

## Chapter 2: The Female Life Cycle

### For Further Reading

Many of the studies on which this chapter is based focus on the early modern family. For an overview of the issues and a large bibliography, see my “Family, Household, and Community,” in Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy (eds.), *Handbook of European History 1400–1600* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1994), pp. 51–78, and Michael Anderson, *Approaches to the History of the Western Family 1500–1914* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1995). Beatrice Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World: From the Black Death to the Industrial Age* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1993) also presents a useful introduction.

Early studies, particularly Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York, Vintage, 1962), and Lawrence Stone, *Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London, Penguin, 1977), set out a rather bleak view of family life. More recent scholarship has viewed family relationships as more varied.

Books that examine upper-class families include the following: Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York, Academic Press, 1978); Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: The Verneys of Claydon House* (London, Routledge, 1984); Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1985); Gayle K. Brunelle, “Dangerous Liaisons: Mesalliance and Early Modern French Noblewomen,” *French Historical Studies* 19, no.

1 (Spring 1995), 75–103; Kate Mertes, *The English Noble Household, 1250–1600* (London, Basil Blackwell, 1988); Judith J. Hurwich, “Marriage Strategy among the German Nobility, 1400–1699,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29, no. 2 (Autumn 1998), 169–95; Stanley Chojnacki, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2002); Patricia Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice: Art, Architecture and the Family* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2004); Judith Hurwich, *Noble Strategies: Marriage and Sexuality in the Zimmern Chronicle* (Kriksville, MO, Truman State University Press, 2006).

Middle-class family life is surveyed in Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England, Modes of Reproduction 1300–1840*, (London, Basil Blackwell, 1986); Sara Heller Mendelson, *The Mental World of Stuart Women: Three Studies* (Brighton, UK, Harvester, 1987); Sherrin Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry, 1500–1650: Family, Faith and Fortune* (New York, Greenwood Press, 1987); Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680–1780* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1996); Mathias Beer, “Private Correspondence in Germany in the Reformation Era: A Forgotten Source for the History of the Burgher Family,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 32, no. 4 (Winter 2001), 931–52; Nicole Eustace, “‘The Cornerstone of a Copious Work’: Love and Power in Eighteenth-Century Courtship,” *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 3 (Spring 2001), 517–46.

Books that include information from all classes include the following: Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality*, trans. Richard Southern (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979); James Traer, *Marriage and Family in Eighteenth Century France* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1980); Michael Mitterauer and Reinhard Sieder, *The European Family: Patriarchy and Partnership from the Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. Karla Oosterveen and Manfred Horzinger (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982); Ralph Houlbrooke, *The English Family 1450–1700* (London, Longman, 1984); John Gillis, *For Better, for Worse: British Marriages 1600 to the Present* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985); Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530–1987* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990); Mary Abbott, *Family Ties: English Families 1540–1920* (London, Routledge, 1993); Anthony Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1994); Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (eds.), *Marriage in Italy, 1300–1650* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998); Martha C. Howell, *The Marriage Exchange: Property, Social Place, and Gender in the Cities of the Low Countries, 1300–1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship, and Patronage* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001); Corinne S. Abate (ed.), *Privacy, Domesticity, and Women in Early Modern England* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2003).

Hans Medick and David Sabean (eds.), *Interest and Emotion: Essays on the Study of Family and Kinship* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), includes a number of essays on family relationships, particularly those between generations, and Mary Chan,

*Life into Story: The Courtship of Elizabeth Wiseman* (London, Ashgate, 1998) provides a fascinating case study, with documents, of one contested marriage.

Other useful collections of articles that explore the family in various cultures and time periods, including early modern Europe, are Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (eds.), *The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays* (New York, Harper, 1971); Charles Rosenberg (ed.), *The Family in History* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975); Jack Goody, Joan Thirsk and E. P. Thompson (eds.), *Family and Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200–1800* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976); Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (eds.), *Marriage and Fertility: Studies in Interdisciplinary History* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980); Robert Wheaton and Tamara K. Harevan (eds.), *Family and Sexuality in French History* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980); R. B. Outhwaite (ed.), *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage* (London, Europa, 1981); Jean Dupaquier et al. (eds.), *Marriage and Remarriage in Populations of the Past* (New York, Academic Press, 1981); Peter Laslett and Richard Wall (eds.), *Household and Family in Past Time* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983); Richard Wall, Jean Robin, and Peter Laslett (eds.), *Family Forms in Historic Europe* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983); Richard M. Smith (ed.), *Land, Kinship, and Life-Cycle* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984); David Kertzer et al. (eds.), *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1991); David Herlihy, *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe* (Providence, Berghahn Books, 1995); André Buguière et al. (eds.), *A History of the Family*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1996); Special issue of *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30,

no. 3 (Spring 1997). The *Journal of Family History*, which began publication in 1976, includes many other relevant articles.

Studies of the representation of family life in early modern literature and painting include the following: Wayne Frantz, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993); Richard Helgerson, *Adulterous Alliances: Home, State, and History in Early Modern European Drama and Painting* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2000); Catherine Belsey, *Shakespeare and the Loss of Eden: The Construction of Family Values in Early Modern Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 2000).

Childhood has been a topic of great interest, although not all works on the subject are careful about making gender distinctions, and the experience of boys has often left more sources than that of girls. David Hunt, for example, uses sources that relate only to the upbringing of the future King Louis XIII of France in his *Parents and Children in History: The Psychology of Family Life in Early Modern France* (New York, Harper, 1970). More recent studies that achieve a better balance include Hugh Cunningham, *The Children of the Poor: Representations of Childhood since the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981); Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983); C. John Sommerville, *The Discovery of Childhood in Puritan England* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1991); Rudolf Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland: From the Golden Age to Romanticism* (London, Macmillan, 1999). Michael Mitterauer, *A History of Youth* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992), and Katherine J.

Lewis, Noël Jane Menuge, and Kim M. Phillips (eds.), *Young Medieval Women* (Phoenix Mill, UK, 1999), both investigate young women's experiences. *The History of Childhood Quarterly*, which began publication in 1973, always contains the newest research on the topic.

Most studies of family relations focus on parents and children or on spouses. Sibling relations are just beginning to be studied. On this, see the articles in Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh (eds.), *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2006). Other discussions of sibling relations include Jerrine E. Mitchell, "Picturing Sisters: 1790 Portraits by J.-L. David," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31, no. 2 (Winter 1997–8), 175–97.

Two excellent studies of the way women understood and experienced their bodies are Barbara Duden, *The Woman beneath the Skin: A Doctor's Patients in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1991), and Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2003). Another fascinating survey of popular attitudes toward the female body and the process of childbirth is Jacques Gélis, *History of Childbirth: Fertility, Pregnancy and Birth in Early Modern Europe* (Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1991). Patricia Crawford, "Menstruation in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 91 (1981), 65–79, and Etienne van de Walle, "Flowers and Fruits: Two Thousand Years of Menstrual Regulation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 28, no. 2 (Autumn 1997), 183–203, cover both popular and learned ideas. Monica H. Green, "From 'Diseases of Women' to 'Secrets of Women':

The Transformation of Gynecological Literature in the Later Middle Ages,” *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 30, no. 1 (Winter 2000), 5–39, explores transformations in learned ideas about the female body. Nancy A. Gutierrez, “*Shall She Famish Then?*”: *Female Food Refusal in Early Modern England* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2003), and Karen Hollis, “Fasting Women: Bodily Claims and Narrative Crises in Eighteenth-Century Science,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 4 (Summer 2001), 523–38, both examine representations of women who refused to eat and relate this to changing ideas about the female body.

The history of sexuality is an incredible growth field at the moment, and the following is just a suggestion of what is available. For the latest research, see the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, which began publication in 1990. Surveys of medieval sexuality are provided in Caolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1999), and Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing unto Others* (New York, Routledge, 2005). For early modern sexuality, see Katherine Crawford, *European Sexualities, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007). Katherine Crawford, “Privilege, Possibility, and Perversion: Rethinking the Study of Early Modern Sexuality,” *The Journal of Modern History* 78 (June 2006), 412–33, provides a review article of recent scholarship. “Forum: Biology, Sexuality, and Morality in Eighteenth-Century France,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35, no. 2 (Winter 2002), is a special issue with several articles.

Several general collections on early modern sexuality bring together the work of historians, art historians, and scholars of literature: Robert Purks Maccubbin (ed.), *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987); James Grantham Turner (ed.), *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993); Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (eds.), *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1994); Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler (eds.), *Desire and Discipline: Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1996); Louise Fradenburg and Carla Freccero (eds.), *Premodern Sexualities* (New York, Routledge, 1996).

Sexuality, both within and outside marriage, has been approached from a wide variety of viewpoints. Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570–1640* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), uses legal documents, as do G. R. Quaife, *Wanton Wenches and Wayward Wives: Peasants and Illicit Sex in Early Seventeenth Century England* (New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 1979), Thomas Max Safley, *Let No Man Put Asunder: The Control of Marriage in the German Southwest* (Kirksville, MO, Sixteenth Century Journal, 1984), and Guido Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage and Power at the End of the Renaissance* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1993). Peter Laslett, *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977), and the essays in Peter Laslett et al. (eds.), *Bastardy and Its Comparative History: Studies in the History of Illegitimacy and Marital Non-Conformism in Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, North*

*America, Jamaica and Japan* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1980), use quantitative as well as qualitative sources. The essays in Jacqueline Murray (ed.), “Sexuality in the Renaissance,” a special issue of *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance at Réforme* 24 (1988), approach sexuality from a largely literary perspective, and Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999), uses literary and artistic materials. Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1990) traces ideas about sexuality and the body in scientific and philosophical writings. Two excellent studies that use a wide range of sources to explore border areas of Europe are Eve Levin, *Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs, 900–1700* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1989), and Rosalind Mitchison and Leah Leneman, *Sexual and Social Control: Scotland 1660–1780* (London, Basil Blackwell, 1989). The essays in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (eds.), *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective: Selections from Quaderni Storici* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) cover a number of topics, including menstruation, sexual honor, and the control of reproduction in early modern Italy and are written by Italian scholars whose work is not often translated into English. Isabel V. Hull, *Sexuality, State, and Civil Society in Germany, 1700–1815* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1996), analyzes the evolving bureaucratic understanding of heterosexuality during the transition from absolutist moral regulation of sexual practices for the public good to the formation of a bourgeois civil society of privacy and property.

Popular ideas about the control of fertility are explored in Orest and Patricia Ranum (eds.), *Popular Attitudes toward Birth Control in Pre-industrial England and France* (New York, Harper, 1972), and Angus McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals: The Perception of Fertility in England from the 16th to the 19th Century* (London, Methuen, 1984). Other studies of birth control include Jacqueline Hecht, "From 'Be Fruitful and Multiply' to Family Planning: The Enlightenment Transition," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (Summer 1999), 536–51; Christine There, "Women and Birth Control in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (Summer 1999), 552–64. Angus McLaren, *A History of Contraception* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990), is the best survey of the issue over a broad time frame.

Control of sexual crimes and deviance has been examined in Guido Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985); Philip F. Riley, "Michel Foucault, Lust, Women and Sin in Louis XIV's Paris," *Church History* 59 (1990), 35–50; Lynda E. Boose, "Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42 (1991), 179–213; Ulinka Rublack, "The Public Body: Policing Abortion in Early Modern Germany," in Lynn Abrams and Elizabeth Harvey (eds.), *Gender Relations in German History: Power, Agency and Experience from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 57–79; Florike Egmond, "Incestuous Relations and Their Punishment in the Dutch Republic," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 25, no. 3 (Fall 2001), 20–42.

Studies that discuss infanticide include Peter C. Hoffer and N. E. H. Hull, *Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England 1558–1803* (New York, New York University Press, 1981); Mark Jackson, *New-Born Child Murder: Women, Illegitimacy and the Courts in Eighteenth-Century England* (Manchester, UK, Manchester University Press, 1996); René Leboutte, “Offense Against Family Order: Infanticide in Belgium from the Fifteenth through the Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 2 (1991), 159–85; Laura Gowing, “Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Past and Present* 156 (August 1997), 87–115; Marilyn Francus, “Monstrous Mothers, Monstrous Societies: Infanticide and the Rule of Law in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century England,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 21, no. 2 (May 1997), 133–56 ; Mark Jackson (ed.), *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550–2000* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2002).

David I. Kertzer, *Sacrificed for Honor: Italian Infant Abandonment and the Politics of Reproductive Control* (Boston: Beacon, 1993), examines the legal, economic, and social factors affecting women charged with killing or abandoning their infants or small children. Additional studies of child abandonment include R. B. Outhwaite, “‘Objects of Charity’: Petitions to the London Foundling Hospital, 1768–72,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (Summer 1999), 497–510; Lisa Zunshine, “The Spectral Hospital: Eighteenth-Century Philanthropy and the Novel,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 29, no. 1 (Winter 2005), 1–22.

Violence against women has been examined in Margaret Hunt, “Wife Beating, Domesticity, and Women’s Independence in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Gender and*

*History* 4 (1992), 10–29; Susan Dwyer Amussen, “‘Being stirred to much unquietness’: Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Women’s History* 6 (1994), 70–89; Joanna M. Ferraro, “The Power to Decide: Battered Wives in Early Modern Venice,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (1995), 493–512; Miranda Chaytor, “Husband(ry): Narratives of Rape in the Seventeenth Century,” *Gender and History* 7 (1995), 378–407; Garthine Walker, “Rereading Rape and Sexual Violence in Early Modern England,” *Gender and History* 10 (1998), 1–25; Elizabeth Foyster, *Marital Violence: An English Family History, 1660-1857* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005). Art historians have also begun to focus on images of sexual violence: Diane Wolfthal, *Images of Rape: The “Heroic” Tradition and Its Alternatives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Yael Even, “Commodifying Images of Sexual Violence in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” *Source* (forthcoming) and “Daphne (without Apollo) Reconsidered: Some Disregarded Images of Sexual Pursuit in Italian Renaissance and Baroque Art,” *Studies in Iconography* 18 (1997), 143–59.

Several studies have paid particular attention to the way women and men portray themselves or are portrayed in cases involving sex and gender relations: Frances E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England 1550–1700* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1994); Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); and three essays by Elizabeth S. Cohen, “No Longer Virgins: Self-Presentation by Young Women of Late Renaissance Rome,” in Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari (eds.), *Refiguring Women: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY,

Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 169–92, “‘Courtesans’ and ‘Whores’: Words and Behavior in the Streets of Early Modern Rome,” *Women’s Studies* 19 (1991), 201–8, and “Honor and Gender in the Streets of Early Modern Rome,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 22 (1992), 597–625. See also Manuela Mourão, “The Representation of Female Desire in Early Modern Pornographic Texts, 1660–1745,” *Signs* 24, no. 3 (Spring 1999), 573–602; Bernard Capp, “The Double Standard Revisited: Plebeian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England,” *Past and Present* 162 (February 1999), 70–100; Marie E. McAllister, “Stories of the Origin of Syphilis in Eighteenth-Century England: Science, Myth, and Prejudice,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 24, no. 1 (Winter 2000), 22–44; Joëlle Rollo-Koster, “From Prostitutes to Brides of Christ: The Avignonese Repenties in the Late Middle Ages,” *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 32 (Winter 2002), 109–44; Beatrice H. Beech and George T. Beech, “A Painting, a Poem, and a Controversy about Women and Love in Paris in the 1530s,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34, no. 3 (Fall 2003), 635–52; Abigail Dyer, “Seduction by Promise of Marriage: Law, Sex, and Culture in Seventeenth-Century Spain,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34, no. 2 (Summer 2003), 439–55; Sophie Carter, *Purchasing Power: Representing Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century English Popular Print Culture* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2004); Benjamin B. Roberts and Leendert F. Groenendijk, “‘Wearing out a Pair of Fool’s Shoes’: Sexual Advice for Youth in Holland’s Golden Age,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13, no. 2 (April 2004), 139–56. Two new books examine the representation of sexual desire in the Ottoman Empire: Walter G. Andrews and Mehmet Kalpakli, *Age of the Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Society and Culture* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2004),

and Dror Ze-evi, *Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1800* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006).

Many studies of same-sex relations in the early modern period focus exclusively or almost exclusively on men, for there are far more records of this. Newer studies that discuss the topic include Jeffrey Merrick, “Sodomitical Inclinations in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30, no. 3 (Spring 1997), 289–95. Jeffrey Merrick and Bryant T. Ragan Jr. (eds.), *Homosexuality in Early Modern France: A Documentary Collection* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2001); Helmut Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany and Switzerland 1400–1600* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2003); Cristian Berco, “Social Control and Its Limits: Sodomy, Local Sexual Economies, and Inquisitors during Spain’s Golden Age,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2005), 331–58. Curtis Perry, “The Politics of Access and Representations of the Sodomite King in Early Modern England,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (Winter 2000), 1054–83, and Katherine B. Crawford, “Love, Sodomy, and Scandal: Controlling the Sexual Reputation of Henry III,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12, no. 4 (October 2003), 513–42, both look at the discourse surrounding sodomite kings.

Same-sex relations between women have been investigated in Theo van der Meer, “Tribades on Trial: Female Same-Sex Offenders in Late Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1 (1991), 424–45; Emma Donoghue, *Passions between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668–1801* (London, Scarlet Press,

1993); Betty Rizzo, *Companions without Vows: Relationships among Eighteenth-Century British Women* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1994); Valerie Traub, "The (In)significance of 'Lesbian' Desire in Early Modern England," in Susan Zimmerman (ed.), *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage* (London, Routledge, 1992); Patricia Simons, "Lesbian (In)visibility in Italian Renaissance Culture," *Journal of Homosexuality* 27 (1994), 81–122; Ros Ballaster, "The Vices of Old Rome Revisited: Representations of Female Same-Sex Desire in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England," in Suzanne Raitt (ed.), *Volcanoes and Pearl Divers: Essays in Lesbian Feminist Studies* (London: Onlywomen Press, 1995), pp. 13–36; Kristina Straub, "Heteroanxiety and the Case of Elizabeth Canning," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 30, no. 3 (Spring 1997), 296–304; Harriet Andreadis, "Sappho in Early Modern England," in Ellen Greene (ed.), *Re-Reading Sappho* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997), pp. 105–21, and "The Erotics of Female Friendship in Early Modern England," in Susan Frye and Karen Robertson (eds.), *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 241–58; Margaret Hunt, "English Lesbians in the Long Eighteenth Century," in Bennett and Froide, *Singlewomen*, pp. 270–96; Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution, Volume I: Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1999); Helmut Puff, "Female Sodomy: The Trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer (1477)," *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 30 (Winter 2000), 41–62; Judith M. Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9, no. 1/2 (January–April 2000), 1–24; Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge,

Cambridge University Press, 2002); Sarah Toulalan, “Extraordinary Satisfactions: Lesbian Visibility in Seventeenth-Century Pornography in England,” *Gender and History* 15, no. 1 (April 2003), 50–68. For a slightly earlier period, see E. Ann Matter, “My Sister, My Spouse: Women-Identified Women in Medieval Christianity,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2 (1986), 81–93, and Jacqueline Murray, “Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible: Lesbians in the Middle Ages,” in Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage, *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality* (New York, Garland, 1996), 191–222; Francesca Canadé Sautman and Pamela Sheingorn (eds.), *Same Sex Love and Desire among Women in the Middle Ages* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

Work that explores literary and artistic representations of female same-sex attraction includes Dympna Callaghan, “The Castrator’s Song: Female Impersonation on the Early Modern Stage,” *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 26, no. 2 (Spring 1996), 321–53; Andrew Elfenbein, “Lesbian Aestheticism on the Eighteenth-Century Stage,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 1–16; Silke R. Falkner, “‘Having it off with fish, camels, and lads’: Sodomitic Pleasures in German-Language Turcica,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13, no. 4 (October 2004), 401–27.

Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1986) investigates the case of an abbess accused of falsifying visions and engaging in homosexual relations with another nun. Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (New York, St. Martin’s, 1989), examines several hundred Dutch cases of

women accused of dressing in men's clothing, some of whom were sexually attracted to other women, and Catalina de Erauso, *Lieutenant Nun: Memoir of a Basque Transvestite in the New World*, ed. and trans. Michele and Gabriel Stepto (Boston, Beacon/Press, 1995), presents a fascinating autobiographical text of the Spanish nun who purportedly went to the New World dressed as a soldier. Brigitte Eriksson, "A Lesbian Execution in Germany, 1721: The Trial Records," *Journal of Homosexuality* 6 (1981), 27–40, and Patricia Crawford and Sara Mendelson, "Sexual Identities in Early Modern England: The Marriage of Two Women," *Gender and History* 7 (1995), 362–78, both discuss cases in which women married women.

Studies that focus on female intimacy and friendship include Susan Snider Lanser, "Befriending the Body: Female Intimacies as Class Acts," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 2 (Winter 1998–9), 179–95; Christine Roulston, "Separating the Inseparables: Female Friendship and Its Discontents in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 2 (Winter 1998–9), 215–31; Kathryn A. Edwards, "Female Sociability, Physicality, and Authority in an Early Modern Haunting," *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 3 (Spring 2000), 601–21; Betty Rizzo, "Equivocations of Gender and Rank: Eighteenth-Century Sporting Women," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26, no. 1 (Winter 2002), 70–93; Lisa L. Moore, "Queer Gardens: Mary Delany's Flowers and Friendships," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 1 (Fall 2005), 49–70.

For discussions of the clitoris, see Valerie Traub, "The Psycho-Morphology of the Clitoris," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 2 (1995), 81–113, and Katherine

Park, "The Rediscovery of the Clitoris," in David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (eds.), *The Body in Parts* (New York, Routledge, 1996), pp. 170–93.

General essay collections or monographs that include studies of same-sex relations among both women and men in the early modern period are Salvatore Licata and Robert Petersen (eds.), *Historical Perspectives on Homosexuality* (New York, Haworth, 1981); Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, Jr. (eds.), *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* (New York, Meridian, 1989); Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities, 1700–1800* (London, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1997); Tom Betteridge, *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe* (New York, Manchester University Press, 2002).

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### ***Original Sources***

#### **Childhood and Adolescence**

## 1. Baptism Rituals

*The Christian church offered rituals for every stage of life, beginning with baptism. Many late-medieval baptism manuals provide slightly different prayers for the baptisms of boys and girls. They do not contain much gender-pertinent language but demonstrate that right from the start, male and female Christians were put into separate conceptual categories. These are the baptism prayers from the Salisbury manual; Protestant prayers did not depart extensively from these, and often maintained gender distinctions. Source: John D. C. Fisher, Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West, Alcuin Club Collections 47 (London: SPCK, 1965), pp. 160–2*

The prayer for boys:

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, God who didst appear to thy servant Moses on Mount Sinai, and didst lead they children Israel out of the land of Egypt, appointing for them the angel of they mercy, who should guard them by day and by night, we beseech thee, Lord, that thou woudst vouchsafe to send they holy angel from heaven, that he may likewise guard this servant N., and lead him to the grace of they baptism.

The prayer for girls:

God of heaven, God of earth, God of angels, God of archangels, God of patriarchs, God of prophets, God of apostles, God of martyrs, God of confessors, God of virgins, God of all that live good lives, God whom every tongue confesses and before whom every knew bows, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, I invoke thee,

Lord, upon this thing handmaid N. that thou mightest vouchsafe to lead her to the grace of thy baptism.

## **2. Orphanages for non-Christian children, Italy, 1576**

*Churches and city governments began to found orphanages in the fifteenth century; some of these were for all children orphaned or left as foundlings in an area, whereas others had specific purposes. The Catecumeni, founded in Venice in 1557, housed men, women, and children of Jewish or Muslim origins with the primary aim of converting them to Christianity. This institution was the delivery point for non-Christian children who had been either orphaned or captured in a war. Once at the home, they were converted, given religious instruction, and sometimes adopted by Christian families. Some petitions for adoption have survived, including one by Bortholo and Madalena, a couple who eloquently expressed their desire for a little girl named Caterina. Source: Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione (IRE), CAT, c.1, Catastico di Catecumeni, 1576, pp. 34–35. Translated by Monica Chojnacka.*

Finding themselves, Bortholo of . . . the parish of San Vido, and . . ., the modest lady Madalena, husband and wife, without children, and at an age at which they are unlikely to have them, and desiring to adopt a little girl for consolation and comfort in their old age they have insistently requested the . . ., governors of the house of the Catecumeni to grant them as an adopted daughter Caterina who at one time was Turkish, raised in the above-named house . . . the said couple will accept her as an adopted daughter, treating her and

governing her and instructing her in good behavior, and persevering with her in good faith, as if she had been conceived and born of the couple themselves. . . . (The governors) of the above-named house of the Catecumeni . . . have granted, and grant, to said sr. Bortholo, and Madalena, husband and wife . . .; said Caterina, who is 7 years of age.

### **3. Fostering contract for a daughter, France, 1610**

*Wealthy families might hire a tutor for their children, and some urban families might send their children to a primary school, but most families were not well-off enough to have a tutor for their children, nor even to send them to school. Children generally began work at an early age, either in their own household or in the household of others, and learned skills by watching or informal instruction. In urban areas, these arrangements were sometimes formalized by contracts drawn up by a notary between the parents and the head of the household in which the child would be living. Although we might wish to distinguish between arrangements made primarily for the care of a child and arrangements made primarily to provide labor to another household and achieve vocational training for the child, as formalized before notaries these arrangements were quite similar. The emotional and practical vulnerability of children in these processes is not explicit in contracts such as these. In the following arrangement for foster care, a young daughter is placed into another household by both of her parents for the remainder of her childhood. She would be well provided for in her new circumstances, but during the sixteen years of the arrangement, she would also serve in the new household and learn the trade of her “foster” father. (In another document recorded on the same day, similar arrangements were made for a son of this same couple. He was*

*placed into service and apprenticeship with the same man, but for only three years and without any payment.) Source: Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier central, Étude CXXII/389, 4 June 1610. Translated by Carol Loats.*

Present in person were Vincent Cervet, farm worker living at Mortayne, parish of Saint Malo, in Preche, and Marie Poigne, his wife, whom he authorizes for this transaction.

Together they acknowledge and affirm that, for the benefit of, and to avoid losses to Marguerite Cervay, their daughter, they have given and left her, from today for the next sixteen years, to and with Francois le Peletier, merchant plumassier [maker of plumed hats], bourgeois [citizen] of Paris, living there on the bridge of Notre Dame in the building with the sign of the shield of Brittany, present and accepting.

[Le Pelletier] has promised and promises to show and teach his art of plumassier, the merchandise and all in which he is involved to the said Marguerite Cervay; to have her instructed in the Catholic apostolic and Roman faith and religion; to provide and deliver what she needs in terms of drink, food, fire, bed, home, light; and to treat her gently, as is appropriate; to have her lanced, medicated, and treated in case of sickness providing that the sickness does not last more than fifteen days each time; and to maintain her with clothes, linen, footwear, and other necessary clothing honorably, as her status warrants, during the said time of sixteen years; and at the end of that time leave to her all the clothing and worn clothes that she then may have in use; and further to give her the sum of 100 livres tournois, one time, to contribute towards her portion in marriage, or otherwise to use at the discretion of the said father and mother, in consideration of the services that she will have provided to him domestically during that time.

To do this, present was the said Marguerite Cervet, aged eight and one half years or so. [She] finds these [arrangements] acceptable and promises to learn the said art to the best of her ability; to serve the said Pelletier and his wife well and faithfully in it, and in all other things lawful and honorable that are commanded of her and as a servant is obliged to do; to work toward their benefit, avoid losses to them, and warn them of problems if they come to her attention; without taking flight nor serving elsewhere during the said time.

And in case of flight or absence, the said father and mother will be obliged to search for her in the city and outskirts of Paris and bring her back to the said Peletier to finish the said service if they are able to find her; and [they] pledge her to complete loyalty and faithfulness.

As thus etc., promising, obligating, each in his own right, etc., the said Cervet and his wife and their daughter, the one for the other and each of them alone for all without dispute or division, renouncing body and goods, etc., Cervet and his wife renouncing any benefits of division or dispute. Done and passed at the offices, etc., the year 1610, the 4th day of June in the afternoon; and the said Pelletier has signed and as to Cervay and his wife and their daughter, they declare that they do not know how to write or sign.

## **Sexuality**

### **4. Confession questions, Russia, seventeenth century**

*Sexual activity by unmarried people was a great concern of early modern authorities, an issue that also emerges in a variety of other types of sources. Catholic and Orthodox Christians were expected to confess their sins to a priest periodically, and the priest*

would pose questions to them, taken from standard lists, termed “penitentials” or confessional manuals. The purpose of the questions was twofold: to identify sins parishioners might have committed, and to teach them to avoid improper conduct. Most lists emphasized first and foremost sexual misconduct, and secondarily behavior disruptive to religious and community life. The following list, dating from the seventeenth century, was designed for young, unmarried women and indicates the types of sins the writers of the confessional manuals – usually a priest – expected them to be most likely to commit. Source: A. Almazov, *Tainaia ispoved' v pravoslavnoi vostochnoi tserkvi*, vol. 3 trans. Eve Levin (Odessa, 1894), p. 169. .

Did you break any vow that you promised to God?

Did you laugh in God’s church during the holy liturgy, or exchange idle words with your girlfriends?

Did you enter God’s church when you were unclean from the flow of blood, until the eighth day? [Russian Orthodox observance forbade women from going to church during or after their menstrual period.]

Did you play with your girlfriends inappropriately, as though with a man, or did you kiss youths with desire?

Did someone defile you by force, either while asleep or while drunk?

Did you look at someone of the male sex with anticipation?

During Lent and on Wednesdays and Fridays, did you eat either milk or cheese? [In Russian Orthodox observance, believers are required to abstain from meat and milk products during fast periods and on Wednesdays and Fridays.]

Did you quarrel with your parents, with your father and mother, or brothers and sisters, or did you strike them with something, or did you condemn them for any reason or tell them to go to the devil?

Did you steal any things or money or anything else from your father and mother, or from your relatives or your girlfriends?

Did you receive holy communion and then vomit?

Did you swear falsely and kiss the cross or icons? [Kissing the cross was a ritual to confirm the veracity of an oath.]

Did you recite maledictions and spells, or have your girlfriend do so for any reason?

Did you drink until you lost your memory, or dance and sing devilish songs?

Did you curse yourself out of some need or from heartache, or did you long for death for yourself?

Did you wash yourself with some drink or with anything else, and give it to somebody? [In Russian folk belief, a person could inspire sexual attraction by bathing in water or milk and then giving it to the object of their affection to drink.]

### **5. Lawsuit regarding a pregnancy out of wedlock, France, 1547**

*Women who became pregnant were sometimes able to make arrangements for the support of the child, which were recorded by notaries. In this document from Paris in 1547, a single woman and a man go on record to settle a lawsuit in progress regarding the woman's pregnancy and the subsequent birth of a child by the man. The woman's economic circumstances and means of earning a living are not specified. The man, as a legal practitioner given the title "master," was probably comfortably well-off, although*

*not rich. Source: Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier central, Étude XI/27, 25 Jan 1547.*

*Translated by Carol Loats.*

Were present in person master Jherosme Honys, legal practitioner at the Palais in Paris, on the one hand, and Mathurine de Marville, living in Paris, rue Alexandre Langloiz, on the other hand, who have made and now make the agreements, compromises, and arrangements which follow.

That is to say that the said de Marville has promised and here promises to raise and support, well and duly, from this point on, a young girl named Claude, to whom she previously gave birth, child of the said Honys; in return for which the said Honys will be obliged and obliges himself to give and pay her, each month for the next two full years, one *écu soleil*, the first term of payment falling due the last day of February coming up.

And in addition to this, [Honys] has given four *écus d'or* in cash, and has promised and promises to pay her six *écus soleil* by the day and feast of Easter coming up, for maintenance and clothing of the said child; without Honys being in any way obliged to give anything else for the support of the said child, from this point on, if not of his own goodwill.

In consideration of the things above, the said Marville has released and here releases the said Honys of all things whatsoever, equally for what she is able or might be able to ask in original amount as for expenses in the legal process pending before whatever judges there might be, and of all other things whatsoever for which she could made demands and take legal action in whatever cause or way that might be, from the past up to now.

Thus etc., promising, etc., obligating, etc., each in his own right, etc., renouncing, etc. Done and passed in duplicate in the year 1547, Wednesday, the 25th day of January.

## **6. Death sentence of a woman accused of infanticide, Germany, 1740**

*Many women who had children out of wedlock could not get the father to agree to support the child, or in some cases even acknowledge that the child was his. Pregnancy outside of marriage was disastrous for many women, and they tried to hide the pregnancy as long as possible or to abort this child with herbs or other methods. If they could not induce a miscarriage, they might give birth as secretly as possible and then abandon the child or attempt to kill it. During the sixteenth century, governments in many parts of Europe became concerned about infanticide and required unmarried women who became pregnant to report their pregnancies; those who did not might be charged with infanticide if the baby died, even if there was no proof that it had been killed. Medical personnel often had great difficulty telling if a child had been born dead or had died shortly after birth, but the more stringent laws were enforced; more women were executed for infanticide in early modern Europe than for any other crime except witchcraft. The following case from Frankfurt is typical of this uncertainty in terms of proof. Source: Criminal court records from Frankfurt, quoted in Wilhelm Wächterhäuser, *Das Verbrechen des Kindesmordes im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Berlin, 1973), p. 11. Translated by Merry Wiesner-Hanks.*

Anna Maria Rauin admitted, concerning her child that was conceived in immorality, that as soon as it was born she shook it back and forth by the head so that it would not cry and

no one would discover it or learn about it, and that she grabbed it around the throat under the face and held it very firmly. But she denied having murderous intentions or having handled the child in a way to murder it. The examination of the body by the doctors and surgeons was inconclusive in terms of determining the cause of death or whether the lungs had drawn breath, despite their best medical understanding. The accused herself was not certain, but only thought that the child was born living into the world and was then strangled by her. Because her confession may have been motivated by fear of torture, and because of the absence of a clear *corporis delecti* and complete certainty that the child lived, the death sentence might appear not to be proper, and it might appear as if the accused should be given an unusual punishment [i.e., not the death sentence], or should be forced into making a more complete confession through firm handling on the part of the city executioner. However, it appears from the circumstances, and is fully demonstrated without a doubt through the confession of the accused . . . that it was the intention of the accused to keep the child from crying by pressing in on its throat so that no one would know anything about this birth. This is indeed premeditated murder, that is, an intent to kill the child, and the accused, who as any reasonable person would, clearly understood that holding it by the throat and neck would cause this gentle little child to strangle and die. . . Thus she is sentenced to death by the sword.

### **7. Trial record of a woman executed for sexual relations with women and cross-dressing, Germany, 1477**

*Records of arrests or trials of women for sexual relations with other women are rare in early modern Europe. There are almost none in southern Europe – at the same time that*

*there were thousands of accusations of sodomy involving men – and just a handful in the cities of northern Europe. The few that did come to trial are similar to the case reprinted here, in that one woman took on a male role – wore men’s clothing, pretended she was a man, and often used a dildo – and she was more harshly treated than the woman who remained in the female sexual and social role. In this case, the accused confesses to having had a long-standing sexual relationship with one woman (whom she originally called her “sister” and who apparently escaped trial) as well as making sexual advances to two other women, who are also punished. The actions are described in the records, but the crime is not given any name. Source: Helmut Puff, “Female Sodomy: The Trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer (1477),” The Journal of Medieval and Europe Modern Studies 30 (Winter 2000): 58–9.*

[Stadtarchiv Speyer 1 A, 704/II, fols. 12r-14r] Else, wife of Wendel Muter, says, among many other things, that around four weeks ago she who stands in the dock [i.e., the accused] came to her at her house when her husband was not at home. She knocked on the door so long that in the end she let her in. Among other things, [she says] when they were together she put her up in a different bed. Then [however] she who stands in the dock lay down in bed with her and, during many quarrels, sat down on top of the above-mentioned Else, and tried to seduce her and to have her manly will with her. [*In the margin at this point: As she in fact did it with her once just like a man. She (i.e., the accused) also says that if she is to be punished she did it once. She also says that her semen is so much that it is beyond measure, that one could grab it with a full hand.*] She grabbed it [the penis] and felt that it was a huge thing, as big as half an arm. She thought

it was like a horn and pointed in front and wide behind. She could hardly ward her off. Among other things, when she broke loose she who stands in the dock jumped out of the window. She also says when she came to her she showed her the penis and tried to have her will with her and offered to give her eight florins. She also says that she urinates through this thing. She also says that she who stands in the dock prohibited her [from telling others], and she promised not to mention it to anybody. She also says that she who is supposed to be her sister said in her in brief that she who stands in the dock had deflowered her and had made love to her during two years. She also said that she did not know anything other than that men should be granted such roguery.

Else, wife of Henck [?] Michel [?], says that during carnival she saw that she who stands in the dock stood, whored like a man, and she grabbed her just like a man. She also says that with hugging and kissing she behaved exactly like a man with women, as she said.

Ennel Helmstetner says that once upon a time she asked the accused for information about her sister . . . asked how it came . . . that she . . . her sister . . . she was her husband.

Hannss Welcker says, among other things, that he had heard from Ennel Helmstat[ner] that she said that she who stands in the dock and who is supposed to be a man – that she abducted her, whom she calls a sister, from a noble and is not her sister.

Katherina Hetzeldorferin from Nuremberg [testifying]: She says that she did it at first with one finger, thereafter with two, and then with three, and at last with the piece of wood that she held between her legs to the extent she said and confessed before. (She

also says that she who was with her is her sister and that she has nothing to do with her [i.e., has had no sex with her]. She was ready to die for that [i.e., it is really true].) She says that she who was with her is not her sister and says that she encountered her in Wefthelm and took her here [to Speyer] (she did not court her nor do anything dishonest with her) and had her ways with her. And she also says thereafter that she made an instrument with a red piece of leather, at the front filled with cotton, and a wooden stick stuck into it, and made a hole through the wooden stick, put a string through, and tied it round; and therewith she had her roguery with the two women and her who is supposed to be her sister.

She was drowned – requiescat in pace – on Friday before the deposition of Saint Guido.

When the Schreckenspoenn said such about her, and when she insisted that she did not know anything other than that she was a man and committed an act of knavery with her three times, she remained arrested because of that until the aforementioned Katherina was executed, [in order to find out] whether Katherina wanted to absolve her for not knowing anything other than that she took her for a man, and [in that case] ban her ten miles' distance from the city. Similarly Else, wife of Wendel Muter, with whom she had to do once [i.e., had sex with her once], remained arrested. And on the following Saturday they both swore ten miles from the city [i.e., they were exiled ten miles from the city].

Friday after Judica, 1477.

## **8. Popular story of a cross-dressing young woman, Portugal, 1599**

*Early modern literature is full of stories of young men who traveled widely and encountered many opportunities to show great skill and bravery. There are also a few stories of young women who followed the same path, although the only way that it was possible for them to do so was to dress in men's clothing. Many of these stories of both men and cross-dressing women claimed to be true, and it is difficult to separate fact from fiction. The following is one of these accounts of a cross-dressing heroine, taken from Duarte Nunez do Leão's *Descrição do Reino de Portugal* written in 1599 and published posthumously by the author's nephew, Gil Nunez do Leão. The author describes in a very romantic, sentimental, and exaggerated fashion the wonders of Portugal, starting with its glorious history, natural resources, and some national heroes and heroines. The latter comprise mainly members of the nobility and of saints, but the selection highlighted here is the story of a young girl of modest means who ran away from home and led a life of high adventure. The experience of Antonia Rodriguez was hardly typical of young women in early modern Portugal, and there is no way to know whether she actually had such a life, but her story was very popular. Source: Duarte Nunez do Leão, *Descrição do Reino de Portugal*, 2nd ed., trans. Darlene Abreu-Ferreira (Lisbon: Na Of. de Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1785 [1610]), 346–50.*

In the town of Aveiro of one Simão Rodriguez mariner and of his wife Lianor Diaz was born a daughter named Antonia. She whom her mother brought to this city of Lisbon to another of her daughters who is married here. This girl not able to suffer the severity of her sister and the ill treatment that she received, she determined to leave her house and go to foreign lands, as she did at the age of twelve years: for which she went to a street

where ready-made clothes are sold, and from the small peculium that she had she bought an outfit according to what boys wear who serve at sea in merchant vessels. And having already cut her hair she went to the fields and in a hidden place she removed her woman's clothing that she wore and dressed as a boy: and walking along the beach she approached a master of a caravel that was loaded with wheat for Mazagan [Morocco] in which she sailed: and she served on that voyage as a cabin boy as skilfully as a man who had always done that work, mounting the mast to handle the sails and doing everything else as a skilful mariner, changing the name Antonia to Antonio. Arriving at Mazagan it was reported to the captain that the master of the caravel had stolen and falsified [the volume of] wheat that was shipped; and in obtaining witness reports on the situation it was the cabin boy Antonio among them who discovered the truth. For which the captain did not allow him to return to the caravel for fear that the master would harm him; and he placed him among the soldiers, and he began to call himself, Antonio Rodriguez. Who in a short period of time made himself so skilful in weaponry that when they went to target he challenged the others and he had so much advantage no one defeated him. And on the streets he fenced and did all the games of battle with such ease as if he had done them all his life. For these reasons and for his gentle temperament he was much loved by all the soldiers and each sought to be his comrade. He did his night vigils without ever missing them, and with the soldiers he ate and laid in bed and slept among them yet always dressed in jerkin and drawers with which he never parted so that he was never found out. And thus he served a little more than a year as a soldier. Because of his abilities he became known and the captain favoured him, putting him up on a horse and giving him a salary and upkeep as all the cavalrymen.

On horseback he outdid the others in dexterity, good bearing, and swiftness with which he mounted from the ground: and in attacks on the enemy in the biggest and important undertakings, the captain always nominated him to lead as the most skilful cavalryman he had. And so he found himself in many battles and encounters where many leading Moors were captured and killed and their horses in which Antonio Rodriguez participated as the best cavalryman of his company. Never failing to keep vigil during his watch on the [fort] walls, he would go to the fields with his musket on horseback to gather wood and hay. And many times he helped kill pigs on the Moors' camp of which he would bring his portion.

The fame of this young woman in disguise as a valiant cavalryman was such that for that and for looking as a young gentleman and with many graces he was much regarded and favoured by the young ladies of Mazagan, particularly by one daughter of a top cavalryman in whose house the pretender Antonio Rodriguez had had much familiarity that all supposed that he would marry her. And with all the intimacies that the parents of the young lady saw in him not without tenderness and gallantry they did not mistrust him: because he was provided with many handkerchiefs and shirts, and everyone thought that he would marry there. Having served in that man's costume for five years, he was anxious of being discovered by someone who had caught sight of some signs of a woman he determined to do it himself, and going to the provisor he disclosed it to him and told him the reasons for which until then he had been in those clothes. The provisor disclosed him to the governor and made him put on women's clothing. And thus she

sought shelter in the home of a married top cavalryman where the young ladies to whom she spoke of romance visited her, the ones who transformed their love they had had for her into friendship and paid her for the gallantries that she had said to them with gifts of distaff and spindles and other similar things. This woman wished to return to the Realm in company with other women that were found. But she was too well loved by the captain and by everyone in the town, men as well as women, that they would not allow her to speak of it. A few days later a young cavalryman from one of the leading families in town married her and with him she returned to the Realm with a certification of the services she did with weapons, and the King granted her with a reward of two hundred *cruzados* for expenses and a *fanega* [a dry measure] of wheat per month and ten thousand *réis* all as pension for the rest of her life. And now recently her son was given a post in court as a page for the services she rendered, his mother. Today she is a widow and is in this city and with another appeal: she is still a young woman under 35 years of age, of good appearance and who has many graces when she speaks and very lively spirits, which well justifies what is said of her.

What of this woman can be praised the most is her chastity and deportment with which she always conducted herself going about with so many soldiers dressed as a soldier eating and sleeping in bed with them triumphing thus that is the greatest of all victories. And thus among the women of Mazagan exists the name of one of great merit and of whom much is said and to all who know her is known as the *Cavalheira* [cavalrywoman] for the courage that in combat she showed.

## Marriage

### 9. Marriage contract for a first marriage, France, 1546

*People in many parts of Europe, including those who were not especially wealthy, made marriage contracts specifying their mutual financial commitments. In Paris, contracts might or might not mention goods or money that constituted a dowry brought by the wife to the marriage. By legal custom and common practice, the bride as a possible future widow received a promise of a dower, a preset or customary amount that would be hers if her husband died before she did. Such an arrangement was also common in parts of England and Germany. In this brief document, two people acting on their own behalf record their intentions to marry and arrange for the future of the woman if her future husband should die before she does. Although the woman's father is alive, he lives in another part of France, and so she acts on her own, though with his consent. Source: Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier central, Étude XI/26, 16 May 1546. Translated by Carol Loats.*

[Were present] the honorable Jehan de la Place, merchant butcher, *bourgeois* of Paris, living at the butchery Saint Geneviefve, in his own name, on the one hand, and Jehanne Picquevel, daughter of Michel Picquevel, farm worker, living in Chavline en Brye, also in her own name, on the other hand. [The parties] willingly, etc., in the presence of Jehan Brenant, merchant living at Saint Marcel in Paris, cousin by his wife of the said Jehanne Picquevel, and with the will and consent of the said Michel Picquevel, father of Jehanne, and other kin and friends of the said Jehanne Picquevel, they say, affirm that they have

made, will make, and make, together and one with the other, the contract of marriage, agreements, gifts, and arrangements which follow.

That is to say, the said de la Place has promised and promises by this [contract] to take the said Picquevel as his wife and spouse, and she on her part promises also to take him as her husband and spouse if God and our Mother Holy Church allow, as soon as this can simply be done and is decided between them, their kin, and friends, with the possessions, rights, and material interests that they have on one side or the other.

And therefore and in consideration of this the said de la Place has given and gives to the said Jehanne Picquevet, his said future wife, the sum of 40 *livres tournois* as pre-set dower, to be paid one time, . . . to have and take as soon as dower takes place, without holding back, from all and each of the inheritances and possessions of the said de la Place, according to the customs of the city, *prévôté* [provost under the king] and *vicomté* [larger regional government] of Paris.

Because thus, etc., promising, obligating, each in his own right, etc., renouncing, etc. Done and passed in duplicate in the year 1546, Sunday, the 16th day of May.

### **10. Marriage contract for a second marriage, France, 1540**

*Second and even third marriages were also formalized before notaries. Although widows could legally act on their own behalf, some widows were represented by their fathers as the marriage contract was formalized. The arrangements made in these cases sometimes reflect the previous marriage. In addition to these factors, the following marriage contract also brings the bride's future inheritance into the current marriage*

*arrangements. Source: Paris, Archives Nationales, Minutier central, Étude XIX/155, 12 June 1540. Translated by Carol Loats.*

Present in person were Blanchet Moreau, *hacquebutier* [maker of a particular sort of early firearm], living in Paris, in the name of and stipulating in this [matter] for Anne Moreau, his daughter, widow of the late Jehan Gibert, who while living was also a *hacquebutier*, on the one hand; and Alexandre Loiseau, similarly *hacquebutier*, living in Paris, for himself in his own name, on the other hand.

The parties, because of the marriage which, to the pleasure of God, will be made and solemnized in front of the Holy Church between the said Loiseau and Anne Moreau, acknowledge and affirm that they have made and make between them the contracts, agreements, dower, promises, and arrangements which follow.

That is to say, the said Blanchet Moreau has promised and promises to give the said Anne, his daughter, according to the name and law of marriage, to the said Loiseau, who has promised and promises to take her as his wife and spouse tomorrow, if God and Holy Church allow, free and clear of all debts whatsoever.

In consideration of [this] marriage the said Blanchet has promised and promises in the said name to give and pay to the said future couple, without the least advance, the sum of 20 *livres tournois* in cash, with the personal property which follows.

That is to say, a bed [frame] of wood, a bed and bolster stuffed with feathers, a white canopy, a cover of red linen, six sheets of hemp cloth, six tablecloths, a dozen table napkins, a locking oak chest, a table, two trestles, a sideboard on a lockable counter,

which property the parties estimate among themselves at a value of 15 *livres tournois*, which brings the value, including the cash, to the sum of 35 *livres tournois*.

[This sum] the said future couple will be obliged to postpone by half, as coming to them by inheritance from the said Blanchet Moreau and from Moudette Louprat, his wife, father and mother of the said Anne.

And the said Blanchet further pledges to give and pay to the said future couple the sum of 10 *livres tournois* payment and wages to their said daughter for serving her said father and mother since the death of her said dead husband up to now.

The said Loiseau affirms that he has received from the said Blanchet three *livres 10 sous tournois* toward the two sums in cash, with which he is satisfied and [which he] considers Blanchet to have paid, saying that he can release and releases the said Blanchet of obligation for the cash that [Blanchet] has received for [Blanchet's] daughter as her customary dower . . . and has renounced and relieves the heirs of the said Gibert, her first husband, of obligation, and [releases Blanchet of obligation for] all other things which . . . [have come to] his said daughter for whatever cause there might be, from the past up to today.

And therefore the said Alexander Loiseau has given and gives the said Anne Moreau, his future spouse, the sum of 30 *livres tournois* in cash, to pay once as pre-set dower and without return, for all right to dower, if there is a surviving child or children of theirs at the time of the dissolution of their said marriage, for her to have and take as soon as dower takes place, and beyond her rights of common property, from all the belongings which belong to the heirs of the said Loiseau at his death . . .

And further the said Loiseau has willed and wills that if he dies before his future spouse without a surviving child or children of the two of them from legal marriage as is said, that she have and take by priority right and before any dividing up with the heirs, all her clothing, rings, and jewelry she has in use at that time.

Thus has the content above been received [by the notaries], passed and agreed between the said parties. Promising, etc., obligating, each in his own right, etc., renouncing. Done and passed in duplicate, in the year 1540, Saturday, the 12th day of June.

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

*Marten de Vos, The Marriage at Cana (1596–97). As do so many artists, Vos puts the*

*biblical characters, including Jesus turning water into wine, into a contemporary setting, here a city in Flanders. The participants and guests are much wealthier than those in Bruegel's peasant wedding, but much of the symbolism remains the same. The original is in the Vrouwekathedraal, Antwerp; this is taken from the Web Gallery of Art, a virtual museum and searchable database of European painting and sculpture from the twelfth to mid-nineteenth centuries*

<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/welcome.html>

### **11. A bride's memoir of her wedding day, Germany, 1777**

*The reality of a young person's wedding day could be very different from that anticipated, as revealed in this memoir from a young German woman, Ernestine Voss.*

*Source: Heinrich Voss, Briefe nebst erläuternden Beilage. Hrsg. v. Abraham Voss (Halberstadt, 1829–33), vol. 2, pp. 14–15. Translated by Merry Wiesner-Hanks.*

After breakfast [Johann Friedrich] Voss [her husband-to-be] went for a walk, so that he could be out of the way for the cleaning up. I was not allowed to lend a hand to anything, so I was the only one left. In my solitude I braided a pretty bridal wreath out of the branches of a myrtle that a poor gardener's wife had brought . . . I had my hair done and thoroughly powdered. Because Voss made up his mind to do the same with his hair, I arranged it myself with the help of a relative . . . Voss himself put the bridal wreath, which also gave him joy, in my hair, and it pleased me greatly that he secured it with a kiss and said he had a very pretty bride. We were barely finished when his mother came to fetch us for the ceremony. I was not ashamed of my tears, for the firmness with which he held my hand told me that he was very moved as well. The pastor, who was

distinguished but practically unknown to us, discussed in a long sermon how the heathens had already had a high opinion of marital happiness, and continued on through the Christian religion, and then some practical advice for the bridegroom . . . and for the bride . . . he blessed us and wished us a happy marriage. Voss took me in his arms with these words: Now only death will part us. A dreadful afternoon in a crowded room followed, with, in our opinion, much too strait-laced company. The sun shone so hot, and there was no way to get out. In front of the window there were steps that led to the large church-yard that was surrounded by trees. The whole afternoon curious lower-class people stood there watching us. As the lamps were lit, young people who were my close relatives also gathered [on the steps] but it would not have been appropriate to go out to them. How often in the last few years has Voss said that this was the most boring day of his life.

## **12. A petition to reclaim a dowry because of bigamy, Germany, 1539**

*Because divorce was not allowed before the Reformation, or in Catholic areas after the Reformation, and was difficult in any case, people seeking to leave unhappy marriages often simply moved apart. If they traveled far enough, they might move beyond the area where people knew they were married and marry again. In this lawsuit, a woman seeks repayment of her dowry and an annulment of her marriage because her husband had a previous wife. Petitions such as this are written in formal legal language and in a way that will best help the supplicant achieve his or her aims. It is thus difficult to say whether everything in them is exactly accurate, but they are certainly based on the real circumstances of the case. This is a petition from Ursula Kolhauffer to the city council of*

*Munich. Source: Munich Stadtarchiv, Urgichten, Nr. 87 (1539). Translated by Merry Wiesner-Hanks.*

Honorable, wise, just, and careful sirs, I, Ursula Kolhauffen, Adam Wagner's wife, would like your wisdoms to know about the case involving me and my husband Adam Wagner, which your wisdoms certainly already know about in part. That is, that he is supposed to have another wife [besides me]. The situation that your wisdoms put to me, is that I was supposed to bring proof that she is still living, and I ventured to do this. But God called to me in the meantime, and I delivered the child with which I was pregnant. I was ill because of the child, and I had nothing other than what pious people shared with me. When the child was two weeks old, I got up and went with the child to Gaissing in the duchy of Fürstenberg, and I found her [the other wife] myself. I wanted to vindicate the case myself, but I did not have the power or right to do so. The authorities in Gaissing told me that if my husband Adam Wagner himself were there, they would handle the case quickly and help me gain what I sought, determine whether she was his wife or not, and whether I could set myself against both of them, as I had requested. He [Wagner] was seeking [to keep] my dowry, which I will swear on my life. For he heaped shame and insults with no justification on me, which threatened my body and life. That is, in the mayor's house in Gaissing, a man whose wife was standing next to him said that my husband publicly said in Zell and elsewhere that I had dishonored myself twice, and was a murderous piece of goods. He also said this to me when we were home – that I dishonored him twice and also sought to dishonor the children – so he used violence against me. After that he said further that I had moved away from him for whorish

reasons and was now moving from place to place like a whore. But I can prove that when I moved out of Munich, I lived with pious honorable people, and supported myself and my child with hard work. Further, he said that the child that I had was not his, but I can prove to the day and hour [that it is]. I have already testified to all of this in writing, and sent it by messenger to the judge in Freising. The judge said to the messenger that he would not order him [Wagner] to appear because he did not have jurisdiction over the case because it had been started elsewhere. I asked not for his life or bodily punishment, but that he be compelled to give me my dowry back and to declare me free of him. He then offered, in the presence of two men, namely Jorgen Dylger and Franntz Federmacher, both citizens of Munich, to pay it back to me year by year and declare me free of him. That is exactly what I am now petitioning and requesting. If you will not agree to this, I will protest, and prove to your wisdoms that I made my request properly according to the law in the proper place, and the law itself is at fault here. I have done everything according to the law, and have revealed everything to you about his [Wagner's] actions. It is now my request and supplication to your wisdoms, that you prevail upon him to do what he himself agreed to do in front of Jorgen Dylger and Franntz Federmacher. I place myself under the care and protection of your wisdoms. Dated the eleventh of April, 1539. Your wisdom's obedient subject, Ursula Kolhauffen.

### **13. Disappearance and remarriage, Spain, 1591 and 1594**

*In many areas of Europe, men left regularly to do seasonal labor in other regions or to fish in faraway seas. During times of warfare, husbands were conscripted into the military. The long absences often left the abandoned wives unsure whether their*

*husbands were alive or dead and whether they should remarry. In document a, a case brought before the Spanish Inquisition in 1591, Marina de Castro was charged with bigamy when her long-absent first husband suddenly returned home. In document b, we see that women who checked into the exact circumstances of their husbands' deaths fared much better with the Inquisition, as is evident in the trial of Margarida Lopez from 1594.*

*Source: Document a: Relaciones de Causas, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Sección Inquisición, legajo 2042, no.26, fol. 13 (1591). Document b: Relaciones de Causas, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Sección Inquisición, legajo 2042, no. 34 folio 6v (1594).*

*Translated by Allyson Poska.*

**Document a.** Marina de Castro, inhabitant of Verin (Ourense), accused of having been married two times, said that her first husband had left her alone and that she was notified that he was dead and having information that it was so, she married for a second time . . . she was absolved, but because we [the judges] are suspicious that the said information was false, she was reprimanded . . . and she was mandated not to live with either of the husbands until the ecclesiastical ordinary might determine with which of them she might make her life.

**Document b.** Margarida López, the wife of Sebastian López of Pongin (Ourense), forty-three years old, accused of having been married two times . . . said that it had been more than twenty-eight years ago that she had married the said Sebastian López in the eyes of the church and had made a married life with him for five years. At the end of that time, the said Sebastian López had left the land and was absent from the land for twenty years at the end of which, understanding that he was dead, she had married a second time. Certain

witnesses testified that it had been four years that they had said that her first husband had been dead and that they had found his burial place in the monastery of Valparaiso . . . she was absolved.

#### **14. Ordinance about marital separation, Portugal, early sixteenth century**

*Divorce with the right to remarry was prohibited in Catholicism, but “separation from bed and board” was sometimes granted in extreme cases. The ordinance that follows, compiled during the reign of King D. Manuel I (1495–1521 ), regulates such separations and makes a child’s upkeep primarily the responsibility of the father, whether it was born in or out of wedlock. Source: Ordenações do Senhor Rey D. Manuel, vol. IV, trans.*

*Darlene Abreu-Ferreira (Coimbra: Na Real Imprensa da Universidade, 1797), pp. 175–76.*

Titulo LXVIII. Upon the birth of any child of a legitimate marriage, and while the said marriage lasts between the husband and the wife both have to care for it at their own expense, and give it what it needs according to its station and rank; and upon the separation of the marriage for whatever reason without the death of either [parent], the mother shall maintain the upkeep of the child until it reaches three years of age, and this in milk only, and the father shall cover all other expenses that are necessary for its upbringing; but if the mother is of such station and rank, that she could not reasonably nurse her child, the father shall maintain at his expense the wetnurse, for the said period of three years, for the milk, as well as whatever other expense, that is necessary for its rearing.

1. And if the child is not born out of a legitimate marriage, be it natural or spurious, and of whatever other manner, the mother shall maintain the upkeep of the child in milk for the said three years, and all other expenses, in the said period, as well as after, shall be done at the expense of the father, as has been said of the legitimate child. And if in those said three years the mother has any expenses concerning this child, that is the obligation of the father, she can in all cases recover it, and have it from the said father, for she did it, when she was responsible for it.

2. And in all cases where a father is responsible to pay the upkeep of his child, if he does not have the means to do it, it [the expenses] shall be paid out of the child's inheritance; and if the child has no inheritance its upkeep will be at the expense of the mother, in as much as she can do. . . .

### **15. A wife's will, Spain, 1628**

*Because many early modern married couples struggled to survive, a woman's financial contribution could mean the difference between comfort and misery. This was particularly true in the parts of Europe where women received significant portions of inheritance through partible inheritance, in which the inheritance was divided equally among all of the heirs, male and female. For instance, in early modern Spain, women often brought significant financial resources to the marriage and actively participated in the investment of those resources. The last will and testament of María Fernández, the wife of a carpenter from Santiago de Compostela in Spain, reveals how she and her husband were not only man and wife but also partners in a number of land holdings. Source: Testament*

*of María Fernández, Archivo Histórico Universitario de Santiago de Compostela, caja 1530/1188, folio 112 (1628). Translated by Allyson Poska.*

Item, I say that my husband and I lease out the benefice of Santiago de Numide next to the middle bridge. . . I leave to the said Jacome de Mata, my husband, the said quarto and a half of produce from this year that we have collected for him entirely, and the other quarto and a half from next year, I leave to my son-in-law, Alonso da Silva, that he have it and collect it entirely, with neither of them putting an impediment on the other.

Item, I say that I and my husband have some cows in San Esteban de Trasmontes and San Julian dos Cabaleiros. . . I order that my husband and my son-in-law divide these in half. . . Item, I say that I and my husband, Jacome da Mata, between us two, bought and rent the house where we live at present in La Algaria de Arriva. I want and it is my will that I leave the usufruct of the entire house and the part that is mine to the said Jacome da Mata for all the days of his life and after his death my heirs may have it.

*Albecht Dürer, Peasant Couple, c. 1500. Scenes of normal married couples are quite rare in Renaissance art; in this drawing, Dürer captures a sense of mutual dependence. The original is in the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan; this is taken from the Web Gallery of Art, a virtual museum and searchable database of European painting and sculpture from twelfth to mid-nineteenth centuries*

<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/welcome.html>

#### **16. A loving letter from husband to wife, Wales, 1612**

*Historians debate the level of affection found in early modern families, and letters such as this one provide evidence for those who argue that many spouses felt strong bonds with one another, even if the marriage had originally been arranged by their parents. This letter was written thirty-five years into a long and successful marriage and illustrates the comfort such a union might offer. Sir John is confident of his wife's interest in the small details of his doings and health and, although scarcely a day's journey from home, wishes to communicate with her; she benefits from his affection, too. But notice that she needs her husband's permission to leave home to go visit their daughter for the Whitsun holiday. Source: N.L.W. MS 9054E f.35. April 9, 1612. Sir John Wynn at Wrexham, Flintshire, to Lady Sydney Wynn at Gwydir. Excerpted by Katharine Swett.*

To my dearest the lady Sydney Wynn at Gwydir.

Good Sydney, I am come hither in health I thank god and feel myself the better by travel and I hope will be better and better for I take but small journeys nor will not over

labor myself . . . I have sent thee a token [small gift] by my son Bodvel having no time to write unto thee. pray for me and I will for thee and thy brats [young children]. to god's holy protection I commend us all god send us a merry and joyful meeting. I will not break promise with thee. thou shall [go] to Kylken against Whitsontyde and from thence I mean to have thee to London if my Return be deferred as I fear me it shall. Wrexham 9 April, my birth day. thine own John Wynn of Gwydir.

### **17. A husband's provisions for his widow, England, 1580**

*Spousal affection sometimes emerges in wills. Although some of the language of wills is formulaic, personal emotions do show through occasionally, and in some parts of Europe, such as England, spouses could also show their love and concern by the economic provisions made in the will. In this will, William Gerard gives his wife a third of his moveable property to use during her lifetime in addition to the income of one-third of his freehold lands that was his wife's dower by law. His wife had had bouts of mental illness, and he makes special provisions for her because of this. Gerard's heir is his elder son Gilbert, and his children are all adults. Source: Prerogative Court of Canterbury. 26 Darcy. February 16, 1580. Sir William Gerard. Excerpted by Katharine Swett.*

Where god has pleased heretofore to visit my wife divers times with such sickness as bereaveth her from all sense & understanding, I foresee that if care be not had to the preservation of those things I have, if god shall please to visit her in that time, the same would be purloined from her & my children. & if she's not looked to carefully in her time of sickness, there is doubt of her perfect recovery . . . [for this reason] my will and request to her is to live with her son and they not separate house. . . if my wife would please I wish Gilbert took charge of the house. . . [they are to receive all

incomes from land jointly and share jointly in all household goods during her lifetime, and Lady Gerard is to have at least four personal servants. Gilbert will inherit the residual goods [when his mother dies] for his better maintenance & ability to welcome his brothers & sisters & others his friends . . . if my wife mislikes living with her son & wants to live alone. . . [provides for half of a house in Chester, with quarterly income]. . . not less than one third of all my livings farms etc to use. . . And I charge Gilbert, as he shall answer before God to the contrary, that he serve obey & lovingly treat his mother, & if god please ever to visit her with her accustomed sickness, to see her so kept & used (as though I lived).

### **18. Excerpt from a will, Spain, 1658**

*Disease and warfare wreaked havoc on many early modern marriages. As a result, many men and women married two, three, and even four times during their lifetimes. Such misfortune befell Costanza Forneyra, who was widowed three times while still a young woman. Her last marriage, however, was much longer and happier. In her last will and testament, Costanza expressed her love for her fourth husband, Antonio González, with both kind words and a significant inheritance. Source: Testament of Costanza Forneyra, Archivo Histórico Provincial de Ourense, caha protocolos, 3669, fol. 134 (1658). Translated by Allyson Poska.*

For the love and affection and obligation that I have for him, and for having had more than twenty-two years of marriage, one with the other, during which he has esteemed me and treated me like an honorable man should with much kindness and goodwill . . . I leave him a vineyard . . . a piece of land . . . half of the territory with the chestnut trees . . . and the fifth part of all of my possessions.

**Die Neumerley Heude**  
 einer bösen Frawen / lãmbt  
 iren Nam Eygenschaften.  
**Wahr das Bitter Süß Eulich**  
 Leben.



**Hans Sachs.**

*Cover of Hans Sachs' satirical poem, The Nine Skins of a Bad Wife. The poet and playwright Hans Sachs frequently based his works on popular tales, one of which was the story of the nine skins of a bad wife. Each skin had the quality of a particular animal, and the husband had to beat through them all to reach her human skin and thus affect her.*

*Such stories of domestic violence common, although it is difficult to determine the level of actual domestic violence that occurred.*

### **19. Wife's legal deposition against an abusive husband, Russia, 1659**

*Not all marriages were happy, of course, and documents like this legal deposition provide evidence for historians who argue that many families were cold or even routinely violent. This legal deposition was submitted in 1659 to the ecclesiastical court of the bishop of Ustiug, a prosperous provincial town in northern Russia. It consists of a complaint filed by Annitsa Osokina against her husband, who abused her, stole her personal property, and abandoned her. Women in premodern Russia were empowered to represent themselves in legal action, as Annitsa did here, but often they sought the assistance of their natal relatives. To gain the sympathy of the court, petitioners portrayed themselves in helpless, deferential terms and often exaggerated their dire straits. Even so, the wealth of detail attests to the reality of Annitsa's plight. The outcome of this suit is not recorded. Source: Akty kholmogorskoi I ustiuzhkoi eparkhii, bk. 3, Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka, vol. 25 trans. Eve Levin (St. Petersburg, 1908), pp. 305–6. Translated by Eve Levin.*

Annitsa daughter of Semen, a resident of Ustiug, petitions the Lord Archpries Vladimir and the monks of the Cathedral Church of Dormition . . . of Ustiug, against her husband, Kliment son of Isak Osoki, a resident of Ustiug.

Lord, last year, in 7166 [according to the Byzantine calendar; this year corresponds to the Western year 1658], during Lent, my husband Kliment got drunk and caroused. In that state, he came home, and beat poor me and injured me to [the point of] death many times. After that, my

husband bragged that he would commit murder and all sorts of awful things against me. He took clothing from me, a caftan, linens, a hat, dresses, and shirts, and my trunk, and all the brass and iron and tin and woven housewares [he took] it is unknown where. He sold his house, where he and I lived together on Nikolskaia street in Ustiug. And now I, poor me, have gone into a final decline: I weep all the time; I go naked and barefoot; I am dying of hunger; and I can no longer go to pray to God in the church at all; and my husband took away from poor me my little bit of clothing and property. And when he sold the house, he gave a donation to the Archangel monastery in Ustiug, and now he lives there, in the Archangel monastery, and he does not provide for poor me to eat and drink, and he does not provide me with clothing and footwear. And I, poor me, pawned my gold-washed silver bracelets, and with that money I bought myself grain: five measures of rye and two measures of oats and half a measure of wheat, but my husband Kliment took that grain that I purchased out of the house and it is unknown where, and he left poor me to perish in the end.

Lord Archpriest Vladimir of Christ and monks, have mercy upon me, poor Annitsa. Order, Lord, that this my deposition be accepted and that my petition be recorded, and that this case be investigated immediately. Lord, be generous, have mercy.

This deposition was given on March 6, 7167.

## **Singlewomen**

### **20. Laws requiring unmarried people to register or leave, Denmark, 1549**

*Despite the fact that people in northern Europe often waited until they were well into their twenties to marry, political and religious authorities regarded young, unmarried people living away from their parents as likely to upset morality and public order. They*

*passed laws requiring them to live with older adults or otherwise restricting their behavior. This is the law from city of Malmø in Denmark. Source: Malmø stadsbog 1549–59. Rådstuerettens, bytingets og toldbodrettens protokol. Udg. v. Einar Bager, trans. Grethe Jacobsen and Pernille Arenfeldt (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til dansk Historie, 1972), p. 35.*

Anno domini 1549, December 14th, the Mayors, the City Council and the Royal Reeve decided to issue this bylaw, which is as follows:

First it was gravely determined, decided and agreed upon that no one should be sitting and drinking alcohol during the sermon on Sundays or other holy days, nor should anyone wander around in the street or in the chapel behind the choir during the sermon. Nor should any cellar be opened on aforesaid days before the noonday sermon is over, unless it is done for the sake of strangers and travellers who arrive and want to leave at once. Whoever breaks this rule will be punished accordingly.

Similarly, all single men and unemployed menservants should at once appear at the City Hall and swear an oath to the Mayors and the Council acting on behalf of His Royal Majesty and the city of Malmø or they should at once be expelled from the city.

Similarly, all girls who are self-supporting [i.e., self-feeding] should enter into service again or be expelled from the city at once.

Then about those whores and poor women of the city, it was decided that whoever is found in the city after New Year's Day and has not been provided with an honest man and she is caught wearing a cape or a headdress while she keeps up such a life, she will lose this clothing and be punished according to the law.

## 21. Unmarried woman's registration as an honorable woman, Denmark, 1554

*In the years following the issuing of these ordinances, several single women appeared in court to obtain a written testimony, confirming that they were honest and decent maidens.*

*Notice that the woman is not accused of any specific act but must swear to her*

*honorability simply because she is not married. Source: Malmø stadsbog 1549–59.*

*Rådstuerettens, bytingets og toldbodrettens protokol. Udg. v. Einar Bager, trans. Grethe Jacobsen and Pernille Arenfeldt (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til dansk Historie, 1972), p. 193.*

18th June 1554 the bearer of this letter, Anne Pedersdatter, our burgheress [female citizen] was (in court) and brought with her these aftersaid honest men and women, her neighbours: [the names of 10 men and 7 women] whom she has summoned to appear in front of us and asked and urged them for God's and justice's sake that they would give her a true and honest testimony concerning how she had lived and behaved herself among them and whether she had consorted with wicked people or loose company with drink, bad behaviour, been a tapster [woman who sold beer] or in any other way led an evil life or stayed in any unsuitable house or in any way heard or learned anything about her, in secret or in public, except that which was honest and suitable in every way.

Which aforesaid honest men and women all and each in agreement stepped forward and with the proper oath swore by God and the salvation of their souls that they had never at any time heard or learned, secretly or publicly, any dishonour, dishonest lifestyle or loose behaviour nor (that she had) stayed in a disreputable house but (that she

had) always as a maiden and a women behaved and led a life and associated with neighbours and everyone honestly, modestly, suitably and well early as well as late in every way. To further witness that thus has been recounted, sworn and testified in front of us, we have sealed this our open letter with the seal of our city, given and written year and day and place as said above.

## **22. Episcopal decree regarding several single women, Spain, 1571**

*Although the Danish ordinances regarded both unmarried men and unmarried women with suspicion, women who did not marry received the most intense scrutiny. In this excerpt from the decrees of an Episcopal visit to a small parish in northwestern Spain, a representative of the bishop condemned the actions of a number of single women and admonished their parents to control their behavior. Source: Libro de Visitas, Santa Maria Amarante, Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Ourense, 24.1.13, fol. 17r (23 July 1571) Translated by Allyson Poska.*

Item: His Honor ordered that as he has discovered information against some single women of this parish whose way of living is so bad and who are bad examples . . . that from now on Margarida, daughter of Vicente Asiana, and Catalina, daughter of Olinda de Dacon, María de Negrellas, single, María dos Casares, blind and single, Herena de Dacon, and Luzia de Amarante, from here forward live honestly and chastely, not being bad examples, under the penalty of one silver mark . . . he orders that henceforth, if they do not comply, the fathers and mothers of the aforementioned should punish them so that they might live properly.

### **23. Ordinance prohibiting girls from living with their mothers, France, 1665**

*Restrictions on unmarried women usually focused on the women themselves, but sometimes also on those who gave them room and board. This might even include their own mothers, as this ordinance from Strasbourg in 1665 makes clear. Source: Strasbourg Archives Municipales, Statuten, vol. 33, no. 61 (1665). Translated by Merry Wiesner-Hanks.*

Numerous complaints have been made that some widows living here have two, three, or more daughters living with them at their expense. These girls go into service during the winter but during the summer return to their mothers, partly because they want to wear more expensive clothes than servants are normally allowed to and partly because they want to have more freedom to walk around, to saunter back and forth whenever they want to. It is our experience that this causes nothing but shame, immodesty, wantonness and immorality, so that a watchful eye should be kept on this, and if it is discovered, the parents as well as the daughters should be punished with a fine, a jail sentence, or even banishment from the city in order to serve as an example to others.

### **Pregnancy and Childbirth**

#### **24. Ordinance Regulating Midwives, Germany, 1522**

*Women in early modern Europe, like those in most of the world's cultures in most periods, generally gave birth assisted by female relatives and friends. Women who had particular talents or inclination were often called to assist more often, and gradually such women began taking payment for their work, evolving into professional midwives.*

*Midwives were trained by watching and helping more experienced midwives, but beginning in the sixteenth century in some parts of Europe, city governments began to regulate midwifery and require midwives to swear an oath if they wished to obtain a license. This is the first midwives' ordinance from the south German city of Nuremberg, which served as a model for many other cities. Source: Nuremberg Staatsarchiv, Amts- und Standbücher Nr. 100, fol. 101–5. Translated by Merry Wiesner-Hanks.*

Every midwife should give her oath and swear she will conscientiously care for and stand by every expectant mother in her time of need to whom she is called, whether she is rich or poor, to the best of her abilities and understanding. She should proceed to whomever she is called first, immediately and without opposition, and make absolutely no excuses or delays, as has often been the case, but faithfully stand by her. Also no woman is to be hurried or forced to deliver before the proper time; she should wait and hold out until the appropriate time.

If the thing [the delivery] looks like it will be dangerous, she should call one or two of the women who oversee midwifery and proceed with the emergency according to their advice. In no case is she to wait or delay to call them until the need is so great they cannot handle it, or she will warrant serious punishment.

If it happens that the birth takes so long and the first midwife has a pressing need to rest or sleep for a while, she should call another sworn midwife and not an apprentice, who will then be just as responsible to appear immediately without opposition. She should then steadfastly and helpfully care for the woman in labor just as if she had been called at first. If it happens that this second midwife is caring for another expectant

mother at the time she is called, she should stay with this one and send another midwife to the other birth.

If any midwives show themselves to be disobedient or disagreeable, the city council will not only remove them from office, but will also punish them severely, so that all will know to shape up and watch their behavior.

The council has certainly experienced that the midwives deal very deceitfully and for their own profit with the Arme Kindbetterin Almosen [a city fund for poor expectant mothers] running back and forth to respectable women, who don't need the alms, promising them bedding and lard and other things if they will agree to call them as midwives. These lucrative operations are leading to a decline and breakdown of the *Almosen*. Because the council sees this with no little displeasure, from now on the midwives will be sworn by their oaths not to run after these women, or promise them the *Almosen*, but to refrain from this completely. If the council discovers any further incidents, she [the midwife] will be let out of her office, and will be punished in each case according to the severity of the deed, however the council decides.

From now on no midwife will be allowed to take on an apprentice who has begun with a different midwife and left her without justifiable cause, but every apprentice shall stay with the woman with whom she started. Justifiable and legitimate cause for leaving may be proven to the council or to those appointed by it. In such cases, the apprentice will not be forbidden to complete her training years with another sworn midwife. In this case, the woman that caused the apprentice to leave through her unfairness and unreasonableness will not be allowed to take on another apprentice until the end of the training years of the first.

They should not take on any flighty, young apprentices, as it so often happens that they marry during the course of their training and that all sorts of injuries result from their inexperience. They should rather take on apprentices well advanced in years and preferably living alone, from whom one expects more diligence than from younger ones.

They should also not allow themselves to drink wine in excess, as all kinds of injury and harm have been inflicted on the pregnant women because of this. The council has decided to punish severely any who break this restriction.

The honorable council has discovered that the midwives often send their maids (who have not completed their instruction or who have just completed it and have no experience yet) alone to women who are giving birth for the first time, through which these women are often neglected and deplorably injured. Therefore the honorable council orders that from now on no maid, whether she has half-completed her training or not, is to attend alone any woman bearing her first or second child, whether she goes with the knowledge of her instructor or not. After the passing of the normal years of training, the apprentice shall carry out her first birth in the presence of her instructor. In the case that the instructor is dead or not there, another sworn, experienced midwife should be present. Anyone who is convicted of this will be punished to the extent that the council's displeasure with the deed can be felt.

The high honorable council has also had enough of midwives taking their proper salary for poor women not only from the established overseer of the charity [the Arme Kindbetterin Almosen] but also from the women themselves, and therefore receiving double payment. This gives the honorable council great displeasure. Because of this the midwives are to swear that when they receive their proper salary (that, due to persuasive

reasons, has been set at 20 kreuzer for each birth) from the overseer for caring for a poor woman, they are not to demand or want anything more, but let themselves be completely satisfied with their established salary. All of this is liable to punishment, which the high honorable council will set each time according to the crime and opportunities of the case.

Recently evil cases have taken place, that those women who live in sin and adultery have illegitimate children, and during birth or before purposefully attempt to kill them by taking harmful, abortion-causing drugs, or through other notorious means. Some of these cases never come to the attention of the authorities, and proper punishment for them cannot be carried out. This the high honorable council, because of the God-given authority it carries, can no longer tolerate. Therefore they have made the recommendation that the midwives' oath be added to. They are to swear yearly, that when one of them is called to deliver a baby for such a woman, one who is carrying an illegitimate child, she [the midwife] is obliged to ask with intent what the name of the child's mother is, and who the child's father is. As soon as she has brought the child into the world, she is to report to the Lord Mayor whether the child is alive or dead, who its mother and father are, and where the mother is lying in bed. Also no dead illegitimate children are to be carried to the grave before she gives her report to the Lord Mayor. At least three or four unsuspected female persons are to go with the child to the grave. If one or more of the midwives act against this, and will not comply with what has been sent forth above, the high honorable council will deal with them as perjurers with corporal punishment. Then they will finally know to conform to this.

[Changes in and additions to the regulations were made fairly regularly, and in 1579 were codified and reissued along with the original 1522 ordinance:]

On the request of the sworn midwives to the high honorable council to improve their ordinance in several various points, this further pronouncement is to be published, to bring the following improvements to their ordinances.

First: The midwives have sworn in their oaths not to send or use an apprentice during her normal training years to a woman having her first baby, but have requested to have this limited to only the first quarter-year. The high honorable council believes this to be much too short a time, and will set the limit at one year. Therefore from now on no midwife should send a maid to a woman having her first child unless she has completed one year of her training program.

Second: It has often come about that some midwives who were with women during their labor run away from them and to others, without caring that this is utterly and completely against their sworn duties. Through this running away many births are hurried, and it should be severely punished. Therefore, when from now on one or more midwives leave a woman in need, without calling another sworn midwife to come in their place, they will be required to pay the high honorable council a five gulden fine, without exception.

Third: Some women have allowed their little children to be carried to holy baptism by strange people when the midwife was too busy, although such small children are easily harmed and injured. Therefore, the high honorable council orders that from now on all new-born children are to be carried to holy baptism by their sworn midwife or her apprentice. Any midwife will be fined two gulden if she breaks this ordinance.

Fourth: No midwife is to send her children or servants to a baptism, nor ask for anything to take home to them, with a fine of two gulden.

Fifth: No midwife is to take on a maid-apprentice without the knowledge of the overseers of midwifery. No maid-apprentice is to be accepted who is married or has her own household, but only those who are single or widowed, so that these persons are not called away from their instructors to their private business or housework, and will always be available. They should not live in the midwife's house, but in the neighborhood, and should keep themselves occupied at all times.

Sixth: Some maid-apprentices have been wantonly leaving their mistresses and continuing their training with others, which is not only not to be tolerated but specifically forbidden in the midwives' ordinance. In order to deal with this the high honorable council has decided that from now on no maid-apprentice who has left her mistress before the completion of her proper training period without justifiable cause may be taken on or instructed by another midwife. These maids have forfeited the office [of sworn midwife] with this action. However, if a midwife treats her maid so unreasonably that she cannot stay with her, it will not be forbidden for her to complete her training with another mistress. The overseers of midwives should make note of this. If they cannot decide the case, it will be the responsibility of the high honorable council, and their decision will have to be awaited. The high honorable council also wants the midwives, when they accept maid-apprentices, to take on the children of citizens before any foreigners.

The high honorable council has discovered that some of the midwives are taking all or half of the tips that have been given to their maid-apprentices by people, which leads to all sorts of lack of diligence and care among the maids. In order to prevent this, the high honorable council has demanded that from now on all that a maid receives for

herself from a child's mother, father, relatives or others, that has been given willingly above the normal payments, should remain the maid's and she is not to be required to give any to her mistress. She should, however, give the house-maid five gulden a year from this, as she is doing her housework [i.e., whenever a maid-apprentice is serving at a birth].

The high honorable council has also discovered that some midwives have no maid-apprentices, with the result that when the old midwives die no qualified people may be appointed to their posts. In order to improve this the high honorable council seriously asks all midwives who have completed the training period with one or more maids to take on another capable one in their place a quarter or at longest a half year later. Also, if they are with pregnant women, they are not to send their maid alone to another to whom they've been called, but go there themselves, so that all kinds of dangers may be prevented.

## **25. Memoirs of the midwife Catharina van Schrader, Netherlands, 1734**

*Catharina van Schrader (1656–1746), a professional midwife in Frisia, part of the Netherlands, kept notebooks of all her cases for more than fifty years. When she was in her eighties, she extracted the most complicated cases from her notebooks and put them all into a single book, dedicating it to the women she had helped. She was often called in when other midwives had given up on a case, and this book thus contains gruesome examples of difficult births. Source: Excerpted from Mother and Child Were Saved: The Memoirs (1693–1740) of the Frisian Midwife Catherina Schrader, trans. and annotated by Hilary Marland (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1984), pp. 63, 64.*

1709 on 27 September fetched to Antic, wife of the brewer, Aate Schoyeles. By The Lord's decree, delivered her two daughters. The first came forth sitting. Broke the water of the other. He presented with his [back]. I had to look for the feet. Got them with great difficulty, though delivered it with its feet. Still all well, by God's blessing, for mother and children. . . .

1710, been fetched on 18 October to Hantum to the wife of Pitter Bockes, who had been in heavy labour for two whole days. And assisted by the midwife from Hantum and surgeon Nicklas, who both gave it over [to Schrader]; I found the arms born to the shoulder. Placed her backwards and not without great difficulty brought the shoulder and arm inside. Looked for the feet. The child was dead when I came. I had heavy work before I could get the feet. But The Lord be thanked. It progressed quickly. And the mother does well. . . .

1711 on 20 March fetched to Maykc, wife of Cornelis Jans, Mennonite preacher and thread winder. I was with her three days and nights doing everything which art allowed. The child came presented right, but was grown in fast. Have drawn off her water through a catheter; also given an enema. And everything in the presence of doctor Eysma. It was caused by all that heavy bearing down and the presentation of an arm. That was not good. The child was then already dead. I had to cut off an arm, and delivered it with terrible difficulty. And stuck the hook in the back of his head and got it like this. The Lord be praised, honored and thanked. The woman does well. A healthy childbed. It is a woman who had always been very crippled in her lower body. Such [women] have heavy births and deliveries in general. . . .

1711 on 28 April to Mayke, the wife of master Watse, a boat builder. The child came [presented] with his back sideways. She had a heavy flooding. With very great difficulty I pulled the child with its bottom to the birth canal. It was hard for her and myself. And had almost given it up, but the Lord gave deliverance. And had to be born doubled up with his bottom [presenting]. However the child and the mother lived. A healthy childbed.

## **26. Prayers for Churching**

*Churching was the ceremony performed for women after childbirth in which they were welcomed back into the congregation and community. Some Protestants wanted to do away with it, but many women wanted it retained, and it was, although the language was changed slightly. Source: Translated and quoted in Susan C. Karant-Nunn, The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).*

*A prayer for churching from Germany before the Reformation begins:*

Lord God, who through Your servant Moses commanded the people of Israel that when a woman had borne a son, she should refrain from entering the temple for forty days, consider this your servant worthy to be strengthened from every pollution of the flesh so that with a clean heart and pure mind she may serve to enter into the bosom of [our] mother, the church.

*After the Reformation, references to the new mother's impurity were lessened. A*

*Lutheran prayer from 1569 begins:*

On account of sin this curse went out to all the daughters of Eve: “I will increase your labor and your groaning, and in labor you shall bear children” – which still remains as a reminder that children are conceived and borne in sin. All the same it is a special work of grace of God’s creation, that a woman is blessed with the fruit of her body, that a little child is formed in the mother’s body and is nourished and maintained, that the mother is delivered with great anxiety and labor pains, and is made happy with the joyous sight of a living, healthy fruit.”

**Motherhood**

seriously my own ignorance  
 and though I did not, this  
 following treatise would  
 betray it, but I send it only  
 to the eyes of a most loving  
 husband and a childe ex  
 ceedingly beloved to whom  
 I hope it will not be <sup>altogether</sup> un  
 profitable Thus humbly de  
 siringe god to give thee all  
 comfort in this life and hap  
 pines in the life to come I  
 leave thee and thine to his  
 most gracious protection:

Thine inviolable  
 Eliza Foscelm

**27. Elizabeth Joscelin, The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Childe, 1622**

*Documents attesting to parents' concerns for their children include quite a few advice books, some written by rulers for their heirs and some by more ordinary people. One of the most touching is Elizabeth Joscelin's The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Child, written by a member of the English gentry. Joscelin feared that she would die in childbirth – her biographer (who published the manuscript) reports she bought a shroud as soon as she knew she was pregnant – so she wrote this guide during her pregnancy. Her fears were not unfounded, because she died of puerperal fever nine days after her daughter was born. The book survives in manuscript in her own hand; it was published two years after she died and reprinted frequently over the next several centuries. This is from the opening.*

It may peradventure [perhaps be] when thou comest to some discretion, appeare strange to thee to receiue these lines from a Mother that died when thou wert borne, but when thou seest men purchase land, and store vp treasure for their vnborne babes, wonder not at mee that I am carefull for thy saluation, being such an eternall portion: and not knowing whether I shall liue to instruct thee when thou art borne, let mee not bee blamed though I write to thee before. Who would not condemne mee if I should bee carelesse of thy body while it is within me? Sure a fane greater care belongs to thy soule, to both these cares I will endeuour my selfe so long as I liue.

Againe, I may perhaps bee wondred at for writing in this kinde, considering there are so many excellent bookes, whose least note is worth all my meditations. I confesse it, and thus excuse my selfe. I write not to the world, but to mine own childe, who it may be,

will more profit by a few weake instructions comming from a dead mother (who cannot euery day praise or reprove it as it deserues) than by fane better from much more learned. These things considered, neither the true knowledge of mine owne weaknesse, nor the feare this may come to the worlds eie, and bring scorne vpon my graue, can stay my hand from expressing how much I couet thy saluation.

Therefore, deare childe, reade here my laue, and if God take mee from thee, bee obedient to these instructions; as thou oughtest to bee vnto mee, I haue learnt them out of Gods Word, I beseech him that they may be profitable to thee.

The first charge I give thee, I learned of Solomn, Eccles.

1. Remember Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth. It is an excellent beginning, and a fit lesson for a childe. Looke with what the Vessell is first seasoned, it retaines the taste: and

if thou beginnest to remember to serue GOD when thou art young, before the world, the flesh, and the deuill take hold on thee, God will laue thee, and send his holy Spirit to take possession of thee, who shall resist those enemies, and not suffer them to hurt thee. . . .

At thy first waking in the morning, be carefull of thy selfe, that thou harbor in thy braine no vaine or vnprofitable, but of all no vngodly fancy to hinder thy morning sacrifice [prayers], but straight frame thy selfe to meditate on the mercies of God, the maliciousnesse of the deuill, and thine owne weaknesse. Thine owne weaknesse is apparant to thee: for euen but now thine eyes were closed, thou couldst not see to defend thy selfe, thy strength was gone, so that thou wert not able to resist the weakest creature, a gnat or a flea might glut themselues with thy blood. The

Deuils malice is as easily perceiued, for euen now hee lies lurking ready to catch euery good motion from thy heart...

And though I beleeeue there are diuers sorts of pride more pestilent to the soule than this of apparell, yet this is enough dangerous, and I am sure betraies a mans folly more than any other. Is it not a monstrous thing to see a man, whom God hath created of an excellent forme, each part answering the due proportion of another, should by a fantasticall habit make himselfe so vgly, that one cannot finde amongst all Gods creatures any thing like him? One man, though not resembling another in shape or face, yet for his rationall soule is like another: but these fashionists [followers of fashion] haue (I feare) changed their reasonable soules for proud soules without reason: could they else deforme and transforme themselues by these new fangled fashions, and apish behaiour crindging? shrugging, starting, and playing the fantastiques euery way. So that they may truly say when they are fashionable, that they are not like other men: and I beleeeue wise men will not be sorry for it. For who would be like them?

I desire thee for Gods sake shunne this vanitie, whether thou bee sonne or daughter. If a daughter, I confesse thy taske is harder because thou art weaker, and thy temptations to this vice greater, for thou shalt see those whom perhaps thou wilt thinke less able, exalted fane about thee in this kinde, and it may bee thou wilt desire to bee like them, if not to out-goe [surpass] them. But beleeeue and remember that I tell thee, the end of all these vanities is bitter as gall. Oh the remembrance of mis-spent time, when thou shalt grow in yeeres, and haue attained no other knowledge, than to dresse thy selfe. When thou shalt see halfe, perhaps all, thy time spent, and that of all thou hast sowed,

thou hast nothing to reape but repentance, late repentance, how wilt thou grieue?

How wilt thou accuse one folly for bringing in another? and in thy memory cast ouer the cause of each misfortune which hast befallen thee, till passing from one to another, at last thou findest thy corrupt will to bee the first cause, and then thou wilt with grieffe enough perceiue, that if thou hadst serued God when thou seruedst thy fond desires, thou hadst now had peace of heart. The God of mercy giue thee grace to remember him in the dayes of thy youth

Mistake me not, nor giue your selfe leaue to take too much liberty with saying, My mother was too strict. No, I am not, for I giue you leaue to follow modest fashions, but not to be a beginner of fashions: nor would I haue you follow it till it bee generallt so that in not doing as others doe, you might appeare more singular than wise: but in one word, this is all I desire, that you will not set your heart on such fooleries, and you shall see that this modest carriage will win you reputation and laue with the wise and vertuous sort.

And once againe, remember how many houres maist thou giue to God, which if thou spendest in these vanities, thou shalt neuer bee able to make account of.

## **Widowhood and Old Age**

### **28. A widow petitions for assistance, Italy, 1566**

*Widows were often left vulnerable to their husband's creditors and with a murky status professionally. In this petition to the Pien Collegio of Venice, a sort of appeals court, a widow makes reference to past injustices and also emphasizes her vulnerable position as a widow and a mother caring for her family. Note that she asserts not only that she is not*

*practicing her husband's trade but also that she is not supervising another artisan; this suggests that some widows in Venice did carry on their husbands' businesses. Source:*

*Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Pien Collegio, Suppliche, filza 2, no. 17, April, 1566.*

*Translated by Monica Chojnacka.*

I, Justina widow of Mr. Donato, a dyer, have begged for mercy from Your Serenity [the Appeals Court, representing the Republic of Venice], that you will concede to free me from the taxes placed on my husband for his occupation as dyer and other [occupational] activities in which he was involved leading up to his death. . . I have found myself named as the debtor for the taxes leveled by the Decima [an office charged with leveling a head tax] and for taxes for practicing the art of dyer and other occupational activities that my husband practiced leading up to his death . . . and since I, a poor widow, have not practiced either dying or other commercial activity since his death, and since I have been named responsible for these debts even now, I humbly beg you to concede out of goodness to free me from this Decima tax [dating] from the death of my husband to the present, since I have neither practiced the craft of dyeing nor any other commercial activity, nor have I commissioned such activity, but I have only looked after my poor, numerous family. And I commit myself in God to these Lord Governors and with all due reverence recommend my soul.

### **29. A widow reflects on her misfortune, Denmark, 1660**

*In 1660, Johanne Kaas composed her autobiography, which offers insight into how fragile a widowed woman's status was in early modern Denmark. Although she was born into a noble*

*family and married well, Johanne Kaas's widowhood was characterized by great hardship. It should be noted that the difficult circumstances she describes most likely are overstated to emphasize her strong religious conviction. Nevertheless, it is evident that because she was without the protection of her husband and apparently unable to establish an alternative socio-economic network, her security and status were easily and almost entirely lost when unfortunate events such as fire and raids by foreign troops occurred. Source: The autobiography has been published in Personalthistorisk Tidsskrift, ser. 5., vol. 1, Copenhagen and Christiania, 1904. Translated by Grethe Jacobsen and Pernille Arenfeldt.*

Notes by Johanne Kaas [wife of] Lave Urne.

*Anno 1660 January 18th, did I, Johanne Kaas [wife of] the late, blessed Lage Urne, write the following to inform my children after my death and departure.*

I, Johanne Kaas, was born on by fathers' estate here in Vendsyssel in the year 1602[,] on March 12th, which was a Tuesday[.] My dear, late, blessed parents let me to the [: my] holy baptism in the presence of many noble people as well as many other honest and good people.

[Her account of her upbringing which, after the death of her mother in 1660, was spent living with various relatives.] Meanwhile it happened by God's wise Providence that the honest and noble man Lage Urne of Bontofte asked for my hand, and then I was by God's Providence betrothed to him; later our wedding was held at Giollebo in Scania [in the] year 1630.

Afterwards we lived together in a Christian and loving marriage for two years and a few weeks during which time our marriage was blessed with two children, a son and a daughter. The son Johan Urne, [and] the daughter Thalle Urne [wife of] Hans Wolff Mollhemes.

Since [the death of my husband] I have sat as a poor sorrowful widow and behaved myself in my widowhood after my blessed husband's death and departure [in a manner that] I will not be ashamed of in the face of God and the world. God has, according to his godly will and as he knows best what serves us in this miserable life, often sent me grief and sickness and sometimes loss of worldly possessions by damaging fire, which I have suffered by God's permission as well as by the unexpected incursion of enemies [during] which [they] stole [part of my] belongings. God has, though, at all times helped me until this day, so that I always have had a proper piece of bread, and in all my sorrows and hardships I found consolation in God and his blessed word and [I] made myself see that the hardship and sufferings of this brief life do not equal the glory that the son of God, my Saviour and salvation, has prepared for me and all true Christians in the happiness and bliss of the Kingdom of Heaven.