

6. "Persons to Whom Every Courtesy Is Owed": The Elite Imperative 1585-1601

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Between 1585 and 1601, seven women's institutions were founded in Mexico City. This frantic pace of foundation would not be seen again for the remainder of the colonial period. The new foundations differed markedly from those of the preceding decades. As we have seen, the Franciscan order and Mexico's first bishop established a beaterio and colegio for Indian women, which was operated during the 1530s but was moribund by the time of the foundation of the first convent for professed nuns, La Concepción de México. After the creation of La Concepción in 1540, the institutions founded for the protection and enclosure of women were evenly distributed between the two categories of recogimiento and convent. In the latter category, Jesús María had a special character, dedicated as it was to the dowryless reception of poor but noble girls. Thus, before 1585, the women's institutions of the city were a diverse group. There were only four actual convents, complemented by the Magdalen house of Jesús de la Penitencia, the Colegio de Niñas Mestizas, and the recogimiento of Santa Mónica. By 1600, conversely, "true" convents dominated, and non-convent institutions were on their way to a homogeneous future providing refuge for the daughters of the wealthy. Thus we can distinguish between two foundational periods, divided somewhere around 1585.

The new foundations undertaken between 1585 and 1600 were all convents for professed nuns, virtually all of them elite women who could provide the requisite substantial dowries. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, the nature of the foundation process changed as well. After 1585, the new establishments were all projects of individuals - pious works - rather than cooperative projects in which local governments and cofradías took a leading role. The city returned to a more conservative and traditional form of foundation, turning away from the shared reformative fervor that had dominated the middle of the century.

Thus, after 1585, the goal of sanctifying the city was largely abandoned, or at least constricted in the face of new colonial realities: social, economic, and demographic. The foundation of women's institutions came to follow the pattern now recognized as typical of colonial Spanish America.

As we have seen, the impulse to protect daughters of the conquistador elite was always part of the rationale for the existence of convents. Yet it had coexisted with other considerations, such as the need to sanctify the newly colonized and still disquietingly Mexica city by protecting and enclosing non-elite women of the república de españoles. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, however, all of the city's recogimientos were transformed into

refuges for the daughters of the urban elite. The growth of the Spanish population meant competition for convent spaces. At the same time, economic pressures made themselves felt. The epidemic of 1576, which killed so many of the colony's native people, also led to a short-term economic slump that was felt in the city by 1585. These factors combined to force a return to older models of foundation based on personal patronage rather than cooperative efforts.

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To be sure, the pressure for more convent places was felt quite early. In 1569, Archbishop Montúfar wrote that there were seventy nuns in La Concepción, and that there was a great need for new convents such as Santa Clara. ¹ By 1580, Don Pedro Moya de Contreras could legitimately speak of "the neediness of the land [which] obliges convents of nuns to grow, for the remedy of the many poor maidens of quality." ²  The pressure on Mexico's women's institutions was unrelenting, and there was insufficient funding to create new ones. As early as 1565, Archbishop Montúfar complained that, "alms are drying up with the great neediness of the land." ³ (*las limosnas se van resfriando con la mucha necesidad de la tierra*) Montúfar may have been overstating the case. As we have seen, charitable institutions continued to be founded after 1565 relying on publicly collected alms. And the funds on which the secular church depended - tithe remittances - continued to increase rapidly from 1550 to 1576. From 1576 to 1590, however, there was great instability in tithe collection, eliciting a crisis in the colonial church. The epidemic of 1576 to 1581 had a great impact on tithe collection, as did the King's revocation of his donation of the "royal ninth." ⁴ These watershed years for the colonial church were also watershed years for women's institutions in the city. The archdiocese, facing huge shortfalls in its income, became much more concerned about its own survival than about the creation of new institutions for the women of Mexico City.

The cabildo, which had been such an important supporter of women's institutions up to this point, also began to withdraw from active participation. As early as 1577, the procurador Juan Velázquez de Salazar asked in the name of the urban government that no more monasteries of men or women be established within the city. The urban government was concerned that the city's regular orders were taking too much of the wealth of the kingdom and occupying too much urban real estate. ⁵ As we have seen, some of the cabildo's most important members participated in the foundation of the charitable convent Jesús María after this date; moreover, they supported — at least with rhetoric — the creation of the recogimiento of Santa Mónica. Increasingly, however, the cabildo began to withdraw from the business of establishing and funding women's institutions. Only some five years after the establishment of Santa Mónica, for example, the city government was shirking its responsibility to provide water to the institution its very members had considered so important to the colony. In May 1587 the cabildo was ordered by the viceroy to supply water to the institution. The following

January, the viceroy ordered the allocation of 2000 pesos for the waterworks for Santa Mónica and the new Carmelite monastery. In July, the city asked to be excused from providing water for Santa Mónica. The order was repeated in September and then cancelled in November. ⁶ This should nonetheless not be interpreted as a sign of the cabildo's total withdrawal from its responsibilities in regard to religious institutions for women. The cabildo continued to grant solares to new convents and to provide them with water and other services. In 1598, councilors readily accepted Guillén Brondat's argument that the costs of water provision should be borne by the cabildo for religious institutions, whether rich or poor, given that such institutions "are so useful to the city." ⁷ (*tan útiles son a la Ciudad*)

Still, the cabildo's attitudes toward women's institutions had changed, as had those institutions themselves. First, houses serving non-professed and non-elite women were fast disappearing. There would be no more recogimientos founded until the seventeenth century. Further, those founded during that century would show a markedly different character: private, often coercive, and explicitly non-monastic. The Hospital de la Misericordia, founded early in the seventeenth century, dedicated itself to the *forceful* reclusion of prostitutes - not their voluntary conversion into professed nuns - and would be converted to a general recogimiento in the eighteenth century. ⁸ Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, founded in 1658 as a voluntary recogimiento for poor women, was carefully conceived of as an institution for temporary residence, and was prohibited from ever becoming a convent or having any public religious services. ⁹ Similar proscriptions maintained the private character of San Miguel de Belem, founded in 1683. ¹⁰ An emphasis on coercion or at least social hygiene also marked the Hospital del Divino Salvador, founded in 1680 for "*madwomen*." ¹¹

If no new recogimientos were founded after 1585, the three that already existed were rapidly becoming indistinguishable from the city's convents. Like other non-elite institutions, the Colegio de Niñas Mestizas was unable to resist elite pressure. From the beginning, the colegio contained the germ of its transformation into a quasi-monastic institution for Spanish girls. The cédula of foundation mentioned "Spanish and mestiza women who wandered lost"; ¹² (*españolas y mestizas que andaban perdidas*) and, as we have seen, one of the first entrants was of Spanish blood. The entrance of paid *pupilas* and *depositadas* after 1549 allowed the beginnings of what would be a gradual takeover of the institution by Spaniards. In 1557, there was already some ambiguity in the colegio's description as a home for "poor lost maidens... daughters of Spaniards, conquerors, and other persons." ¹³  Indeed, by this early date there were already many legitimate girls being placed in the colegio by their parents, many of whom were "gentlemen from among the most principal of this city." ¹⁴ (*cavalleros de los mas principales desta cibdad*) Alonso de Zorita, who had served as *visitador* to the colegio,

noted that the colegio's inhabitants included "many with rich parents." ¹⁵ (*muchas de padres ricos*) The daughters of Bernaldino de Albornoz, for example, had been placed in the colegio very early in its history.

By 1597, the Conde de Monterrey reported to the king that "the school that Your Majesty calls [the school] of mestiza maidens has come with time to be [a school] of Spanish girls and honorable people of quality who are orphans or daughters of poor parents who deposit them there." ¹⁶ By 1599, Monterrey noted that the colegio "used to be called [emphasis added] 'of mestizas'." ¹⁷ (*solía llamar de mestizas*) The mestiza girls and women for whom the school had been intended were simply no longer there. The colegio continued to offer places for "charity girls" (*colegialas*), but even these places had undergone a change. Competition for them was such that many applicants were from the most important families of New Spain. ¹⁸ From the beginning of the seventeenth century on, legitimacy and *limpieza de sangre*, which had never been required of sixteenth-century applicants, were mentioned in applications for entry. ¹⁹ Thus, while the institution continued to offer charity, its clientele was greatly narrowed. Its sixteenth-century history, indeed, appears as a gradual limiting of opportunity. First, as we have seen, constricted age limits were introduced seven years after the institution's foundation. The 1565 proscription against non-virgins further limited entrants. Gradually, the institution became much more homogeneous and the mestiza orphans whose perils had occasioned the colegio's foundation were abandoned to other more personal and haphazard forms of charity.

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A similar trajectory was followed by Jesús de la Penitencia, which operated as a recogimiento for some fourteen years, until 1586. Yet from its beginning it had received novices as well, a measure both of the pressure for convent spaces and the regard in which the house was held. As we have already noted, one of the young women received at the official encerramiento claimed to be a virgin. In 1574, soon after the institution's foundation, a young woman professed; she had entered with the specific purpose of becoming a nun and was not a prostitute. ²⁰ From at least 1589 on, Jesús de la Penitencia continued to receive "some maidens enclosed to be nuns with their dowries." ²¹ (*algunas donzellas recojidas por monjas con sus doctes*) These dowries were substantial, ranging from 2000 to 3000 pesos, enough to indicate that the bearers of such sums were elite women. The Cofradía de la Soledad retained the power to administer the institution's finances, while the bishop continued to govern its spiritual life. This arrangement led to some disarray, and as a result, in 1589 the cofradía was commanded by the pope to give financial accounts to the ordinary every year and was forbidden to receive any nun without the license of the ordinary and the abbess. ²² Slowly, the cofradía was being squeezed out of what was becoming a traditional convent. The cofrades resisted their loss of control over the

institution. Nonetheless, abbess elections were imposed in 1598, replacing the *cofradía's* right of appointment. In the same year, the inhabitants of the convent/*recogimiento* received the right to receive nuns with dowries and to follow the rule of La Concepción. ²³ Shortly thereafter, in 1607, more nuns came from La Concepción. From this point on, no more repentant prostitutes were received, and the institution's name changed to Nuestra Señora de Balbanera. ²⁴ In 1608, the cathedral chapter claimed that the convent was "one of the three most principal that there are in this kingdom." ²⁵  Thus the institution took its place alongside La Concepción and Regina Coeli as a refuge for a homogeneous group: the elite women of Mexico City.

The *recogimiento* of Santa Mónica, as we have seen, was founded relatively late, in the early 1580s. It too was soon the target of elite pressure. There was intense competition to gain access to Santa Mónica in the last decade of the century, when Guillén Brondat claimed that all those in the *recogimiento* were "persons to whom every courtesy is owed." ²⁶ (*personas a quien se debe hazer toda cortesía*) This had resulted, he said, from the great flood of applicants that allowed the *recogimiento* to select only the most qualified. The foundress, as we have seen, cherished the hope of converting the institution into a dual convent/*recogimiento*, in which nuns and *depositadas* could live separately. The consummation of her desire was long delayed, and when it came, the installation of professed nuns destroyed the *recogimiento*.

Its ultimate transformation was quick and violent. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Santa Mónica's income was low and its population was no longer occupying its entire edifice. The archbishop of the day, García Guerra, decided to establish a new Conceptionist convent upon the site. The building was split in two: half for the convent and half for the *recogimiento*. Two nuns from La Concepción joined two from La Encarnación as foundresses. ²⁷ The new convent was inaugurated in 1610 under the name of Santa María de Gracia (later San José de Gracia). The rector of the university, Doctor Fernando de Villegas, became patron of the convent in exchange for his annual payment of 2000 pesos de oro común. The patron received the right to admit his eight daughters and mother-in-law without any dowry. The two foundresses from La Encarnación were, in fact, his daughters. ²⁸ Very soon the professed nuns began to complain about the women in the *recogimiento*, particularly as the convent flourished and needed more space. The conflict over space culminated in the forced eviction of the *recogidas* by the nuns' servants, in which the authorities were complicit. ²⁹

Though the ultimate conversion of both Jesús de la Penitencia and Santa Mónica took place in the first decade of the seventeenth century, the seeds of their overthrow were sown in the late sixteenth century, when their incomes declined and their populations became increasingly dominated by rich

criollas. The pressure for convent places for elite women was important, but so too was a decline in financial support for non-elite institutions. Somehow the notion of recogimientos for a wide range of Spanish women was like the colegio de niñas indias before it losing support, as members of the cofradías that supported the Colegio de Niñas Mestizas and Jesús de la Penitencia complained of their increasing inability to collect sufficient alms.

If the recogimientos founded during the sixteenth century underwent change at century's end, convents of professed nuns would also be altered by the new climate. Jesús María presents a particularly interesting case because it was founded both as a "welfare institution" and as a professed convent and because the date of its foundation places it close to the sea change in the role of women's institutions. Soon after the foundation of Jesús María, founders Pedro Thomas and Gregorio de Pesquera came into conflict with the Conceptionist nuns who had come to the institution as foundresses. The latter complained to the archbishop that the two founders were seeking to gain from their status and "even interfere in religious and internal matters." ³⁰ In 1581, Pesquera asked the cabildo to intervene in the dispute with the abbess, citing the imminent loss of nuns' dowries as cause for urgency. ³¹

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Indeed, dowries caused the first conflicts, when Archbishop Moya de Contreras decided, apparently unilaterally, to accept dowried novices as well as the dowryless women who were received as holders of capellanías. Almost immediately, there was a flood of applicants "with rich dowries." ³² The new ordinance allowed for the entry for six years of dowried women, who were to bring 1500 pesos each. Each dowried woman could opt to dower a poor woman for an additional 800 pesos. Provisions for dowried entry outraged Thomas, who had dedicated so much time and effort to the creation of a dowryless convent. Similarly perturbed, the city councillor Baltasar Mexia Salmerón claimed that he had given the convent a capellanía under the original provisions, which were now not being met, and might therefore withdraw it. ³³ Finally, however, the founders agreed reluctantly that dowried women could be received if each brought a dowry large enough to also endow a poor woman. The latter would become a "chaplain" (*capellana*) of the former, with obligation to pray for her soul. If either died, she would be replaced by another *pobre*. ³⁴

Thus stood matters in 1582, when Pedro Thomas left Mexico for Spain to seek royal favor for the new foundation. The founder left 12 to 15 thousand pesos in the power of the abbess. Upon his return, he complained that she had mishandled these funds, because "women know little of business." ³⁵ (*mugeres saben poco de negocios*) Thomas found that not only were dowried applicants being received without endowing poor ones,

but the poor capellanas were being selected not on the basis of merit but "as favors." ³⁶ Given the deluge of dowried entrants plus favoritism in the selection of capellanas, Thomas despaired of his project. He appealed to the audiencia, which in 1587 ruled that the convent should continue to offer fifteen royal chaplaincies (*capellanías reales*) in perpetuity; however, there was no provision made for the increase of these chaplaincies. This in itself was a blow for Thomas, who had a few years earlier urged the king to endow the convent so that it could receive fifty dowryless women. Nor did the audiencia limit the number of dowered entrants to the number of dowryless nuns. Given the rapid growth experienced by all of Mexico's convents during this period, the complete overwhelming of the convent's charitable objective was inevitable and imminent. The mere existence of a few chaplaincies as scholarship posts would not guarantee the foundation's character. ³⁷ Jesús María would become simply one more convent like the others, dedicated to the reception of the daughters of the wealthy.

If the already established women's institutions were becoming more homogeneously elite in character, so too were new foundations. This was undoubtedly related to a change in the very nature of the foundation process. After the short-term economic downturn that followed the epidemic of 1576-81, as we have seen, the city government and the archdiocese attempted to withdraw from founding women's institutions. When prosperity returned, which it certainly had by 1590, ³⁸ there was no return to the earlier model of foundation. Instead, there was a blossoming of "patrimonial" foundations based on personal patronage. ³⁹ From 1590 through the seventeenth century, "pious works" increased dramatically in the colony, ⁴⁰ many involving the foundation or renovation of convents for women.

The transition from one mode of foundation to the other is highlighted in the creation of Santa Catalina de Sena, the city's first Dominican convent. The city had long sought to establish a Dominican convent. One might expect, then, that the foundation of Santa Catalina would be undertaken as a cooperative venture on the model of Santa Clara, the Franciscan convent founded at the city's insistence in 1569-70. Indeed, as late as the 1560s, the cabildo was insistent on the need for a Dominican institution. And in 1578, Fray Bartolomé de Ledesma and Fray Andrés de Hubilla appeared before the cabildo to request its assistance in the establishment of such an institution. The cabildo agreed to send two representatives to talk to the order about the foundation. ⁴¹ Clearly, at that date, the *regidores* had not abandoned the idea that convents were a matter for the municipal government's oversight, if not its funding. Interestingly, however, the cabildo was clearly more cautious now than it had been in the past; discussion established that the project would be undertaken not with alms, "but with the dowries of the nuns." ⁴² (*sino con las dotaciones de las religiosas*)

The foundation thus partook of a personal rather than cooperative or institutional character. In fact, the foundation did not take place until three well-to-do sisters known as the Phelipas, one a widow and the others spinsters, offered their homes as the basis for the foundation, and their wealth to guarantee it. With this assurance, the foundation was quickly approved by the Vatican and the Dominican Order, which gave its permission in 1583. ⁴³ Not for ten years, however, was the transformation of the houses into a convent completed. ⁴⁴ In 1593, the convent was inaugurated, with the foundresses two Oaxacan nuns from the Dominican convent founded there in 1576. They were carried in solemn procession from the church of Santo Domingo to the new convent, along with the nine novices who were granted the habit. ⁴⁵ A 4000-peso dowry requirement ensured that the nuns would be drawn from only the wealthiest families. Provision was also made for a caste system within the convent; young women who brought a smaller dowry could become white-veil nuns, and those with special skills in accounting or music might be admitted without dowry. ⁴⁶ In many ways this foundation mimicked that of Santa Clara; missing, however, was the same enthusiastic communal support the latter had aroused. No matter the importance of the Dominican order in the city and empire, the foundation was to be a patrimonial affair.

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Another patrimonial foundation was that of San Jerónimo de México (originally Santa Paula) in 1585. This first Jeronymite convent would later become best known as the cloister of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The new establishment was the project of Doña Isabel de Barrios, her husband Diego de Guzmán, and her children from her first marriage. The family purchased a house belonging to the merchant Alonso Ortiz for 11,500 pesos de oro común as the basis for the convent and spent a further 5947 pesos equipping the convent and church. Doña Isabel also supplied free medical services for three years and the services of a chaplain for one year. ⁴⁷ As in the case of Regina Coeli, a high dowry requirement (3000 pesos) along with ethnic restrictions limited entrance to the daughters of the elite. Among them were two granddaughters of Jerónimo López as well as other granddaughters of conquerors. Despite this connection to one of the cabildo's most important members, and although the alguacil mayor Diego de Velasco attended the procession and encerramiento, there is no indication that the urban government participated in this most patrimonial foundation.

Shortly after San Jerónimo's opening, Don Luis de Velasco aptly expressed the new exclusivity of the union between convent life and elite family strategy. He testified that Regina Coeli was a convent "where more honored and principal people are continually placed... in such a manner that if this [convent] might cease, much damage and discomfort would follow for the honored citizens of this city." ⁴⁸  Indeed, the "honored people" of Mexico City were well pleased with the opening of new convents such as San Jerónimo; by 1598, the institution contained 90 nuns along with servants.

The patrimonial character of new institutions was partly responsible for the accelerated pace of foundation. The foundation of San Lorenzo de México, the second Jeronymite (Augustinian) convent created in Mexico City, is a case in point. In 1598, Doña Marina de Mendoza, who had only been a novice in San Jerónimo for six months, determined that "with such a multitude she could not devote herself to prayer as she wished." (*con tanta multitud no podia como desseava vacar en la oracion*) Doña Marina was the daughter of Captain Juan de Zaldivar and the granddaughter of Luis Marín, conquerors of Nueva Galicia and New Spain respectively. With such illustrious antecedents, she was able to marshal substantial capital. She received viceregal approval for a new foundation dedicated to San Lorenzo; the archbishop gave his approval, with the proviso that Doña Marina must bring some 44,300 pesos in capital. 50 This agreed, the convent was inaugurated on 14 November 1598. As a novice, Doña Marina could be a patron but not a foundress. The familial character of the foundation, however, would not be compromised at all by the foundresses. Doña Marina's aunt and sister arrived as foundresses from Jesús María; another sister came from San Jerónimo. Doña Marina became the convent's first novice. 51 Designed for thirty-three nuns, the convent grew rapidly; it received five novices within its first twenty days of operation, all of them "daughters of the principal men of New Spain." 52 (*hijas de los principales hombres de la nueva espana*) Within its first month, San Lorenzo was already at least half-full.

The Conceptionist order, meanwhile, was no less active in new foundations, nor were its foundations immune to the new imperative of personal patronage. In 1594, the first Conceptionist convent in over a decade was founded under the patronage of Don Sancho Sánchez de Muñón. He was the *maestrescuela* of the cathedral chapter, and acceded to the lofty position of convent patron through his services to the Crown during the Cortés Conspiracy. In recompense for those services, Sánchez de Muñón received an annual pension of 2000 ducados. 53 He was thus able to found a new institution, La Encarnación, endowing it with 20,000 pesos. The collection of this amount proved difficult, as Don Sancho died intestate without having formalized his endowment. An ensuing period of financial instability ended when a new patron was found: Don Alvaro de Lorenzana offered 100,000 pesos. The 4000-peso dowries of the nuns provided some additional income. 54

Six years after the foundation of La Encarnación, another Conceptionist institution was founded, again through the intervention of a private person. Don Diego Caballero and his wife Inés de Velasco had long sought to establish a convent. It would not permit dowries, as the patrons' endowment would be sufficient. The project received papal approval in 1596. Royal

approval was less forthcoming, even though Don Diego pledged 4000 pesos de oro común in annual income for the sustenance of the thirty-three nuns he and his wife hoped the convent would house. In 1599, Doña Inés died, the foundation still pending. Not until the following year was viceregal permission received. [55](#)

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Santa Inés partook of a highly pious character in its provision for dowryless entry and in its goal to house thirty-three nuns, one for every year of Christ's life. But the foundation was also highly patrimonial. The thirty-three nuns received without dowries were to pray for the souls of the founders one hour each day. The familial character of the foundation was enhanced by Don Diego's specification of his sister-in-law, Catalina de Santa Inés, as foundress. (Catalina was a professed nun in La Concepción.)

Thus, though the foundation might ostensibly benefit women without means, its principal aim was not "the good of the republic" but a much more traditional good: that of the founders' souls. [56](#) This pattern of foundation was new in Mexico City, but was really a traditional paradigm. In Spain as in other parts of Europe, from the Middle Ages on, the character of women's convents was "patrimonial," determined by the existence of convent patrons and the nuns' spiritual obligations to them. This private character was enhanced by the domination of convent populations by the great names of the peninsula; aristocratic families, in addition to acting as convent patrons, filled convents with their female members. [57](#) After 1585, convent foundation in Mexico followed this more traditional pattern as wealthy individual patrons, often women, endowed convents that catered to the urban elite. Elite values "based on family honor and continuity" were expressed in personal rather than institutional foundation of convents. [58](#)

This change in the nature of female monasticism in the city is best exemplified by its most important convent. Where La Concepción had begun its life with a strong sense of its importance as an example to the naturales and the city, by 1592 the nuns had a different view of the convent's role. Now they emphasized its elite status both because of the quality of its nuns and its role as founding convent:

in particular for having in it many daughters and granddaughters of servants of Your Majesty and distinguished persons, and some of them, to enter religious life have left their pensions and encomiendas, to which Your Majesty has succeeded; and also for being a mother house from which have gone forth plants for the whole of this kingdom. [59](#) 

Women's religion thus took its place at the heart of the Spanish city, but in a form very much different from the reformatory vigor of the middle of the century. By century's end, rich criollas dominated most of the city's institutions for women, and only these women had the resources to enter religious life, as Don Luis de Velasco admitted in 1590. ⁶⁰ Lost through the persistence of the elite imperative was concern for less fortunate women of the república de españoles. While their protection had engendered more widespread support among the citizens of the traza than had the colegios de niñas indias, they too fell prey to a consistent narrowing of focus on the part of women's institutions in the city.

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Between 1585 and 1600, then, the character of female monasticism in Mexico City underwent a process of conversion, but to a familiar norm. From now on, foundations of women's monastic institutions would return to the patrimonial traditions of medieval and Renaissance Europe. The quasi-monastic and monastic "welfare" institutions founded for non-elite or poor elite women were gradually taken over by wealthy criollas. New foundations were almost without exception aimed squarely at such women. In the process, women's institutions gradually assumed the contours to which, with few exceptions, they would conform throughout much of the colonial period.

Appendices

[Appendix 1. AGI, México 291. A SM del mono de san lorenzo. 12 December 1598.](#)

[Appendix 2. AGN, Bienes Nacionales 78, Exp. 63. Fray franco moreno. 26 January 1601.](#)

[Appendix 3. AGI, México 270. Información doña María de Velasco.](#)

Notes:

Note 1: AGI, México 336 A. El arzobispo de mexico fray alonso de montufar a SM. 31 March 1569. [Back.](#)

Note 2: AGI, México 336A, Ramo 3, doc. 145. El arzobispo de mexico a SM. 28 March 1580. F. 1. [Back.](#)

Note 3: AGI, México 336A, Doc. 1. Carta a SM del arzobispo de mexco y obispos de la nueva españa. s.f. (1565). [Back.](#)

Note 4: Schwaller, *Wealth*, 150-2. Some relief in this particular funding crisis

came in 1583, when the royal ninth was restored. See Victoria Hennesy Cummins, "Imperial Policy and Church Income: The Sixteenth Century Mexican Church," *The Americas* 48:1 (July 1986), 97-103; 102. [Back.](#)

Note 5: AGI, México 2606. El rey a don martin enriquez. 4 April 1577. [Back.](#)

Note 6: *Guía*, Acta del 8. v. 1587, 660; Acta del 29. i. 1588; Acta del 11.vii.1588, 678. [Back.](#)

Note 7: *Guía*, Acta del 15.v.1598, 886. [Back.](#)

Note 8: Muriel, *Recogimientos*, 56-7. When the Hospital became a general recogimiento, it was used for the reclusion of women seeking divorces, in addition to other troublesome women. Muriel says that the institution was regarded with horror by the city's female population. [Back.](#)

Note 9: *Ibid.*, 78-80. [Back.](#)

Note 10: *Ibid.*, 93. [Back.](#)

Note 11: Marroquí, II, 62. [Back.](#)

Note 12: AGN, Cofradías y Archicofradías 10, Exp. 1. Fundación de la Ylustre Archicofradía del Santísimo Sacramento, f. 4v. [Back.](#)

Note 13: AGI, Justicia 157, No. 2, Pieza 2. Informacion sobre la casa de nuestra señora de la caridad. 1557, f. 23. [Back.](#)

Note 14: *Ibid*, interrogatory, f. 25. [Back.](#)

Note 15: Quoted in Muriel, *Colegios*, 124. [Back.](#)

Note 16: AGI, México 23, N. 80. El virrey conde de Monterrey a SM. 4 August 1597. f. 9v. [Back.](#)

Note 17: Carta del Conde de Monterrey a Felipe III. 11 June 1599. In Cuevas, *op. cit.*, 466-78; 476. [Back.](#)

Note 18: Muriel, *Colegios*, 136. [Back.](#)

Note 19: *Ibid.*, 138. [Back.](#)

Note 20: Muriel, *Recogimientos*, 54. [Back.](#)

Note 21: INAH, Fondo Franciscano N. 336, Exp. 24. Sobre la fundación de una cofradía llamada de Sta Lucía. Ff. 105-6. [Back.](#)

Note 22: *Ibid.* [Back.](#)

Note 23: *Ibid.* [Back.](#)

Note 24: Muriel, *Recogimientos*, 54. [Back.](#)

Note 25: AGI, México 228, N. 7. Información sobre Juan de Fuentes. 1608. Im. 39. [Back.](#)

Note 26: AGI, México 289. Ysavel lopez de jesus rectora e fundadora del monesto y rrecogimiento de sancta monica de la ciudad de mexco sobre que su magd sea patron del dicho monesto... 1586-1591. [Back.](#)

Note 27: Marroquí, III, 79. [Back.](#)

Note 28: Ibid., 80-81. [Back.](#)

Note 29: Muriel, *Recogimientos*, 78-80. [Back.](#)

Note 30: AGI, México 336A, Ramo 3, doc. 155. El arzobispo de México, sobre que se declare lo que convenga para que vaya adelante... Jesús María. 25 October 1581. Carta de la abadesa de Jesús María al Arzobispo de México, s.f. [Back.](#)

Note 31: *Guía*, Acta del 15.xii.1581. [Back.](#)

Note 32: AGI, México 286. Ynformacion rrescibida en la rreal audia de mexco de la nueva espa a pedimio de gregorio de pesquera y po tomas en nombre del monesterio de jhus maria. 1583-4. [Back.](#)

Note 33: AGI, México 286. Advertencias que pedro tomas a dado. s.f. (1584). [Back.](#)

Note 34: Ibid. [Back.](#)

Note 35: AGI, México 286. Ynformacion rrescibida en la rreal audia de mexco de la nueva espa a pedimio de gregorio de pesquera y po tomas en nombre del monesterio de jhus maria. 1583-4. [Back.](#)

Note 36: Ibid. [Back.](#)

Note 37: Indeed, all convents had *some* provision for dowryless entry, as we shall see in Chapter Eight. [Back.](#)

Note 38: See the discussion in Schwaller, *Wealth*, 150-2. [Back.](#)

Note 39: Antonio Domínguez Ortiz makes the point that in Spain, whenever "a new spring of wealth gushed forth," it was accompanied by a flowering of convents, because the regular church, unlike the secular, was able to respond quickly to the opportunities for expansion created by new wealth. See Domínguez Ortiz, "Aspectos sociales de la vida eclesiástica en los siglos XVII y XVIII." In Mestre Sanchis, op. cit., 5-121. [Back.](#)

Note 40: Schwaller, *Wealth*, 184. [Back.](#)

Note 41: *Guía*, Acta del 21.iv.1578, 547. [Back.](#)

Note 42: *Ibid.* [Back.](#)

Note 43: Texas, García 15, folder 8. Fundación del Convento de Santa Catarina de Sena, sacada de la segunda parte de la Crónica de Santo Domingo, que guarda manuscrito en el Archivo del Convento de Santo Domingo de México. [Back.](#)

Note 44: Muriel, *Conventos*, 340. [Back.](#)

Note 45: Texas, García 15, folder 8. Fundación del Convento de Santa Catarina de Sena, sacada de la segunda parte de la Crónica de Santo Domingo, que guarda manuscrito en el Archivo del Convento de Santo Domingo de México. [Back.](#)

Note 46: Muriel, *Conventos*, 342. Unfortunately, Muriel does not specify whether this regulation was contained in the first ordinances for the convent. Frustratingly, I have found no reference to a distinction between black-veil and white-veil nuns for the period. [Back.](#)

Note 47: *Ibid.*, 270-1. [Back.](#)

Note 48: AGI, México 218, N. 17. Información--Regina Coeli. 1586. f. 2v, im. 4. Velasco had three daughters in the convent. [Back.](#)

Note 49: AGI, México 291. El mono de san loro a sm. 12 December 1598. [Back.](#)

Note 50: *Ibid.* [Back.](#)

Note 51: Muriel, *Conventos*, 327-30. [Back.](#)

Note 52: AGI, México 291. El mono de san loro a sm. 12 December 1598. This letter is apparently the only evidence of the financial arrangements that led to the convent's creation. [Back.](#)

Note 53: Schwaller, *Wealth*, 139. [Back.](#)

Note 54: Muriel, *Conventos*, 108. [Back.](#)

Note 55: *Ibid.*, 114-6. [Back.](#)

Note 56: Medieval foundations were often linked to personal piety and familial goals. See, for example, Gilchrist, *op. cit.*, 50. [Back.](#)

Note 57: García Oro, *op. cit.*, 207-8. [Back.](#)

Note 58: Thus Mexico returned to a pattern of foundation found in Ávila, for example, in the late fifteenth century, when a small number of elite families dominated monastic foundations. See Bilinkoff, *op. cit.*, 15. [Back.](#)

Note 59: AGI, México 289. Carta de las monjas de la concepcion de mexico. s.f. [1592]. [Back](#).

Note 60: "There are few who have the means even to place [their daughters] as nuns."  AGI, México 22, N. 18. El virrey luis de velasco, hijo, a SM. 5 June 1590, 2r. [Back](#).

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