# Chapter 9

# Gender in the Colonial World

## For Further Reading

Older literature on early European colonization generally pays no attention to gender and discusses only a few iconic women, such as Pocahontas. One of the few older studies that focused on women, and is still valuable, is C. R. Boxer, *Mary and Misogyny: Women in Iberian Expansion Overseas, 1415–1815* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1975).

Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva (ed.), *Families in the Expansion of Europe, 1500–1800* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 1998), presents legal, religious, and demographic aspects of the transfer of European family organizations to new environments. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1995), includes discussion of two European women who left extensive records of their travels to the New World. Richard Trexler, *Sex and Conquest; Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1995), analyzes sexualized language in European conquests. Stuart Schwartz, ed., *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), includes several essays that focus on women, gender, or sexuality.

Collections of essays that focus on European women's religious activities in the colonial world include Mary G. Giles (ed.), *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Susan E. Dinan and Debra Meters (eds.), *Women and Religion in Old and New Worlds* (London, Routledge, 2001); Nora E. Jaffary, *Gender, Race, and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas* (Barkington, VT, Ashgate, 2007). Two books by Patricia Simpson look at the life of the remarkable Marquerite Bourgeoys: *Marquerite Bourgeoys and Montreal* and *Marguerite Bourgeoys and the Congregation of Notre Dame* (Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queens University Press, 1997 and 2005), and Leslie Choquette, "'Ces Amazones du Grand Dieu': Women and Mission in Seventeenth-Century Canada," *French Historical Studies* 17 (1992), 626–55, examines a number of women. For Spanish America, see Nora E. Jaffary, *False Mystics: Deviant Orthodoxy in Colonial Mexico* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2004). For further readings on gender and sexuality in the expansion of Christianity, see the bibliographies in my *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice* (London, Routledge, 2000).

Scholarship on women in the Spanish American colonies increasingly emphasizes the active participation of women of all social groups, both religious and lay, in many aspects of life. See Ann Pescatello, *Power and Pawn: The Female in Iberian Families, Societies, and Cultures* (Westport, CT, Greenwood, 1976); Della M. Flusche and Eugene H. Korth, *Forgotten Females: Women of African and Indian Descent in Colonial Chile, 1535–1800* (Detroit, Blaine Ethridge, 1983); Luis Martín, *Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1983);

Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574–1821* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1988); Asuncion Lavrin, *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Nancy E. van Deusen, "Defining the Sacred and the Worldly: *Beatas* and *Recogidas* in Late-Seventeenth-Century Lima" *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 6 (1997), 456–72; special issue of *Ethnohistory*, "Women, Power, and Resistance in Colonial Mesoamerica," 42, no. 4 (1995), edited by Kevin Gosner and Deborah E. Kanter; Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1999); Susan Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000); Nancy E. van Deusen, *Between the Sacred and the Worldly: The Institutional and Cultural Practice of Recogimiento in Colonial Lima* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001); Kimberly Gauderman, *Women's Lives in Colonial Quito: Gender, Law, and Economy in Spanish America* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2003); Jane E. Mangan, *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosi* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2005).

Studies that focus primarily on the responses of indigenous women to colonization in Latin America include Inga Clendinnen, "Yucatec Maya Women and the Spanish Conquest: Role and Ritual in Historical Reconstruction," *Journal of Social History* 15 (1982), 427–42; Frank Salomon, "Indian Women of Early Colonial Quito as Seen through Their Testaments," *The Americas* 44, no. 3 (January 1988), 325–41; Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial*

*Peru* (Princeton, NJ Princeton University Press, 1987), "Andean Witches and Virgins: Seventeenth-Century Nativism and Subversive Gender Ideologies," in Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (eds.), *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London, Routledge, 1994), 259–86, and "Family Values in Seventeenth-Century Peru," in Elizabeth Boone and Tom Cummins (eds.), *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World* (Washington, Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), 63–89; Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico 1500–1846* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1991); Ward Stavig, "Living in Offense of Our Lord: Indigenous Sexual Values and Marital Life in the Colonial Crucible," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 75 (1995), 597–622; Elisa Sampson Vera Tudela, "Fashioning a *Cacique* Nun: From Saints' Lives to Indian Lives in the Spanish Americas," *Gender and History* 9 (1997), 183–201; Karen B. Graubart, "Indecent Living: Indigenous Women and the Politics of Representation in Early Colonial Peru," *Colonial Latin American Review* 92 (2000), 213–35. Alida C. Metcalf, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2005) explores the roles of male and female cultural intermediaries.

Studies of encounters between Europeans and indigenous men and women in North America discuss subjugation, resistance, and, increasingly, adaptation as well. See Eleanor Leacock, "Montagnais Women and the Jesuit Program for Colonization," in Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock (eds.), *Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York, Praeger, 1980), 25–42; Annemarie Shimony, "Iroquois Religion and Women in Historical Perspective," in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Ellison

Banks Findly (eds.), *Women, Religion and Social Change* (New York, State University of New York Press, 1985), 397–418; Nancy Shoemaker, "The Rise or Fall of Iroquois Women," *Journal of Women's History* 2 (1990–1), 39–57; Karen Anderson, *Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Women in Seventeenth-Century New France* (London, Routledge, 1991); Carol Devens, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630–1900* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst, University of Massachusetts, 2001); Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, eds. *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2005). The many works of James Axtell, such as *Natives and Newcomers: The Cultural Origins of North America* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000), have been influential on the ways encounters are understood. Camilla Townsend, *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma* (New York, Hill and Wang, 2004) provides a very different look at Pocahontas than did earlier biographies.

Studies of the religious activities of indigenous Christian converts in the Americas include: Nancy Shoemaker, "Katerina Tekakwitha's Tortuous Path to Sainthood," in Shoemaker, *Negotiators of Change*, 49–71; Allan Greer and Jodi Bilinkoff (eds). *Colonial Saints: Discovering the Holy in the Americas, 1500–1800* (New York, Routledge, 2003), and Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005).

For European women in colonial North America, the best place to start is Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1996). Other solid surveys are Paula Treckel, *To Comfort the Heart: Women in Seventeenth-Century America* (New York, Twayne, 1996); Larry D. Eldridge, *Women and Freedom in Early America* (New York, New York University Press, 1997). Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1996), examines many types of colonial relationships, and Terri L. Snyder, *Brabbling Women: Disorderly Speech and the Law in Early Virginia* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2003), looks at issues of social disorder, and Elaine Forman Crane, *Ebb Tide in New England: Women, Seaports, and Social Change, 1630–1800* (Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1998), at women's changing role in market economies, as does Carol Shammas, "Anglo-American Household Government in Comparative Perspective," *William and Mary Quarterly* 52 (1995), 104–150. Issues of sexuality are discussed in Kathleen Brown, "Changed . . . into the Fashion of Man: The Politics of Sexual Difference in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Settlement," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 6 (1995), 171–93, and Merril D. Smith (ed.), *Sex and Sexuality in Early America* (New York, New York University Press, 1998).

Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), traces the ways that expectations regarding gender and reproduction were central to racial ideologies and the organization of slavery. Her book builds on the earlier work of David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark

Hine, *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1996).

Encounters between women and men of many ethnic groups in Southeast Asia are increasingly the focus of study. See Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht, Foris, 1986), and *Bitter Bonds: A Colonial Divorce Drama of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Diane Webb (Princeton, NJ, Markus Wiener Publishers, 2002); Mary John Mananzan, "The Filipino Woman: Before and after the Spanish Conquest of the Philippines," *Essays on Women* (Manila, Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1989), 1–17; Carolyn Brewer, "From 'baylan" to 'bruha': Hispanic Impact on the Animist Priestess in the Philippines," *Journal of South Asia Women Studies: 1995–1997* (Milan, Asiatica Association, 1997), 99–117; and *Shamanism, Catholicism and Gender Relations in Colonial Philippines, 1521–1685* (Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2004).

The work of Barbara Watson Andaya is especially important for gender issues in early modern Southeast Asia: "From Temporary Wife to Prostitute: Sexuality and Economic Change in Early Modern Southeast Asia," *Journal of Women's History* 9, no. 4 (1998), 13–35; Barbara Watson Andaya, "The Changing Religious Role of Women in Pre-Modern South East Asia," *Southeast Asian Research* 2, no. 2 (1994), 99–116; *Other Pasts: Women, Gender and History in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawaii at Mânoa, 2000); *The Flaming Womb: repositioning Women in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2006).

For the development of ideas about race, Ivan Hannaford, *Race: the History of an Idea in the West* (Washington, DC, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996), is a good place to start. More specialized analyses include Sue Peabody, *"There Are No Slaves in France": The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1996); Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England," *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 113–46; Linda Lomperis, "Medieval Travel Writing and the Question of Race," *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 147–64; Dorothy Hoogland Verkerk, "Black Servant, Black Demon: Color Ideology in the Ashburnham Pentateuch," *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2001), 57–77; Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall (eds.), *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2003); Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006).

The best brief discussion of the links between racial and gender hierarchies in this period is Tessie Liu "Teaching the Differences among Women from a Historical Perspective: Rethinking Race and Gender as Social Categories," *Women's Studies International*

*Forum* 14 (1991), 265–76. See also Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1968); Paul Edwards, "Representations of Blacks and Blackness in the Renaissance," *Criticism* 35 (1993), 499–528; Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (eds.), *Women, "Race" and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London, Routledge, 1994); Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1995). Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Roxann Wheeler, "The Complexion of Desire: Racial Ideology and Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Novels," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 3 (Spring 1999), 309–32; Susan Kellogg, "Depicting Mestizaje: Gendered Images of Ethnorace in Colonial Mexican Texts," *Journal of Women's History* 12, no. 3 (2000); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002); Deirdre Coleman, "Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2003), 169–93; Margaret Ferguson, *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2003); Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London, Routledge, 2003); Betty Joseph, *Reading the East India Company, 1720–1840: Colonial Currencies of Gender* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004); Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (eds.), *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2005); Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the*

*Texas Borderlands* (Durham, University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.) *At Home with Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Two important sources that have seen recent reprints are Françoise de Graffigny, *Letters from a Peruvian Woman,* MLA Texts and Translations, trans. David Kornacker (New York, The Modern Language Association of America, 1993), a wildly-popular novel first published in 1747 in which the Inca princess Zilia is captured and taken to Europe, allowing Graffigny to critique French society and gender norms based on her own experiences. Frank Felsenstein (ed.), *English Trader, Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World: An Inkle and Yarico Reader* (Baltimore, MD, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), includes the main English versions of this once-famous story

## Web Sites

Early Canadiana Online. Texts documenting the history of Canada from the 1550s to the twentieth century, including the French and English texts of all seventy-three volumes of the Jesuit Relations, the reports written to their superiors by early Jesuit missionaries in French Canada.

http://www.canadiana.org/ECO


New World Orders: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin America. An essay from the catalog for a 1996 exhibition organized by the Americas Society Art Gallery. Includes links to about twenty paintings and engravings of castas, the categories of mixed-ethnicity persons in colonial Latin America.

http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/laberinto/fall1997/casta1997.htm

# Original Sources

*Painting by an indigenous artist of Malinche and Cortés, from the Florentine Codex.*

**1. Dõna Marina/Malintzin/La Malinche, 1520s**

*One of the most controversial figures in the Spanish conquest was a native woman who served as one of Cortés's translators. He makes only a brief mention of her in his letters, but Bernal Días and some of the Nahuatl sources describe her in more detail. According*

*to these sources, she was an upper-class woman who was given to Cortés, accompanied him on his conquests, and later married one of his captains. We do not know her original name; the contemporary sources call her Dõna Marina or Malintzin or La Malinche. She had a child by Cortés and one by her husband. She was viewed as important in both Spanish and native accounts, although later Mexican opinion has varied widely. Some see her as a traitor to her people, others as the mother of the* mestizo *culture that is the heart of Mexico, and others as a feminist foremother. Twelve written and artistic depictions of this controversial woman, beginning with Cortes's letters and ending with contemporary sculptures and poems, along with a discussion of their interpretation, can be found at:* http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/lessons/lesson6/lesson6.php?s=0.

**2. The Memoirs of Mendez Pinto, late sixteenth century**

*Ferdinand Mendez Pinto (1509?–1583?) was a Portuguese explorer and writer known primarily through his own work,* Pilgrimage (Peregrinação), *which was published posthumously. He claims to have been shipwrecked, enslaved, and captured in war many times and to have introduced firearms to Japan; it is impossible to say whether his stories are true, although he was in Japan during the time that guns were first introduced. He apparently left Europe about the same time as Francis Xavier and traveled to India, China, and Malacca, as well as Japan. His report does provide a perspective on Asian culture from a European who was not a missionary (although he did support the Jesuits financially). In this extract, Pinto reports on a chance meeting in about 1540 with Inez de Leyria, a Eurasian woman who had earlier been converted to Christianity by Portuguese missionaries. Women were often quite numerous and prominent among early converts to*

*Christianity in Asia, just as they had been in the early years of Christianity in the Roman Empire.*

Chained together as we were, we went up and down the streets craving of alms, which were very liberally given us by the inhabitants, who, wondering to see such men as we, demanded of us what kind of people we were, of what kingdom, and how our country was called. Hereunto we answered conformably to what we had said before, namely, that we were natives of the kingdom of Siam, that going from Liampoo to Nanquin we had lost all our goods by shipwreck, and that, although they beheld us then in so poor a case, yet we had formerly been very rich; whereupon a woman who was come thither among the rest to see us: “It is very likely,” said she, speaking to them about her, “that what these poor strangers have related is most true, for daily experience doth show how those that trade by sea do oftentimes make it their grave, wherefore it is best and surest to travel upon the earth and to esteem of it as of that whereof it has pleased God to frame us.” Saying so, she gave us two mazes, which amounts to about sixteen pence of our money, advising us to make no more such long voyages since our lives were so short.

Hereupon she unbuttoned one of the sleeves of a red satin gown she had on, and baring her left arm, she showed us a cross imprinted upon it like the mark of a slave. "Do any of you know this sign, which amongst those that follow the way of truth is called a cross? or have any of you heard it named?" To this, falling down on our knees, we answered with tears in our eyes that we knew exceeding well. Then, lifting up her hands, she cried out, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name," speaking these words in the Portugal tongue; and because she could speak no more of our language, she

very earnestly desired us in Chinese to tell her whether we were Christians. We replied that we were, and for proof thereof, after we had kissed that arm whereon the cross was, we repeated all the rest of the Lord's Prayer which she had left unsaid; wherewith being assured that we were Christians indeed, she drew aside from the rest there present and weeping said to us, “Come along, Christians of the other end of the world, with her that is your true sister in the faith of Jesus Christ, or peradventure a kinswoman to one of you by his side that begot me in this miserable exile”; and so going to carry us to her house, the hopes which guarded us would not suffer her, saying, that if we would not continue our craving of alms they would return us back to the ship; but this they spoke in regard of their own interest, for that they were to have the moiety of what was given us, and accordingly they made as though they would have led us thither again, which the woman perceiving, “I understand your meaning,” said she, “and indeed it is but reason you should make the best of your places, for thereby you live”; so opening her purse, she gave them two taeis in silver, wherewith they were very well satisfied; whereupon she carried us home to her house, and there kept us all the while we remained in that place, making much of us and using us very charitably.

Here she showed us an oratory, wherein she had a cross of wood gilt, as also candlesticks and a lamp of silver. Furthermore she told us that she was named Inez de Leyria, and her father Tome Pirez, who had been great ambassador from Portugal to the king of China, and that in regard of an insurrection with a Portuguese captain made at Canton, the Chinese taking him for a spy and not for an ambassador, as he termed himself, clapped him and all his followers up in prison, where by order of justice five of them were put to torture, receiving so many and such cruel stripes on their bodies as they

died instantly, and the rest were all banished into several parts, together with her father into this place, where he married with her mother, that had some means, and how he made her a Christian, living so seven and twenty years together, and converting many Gentiles to the faith of Christ, whereof there were above three hundred then abiding in that town; which every Sunday assembled in her house to say the catechism: whereupon demanding of her what were their accustomed prayers, she answered that she used no other but these, which on their knees, with their eyes and hands lift up to Heaven, they pronounced in this manner: “O Lord Jesus Christ, as it is most true that thou art the very Son of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary for the salvation of sinners, so thou wilt be pleased to forgive us our offenses, that thereby we may become worthy to behold thy face in the glory of thy kingdom, where thou art sitting at the right hand of the Almighty. Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen.” And so all of them, kissing the cross, embraced one another, and thereupon every one returned to his own home. Moreover, she told us that her father had left her many other prayers, which the Chinese had stolen from her, so that she had none left but those before recited; whereunto we replied that those we had heard from her were very good, but before we went away we would leave her divers other good and wholesome prayers. “Do so, then,” answered she, “for the respect you owe to so good a God as yours is, and that hath done such things for you, for me, and all in general.”

Then causing the cloth to be laid, she gave us a very good and plentiful dinner, and treated us in like sort every meal during the five days we continued in her house, which was permitted by the Chifuu in regard of a present that this good woman sent his

wife, whom she earnestly entreated so to deal with her husband as Eve might be well entreated, for that we were men of whom God had a particular care; as the Chifuu's wife promised her to do, with many thanks to her for the present she had received. In the mean space, during the five days we remained in her house, we read the catechism seven times to the Christians; wherewithal they were very much edified; beside, Christophoro Borbalho made them a little book in the Chinese tongue, containing the Paternoster, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and many other good prayers. After these things we took our leave of Inez de Leyria and the Christians, a who gave us fifty taeis in silver, which stood us since in good stead; and withal Inez de Leyria gave us secretly fifty taeis more, humbly desiring us to remember her in our prayers to God.

**3. Letter of Marie de Saint Joseph, 1639**

*Mother Marie de Saint Joseph was a French Ursuline nun in Canada. In this letter, published as part of the* Jesuit Relations*, she describes the interactions of women in convents with their indigenous pupils.*

http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson4/lesson4.php?menu=1&s=8


**4. Letters of Marie of the Incarnation, 1640s–1660s**

*Marie Guyard, a French widow later called Marie of the Incarnation, founded the first Ursuline convent in North America, at Quebec in 1641. She learned several indigenous languages and took in young women from various tribes, including Hurons and Algonquins. In her letters, published as part of the* Jesuit Relations, *and separately after her death, she reports on the activities of Native American women in her convent, describing them as both childlike and powerful.*

There is nothing so docile as these children. One can bend them as he will; they have no reply to anything one may desire from them. If they are to pray to God, recite their catechism, or perform some little piece of work or task, they are ready at once, without murmurs and without excuses.

They have a special inclination to pray to God outside the hours specified for doing so and for their instruction. They urge us a hundred times a day to have them pray, and to teach them how it should be done, never wearying of this act. You will see them clasping their little hands, and giving their hearts to our Lord. They attend holy Mass every day, and are so attentive—not playing and talking, like the little children in France—that we are delighted.…

They do not fail to recite their rosary every day. If they notice some Nun going aside to say hers, they present themselves to say it with her.… They sometimes slip into our choir, and placing themselves on opposite sides, each holding a book in her hand, they act as we do during our service. They sing the *Ave Maris stella* and the *Gloria Patri*, making the same inclinations that they see us make; they sing it twenty and thirty times without tiring of it, thinking that they are offering a prayer very acceptable to God. This innocence is enchanting.…

Their favorite recreation is to dance, after the fashion of their country; they do not do this, however, without permission. Having come one Friday to ask this, they were told that Jesus had died on Friday, and that it was a day of sadness. Nothing more was needed to stop them. “We will dance no more on the day,” they said; “we will be sad, since Jesus

died on such a day."…

I was greatly consoled when I learned that the Reverend Father Superior was inclined to have three of our seminarists make their first communion, if they were considered fitted for it. Father Claude Pijard instructed them with great care; he is much comforted at seeing them so well inclined. Verily, my good Father, they manifest so much desire to possess so great a blessing that you would say they are about to enter heaven, so much joy appears on their faces. Agnes committed some childish fault yesterday; she was told that she was off ending God. She began to cry, and, when asked the reason, she replied, "They will not let me receive communion, because I have offended God." She could not have been comforted, had we not assured her that that should not keep her from communion. They are so attentive to what is taught them that, besides the instruction the Father gives them, if I wished to have them repeat what has been told them, and what is contained in the catechism, from morning until night, they would willingly submit to this. I am carried away with astonishment at them; I have never seen girls in France so eager to be instructed, or to pray to God, as are our seminarists. I believe that the blessings of heaven are fully bestowed upon these innocent souls, for such they certainly are…

We learned that our Huron Seminarist, who was captured about ten years ago by the Iroquois, was married in their country; that she was the mistress in her cabin, which contained several families; that she prayed to God every day; and that she induced others to pray to him. This appears the more wonderful, as she was only about thirteen or fourteen years old when she was carried away by those Barbarians. We have in our house her sister, who is a young widow of charming modesty, and greatly given to prayer. She

prays every day, as long as do the Nuns themselves; she lives almost constantly in the presence of God; and her soul is so illuminated, and so filled with light and with motives for the exercise of virtue, that, plainly, she is governed by a Spirit more exalted and sublime than that of man.

The father and mother of one of our Seminarists (our poverty compels us to maintain them in very small numbers) came to see their daughter, who was about ten years old. They told her that, as peace was being made with the Iroquois, those whom her father had known in that country, where he had been a captive, were inviting him to go and dwell there with all his family; and, thereupon, they asked her whether she would not like to be one of the party and follow her father and mother. “What?” she rejoined, “are you not ashamed to wish to leave the country of prayer, and go to a place where you will be in danger of losing the faith? Are you not well aware that the Iroquois do not believe in God, and that, being among them, you will live as they do? Go, if you will, to that wretched country, but I shall not follow you; I will never leave the holy maidens if you forsake me.” Her parents respected her courage, and assured her that they would not go away from the house of prayer…

As good trees bring forth good fruit, this noble Christian woman has a daughter who inherits the holy inclinations of her good mother. This child lives with the hospital Nuns, acting as Interpreter for the poor Huron patients, of whom there has been a goodly number all the year in that house of mercy. She is so intelligent that she mastered the French language in less than two years; and then learned to read and write, so that she outstrips the little French girls. She is of so excellent a disposition that she never excuses

herself when her little faults are corrected; and if any one of her companions is accused of error, she is wont to say that it was she who committed the offense, and that she has no sense. Not long ago she made her first Communion; and, in proof that she knew him who had just visited her, she voluntarily offered herself to him, imploring him to retain her in his house and graciously permit her to become a Nun. She has so strong a faith that he will grant her this favor, that she is determined never to leave the Convent where she is, for the purpose of going to see her good mother and her relatives, who live at a distance of only two leagues from Quebec. And, if they come to see her, she is so afraid that they will speak to her of leaving this Hospital, that she dismisses them with very few words — an unusual thing for children to do. But he who gives force to the winds, and who takes pleasure in innocence, makes their hearts strong and their tongues eloquent when he chooses.

[Describing a woman named Khionrea, a Huron who had learned both French and Algonquin] Two Huron men from her village came to the convent two years later and she preached to them through the grill. They listened to this young woman with unrivalled attention, and one day, when they were on the point of being baptized, one of them pretended no longer to believe in God and so she need no longer speak to him of faith or baptism. Our fervent Therese...became disturbed and said, “What are you talking about? I see the Devil has overturned all your thoughts so that you will be lost. Know you well that if you died today, you would go to Hell where you would burn with Devils, who would make you suffer terrible torments.” The good man laughed at everything she said, which made her think that he spoke with a spirit of contempt. She redoubled her exhortations to combat him, but failing, she came to us in tears. “Ah,” she said, “he is

lost; he's left the faith; he will not be baptized. It hurt me so to see him speak against God that if there had not been a grill between us, I would have thrown myself on him to beat him." We went to find out the truth... and the man affirmed that he had done this only to test her faith and zeal.

[Describing another Huron woman, Cecline Gannendaris]: She was so solidly instructed in our mysteries and so eloquent in explaining them that she was sent foreign Savages, who were asking to embrace the faith. In a few days she had them ready for baptism, and had reduced the opinionated ones beyond defense by her good reasoning.

**5. Cultural Contact in Southern Africa, 1657–1766**

*Southern Africa was populated by several peoples, of whom the most numerous were the Khoikhoi, in the seventeenth century when the Dutch established a small colony at the Cape of Good Hope. This selection of sources includes a number of written documents and visual evidence that relate to the lives of Khoikhoi and Dutch women.*

http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/lesson7.php?menu=1&s=0

**6. Richard Ligon, *The True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados,* 1657**

*Richard Ligon was an English sugar planter on the Caribbean island of Barbados, just when this island was becoming the main supplier of sugar for the British market. He included a long discussion of sugar growing and processing, was well as the slave system that supported it, in the history of Barbados that he wrote in 1657. In his book, Ligon*

*uses the term "Christian" to refer to Europeans, although some of the African slaves were also Christian. He includes numerous comments about African women.*

The work of sugar making . . . is now grown the sole trade in this island.. . .

It has been accounted a strange thing, that the Negroes, being more than double the number of Christians that there are, and they accounted a bloody people . . . should not commit some horrible massacre upon the Christians thereby to enfranchise themselves and become masters of the island. But there are three reasons that they do not: the one is, that they are not suffered to touch or handle any weapons, the other, that they are held in such awe and slavery as they are fearful to appear in any daring act; and seeing the mustering of our men and hearing the gun shot (which nothing is more terrible to them) their spirits are subjugated to follow a condition, as they dare not look up to any bold attempt. Besides these, there is a third reason which stops all designs of that kind, and that is that they are fetched from several parts of Africa who speak several languages. And by that means one of them understands not another. For some of them are fetched from Guinea and Bonny . . . some from Angola, and some from the river of Gambia. And in some of these places where petty kingdoms are. They sell their subjects, as such as they take in battle, whom they make slaves; and some mean men sell their servants, their children, or sometimes their wives, and think all good traffic for such commodities as our merchants feed them.

When they are brought to us, the planters buy them out of the ship, where they find them stark naked, and therefore cannot be deceived in any outward infirmity. They choose them as they do horses in a market; the strongest, youngest, and most beautiful yield the greatest prices…. And we buy them so the sexes may be equal; for if they have

more men than women the men who are unmarried will come to their masters and complain, that they cannot live without wives. And he tells them that the next ship that comes he will buy them wives, which satisfies them for the present.…

At the time the wife is to give birth, her husband removes his board (which is his bed) to another room (for many several divisions they have, in their little houses, and none above six feet square) and leaves his wife to God, and her good fortune, in the room, and upon the board alone, and calls a neighbour to come to her, who gives little help to her delivery, but when the child is born (which she calls her Pickininny (she helps make a little fire near her feet. In a fortnight this woman is at work with her child at her back, as merry a soul as any there is. If the overseer be discreet, she is suffered to rest herself a little more than ordinary; but if not, she is compelled to do as others do. Times they have of suckling their children in the fields, and refreshing themselves; and good reason, for they carry their burdens on their backs, and yet work too.… The work which women do is most of it weeding, a stooping and painful work; at noon and night they are called home y the ring of a bell, where they have two hours time for their repast at noon, and at night, they rest from six till six a clock the next morning.

On Sunday they rest, and have the whole day at their pleasure, and the most of them use it as a day of rest and pleasure; but some of them who will make benefit of that day's liberty go where the mangrove trees grow and gather the bark, of which they make ropes, which they truck away for other commodities, as shirts or drawers.…

What their other opinions are in matters of religion, I know not … they believe in a resurrection, and that they shall go into their own country again, and have their youth renewed. And lodging this opinion in their hearts they make it an ordinary practice, upon

any great fright, or threatening of their masters, to hang themselves. But Colonel Walrond having lost three or four of his best Negroes this way, and in a very little time, caused one of their heads to be cut off and set upon a pole a dozen foot high; and having done that caused all his Negroes to come forth and march around the head, and bid the look on it, whether this were not the head of such a one that hanged himself. Which they acknowledging, he then told them that they were in a main error in thinking they went into their own countries after they were dead; for this man's head was here, as they all were witness of; and how was is possible, the body could go without a head. Being convinced by this sad yet lively spectacle they changed their opinions; and after that, no more hanged themselves.


*Frontispiece from a play based on Aphra Behn's novel, in which Oroonoko kills his lover Imoinda, with her agreement, rather than let her live under slavery. In Behn's novel, Imoinda is African; the playwright changed her to a white woman.*

**7. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko, or the history of the Royal Slave,* 1688**

*Aphra Behn was an English playwright, poet, and novelist. Her novel* Oroonoko *tells the story of an African prince taken as a slave to South America; Behn herself had lived in the Dutch colony of Surinam. In this section, from the opening of the book, she describes the natives of this area as in many ways "noble savages," and then goes on to describe the African prince Oroonoko in even more positive terms, although her explanations of where he got his noble qualities reveal quite typical European attitudes toward Africans. The entire text can be found at:* http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/b/behn/aphra/b42o/

I do not pretend, in giving you the history of this Royal Slave, to entertain my reader with adventures of a feigned hero, whose life and fortunes fancy may manage at the poet's pleasure; nor in relating the truth, design to adorn it with any accidents but such as arrived in earnest to him: and it shall come simply into the world, recommended by its own proper merits and natural intrigues; there being enough of reality to support it, and to render it diverting, without the addition of invention.

I was myself an eye-witness to a great part of what you will find here set down; and what I could not be witness of, I received from the mouth of the chief actor in this history, the hero himself, who gave us the whole transactions of his youth: and though I shall omit, for brevity's sake, a thousand little accidents of his life, which, however pleasant to us, where history was scarce and adventures very rare, yet might prove tedious and heavy to my reader, in a world where he finds diversions for every minute, new and strange. But we who were perfectly charmed with the character of this great man were curious to gather every circumstance of his life.

The scene of the last part of his adventures lies in a colony in America, called Surinam, in the West Indies. ..

But before I give you the story of this gallant slave, 'tis fit I tell you the manner of bringing them to these new colonies; those they make use of there not being natives of the place: for those we live with in perfect amity, without daring to command 'em; but, on the contrary, caress 'em with all the brotherly and friendly affection in the world; trading with them for their fish, venison, buffalo's skins, and little rarities; as marmosets, a sort of monkey, as big as a rat or weasel, but of marvelous and delicate shape, having face and hands like a human creature; and cousheries, a little beast in the form and fashion of a lion, as big as a kitten, but so exactly made in all parts like that noble beast that it is it in miniature. Then for little paraketoes, great parrots, mackaws, and a thousand other birds and beasts of wonderful and surprising forms, shapes, and colors. For skins of prodigious snakes, of which there are some threescore yards in length; as is the skin of one that may be seen at his Majesty's Antiquary's; where are also some rare flies, of amazing forms and colors, presented to 'em by myself; some as big as my fist, some less; and all of various excellencies, such as art cannot imitate. Then we trade for feathers, which they order into all shapes, make themselves little short habits of 'em and glorious wreaths for their heads, necks, arms, and legs, whose tinctures are unconceivable. I had a set of these presented to me, and I gave 'em to the King's Theater, and it was the dress of the Indian Queen, infinitely admired by persons of quality; and was unimitable. Besides these, a thousand little knacks and rarities in nature; and some of art, as their baskets, weapons, aprons, etc. We dealt with 'em with beads of all colors, knives, axes, pins, and needles; which they used only as tools to drill holes with in their ears, noses, and lips, where they hang a great

many little things; as long beads, bits of tin, brass or silver beat thin, and any shining trinket. The beads they weave into aprons about a quarter of an ell long, and of the same breadth; working them very prettily in flowers of several colors; which apron they wear just before 'em, as Adam and Eve did the fig-leaves; the men wearing a long stripe of linen, which they deal with us for. They thread these beads also on long cotton threads, and make girdles to tie their aprons to, which come twenty times, or more, about the waist, and then cross, like a shoulder-belt, both ways, and round their necks, arms, and legs. This adornment, with their long black hair, and the face painted in little specks or flowers here and there, makes 'em a wonderful figure to behold. Some of the beauties, which indeed are finely shaped, as almost all are, and who have pretty features, are charming and novel; for they have all that is called beauty, except the color, which is a reddish yellow; or after a new oiling, which they often use to themselves, they are of the color of a new brick, but smooth, soft, and sleek. They are extreme modest and bashful, very shy, and nice of being touched. And though they are all thus naked, if one lives forever among 'em there is not to be seen an undecent action, or glance: and being continually used to see one another so unadorned, so like our first parents before the Fall, it seems as if they had no wishes, there being nothing to heighten curiosity; but all you can see, you see at once, and every moment see; and where there is no novelty, there can be no curiosity. Not but I have seen a handsome young Indian dying for love of a very beautiful young Indian maid; but all his courtship was to fold his arms, pursue her with his eyes, and sighs were all his language: while she, as if no such lover were present, or rather as if she desired none such, carefully guarded her eyes from beholding him; and never approached him but she looked down with all the blushing modesty I have seen in

the most severe and cautious of our world. And these people represented to me an absolute idea of the first state of innocence, before man knew how to sin. And 'tis most evident and plain that simple Nature is the most harmless, inoffensive, and virtuous mistress. 'Tis she alone, if she were permitted, that better instructs the world than all the inventions of man. Religion would here but destroy that tranquillity they possess by ignorance; and laws would but teach 'em to know offense, of which now they have no notion. They once made mourning and fasting for the death of the English Governor, who had given his hand to come on such a day to 'em, and neither came nor sent; believing, when a man's word was past, nothing but death could or should prevent his keeping it: and when they saw he was not dead, they asked him what name they had for a man who promised a thing he did not do. The Governor told them, such a man was a liar, which was a word of infamy to a gentleman. Then one of 'em replied, “Governor, you are a liar, and guilty of that infamy.” They have a native justice, which knows no fraud; and they understand no vice, or cunning, but when they are taught by the white men. They have plurality of wives; which, when they grow old, serve those that succeed 'em, who are young, but with a servitude easy and respected; and unless they take slaves in war, they have no other attendants.

With these people, as I said, we live in perfect tranquillity and good understanding, as it behoves us to do; they knowing all the places where to seek the best food of the country, and the means of getting it; and for very small and unvaluable trifles, supply us with that 'tis impossible for us to get: for they do not only in the woods, and over the savannahs, in hunting, supply the parts of hounds, by swiftly scouring through those almost impassable places, and by the mere activity of their feet run down the

nimblest deer and other eatable beasts; but in the water, one would think they were gods of the rivers, or fellow-citizens of the deep; so rare an art they have in swimming, diving, and almost living in water; by which they command the less swift inhabitants of the floods. And then for shooting, what they cannot take, or reach with their hands, they do with arrows; and have so admirable an aim that they will split almost an hair, and at any distance that an arrow can reach: they will shoot down oranges and other fruit, and only touch the stalk with the dart's point, that they may not hurt the fruit. So that they being on all occasions very useful to us, we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as friends, and not to treat 'em as slaves, nor dare we do other, their numbers so far surpassing ours in that continent.

Those then whom we make use of to work in our plantations of sugar are negroes, black slaves altogether, who are transported thither in this manner.

Those who want slaves make a bargain with a master or a captain of a ship, and contract to pay him so much apiece, a matter of twenty pound a head, for as many as he agrees for, and to pay for 'em when they shall be delivered on such a plantation: so that when there arrives a ship laden with slaves, they who have so contracted go aboard, and receive their number by lot; and perhaps in one lot that may be for ten, there may happen to be three or four men, the rest women and children. Or be there more or less of either sex, you are obliged to be contented with your lot.

Coramantien, a country of blacks so called, was one of those places in which they found the most advantageous trading for these slaves, and thither most of our great traders in that merchandise traffic; for that nation is very warlike and brave: and having a

continual campaign, being always in hostility with one neighboring prince or other, they had the fortune to take a great many captives: for all they took in battle were sold as slaves; at least those common men who could not ransom themselves. Of these slaves so taken, the general only has all the profit; and of these generals our captains and masters of ships buy all their freights.

The King of Coramantien was himself a man of an hundred and odd years old, and had no son, though he had many beautiful black wives: for most certainly there are beauties that can charm of that color. In his younger years he had had many gallant men to his sons, thirteen of whom died in battle, conquering when they fell; and he had only left him for his successor one grandchild, son to one of these dead victors, who, as soon as he could bear a bow in his hand, and a quiver at his back, was sent into the field to be trained up by one of the oldest generals to war; where, from his natural inclination to arms, and the occasions given him, with the good conduct of the old general, he became, at the age of seventeen, one of the most expert captains and bravest soldiers that ever saw the field of Mars: so that he was adored as the wonder of all that world, and the darling of the soldiers. Besides, he was adorned with a native beauty, so transcending all those of his gloomy race that he struck an awe and reverence even into those that knew not his quality; as he did into me, who beheld him with surprise and wonder, when afterwards he arrived in our world.

He had scarce arrived at his seventeenth year, when, fighting by his side, the general was killed with an arrow in his eye, which the Prince Oroonoko (for so was this gallant Moor called) very narrowly avoided; nor had he, if the general who saw the arrow

shot, and perceiving it aimed at the prince, had not bowed his head between, on purpose to receive it in his own body, rather than it should touch that of the prince, and so saved him.

'Twas then, afflicted as Oroonoko was, that he was proclaimed general in the old man's place: and then it was, at the finishing of that war, which had continued for two years, that the prince came to court, where he had hardly been a month together, from the time of his fifth year to that of seventeen; and 'twas amazing to imagine where it was he learned so much humanity: or, to give his accomplishments a juster name, where 'twas he got that real greatness of soul, those refined notions of true honor, that absolute generosity, and that softness that was capable of the highest passions of love and gallantry, whose objects were almost continually fighting men, or those mangled or dead, who heard no sounds but those of war and groans. Some part of it we may attribute to the care of a Frenchman of wit and learning, who, finding it turn to very good account to be a sort of royal tutor to this young black, and perceiving him very ready, apt, and quick of apprehension, took a great pleasure to teach him morals, language, and science; and was for it extremely beloved and valued by him. Another reason was, he loved when he came from war, to see all the English gentlemen that traded thither; and did not only learn their language, but that of the Spaniard also, with whom he traded afterwards for slaves.

I have often seen and conversed with this great man, and been a witness to many of his mighty actions; and do assure my reader, the most illustrious courts could not have produced a braver man, both for greatness of courage and mind, a judgment more solid, a wit more quick, and a conversation more sweet and diverting. He knew almost as much

as if he had read much: he had heard of and admired the Romans: he had heard of the late Civil Wars in England, and the deplorable death of our great monarch; and would discourse of it with all the sense and abhorrence of the injustice imaginable. He had an extreme good and graceful mien, and all the civility of a well-bred great man. He had nothing of barbarity in his nature, but in all points addressed himself as if his education had been in some European court.

This great and just character of Oroonoko gave me an extreme curiosity to see him, especially when I knew he spoke French and English, and that I could talk with him. But though I had heard so much of him, I was as greatly surprised when I saw him as if I had heard nothing of him; so beyond all report I found him. He came into the room, and addressed himself to me and some other women with the best grace in the world. He was pretty tall, but of a shape the most exact that can be fancied: the most famous statuary could not form the figure of a man more admirably turned from head to foot. His face was not of that brown rusty black which most of that nation are, but of perfect ebony, or polished jet. His eyes were the most awful that could be seen, and very piercing; the white of 'em being like snow, as were his teeth. His nose was rising and Roman, instead of African and flat. His mouth the finest shaped that could be seen; far from those great turned lips which are so natural to the rest of the negroes. The whole proportion and air of his face was so nobly and exactly formed that, bating his color, there could be nothing in nature more beautiful, agreeable, and handsome. There was no one grace wanting that bears the standard of true beauty. His hair came down to his shoulders, by the aids of art, which was by pulling it out with a quill, and keeping it combed; of which he took particular care. Nor did the perfections of his mind come short of those of his person; for

his discourse was admirable upon almost any subject: and whoever had heard him speak would have been convinced of their errors, that all fine wit is confined to the white men, especially to those of Christendom; and would have confessed that Oroonoko was as capable even of reigning well, and of governing as wisely, had as great a soul, as politic maxims, and was as sensible of power, as any prince civilized in the most refined schools of humanity and learning, or the most illustrious courts.

**8. Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 1717–19**

*Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762) was an aristocratic English woman whose husband was sent as the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1717. She wrote many letters, which were published and widely read, and later essays and other works as well. Her writings helped form western European opinion about life in Turkey for many years. Interestingly, she was also the most prominent English advocate of inoculation for smallpox. She had been scarred by smallpox as a young woman and was intensely interested when she watched Turkish women inoculate their children. She had both of her children inoculated and on returning to England wrote essays in popular journals and letters to powerful individuals urging the practice. One of her letters, on the sultan's wife, is included on the Web site for Chapter 8. Excerpts from three others are at:*
http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson4/lesson4.php?menu=1&s=11

**9. Denis Diderot, *Supplement to Bougainville's Voyage* (1771)**

*Louis Antoine de Bougainville was the captain of the first French expedition to circumnavigate the globe. He later wrote a widely read book describing his voyages and*

*the Polynesians he had met. The philosophe Denis Diderot added a fictionalized version of Bougainville's encounter with the Tahitians, although he couched it as a "supplement" and claimed it included materials that Bougainville had been hesitant to publish, because it showed the Europeans in a bad light. It was also widely read and became an important text in Enlightenment debates about civilization. In the first scene that follows, an older Tahitian speaks to a crowd just as Bougainville is leaving and describes the impact of encounters with the French on various aspects of Tahitian life, including family structure. (This is, of course, Diderot imaging this speech.) The second brief section mentions a European woman dressed in men's clothing who was on Boungainville's ship. For the entire text, see:*

*http://courses.essex.ac.uk/cs/cs101/Boug.htm*

**The Old Man's Farewell**

He was the father of a large family. On the arrival of the Europeans, he cast looks of disdain at them, showing neither astonishment, fright, nor curiosity. [The presence of this old man and his attitude to the Europeans are mentioned by Bougainville.] They came up to him: he turned his back on them and retired into his cabin. His silence and his anxiety revealed his thoughts too well. He groaned within himself over the happy days of his country, now for ever eclipsed. On the departure of Bougainville, as the inhabitants rushed in a crowd on to the beach, attached themselves to his clothing, hugged his comrades in their arms and wept, this old man advanced, severe in mien, and said: "Weep, luckless Tahitiens weep, but for the arrival not for the departure of these ambitious and wicked men. One day you will know them better. One day they will return,

holding in one hand the morsel of wood you see attached to this man's belt, in the other, the iron which hangs from that man's side: they will return to throw you into chains, to cut your throats, or to subject you to their extravagance and vices: one day you will serve under them, as corrupted, as vile, as luckless as they. One consolation I have. My life is drawing to its close. And the calamity I announce to you, shall not see. O Tahitiens, my friends, there is one method which might save you from your tragic future. But I would rather die than advise it. Let them withdraw and live."

Then addressing Bougainville, he added :

"And thou, chief of the brigands who obey thee, quickly push off thy vessel from our shore. We are innocent; we are happy: and thou canst not but spoil our happiness. We follow the pure instinct of nature: thou hast sought to efface its character from our souls. Here all things belong to all men. Thou hast preached some strange distinction between thine and mine. Our daughters and our wives were held in common by us all: thou hast shared this privilege with us, and thou hast come and inflamed them with frenzies unknown before. They have lost their reason in thy arms. Thou hast become ferocious in theirs. They have come to hate each other. You have slaughtered each other for them: they have come back stained with your blood. We are free: and see thou hast planted in our earth the title of our future slavery. Thou art neither god nor demon. Who art thou then to make slaves? Orou! [a Tahitian who had learned European languages and served as a translator] thou who understandest the language of these men, tell us all as thou hast told me, what they have written on this metal blade! *This country is ours.* This country is thine! And why? Because thou hast set foot there? If a Tahitien disembarked one day

upon your shores, and graved upon one of your stones or on the bark of one of your trees*: This country belongs to the inhabitants of Tahiti,* what wouldst thou think of such a proceeding? Thou art the stronger! But what of that? When someone took from you one of those rubbishy trifles with which your hut is filled, thou didst cry out and take thy revenge. Yet at that moment thou wast projecting in the depth of thy heart the theft of a whole country. Thou art not a slave. Thou wouldst suffer death rather than become one, yet us thou wouldst enslave. Thinkest thou then that the Tahitien cannot defend his liberty and die? He, whom thou wishest to seize like an animal, the Tahitien, is thy brother. You are both children of nature. What right hast thou over him that he has not over thee? Thou art come. Did we fall upon thee? Did we pillage thy ship? Did we seize thee and expose thee to the arrows of our enemies? Did we yoke thee to our animals toiling in the fields? No. We have respected our image in thee. Leave us our customs. They are wiser and more honourable than thine. We have no wish to barter what thou callest our ignorance against thy useless knowledge. We possess all that is necessary and good for us. Do we deserve contempt because we have not known how to fabricate for ourselves wants in superfluity? When we are hungry we have enough to eat; when we are cold the means to clothe ourselves. Thou hast entered our cabins. What, in thy opinion, is lacking? Pursue as long as thou wilt what thou callest the commodities of life. But permit sensible beings to stop, when by continuing their painful labour they will gain but imaginary good. If thou persuadest us to cross the narrow limit of necessity, when shall we stop working? What time will be left over for enjoying ourselves? We have reduced to the smallest possible the sum of our annual and daily toil, because to us nothing seems better than repose. Go back to thine own country to trouble and torment thyself as much

as thou wilt. Trouble us neither with thy artificial needs, nor thy imaginary virtues. Look at these men: how straight, healthy, and robust they are! Look at these women. How straight, healthy, fresh and fair they are. Take this bow. It is mine. Call to help thee, one, two, three, four of thy comrades and try to bend it. I bend it myself alone. I plough the earth. I climb the mountain. I pierce the forest. I cover a league of the plain in less than an hour. Thy young companions can scarcely follow me, and I am ninety years old and more. Woe to this island! Woe to all Tahitiens present and to come for the day of this thy visit! We only know one illness that to which man, animal and plant have been condemned, old age: and thou hast brought to us another. Thou hast infected our blood. Perhaps we shall have to exterminate with our own hands, our daughters, our wives, our children: the men who have approached thy women: the women who have approached thy men. Our fields will be damp with the impure blood which has passed from thy veins into ours: else our children will be condemned to nourish and perpetuate the ill thou hast given to their fathers and mothers and to transmit it for ever to their descendants. Wretch! thou wilt be guilty of the ravages that follow thy fatal embraces or of the murders we shall commit to check the poison! Thou speakest of crimes! Knowest thou a greater than thine own? What with thee is the punishment for the man who kills his neighbour? Death by iron. And what for the coward who poisons him? Death by fire. Compare thy crime to this latter one, and tell us, poisoner of nations, the punishment thou deservest. A moment ago the young Tahitien maiden abandoned herself with transport to the embraces of the Tahitien boy: she waited with impatience till her mother (authorized by her reaching the nubile age), raised her veil and bared her throat. She was proud to excite the desires or to fix the amorous gaze of the stranger, her parents or her brother. She accepted fearlessly

and shamelessly, in our presence, midst a circle of innocent Tahitiens, to the sound of flutes, between the dances, the caresses of him her young heart and the secret voice of her senses had chosen. The idea of crime and the danger of disease have come with thee amongst us. Our pleasures, formerly so sweet, are accompanied by remorse and terror. That man in black, next you, who listens to me, has spoken to our boys. I know not what he has said to our girls. But our boys hesitate: our girls blush. Plunge if thou wilt into the dark forest with the perverse partner of thy pleasures, but allow the good and simple Tahitiens to reproduce without shame, in the face of heaven and the open day. What sentiment more honourable and greater couldst thou find to replace the one we have breathed into them and which animates their lives? They think the moment has come to enrich the nation and the family with a new citizen and they glory in it. They eat to live and grow. They grow to multiply, they find there neither vice nor shame. Listen to the succession of thy crimes. Scarcely hadst thou appeared among them, but they turn thieves. Scarcely hadst thou descended on our soil, but it smoked blood. That Tahitien who ran to meet thee, who greeted thee, who received thee crying *Taio, friend, friend:* you killed him. And why, did you kill him? Because he had been seduced by the glitter of thy little serpents' eggs. He gave thee his fruits: he offered thee his wife and daughter: he yielded thee his cabin. And thou hast killed him for a handful of these grains, which he took from thee without asking . And this people? At the sound of thy deadly firearms, terror seized them and they fled into the mountain. But understand they would have speedily come down again. Without me you may be sure you would all have perished in an instant. Why have I calmed, why have I restrained them? Why do I restrain them even now? I do not know. For thou deservest no sentiment of pity. Thou hast a ferocious soul

which never felt it. Thou didst walk, thou and thine, in our island: thou hast been respected: thou hast enjoyed everything: thou hast found in thy way neither barrier nor refusal: thou wast invited in: thou sattest down: there was laid out before thee the abundance of the country. Didst thou wish for our young girls? Save for these, who have not yet the privilege of showing face and throat, their mothers presented thee them all quite naked. Thine the tender victim of hostly duty. For her and for thee the ground hast been scattered with leaves and flowers: the musicians have tuned their instruments: nothing has troubled the sweetness nor hindered the liberty of her caresses or thine. The hymn was chanted, the hymn which exhorted thee to be a man and our child to be a woman, a woman yielding and voluptuous. There was dancing round your bed, and it is on leaving the arms of this woman, after feeling on her breast the sweetest rapture, that thou hast killed her brother, her friend, her father perhaps. Thou hast done worse still. Look this way. See this enclosure stiff with arms: these arms which had only menaced our enemies, they are turned against our own children: see the wretched companions of our pleasures: see their sadness. See the grief of their fathers: the despair of their mothers. In that place they have been condemned to perish by our hands or by the ills that thou hast done them. Withdraw unless thy cruel eyes take pleasure in spectacles of death: withdraw, go, and may the guilty seas which have spared thee in thy voyage gain their own absolution and avenge us by swallowing thee up before thy return. And you, Tahitiens, return to your cabins every one of you and let these unworthy strangers hear on their departure but the moaning wave, and see but the foam whose fury whitens a deserted beach."

He had scarcely finished, but the crowd of inhabitants had disappeared. A vast silence reigned over all the island. Nothing was heard but the shrill whistle of the winds and the dull noise of the water along all the coast. One might have thought that air and water, responsive to the old man s voice, were happy to obey him.…

*B.:* I nearly forgot to mention a curious incident. This scene of benevolence and humanity was suddenly interrupted by the cries of a man calling out for help, the servant of one of Bougainville's officers. Some of our Tahitiens had thrown themselves at him, stretched him on the ground, taken his clothes off, and were preparing to show him the final courtesy.

*A.:* What! these simple people, these good worth savages?

*B.:* You are quite wrong. This servant was a woman disguised as a man, a fact that was never discovered by a single member of the crew during the whole period of their long voyage. But the Tahitiens divined her sex at the first glance. She came from Burgundy and was called Barre, neither pretty nor ugly, and twenty-six years old. She had never left her village and her first notion of a journey was to go round the world. She always showed good sense and courage.

*A.:* These slender mechanisms sometimes encase very strong souls.


**10. Gender and Race in Colonial Latin America**

*The series of documents, with an introduction by Nora Jaffary, provides evidence of the ways in which racial and gender hierarchies were linked in colonial Latin America. It focuses particularly on three legal cases involving norms of masculinity and femininity that center of issues of disputed honor.*

http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/d/124/wwh.html