta lengua que otra ninguna. (Serés, ed., 399)
>
> [None of the grave authors attended the learning of strange tongues, thereby to deliver their conceits: but the Greeks wrote in Greek, the Romans in Latin, the Hebrews in the Hebrew language, and the Moors in Arabic; and so do I in my Spanish, because I know this better than any other.] (Rogers, ed., 105)[15]

Mastery of foreign languages is for Huarte a function of the memory, a lesser power in his opinion than imagination and understanding. While he uses this assessment to attack lawyers who set great store by their reliance on memory and their use of Latin (Yndurain, "En torno" 29), he also justifies his low opinion of women's intelligence for the same reason. Because imagination and understanding prefer dryness and heat, women's cool and damp humoral disposition impedes their ability to shine intellectually (Serés,ed. XIV.581–2/Rogers, ed., 246–7).

The *Examen de los ingenios* embraces the microcosmic theories regarding man's nature and capacities found in Galen and other classical authorities. The focus of Huarte's work considers how the temperaments predispose an individual with certain mental attributes toward a place in society suited to his abilities and limitations (Perouse, "Les Femmes" 273; Abellán, *Historia* 211).[16] In the case of women, the implications of Huarte's findings are significant, especially because his *Examen* enjoyed far greater success and distribution than did that of Doña Oliva's works.

In Chapter XV of the *Examen*, Huarte attempts to explain the "manera como los padres han de engendrar hijos sabios [y] … qué diligencias se han de hacer para que salgan varones y no hembras" [how parents may beget wise children and … what actions should be taken so that {they may have} sons and not daughters] (Torre, *Sobre lengua* 162–3). Relying on the authority of Aristotle and Galen, he asserts that "es conclusión de todos los filósofos y médicos que si la simiente es fría y húmida, que se hace hembra y no varón, y siendo caliente y seca se engendrará varón y no hembra" [it is the conclusion of all the philosophers and doctors that if the seed is cold and humid, a female and not a male will be made, and {if} hot and dry a male will be conceived and not a female] (Serés, ed., 610/Rogers, ed., 271).[17] What follows from this generative predisposition inevitably diminishes woman's intellect from the start. He explains the consequences of these supposed deficiencies of the female:

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15 English translations of Huarte's work come from the Rogers edition with some modernizing of spelling and/or vocabulary.

16 Read (*Juan Huarte de San Juan* 19) considers Huarte's theories as a kind of "biological determinism which was in essential respects a counterpart of Luther's theology of predestination."

17 Compare to Juan de Piñeda's *Diálogos familiares* (V.3). See Ian Maclean (*Renaissance Notion* 28–46), who examines medical theories of the Renaissance vis-à-vis women. Yndurain ("En torno" 8) comments on Huarte's repeated rejection of the opinions of the ancients.

> Y si nos acordamos que la frialdad y humidad son las calidades que echa a perder la parte racional, y sus contrarios, calor y sequedad, la perfeccionan y aumentan, hallaremos que la mujer que mostrare mucho ingenio y habilidad, terná frialdad y humidad en el primer grado; y si fuere muy boba es indicio de estar en el tercero; de los cuales dos extremos participando, arguye el segundo grado. Porque pensar que la mujer puede ser caliente y seca, ni tener el ingenio y habilidad que sigue a estas dos calidades, y es muy grande error; porque si la simiente de que se formó fuera caliente y seca a predominio, saliera varón y no hembra; y por ser fría y húmida, nasció hembra y no varón. (Serés, ed., 614)

> [Now if we conclude, that cold and moist, are the qualities which work an impairment in the reasonable part, and that his contraries, namely hot and dry, give the same perfection and encreasement, we shall find that the woman who shows much talent and sufficiency, partakes of cold and moist in the first degree; and if she be very simple, it yields a sign that she is in the third; the partaking which two extremes, argues the second degree; for to think that a woman can be hot and dry, or endowed with a wit and ability conformable to these two qualities, is a very great error; because if the seed from which she was formed, had been hot and dry in their domination, she would have been born a man and not a woman. But in that it was cold and moist, she was born a woman and not a man.] (Rogers, ed., 274)

The best that women might hope for in intellectual attainment is a good memory, which, as we have seen, the author relegates to a lesser level than imagination and understanding (Yndurain, "En torno" 23; Perouse, "Les Femmes" 276).

When confronted with examples of women of accomplishment in antiquity, Huarte provides a novel explanation:

> Pero lo que más espanta de Grecia es que, siendo el ingenio de las mujeres tan repugnante a las letras (como adelante probaremos), hubo tantas griegas y tan señaladas en ciencias, que vinieron a competir con los hombres muy racionales; como se lee de Leoncia, mujer sapientísima, que, siendo Teofrastro el mayor filósofo que hubo en su tiempo, escribió contra el notándole que hubo errores en filosofía. (Serés, ed., XIV.575)[18]

> [But which we may most marvel at in Greece is, that whereas the wit of women is found so repugnant to learning (as hereafter we will prove) yet there have been so many Greek women, so especially seen in the sciences, as they have grown into competency with the most able men; as namely Leontia, a most wise woman, who wrote against Theophrastus, the greatest philosopher of his time, reproving him for many errors in philosophy.] (Rogers, ed., 241)

The reason for the anomaly of intelligent women of Greece is the temperate, even hot, climate to be found there. Huarte cites no less an authority than Aristotle, who

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18 In contrast, Juan Pérez de Moya (*Varia historia* fols. 261v–262r) finds numerous examples of "mugeres assí antiguas como modernas que fueron muy doctas en Letras Latinas, Griegas, Historia y Rethórica, y Astrología, Philosophía, y en Sagrada Escritura y otras cosas" [women both ancient and modern who were very learned in Latin and Greek letters, history and rhetoric, astrology, philosophy, and in Sacred Scripture and other things] (my translation). He goes on to enumerate them, including the Nogarola sisters, Doña Ysabel, Reina de Portugal [y] Princesa de Castilla, [daughter of Isabel la Católica] and Doña María Manuel, Marquesa de Santa Cruz, among others.

opines that "'la buena temperatura no solamente hace buena gracia en el cuerpo, pero aprovecha también al ingenio y habilidad'" [a good temperature not only makes a good grace in the body, but also aids the wit and ability] (Serés, ed., 576/Rogers, ed., 241). For Huarte, such an advantage may also be found in Spain (577), which enjoys a climate not unlike that of Greece.

Beyond the climactic argument, Huarte de San Juan implicitly offers a "scientific" basis for the *mujer varonil*. A woman who possesses intelligence and wit is physiologically closer to the male than the female of the species. Still, she can never equal a man, because "nothing surpasses whatever possesses this point of coolness and humidity; everything depends on and works against it, and thus it cannot prevail" (Serés, ed., 616) (my translation). So, too, the author rationalizes the humors governing the brain: "Del célebro … su natural temperamento es frialdad y humidad" [Of the brain … its natural temperature is cold and moist] (Serés, ed., 581–2/Rogers, ed., 246). Although these are precisely the humors that predominate in women, Huarte de San Juan explains that "es tanta fuerza y vigor el útero y sus testículos para alterar todo el cuerpo" [yet her womb and cods {ovaries} are of so great force and vigor, to alter the whole body] (613/273). The delicacy of the brain is such that it is easily influenced and overwhelmed by the humors excreted by the female organs. This opinion contradicts that of Doña Oliva, who posits in the brain a liquid that actually regulates the bodily humors.

In spite of his grim assessment of women's inherent intellectual inferiority—the Greeks notwithstanding—Huarte also acknowledges a handful of other exemplary figures who possessed the ability to teach and to speak. Among these he includes Judith, a "very wise woman," and Deborah, "a woman of no less wisdom" [Judith, mujer sapientísima {y} Débora, mujer no menos sabia] (Rogers, ed., 275/Serés, ed., 615). Nevertheless, the basis of their wisdom is not of their doing; rather, it is a free gift from God. In all other respects, he reiterates that "quedando la mujer en su disposición natural, todo género de letras y sabiduría es repugnante a su ingenio" [while a woman abides in her natural disposition, all sorts of learning and wisdom, carries a kind of repugnance to her wit] (Serés, ed., 615/Rogers, ed., 275). He thus turns the argument adduced by Sor Teresa de Cartagena and Doña Oliva Sabuco de Nantes in the guise of Antonio of the *Vera medicina* against exemplarity and for exceptionality. For Huarte de San Juan, the *natural* state of woman's intellect is inherently inferior to man's. To bolster his findings further, he invokes the authority of Scripture, most predictably that of Saint Paul's admonition against women teaching or preaching.

The popularity of Huarte de San Juan's *Examen de los ingenios* assured widespread promulgation of its theories. The acceptance of the humors and elements as determinants of sexuality, intelligence, and character pervades Golden Age literature.[19] Microcosmic notions of human physiology mirror macrocosmic theories of the universe. Harmony is possible in both instances when balance exists among the elements. In the main, however, the theory assumes built-in limitations in the case of women.

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19 For example, see Francisco Rico, *El pequeño mundo*. It is no less true in England as E.M.W. Tillyard shows in *The Elizabethan World Picture*.

In the works of Huarte de San Juan and Doña Oliva, women are presented as frail creatures in comparison to men. Overcome by female hormones, the lesser humors, or delicacy of constitution, they are best suited to a cloistered existence in convent or home where they might be sheltered from the vicissitudes of physiology and their own inherent weakness. Although the *Examen de los ingenios* refuses to acknowledge the intellectual equality of women, it does not completely proscribe their education. Nevertheless, its advocacy advances the view of women that more often relegates them by nature to secondary and supportive roles in the social equation even as it co-opts those exemplary figures who might contradict such an interpretation (Serés, ed., 617).[20]

Another advocate of social harmony who assigns women to secondary, supportive, and silent roles may be found in Fray Luis de León. Published soon after the *Examen de los ingenios*, his *La perfecta casada* [*The Perfect Wife*] (Salamanca 1583) repeats the Galenic theories concerning the humors found in Huarte's work (García, ed., 1.263–4). At the same time, Fray Luis marshals scriptural and classical authorities to define his notion of the "perfect wife."

Often compared to Vives's *De institutione*, *La perfecta casada* enjoyed a publishing success equal to that of Justiniano's translation of Vives and of Huarte's *Examen*. Fray Luis's treatise appeared in nine editions between the years 1583 and 1632 in Salamanca, Zaragoza, and Madrid, as well as in Naples and Venice. Dedicated to Doña María Varela Osorio, a recently married relative of the author, the work focuses exclusively on the married state and the key role that women play in it. Fray Luis frames his treatise around the final verses of the book of Proverbs (31:10–31): "Who shall find a valiant woman?" As a structural device, reliance on this source serves a number of functions. At the very least, it provides a vernacular translation of a pertinent scriptural passage appropriate to married women along with a running commentary on it. The work also tacitly acknowledges the audience's capacity to read and understand the references to Biblical, classical, and patristic sources.[21] Lastly, Fray Luis presents a notion of marriage that ennobles a woman's part in it even as it restricts her to a limited sphere of activity. Still, he also recognizes that success in her endeavor requires a degree of wisdom best acquired from books (J.A. Jones, "The Sweet Harmony" 261).

From the outset, Fray Luis reveals his debt to earlier writers for his conception of women as well as his own humanist scholarship. He equates the "*mujer de valor*" [valiant woman] of the Bible with a "*mujer varonil*, como Sócrates, cerca de Jenofón, llama a las casadas perfectas" [virile woman, as Socrates, following Xenophon, calls perfect wives]. "Varonil" or "valor" aptly describes the married woman because

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20 See also Piñeda (*Diálogos familiares* V.3: 306). The response of women writers to Saint Paul's oft-quoted phrase may be seen in the works of Santa Teresa de Jesús and those of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. As Maclean (*Renaissance Notion* 19) notes: "in more serious writings … the full array of biblical texts relating to subordination are reviewed and then combined with pagan tracts on the same topic."

21 Fray Luis cites both Old and New Testament authorities; the works of Augustine, Cyprian, Basil, and Tertulian; and Vives, Antonio de Guevara, and *La Celestina*. See García, ed. (introduction 1.233–5) and Durán (*Luis de León* 96) for a summary of his sources.

> quiere decir virtud de ánimos y fortaleza de corazón; industria y riquezas y poder y aventajamiento, y, finalmente, un ser perfecto y cabal en aquellas cosas a quien esta palabra se aplica; y todo esto atesora en si la que es buena mujer, y no lo es si no lo atesora. (1.256)[22]
>
> [It betokens many things; strength of mind, and fortitude of heart; resourcefulness, and wealth, influence, prosperity, and, in fine, a being perfect and complete in all those qualities which are embraced within the meaning of the word; and all these the resolute woman cherishes within herself, and cannot be thus regarded unless she do so cherish them.] (Hubbard 13)

The "virile" attributes of courage and fortitude are particularly necessary for the married woman since "la mujer sea de su naturaleza flaca y deleznable más que ningún otro animal, y de su costumbre e ingenio una cosa quebradiza y melindrosa" [woman may be by nature weak and frail more than any other animal, and by custom and intelligence a fragile and finicky creature] (1.256/Hubbard 13). In spite of this unpromising opinion of woman's weakness, Fray Luis believes the valiant woman capable of the heroic virtues he enumerates. Marriage represents a challenge for her rather than an escape. To succeed in the married state a woman must arm herself "de un tan noble escuadrón de virtudes como son las virtudes que habemos dicho" [with such a noble squadron of virtues such as those that we have mentioned] (1.257/Hubbard 13). Significantly, for Fray Luis, such an acquisition of "manly" virtues is not beyond the married woman. Rather, it is the hallmark of "la perfecta casada."

According to Fray Luis a married couple represents a microcosm of society as a whole, a vision based on a Renaisssance theory of harmony.[23] Marriage is a partnership of man and woman in which Nature plays on the strengths and weaknesses of both.

> Y de inclinaciones tan diferentes, con arte maravillosa, y como se hace en la música con diversas cuerdas, hizo una provechosa y dulce armonía, para que cuando el marido estuviere en el campo, la mujer asista a la casa, y conserve y endure el uno lo que el otro cogiere. (1.263–4)
>
> [Out of dispositions so diverse, as is done in music upon different strings, nature called forth a precious beautiful harmony: the husband busy in the fields, the wife busy at her home-making, and the latter holding and employing to good purpose, whatsover the other might gather together.] (Hubbard 19)

For a marriage to succeed each partner must discharge the duties for which Nature has equipped him or her. In the case of women, Fray Luis envisions the management of the household, supervision of the servants, and the nurture and education of children. In short, he paints a picture of domestic life derived as much from Scripture and Aristotle as it is from humanists such as Vives. Although dedicated to a noblewoman, *La perfecta casada* idealizes a woman of the country rather than

22 Fray Luis's distinction between "de valor" and "buena" (1.257–8) reveals a humanist's penchant for textual analysis.

23 See Jones ("Sweet Harmony"), who explains the theory more fully as it is presented in *La perfecta casada*.

one of the court. The author's rejection of courtly ways is evident in his lengthy denunciation of cosmetics and fine clothing (1.302–28/Hubbard 50–66), where he enumerates a number of authorities from Aristotle to Saints Cyprian, Clement, and Ambrose as well as Tertulian to support his argument. Even when he offers examples of queens for his reader's imitation, it is their skill in domestic duties that he admires. Thus, Penelope and Isabel la Católica merit praise for their abilities at loom and spindle (1.277–8/Hubbard 30). No example of learned women appears in the work.

In spite of the absence of learned *exempla*, Fray Luis does not proscribe education for women altogether. He acknowledges that "dos cosas hacen y componen este bien de que vamos hablando: razón discreta y habla dulce. Lo primero llama *sabiduría* y *piedad* lo segundo, o, por mejor decir, *blandura*" [there are two things which make up and constitute the loving kindness of which we are speaking: a discerning reasonableness, and friendly speech. The first, {Solomon} calls wisdom; the second, he calls sympathy, or rather better, compassion] (1.333/Hubbard 69). While he never specifies the knowledge appropriate to a young woman's education, he strongly implies the limited, domestic nature of it:

> [A]sí como a la mujer buena y honesta la naturaleza no la hizo para el estudio de las ciencias ni para los negocios de dificultades, sino para un sólo oficio simple y doméstico, así le limitó el entender, y por consiguiente les tasó las palabras y las razones. (1.334)

> [Wherefore, as a good and honest woman was not endowed by nature for the study of the various branches of knowledge, nor for the difficulties of business affairs, but was created for one single duty, simple and domestic, so was her understanding circumscribed, and, in consequence, her words and arguments limited.] (Hubbard 70)

Fray Luis never cites Huarte de San Juan even though he shares with him opinions regarding women's frailty. Their safe refuge remains home and hearth. He emphasizes the primacy of household management and domestic harmony between husband and wife. Unlike Juan Luis Vives, who makes allowance for some intellectual endeavor to enhance a woman's contribution to marital bliss, Fray Luis omits a curriculum of study for young girls or brides from *La perfecta casada*. Only indirectly does he suggest a reading list through his quotation of sources.

As with many of his clerical forebears, Fray Luis is most comfortable with the silence and reclusion of women. He prefers the cloister to the court and the needle to the pen for women of all walks of life, whether queens, nuns, or housewives. This attitude is most evident in the few examples of notable women whom he includes in *La perfecta casada*. By conflating Penelope and Isabel la Católica and applauding their attention to the loom, he presents them as submissive within the home while their husbands are abroad. In the same way, he cites the example of Judith at the conclusion of the work, not in the context of her valiant act of war but, rather, by associating her in the reader's mind with enclosed and faithful housewives (1.357–8/Hubbard 89). In so doing, he merely confirms an earlier observation he has made concerning women:

> ... no las dotó Dios ni del ingenio que piden los negocios mayores, ni de fuerzas las que son menester para la guerra y el campo, mídanse con lo que son y conténtense con lo que es de su suerte, y entiendan en su casa y anden en ella, pues las hizo Dios para ella sola. (1.339)

> [As God did not endow women either with the capacity necessary for large business dealings, or with the vigour indispensable for war and agriculture, let them take the measure of what they truly are, and be content with the lot which has befallen them, occupy themselves with their housekeeping, and be active about their houses, since that is what they were meant to do.] (Hubbard 73)

Fray Luis thus reasserts the male prerogative to authority to control and define female *exempla* and lives.

Moral, philosophical, and pedagogical treatises, such as those by Huarte de San Juan, Doña Oliva, Fray Luis de León, or Vives, were virtually unanimous in recommendations circumscribing the lives of women both physically and intellectually. Even popular literature and theater written by men ostensibly echoed these restrictive views. Yet, subversive examples exist among the works of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors and playwrights that suggest contrary views of women, ones that assert a claim to independence of thought and sometimes action. In the course of doing so, they also challenge some of the principles enunciated in the treatises examined above.

The preeminent example of popular literature from the *siglo de oro* in Spain is, of course, *Don Quijote*, a work that presents its share of independent women from Dorotea and Marcela of Part One to the Duchess of Part Two. In contrast to these examples of spirited women, Cervantes describes Don Quijote at the beginning of Part Two in high dudgeon because his niece and housekeeper are trying to prevent another sally with Sancho and Rocinante. When the niece challenges the veracity of the chivalric romances that her uncle cites to validate his actions, Don Quijote expostulates: "¿Cómo que es posible que una rapaza que apenas sabe menear doce palillos de randas se atreva a poner lengua y a censurar las historias de los caballeros andantes?" [How is it possible that a mere slip of a girl who barely knows how to manage twelve lace bobbins can dare to speak against and censure the histories of the knights errant?] (Riquer, ed., 2.579/Grossman, ed., 493). Don Quijote's query implies that his niece should keep quiet and tend to her sewing, a sentiment that seems to echo those expressed by Fray Luis and others.

Cervantes's character continues his argument with his female household by invoking the masculine view of arms and letters implicitly voiced by Huarte de San Juan and Fray Luis: "dos caminos hay, hijas, por donde pueden ir los hombres a llegar a ser ricos y honrados; el uno es el de las letras; otro, el de las armas." [There are two roads, my dears, which men can take to become rich and honored: one is that of letters, the other that of arms] (Riquer, ed., 2.581/Grossman, ed., 495). While men such as Don Quijote—and Cervantes himself—may elect either road, the knight-errant implies that both are closed to women. The path best trod by his niece and other women is from loom to sewing basket. A man may wield a sword or a pen, but the proper tools for women's work are needles and pins, or "bobbins and bodkins" (Motteux, ed. and trans., 2.708).

Although counterexamples to Don Quijote's limited realm for women may be found among those whom he encounters during his many adventures, an even stronger view of a woman's rights to pursue arms and letters—to be Amazon or Athena—is clearly articulated in the works of María de Zayas, a contemporary of Cervantes.

While little is known of her life, Serrano y Sanz speculates that she was probably born in Madrid in September of 1590, the daughter of Don Fernando de Zayas y Sotomayor, a knight of the chivalric order of Santiago. She may have resided in Naples at some point in her youth, and her novels were published in Zaragoza and Barcelona, hinting at a modest amount of travel in her life (*Apuntes* 2.2583–4).[24] The date of her death is even more uncertain, possibly occurring in 1661 or 1669 (Serrano y Sanz, *Apuntes* 2.2.585–6). Her claim to fame rests on the publication of two collections of stories: the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* [*The Enchantments of Love*] (Zaragoza 1637) and the *Parte segunda del sarao, y entretenimiento honesto* (Barcelona 1649), usually referred to as the *Desengaños amorosos* [*The Disenchantments of Love*].[25]

From her writings, one may surmise some details concerning her background and education. She was probably an aristocrat with financial resources sufficient to support publication of her *novelas* (Sylvania 200) and the skill to manage a large household. Describing her love of reading in the preface, "Al que leyere" [to the reader], of the *Novelas amorosas*, she explains: "si todas tienen mi inclinación, que en viendo cualquiera, [libro] nuevo o antiguo, dejo la amohadilla y no sosiego hasta que le paso" [The moment I see a book, new or old, I drop my sewing and can't rest until I've read it] (Olivares, ed., 161/Boyer, ed., 2). Unlike Don Quijote's niece or, for that matter, Judith or Isabel la Católica, Zayas proposes putting down her sewing and taking up a book. Moreover, she encourages other women to follow her example. She also offers them exemplary figures from mythology, such as Argentaria, Temistoclea, Diotimia, Zenobia, and Cornelia, whom she recognizes for their learning.[26] By implication, she is one of them.

In the *Desengaños amorosos*, Zayas returns to the question of educating women and, in the process, creates a frame story in which women hold sway in storytelling. Gathered for a *sarao* [soirée] in the house of Lisis, who is recovering from an illness and the effects of being jilted by her fiancé, her female friends form a veritable academy in which they will educate both male and female guests. One narrator, who, like Don Quijote, addresses the issue of arms and letters, is Filis. She is the *bachillera* who narrates the fourth *desengaño* and turns the tables on male critics of women's education. She does so by first describing the very limited scope of girls' education:

> Y así en empezando a tener discurso las niñas, pónenlas a labrar y hacer vainillas, y si las enseñan a leer, es por milagro, que hay padre que tiene por caso de menos valer que sepan leer y escribir sus hijos, dando por causa que de saberlo son malas, como si no hubiera muchos más que no lo saben y lo son. (Yllera, ed., 228)

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24 Yllera, ed. (introduction, *Parte segunda* 15–16) suggests a possible residence in Valencia as well.

25 Vollendorf (172–3) calls publication of Zayas's texts a "turning point in Spain's feminist history."

26 Greer (*María de Zayas* 72–9) explains the significance of these foremothers in some detail.

> [As soon as little girls learn to talk they are set to needlework and hemstitching. If a girl is taught how to read it's a miracle, for fathers consider it unimportant for their daughters to know how to read and write, alleging that this makes them bad; as if there weren't many who don't know how to read and write and who are bad.] (Boyer, ed., 140)

Filis imputes motives of fear and envy to those men who would so circumscribe their daughters' lives. Rather, she enjoins them and female readers as well to set aside their needles and pins in order to take up quite different implements. She makes a bold suggestion that challenges the male exclusivity to arms and letters voiced by Don Quijote: "[b]ueno será que si una mujer ciñera espada, sufriera que la agraviara un hombre en ninguna ocasión; harta gracia fuera que si una mujer profesar las letras, no opusiera con los hombres tanto a las dudas como a los puestos." [It would be a good thing of women to use swords, then they would never suffer affront from any man. It would be even better for women to profess in letters, for then they would cost men fewer doubts and more jobs] (Yllera, ed., 228/Boyer, ed., 140). To buttress her argument, Filis, too, provides a list of female *exempla*. They are not drawn from mythology, however, but from contemporary society. They include the sisters of Carlos V and the daughter of Philip II, as well as Zayas's friends, the playwright, Ana Caro, and the poet, Isabel de Ribadeneira (Yllera, ed., 229–30). Although not named, one may again surmise that Zayas believes that she, too, belongs in this list.

Filis concludes her observations with a clarion call to her female listener-reader: "'¡Ea, dejemos las galas, rosas y rizos, y volvamos por nosotras: unas, con el entendimiento y otras, con las armas! Y será el mejor desengaño para las que hoy son y las que han de venir'" [Come, let's give up our finery, our curls, and our flowers; let's defend ourselves, some with wit, others with weapons! That would be the best kind of disenchantment for women living today and for all days to come] (Yllera, ed., 231/Boyer, ed., 141). The call to arms and letters is a claim to equality with men not recognized by a Don Quijote or, for that matter, some of the male characters who populate Zayas's stories.[27] At the same time, it can be read as a response to the rhetorical questions posed by the betrayed wife, Laura, of the *novela amorosa* "La fuerza del amor," who asks: "'¿Por qué, vanos legisladores del mundo, atáis nuestras manos para las venganzas, imposibilitando nuestras fuerzas con vuestras falsas opiniones, pues nos negáis letras y armas? ¿Nuestra alma no es la misma que la de los hombres?'" [Why, vain legislators of the world, do you tie our hands so that we cannot take vengeance. Because of your mistaken ideas about us, you render us powerless and deny us access to pen and sword. Isn't our soul the same as a man's soul?] (Olivares, ed. 364/Boyer. ed., 175). Insofar as Filis and Laura are creations of the same author, many see them as proponents of Zayas's views on the rights of women to education.[28] Yet, they, like Don Quijote, are fictional characters who may not necessarily voice the opinions of their creators. When juxtaposed with

27 See, for example, comments by male characters in the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares* "El prevenido engañado" and "El castigo de la miseria."

28 Boyer, ed. (introduction, *Enchantments* xii–xiii, xxvi) certainly reads them that way. Others, however, such as Griswold ("Topoi" 102–3, 108), challenge the idea of Zayas's feminism, since her novels present both feminist and anti-feminist opinions expressed by different characters.

writings such as the non-fictional "Al que leyere" prologue, however, some of the fictional characters appear to echo Zayas's own objections to the state of women in her society.

María de Zayas not only joins the arms and letters debate, but she also chides those who would close these paths to women by declaring an equality of soul and spirit between male and female or, more precisely, by recognizing that "souls are neither male or female," a sentiment shared by Sor Juana (Boyer, ed., *Enchantments* 1–2). Since that is so, she asks: "¿qué razón hay para que [los hombres] sean los sabios y presuman que nosotras no podemos serlo?" [How then, can men presume to be wise and presume that women are not?] (Olivares, ed., 159/Boyer, ed., 1).

As had her literary foremothers—Christine de Pisan, Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Santa Teresa de Jesús, and Oliva Sabuco de Nantes—Zayas, too, anticipates skepticism from readers "amaze[d] that a woman has the nerve, not only to write a book but actually to publish it, for publication is the crucible in which the purity of genius is tested" (Boyer, ed., 1/Olivares, ed., 159). Unlike them, however, she does not adopt the humility *topos* nor does she apologize for writing as a woman. Rather, she attributes her readers' incredulity to male "cruelty and tyranny in keeping [women] cloistered and not giving [them] teachers. (Boyer, ed., 1/Olivares, ed., 159–60). In place of books and teachers, girls have been given "cambric for their sewing cushions and patterns for their embroidery frames" (Boyer, ed., 1).

Arguing further for women's aptitude for letters, Zayas turns the humoral theories invoked by writers such as Huarte de San Juan on their head.[29] In doing so, she seems to align herself with Sor Teresa de Cartagena's ideas concerning *entendimiento* and, indirectly, with Doña Oliva's novel theories concerning learning. If girls had books instead of sewing, Zayas speculates, "fuéramos tan aptas para los puestos y las cátedras como los hombres, y quizá más agudas, por ser de natural más frío, por consistir en humedad el entendimiento ... que todo lo que se hace con maña, aunque no sea virtud es ingenio" [we would be as fit as men for any job or university professorship. We might even be sharper because we're of a colder humor, and intelligence partakes of the damp humor ... for everything we do with skill, whether or not with erudition, shows talent] (Olivares, ed., 160/Boyer, ed., 1–2). In contrast to Huarte's low esteem of woman's intellectual capacity, Zayas asserts that *entendimiento* works best in the cold and damp conditions normally ascribed to women (Greer, *María de Zayas* 70).

Even though she does not approach the function of *entendimiento* as interior exercise in the fashion of Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Zayas does propose a literal, physical enclosure as conducive to a woman's well-being. In a number of her stories, survivors of physical and psychological abuse at the hands of husbands or male family members seek refuge in the convent in order to escape men's violence.[30]

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29 See Heiple ("Profeminist Reactions" 130–32), who compares Zayas's and Huarte's reasoning in greater detail. Greer (*María de Zayas* 67–70) cites Heiple in her own comparison of the two writers.

30 See, for example, "La fuerza del amor," where Laura "se quería entrar en un monasterio ... para valerse de las miserias a que las mujeres están sujetas" [wanted to enter a convent, the only real sanctuary for the relief of the misery to which women are subjected] (Olivares,

Although some critics construe this choice as validation of the "'architecture of patriarchy,'" others disagree.[31] Among the latter is Ordóñez, who points out that the decision to enter the convent by Zayas's characters "signals a more positive move toward the formation of another kind of bonding (or 'economy')" ("Woman and Her Text" 8–9).[32] By positing such a place as a locus of female power, Zayas conjoins Christine de Pisan's notion of the City of Ladies with the realization of Santa Teresa and her followers that the convent may serve as a refuge in which to nourish women's intellectual life as well. That Zayas's characters choose it of their own accord—often in the absence of any religious vocation—wrests the decision from those who would force women into a monastic life for their own purposes. Examples of such involuntary claustration abound in fact and fiction.[33]

Zayas's stories proved enormously popular both during her lifetime and after her death. They were bestsellers in Spain for over 200 years and circulated in France and England due to Scarron's plagiarism.[34] In a second prologue to the *Novelas amorosas* ostensibly penned by an "Objective Reader," the anonymous writer attributes to the author "sutilísimo ingenio, disposición admirable y gracia singular en cuanto piensa, traza y ejecuta" [an exceedingly subtle wit, an admirable disposition, and singular charm in everything she thinks, says, and writes] (Olivares, ed., 163/Boyer, ed., 3). Evidence suggests that the "Objective Reader" was probably a bookseller. His advice to the prospective buyer not to "be without her book, and not borrowed but purchased . . .; no matter what it costs, it will be money well spent" (Boyer, ed., 4/Olivares, ed., 164) suggests as much. Yet, the remarks also testify to the dissemination of Zayas's literary works through a variety of means in her time, for the prologue also chides those hangers-on at bookstalls who read a work quickly without purchasing it. Similarly, it complains of those who borrow from others, read a work, and then critique it to their friends, thus hurting potential sales. Given the evident popularity of Zayas's works, the comments of the "Objective Reader" comments hint at an even wider readership than the number of editions or sales implies.

The "Objective Reader" presumably praises her work in order to spur sales, but others couch their admiration in familiar comparisons, calling Zayas a "Muse of our century and the Sibyl of Madrid" (Lara, "De escritoras" 32; Brownlee,

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ed., 369/*Enchantments*, Boyer, ed., 178). At the conclusion of the *Desengaños amorosos*, Lisis also declares her intention of joining Doña Isabel in the convent, explaining: "me voy a salvar de los engaños de los hombres" [I'm going to save myself from the deceptions of men] (Yllera, ed., 509/*Disenchantments*, Boyer, ed., 403).

31 Williamsen ("Engendering Interpretation" 646) cites Gilbert and Gubar in the architecture reference. Gorfkle ("Seduction" 12) also views the convent option negatively.

32 Boyer, ed. (introduction, *Enchantments* xxv) and Sylvania (211) consider it a moral choice. Boyer ("The Other Woman" 63), Foa ("María de Zayas: Vision" 133), and Diez Borque (82) also see it as an escape from patriarchal control.

33 Consider the fate of Queen Juana of Castile, called "la loca," who was confined for almost 50 years to Tordesillas by her father and later Cisneros. In fiction, Calderón de la Barca has the character of the ravaged Isabel in *El alcalde de Zalamea* sent to a convent by her father.

34 Boyer, ed., introduction, *Enchantments* xii. Foa ("María de Zayas: Vision" 55) and Amezúa (2.20) list Spanish editions of her works.

"Postmodernism" 111). In his *Laurel de Apolo*, Lope de Vega compares her to Sappho, Cornelia, and Targelia (Silva VIII), *exempla* whom she herself cites in defense of women's learning. Her friend, Ana Caro Mallén de Soto, also identifies her as a "new Sappho, [a] new Pola Argentaria" and "the great Mantuan Sibyl" in her dedicatory poem (Olivares, ed., 154–5). As is evident in earlier examples, these comparisons are a convenient shorthand for almost any woman who evinces some level of erudition. Yet, they also suggest that such women may be more example than exception in their attainments, for as muses, Zayas and her sisters may inspire both men and women who wish to write.[35]

The audience for prose works—whether treatise or novel—tended to be more restricted than that for theatrical productions in the *siglo de oro*. The cost of purchasing a book, alluded to in Zayas's preface, along with a requisite level of literacy on the part of the reader, potentially limited the number of people who had access to the printed text. Even those who listened to another read a work aloud—as characters in *Don Quijote* or, indeed, Zayas's *novelas* did—were obviously constrained by cost and by availability of someone able to read.[36] In contrast, theatrical productions could reach a larger, less literate group. Consequently, as vehicles for the dissemination of ideas or for maintaining conventions, plays appealed to a wider, more diverse audience, one comprised of men and women drawn from every social class.

Women's participation in all aspects of Spanish theatrical productions was well established in the *siglo de oro*. Hegstrom observes that "in the *corrales de comedias*, the presence and participation of women ... played a significant role in the theatrical spectacle" ("Entremés 1" 113).[37] Those roles included writing plays for both secular theaters as well as convent productions.[38] In contrast to the English stage, women could perform in the Spanish theater, so that the female audience members occupying the *cazuela* or "stew pan," as the women's section was called, could observe actresses portraying everything from queens to peasants. Thus, the Spanish *corrales* [theaters] presented female audiences with actresses portraying roles devised by women playwrights, which "promote a woman-centered resistance to the frequently staged myth of the lack of female agency in Golden Age dramas" (Soufas, *Women's Acts* ix).[39]

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35 Voros ("Calderón's Writing Women" 127) remarks that "the exempla of women's lives becomes a justification and defense of women writers in this regendering of the writers' profession."

36 Reading texts aloud for the benefit of the unlettered was an established practice in monasteries as the rules for religious orders indicate. Nalle ("Literacy and Culture") examines the practice in the secular sphere of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain.

37 Orgel ("'Nobody's Perfect'" 8) compares the Spanish stage to the English. While the latter forbade the use of actresses, it still depended on women in the audience for its success, as did the former. In Spain, women could and did perform on stage.

38 See Hegstrom ("Entremés 1" 116), who mentions fourteen secular women playwrights and ("Entremés 2"), where she accounts for nuns writing theatrical works.

39 Soufas (*Dramas* 113) and Perry (*Gender and Disorder* 118) comment on the "subversive" nature of such portrayals, while Hegstrom ("Entremés 1" 117) describes the audience.

The roles created by these playwrights included both conventional and unconventional parts for women. The latter ranged from *mujeres varoniles* to *esquivas* [coy] and *letradas* [learned]. The portrayal of these types by women on stage communicated a multi-layered message to the audience. In one respect, the actress plays parts that may teach women in the audience how to either subvert or rebel against social norms. On the other hand, she may represent a "learned woman," who, by her very existence, contradicts the opinion that women are neither educated nor educable. Ironically, the actress is herself a "learned woman," since she must know movement, versification, and, sometimes, design, in order to play her part (Román, "Spectacular Women" 455). That moralists considered just such a pernicious influence is evident in the proscriptions they sought to impose by various edicts throughout the course of the *siglo de oro.*[40]

Among works by female playwrights is *La traición en la amistad* [*Friendship Betrayed*] by Zayas, a play in which female characters dominate the action. Like her fellow female playwrights, Zayas utilizes her own perspective to present both readers and audience members with a *Weltanschauung* at variance with that of the predominantly male voices in the theater of her time (Larson, "Gender, Reading" 132). Yet, it is a disconcerting worldview when observed through the actions of the character Fenisa. She is a *mujer varonil* of a very different stripe, for her pursuit of the men in the play by the same deceptions they use to seduce women makes of her a veritable female Don Juan.[41]

Fenisa receives her come-uppance at the end when she is left to fend for herself while the other characters are married. While Soufas contends that the conclusion leaves Fenisa "free to continue her preferred process of courtship at the play's end" ("María de Zayas's (Un)Conventional Play" 159), it can also be seen as a bow to convention on Zayas's part. The female character who challenges society's rules is often punished in the *comedia* either, as is true in this play, by a life of spinsterhood or by a loveless marriage.

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40 The *Tratado de la tribulación* (1589) composed by Pedro de Rivadeneyra is a case in point. It focuses on the "pésimo ejemplo que daban las actrices y en su perniciosa influencia sobre los espectadores" [the very evil example that actresses give and the pernicious influence they have over spectators] (my translation)(Romera Navarro 269). The principal objections center on the perceived immorality of these "public" women and their ability to lead audience members astray by their dress, conduct, and speech. He is especially concerned about "la perversa influencia que estas artistas tan libres como bizarras y engalanadas habían de ejercer sobre una espectadora virtuosa y pobre, porque, ¿cómo no dejará de sentir ésta 'que la virtud esté arrinconada y pobre, y el vicio autorizado y caudaloso?'" [the perverse influence that these artists—so free as well as bizarre and bedecked—must have exercised over a poor, virtuous female spectator, because, how couldn't the latter feel that virtue is poor and cast aside {while} vice is rich and authorized?] (Romera-Navarro 271). In short, it is the bad example that actresses project that disturbs the moralist, validating by his observations the potential exemplarity of the characters portrayed and those portraying them.

41 Stroud ("Love, Friendship" 542) calls her "not only a burladora [trickster] but a vengadora de mujeres [an avenger of women]." Oakey ("The Fallacy" 63) considers her an "extreme example of a mujer varonil."

Zayas's friend and fellow writer, Ana Caro Mallén de Soto, represents in her persona and her works women who embrace both arms and letters. Like Zayas and other women writers before her, Caro, too, was identified in exemplary terms as the "tenth muse of Seville" by Vélez de Guevara (*El diablo cojuelo* Tratado IX, 188). Rodrigo Caro explains the basis for this praise when he describes her in his *Varones insignes de Sevilla* as an "insigne poetisa que ha hecho muchas comedias, representadas en Sevilla y Madrid y otras partes con grandísimo aplauso" [noted poetess who has written many plays, staged in Seville and Madrid and other places to great applause] (my translation).[42]

In contrast to many of her fellow women writers, Caro made writing her profession and apparently earned her living by composing *loas* and *comedias* (Luna, ed., 11–12; Soufas, *Women's Acts* 135). Her very act of writing and producing plays makes of her a woman who makes the word public, as Luna puts it ("Ana Caro" 18). In contrast to the nun who writes only for her community or the aristocrat who might dabble in literary endeavors, Caro occupies a public rather than a private space. Her plays enunciate women's speech in a public act of production, performance, and witness. Lest any doubt this fact, she concludes one of her extant plays with a declaration that is at once conventional and provocative. The female protagonist, Leonor, addresses the audience:

> Aquí, senado discreto,
> *Valor, agravio y mujer*
> acaban. Pídelos su dueño,
> por mujer y por humilde,
> que perdonéis sus defectos.
> (Luna ed, vv. 2753–7)

> [Here, discreet audience, ends *Valor, agravio y mujer*. Its author begs you as a humble woman that you forgive its defects.] (My translation)

While the formula is a conventional one for *comedias* of the period as is the evocation of the humility *topos* for a woman writer, in other important respects these final verses and what they represent are not. The articulation of the formula addressed to the audience by a female character and the attribution of authorship to a woman are provocative on many levels, not least of which is the public speech by women that breaks through the fourth wall of the theater. In the context of what has preceded it in Leonor's role in the play, it is at once challenging and conciliatory.

Leonor is a woman who assumes male dress and the male identity of Leonardo and thereby incarnates the *mujer varonil* in all respects in the play. Although she reinhabits her feminine role at the conclusion of the work, both in her male garb and actions as in her decision to marry rather than kill her betrayer, Don Juan de Córdoba, she remains the agent of her own deliverance. She does not look to male members of her family to right the wrong done her, as other female characters have. Thus, in her initial entrance, Leonor alludes to the reason she has adopted male attire

42 Cited in Delgado, ed. (7). Zayas mentions these accomplishments as well in the *Desengaños amorosos* (Yllera, ed., 230).

(vv. 464–5), and then concludes her recounting of her lover's treachery by calling herself a "new Amazon" (v. 501).[43]

As the plot evolves and Leonor readies her elaborate ruse to punish Don Juan, her servant and confidant, Ribete, urges her to embrace the traditionally male virtues:

> Cátate aquí muy valiente,
> muy diestra, muy arrogante,
> muy alentada, y al fin,
> un sepan cuantos de Marte,
> que hace a diestros y siniestros
> estragos y mortandades
> con el ánimo. Y la fuerza,
> di, señora, ¿dónde está?
> (Luna ed. vv. 1332–40)
>
> [Here try to be very valiant, very adept, very arrogant, very courageous, and in short, a veritable Mars, who wreaks spirited havoc and mayhem left and right. And tell me my lady, where is fortitude?] (My translation)

Ribete's use of the appropriate feminine endings for "diestra" and "alentada" remind the viewers that it is a woman he addresses. Yet, he calls her to arms, with his reference to Mars and "fuerza." In her response, Leonor recalls the mythological viragos, "Semiramis/ ... /Cenobia, Drusila, Draznes,/Camila, y otras cien mil [que] sirvieron de ejemplos/a mil varones famosos" [Semiramis, Zenobia, Drusilla, Draznes, Camilla, and another hundred thousand {who} served as examples to a thousand famous men] (Luna, ed., vv. 1341–5).

In this exchange, Caro manifests her own grasp of mythology as exemplary but does so in a nuanced way. Ribete urges Leonor/Leonardo to match her actions to her dress and act as men do. She, in turn, recalls the *mujeres varoniles* of mythology as her exemplars even as she suggests their usurpation by men for inspiration. One need only recall Boccaccio and Álvaro de Luna to confirm such a use. In this instance, a woman dressed as a man—the creation of a woman playwright—reclaims the figures of valiant women for her own. In doing so, she presents them to the female members of the audience as exemplary as well. The result, as Gorfkle observes, is a profoundly subversive message: "by viewing Leonor as male and female, active and passive, subject and object, the spectator is obliged to examine the hierarchy of gender roles as a system of power relations itself culturally inscribed as theatricality, and, therefore, subject to reversal" ("Restaging Femininity" 30). The critic goes on to point out Leonor's embrace of arms and letters "by means of the tongue and the sword, two weapons which the aristocratic woman must never wield" (33).

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43 Luna, ed. (introduction 40) and Romera-Navarro (271–2) both cite the prohibitions on women dressing as men for the stage, yet this play and others—notably Calderón's *La vida es sueño*—depict women much like Leonor, dressed as men in order to pursue their betrayers for reasons of honor.

While real-life examples existed of actual women who adopted male dress and customs, such as the so-called 'lieutenant nun" Catalina de Erauso,[44] they were viewed as aberrations or curiosities by contemporary society. Significantly, those women who adopt male identities in theater and fiction of the *siglo de oro*, such as Leonor, Rosaura in *La vida es sueño*, or Cervantes's protagonists in *Las dos doncellas*, do so in order to bring their male deceivers to account. Once they accomplish this, they reassume female dress and roles and marry at the end of the works in which they appear. Such a turn of events suggests that society accepts these fictional *mujeres varoniles* as long as the social order is ultimately restored.

Although Leonor has shown herself to be verbally adroit in staging scenes to further her ends, Ana Caro acknowledges the problems surrounding a woman's embrace of letters. In a brief exchange between Ribete and Tomillo, the *gracioso*, the resistance to women's erudition is articulated by the fool. Ribete first remarks that in Madrid

> hay notable novedad
> . . ..
> que aun quieren poetizar
> las mujeres, y se atreven
> a hacer comedias ya.
> (Luna, ed., 1166–70)
>
> [There is a notable novelty ... that even women want to write and they already dare to compose plays.] (My translation)

Tomillo derides the very notion of erudite females even as he enunciates his opinion about more appropriate activities for them: "¡Válgame Dios! Pues, ¿no fuera/mejor coser e hilar?/¿Mujeres poetas?" [God help me! Wouldn't it be better to sew and spin? Women poets? Yikes!] (Luna, ed., vv. 1171–3).[45]

Ribete's reply recalls the female precursors of Madrid's women poets, of whom, by inference, Caro is one:

> Mas no es nuevo, pues están
> Argentaria, Sofoareta,
> Blesilla, y más de un millar
> de modernas, que hoy a Italia
> lustre soberano dan,
> disculpando la osadía

44 Catalina Erauso, known as the "monja alférez" [lieutenant nun], whose life story circulated in Spain, was dramatized on stage in a play of the same name. Perry (*Gender and Disorder* 132) cites her in commenting on Caro's play. See also Romera-Navarro (280) for the implications of Erauso for cross-dressing.

45 It is a sentiment shared by the character, Don Diego, in Calderón's *No hay burlas con el amor*, who summarizes an appropriate education for a women: "Sepa una mujer hilar,/coser y echar un remiendo,/que no ha menester saber/gramática ni hacer versos" [A woman should know how to weave, sew and patch, {since} she has no need to know grammar nor to write verses] (Cruickshank, ed., vv. 471–4).

de su nueva vanidad.
(Luna ed. vv. 1174–80)

> [But this is not new, because there's Argentaria, Sofoareta, Blesilla, and more than a thousand modern women, who in this day and age give distinguished preeminence to Italy, excusing the boldness of their newfound vanity {of course}]. (My translation)

As was the case with Zayas's evocation of female *exempla*, each of these women asserted her right to authorship. By implication, Leonor "writes her own life" while her creator enunciates a woman's voice through her character and her work.[46]

In her other surviving play, Caro manifests her own learning indirectly while also creating female characters who dominate the action and determine the outcome.[47] In *El conde Partinuplés* (*The Count Partinuples*), she rewrites the chivalric romance on which her play is based by moving the focus from the male protagonist of the title to the female characters, who seek to establish peace and stability within their realms. In addition to the chivalric source, Caro also makes reference to *Orlando furioso* (Delgado, ed., v. 686) and suggests the influence of Calderon's *La vida es sueño* [*Life is a dream*].[48] This modest level of literary citation implies more than Caro's reading interests, however.

In her initial appearance, the heroine, Rosaura, like Leonor, declares her readiness to imitate "las ilustres Amazonas/ ... /y aun ofrec[r] la vida/con resolución heróica" [the famous Amazons ... and to offer her life with heroic resolution] (Delgado, ed., vv. 30–36). Her motivation is not a desire to avenge a dishonor but, rather, a determination to preserve the empire of Constantinopla. As empress she may embrace the chivalric ideal and take up arms in defense of the realm as other female monarchs before her had. Yet, as woman she must also marry if the royal line and the stability of her empire are to be maintained. Thus, the crux of the dilemma she faces revolves around her political responsibilities in conflict with her personal preference to remain unmarried.[49]

Although she will ultimately marry, Rosaura's first reaction to the idea is resistance. In this respect, she embraces the role of a *mujer esquiva* [a coy or elusive woman] as much as that of a *mujer varonil*. Her reluctance to marry derives from the dire prophecy made by her father based on his understanding of astrology (Delgado, ed., vv. 125–86). Rosaura's predicament mirrors that of her rival Lisbella. Both women desire the same man and both face the societal pressure to marry in order to assure the future of their respective realms. Both also consciously evoke female *exempla* to explain their actions. In the final confrontation of Act Three, it is Lisbella who enters

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46 Mujica ("Women Directing Women" 22) describes Caro's work as "an early step toward what is now called 'women conscious theater'."

47 Lundelius ("Ana Caro" 229–39) conjectures on the extent of her education.

48 References to Rosaura and Sigismundo (Delgado, ed., v. 1156) suggest Caro's familiarity with Calderón's masterpiece as does her reliance on astrology as an important plot device. See Kaminsky, "Ana Caro Mallén" (91). See, also, de Armas ("Mirrors and Matriline" 79), who detects the influence of Calderón's *La dama duende* here.

49 Soufas ("Repetitive Patterns" 99) and (*Dramas* 41) summarizes the dilemma.

attired as a veritable Amazon with sword, plumed hat and soldiers (Delgado, ed., p. 243) and declares:

> Verá el mundo que imito
> a Semiramis, armada
> de ardimientos vengativos;
> y verá también Rosaura,
> como valerosa aspiro
> a destruir sus imperios
> si no me entrega a mi primo.
> (Delgado ed. vv. 1792–8)
>
> [The world will see that I imitate Semiramis, armed with vengeful courage; and Rosaura will also see, as I valerous{ly} aspire to destroy her empire if she does not hand over my cousin to me.] (My translation)

Lisbellas's evocation of the warrior queen, her fierce language, and her dress all recall Rosaura's initial appearance in the play.[50] Yet, in the latter's case, it is less the Amazon than Athena whom Rosaura imitates in her use of intelligence to achieve her objectives. She employs her mind and her beauty to attract the Conde rather than force of arms. They are the qualities first identified by the characters Arcenio and Emilio in reaction to her initial utterances (v. 44). In reconciling the demand to marry with the prophecy, Rosaura manifests a clear understanding and a truly rare ingenuity admired by the Conde (vv. 1329–30). The marriage of Rosaura and the Count thus satisfies the conventions of the *comedia* as well as the needs of the empire of Constantinopla.[51]

In *El desdén con el desdén* [*Disdain with Disdain*] (1654), the playwright Agustín Moreto also creates a character who shares some of the concerns and characteristics of Ana Caro's Rosaura. As the only child of her father, Diana, Princess of Barcelona, stands to inherit his throne. Although she faces neither a dire prophecy nor an imminent threat to her rule, as does Rosaura, she shares with Caro's empress a reluctance to marry. The basis of her *esquivez* derives from her studies, as the would-be suitor, Carlos, Conde de Urgel, explains to his servant, Polilla:

> ... averigüé que Diana
> del discurso las primicias,
> con las luces de su ingenio
> le dio a la filosofía.
> Deste estudio y la lición
> de las fábulas antiguas,
> resultó un común desprecio
> de los hombres, unas iras
> contra el orden natural
> del Amor con quien fabrica
> el mundo a su duración

50 Rosaura also appears as a wild woman dressed in pelts (Delgado, ed., 188).

51 Soufas (*Dramas* 47) considers her decision as a loss of her independence, while Matulka ("The Feminist Theme" 239) views the marriage of the feminist heroine as a defeat.

> alcazares en que viva;
> (Rico ed. vv. 173–84)

> [I found out that Diana from the first fruits of discourse, with the light of her talent gave herself over to philosophy. The result of this study and the lesson of the ancient fables was common disdain for men, {and} some anger against the natural order of Love with which she creates the world for a lifetime in {an ivory tower}.] (My translation)

Specifically, it is the exemplary women of history and mythology and their unhappy experiences of love who have influenced Diana's decision to remain single.

Imitating the chaste goddess, Diana, the princess

> A su cuarto hace la selva
> de Diana, y son las ninfas
> sus damas, y en este estudio
> las emplea todo el día.
> (Rico ed. vv. 195–98)

> [Makes of her space Diana's forest, and the nymphs are her ladies-in-waiting, and in this study she employs them all day long.] (My translation)

To remind the women of their purpose in this veritable academy of *esquivez*, Diana has adorned the walls with paintings of Daphne, Anaxarete, and Arethusa (vv. 199–208). In addition to mythology and philosophy, Diana has also studied history (v. 834) and moral philosophy (vv. 843–4). In her debates with Carlos, she demonstrates a knowledge of logical fence and, in other scenes, an ability to sing and dance. In short, she enjoys an education similar in its particulars to that attained by Isabel la Católica and her daughters.[52]

In spite of her accomplishments and the example of other royal princesses, the men and, indeed, some of the women, of her court echo the criticism leveled at other women who espoused independence and education. Her father complains of her blind caprice (v. 442); the *gracioso* Polilla calls her crazy (v. 827); and the Lady Cintia considers her wit a mistake (v. 555). Carlos realizes that the way to win her is to appeal to the very wit and intelligence that she has relied on to reject other suitors. By mirroring the same disdainful attitude she has manifested, Carlos first piques her interest and then engages her in a running debate about the nature of love, gratitude, and marriage (Howe, "The Education of Diana" 158–60). In the end, he succeeds because he has addressed her as an equal, appealing to her education to recognize the faultiness of her reasoning. Carlos accepts Diana as the intelligent woman that she is. Rather than an obstacle to love and marriage, her education proves to be the linchpin of the courtship and marriage of Moreto's protagonists (Howe, "The Education of Diana" 161).

The conventions of *siglo de oro* theater demanded marriage of the protagonists as a reaffirmation of the social order. In the case of princesses, such a necessity was paramount for the continuation of the royal line and for the stability of the kingdom. Although Caro and Moreto conform to the convention, they do so in a way that

52 For more on this point, see my article "The Education of Diana."

empowers the women in their plays. Both Rosaura and Diana ultimately choose the men they marry in part because the *Condes* treat them as equals. Partinuplés plays by rules imposed by Aldora and Rosaura as proof of his worthiness to be her partner. In the process, he manifests the *cordura* [prudence] (v. 366) that she, too, possesses. Carlos also mirrors Diana in his use of disdain. He succeeds in engaging her intellect as a means to win her hand.

Theatrical works thus presented female characters capable of independent action—Leonor—and intelligence—Rosaura and Diana—who do not overthrow the conventions but, rather, affirm them with a feminine twist. With actresses depicting these characters, the ability of women to learn and to act independently is made patent on the stage. When the characters portrayed are the creation of a female playwright, the education of women serves as text and subtext of the production.

Popular theater and literature provided a forum for women to manifest their intellectual capabilities. In doing so, they refuted the deterministic opinions found in Huarte de San Juan's *Examen*. They also challenged the restrictive views of women's lives presented by moralists such as Vives and Fray Luis de León. As Doña Oliva, Zayas, and Caro demonstrate, women need not keep silent nor simply attend to their knitting.

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Chapter 6

Phoenix, Tenth Muse, and Other Epithets: The Example of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

> Yo no estudio para escribir, ni menos para enseñar (que fuera en mi desmedida soberbia), sino sólo por ver si con estudiar ignoro menos.
>
> Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*[1]

In 1689, the first volume of the works of the Mexican nun, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, was published in Madrid with the grandiloquent title of *Inundación castálida de la única poetisa, musa décima, Soror Juana Inés de la Cruz* [*Castalian Inundation of the Unique Poetess, Tenth Muse, Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz*]. It appeared due to the patronage of the author's friend, the former vicereine of Mexico, Doña María Luisa Gonzaga Manrique de la Lara, Condesa de Paredes and Marquesa de la Laguna. The success of this initial volume and the two that followed was extensive, so much so that some 19 editions appeared between 1690 and 1725 (González Boixo 68). The second volume of the *Inundación* was published in 1693 and included the prose *Crisis de un sermón* (Trabulse*, El enigma* 22), better known to later generations as the *Carta Atenagórica* [*Letter Worthy of Athena*]. The third, and final, volume, *Fama y obras pósthumas del fénix de México, dézima musa, poetisa americana, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* [*Fame and Posthumous Works of the Phoenix of Mexico, Tenth Muse, American Poetess, Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz*] appeared in Madrid in 1700. It included heretofore-unpublished poems and devotional prose works by this remarkable woman, as well as the first printed copy of her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea* [*The Reply to Sister Philotea*]. In addition, a biography by the Jesuit Diego Calleja and a number of encomiastic poems by admirers on both sides of the Atlantic comprised half the volume. While the titles of the three volumes suggest the esteem in which Sor Juana was held, their publication in Spain rather than in Mexico underscored the conflicts that roiled the waters of her life and times. Even in death, Sor Juana's works revealed the turbulent relationship that she had with the society of New Spain that alternately embraced and excluded her.

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1 [I do not study to write, even less to teach–which in one like myself were unseemly pride–but only to the end that if I study, I will be ignorant of less]. *A Woman of Genius*. Trans. Margaret Sayers Peden, 24–6/25–7. Citations of Sor Juana's *Respuesta*/*Reply* refer to this bilingual edition unless otherwise indicated.

At the same time, the titles also underscore the exemplary status that Sor Juana had attained in her lifetime both in the Old World and in the New. By associating her and her works with Mount Olympus and the springs of Castalia, the editor of the first two volumes places her alongside the Muses of antiquity as inspiration to other poets (Arenal, "This Life" 158). Similarly, when the *Fama* identifies her as the Tenth Muse and the Phoenix of Mexico, it alludes to comparisons used in a number of the laudatory poems that introduce and conclude the volume.[2] Thus, like such forebears as Luisa Sigea, María de Zayas, and Ana Caro de Mallén, she is ostensibly praised for her intellectual and literary accomplishments, even as she is effectively marginalized as exceptional. She, like they, fall into what Stephanie Merrim calls the "Tenth Muse trap," one which views her "as an isolated eccentric phenomenon" (*Early Modern* xiii).[3]

Certainly, the title of Phoenix of Mexico emphasizes her uniqueness since only one of these mythological creatures lives at any time. The title also places her alongside the *Fénix de España*, Lope de Vega y Carpio.[4] Yet, in both titles, Sor Juana is at a geographic remove from the other Muses and the great Spanish playwright, so that she is at once praised and diminished by the comparisons.[5]

Equally important in the measured praise afforded her by the contributors to both the *Inundación* and the *Fama* was her status as both a "*rara avis*" unique to Mexico[6] and a *mujer varonil*. In grappling with the reality of her intellect, her contemporaries identified her as a "muger singular" [singular woman] (*Fama* 139), "que en femenil sexo/Varonil afecto encubre" [who in the guise of the female sex cloaks a virile affect] (*Fama* fol. 205) or even claim:

> No fue muger, aunque el sexo
> Como à tal la reconoce;
> Que fue Un Angel, si los ay
> De humanas composiciones (*Fama* fols. 197–8)
>
> [She wasn't a woman, although her sex recognized her as such. Rather, she was an angel, if there are such in human form.] (My translation)

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2 She is called the Tenth Muse by at least six of those who contributed *encomia* to the *Fama*. See Alatorre, ed., 56, 71, 75–6, 77, 111, 193.

3 Luciani ("Sor Juana" 782), concedes that Sor Juana herself may have realized that "su título de honor era, en efecto, una tierra de nadie" [her honorific title was, in effect, no man's land] (my translation). In contrast, Luna ("Sor Juana" 66) views the title as one which "ha servido para epitomizar a una galería de seres excepcionales que, transgrediendo las barreras genéricas, descubrieron el espacio múltiple y dialógico de la escritura" [has served to epitomize a gallery of exceptional beings who, transgressing the gender barriers, discovered the many dialogical spaces of writing] (my translation). Arteaga ("Chiasmus" 91) observes that "the 'tenth Muse' is an Imperial European celebration of Greek *poesis* after all, and neither the celebration *in xóchitl in cuicatl* Mexican poetics, nor that of feminist poetics."

4 I am grateful to Constance Rose for pointing out this connection to me.

5 Other epithets also appear among the encomiastic poems found in the *Fama*. She is a "sirena" [siren (39)]; the "Sibila de la América excelente" [the sibyl of America (70)]; and a "nueva Minerva" [new Minerva (fol. 210)].

6 So called by Tineo in the "Aprobación" found in the *Inundación* n.p.

More telling still were the comparisons of her to male figures. Thus, the author of the prologue to the *Fama* remarks: “pues es sin duda, que si el entendimiento son los ojos del alma, esta rara Muger fue el Argos del entendimiento” [without a doubt, if understanding are the eyes of the soul, this rare woman was the Argos of the understanding] (Alatorre, ed., 119). Another asserts that “ni Homero sus versos igualasse” [not even Homer could equal her verses] (Alatorre, ed., 71). Doña María de Abogader y Mendoza compares her to Samson in a *décima* and finds her more admirable:

> Con la falta del cabello,
> Pierde las fuerzas Sansón,
> Y de nuestra Julia son
> más activas con perdello. (Alatorre, ed., 91)
>
> [With the loss of his hair Samson lost his strength, {but} for our Julia {i.e., Sor Juana}, her strength is greater by losing it.] (My translation)

In her most ambitious work, the *Primero sueño* [*First Dream*], Sor Juana devotes the bulk of her poem to recalling a veritable pantheon of female mythological figures. Yet, ironically, at the end of the work, she compares herself to Phaeton, the son of Helios, who was struck down by Jupiter for his attempt to fly the chariot of the sun. Rather than a symbol of ambition punished, she prefers to view Phaeton and herself as individuals who continually strive to know more (Myers, “Phaeton” 462; González Boixo 79–80). In this continual striving, Sor Juana casts herself as a “manly woman” unlike any of her foremothers.

Nevertheless, she is also a “muger fuerte … singular entre todas” [a strong woman … unique among all others] (Bénassy-Berling, “Más sobre la conversión” 465). None of the mythological or classical figures with whom she is paired reproduced itself. Their singularity is also hers by inference. The author of the *Aprobación* introducing the *Fama* marvels that “tanta sabiduría cupiesse, no en una muger, que las calidades del entendimiento todas son de las almas; sino en una Muger, que, … jamás tuvo Maestros” [so much wisdom could fit, not in a woman, {since} all of the intellectual qualities are spiritual; but in a woman who never had a teacher] (Alatorre, ed., 13–14).[7] In her status as a woman of intellect, she becomes exceptional in their eyes as well because she is also, of necessity, an autodidact, one-of-a-kind, not exemplary at all.

Sor Juana recognized the dilemma caused by her intellectual gifts. During her lifetime, she was to find herself caught up in the maelstrom of secular and religious currents within her society as she sought to pursue her own intellectual interests. She alludes to some of these struggles in her quasi-autobiographical *Respuesta*, where she reveals that at a very early age she learned to read and quickly became an ardent student and a voracious reader:

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7 It is a sentiment echoed by Muñoz de Castilblanque (*Fama* 108), as well as an opinion like that expressed by Sor Teresa de Cartagena.

> … desde que me rayó la primera luz de la razón, fue tan vehemente y poderosa la inclinación a las letras, que ni ajenas reprensiones—que he tenido muchas—, ni propias reflejas—que he hecho no pocas—, han bastado a que deje de seguir este natural impulso que Dios puso en mí: Su Majestad sabe por qué y para qué. [... from the moment I was first illuminated by the light of reason, my inclination toward letters has been so vehement, so overpowering, that not even the admonitions of others—and I have suffered many—nor my own meditations—and they have not been few—have been sufficient to cause me to forswear this natural impulse that God placed in me: the Lord God knows why, and for what purpose.] (Peden, ed., 26/27)

In a passage that follows, she comments further on conflicts that arose precisely because of her intellectual gifts, asking God to "dim the light of [her] reason, leaving only that which is needed to keep His Law, for there are those who would say that all else is unwanted in a woman, and there are even those who would hold that such knowledge does injury" (Peden, ed., 26/27).

From the moment of her birth in San Miguel de Nepantla in 1648, Juana Ramírez y Asbaje was caught figuratively and literally between two worlds. Her village was situated between Iztaccihuatl, the *Volcán de nieve* [snow volcano] and Popocateptl, the *Volcán de fuego* [volcano of fire]. Both mountains figured prominently in the conquest of Mexico, for from the former the Spanish first glimpsed the high plane of Anahuac where the Aztec capital was located, while the latter provided the sulphur from which they made the gunpowder to subdue the lands and peoples before them (Nicholson, "Sor Juana" 141).[8]

Even the circumstances of her birth were divisive, for the bureaucratic mindset of Spanish colonial administration categorized subjects by their race and place of birth. Thus, her father, Don Pedro de Asbaje, a Basque adventurer, was a Spaniard, while her mother, Doña Isabel Ramírez de Cantillana, the daughter of Spanish-born colonists, was a *criolla* by virtue of her birth in Mexico. Sor Juana, too, was designated a *criolla*. More importantly, she was an "*hija de la iglesia*" as her baptismal certificate notes, or an "*hija natural*" of her mother. In short, she was illegitimate (Paz 64–5). The details of her lineage incarnate the two institutions which initially conquered and colonized the New World: the army—her father—and the Church—her illegimitacy. They also represent the ambiguities of New Spain in which the institutions and practices of the Old World lived in constant tension with the realities of the New.

Nevertheless, Sor Juana's unique status as a writer in the New World, whose works were published and known in Europe, also contributed to the fascination of readers and admirers on both sides of the Atlantic. Consequently, she was viewed as a link between the two worlds, a motif exemplified by the engraving of her portrait in the *Fama* that "configures her as a bridge between a Spanish conquistador and an Indian warrior" (Kirk 27). Contributors to the *Fama* emphasized the comparison by calling her an "asombro ingenioso de dos Mundos" [astonishing intellect of two Worlds], one capable of uniting the two continents (Alatorre, introduction, *Fama* xxxiii).

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8 Alatorre, "Para leer la *Fama*" 433, comments on the Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca's use of these details in the "Dedicatoria" of the *Fama*.

What is evident in her life and works is the intersection of the sometimes-hostile worlds which Sor Juana was seen to occupy. She was a Mexican-born nun who wrote secular love poetry in the style of the Spanish baroque; she was a woman of prodigious intellect in a predominantly masculine world of learning; she was a "daughter of the Church" who dared to criticize the luminaries of the very institution that sheltered her; lastly, she was a woman of the Americas equated with the illustrious female figures of European antiquity. Each of the circumstances of lineage, birth, and intellect forced her to straddle opposing worlds: the New and the Old, the legitimate and the illegitimate, the secular and the sacred, the literate and the illiterate, and, most importantly, the male and the female.

The center point of these opposing worlds in the life of Sor Juana is her prodigious intellect. It becomes the focus of admiration by her supporters and of censure by her critics throughout her life. It also figures in many of her works as a theme encompassing her own situation and, by inference, all women and their right to an intellectual life equal to that of men. Juana's formal education began modestly enough at the age of three when she accompanied her sister to a local *amiga* where she learned to read and write as well as to sew and to cook. By her own account, she learned to "leer en tan breve tiempo que ya sabía cuando lo supo mi madre, a quien la maestra lo ocultó por darle el gusto por entero y recibir el galardón por junto" [read so quickly that before my mother knew of it I could already read, for my teacher had kept if from her in order to reveal the surprise and reap the reward at one and the same time] (Peden, ed., 28/29). Her education did not end there, however.

When Don Pedro de Asbaje abandoned his family, Doña Isabel began living with another man with whom she also bore children out of wedlock. Eventually, the mother and her children returned to her own parents' home where Juana enjoyed the influence of her maternal grandfather, Don Pedro Ramírez de Santillana, and the resources of his extensive library (Peden, ed., 6/7; 30/31).

Juana's self-described "natural impulse" (Peden, ed., 26/27) to learn led to some extraordinary measures to stimulate or continue her learning. In the *Respuesta* she claims to have given up cheese because she believed it made her slow-witted. When she learned that there was a university in the capital, she tried to convince her mother to dress her in men's clothing so that she might attend (28/29). In addition, she describes cutting her hair as a punishment for not mastering Latin as quickly as possible (30/31).[9] In short, she aspired to be the *mujer varonil* in appearance, who heretofore had been portrayed principally on stage or in fiction, so that she might achieve her real aim of advancing her education (Dill 107).

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9 Calleja (*Vida de Sor Juana* 16) remarks on this decision and contrasts her with other, vain women. These self-described acts of desire and denial lead Paz to discern in Sor Juana a "move toward maleness." In her thirst for knowledge and the cutting of her hair, Sor Juana admits that "in order to learn, one must be a man, or like a man" (83; 112). Morino ("Respuesta" 11–12) considers these actions a rejection of the mother and the maternal. Clearly, the *mujer varonil* argument with Freudian overtones, used to explain female erudition survives to the present day. See Arenal ("Convent as Catalyst" 554), Bergmann ("Sor Juana" 157), and Thurmann ("Sister Juana" 14), all of whom reject these misogynistic views.

In 1656, she moved to Mexico City to live with her maternal aunt, Doña María Ramírez, and her husband, Juan de Mata (Paz 86). Soon Juana's prodigious learning coupled with her great beauty attracted the attention of the Viceroy and his wife, who invited her to join the vice-regal court. There, according to Calleja, she was publicly examined by some 40 experts in order to ascertain the extent and nature of her learning. The examiners wished to determine whether it was "admirable, infused, acquired, faked or unnatural."[10] She acquitted herself so well that the Viceroy likened her to a "royal galleon defending itself against so many canoes."[11] Although Sor Juana makes no mention of this event either in the *Carta de Monterrey* or later in the *Respuesta*, still it resonates in other works of hers. It also mirrors the example of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, a woman who also triumphed in a public examination.

During her residence in the vice-regal court, she was known as Juana de Asbaje, a name that made a tacit claim to legitimacy and Peninsular origins, truly a Spanish galleon distinguished from other, American-made canoes. At the time of her service to the vicereine, life in Mexico City was marked by licentiousness and moral laxity (Schons, "Some Obscure Points" 143; Paz 86–99). In a backlash to humanist principles, attempts to protect the virtue of women ranged from denying them education to enclosing them in home, convent, or *recogimiento* (Schons, "Some Obscure Points" 145). For a woman of great beauty and learning but no father and little dowry, it was an environment fraught with certain danger.

In the fall of 1667, to the surprise of many, Juana de Asbaje entered the Discalced Carmelite monastery of San José de México as a novice. A short three months later, she left the Carmelites due to poor health and the rigors of the life, returning temporarily to the vice-regal court.[12] In February 1668, she entered the Hieronymite convent of Santa Paula as Juana Ramírez. The choice of her mother's surname attested to her Creole heritage in order to gain entrance to a religious house specifically founded for *criollas*. Still, legitimate birth, statements of *limpieza de sangre*, and a dowry were also prerequisites for a place among the choir nuns. Accommodations were made to permit Juana's profession in 1669 as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[13] She was to remain there for the rest of her life.

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10 [saber si era sabiduría tan admirable, o infusa, o adquirida, o artificio, o no natural] Calleja, *Vida de Sor Juana* (17).

11 Cited in Arenal and Powell, eds. (*The Answer/La Respuesta* 3–4).

12 Salazar Mallén (44) identifies the convent as one of Discalced Carmelites. Bénassy-Berling ("Une intellectuelle" 15–16), identifies a bout with typhus as the cause of her withdrawal from the Carmelites and her decision not to return. Salazar Mallén (ibid.), Leonard (*Baroque Times* 174), and Paz (98) put it down to misgivings about her vocation or fear of the rigorous Carmelite rule.

13 Scott ("'Let your women'" 512) cites her confessor Antonio Núñez's influence in the question of legitimacy. Kirk (23) cautions against taking Calleja's opinion on the matter as accurate. See also Lavrín, "Values and meaning" 368. In her letter to Núñez (Alatorre, ed., 624) Sor Juana herself indicates that the dowry was paid by Capt. Don Pedro Velázquez de la Cadena. Glantz ("La autobiografía" 34) cites her vow statement in which she wrote: "Yo, soi Juana Inés de la Cruz, *hija legítima* de don Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas Machuca y de Isabel Ramirez … hago voto etc" [I, Juana Inés de la Cruz, *legitimate daughter* of Don

The circumstances of her life prior to her profession as a Hieronymite mirror those of a number of the women already considered. In the method and content of her education, she followed a path similar to that of Sor Teresa de Cartagena. Like Sor Teresa, she manifested a precocious ability to learn, found encouragement from her family, and availed herself of their library to expand her knowledge. Sor Juana's desire to assume male garb in order to move freely in the masculine world of the university recalls the figure of Catalina de Erauso, the *monja alférez*, who inhabited a male identity for different reasons but succeeded nonetheless in living on her own terms in both the Old and the New Worlds.[14] During her years in the vice-regal court, Juana lived and learned in a manner akin to that of Beatriz Galíndez or Luisa de Sigea. In her decision to enter the Discalced Carmelites, she initially embraced the life set forth by Santa Teresa de Jesús. When she next found her home among the Hieronymites, she adopted the model of Saint Paula described in letters from Saint Jerome. Finally, in her dedication to the literary life, she joined the ranks of other women writers such as María de Zayas and Ana Caro de Mallén in writing popular plays and poetry. More importantly, she also advocated for the education of women.

Sor Juana's reasons for entering the convent remain elusive. In the *Respuesta*, she states that she opted for the religious life with certain reservations, since she found some aspects of monastic life "repugnant" to her nature. With no interest in marriage, she chose the convent as "lo menos desproprocionado y lo más decente que podía elegir en materia de la seguridad que deseaba de mi salvación" [the least unsuitable and the most honorable I could elect if I were to insure my salvation] (Peden, ed., 30/31).[15] She hastens to add that she also assumed that a monastic setting would allow her the freedom to continue her studies with only the occasional interruptions created by community obligations. In her own case, these obligations included teaching some of the boarders and serving as bookkeeper and archivist for the house (Bénassy-Berling, "Une intellectuelle" 26).

By choosing the Hieronymites, Sor Juana entered a community better suited to her pursuit of scholarly interests than the Carmelites might offer. The monastery building itself provided private apartments for well-to-do members of the community. The rule also allowed the nuns to possess books and personal articles. Hence, Sor Juana was able to amass a considerable library and to live quite literally in a book-lined cell, as portraits of her attest (see Figure 11).[16] At the same time, her depiction as a woman of learning who owned books and wrote provided a contemporary example for other women to imitate.

Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas Machuca and of Isabel Ramírez ... vow etc.] (emphasis added) (my translation).

14 See Chapter 5, p. 151, where Catalina de Erauso is mentioned. Her life story was published in Mexico in 1653. See Stepto, introduction xliv.

15 Calleja (*Vida de Sor Juana* 144) considers some secret motive in her reluctance to marry. He implies that she is a veritable Phoenix in female form. See Dill (108) for a very different explanation.

16 Abreu Gómez (*Iconografía* 334–5) provides reproductions of the various portraits of her and explains the sources used to reconstruct the contents of her library.

Annexed to the monastery was a *colegio* for girls, and, as was the custom in both Spain and Mexico, many of the students resided in the house as boarders.[17] In spite of the rules of enclosure, the Hieronymites regularly entertained visitors in the parlors and even in their private apartments. In Sor Juana's case, these visitors included such influential friends as the Viceroy and his wife; the Bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz; the *catedrático*, Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora; and other members of the court (Bénassy-Berling, "Une intellectuelle" 18). It was a gathering not unlike the *saraos* (soirées) that frame the stories of María de Zayas.

As her foremothers had done, Sor Juana took advantage of the opportunities presented and devoted herself to a life of study and writing. Unlike her religious antecedents, however, her works were not exclusively concerned with spiritual themes. Even in her writing, she straddled two worlds: the sacred and the profane. Among her secular works may be counted poetry and plays that reveal her acquaintance with her Spanish contemporaries, Luis de Góngora and Calderón de la Barca, and topics in keeping with other female playwrights.

One Calderonian play in particular provides both theme and characters that seem to influence Sor Juana's work. In *No hay burlas con el amor* [*With Love There Are No Tricks*], Calderón creates a female character, Beatriz, whose pretensions to learning elicit derision from others in the play. Don Juan ridicules her embrace of the worst excesses of *culteranismo* when he remarks:

> lo peor ... es hablar
> con tan estudiado afecto
> que, critica impertinente,
> varios poetas leyendo,
> no habla palabra jamás
> sin frases y sin rodeos;
> tanto, que ninguno puede
> entenderla sin comento. vv. 301–8
>
> [The worst … is to speak with such studied affect that, impertinent critic, in reading various poets, she never uses a word without sentences and circumlocutions; so much so, that no one can understand her without a commentary.] (Cruickshank, ed., 18)

Even an erstwhile suitor, Don Alonso, is nonplussed by "una mujer/que habla siempre algarabía,/y sin Calepino no/puede un hombre entrar a oírla" [a woman who always speaks nonsense and without a 'pony' no man can stand to hear her] (vv. 1645–8; Cruickshank, ed., 104/106). Much like Moreto's Diana, Beatriz feigns a disinclination to marry; yet, in the end, she succumbs to Don Alonso's love, abandons her role as *latiniparla* (Latinist), and marries.[18]

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17 Jiménez Rueda (134) describes the house and the convent offices, while Paz (124–5) explains the school and Sor Juana's connection with it. He also describes her private rooms (128).

18 Critical opinion regarding Beatriz is mixed. Arellano ("El sentido cómico" 377), McKendrick ("The *mujer esquiva*" 171), and Quintero (249) see her in much the same way as the male characters do. In contrast, Román (447–8) challenges these views and considers her

Figure 11 **Miguel Cabrera, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, 1751. Courtesy of the National Historical Museum, Mexico, D.F.**

In *Los empeños de una casa* [*The Obligations of a House*], Sor Juana imitates the plot line of *No hay burlas con el amor* even as she puns on the title of another of Calderón's plays, *Los empeños de un acaso* [*The Obligations of Chance*]. Lest her familiarity with Spanish playwrights be doubted, she names Calderón, Moreto, and Rojas Zorrilla in the second *sainete* of her *Los empeños* (*Obras* 675; Schmidhuber 37).[19] At the same time, her play explores themes and characters similar to those found in Zayas's *La traición en la amistad* and Caro de Mallén's *Valor, agravio y mujer*.

In Doña Leonor of *Los empeños*, Sor Juana creates a character who reflects some of the circumstances of her own life.[20] In doing so, she also advances and changes the focus of the "scholarly" woman motif found in the works of Calderón, while fleshing out a character who shares the intellectual aspirations of Zaya's Filis and the initiative of Caro de Mallén's own Doña Leonor/Leonardo. She does so, in Schmidhuber's opinion, by taking the Calderonian formula of the *capa y espada* [cloak and dagger] play and recreating it as a veritable *falda y empeños* [petticoat and perseverance] version of her own (101). She accomplishes this transformation by shifting the focus of attention from men's pursuit of women to women's pursuit of the men of their dreams.[21] In place of the *mujer esquiva*, she substitutes a cross-dressing male servant, Castaño, who performs a literal and linguistic strip tease in front of the audience (Cypess 180–81). Finally, in a play in which women take center stage, the action takes place entirely inside the house of one of the female characters. The setting is thus a quintessential female space and one befitting the imagination of a cloistered nun.

Unlike Calderón's Beatriz, Moreto's Diana, or, for that matter, Sor Juana herself, Doña Leonor does not reject marriage. Rather, she is in the process of trying to elope when the play begins. What she does share with the aforementioned is her interest in learning:

> Inclinéme a los estudios
> desde mis primeros años
> con tan ardiente desvelos.
> con tan ansiosos cuidados,
> que reduje a tiempo breve
> fatigas de mucho espacio. (*Obras* 641)

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embrace of learning as a way "to distance and differentiate herself from the social fabric rather than as a means to acculturate into the social roles demanded of women."

19 A *sainete* is an *entreacte* within a longer play that is comic in tone and often includes music. See also Castaño's reference to Calderón (*Obras* 684). Spanish citations are taken from the *Obras completas* and English translations from Schmidhuber's *Secular Theater*, when available.

20 Luciani ("Octavio Paz" 12) calls Doña Leonor "a thinly disguised transmutation of Juana Inés."

21 Schmidhuber (38), Merrim ("*Mores*" 99), and Johnson (128–9) all comment on this inversion.

> [I was inclined toward my studies since my early years with such ardent efforts, with such anxious determination, that I reduced to a brief what normally was a great labor.] (Schmidhuber 108)

The combination of beauty and brains is viewed as a double inconvenience by Leonor, because it has elicited more blame than praise from others. Even the female figure of Doña Ana acidulously dismisses Leonor as "una dama/de perfecciones tan sumas/que dicen que faltan plumas/para alabarla a la Fama" [a woman of such substantial perfections that they say that they lack pens to praise her to the goddess, Fame] (*Obras* 637). Leonor's own father complains:

> Pensaba yo, hija vil, que tu belleza,
> por la incomodidad de mi pobreza,
> con tu ingenio sería
> lo que más alto dote te daría;
> Y ahora, en lo que has hecho,
> conozco que es más daño que provecho. (*Obras* 646)
>
> [I thought, vile daughter, that your beauty, given the inconvenience of my poverty, along with your intelligence would be the greatest dowry I could give you. And now in what you have done, I realize that it has done more harm than good .] (My translation)

The *gracioso*, Castaño, considers the impoverished Leonor a woman whose fortune consists of four *bachillerías*."[22] Patricia Kenworthy summarizes Leonor's predicament by noting that "[her] essential problem … is that her intelligence, beauty, virtue, and *discreción* are not matched by her social status. In character she is noble but in rank she is not" (113). In these respects, she mirrors her creator. In the end, Don Carlos ignores the disparity of social class, admires Leonor's beauty and intelligence, and gladly marries her.

However happily *Los empeños* ends for Doña Leonor and Don Carlos, the situation of Sor Juana was significantly different. Since the play was performed as part of the festivities greeting the arrival of the new archbishop, Don Francisco de Aguiar y Seijas, in October 1683,[23] a man who proved to suffer from an almost pathological misogyny, the vulnerability of Sor Juana to the forces that would eventually still her pen become apparent. Having chosen the cloister rather than marriage in order to pursue her studies, she had also put herself in a position where ecclesiastical authority could ultimately prevent her from doing so.

The clearest articulation of Sor Juana's embrace of the intellectual life of a scholar is to be found in a series of letters that she wrote to her male superiors over the course of some ten years. Beginning with the *Carta de Monterrey* [*Letter of Monterrey*], addressed to her confessor, the Jesuit Antonio Núñez de Miranda, and concluding with her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*, Sor Juana reveals the breadth and depth of her own learning. At the same time, she enunciates a defense of a woman's right to education in rebuttal of those who would constrain or even deny it to her. In the process, she

22 This represents a play on bachelors' degrees, here used as "prattles or babblings."

23 García Valdés, ed., *Los empeños de una casa*, 51.

evokes exemplary figures of learning—both male and female—whom she imitates. Ultimately, she includes herself among them.

Sor Juana's entrance into monastic life had been encouraged and assisted by Núñez de Miranda. Over time, their relationship became strained as he urged her to forego secular studies in favor of the sacred. In a letter to him identified now as the *Carta de Monterrey*, written in either 1681 or 1682,[24] she ostensibly responds to his criticism of her literary endeavors in writing poetry. In a broader context, however, she fights against "the walling-in of her intellect, the imposition of reduced parameters to intellectual activity because of her condition as woman and as nun" (Scott, "'If you are not pleased'" 432).

Early in the letter, she distinguishes between public and private discourse, acknowledging that women are customarily excluded from the former. Yet, as she explains, public performance of her poetic works, which her confessor criticized, was done as an act of kindness or in response to requests from those in authority. In such instances, she queries: "ya que en su opinión es pecado hacer versos, ¿en cuál de estas ocaciones [sic] ha sido tan grave el delicto de hacerlo?" (Alatorre 620); [since in your opinion it is a sin to write verses, on which of these occasions was the transgression of having written them so grave?] (Paz 497).[25]

Of far greater concern to her was the antipathy directed against her private studies, criticism that she heard from both men and women:

> Las mugeres sienten que las exceda. Los hombres, que paresca que los igualo. Unos no quisieran que supiera tanto, otros dicen que avía de saver más, para tanto aplauso. Las viejas no quisieran que otras supieran más. Las mozas, que otras parescan bien. Y unos y otros, que viesse conforme a las reglas de su dictamen ... Que hasta el hacer esta forma de letra algo razonable me costó una prolija y pesada persecuzión, no más de porque dicen que parecía letra de hombre y que no era decente, con que me obligaron a malearla adrede, y de esto toda esta comunidad es testigo. (Alatorre 620–621)
>
> [Women feel that men surpass them, and that I seem to place myself on a level with men; some wish that I did not know so much; others say that I ought to know more to merit such applause; elderly women do not wish that other women know more than they; young women, that others present a good appearance; and one and all wish me to conform to the rules of their judgment; ... for even having a reasonably good handwriting has cost me worrisome and lengthy persecution, for no other reason than they said it looked like a man's writing, and that it wasn't proper, whereupon they forced me to deform it purposely, and of this the entire community is witness.] (Paz 497)[26]

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24 Franco (*Plotting Women* 39) links the *Carta de Monterrey*, the *Carta Atenagórica*, and the *Respuesta*. Scott ("'If you are not pleased" 430) indicates that the first letter anticipates the *Respuesta*. Trabulse (intro. *Carta Atenagórica* 41–2) perceives in Núñez de Miranda's actions "el falso celo piadoso de un confesor intolerante" [the false and pious zeal of an intolerant confessor].

25 Franco (*Plotting Women* 40) believes that Sor Juana rejects "Núñez de Miranda's condemnation of her poetry as a 'public scandal' on the grounds that he did not know what he was talking about."

26 Cervantes (*El testamento*) reproduces documents and signatures of Sor Juana.

Her defense is both erudite and personal, for she invokes the sacred and profane authors who have served as source and inspiration of her work, most especially those women who corresponded with Saint Jerome, principal among them Saint Paula, patroness of her monastery. (Alatorre 622–23; Paz 499). She credits God with inclining her intellect to study, observing that "no me pareció que era contra su ley santíssima ni contra la obligación de mi estado. Yo tengo este genio. Si es malo yo me hize. Nací con él y con él he de morir." [I have not seen that it was against His most holy law nor contrary to the obligations of my state. I have this nature; if it is evil, I am the product of it; I was born with it and with it I shall die] (Alatorre 623; Paz 499). She then asks pointedly why God would prefer ignorance better than knowledge since he is supreme wisdom (Alatorre 623; Paz 500). In this as in the other rhetorical questions that fill the letter, Sor Juana leaves it to her reader to supply the obvious answers.

At first glance, Sor Juana's argument recalls that of Sor Teresa de Cartagena in the *Admiraçion operum Dey.*[27] In fact, it reverses the roles of men and women in their acquisition and use of knowledge. In Sor Teresa's work, the author recapitulates the doubts expressed by men and women concerning her composition of the *Arboleda de los enfermos* even as she credits the admirable power of God in guiding her "weak, womanly understanding." In the *Carta de Monterrey*, Sor Juana wrests the intellectual high ground from her critics in a way not found in Sor Teresa. When she evokes exemplary figures of erudition from antiquity, she begins with two doctors of the church, Saints Augustine and Ambrose, and then follows with a more pointed question to Núñez himself: "Y V.R., cargado de tantas letras, ¿no piensa salvarse?" [And Your Reverence, with such learning, do you not plan to be saved?] (Alatorre 622; Paz 499). After enumerating the examples of Saint Jerome and his female followers, she subtly compares herself to Socrates, Diogenes, and Aristotle (623). Finally, she follows her rhetorical question concerning ignorance and learning by demanding: "Sálvase San Antonio con su ignorancia santa, norabuena, que San Agustín va por otro camino, y ninguno va errado" [That St, Anthony was saved in his holy ignorance is well and good. St. Augustine chose the other path, and neither of them went astray] (Alatorre 623; Paz 500). Her *exempla* imply that Núñez de Miranda shares the ignorance of his patron saint, Anthony, while she, a nun in a monastery following the Augustinian rule, is heir to the intellectual life of the Fathers of the Church. It is not only a daring and personal rejection of her confessor's assertion of control, but also the usurpation of a masculine *exemplum* as her own.[28]

At the conclusion, Sor Juana dismisses Núñez de Miranda as her confessor, reminding him that he has no claim by family tie or ecclesiastic authority to continue. At the same time, she rejects the coercion that she believes he has tried to exercise over her (Alatorre 624; Paz 501). While it is possible that Sor Juana may never have sent this letter—although she did dismiss her confessor—the issues raised in it

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27 See Chapter 1, pp. 25–7.

28 Moraña ("Orden dogmático" 205–25) examines the style of the letter in some detail. Scott ("'If you are not pleased'" 430) finds the letter to Núñez "strident, openly rebellious and at times insolent". See Bénassy-Berling ("Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz aujourd-hui" 23), who also comments on it.

and the revelations concerning her own education reverberate in the two subsequent works that signaled the end of her literary endeavors.

In 1690 at the behest of the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, Sor Juana wrote a refutation of a sermon preached some forty years earlier in Lisbon by the Jesuit Antonio de Vieyra (Schons, "Some Obscure Points" 49).[29] Unbeknownst to the nun, the bishop published her work under the grandiloquent title of *Carta Atenagórica*, that is, a letter worthy of Athena. Appended to it was another letter ostensibly written by Sor Filotea de la Cruz of the convent of Santíssima Trinidad de Puebla, which both praised Sor Juana's *Carta* even as it lamented the fact that the author did not devote herself wholly to sacred rather than profane letters. Sor Filotea was, in fact, the bishop himself.

Overtly, the object of Sor Juana's criticism in the *Carta Atenagórica* (or *Crisis de un sermón*, as she titled it), is the argument put forward in Vieyra's sermon concerning Christ's greatest expression of love. Beneath the surface, however, other, covert arguments are at work. Recent scholarship suggests that the author actually takes to task her ecclesiastical superiors in Mexico under the guise of critiquing Vieyra.[30] While the *Carta Atenagórica*, like the *Carta de Monterrey* and the subsequent *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*, invokes the humility *topos* of "una mujer ignorante" [an ignorant woman], what is not in doubt is Sor Juana's command of theological and scriptural sources as well as her considerable rhetorical skills. As in the *Carta de Monterrey*, she again claims the intellectual high ground by aligning herself with the Fathers of the Church while comparing Vieyra to the pagan Cicero:

> ... Si hay un Tulio moderno que se atreva a adelantar a un Augustino, a un Tomás y a un Crisóstomo, ¿qué mucho que haya quien ose responder a este Tulio? Si hay quien ose combatir en el ingenio con tres más que hombres, ¿qué mucho es que haya quien haga cara a uno, aunque tan grande hombre? Y más si se acompaña y ampara de aquellos tres gigantes, pues mi asunto es defender las razones de los tres Santos Padres. Mal dije. Mi asunto es defenderme con las razones de los tres Santos padres. (*Obras* 812)
>
> [... if there is a modern Cicero who makes so bold as to surpass an Augustine, a Thomas and a Chrysostom, who can dare to respond to him? If there is someone who dares to compete in intelligence with these three great men, what more is there {to do} for one who faces just one of them, even such a great man? And, moreover, if one consults and seeks protection from those three giants, then my job is to defend the reasoning of the three Holy Fathers. I misspeak. My task is to defend myself with the reasoning of the three Holy Fathers.] (My translation)

By casting her lot with the Fathers at the outset, she effectively undercuts the theological foundation of Vieyra's argument even as she aligns herself with male exemplary models. What follows is an exposition of the sophistry she believes he

29 See Blacut ("Critica que Fez Soror Juana" 3–7) for details on Vierya's sermon and Sor Juana's critique. Paz (398–400) offers a brief biography of the bishop, pointing out that he had founded *colegios de doncellas* in Puebla.

30 Paz (402) believes that Sor Juana along with Fernández de Santa Cruz aims her criticism at Archbishop Aguiar y Seijas, an admirer of Vieyra. Schüller (725) considers Núñez de Miranda as the object of her criticism.

has employed in making it.[31] Near the end of the letter, she once again addresses the bishop, apologizing for the "rudeza, cortedad, y poco ingenio" [coarseness, brevity and little talent] of her effort. While this mandatory reiteration of the humility *topos* casts her in the mould of such literary predecessors as Sor Teresa de Cartagena and Santa Teresa de Jesús, Sor Juana also turns even this simple acknowledgement to her advantage. She paints herself as God's instrument, claiming that the *Carta Atenagórica*

> no es obra de mi entendimiento, sino sólo que Dios quiere castigar con tan flaco instrumento la, al parecer, elación de aquella proposición: 'que no habría quien le diese otra fineza igual,' con que cree el orador que puede aventajar su ingenio a los de los tres Santos Padres y no cree que puede haber quien le iguale. (*Obras* 824)
>
> [is not a work of my understanding, but only that God wishes to punish with such a weak instrument {as I am} the apparent elation of that proposition 'that there would be someone who could give an equal expression of love,' with which the orator believes that his talent can best that of the three Holy Fathers and he doesn't believe that anyone can equal him.]

Implicitly, he has met his match in Sor Juana who sees her action as comparable to those of Judith and Deborah. Nevertheless, she also suggests to the bishop that "con todo, pareciere en esto poco cuerda, con romper V. Md. este papel quedara multado el error de haberlo escrito" (*Obras* 824) [All things considered, it might seem a little prudent that Your Grace destroy this paper since things might turn out badly for having written it.] As Sor Teresa de Cartagena before her, Sor Juana invokes the figure of Judith, a *mujer flaca* who became a *mujer varonil* with God's grace. Like Deborah and Judith, Sor Juana assumes a traditionally male role when needed.[32]

In his prefatory letter accompanying the *Carta Atenagórica*, the bishop assumes his own guise as a "flaca mujer" in order to reprimand the author's interest in "Filósofos y Poetas" rather than study of the Gospels.[33] In a linguistic turn not unlike that of the *gracioso*, Castaño, of *Los empeños de una casa*, the bishop becomes a transgendered voice "appropriating through prescription and circumscription, feminine discourse" (Arteaga, "Chiasmus" 94). Even his choice of names contains a hidden message. As Sor Filotea or lover of God, "he can write to Sor Filosofía (philosophy, lover of knowledge, author of the letter worthy of Athena's knowledge)" (Ludmer, "Tricks" 91). More telling still is the association of "Filotea" with a work by Saint Francis de Sales, a favorite of Fernández de Santa Cruz. The *Introduction to the Devout Life* was popularly known as the "Filotea." Thus, the bishop also suggests that Sor Juana devote her energies to sacred rather than profane subjects through his choice of pseudonyms. Even as Sor Filotea asserts that Sor Juana has

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31 See Scott ("'Let Your Women'" 513) and Bénassy-Berling ("Une intellectuelle" 28–9), for more on her critique of his logic.

32 See Franco (*Plotting Women* 41), who comments on this passage in similar terms.

33 Cited in Schons ("Some Obscure Points" 50). See *A Sor Juana Anthology*, Trueblood, ed. (201), for a translation of Sor Filotea's letter. See also Arenal and Powell, eds. (*The Answer/La Respuesta* 27), who contend that "the central tenet of the bishop's prefatory letter … is that all but divine knowledge should be eschewed."

done honor to "their" sex through her critique of Vieyra's sermon, s/he also tempers her admiration by suggesting that the nun imitate the examples of Santa Teresa, Saint Gregory Nazianzen, and other, unnamed saints, who confined their writings to wholly religious subjects (Tapia Méndez, *Carta de Sor Juana* 85; Trueblood, ed., *Sor Juana Anthology* 200).

What follows is a problematic rationale that rests on a series of negative assertions that invokes the authority of male authors whose appeal to misogynists is well known. The bishop as Sor Filotea writes:

> I do not subscribe to the commonplace view of those who condemn the practice of letters in women, since so many have applied themselves to literary study, not failing to win praise from Saint Jerome. True, Saint Paul says women should not teach; but he does not order women not to study so as to grow wiser. He wished only to preclude any risk of presumptuousness in our sex, inclined as it is to vanity ....
>
> Letters that breed arrogance God does not want in women. But the Apostle does not reject them so long as they do not remove women from a position of obedience ....
>
> I do not on this account censure the reading of these authors; but I pass on to you some advice of [Jean] Gerson's. Lend yourself to these studies; do not sell yourself to them, nor yet allow yourself to be carried away by them. The humanities are slaves and as such they have their usefulness for sacred studies. (Trueblood, ed. 200–201/ Tapia Méndez, *Carta de Sor Juana* 85–6)

Sor Filotea offers a gesture of ambiguous magnanimity when s/he alludes to the Pauline dictum and cites Christine de Pizan's opponent, Jean Gerson, in his rejection of the humanities. When s/he follows these assertions by urging Sor Juana to imitate Saint Jerome's rejection of Cicero in favor of Scripture and Boethius's presumed embrace of Christianity over philosophy, the underlying criticism is made patent.

Since Sor Juana's letter is written in obedience to the bishop's request and published without her consent, the implied criticism of her actions is without foundation. Furthermore, the more egregious demonstration of intellectual arrogance is that found in Vieyra's sermon, which presumed to argue against the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church whom Sor Juana defends in the *Carta*. Lastly, in the closing remarks of Sor Filotea's letter, s/he laments that "lástima es que tan gran entendimiento, de tal manera se abata a las rateras noticias de la tierra, que no desee penetrar lo que pasa en el Cielo" [it is a pity that so great a mind should stoop to lowly earthbound knowledge and not desire to probe into what transpires in heaven] (Tapia Méndez, *Carta de Sor Juana* 86; Trueblood, ed., 202). It is a curious criticism since the *Carta Atenagórica* more than any other work of Sor Juana's "probe[s] into what transpires in heaven" far more than it "stoop[s] to lowly earthbound knowledge." Clearly the bishop in the guise of fellow nun has in mind the other literary endeavors of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[34]

Sor Juana's response to the criticism voiced in Sor Filotea's letter assumed a variety of forms in both prose and, later, poetry. First in chronology is a letter, only

34 Peden, ed. (*Woman of Genius* 3) points out the contradictions in the bishop's critique, noting that Sor Juana wrote far more on religious than secular subjects.

recently discovered, entitled *Carta de Sor Serafina* [*Letter of Sister Seraphim*] (Volek 341). It includes a number of enigmas, not least of which is the identity of its author (Trabulse, *El enigma* 20), but its discoverer makes a convincing argument that it is the work of Sor Juana.[35] The ironic tone employed by Sor Serafina serves "not only to refute but also to ridicule her adversaries and critics" (Trabulse, *El enigma* 10–11) (my translation).

Part of the ridicule rests on the author's use of puns of Vieryra's name and judgment:

> … Díjele entonces que me parecía muy bien el Juicio de no parecer; que se quedase el buen soldado en paz, o que se fuera a Guerra, que a mano está la Cuaresma, donde hallaría bien en que batallar y que allí *Viera* y *Viera* sin duda, allí a Guerra galana lo bastante para no salir con la suya a Guerra viva. (Trabulse, ed., *Carta de Serafina* 38)
>
> [… I told you then that it seemed to me better the Judgement not appear; that the good soldier might remain in peace, or if he were to go to War, that Lent is at hand, where one might well find something with which to battle and that there one might *be seen* and *seen* without doubt, {that} elegant {literary} warfare is sufficient so as not to engage in actual combat.] (Emphasis added) (My translation)

When she follows by invoking the exemplary figure of the warrior queen, Camila, Serafina/Sor Juana continues the battle with Vieyra and her other critics, especially Sor Filotea. She likens the bishop to a *lobo* [wolf] rather than the *cordera* [lamb], a more appropriate symbol of his pastoral duties as Christ's *adalid* [representative]. The lamb also symbolizes the virginal Camila and Ynez [Agnes] (vv. 78–85).[36]

Further underscoring Camila's victory, Serafina plays once more on issues of identity and generative faculties manifested in the *Carta Atenagórica*, where Sor Juana defended the works of the Fathers of the Church against Vieyra's arguments:

> No tan fiera, que este día
> en la mugeril victoria
> (dijo Camila) la gloria
> de los PADRES es la mía
> Para gloria de las MADRES
> Sepa en el mundo todo hombre
> que hoy, en Camila, más nombre
> han conseguido los PADRES. (vv. 103–10)
>
> ['Not so fierce, that this day in womanly victory,' {said Camilla}, 'the glory of the Fathers is mine.' For the glory of Mothers let the whole masculine world know that today, in Camilla, the Fathers have attained more fame.] (My translation)

What follows is yet another play on words, in this instance the "yerros de la imprenta" which transpose the "t" of *Patrum* into *Partum* in the Aeneid. Serafina argues:

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35 Trabulse, "La guerra de las finezas" 206–11.

36 Trabulse, ed., *Carta de Serafina* 39. See Boccaccio (Chapter 39, *Concerning Famous Women*) and Christine, (*Book* 1.24.1), both of whom summarize the life and deeds of this virgin queen.

> Todo el yerro ha estado, dicen, en la impresión del *Sermón* celebérrimo *de las finezas de Christo*, donde se erró no sólo el PARTUM y el PATRUM sino todo lo demás. … Erróse el PARTUM porque no es el parto legítimo, ni hijo de tan gran Padre. Pero la principal errata estuvo en el PATRUM. Fue gran yerro corregir a los PADRES. (Trabulse, ed., *Carta de Serafina* 41)
>
> [The whole mistake has been, they say, in the printing of the celebrated Sermon of the expressions of Christ's love, where it erred not only in the partuition but in the paternity of the rest as well. … The partuition was erroneous because it was not a legitimate birth, nor the son of so great a Father. But the principle mistake was in the paternity. It was a great mistake to correct the Fathers {of the Church}.]

In the concluding verses, the author pokes fun at the bishop himself in his guise as Sor Filotea de la Cruz:

> Si confuso caracol
> es lo dicho, Madre Cruz
> aplíquele su arrebol
> que yo no lo saco a luz
> sino que los saco al sol.
> Al fuego así que ilumina
> acrisolando finezas
> de Christo en la Cruz se afina
> Alma, a pesar de tibiezas
> *que de Christo Serafina*. (vv. 208–17)
>
> [If the aforesaid is a confusing snail, Mother Cruz, apply your rouge to it so that I do not publish it but, rather, that I take it out in the sun. To the fire, so that it illuminates by refining the expressions of Christ's love on the Cross, the Soul may be polished, in spite of the weaknesses that are mine.][37] (My translation)

Trabulse considers this *Carta* a satiric counterpart to the longer and better-known *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*, written shortly afterwards and published in the *Fama y Obras póstumas* (25). Part of the irony rests on the *nom-de-plume* adopted by the author. If the bishop as Filotea evokes Saint Francis de Sales and his *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Sor Serafina alludes to the *Divine Hierarchies* of the Pseudo-Dionysius, where the seraphim stand closest to God and represent His most passionate lovers. In that respect, they exceed, by far, the love of Filotea.[38]

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37 According to Covarrubias, *caracol* literally means a snail, but also denotes a spiral staircase. In the plural form, it refers to cooked snails, which are a symbol "de las mugeres que, viendo amor en sus galanes, se ablandan, y siendo muy encendido, con el demasiado amor se endurecen" [women who, seeing love in their gallants, relent, and being aflame with too much love, they put them off (300)] (my translation). In Mexico it may also refer to a woman's nightdress. Sor Juana seems to be playing on multiple meanings of the word here. At the same time, the reference to *arrebol* recalls both a red sky and rouge, even as it suggests the color of the bishop's robes. Finally, by calling her correspondent *Madre Cruz* rather than Madre Filotea, Sor Juana is able to play off Christ on the cross in what follows.

38 See Schüller (725–6), who makes this observation and expands on it. Trabulse (*El enigma* 15–17) believes this letter supports his thesis that the criticism voiced in the *Carta Atenagórica* is directed at Núñez de Miranda rather than Vieyra.

In contrast to the pseudonymous critique by Sor Serafina, in the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea* Sor Juana responds openly to the charges and implied criticisms raised in the letter from the bishop as Sor Filotea de la Cruz. But she also expands her reply to encompass more than her own study and writing, concluding with a veritable defense of the right of all women to an education. In doing so, she carries the argument presented in the earlier *Carta de Monterrey* to its logical conclusion. As the reply unfolds, Sor Juana enumerates both male and female *exempla* from antiquity to her own day in order to support her argument. By using her own life and education as a model, she includes herself among those exemplary predecessors and contemporaries whom she considers worthy examples to imitate. As so many of the educated women who preceded her, Sor Juana thus establishes herself as both author and authority in refutation of those male critics who would silence women's voices.[39]

In recognition of the full import of Sor Filotea's critique as an attempt to silence her, Sor Juana begins her response by ironically acknowledging the virtual impossibility she faces in knowing how to answer "[la] doctísimia, discretísima, santísima y amorisísima carta" [the most learned, most prudent, most holy, and most loving letter] (Peden, ed., 14/15). Indeed, her initial response is one of dumbstruck wonder, not unlike that of a number of eminent examples drawn from Scripture and patristics. Even though Sor Juana maintains the conceit of female authorship of the letter from the bishop in the linguistic guise of fellow nun, she does so in a way that acknowledges his/her assumption of a superior position that seeks, at the very least, to control women's speech, or, at its most draconian, to silence it completely.

Ironically, Sor Juana evokes as her exemplary models predominantly male figures left speechless before higher authorities: Saint Thomas Aquinas before his teacher, Saint Ambrose; Saul, Saint Paul, and John, the Evangelist, before God; and Moses before Pharaoh. Like them, Sor Juana declares: "Señora mía, sólo responderé que no sé qué responderé" [And thus I, lady, shall respond only that I do not know how to respond] (Peden, ed., 20/21). Yet, respond she does, in a manner that draws comparisons between herself and a whole panoply of *exempla* even as she evokes some of the criticism raised in the earlier *Carta de Monterrey*.

By equating herself with the Angelic Doctor in the opening sentence of the *Respuesta*, Sor Juana recalls both the *Carta de Monterrey* and the *Carta Atenagórica*. In the first letter, she aligned herself with Saint Augustine while comparing Núñez de Miranda to Saint Anthony. In the second, she defended Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine against the critique of another Anthony, Vieyra. In the *Respuesta*, she initially assumes the role of the silent pupil, Aquinas, before his teacher, Albert (Peden, ed., 14/15). It is, however, a silence fraught less with admiration than with incredulity.

While Sor Juana had preferred silence—that is, not publishing her remarks—Sor Filotea not only ignored her wishes by committing them to print, but s/he also gave them their pretentious title (Peden, ed., 17/19). She reminds Sor Filotea that she has never written anything except in obedience "and then only to give pleasure to

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39 See Chapter 1, pp. 9–18 and 25–6. See also Guillon Barnett ("Función retórico-actancial" 239–45), Larisch ("Sor Juana's Apologia" 48–53), and Ludmer ("Tretas del débil" 47–54), all of whom comment on Sor Juana's rhetoric more closely.

others" (24/25).[40] Implicitly, the bishop is one of these "others." When asked to write, Sor Juana has demured, reminding Sor Filotea that she does not study "para escribir, ni menos para enseñar … sino sólo por ver si con estudio ignor[a] menos" [to write, even less to teach … but only to the end that if I study, I will be ignorant of less] (24–6/25–7). Nevertheless, as a daughter of Saint Jerome she is both authorized and encouraged to study and to write. As a dutiful daughter of the Hieronymites, Sor Juana bows to the higher authority of her founder's advice. If that is not sufficient justification, she accedes to a higher authority still, for it is God who has given her this "natural impulse" to study (26/27).

Demonstrating mastery of the Biblical, patristic, and classical sources on which she bases the *Respuesta*, Sor Juana organizes her reply along the lines of scholastic argumentation.[41] The style "is based on patterns of expression and composition set by the leading male figures of classical antiquity and early Christianity." Yet, as Arenal also points out, the work "includes use of narrative modes common to women's religious writing of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (Arenal and Powell, eds., *The Answer* 21). In its overall organization it adheres to "'the orders to be followed in forensic causes'" (23–4). Thus, Sor Juana effectively ignores the proscription on women's participation in "public discussion, forensic argument, logical fence, and the like" enunciated by Bruni d'Arezzo some two centuries earlier. Instead, she takes *emulatio* to heart.[42]

Following these preliminary remarks, Sor Juana moves seamlessly to an account of her own life, drawing from it those events or insights that will further her argument. In doing so, she joins the long line of monastic women writers who had authored spiritual biographies for their confessors or their fellow nuns.[43] Unlike them, however, hers is a revelation of an intellectual far more than a spiritual life. As a result, her reasons for entering a religious order were made even though, as she admits, the regimen of community life ran counter to the freedom and quiet necessary for her scholarly work (Peden, ed., 26/27). Still, her ultimate choice of the Hieronymites over the Carmelites guaranteed that her studies could continue.[44]

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40 Wiesner (160) remarks that "women who did publish … claimed that their works were really private, but that some external force had compelled them to be published" as a protection against accusations of other kinds of loose behavior.

41 1. While the structure of the *Respuesta* imitates scholastic forms, the author also pays due deference to feminine discourse. Thus, she restates the humility *topos*, subtly evoking Santa Teresa among others. Yet, like the saint, she, too, asserts that she writes in obedience to superiors and with a healthy regard for the watchful eye of the Inquisition. Cortest, "Some Thoughts" 83. Lavrín ("Values" 382–3) cites the example of Sor Juana when she remarks that "learning in a woman was not encouraged and, at times, was forbidden within the walls of the convent. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the latter seems to have been the prevailing attitude."

42 See Chapter 1, p. 5. The *Respuesta* became "public discussion" when it was published in Madrid in 1700 as part of the *Fama*.

43 See Myers ("Sor Juana's *Respuesta*" 460–61; 468) and Ludmer (*Tretas* 88–9).

44 See Leonard (*Baroque Times* 179) for comments on her choice of religious order and Myers ("Sor Juana's *Respuesta*" 462–4) for the nature of her vocation.

The scope of her intellectual interests is apparent in the *Respuesta* as she enumerates the subjects she studied. Beginning with her self-instruction in Latin (Peden, ed., 30/31), she then applied herself to logic, rhetoric, physics, music, arithmetic, geometry, architecture, art, history, canon and civil law, astronomy, not to mention classical literature, and, finally, sacred scripture and theology (34/41). By her own admission, her insatiable desire to learn became such a trial that she could say with Saint Jerome that "'my conscience is witness to what efforts I have expended, what difficulties I have suffered, how many times I have despaired, how often I have ceased my labors and turned to them again, driven by the hunger for knowledge'" (Peden, ed., 42/43). Even when ordered to put her books aside, she found herself studying natural phenomena in the kitchen or by observing children at play (60/63).

This deliberate, hierarchical curriculum was intended to provide her with the requisite knowledge to advance systematically toward the study of theology. As she puts it: "¿cómo entenderá el estilo de la Reina de las Ciencias quien aún no sabe el de las ancilas?" [how could one undertake the study of the Queen of Sciences if first one had not come to know her servants?] (32/35).[45] While her formal studies might occur in her library, her investigations were not confined to printed texts alone. Rather, when books were unavailable, she turned her attention to everything around her, "sirviéndome … de libro toda esta máquina universal" [reading in them, as … in books, all the workings of the universe] (58/59). By including observations made in the kitchen, the cloister, or the playground as equally important to her studies, Sor Juana extends the scope of her classroom to encompass traditionally women's places. In doing so, she "justifies her learning and that of all women by fitting it into the mold of traditional learning. The world is seen as a harmonious machine in which all parts worked together and which led her to a knowledge of God" (Montross, *Virtue* 27). Henceforth, the barriers erected by the *letrados* might be breached by those like her with access to books and inquiring minds.[46]

Having proffered predominantly male models to imitate at the beginning of the *Respuesta*, Sor Juana follows the extended example of her own life with a catalogue of exemplary women whom she both emulates and joins. In doing so, she expands the authority of women to speak and to teach. She finds these examples of learned women in written texts from the Bible to her own times. Among them are Deborah, the lawgiver and military leader, who governed "el pueblo donde había tantos varones doctos" [a people among whom there were many learned men] and the "sapientísima reina de Sabá tan docta que se atreve a tentar con enigmas la sabiduría del mayor de los sabios" [a most wise Queen of Saba, so learned that she dares to challenge with hard questions the wisdom of the greatest of all wise men] (Peden, ed., 64/65). She lauds Minerva for her wisdom; Pola Argentaria for her writing skills; Zenobia

45 Franco (*Plotting Women* 46–7) compares Sor Juana's hierarchical approach to study to the gradations of prayer found in the mystics.

46 Franco (*Plotting Women* 23) claims that Sor Juana "directly defied the clergy's feminization of ignorance." Myers ("The Addressee" 39) states that "her work is the first to dismantle the traditional church image of woman as passive and ignorant, then to reconstruct an image of woman as capable of pursuing intellectual and religious knowledge."

for her wisdom and courage; and Nicostrata for her erudition in Greek and Latin (66/67). These Biblical and classical *exempla*, most of whom appear in any number of earlier works, here serve as models of feminine erudition whose learning did not compromise their virtue.[47] More significantly, they were wiser than the men around them.

From classical *exempla*, Sor Juana moves forward in time to include notable women of the Christian era. Among them are Catherine of Alexandria, whom she admires for "leyendo y convenciendo todas las sabidurías de los sabios de Egipto" [studying and influencing the wisdom of all the wise men of Egypt] and Gertrude of Helfta, who could "leer, escribir y enseñar" [read, write and teach].[48] She includes Paula, the patroness of her own order who was learned in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Scriptural exegesis, as well as the figures of Blesilla, Eustochium, and the other women who corresponded with Saint Jerome (Peden, ed., 66/67). She concludes with her contemporaries, such as the Queen of Sweden, Christina Alexandra, noted for her learning, valor, and magnanimity; and her friends and patronesses, the Duchess of Abeyro and the Condesa of Villaumbrosa (68/69).[49]

While queens and aristocrats could inspire poets and indulge their own particular literary tastes, the models of monastic women dedicated to the intellectual and the spiritual life are closer to Sor Juana's own experience. If holy women could also be educated women, why, then, does Sor Filotea criticize Sor Juana's decision to wed the life of the spirit with that of the mind? The women most closely associated with her own order serve as role models, as do the more recent examples of Saints Teresa of Avila and Bridget of Sweden (82/83). By association, Sor Juana is one of them, a woman who has chosen the monastery as a refuge from marriage and as a safe harbor in which to pursue her studies.[50] By implication, she is also one of them in her exemplarity, a worthy model to be imitated by other women. Just as her female predecessors were, she, too, is caught between exceptionality and exemplarity; that is, between irrelevance as an exception to the general rule of women as illiterate or as an example of those learned forebears whom she recalls in the *Respuesta.*[51] By inextricably linking her life to their achievements, she indicates for her reader her own view of her accomplishments. Hers is an example that may instruct other women.

Both to underscore her point and to turn Sor Filotea's attempt to silence her on its head, Sor Juana next chooses adroitly to reinterpret the Pauline dictum often invoked by men to silence women and to still their pens. Sor Juana simultaneously accepts that "women should keep silent in church" even as she rejects the broader application of it by men to proscribe learning in women altogether. On the one hand,

47 As Arenal (*The Answer/La Respuesta* 31) points out, Sor Juana also uses these *exempla* "to counteract the idea of her own rarity."

48 Scott ("'La gran turba'" 210–11) explains that Catherine of Alexandria was a favorite example for Sor Juana.

49 See Scott ("'La gran turba'" 206–23) for a summary description of all the female *exempla* mentioned in the *Respuesta*.

50 Scott ("'La gran turba'" 210) describes her as "'a daughter of St. Jerome and St Paula' [and thus] under obligation to profess letters so as not to shame her erudite parents."

51 Luciani ("Sor Juana 782) comments on the paradox of exception and example.

she concurs with the Mexican theologian Dr. Arce, who "resuelve, con su prudencia, que el leer públicamente en las cátedras y predicar en los púlpitos no es lícito a las mujeres; pero que el estudiar, escribir y enseñar privadamente no sólo es lícito, pero muy provechoso y útil" [resolves, with all prudence, that teaching publicly from a University chair, or preaching from the pulpit, is not permissible for women; but that to study, write and teach privately not only is permissible, but most advantageous and useful] (Peden, ed., 68/69). On the other hand, she recasts other Pauline passages in a way that would allow women to study and to teach. Such is the case with her elliptical citation of the letter to Titus (2:3): "anus similiter in habitu sancto, bene docentes" ["the aged woman in like manner, in holy attire ... teaching well"].[52] She qualifies her assertion by averring that study is not for all women but only for those endowed by God with the requisite virtue and talent to pursue them (68/69). In brief, women like herself may study, write, and teach in the privacy of their convents. Just as Santa Teresa before her, Sor Juana first appears to accept only to recast the Pauline dictum in more favorable terms.[53]

Part of that recasting claims that Saint Paul "no lo dijo ... a las mujeres, sino a los hombres; y que no es sólo para ellas el 'taceant,' sino para todos los que no son aptos" [did not direct these words to women, but to men; and that *keep silence* is intended not only for women, but for *all* incompetents] (Peden, ed., 72/73), among whom she has already included Pelagius, Luther, and Cazalla (70/71). Returning to Arce's authority, she quotes him citing Saint Jerome's letter to Laeta concerning the education of her daughter, Paula. She concludes that Jerome would wish his nuns to imitate, if not exceed, the education he proposed for the young Paula (74/75). In short order she defends the full spectrum of a woman's right to education from its inception to its full flowering in women such as she who have the God-given talent to engage in advanced study.

She recapitulates the arguments presented in her explanation of the "*mulieres taceant*" passage with reference to other Biblical citations and paraphrases. Citing 1 Timothy 2:11 and evoking the Psalms, she repeats her idea that the admonitions apply equally to men and women (80/81). She questions why men censure those who study privately,[54] since numerous examples of monastic women writers approved by the Church as well as those of women in the Gospel counter the argument. As both her female predecessors and her spiritual father, Saint Augustine, before her, what Sor Juana has desired is to study in order that she might be ignorant of less (Peden, ed., 82/83).

In her manipulation of the passage from Titus, she also contends that Saint Paul actually approves of women teaching other women. She laments the dearth of learned, older women to teach the younger generation, since, as a consequence, some parents neglect entirely the education of their daughters rather than allow them to be taught by men. Such peril could be avoided, she contends, if Saint Paul's

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52 Scott ("'Let your women'" 516) notes Sor Juana's alteration of this passage to buttress her argument.

53 See Ludmer ("Tricks" 93) and Bénassy-Berling (*Humanisme* 282) for an analysis of Sor Juana's argument. Arenal ("The Convent as Catalyst" 179) examines her style here.

54 It is an argument that echoes that of Sor Teresa de Cartagena. See Chapter 1, p. 26.

wishes were honored and if there were sufficient learned elder women to teach girls their letters as they do domestic crafts and other traditional skills (Peden ed., 74–7). In addition to Saint Paul's authority, she adds that of Eusebium and Saint Jerome to justify women teaching other women.[55]

In her selective interpretation of the Pauline dictum, Sor Juana joins her female forebears in rejecting a blanket proscription of women's learning and teaching. Certainly in her own experience, she had benefited from the teaching of an older woman in her first lessons at the *amiga* even as she had taught others in turn within the Hieronymite convent. In the numerous examples and authorities that she cites, she offers her reader objective arguments to further her case for women's education even as she defends the subjective example that is her own life.

Sor Juana begins and ends the *Respuesta* with recourse to male examples. If writers such as Boccaccio and Álvaro de Luna could offer readers female figures as worthy *exempla* for men to imitate, Sor Juana embraces male and female models for women to emulate. Like Saint Augustine, she is cautious in the face of praise (Peden, ed., 96/97); like Saint Jerome, she studies a broad range of subjects; like Christ, she suffers persecution for her pursuit of wisdom (50/51).[56] By aligning herself with these male examples, Sor Juana embodies the concept of the *mujer varonil* in ways only suggested by earlier models.

No less powerful are other female *exempla* whom Sor Juana invokes, chief among them the Virgin Mary. Defending her composition of poetry against her critics, she points out that "la Reina de la Sabiduría y Señora nuestra con sus sagrados labios, entonó el Cántico de la *magnificat* [Queen of Wisdom, Our Lady, with Her sacred lips, intoned the Canticle of the Magnificat] (Peden, ed., 88/89). As is the case with so many of her examples, this reference may be read in different ways. The overt sense is that writing poetry is an acceptable activity for even a nun since the Mother of God composed it as well. At the same time, the specific Biblical event cited recalls the opening reference in the *Respuesta* to the silence of Saint Elizabeth. She is silent so that she might listen to Mary as she sings the *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46–55). As if to further underscore the connection between her act of composing poetry in imitation of the Virgin Mary, Sor Juana also reminds Sor Filotea that she composed two other groups of poems–the *Ejercicios de la Encarnación* [*Exercises of the Incarnation*] and the *Ofrecimientos de los Dolores* [*Offerings of the Sorrows*]—recalling events in the life of Mary. In one seemingly disingenuous statement she turns the tables on her detractors. Unlike the *Carta Atenagórica*, these poems were published with the author's consent although without her name attached. They serve not only as proof that not all of her writings are secular in nature but that Sor Filotea's principal criticism is without foundation. To drive the point home, she offers to send a copy of these poems, originally written for the edification of other nuns, to the bishop disguised as a nun. It is a not so subtle reminder that *his* episcopal predecessors saw

55 Again Scott ("'Let your women'" 517) shows how Sor Juana alters the text to fit her argument.

56 See Arenal ("The Convent as Catalyst" 167). Cortest ("Some Thoughts" 87) and Myers ("Sor Juana's *Respuesta*" 46) explain her association with the sufferings of Christ.

fit to make appropriate literature available to women through translation, publication, and distribution.[57]

Just as Christine de Pizan before her, Sor Juana also found inspiration in the example of Saint Catherine of Alexandria. As noted earlier, she cites her in the *Respuesta* (66/67). Yet, it is in a series of *villancicos* celebrating the feast of the saint that Sor Juana explores the example of this early Christian virgin and martyr in more detail.[58] The *villancicos* are also among the last works she wrote following the controversy generated by the *Carta Atenagórica* and her subsequent *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*. At the same time, they present a "necessary compliment to the views expressed in the *Respuesta*" (Merrim, "Toward a Feminist Reading" 24).

As was the case in her *Cartas* and *Respuesta*, Sor Juana once again evokes both male and female examples in the *villancicos* dedicated to Saint Catherine. In the first, it is by indirection when she addresses the Nile which flows through Alexandria, "que de Moíses fue cuna/ … Más venturoso ahora" [which was Moses's cradle/ ... more fortunate now] (*Obras* 286–7) because of Catherine's birth. Glantz believes that Sor Juana finds in Moses a kindred spirit, like her a fatherless child cast adrift in dangerous waters ("La autobiografía" 36–7). Yet, the poet juxtaposes Catherine of Alexandria with Old Testament matriarchs as well, claiming that she is "más lozana/ que Abigaíl, Esther, Raquel, Susana … [que] en las virtudes trueca/de Debora, Jael, Judith, Rebeca," [more bountiful than Abigail, Esther, Rachel, Susannah … whose virtues are hailed by Deborah, Jael, Judith, {and} Rebecca]. Similarly, "excedió su cara/la de Ruth, Bathsabé, Thamar y Sara" [yet she was fairer than Ruth, Bathsheba, Tamar, and Sarah] (*Obras* #312, pp. 286–7/Trueblood, ed., 139). In the second *villancico*, Sor Juana insists that Catherine's triumph was greater than Judith's (287).

Saint Catherine of Alexandria not only exceeds in beauty and virtue the female, scriptural archetypes indicated, but, as Sor Juana claims in the fourth *villancico*, she also equals Moses in her defense of the faith:

> ¡Oh Providencia altísima! ¿Quién duda
> que sólo fue por Ascendiente regio
> de Catarina, en quien la Ley de Gracia
> su defensa miró y su cumplimiento,
>
> porque si de Moíses conservó Egipto
> en su traducción pura los Preceptos,
> también en Catarina ministrase
> quien defendiese los del Evangelio? (*Obras* 289)
>
> [Oh most High Providence! Who can doubt that it was only by Catherine's regal influence, in whom the Law of Grace looked for its defense and its fulfillment; because, if from

57 A number of writers have examined Sor Juana's "mariolatry." See, for example, Arenal ("Sor Juana," 93–105), Franco *(Plotting Women* 52–4), and Sabat de Rivers ("Ejercicios" 354–69).

58 The *villancico* is "a Spanish song form of popular origin … particularly now a Christmas carol or a popular song on some other religious theme." See Preminger, ed., *Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, s.v. "*villancico*."

> Moses Egypt conserved in its pure translation the Commandments, so, too, in Catherine was provided one who could defend those of the Gospel?] (My translation)

Catherine is the defender of the New Testament not simply by reason of her martyrdom, described in the verses that follow, but also in her learned refutation of those wise men employed by the Emperor Maximinus to force her apostasy.

Sor Juana's admiration for Catherine of Alexandria is understandable, since the events of the saint's life resonate in her own.[59] Like Catherine, Juana was noted for her beauty and her learning. Where Catherine had been subjected to public examination by learned men and triumphed, so, too, had Juana astounded all in the vice-regal court, proving in her own life that "el sexo/no es esencia en lo entendido" [one's sex is not the essence of one's understanding] [*Obras* 290]).[60] When Catherine studies, argues, and teaches in service to the Church, she engages in tasks forbidden to women by the likes of Sor Filotea and Saint Paul, but which Sor Juana finds licit in this instance.[61] God has endowed both Catherine and Juana with the intelligence that he expects them to use to serve the Church.[62] Implicitly, Sor Juana also argues on behalf of all women for equality in intellectual endeavors alongside men (Perelmuter, "Las voces femeninas" 207).[63]

The eighth *villancico* presents a dialogue in which a number of speakers consider which of the seven wonders of the ancient world is the greatest. In describing each in turn, the poet associates three of the four with female figures before returning to Catherine as the object of her admiration. She begins as did Christine de Pizan in her *Book of the City of Ladies* with the work of Semiramis, who built the walls of Babylon; then passes to the other wonders in turn, including the Mausoleum that Artemisia constructed; the Temple of Diana built in Ephesus; and, finally, to the rarest, the lighthouse of Alexandria. In the last allusion, Sor Juana subtly ties these

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59 Tenorio (128–9) claims that "Sor Juana hace del martirio un asunto personal … la monja 'usa' el martirio de Catarina como una alegoría de su propia circunstancia vital" [Sor Juana makes martyrdom a personal matter...the nun uses the martyrdom of Catherine as an allegory of her own life situation] (my translation).

60 See Chang-Rodríguez ("Mayorías y minorías" 25–8) for more on the comparison between the two. See also Bénassy-Berling ("Une intellectuelle" 13–14) for an analysis of *Villancico* 6. Tenorio (142) doubts that Sor Juana wrote this poem primarily because of its inflammatory tone.

61 See Bénassy-Berling ("Más sobre la conversión" 465) for an explanation of this apparent contradiction.

62 See Chang-Rodríguez ("Mayorías y minorías" 27), who writes: "atrevidamente, Sor Juana atribuye así sanción divina a su firme convicción de la igualdad intelectual de varones y hembras" [daringly, Sor Juana thus attributes divine sanction to her firm conviction in the intellectual equality of men and women] (my translation).

63 Trabulse ("*La Rosa*" 209–10) believes that Sor Juana might be refuting an antifeminist tract published in Mexico in 1672 entitled *La Rosa de Alexandría*. In this work, the author, a friend of Núñez de Miranda, claims that Saint Catherine of Alexandria's learning "no era sino producto de sus 'varoniles rasgos'" [was nothing but a product of her 'manly characteristics']. He goes on to call her the "Tenth Muse of Parnassus" and "Patroness of the Muses of Egypt."

poems in praise of Catherine of Alexandria to her masterpiece, the *Primero sueño*. She concludes that

> la más peregrina
> Maravilla, es Catarina:
> que fue Muro
> de todo asalto seguro, ...
> ¡Ésta sí que es Maravilla
> que tal nombre mereció!
> ¡Ésta sí, que las otras no! (*Obras* 293)
>
> [the most singular Wonder is Catherine who was a sure defense against all assault … This is truly the Wonder that such a name she deserved! This truly and the others, not.] (My translation)

Catherine not only exceeds the wonders of the ancient world, she virtually equals the Virgin Mary. In the final *villancicos*, Sor Juana describes her as the Alexandrian rose (IX) and the morning star (X).[64] For those who believe that women only need to know how to spin and sew, Catherine was both holy and learned, proving to the devil himself "que hay mujer que sepa/más que supo él" [that there is a woman who's smarter than he] (XI.295/Trueblood, ed., 145). Sor Juana succinctly demonstrates a woman's right to learning beyond spinning and sewing in the example of Catherine of Alexandria and, by association, herself.

For Sor Juana, Catherine of Alexandria is appealing for more than the superficial congruences of their life stories. The examination that each woman underwent before "all the wise men" of their respective countries demonstrates that intelligence knows no gender. Rather, it is well within the capabilities of both women and men. Indeed, as Sor Juana argues in the *Respuesta*, if souls have no sex, neither does reason. And as many critics have shown, Sor Juana is at heart a rationalist with a passion for learning. Like Saint Catherine, she hopes to silence her critics and, by association, all those misogynists before them, through her reason and her writing.

Following the controversy surrounding the publication of the *Carta Atenagórica* and the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*, however, Sor Juana disposed of all of her books and scientific instruments then devoted the remaining years of her life to nursing her fellow nuns. She died during the epidemic of 1695 that ravaged Mexico City. Whereas Catherine of Alexandria had suffered physical martyrdom in defense of the faith, many critics have claimed a psychological martyrdom for Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz at the hands of those powerful men who tried to silence her pen.[65] The most

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64 In the litanies of the Blessed Virgin, Mary is called "rosa mystica" [mystical rose] and "stella matutina" [morning star]. Tenorio (139) points out that "como Catarina, Sor Juana es Rosa (virgen y mártir)" [like Catherine, Sor Juana is {a} rose {a virgin and martyr}] (my translation).

65 Among those who believe that she was pressured into asceticism at the end of her life are Durán ("El drama intelectual de Sor Juana" 242), Schons ("Some Obscure Points" 158), Morino ("Respuesta" 28), and Paz (463–70). Bénassy-Berling ("Sor Juana" 25, 27) finds the decision more complex as she explores its reasoning. See also Bénassy-Berling ("Une intellectuelle" 35).

powerful was, of course, Archbishop Aguiar y Seijas to whom Sor Juana gave her collection to be sold for poor relief.[66]

Yet, even after death her voice was heard, for, as noted above, the third and final edition of her works was published in Madrid in 1700 under the title *Fama y obras pósthumas del fénix de México*. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the *Fama*, however, is the epithet used to describe her in the title. By calling her the "fénix de México," the editor immediately underscores her uniqueness as well as her triumph over death in the form of her writings. The use of the epithets of Phoenix and Muse emphasize the poet's uniqueness and erudition. Still, as Luciani points out, they also marginalize her by calling attention to her as exotic and extraordinary, "restándole todo lo que pudiera ser motivo de escándalo o de perplejidad. Presenta a una Sor Juana que es lo suficientemente distinta como para ser interesante, pero no tanto como para representar una amenaza" [removing from her everything that could be a motive for scandal or confusion. They present a Sor Juana who is sufficiently different enough to be interesting, but not so much as to constitute a threat] ("Sor Juana … epígrafe" 783) (my translation). Their ambivalence reflects that found in the sermon preached in Sor Juana's own convent in 1691 by Francisco-Javier Palavicino, who calls her the Minerva of America, whose great genius is unfortunately "limitado con la cortapisa de mujeril. … la Madre Juana Inés de la Cruz [es] ... parto fecundísimo del más divinizado entendimiento del Jerónimo Júpiter" [limited by the feminine impediment ... Mother Juana Inés de la Cruz {is} … the very fertile creation of the most divine understanding of Jerome Jupiter][67] (my translation).

In an earlier work, Sor Juana's friend, Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, praised her *Neptuno alegórico*—the triumphal arch raised in honor of the new viceroy and his wife as they assumed their positions in Mexico City—by remarking on "la enciclopedia y universalidad de sus letras, para que se supiera que en un sólo individuo goza México lo que, en los siglos anteriores, repartieron las Gracias a cuantas doctas mujeres son el asombro venerable de las historias" [the encyclopedic {breadth}and universality of her learning, so that one might know that in a single individual Mexico enjoys that which, in times past, the Graces apportioned to so many learned women {who} are the venerable marvel of history] ("Teatro de virtudes" 246). Like Palavicino, Sigüenza y Góngora praises her intellect and accomplishments even as he unwittingly marginalizes her. She is unique as is the Phoenix and uniquely self-referential since only one exists at any time in history. Similarly, in Palavicino's comparison of her with Minerva, he recalls the association of the Roman goddess with the Greek Athena, a figure of wisdom sprung directly from the mind of Zeus-Jupiter. It is a logical combination, deriving from mythology and from the subject of his sermon, the *Carta Atenagórica*. Whether isolated as the Phoenix, relegated to handmaiden to the inspiration of others as the Tenth Muse, or unnatural and unique

66 The character of Aguiar y Seijas is also debated. See Paz (403–9) and Schons ("Some Obscure Points" 153). Bénassy-Berling ("Más sobre la conversión" 467–70) describes a more complex man.

67 *La fineza mayor, sermón panegyrico* cited in Bénassy-Berling ("Más sobre la conversión" 464). See also Paz (412). Camarena ("'Ruido'") offers a close reading of the sermon by Palavicino.

creation of a masculine god as Minerva, the association of Sor Juana with these mythological examples suggests an extraordinary individual who may be admired but not imitated.[68] Indeed, none of the figures with whom she is compared can replicate itself save the Phoenix, and, then, only by self-immolation

Nevertheless, it is clear that Sor Juana did not view herself as unique nor as an isolated example of a female writer, an exceptional case of New World erudition. Scott has noted that the common denominator of Sor Juana's female *exempla* are their intelligence and power ("'La gran turba'" 212). The nun places herself in a long line of learned women. Indeed, she was not alone even in her own time as a woman given to letters.[69] Other nuns in the Americas wrote, although many of their works have been lost. Certainly, none approached the level of erudition demonstrated by Sor Juana. Rather, their works reflect the more traditional forms of autobiography and biography and interest in spirituality and the religious life characteristic of monastic women's writings.[70]

In the subject matter of the *Respuesta*, in the reception of her works, and in the experiences of her life, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz represents the apogee for women writing in defense of the education of their own in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Hispanic world. She acknowledges her debt to her monastic forebears in the *Respuesta*, including Santa Teresa de Jesús and Saint Gertrude. Others link her to such literary predecessors as Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Christine de Pizan, María de Zayas, and Ana Caro de Mallén.[71] Like them, she was alternately admired and marginalized by male critics who emphasized uniqueness over exemplarity or who sought to silence women's voices altogether. Each in her time was singled out as extraordinary, a *mujer varonil* because of her intelligence, yet also unwomanly in the

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68 See Thurmann ("Sister Juana" 14) for more on the tendency to separate her from the mainstream of womankind. See also Ashhurst ("Sor Juana" 45–7), who examines this tendency in the works of male critics from Feijóo to Unamuno and Pedro Salinas. A number of critics of Paz's book on Sor Juana accuse him of similar failings. For example, see, Arenal ("Comments on Paz's 'Juana Ramirez'" 555), Serafin ("La Respuesta sorjuanina" 3–15), and Cortest ("Some Thoughts" 85).

69 See Lavrín ("In Search of Colonial Women" 24–5), who reiterates the argument in favor of uniqueness. Arenal and Schlau, eds., (*Untold Sisters* 341) and Paz (185) reject it, citing the example of other writers of her time and place.

70 For example, see Scott ("'Let your women'" 513) and Franco (*Plotting Women* 5–14), who name other contemporaries of Sor Juana who wrote. Arenal and Schlau, eds., (*Untold Sisters*) reproduce some of these works. Monguio ("Compañía para sor Juana" 45–52) names women of Peru who were writing at the same time. See also the introduction (46) to Madre María de San Joseph, *Word from New Spain*, which calls this work "a complement to Sor Juana's 'Respuesta' and … emblematic of the situation of nuns writing in colonial Mexico and of the strategies they used."

71 See Vicente García ("La defensa de la mujer" 95–103) and Guernelli (*Gaspara Stampa* 64), who compare her to Sor Teresa. Arenal and Powell, eds., (*The Answer/La Respuesta* vii) claim that "the *Respuesta* ... stands as a link to the *Book of the City of Ladies*." Bénassy-Berling ("A manera de apéndice" 91) ties her to Zayas in her defense of women's education. Vollendorf (173), includes her among the "larger numbers of women across Europe and the Americas [who, by the end of the seventeenth century] articulated their anger about the state of women's education."

bargain because of it. In spite of the obstacles placed in their way, they continued to argue in writing and by example for the right to learn.

Sor Juana's frustration with male attempts to trivialize women finds its clearest expression in her *redondilla* "Hombres necios." In it she employs "biting logical argumentation [to] expose the absurdities of the male's double-standard" (Merrim, "Toward a Feminist Reading" 25). In the opening stanza she chides men:

> Hombres necios que acusáis
> a la mujer sin razón,
> sin ver que sois la ocasión
> de lo mismo que culpáis. (*Obras* 109)
>
> [Silly, you men–so very adept at wrongly faulting womankind, not seeing you're alone to blame for faults you plant in woman's mind.] (Trueblood, ed., 111)

Near the end she offers succinct advice: "queredlas cual las hacéis/o hacedlas cual las buscáis" [either like them for what you've made them or make of them what you can like] (Trueblood, ed., 112–13). It is apt counsel for those of her time and beyond who complain of women's ignorance even as they deny them education.

Conclusion

> "Listening to women, I heard a difference and discovered that bringing in women's lives changes both psychology and history. It literally changes the voice: how the human story is told, and also who tells it."
>
> Carol Gilligan[1]

In 1979 the artist known as Judy Chicago first exhibited her controversial *Dinner Party* to both acclaim and condemnation from the critics. On the one hand, it was hailed as "magnificent ... an important work" and on the other as "brutal, baroque, and banal all at once."[2] While some critics and conservative politicians condemned it as "obscene," others found fault with the media employed (hand-painted ceramic and needlework) the method of creation (a collaborative, group effort), and the subject matter (a symbolic gathering of over one thousand women of history and myth). Both men and women grappled with the "seriousness" of a work that depended on handicrafts for its materials and women's history for its subject matter. As Amelia Jones describes it, the effect was "an explosive collision between aesthetics (the public domain of the high-art museum) and domestic kitsch (the private domain of women's space, the home.) (Jones, "The 'Sexual Politics'" 87).[3]

By combining traditional feminine handicrafts in order to represent notable female figures of Western civilization of the previous five thousand years, Chicago and her collaborators[4] both valorized "women's work" even as they recuperated women's history in the process. In effect, they used needles to honor those who earlier had wielded pens. That they did so in a setting and a form so quintessentially feminine attests to the enduring influence of the exemplary models evoked throughout the history of women and to the tendency of each generation to join the ranks of these *exempla*. Chicago herself summarizes the effect she wished to create in her work:

> These guests, whether they are real women or goddess figures, have all been transformed in *The Dinner Party* into symbolic images—images that stand for the whole range of women's achievements and yet also embody women's containment. Each woman is herself, but through her can be seen the lives of thousands of other women—some famous, some anonymous, but all struggling, as the women on the table struggled, to have some sense of their own worth through five thousand years of a civilization dominated by men. (*The Dinner Party* 52)[5]

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1 *In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development* xi.

2 Cited in Jones ("The 'Sexual Politics'" 82).

3 See Meyer ("From Finish Fetish" 46–74) for details on the work itself and its mixed reception.

4 Jones ("The 'Sexual Politics'" 106) explains that [Chicago] "insisted throughout [that *The Dinner Party*] was *cooperative* not collaborative, in the sense that it involved a clear hierarchy but cooperative effort to ensure its successful completion."

5 Among the figures represented are many of those considered here. See, for example, Chicago (65–96) for the names of the thirty-nine figures at the table and 98–215, for the

In this sense, Chicago's work continues the use of exemplarity demonstrated by the very women whom she chooses to include in her dinner party.

The history of women during the early modern period reveals the existence of a long line of educated individuals who took as their models exemplary females of fact and fiction, ultimately choosing to join their ranks as examples for subsequent generations. Beginning with Christine de Pizan and her response to the misogynistic texts of her time, women began to usurp from male dominance the right to claim the female *exempla* found in scripture, history, and literature as their own. Heretofore, many writers from Juvenal to Boccaccio had presented women as objects for satire. In fact, when the latter considered "famous women" in his *De claris mulieribus*, he considered them appropriate models for men to imitate. Christine de Pizan and other women writers who followed her sought to change that paradigm.

When confronted with such extraordinary figures as Zenobia, Judith or Catherine of Alexandria, men saw them as exceptions to the norm rather than figures for imitation by other women. These feminine *exempla* were presented as unique, one-of-a-kind, queens and saints and, therefore, outside the mainstream. Indeed, in the works of Boccaccio and Alvaro de Luna, such stalwart figures as Zenobia and Judith were mainly seen to influence the actions of great men in their valor. Even among such Renaissance humanists as Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León, the contemporary Spanish examples of Isabel la Católica, and her daughters were reduced to models of domestic devotion rather than intelligent and educated women in their own right. The military prowess exemplified by the Old Testament deeds of Judith or Deborah was co-opted for male rather than female inspiration and imitation. These scriptural figures, like Isabel, were "*mujeres varoniles*" [manly women], who manifested "male" virtues when they assumed public roles. Only in reclusion as widows, virgins, or wives, were they considered worthy examples for women's imitation.

In those instances when women did write, they were often met with incredulity or condemnation by male authorities. From Sor Teresa de Cartagena and Luisa Sigea to María de Zayas and Oliva Sabuco de Nantes, men either questioned the authorship of works by women or ascribed them to male authors. Sor Teresa defended herself in the *Admiraçión* primarily against those detractors who doubted that she wrote the *Arboleda*. Similarly, Luisa Sigea's *Duarum virginum* was first plagiarized by Nicholas Chorier and then her very existence as an author was denied. The same fate befell Doña Oliva Sabuco de Nantes, whose own father claimed authorship of her treatise, the *Nueva filosofía*.

The erasure of women's authorship took other forms as well. The works of Sor Teresa and Santa Teresa were never published in their lifetimes. The writings of Beatriz Galíndez simply disappeared altogether.[6] Even Christine de Pizan's books

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nine hundred ninety-nine represented in the "heritage floor." They include Christine de Pisan, Teresa de Cartagena, Isabel of Castile, Saint Teresa, Oliva Sabuco, and Sor Juana among others.

6 As noted earlier, although the titles of two treatises attributed to Beatriz Galíndez survive, the manuscripts do not. Galíndez is not alone is this since Serrano y Sanz (*Apuntes*) lists numerous women known to have authored works that disappeared.

suffered the indignity of being ignored only to be "rediscovered" by later generations.[7] Worse still is the erasure of identity itself, where essential biographical facts of writers such as Sor Teresa de Cartagena or María de Zayas are unknown.

When authorship by a woman was recognized in her lifetime, there were often male critics who contended that her books should never have been written. Such was the case with Santa Teresa's works. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was asked to compose both secular and religious works only to be criticized later for writing them and then silenced after defending herself in her *Respuesta* to her critics. Even Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León, who championed education for some women, preferred that the majority stay at home tending to the needs of husband and family. At the very least, male critics of women's education and writing favored those who held needles instead of pens.

In contrast, women approached the exemplary figures of other women—whether real or imagined—as worthy of imitation by themselves. For Christine de Pizan, the mythological, biblical, and historical figures of strong and educated women served as the foundation of her City of Ladies. They formed the walls of the City and invited imitation by those women who entered, led symbolically by the Virgin Mary bearing a book. In Spain, the figures of strong, valiant, and educated women, ranging from Isabel la Católica, through Santa Teresa de Jesús, do not exist in isolation. Rather, they serve as models for imitation by other women, whether they be Isabel's biological daughters or Teresa's spiritual children.

When women wrote they usually did so in the vernacular rather than in Latin. Although this was a choice dictated by necessity, yet it also assured them of a wider reading audience, both male and female. Popular literature of the time, from *Don Quijote* to the *comedia*, suggests the existence of women able to read works written in Castilian. At the same time, the very forms employed by women authors were often derived from women's experiences. Thus, the story-telling *saraos* of María de Zayas or the conversation among nuns during the hours of recreation in María de San José's *Book* convert women's spaces and activities to literary forms that transmit their messages within familiar settings.

Santa Teresa evokes both devotional and popular literature as well as everyday activities such as gardening to make comprehensible her mystical message. She even devotes the better part of her *Camino de perfección* to an extended meditation on the Lord's Prayer. In doing so, she not only reflects her own education and reading, but she also privileges the sorts of reading and activity that constituted women's learning, where the *Book of Hours*, chivalric romances, and daily prayers were mainstays of their daily existence even as they served as textbooks for their education.

Similarly, the insistence on teaching girls such domestic skills as sewing, weaving, and cooking, is transformed by women writers to literary ends. Thus, María de San José compares advancement in prayer to embroidery and Sor Juana studies the physical properties of cooking while at work in the kitchen. Each of these

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7 See Lawson ("introduction," *Treasure of the City of Ladies* 15), where she writes: "there cannot have been many writers who have been publicly 'discovered' as often as Christine de Pisan." Long (*Telling* 106) concurs and observes that "such lives as hers have been forcibly submerged, usually through the agency of male scholars, critics, and publishers.

authors provides her women readers with comparisons drawn from real-life and uses them to argue for a woman's right to pursue learning further than the constraints imposed by male authority.

Although schools for girls existed in early modern Spain and New Spain, most learned at home. Their curriculum focused almost exclusively on domestic skills as well as religious and moral training. Occasionally, reading and writing might also be taught. Some girls could continue their education in the cloister or, perhaps, in a *colegio* or *amiga* as did Santa Teresa and Sor Juana. Nevertheless, the extent of a girl's education often depended on circumstances outside her control. Parental consent and encouragement enabled Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Luisa Sigea, and Doña Oliva Sabuco to receive an education well beyond the reach of most women. The availability of books or access to a library allowed Santa Teresa and Sor Juana to read extensively. Royal and noblewomen from the daughters of Queen Isabel to María de San José and Doña Oliva also enjoyed the advantage of tutors as well as the aforementioned access to books and support from parents or guardians. Other, less fortunate, women might learn from the example of women teaching other women as depicted in artwork, or they could witness actresses portraying women of education and independence on stage. Even though a woman might be physically sheltered in cloister or home, as so many of the female authors considered here were, still their minds were free to explore and to write about the world they understood. Evidence that some did is apparent in those works that do survive.

Women authors also addressed the very issue of female education either directly or indirectly. Some, like Santa Teresa, María de Zayas, and Sor Juana, argued forcefully for teaching girls as both a right and a necessity. Santa Teresa and Sor Juana went further and actually taught girls under their charge. Others, such as Doña Oliva Sabuco de Nantes, Sor Teresa de Cartagena, Luisa Sigea, and Ana Caro de Mallén manifested their erudition through the medium of their writings. Many of them credited God with endowing them with souls equal to men's and, hence, capable of learning. In doing so, they turned the Pauline dictum against women teaching on its head, thus answering male critics who wished to silence them. While men might isolate women scholars as unique as the Phoenix or the Tenth Muse, women could and often did perceive them as examples to be imitated. Authors from Christine de Pizan to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz not only presented the exemplary figures of women drawn from ancient to contemporary times as worthy of imitation by their female readers, they also implicitly joined their ranks. While they did not abandon the needle, neither did they abjure the pen.

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Index

Abeyro, Duchess of 178
Abigail76, 181
Abril, Pedro Simón 131n, 135
  Apuntamientos de cómo se deben reformar las doctrinas y la manera de enseñallas 135
Acta Sanctorum 103
actress(es) 147–8, 155, 192; *see also* theater
aemulatio 5; *see also* emulation
Aeneid 173
Africa 132
Agnes, Saint 173
Aguiar y Seijas, Francisco de 167, 170n, 185
Alba, Alvara de 44
Alba de Tormes 73, 112
Albert, Saint 175
Alcalá de Henares 42n, 44, 63, 113
  Brocar's press 63
  Jiménez de Cisneros 63, 105, 126
  schools 105–6, 113, 126
  university 44, 54, 64, 110
Alcántara, Fray Pedro de 70
Alexandria 16, 181
  lighthouse of 182
Alfonso V de Aragón y las dos Sicilias, King 32
Alfonso de Cartagena, Don 24n
Alfonso de Castilla, Don 33
allegory 12, 18
alphabet xiiin, 14, 112
  Egyptian 13, 21
  Greek 14, 21
  Latin 14, 21
alumbrados 67, 71
Alvaro de Luna, Don xiii, 20–23, 24n, 27n, 29, 30, 36, 38, 82, 101, 103, 150, 180, 190
  Book of Illustrious and Virtuous Women 20
  Libro de las claras e virtuosas mujeres 20–23, 35
Amazon(s) xii, xiii, 1, 2, 7, 8n, 11, 14, 22, 29–30, 38, 82, 143, 150, 152–3
  figure of 2n
  queens of 8, 11, 14
Ambrose, Saint 24n, 38n, 133n, 141
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 169, 175
America 161, 185; *see also* New World
amigas xiv, 125, 161, 180, 192
Ana de Jesús Lobera, Madre 65, 66
Ana de San Bartolomé García, Madre 72–4, 75
  and Santa Teresa 72–3, 86
  Conferencias espirituales 73
Anahuac 160
Anaxarete 154
Angela of Foligno, Saint 63, 76
Anghiera, Pedro Mártir de 40, 43
  education of courtiers 48
  and Isabel, la Catolica 40, 41, 43, 48
ánimo varonil 36–7, 56, 57; *see also mujer varonil*, manly women
Anne, Saint xiii, 91, 94n, 96, 99, 102, 113
  education of Mary xiii, 96, 102
  iconography of 94, 96, 113
Annunciation 94, 98
Anthony, Saint 169, 175
anti-feminist *see* misogyny
antiquity, classical x, xi, 1, 5–6, 135–6, 139, 176
  culture of 33n, 47, 53
  languages 12, 14, 52, 54, 56, 102
  literature of 1, 7, 21, 35, 50, 53–4, 103, 133, 139, 176, 177
  women of x, 12, 21, 33n, 39, 103, 130–31, 159, 178
  wonders of 182, 183
anti-Semitism 24
Arabic 54, 136
Arachne 37
Aragon 32, 48
Arce, Pedro Ignacio de 179
Arcipreste de Talavera 20, 32–3n
  El Corbacho 20
Arethusa 154
Arévalo 33
Argentaria 143, 147, 151–2, 177
Argos 159
Aristotle xi, 1, 2–5, 14n, 26, 35, 38n, 60, 101, 132, 133n, 136, 137, 140–41, 169

logos 4
mulier economica 3, 37
Oeconomica 3, 5, 101
parabole 4
Politics 3
arms vs. letters ix, xii, 7, 21, 29, 39–40, 142–5, 149, 150
in *Don Quijote* 142–4
and Maria de Zayas 145, 149
and women ix, 7, 21, 29, 142, 144, 145, 150
Artemisia 130, 182
arts and letters xiii, 130
Asbaje, Don Pedro de 160, 161, 162n
Ascent of Mount Sion 63
Aspasia 130
Assyria 12, 16, 22
Astete, Gaspar de 104n, 113
Athena xii, xiii, 1–2, 7–8n, 11, 14, 30, 82, 143, 153, 157, 170, 171, 185; *see also* Minerva
Athens 1–3, 37
women of 37, 102n
Augustine, Saint 5, 24n, 35n, 38n, 55, 133n, 139n, 180
Confessions 63, 85
and powers of the soul 28
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 169–70, 175, 179
Augustinian(s) 61–2, 109
rule 169
authority 18
classical 1, 5, 102, 136, 137
ecclesiastical 7, 68, 138, 167, 169
female 10, 12, 18, 78, 103, 126, 132–3, 175, 177
male 5, 17, 28, 59, 64, 102, 142, 172, 179, 192
patristic 7, 22, 180
autobiography xiii, 60, 81, 87, 89, 159, 186
Ávila 60–63, 68, 72–3, 106, 111
Aztec(s) 123, 160

Babylon 182
Barcelona 74, 143, 153
Bathsheba 181
beatas 87n, 105, 112, 121–3, 125
Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint 24n, 38n
Bernini, Giovanni 78n, 91
Betulia 6, 22
Bible 11, 22, 24n, 26, 32n, 38n, 55, 71, 75, 84, 133n, 139, 177; *see also* Scripture
biography 63, 157, 186
Blesilla 54–5, 151, 152, 178
Boccaccio, Giovanni xii, 1, 2, 8, 10–23, 27, 30, 52, 82, 94, 103, 150, 180
Concerning Famous Women xii, 8, 14, 91, 173n
De casibus virorum xii, 8
De claris mulieribus xii, 8, 10, 91, 190
Decameron 103
and exempla xii, 2, 8, 9, 10, 23, 29, 30, 103, 180, 190
Fates of Illustrious Men xii, 8, 13–14
Il Corbaccio 8
influence of xii, 20
Novelas 35
Boethius 24n, 33n, 35n, 61, 134n, 172
Consolation of Philosophy 61
Botticelli, Sandro 96, 98
Madonna of the Magnificat 98
Braga, Archbishop of 48
Braganza, Duke of 54
Bridget of Sweden, Saint 76, 178
Bruges 104
Bruni d'Arrezzo, Lionardo 32n, 35n, 101, 176
De studiis et literis 38
Brutus 21
Burgos 24n, 55, 113

Caesar, Julius 23, 35n
Commentaries 43
Calderón de la Barca, Pedro 126–7, 146n, 164, 166
Los empeños de un acaso 166
No hay burlas con el amor 126, 151n, 164
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 164, 166
La vida es sueño 150n, 152
Calleja, Diego 157, 161n, 162, 163n
Camilla 150, 173
Cano, Melchor 64
Censura 71
Carlos V, Emperor 53, 118, 122, 144
Carmelite, Discalced
background of members 64, 68n, 70, 72, 74–5, 81
boarders 89, 111

choir nuns 74
Constituciones 63, 69–72, 73n, 75, 80, 86–7, 89
Divine office 70, 78
horarium 69, 80
library 70
principles of 69
and reading 71
teaching novices xiii, 69–71, 75, 80n
criteria for admittance 65, 71, 74–5
dowry 70, 89
education xiii, 69, 72
foundations 63, 70, 86, 90
Barcelona 74
Beas 75
Bogotá, Colombia 87
in Europe 90
Lisbon 75
Malagón 75
Medina del Campo 63, 74, 111–12
Mexico City 87, 162n
San José de México 87, 88–9, 162
in New World 90
Puebla, Mexico 87, 89n
Sevilla 75
Soria 74
Valladolid 72, 81, 83, 130
Institución de los primeros monjes 69
limpieza de sangre 70
Reform 63–4, 66, 68–70, 72, 74–5, 79, 81, 84–6, 89, 111
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 89, 162–3, 176
schools 89, 110–11
Carmelites, Mitigated 75n
Carmenta xiii, 14, 39–40, 56
Carmentis xii, 37
Caro Mallén de Soto, Ana xiv, 147, 149, 152–5, 158, 163, 186, 192
El conde Partinuplés 152–5
Tenth Muse 149
Valor, agravio y mujer 149, 166
Caro, Rodrigo 149
Cartujano, El 63, 64n, 70
Vita Christi 63
Carvajal y Saavedra, María ixn
Castalia, springs of 158
Castiglione, Baldesar 134n
Book of the Courtier 56
Castile 31, 39, 48, 104
language of 43, 52, 60, 111, 127, 135, 191
and Latin literature 39–40
Castillet y Ayala, Inez de 87–8
Catalina de Cristo Balsameda y Bustamante, Madre 72, 74–5
Catarina de Aragon, Queen 42n, 47, 53, 99, 101
catechisms *see* devotional literature
catechizing 105, 113, 118, 125
in America 116–17, 118
schools for 105, 125
in Spain 113
Catherine of Alexandria, Saint 16–18, 23, 30, 38, 60, 80n, 84, 89, 90, 133
effluence of milk 17, 18, 23, 80, 90
effluence of oil 80
example of 17, 23, 30, 66, 178, 181, 190
patroness of female scholars 17, 80
public examination 162, 182
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 178, 181–4
teaching 90
and writing 30
Catherine of Siena, Saint 33n, 63, 64n, 76
Cecilia del Nacimiento Sobrino, Madre 75, 81–2, 130
Certamenes 81–2, 130
and Santa Teresa 82, 83–4
Celestina, La 103, 139n
Cepeda, Teresita de 111
Cepeda y Ahumada, Teresa *see* Teresa de Jesús, Santa
Cerda, Doña Luisa de la 75
Cereta, Laura 33
Cervantes, Miguel de 142–3
Don Quijote 142, 191
Las dos doncellas 151
Cervent, Clara 103
Chacón, Gonzalo 33
chastity6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26, 39
Chicago, Judy 189–90
Dinner Party 189
chivalry, romances of 60, 62, 85, 89, 102–4, 142, 152, 191
Amadis de Gaula 85, 103
Gran conquista de Ultramar 61
Chorier, Nicholas 56n, 190
Christian Doctrine 110, 112, 115, 117
confraternities of 80n, 110, 112

Christians, New *see conversos*
Christians, Old 60, 107, 115
Christina Alexandra of Sweden, Queen 178
Christine de Pizan x, xii, 1, 9–25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 38, 52, 54, 55, 75, 82, 91, 94, 99, 100, 101, 132, 145, 146, 190, 191
  Book of the City of Ladies xii, 1, 9–18, 20, 29, 91
  incipit 91
  miniature(s) 91, 93–4, 97
  Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc 17n
  Epistre d'Othéa 10n, 20n, 94n
  and exempla 10, 12, 14–16, 21, 27, 29, 94, 103, 191, 192
  as exemplary 15n, 18, 78n
  influence of xii, 19–20
  and Jean Gerson 172
  L'Avision-Christine 9, 20, 26n
  paper manuscripts 20
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 172, 181, 182, 186
  Treasure of the City of Ladies xii, 18–20, 34, 35
  works 20, 31
Christine, Saint 17–18, 29, 133
Cicero 24n, 35, 38n, 55, 103, 133n, 170, 172
  De officiis 61
Cisneros *see* Jiménez de Cisneros, Francisco
Clement, Saint 141
cloister xii, 27, 59, 63n, 64, 69, 86, 89, 102, 131, 141, 166, 167, 177, 192; *see also* convent, monastery, reclusion, *recogimiento*
  and women 6, 28, 29, 37, 89, 109, 123, 139, 145
cofradía(s) *see* confraternities
Colegio de
  Doncellas Pobres de San Juan de la Penitencia 106, 124
  Doncellas Pobres de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios *see* Nobles Doncellas
  Loreto 109
  Niñas 125
  Nobles Doncellas 107–9, 111n, 124
    constitutions 107–8
    limpieza de sangre 107n
  Nuestra Señora de la Caridad 124
  San José de Belén de los Naturales 117
  Santa Cruz de Santiago de Tlatelolco 120
  Santa Isabel 105–6, 109–10
    admission to 106, 109
    constitutions 109–10
  las Vírgenes 110
colegios 99, 107–26, 192
  and catechizing 123
  curriculum 123, 126
  education of boys 116–17, 123
  and mestizas 117, 124
  in Mexico 117–18, 123–25, 126, 164, 170n
colegios de niñas huérfanas xiii, xiv, 113–16, 118
  in America 116
  curriculum 113, 115
  founders 113
  headmistress/*rectora* xiv, 108, 110, 115
  in Santiago de Compostela 115
colegios mayores 125
Columbus, Fernando 20n
comuneros 104
Conceptionist(s) 87; *see also* Real Convento de Jesús María
conduct, right x, xi, 8, 11n, 34, 52, 99
  books on 18, 34–5, 39, 99, 104, 113
  female 6, 19, 22, 34, 36, 99, 103, 148n
  of prince 55
confessor(s) xi, 40, 63–5, 68, 74, 89, 167–8, 169, 176
  and *letras* 64, 68
  selection of 69, 79, 169
  of women ix, 64, 89, 129
confraternities 80n, 109–11, 111n, 112–13, 117, 124; *see also* Christian doctrine, works of mercy
  Cofradía del Santísimo Sacramento y Caridad 124
  and orphans 109
  and poor 113
  schools 110, 112
Constantinopla 152–3
convent x, xiii, 3, 62, 65, 66, 68, 69, 74, 80 *passim*, 99, 100, 105, 107–13, 115, 125–6, 129, 131n, 139, 145–6, 147, 162, 163, 176, 179; *see also* cloister, monastery, reclusion, *recogimiento*
  offices 70, 74, 81, 126, 129; *see also* novices, Mistress of, prioress

Convento de
  San Juan de la Penitencia 105
  Santa Paula 162
converso(*s*) 24, 59, 60n, 67n, 68n, 89
corazón varonil 21n, 23, 39, 42n; *see also* manly women, *mujer varonil*
Córdoba 42n, 113, 116
Cornelia 143, 147
Cornificia 40, 45
corrales 147; *see also* theater
Cortés, Hernán 117
cosmetics 6, 103n
Councils, church
  Lateran 105
  Toledo, second 105
  Trent 111, 112
Counter Reformation 112
criolla(*s*) 88, 124, 125, 160, 162
cuerpo mugeril 36, 37, 40, 57; *see also* manly women, *mujer varonil*
Cyprian, Saint 5, 55, 139n, 141

dance 61, 115, 154
Daphne 154
Deborah 6, 7, 40, 76, 84, 138, 171, 177, 181, 190
devotional literature 19, 24, 33n, 35, 53, 60, 62, 63, 64, 116, 157, 191
  Book of Hours 32n, 51n, 94, 96, 97, 98, 126, 127, 191
    miniatures 97
  cartilla 112, 119, 124n
  Cartilla de la doctrina religiosa 89, 118n
  catechisms 63, 80, 110, 112, 116–18, 123, 126
  as primer 80n, 113n, 114, 124n
  prayer books 35, 62, 69, 71, 96, 113
  psalter 32n, 94, 96
    as primer 96, 112, 113
Deza, Fray Diego 43, 48n
Diablo cojuelo, El 149
dialogue xii, 12, 48, 50, 54–5, 75–6, 78, 89, 135, 182
Diana 39–40, 85, 153–4
  Temple of 182
Diogenes 169
Diotimia 143
discretion 25, 26, 115, 167
Divine Hierarchies 174
Divine Office 70, 78
  and Latin 70
domestic skills xiii, xiv, 3, 4, 19, 28, 34, 44, 53, 60, 81, 104–8, 116, 118, 126, 141, 180, 192; *see also* needle vs. pen
  cooking xiii, 53, 104, 134, 192
  embroidery 34, 37, 53, 79, 104, 134, 145, 192
  needlework 79, 91n, 144, 189
  sampler(s) xiiin, 79
  sewing xiii, 53, 57, 104, 112, 143, 145, 183, 192
  spindle and distaff 4, 13, 30, 141
  spinning 4, 34, 53, 104, 183
  weaving xiii, 4, 14, 34, 37, 53, 104, 141, 192
  woolmaking 14, 37
Don Juan, female 148
Doria, Nicholas 79, 83
Draznes 150
Drusilla 150

Ecuador 111
educanda(*s*) 88, 125
Egypt 13, 21, 178, 182
Elizabeth, Saint 41, 76, 180
Elizabeth of Hungary, Saint 34n, 109
eloquence 13, 15, 16, 17, 23; *see also* orator, oratory
  and women 13, 15, 16–17, 23, 27, 29, 32, 40, 44–5, 101
emulation xi, xiii, 5, 11, 32, 52, 60, 176, 177, 180
Encarnación, Monasterio de la 61, 62, 63, 85
  library of 63n, 69
  and Santa Teresa 61–2, 70, 111
Encina, Juan de 61
England x, xii, 17, 53, 103, 138n, 146
Enrique IV de Castilla, King 33
enseñar 56, 69, 79n, 106, 110n, 115, 122, 124n, 130, 157, 176, 178, 179
entendimiento see powers of the soul
Erasmus, Desiderius 100, 101, 103, 117n, 118
  and Catarina de Aragón 53n
  and Juan Luis Vives 100, 101, 103
Erauso, Catalina de 151, 163
Esther 16, 22, 55, 84, 181
etiquette 18

Europe xii, xiii, 1, 3, 20, 48, 52n, 64n, 86, 96, 112, 117, 125, 160, 161, 186n
Eusebium 180
Eustoquia 64, 85, 178
Evadne 135
Eve 11n, 21
exceptionality 14n, 30, 67, 138, 159, 178
exempla x–xiii, 2, 7–8, 12, 14, 16, 56, 65, 66, 76, 79, 129, 168, 175, 189, 190–92; *see also* figures
  ancient xii, 6, 11n, 40, 56, 57
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 158, 169–70, 173, 175, 178, 180, 186, 192
  as exceptions 8, 14, 30, 39
  Biblical 7, 21, 22, 29, 178, 190
  Old Testament 6, 7, 16, 21, 22, 40, 55, 56, 76, 181, 190
  Christian 11n, 16, 17, 23, 178
  classical 6, 7, 21, 103, 178
  contemporary 18, 131, 144, 175
  female xi–xii, 1–2, 7–11, 13–14, 16–18, 20, 21, 23, 29, 30, 37–9, 44, 55–7, 76, 78, 82–4, 86, 89, 94, 96, 103, 129, 133, 138, 139, 141, 142, 149, 152, 154, 175, 177, 180, 186, 189, 190–92
  hagiographical 7, 11, 12, 16, 21, 84, 85, 130
  male 169, 170, 175
  mythological 143, 147, 150, 154, 173
  pagan 11
  Roman 45
exemplarity xi, 9, 14, 29, 66–7, 82, 84, 85, 94, 130, 138, 148n, 158, 178, 186, 190
exemplary literature 103, 125, 129
exemplum 7n, 12
Ezechial 55

family life 99, 104, 129
Fathers of the Church xi, 5, 7, 55, 100, 102, 169, 173; *see also* patristic literature
  Latin fathers 53
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 169–70, 173
Fernández de Santa Cruz, Manuel 164, 170–80
  and *Carta Atenagórica* 170
  and Saint Francis de Sales 171–2, 174
  as Sor Filotea de la Cruz 170–72, 173, 174, 175–80, 182
Fernando de Aragón, el Católico, King 31, 42, 43, 54, 99n, 186
figures 7, 9, 11–13, 16, 18, 21–2, 30, 34n, 84, 96, 99; *see also* exempla
  classical 6, 39, 56, 57
  exemplary x–xiii, 1, 16, 18, 21, 56, 94, 138–9, 150, 168–9, 180, 182
  female x–xiii, 1, 8, 13, 16, 18, 21, 23, 29, 40, 76, 85, 91, 130, 150, 161, 178, 189, 190–92
  goddesses 189
  in antiquity 2n, 8
  male 130, 159, 175, 176
  mythological 12, 13, 21, 143, 149
  Old Testament 6, 16, 21, 29, 55, 138
Filotea de la Cruz, Sor *see* Fernández de Santa Cruz, Manuel
finery 6, 144
Flanders xii, 104n
Flos sanctorum 70, 84, 110
foundlings 112, 113, 124
frame story 11, 143
France 17, 20n, 90, 146
  French language 9, 12, 81
Francis de Sales, Saint 171, 174
Franciscan(s) xii, 64, 116–18, 121–2, 123
  in America 116–18, 121–3
  and Jiménez de Cisneros 106, 123
  and laywomen 106, 118, 121–2
Furia 6

Gaetulia 132
Galen 132, 136
  humoral theories 134, 139
  and microcosm 136
Galíndez, Beatriz xii, 45, 54, 81, 129, 163, 191
  Comentarios de Aristóteles 47, 191n
  Hospital de la Concepción 47
  and Isabel, la Católica xii, 45, 47, 57
  and Latin 45
  Notas sabias sobre los antiguos 47, 191n
games 21, 35, 66n, 82, 115
Gante, Pedro de 117–18, 120
Geraldini, Antonio and Alessandro 47
germanías 104
Gerson, Jean 19n, 69n, 172
Gertrude of Helfta, Saint 178, 186

God 16, 19, 27, 28, 29, 36
authorizing women's works 16, 28, 29, 30, 59, 67, 78, 82, 160, 169, 171, 172, 174–6, 182
gift of 30, 86, 135, 138, 179, 192
grace of 27, 171
ignorance vs. knowledge 135, 160
instrument of 67
mercy of 76
power of 17, 22, 26, 27, 29, 86, 138, 169, 175, 177
and Santa Teresa 60, 67
will of 26, 28, `42, 172
Golden Age xn, xi, xiv, 1n, 75 *see also siglo de oro*
Gonçález Dávila, Gil 45, 107n
Góngora, Luis de 83n, 84, 164
Graces 185
Gracián, Fray Jerónimo de 74, 75n
Gramática castellana 43; *see also* Nebrija, Antonio de
Granada 39, 41, 43n
Archbishop of 41, 60
Granada, Fray Luis de 70, 110, 134n
Greece 1, 4, 14, 103, 137
alphabet 14
Hellenistic 4
language of 6, 13, 14, 21, 44, 54, 55, 81, 135, 136, 137n, 178
literature of 6, 14
mythology of 2n, 3, 158n, 185
Gregory Nazianzen, Saint 172
Gregory the Great, Saint 24n, 33n, 63
Moralia 63
Guadalajara 107n, 110, 113, 115n
Guaxaca 121
Guevara, Antonio de 34n, 104n, 139n
Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea 55

hagiography 7, 11, 12, 16, 21, 70, 84, 85, 91, 130–31, 133n
harmony 52, 105, 125, 138–41
and marriage 140–41
and microcosm 138
Renaissance theory of 140
social 52, 105, 125
Hebrew 54, 55, 136, 178
Hernando de Talavera, Fray *see* Talavera, Fray Hernando de
hidalgas 107
Hieronymites 47, 126, 163–4, 176
colegio de niñas 99, 126
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 99, 162–3, 176, 180
higher education 7, 125 *see also* university
Hippocrates 132
Hippolyta 130
Hispaniola 117
Holofernes 6, 16, 22, 27, 38
Holy See 118
Holy Spirit 6, 91, 96n
Homer 133n, 159
Horatius Cocles 21
Hortensia 16–17, 22–3, 40, 45, 57, 101
Hortensius 16, 23, 44
Huarte de San Juan, Juan 100, 135, 138–9, 141, 142, 145
Examen de los ingenios 135, 138, 155
humoral theories 136, 138–9
and language study 135
and learned women 138
and Oliva Sabuco de Nantes 139, 145
male vs. female 138, 139
humanism x, xi, 1, 3, 5, 6, 47, 54, 55n, 56, 100
curriculum 33, 54, 107
dialogues 55
humanist scholars(hip) x, xi, xiii, 5, 6, 11, 33n, 34, 38, 43, 44, 48–50, 53, 56, 81, 100, 102, 103, 118, 125, 129, 132n, 139, 140, 190
principles of 103, 105, 118, 126, 162
rhetoric of 103
studies 43
theory xiv, 101n
treatises 126, 129
humility topos 79, 132, 145, 149, 170, 171, 176n
hunting 14, 35

iconography 78n, 91, 94, 96, 97–9, 126, 192
imitation x–xii, 1, 3–5, 7, 8n, 20, 29, 50, 70, 99, 141
and exempla xiii, 30, 52, 57, 66, 73, 154, 180
of handwriting 3, 73
of models xi, 5, 8, 11n, 20, 22, 51, 55, 57, 191
by women x, xi, 9, 10, 16, 18, 22, 23–4, 29–30, 37, 43, 73, 79, 99, 141, 180, 190–92

Imitation of Christ 63, 70
Index of Forbidden Books 64, 71
Indians 116–25
  assimilation of 122–3
  catechizing 118
  conversion of 116
  education of 117–24
  and marriage 123–4
Inés de la Cruz, Sor 87–8
infantas 47, 51n 53, 54
Inquisition xiv, 67n, 94n, 176n
Institutes of Oratory xi, 5
Introducciones latines 43; *see also* Nebrija, Antonio de
Introduction to the Devout Life 171, 174 *see also* Francis de Sales, Saint
Isabel de Aragón, Infanta 54, 137n
Isabel de Portugal, Queen 22, 32
Isabel, la Católica, Queen xii–xiv, 20, 22, 31–58, 59, 61, 63, 85, 99, 129, 141, 143, 154, 190, 191
  and Alonso Ortiz xii, 48–52, 55
  and Books of Hours 32n, 97
  court of 31, 43–5, 47, 48n, 49, 53, 57
  daughters of 52, 53, 57
  domestic skills 34, 37, 44, 53
  and eagle 40–41
  and education 81, 129
    of her children xii, 32, 47, 48–53, 55, 81, 102
    of women 53, 55, 56–8
    of young courtiers xii, 44, 48, 99
  education of 32–5, 42–3, 47, 49, 53
  as example xii, 31, 34, 36, 39, 44, 47–8, 52, 53, 56, 57–8
  as exception 56
  and Fray Luis de León 55
  iconography of 97
  influence of xii, 44, 47, 48, 53, 56, 57–8
  and Juan Luis Vives 53, 56
  and Latin 34, 35, 39–40, 43, 45, 47, 52
  library of 34–5, 39, 43, 48, 49, 53
  as manly woman 37, 39, 57
  and orphans 44
  and patron saints 41
  and publishing 43
  virtues of 34, 36, 38–41, 48, 52, 56, 100
Isaiah 55
Isis 4
Israel 16, 22
Italy x, 8, 40, 96, 112, 113n, 130, 151–2
  and educated women 9, 33, 44, 130, 152
  humanism 34, 38, 43, 47
  language of 9, 63
Iztaccihuatl 160

Jael 181
Jerome, Saint xi, 5–7, 22, 33n, 35n, 38n, 51, 81, 172
  Adversus Jovinianum 5
  letters of 6, 55, 63, 64, 85, 103, 163, 179
  misogyny 6, 8, 85
  and music 106
  and nursing 102
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 163, 169, 172, 176, 177, 180
  and women 5–7, 169, 178–80
Jesuit(s) 89, 157, 167, 170
Jesus Christ xiii, 80, 82, 83, 170, 173–4, 180
  and books 96
  iconography of 78n, 94, 96
Jiménez de Cisneros, Francisco 63, 146n
  and publishing 63–4
  and Reform 63–4
  and women 63, 105
  foundations 105
    Colegio de Doncellas Pobres 106–7, 108, 124, 126
    Colegio de Santa Isabel 105–6, 126
    Convento de Santa Isabel 124
    Convento de San Juan de la Penitencia 105
    schools 105, 113
  influence of 64, 107, 111, 116n, 123–4, 126
  poor relief 111, 113
Joan of Arc, Saint 17, 31n
João III de Portugal, King 53, 54
João, de Portugal, Prince 54
John Climacus, Saint 63
John Chrysostom, Saint 5, 170
John the Baptist, Saint 41
John the Evangelist, Saint 41, 175
José de Santa Teresa, Fray 73
Juan II de Castilla, King 32–3, 35, 41
Juan, Infante Don 32, 41, 42
  education of 32, 47–9
Juan de la Miseria, Fray 91
Juana Inés de la Cruz, Sor ix, xiii, 14, 15n, 27n, 64, 76, 98–9, 126, 131, 132, 134, 145, 157–88, 190n, 191, 192
  Annunciation 98

Carta Atenagórica 157, 168n, 170–71, 173, 174n, 175, 180, 181, 183, 185
criticism of 170, 171–2
Carta de Monterrey 162, 167–9, 175
Carta de Sor Serafina 173–4
and Catherine of Alexandria 162, 178, 181–3
as *criolla* 160, 162
Crisis de un sermón 157, 170
and Discalced Carmelites 162–3, 176
Ejercicios de la Encarnación 180
Los empeños de una casa 166–7
escudo of 98
as exception(al) 99, 159, 178, 186
as exemplary 158, 168, 169–70, 175, 177–8
Fama y obras póstumas 157, 174, 185
and Hieronymites 162–4, 176, 180
humility topos 170, 171, 176n
iconography of 98–9, 126
Inundación castálida 157, 158
library of 99, 163, 177, 192
and marriage 163, 166, 167, 178
and misogyny 161n, 167, 172, 183
Neptuno alegórico 185
as Minerva 158n, 185–6
as *mujer varonil* 158, 161, 171, 180, 186
"mulieres in ecclesia taceant" 139n, 172, 178–80, 192
Ofrecimientos de los Dolores 180
as Phoenix xiii, 157, 158, 163n, 185–6
poetry of
Primero sueño 159, 183
Redondilla 186
Villancicos 181–3
portraits of 98–9, 126
public examination 133n, 162, 182
Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz 76, 157, 159–63, 167, 170, 172, 174–81,
biographical elements 159–63
and Fathers of the Church 175
style 176n
and Santa Teresa 163, 171, 172, 176n, 179, 186
as Sor Serafina 173–4, 175
as Tenth Muse xiii, 157–8, 182n, 185
sources 170, 172, 176, 177
and Virgin Mary 98, 180, 183
writing 157n, 160, 164, 168, 171–2, 175–6, 179, 180, 183, 186–7
Juana "la loca," Queen 42, 50
education of 47, 50, 51n
Judith xii, 6, 7, 16, 21–3, 26–7, 29–30, 38, 40, 55, 56, 60, 65, 76, 82, 84, 85, 89, 138, 141, 143, 190
and enclosure 22
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 171, 181
Jupiter 14, 159 *see also* Zeus
Justiniano, Juan 99, 139
Juvenal xi, 4, 5, 7, 8, 64, 103, 190
Sixth Satire 4
Juvencus 53

Kempis, Thomas à, Saint 133n
biography of 63
Contemptus mundi 63
Imitation of Christ 63, 70

Laeta 6, 179
Laredo, Bernadino de 63
Latin xii, 6, 7–8, 9, 11, 13, 19, 24n, 39–40, 47, 52–4, 55, 56, 58, 61, 63–4, 70, 81, 126, 135, 164, 178
alphabet 14, 37
grammar 35
instruction in 35, 45, 71, 88, 106–7, 112, 117, 125
and *Nueva filosofía de la naturaleza del hombre* 135
psalter 94, 96
study of 7, 19, 21, 32, 34, 43, 44, 52, 70–71, 102, 106–7, 131, 161, 177
vs. vernacular 7–8, 11–12, 20, 35, 52, 55, 99, 102, 135–6, 191
"Latina, la" *see* Galíndez, Beatriz
learning 1, 3, 11, 61, 73, 162
acquired 27–9, 88, 132, 135, 139, 162
infused 29, 91, 135, 162
and women 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18, 23, 24, 132
Lebrija, Francisca de *see* Nebrija, Francisca de
Leonor de Austria 54
Leonor of Portugal 20
Leontia 137
Lesbos 3, 15
letrados(*as*) 68, 78, 82, 177
letters, profession of 68, 78, 82
Leyes de Burgos 117
Libro de buen amor 35
limpieza de sangre 70, 107–8, 115, 124, 162
statutes of 70, 107

Lisbon 20, 54, 75, 170
literacy 3, 32n
Lives of the Saints 63, 70; *see also Flos sanctorum*
Livy 35
Loaysa, Don García Girón de 110–11, 112, 113
Lord's prayer 80, 117, 191
Lucena, Juan de 40, 43, 57
  and Isabel la Católica 39, 43, 57
Ludolf of Saxony *see* Cartujano, el
Luis de Granada, Fray 70, 110, 134n
Luis de León, Fray 51n, 55, 65, 133n, 134n, 139–42, 155, 190, 191
  Carta dedicatoria 65, 86
  and harmony 139, 140
  and the humors 139
  and marriage 139, 140
  La perfecta casada 139–42
  and Santa Teresa 65, 67, 80, 86, 87
  sources 139
  and women 139–40, 141
Lunario 61
Luther, Martin 71, 113n, 136n, 179

Madrid 47, 65, 109, 113, 116, 139, 143, 146, 149, 151
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 157, 176n, 185
Madrigal de las Altas Torres 74
management, household 4, 5, 26, 32, 34, 37, 76, 102, 115, 123, 140, 141, 143
manly xii, 8, 15n, 17, 21, 23, 36, 39, 56, 76, 85, 121n, 140, 182n; *see also mujer varonil*
  courage 13–15, 16–17, 21–2, 23, 30, 56
  virgins 5
  women ix, 2n, 5, 8, 12, 14, 82, 83, 140, 159, 190
Manuel I de Portugal, King 53, 54
Manrique, Gómez 24, 25
Map, Walter 4n
March, Blanca 103
Marello, Cecilia 44
Marguerite de Bourgogne 18
María, Infanta 42n, 47, 53
  education of her children 53, 54
María Briceño, Sor 61
María de Agreda, Sor ix
María de Aragón, Doña 32, 33
María de Portugal, Princesa 54
María de San Alberto Sobrino, Madre 75, 81–2, 84n, 130
  Certamenes 81
  and Santa Teresa 82, 83
María de San José Salazar, Madre xiv, 71, 75–80, 82, 84, 86, 192
  background of 71–2
  Consejos de prioras 79
  and domestic skills 79, 134, 192
  and education 72, 75–6
  and exemplary women 76, 78–9
  Instrucción de las novicias 78, 80
  and *letras* 71, 75
  Libro de recreaciones 75–8, 191
  mystical prayer 79
  and Santa Teresa 71, 75, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86
  and women's learning 76, 78, 79
Mariana de la Encarnación, Sor 87–8, 89n
  Relación de la fundación del convento de San José de México 88
marriage xii, 2n, 5, 105–8, 111, 113, 123–4, 139–40, 163, 167, 178
  ceremony 4
  roles in 19, 139–40
  and theater 148, 153, 154, 166
  and women 2n, 6, 9, 19, 105–6, 131n
Mars 150
Martín de Córdoba, Fray xii, 35–49, 50, 51n, 52
  Garden of Noble Maidens xii, 35
  Jardín de nobles doncellas xii, 35–49, 52
Martínez Guijarro, Juan *see* Siliceo
Mary Tudor, Princess 99, 101n
  education of 53n, 49, 99
Mary, Virgin xiii, 16, 21, 27, 37, 38, 41, 94, 96, 180, 183, 191
  and the *Book of the City of Ladies* 94
  and books 94, 191
  and Books of Hours 94, 98, 126
  education of xiii, 94, 102
  education of Jesus xiii, 94, 96
  as example xiii, 22, 99, 180
  iconography of 94, 96, 113, 126
  and Isabel la Católica 37, 41
  as mother 96
  and Santa Teresa 73n, 78, 82, 84–5
  as teacher 96, 99
  writing 96
mathematics 19, 33n, 44, 88, 125

Mathéolus 10
Maxentius/Maximinus, Emperor 16, 182
meditation 27–8, 51, 110, 191
Medrano, Lucia de xii, 44–5, 57
Mena, Juan de 61
Mendoza, family of 32, 75, 159
  daughters of 32, 34n
Mendoza, Fray Iñigo de 40
Mendoza, Juana de 25
Mendoza, Doña María de 71
Mendoza, Pedro González 49, 107n
Meun, Jean de 4n, 9–10
Mexico xiii, 87–8, 117–26, 157–60, 170, 174n, 185
  Audiencia 118, 121
  cabildo 125
  caciques 117, 120, 121–2
  church in 87
  colegios 117–18, 123–6, 164, 170n
  colonial 157, 160, 186n
  European settlers 118
  Franciscans in 116–23
  Guaxaca 121
  macehuales 117
  Mexico City 87, 99, 117, 120, 121n, 125, 162, 183, 185
  Michoacán 118
  publishing in 89
  Puebla 87, 89n, 164, 170
    bishop of 164, 170
  Santo Domingo 121
  Texcoco 117
  Tlatelolco 118n, 120
  university 120
microcosm 133, 136, 140
  humors 135, 138–9
  theories of 133, 136, 138, 145
  and women 136, 138–9, 145
Middle Ages x, xi, 3, 7, 18, 40n, 62, 64, 94, 96n, 129
  medieval literature 4, 8
migas see amigas
military 7, 13, 17, 38
Minerva 1, 14, 37, 131; *see also* Athena
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 158n, 177, 185–6
  and weaving 37
misogyny xi, 6–12, 18, 20, 27, 36n, 64, 85, 102, 161n, 167, 172, 183, 190
models 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11n, 33, 189–91
monastery 3, 6, 7, 47, 62n, 72, 100, 102, 117, 122–3, 163, 169, 178; *see also* cloister, convent, reclusion, *recogimiento*
  education in 61–2, 72, 123–4, 125, 147n, 164
  monastic life 24, 59, 62, 63, 70, 75, 79, 87, 105, 108, 146, 163, 168
Monja alférez see Erauso, Catalina de
Moors 38, 60, 136
moral(s) 36, 38, 39, 52, 55, 56, 60, 103–4, 105, 134, 135
  and Alonso Ortiz 51
  education 2, 7, 8, 10, 19, 50, 57, 60, 103n, 104, 107, 108, 116, 154, 192
  literature 3, 19, 51, 60, 103, 129
  rule 52
  treatises 35, 102, 142
  wisdom 10, 36
moralists 11n, 126, 148, 155
More, Saint Thomas 56, 100
  Utopia 118
Morell, Juliana 130
Moreto, Agustín 153–4, 166
  El desdén con el desdén 153–4, 166
  and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 164, 166
Morillas, Cecilia de 81, 130
Moses 175, 181–2
mother(s) xiii, 2, 3, 14, 21, 76, 78, 82, 84, 86, 90
  education of her children xiii, 3, 59n, 60, 73, 78, 86, 102
  as example xiii, 80, 83
  and nursing 17, 23, 102
Mount Parnassus 15, 182n
Mount Sinai 17
mujer(*es*) *see also* manly women, virago
  esquiva(*s*) 148, 152–4, 166
  de valor 139
  varonil(*es*) ix, xiii, 21, 23, 27, 36, 40, 56, 57, 76, 83, 89, 121n, 138, 139, 144, 148–52, 158, 161, 171, 180, 182n, 186, 190
Murcia 116
Muses 3, 15, 131, 146, 147, 158, 182n, 185
music 34, 39, 48, 53, 75, 81, 88, 106, 107, 126, 166n
  and Fray Luis de León 140
  instruction in 6, 48, 53, 61, 88, 106, 117, 177

Muslims, conversion of 116; *see also* Moors
mythology 2n, 37, 150, 154, 158, 159, 185
    as exemplary 1, 2n, 143–4, 150, 154, 186, 191

Nahuatl 117
Naomi 55
Naples 139, 143
Nebrija, Antonio de 43, 44, 54, 57, 130
Nebrija, Francisca de xii, 44, 54, 57, 130
needle vs. pen x, xiii, xiv, 45, 141, 142, 144, 189, 191–2
New World xi, xiii, 86–7, 110n, 116, 120, 123, 125, 160, 163, 186
    catechizing in 117
    encomenderos, duties of 117
    mestizas(*os)* 117, 118, 124, 125
    missionaries in 116–20
    New Spain ix, 90, 126, 157, 160, 192
Nicostrata 14, 57, 82, 130, 178
Nile 181
Ninfa 135
Nogarola, Isotta x, 33, 137n
novices 78–9, 111
    education of xiii, 69, 71, 78–80, 111
    Mistress of 69, 70, 71, 75, 78–81, 126
        as teacher 69, 71, 75, 79–80
    and reading 75
Núñez de Miranda, Antonio 89, 167–9, 170n, 174n, 175, 182n
    as confessor 89, 169
    and Saint Anthony 175
    and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 162n
        Carta de Monterrey 167–9
nuns xiii, 7, 62, 69–70, 78–90
    education of 64, 68, 74–5, 111, 125–6, 179
    iconography of 94
    Latin 71, 125
    in Mexico 121–3, 125–6
    and recreation 75–8, 191
    as teachers 99, 109–11, 122–3
    writings of 63, 65, 80–91, 129, 149n, 176, 179, 186
nurse, nursing 3, 17, 23, 50–51, 72, 73, 80, 102, 183
    royal nursemaids 50–51

Old World 158, 160
Olympus, Mount 158
orator, education of 4, 5, 9, 10, 16, 22–3
oratory xi, 4, 16, 38, 45, 171
    forensic argument 38, 176
    logical fence 38
    rhetoric ix, 9, 38, 66, 67, 71, 79, 81, 110, 132, 137n, 170, 175n, 177
Oratory of Religious 70
Orestila 135
Orlando furioso 85, 152
orphans 105n, 109, 111–13, 115–16, 124; *see also colegios de niñas huérfanas*, foundlings
Ortiz, Alonso xiii, 48–52
    and Isabel la Católica 49–50, 52, 55
    character formation 50
    Diálogo sobre la educación del Príncipe Don Juan, hijo de los Reyes Católicos xii, 48–52, 55
    Dialogue concerning the Education of the Prince xii
    and Latin 52
    Liber de educatione Johannis Serenissimi Principis xii
    sources 51
Osuna, Francisco de 63, 64, 118n
    Tercer abecedario espiritual 63
Ovando, Nicolas 116
Ovid 7, 103, 133n

Padilla, Doña Elvira de 87
Padilla, Juan de 61
Palavicino, Francisco-Javier 185
Palencia, Alonso de 31n, 43
Palmyra, Queen of 13
Paredes, Condesa de 157
patristic literature 1, 5–7, 24n, 50, 75, 133, 139, 175, 176; *see also* Fathers of the Church
Patzcuaro 118
Paul, Saint 5, 60, 65–7, 78, 138, 175, 179–80, 182; *see also* ‘Mulieres in ecclesia taceant’
    “Mulieres in ecclesia taceant” 60, 65–6, 67, 101, 138, 139n, 172, 178–9, 180, 192
    and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 172, 178–80
    and women 78, 179–80, 182
Paula, Saint 6, 64, 169, 178–9
    education of 6, 106, 179

and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 163, 178–9
pedagogy
block letters, use of 6, 50, 51
grammar books 33, 35, 43, 96
hornbook 96
learning aids 94n, 102
textbooks 191
treatises on xiii, 5, 33n, 34n, 50, 62, 99, 126, 129, 142
Pedro de Luna 27n, 28n
Pelagius 179
Penelope 56n, 57, 141
Pérez de Guzmán, Fernán 21n, 32
Generaciones y semblanzas 32
poems of 61
Petrarch 11, 20
De viris illustribus 11
Phaeton 159
Philip II, King 106, 109, 110, 125, 132, 135, 144
daughter of 144
education of girls 106, 109, 125
and learned women 54n, 132
library of 43n
and poor 106
philosophy 20, 27, 44, 61, 110, 137, 171
study of 33n, 81, 103n, 135, 154, 172
treatises 110, 133
Phoenix xiii, 130–31, 157, 158, 163n, 185–6, 192
Pinelo, Doña Valentina de 130–31
Pisa, Francisco de 67
Plato xi, 1–5, 38n, 50, 51, 103, 132, 133n, 134
and Alonso Ortiz 50
Guardian class 1–2
influence of 1, 4–5, 133n
Laws 2
Republic 2
Plautus 55
Plutarch xi, xiii, 4, 7, 8, 55, 102
Conjugalia praecepta 102
Lives xii
De mulierum virtutes 4–5
Pola Argentaria 147, 177; *see also* Argentaria
poor 104–6, 109–16, 125
education of 104–5, 113
relief 104–5, 111
in America 125, 185
schools for 47, 105–6, 109–11, 113, 115–16, 126
Pope Joan 11n
Popocateptl 160
Portia 135
Portugal xii, 20, 53–4, 108n
court 53–4, 57
education of princess 137n
and Isabel la Católica xii, 32, 53, 57
Portuguese language 20
powers of the soul 25, 28, 134
and bodily senses 28
entendimiento 23, 25–9, 35, 67, 71, 80, 115, 132n, 144, 145, 159, 171–2
memory 27, 38
understanding 28, 67, 71, 80, 159
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 171–2, 185
will 28
prayer(s) 29, 40, 67, 71, 79, 116, 117, 125, 177n, 192
daily 106, 191
teaching of 19, 69, 79–80, 87, 106, 112, 126
preachers, preaching 7, 138, 170, 179; *see also* orator, oratory, sermon literature
princess 18–19, 154
education of xii, 34, 36–9, 49–50, 53n, 54, 101, 104, 153–4
as example 18, 36, 52, 154
as exception 39
and plebian women 38
prioress 59n, 69, 70, 79, 81, 86, 89; *see also* convent
and confessors 69, 79
qualifications of 69n, 74, 126
and reading 70
as teacher 59n, 69, 71, 99
Proba 92
Procris 135
proselytizing 116–17, 123
Prudentius 53
psalter 6, 33n, 94, 96; *see also* devotional literature, Latin, reading
as primer 96
and women 94, 96
Pseudo-Dionysius 174
publishing 8, 20, 31
Pulgar, Fernando de 41, 44

Quechua 111
queen ix, xii, 8, 11, 13–14, 39, 99, 141, 147, 178
  education of xii, 34, 36
  as example xii, 31, 34, 36, 39–41, 44, 52, 56–7, 99, 126, 129, 141, 190
  as manly woman ix, 11, 39, 40
  strong xii, 13, 14, 16, 40, 76
  as warrior 11, 14, 31, 37, 38–9, 40, 153, 173
  as wife 34, 40
querelle des femmes xi, 9, 20
Quevedo, Francisco de 84, 86n
Quintilian xi, 5, 12, 49, 50, 51, 55, 102
  Institutio oratoria xi, 5
Quiroga, Doña Elena de 111–12, 113
Quiroga, Vasco de 118, 120
  Hospital de Santa Fe 118

Rachel 55, 181
Ramírez, Doña María 162
Ramírez de Cantillana, Isabel 160, 162n
Ramírez de Santillana, Pedro 161
reading xiii, 3, 5–6, 12, 34, 51, 57, 61, 70, 72, 80, 85, 91, 96, 107, 108, 112, 123, 125–6, 132, 143, 147n, 164, 191, 192
  devotional 35, 61n, 63, 100, 108, 116
  and laywomen xiii, 3, 5, 6, 19, 25, 32n, 33n, 50, 63, 64, 103, 141, 172
  and nuns 62, 64, 65, 70, 87–8, 125
  novels 108, 110, 129
  plays 110, 115
  popular literature 20n, 24n, 60, 103, 129, 138, 142, 155, 163, 181n, 191
  primers 96, 112, 113n
  profane books 32n, 62, 85, 103n, 108, 116, 172, 191
  psalter 71, 96
  solitary 70
  spiritual 6, 62, 70, 80
Real Convento de Jesús María 87–8, 125
Rebecca 55, 164
reclusion xii, 22, 29, 40, 56, 63, 109, 122–3, 141, 190
recogimiento 100n, 109, 121, 122, 162; *see also* cloister, convent, monastery, reclusion
  and nuns 122
  and Juan Luis Vives 100n
Regula monacharum 7
Reformation 112
Renaissance xi, 1, 7, 8, 18, 40n, 53, 62, 96n, 100, 102n, 103, 133
  humanists x, xi, 100, 103, 190
  Italian 33, 47
  scholars 1, 4, 5
  Spanish 5, 44
  theorists 5, 7, 136n
Resende, Andres de 56
Retablo de la Vida de Cristo 61
retirement, life of 55; *see also* cloister, convent, monastery, reclusion, *recogimiento*
Ribadeneira, Isabel de 144
Rodríguez, Alfonso 110
Rojas Zorrilla, Francisco 166
Roman de la rose 9–10
Rome 4, 13, 21, 45, 53, 112
  marriage ceremony 4
  men of 5, 16, 23
  women of 4, 6, 22
Roper, Margaret x, 56
Ruiz, Fray Francisco 106
Ruiz, Juan 35
Ruth 181

Saba, Queen of 177
Sabuco de Nantes, Oliva xiv, 130–35, 138, 139, 142, 145, 155, 190, 192
  and authorship 131–2, 190
  father of 131, 190
  and the humors 133–5, 139
  Nueva filosofía de la naturaleza del hombre 131–5, 190
  public examination 133
  and *quilo* 134
  as Tenth Muse 131
  Vera medicina 131, 135
Sahagún, Fray Bernadino de 123
sainete 166
Salamanca 43, 44, 45, 72, 107n, 110n, 113, 139
  University of 44, 107n
Sallust 35
Samano, Juan de 124
Samson 159
San José de Avila, Monastery of 63, 72, 80n, 111
San José de México, Monastery of 87–9, 162
San Juan de los Reyes, Monastery of 43

San Miguel de Nepantla 160
San Pedro, Diego de 27n
    Cárcel de amor 103
Sandoval sisters 112–13; *see also* Carmelites, Discalced, foundations, Beas
Santacruz, Alonso de 56
Santa María de la Gracia, Monastery of 61, 62, 111
Santa Teresa, la Antigua, Monastery of 87
Santander 116
Santiago, Order of 143
Santiago de Compostela 113, 115
Santo Domingo, Mexico 121
Sappho 3, 14–15, 100, 147
Sara(h) 55, 181
sarao 143, 191
    and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 164
Saul 175
Scarron, Paul 146
scholastic disputation 7, 71; *see also* oratory
schools xiii, 2, 28–9, 104–5, 107, 109–10, 112, 113, 116, 117, 120–26, 192; *see also colegios de niñas huérfanas*
    boarding 3, 111–12
    cathedral 112
    on church grounds 117
    curriculum xiii, 107, 112, 113n, 123, 126
    for Indians 117, 123–4
    for orphans xiii, 112, 113, 116, 124
    for poor 104–5, 111, 113
    primary xiii, 112, 123, 125
    trade 112
science 9, 14, 19, 29, 37, 48, 75, 135, 137
    and learned women 9, 15, 132, 134, 135, 137
    teaching of 34n, 135
    treatises on 129
Scipio Africanus 21
Scripture 1, 5, 20, 25, 35, 50, 55, 76, 81, 138, 140, 175; *see also* Bible
    and exemplary women 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 21–2, 40, 84, 175, 190
    exegesis 76, 178
    New Testament 40, 61, 71, 102, 139n, 182
        Epistles 71, 138, 179
        Gospels 171, 179, 182
        Magnificat 81, 96, 180
        study of 171
        Timothy 179
        Titus 179
    Old Testament 16, 21, 22, 40, 55, 76, 139n, 181, 190
        Proverbs 56, 139
        Psalms 71, 81, 179
        Ten commandments 80, 112, 182
    study of 1, 6, 35, 53, 64, 68, 71, 76, 131, 137n, 172, 177
    translation of 33n, 61, 71, 81, 139
    Vulgate 43
Semiramis 12–13, 16, 21, 38, 56, 150, 153, 182
Seneca 24n, 33n, 35, 38, 53, 55, 103, 133n
    Proverbs 61
Sentencias morales 61
sermon literature xi, 7, 8, 40, 61, 64, 170, 172, 174; *see also* oratory, preaching
Seville 42n, 75, 94n, 105n, 113, 116, 149
    Columban library 20n
Sforza, Doña Isabel 130–31
Sibyls 37, 146–7, 158n
Sicily 32, 44–5
Sículo, Lucio Marineo 43, 44, 45
Sigea, Luisa de xiv, 15n, 54–6, 75, 158, 190, 192
    Duarum virginum colloquium de vita aulica et privata 54–6, 190
    education of 54, 81, 192
    as Tenth Muse 158
Sigeo, Diego 54, 81
siglo de oro ix, x; *see also* Golden Age
Sigüenza y Góngora, Carlos 164, 185
silence 3, 15, 17, 23, 27, 65–7, 101, 141, 175, 178–80, 183, 186, 191, 192
Siliceo 107–8, 115
    Colegio de Nobles Doncellas 108, 111n
    and Jiménez de Cisneros 108
    *limpieza de sangre*107
Sobrino, family of 82–4, 86; *See also* Cecilia del Nacimiento, María de San Alberto
    education of 75, 81
Sobrino, Antonio 81
Socrates 139, 169
Sofoareta 151, 152
Solomon 49, 55, 141
Sotomayor, Don Juan de 131

Spain ix–xiv, 31, 33, 41, 43, 44, 48, 53, 54, 57, 59, 60, 62, 64, 86, 89, 90, 99, 103–5, 111–13, 115–18, 123, 125, 126, 129, 135, 138, 142, 146, 147n, 157, 164, 191, 192
humanists in 44, 48
Spanish language 75n, 81, 136
speculum principis 18, 34, 36, 48
Stesichorus 45
Subida del monte Sión 63
Susannah 181
sword 6, 31, 144, 150, 153
Syriac 54
Syrian 13

Talavera, Fray Hernando de 40, 43n, 60, 62, 64n
Devoto tractado 61
Suma y breve compilación de cómo han de vivir 62
Tamar 181
Tarancón 54
Targelia 147
Temistoclea 143
Tenth Muse xiii, 15n, 56, 130, 131, 149, 158, 182n, 185, 192
Terence 38n, 103
Teresa de Cartagena, Sor xii, xiv, 24–30, 31, 32, 56, 59, 60, 63, 67, 82, 131, 132, 138, 145, 163, 169, 171, 190–92
Admiraçión operum Dey 25–9, 63, 135
Arboleda de los enfermos 24–5, 76, 135
deafness 24–5, 27, 29
family of 24n
powers of the soul 28
and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz 171, 179n, 186
Teresa de Jesús, Santa ix, x, xii, xiii, xiv, 59–90, 91, 98–9, 111–12, 132n, 145, 146, 163, 190–91, 192
and Augustinians 61–2
beatification of 65, 72, 84, 91, 130
and books 65, 70, 192
Camino de perfección 63, 68, 69, 73, 76, 79, 83, 191
canonization of 84, 85, 91
Carmelite rule 63, 69–71, 80, 87, 89
and confessors 64–5, 68, 69, 74
Constituciones 63, 65, 69, 70–71, 73n, 75, 80, 86–9
converso descent 59, 60n, 67n, 68n
death of 59, 65, 73, 79, 84, 85, 86, 111
education of 60–62, 104, 192
as example xii, 59, 62, 64, 66, 67, 69, 72, 73, 75 78, 80, 82–4, 86, 90, 172, 178, 186
as exception 62, 67, 99, 129
Fundaciones 66, 89
handwriting of 61, 73
humility topos 79, 132, 171, 176n
iconography of 78n, 91, 98–9
and Index 64, 71
influence of 59, 70, 72, 80, 86–8, 90, 130
and Latin 61, 64, 70, 71
and letras 66, 68, 71
letters of 65–6, 71, 72–3
and Lope de Vega 84, 86, 130–31
as manly woman xiii, 83, 89
and María de San José Salazar 71–2, 75, 76, 78–9, 80, 82, 84, 86
Moradas del castillo interior, Las 69
as mother 59n, 73, 78, 82, 84, 86, 90, 99, 191
"Mulieres in ecclesia taceant" 65–6, 139n, 179
mysticism 63, 66–7, 69, 79–80, 86
and reading 61–5, 70–72, 73n, 80, 85, 110
and Reform 60, 62–72, 74, 75, 79, 81, 84–6, 89, 90; *see also* Carmelites, Discalced
sources 62–3, 191
style 61n, 66, 67n
as teacher xiv, 64, 67, 69, 78, 82, 86, 99
Vida 60, 63, 64, 67, 78n, 85, 87, 88, 89
as virginal mother xiii, 82, 84, 86, 90
works of xii, 86–7, 89, 129, 190, 191
and writing 59, 60, 68, 69, 72, 73, 80, 85–7
Tertulian 55, 139n, 141
Texcoco 117
Thamyris 14, 15
theater xiii, 129, 142, 147–55, 192
and actresses 147, 149–50, 155, 192
and convent 81–2, 147
and María de Zayas 148–9
and women 147, 150
theology 20, 27, 47
Theophrastus 133n, 137
Third Order of Saint Francis 105, 121
Thomas Aquinas, Saint 134n, 170, 175

Tlatelolco 118, 120
Toledo 42n, 43, 48, 54, 75, 87, 106, 110, 126
  schools 106–8, 126
  Second Council of 105
translation 19, 20, 31, 33n, 35, 63, 71, 81, 99, 111, 139, 181–2
  and libraries 35, 60–61
treatises x, xiii, 5, 34n, 35, 62, 69, 99, 126, 129, 139, 147, 190, 191n
  on childhood education x, xiii, 5, 49–50, 99, 126, 142
  on right conduct x, xiii, 35, 102
  philosophical xiii, 10, 33n
Trent, Council of *see* Councils, church
tutor 4, 6, 7, 35n, 43, 45, 47, 48, 51, 54, 61, 88, 99, 110, 125, 192
    character of 6, 51, 108
    female 45, 49, 108
    male 47, 102

Universal Vocabulario en Latín y en romance 43
university 7, 27, 52, 105, 107, 126, 161; (*see also* higher education
  access to 7, 107n
  and New World 120, 125, 161
  and women xn, 7, 28, 29, 130–32, 161, 163, 179
  teaching in xn, 44, 130, 145, 179

Valdés, Fernando de 64, 71
Valencia 99, 104, 143n
Valera, Diego de 19n, 41, 104n
Valladolid 72, 81, 83, 113, 116, 130
Varela Osorio, Doña María 139
Vaseo, Juan 56
Vega y Carpio, Lope de 45, 84–6, 90, 130, 147, 158
  and exemplary women 84, 85, 130, 147
  as Fénix de España 158
  Laurel de Apolo 45, 130–31, 147
  and learned women 45, 130–31
  Oración y discurso 130
  Peregrino en su patria 130
  and Santa Teresa 84, 86, 130
  Vida y muerte de Santa Teresa de Jesús 84–6
Velasco, Francisca de 54
Velázquez, Juana 121
Vélez de Guevara, Luis 149
Venice 139
Vergara, Isabel de 44
Vergara, Juan de 44, 56
vernacular 7, 8, 12, 19, 20, 24, 32, 35, 52, 63n, 64, 71, 81, 102, 116, 135, 139, 191; *see also* Scripture
viceroyalties 87, 89, 124n, 157, 162, 164, 185
Vieyra, Antonio de 170, 172, 173, 174n, 175
  criticism of 170–72, 173, 175
  Sermon of 170, 172
villancico(*s*) 181–3
Villaumbrosa, Condesa de 178
virago(s) ix, xiii, 6, 11n, 13, 14, 21, 57, 84, 150; *see also* manly women, *mujer varonil*
Virgil 35, 61, 173
  Aeneid 173
  Bucolics 61
virgin(s) 5–6, 8, 11, 23
virtue(s) 2–4, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 20, 34, 36, 38, 41, 45, 48, 50, 102–5, 125
  and Alonso Ortiz 49–52
  and boys 105
  and women 3–7, 19, 27, 51, 55, 56, 102, 115, 121–3, 162, 178, 179
  chastity 6, 10, 13, 19, 22, 23, 26, 40, 56, 100, 102, 104
  courage 3, 7, 13–17, 21–3, 29, 30, 38, 39, 40, 56, 76
  female 10, 13, 15, 16, 34, 36, 40, 52, 56, 100n, 102, 105, 123, 181
  fortitude 8, 23, 140, 150
  heroic 16, 39, 60, 140
  manly 17, 22, 23, 36, 56, 140, 150, 190
  modesty 100n, 104
  piety 41
  prudence 22, 40, 56, 110, 155, 179
  sobriety 10, 19, 104
  wisdom 4, 7, 10, 13, 14, 28, 29, 36, 56, 101
Vives, Juan Luis xi, 5, 20, 39n, 50, 51n, 53, 99–116, 126, 139–42, 155, 190, 191
  De los deberes del marido 100
  De institutione feminae christianae 5, 53, 139
  Instrucción de la mujer cristiana 5, 39n, 56, 99–104, 107, 109, 116, 139
  Instruction of the Christian Woman 5, 20
  and Isabel, la Católica 56

and Mary Tudor 101n
mother as teacher 102
De ratione studii puerilis 53
Del socorro de los pobres 104–5, 109, 116
De subventione pauperum 104, 109, 116

warriors 2n, 8, 11, 14, 29, 31
widow(s) 5–6, 16, 22, 26, 29, 109, 111
wives 3, 5–6, 10, 19, 57
Woolf, Virginia ix
works of mercy 105n, 111, 124
writing ix, x, xiii, 1, 3, 6, 11n, 24, 40
and pen x, xiii, xiv, 66, 85, 94, 96, 141, 142, 144, 167, 178, 183, 189, 192
and women 24, 26, 85, 94, 96, 141, 144, 178, 183, 189, 191
by women ix, x, xiii, 3, 9, 26, 27, 30, 31

Xenophon 139

Zaragoza 19n, 113, 116, 139, 143
Zayas, María de ix, xiv, 14, 76, 132n, 143–8, 149, 152, 155, 158, 163, 186, 190, 191, 192
arms vs. letters 145
Desengaños amorosos 143–4, 149n
as exemplary 158, 163
and frame story 164
Novelas amorosas y ejemplares 143–5, 146, 147
Al que leyere 143, 145
La fuerza del amor 144
Parte segunda del sarao y entretenimiento honesto 143
popularity of 146
as Sibyl 146
as Tenth Muse 146
La traición en la amistad 148, 166
works of 143–6, 148
Zenobia xii, 13–14, 17, 21, 30, 39, 53, 57, 130, 143, 150, 177, 190
as warrior 14, 21, 40
education of her children 13, 21
Zeus 8n, 185; *see also* Jupiter
Zumárraga, Juan de 118–25
and Carlos V 118, 120
education of girls 120–25
and laywomen 121–2
and missionaries 120
and nuns 122
Protector of the Indians 120