Quand le marchand aura succédé au moine et que le beffroi aura fait concurrence au clocher, alors le temps subira une profonde mutation, ainsi que le rappelle opportunément Alain-Julien Surdel dans son éclairante contribution à l'étude du temps dans la *Legenda aurea* et dans les mystères du XVᵉ siècle. Le "temps de l'Église" (J. Le Goff) recule au fur et à mesure que se met en place un monde que préoccupent le temps et l'espace réels, un monde ou le temps, c'est de l'argent.

La maîtrise du temps, parallèle à la naissance de la perspective en art, marque le passage du Moyen Age à la Renaissance. Temps divin et temps humain sont difficilement compatibles; s'il paraît incommode de manier le premier, il semble au contraire tout naturel d'apprécier le second, ainsi qu'on s'en avise quand on parcourt les quatorze communications qui composent le présent volume. Si tous les participants à ce colloque – médiévistes et seiziémistes – se tirent fort honorablement d'affaire, on ne s'étonnera pas d'apprendre que tous n'ont pas du "temps" la même notion. Les discussions auxquelles les concepts de "temps" et de "durée" ont donné lieu n'accompagnent pas le texte des communications, sans doute par mesure d'économie. On peut le regretter, car il est probable qu'elles auraient tissé des liens entre des points de vue si divers et insufflé du même coup à ces Actes un peu de la spontanéité et de la chaleur qui ont dû caractériser ces journées rémoises.

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The experiences of Spanish women in the Habsburg era are poorly understood. Statements about them are often based on nothing more than evidence from documents produced by and for men. In presenting and examining writings by and for women, these two books serve to undermine some of historians' facile generalizations, at least those about Iberian women from economically favoured circumstances.

As he is well aware, Sánchez Lora has written a controversial book in which he has sought to explain types of female spirituality that have been neglected by modern scholars to whom the matter has seemed both bizarre and unimportant. The work is presented as a contribution to the study of *mentality* which is so much in vogue, but in form it is much more like the broad studies of cultural transformations by Jacob Burckhardt and Johan Huizinga so popular in earlier
generations. Although moving along the thread of a concern for the devotional conduct and religious ideas of Spanish nuns, the text is driven by an interpretative model into which a series of extended quotations are crunched, often without regard to chronology or individual context.

Briefly, Sánchez Lora understands the Baroque to be a culture generated by the seventeenth century crisis that was undermining Spain's traditional hierarchical social organization. The existing power elites increasingly hardened their attitude toward any individual deviations from accepted social norms in an effort to preserve their place at the top. As most of those who wielded power were males raised in a misogynist culture, they felt that women were most likely to compromise the honour due to them because of their families' elevated social position, and these men, therefore, gradually used oppressive means, including confinement in convents, to control their female relatives.

These confined nuns sought ways to escape, and among those they found were certain religious experiences shaped by the era's anxieties. More pessimistic views of humanity had led away from the humanism of the Renaissance towards a Counter Reformation emphasis on the miraculous and otherworldly. As an assertion of clerical power, the Renaissance's mystical spirituality, which was individualistic, creative, and free of ties to existing norms and authorities, was crushed in the name of preventing heretical deviation by those, like women, incapable of interpreting the meaning of their experiences. This true mysticism was replaced by devotional practices and attitudes which made use of some of mysticism's formal elements without providing its experience. Instead, the result was likely to be an ecstatic trance which provided the necessary enchanted escape under proper clerical guidance. In the convents, all of this took place in the context of increasingly brutal ascetic practices reinforced by exposure to an overwrought style of art and to an ever more extravagant hagiographic literature. Nuns were drawn into this transformed religiosity not only to escape from their oppressive circumstances through induced trances but also to escape by gaining social prestige and enhanced self-esteem.

The type of broad, reductionist cultural definitions that underlie Sánchez Lora's argument will make many readers uneasy. Moreover, there are grounds to quibble with his contention that Spain's economic and political difficulties in the seventeenth century destabilized its aristocratic society, with his treatment of the social role of honour, and with his discussions of magic and mysticism. The gravest defect of the book, however, is that its chosen subject, women, do not really emerge from the text. They are there in numbers, but only as pieces forced into the puzzle of the author's model, and this is a model built almost entirely from male cultural sources. The effect, of course, is to deny that these women had any ability to shape or interpret their behaviour in any way which differed from these male-defined models. Even in his otherwise excellent treatment of the period's neglected hagiographic literature, Sánchez Lora apparently never considered that gender
might have played a role in the creation of particular works. The women are present on the page as fragments rather than as real people, and the lack of an index makes it hard for the reader to piece together bits of information about individuals which are scattered throughout the text. A comparative approach and a more sophisticated grasp of the available anthropological literature would perhaps have given Sánchez Lora the necessary critical distance for a more convincing analysis of these women's unfamiliar ascetic and meditative practices.

This unwillingness to credit women themselves for the creation of their lifestyles and cultural forms is unfortunate because Sánchez Lora presents an abundance of fascinating material about nuns both in the frequent extended quotations in the text and in the appendices. The book is well worth its price for this material and for the indications where more texts on women can be found. Sánchez Lora's reductionist scheme ends up by burying women's experiences by making them a vehicle of illustration for cultural changes based fundamentally on the ideas of men.

Yet as many of his quotations and many of the poems in Ana Navarro's useful anthology show, Spanish women of the Habsburg era were often capable of speaking for themselves and in a variety of voices. Indeed, Navarro's purpose was a simple one: she wanted to introduce a more general readership to the quality of female literary contributions during one of the great ages of Spanish literature.

Among the forty authors Navarro has included are those who received excellent humanist educations. Sometimes their style is clearly a gesture to display that education in order to demonstrate their intellectual potential and equal ability. Moreover, in Navarro's introduction and brief biographical comments, there are clear indications that a number of prominent men recognized and encouraged such ability. Some of the women participated actively in the scholarly academics and literary salons of their day. Others were admired by male religious leaders for the outstanding contributions to reformed piety. Among the documents quoted extensively by Sánchez Lora are a number of fascinating tracts of the latter variety, and Navarro has included several beautiful expressions of the religious devotion and mystical piety of these women. Often, despite using cultural forms of expression typical of their time, many of these writers obtained a sense of self that refused to be victimized by a misogynist, patriarchal discourse, and they thereby demanded to be taken seriously.

In Sánchez Lora's book as in Navarro's introduction, we lack the context of the ways women really lived, the degree to which they could shape their own lives, and the extent to which they could follow female models. Supplying such a context will mean not only understanding women better but also men since men were usually responsible for publishing the works of female authors and often for accounts of female leaders. Even the spiritual autobiographies of the period, which may be the most exclusively female literary genre, were usually written at the urging
of male confessors. To what degree were these males using their influence to produce female portraits different from the usual fictions about women in the works of most male authors?

Some of these women writers were capable of pointing out to men how male behaviour produced exactly the sort of women misogynists so disliked. Navarro includes one of the best examples: the poem "Arguye de inconsecuentes el gusto y la censura de los hombres que en las mujeres acusan lo que causan" by the Spanish American writer Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. One verse asks: "¿O cual es más de culpar/?aunque cualquiera mal haga,/la que peca por la paga,/o el que paga por pecar?"

In addition to some of the better known female authors, like Sor Juana Inés and Santa Teresa de Jesús (de Avila), Navarro indicates that editions of the works of several others are being prepared: those of the Toledan writer Sor María de Santa Isabel (better known as Marcia Belisarda) and of Leonor de la Cueva y Silva. Others, like the sevillana Sor Gregoría Francisca de Santa Teresa, will get extensive treatment in a forthcoming book by Mary Elizabeth Perry. But much remains to be done. Several authors (e.g., Luisa de Carvajal y Mendoza and María de Zayas y Sotomayor) invite major studies, and work in relatively untapped sources (e.g., notarial archives) can yield crucial information about women's lives.

Both these book will be useful for those interested in women's history. Many of the problems of analysis in Sánchez Lora's book and in Navarro's introduction are due mostly to the small number of solid studies we now have of women in the period. These books reveal an abundance of underutilized documents and literary works and should, therefore, stimulate some much needed research.

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In the English-speaking world, Lorenzo de’ Medici’s reputation as a writer has been overshadowed, if not eclipsed, by his reputation as a politician and as a refined patron of the arts. The only comprehensive English-language study of his literary works, Sara Sturm’s indispensable Lorenzo de’ Medici (Twayne Series, 1974), offers an invaluable insight into Lorenzo’s writings, but unfortunately no authoritative complete translation of his writings is available to inspire further inquiry and appreciation. Professor Thiem’s edition and translation, with others, of selected poems and prose from Lorenzo is therefore a welcomed contribution.

The collection contains a brief chronology and introduction to Lorenzo’s writings and career (pp. 1–29), and then lets the selected texts speak for themselves