

Abstracts

Ute Daniel, Between centre and periphery of the court society: To the biographical structure of the life of a princess in early modern times taking as example Electress Sophie of Hanover

The gender history of the German courts is a new field of research, which offers more open questions than answers. One of the most interesting questions is the question of power: What was the role of the princess in court policies? On which levels could she exert influence, how did she participate in dynastic conflicts? The contribution illustrates one example, the case of the princess Sophie of Hanover (1630–1714). By analyzing her autobiography and her role in the court policies of Hanover in the last decades of the 17th century some tentative answers are formulated.

Jill Bepler, Pictures of virtue and vice of a German princess: The dowager of Schöningen

The article presents the career of a German princess during the Thirty Year's War and examines the possibilities and the restrictions imposed on women who never came to rule. To date gender studies in Germany, when they have concerned themselves with the elite, have concentrated on examples of women in positions of power, if not regents and rulers in their own right then those women whose lives were led at the centre of courts as wives and dowagers. There were however a significant number of women who had their own establishments outside the confines of male rule, with which they lived in precarious balance. For a number of reasons, Anna Sophia of Brandenburg (1598–1659) established such a peripheral existence and the article investigates the ways in which she negotiated her position, both in a broad political framework and within her own dynasty.

Claudia Schnitzer, The "disguised sex". Courtly masquerades in early modern times

The development of courtly masquerades is closely connected to the changing role of the woman in these festivities. The women have to conquer little by little their "own" place of sex in these masquerades which formerly was held by "men in women's clothes". The growing integration of court ladies as active participants in banquets is proved by the introduction of ladies competitions as well as disguising banquets and masquerades where courtiers and court ladies appear together as pairs. The appearance of costumed ladies in the masquerades suddenly ended the idea of men taking the role of women. Being no longer a "protection of the courtly woman" from being compromised, to put on women's clothes now becomes detrimental to men's reputation.

Antje Stannek, Growing up abroad. Gender-specific upbringing of noble adolescents during the 17th century

In the 17th century, the accomplishment of a German nobleman's formation took place abroad during a Grand Tour. The article considers educational travels of German adolescents from several German aristocratic families as a gender-specific training of courtly manners and behaviors. It analyzes the tension between gender and politeness in the young men's relationships with female courtesans; it reflects upon the role of mothers during their offspring's Grand Tour, and it speculates on the nature of the boy's

unofficial contacts with prostitutes. Both official and unofficial travel experiences, it will be argued, were major constituents in the fashioning of a 17th century German nobleman.

Horst Wenzel, Wild glances. A contribution to the uncourtly perception of bodies and pictures

This contribution shows the tension between the domesticated and the undomesticated in courtly literature. The "wild", non-domesticated glance of the woman who loses herself in the earthly world (*vana curiositas*) corresponds to the "wild" glance on the written, in which the isolated reader can lose herself, thus that her life gets estranged.

Susan Zimmermann, How they became feminists. The road to the women's movement at the turn of the century in Central Europe

The study analyzes the biographies of Rózsa Schwimmer and Mária Gárdos, two outstanding protagonists of the liberal-progressive and socialdemocratic women's movements in the Habsburg Monarchy (Hungary). Tensions and contradictions in the relationship between women and society, between personal social circumstances and desire on the one hand and political and cultural traditions and restrictions on the other are presented as having been of decisive importance to the unfolding of the women's movements of their time. How did women perceive personal, socio-economic and political conditions determining their lives and how did they try to influence them? How did they become activists of the women's movements while shaping and reshaping these conditions? How did their own lives change during the course of these endeavours? Personal awakening, the creation of a new (again conflictuous) sociability, and the development of a cultural and political movement were closely interwoven in the endeavours of women breaking through the boundaries of social tradition, dominant culture, and gender hierarchies in the societies at the turn of the century in Central Europe.

Esther Fischer-Homberger and Esther Wildbolz-Quarroz, To nourish and to bear – Abraham's fruitbearing bosom

There is an etymological connection between the name 'Abraham' and the Hebrew word 'ræhæm' (womb), which has been virtually ignored by contemporary theologians. Simultaneously, there is an association between begetting and nurturing which is an intrinsic part of certain premodern concepts of female fertility. Viewed in this light, the traditional depictions of Abraham (one, who miraculously in old age was granted the son promised to him by God; and the other, a heavenly comforter in whose lap the starving Lazarus recovers from his hardships) coalesce quite naturally into the image of a man with a fertile, sheltering and nurturing womb. And Abraham's God also reveals female powers – as a nursing motherly breast.

Ute Planert, Gender History meets New Military History

Up to the 1990s, Gender and Military historians in Germany have coexisted side by side, mutually ignoring their findings. After having discovered the view from below, the "new" Military History recently began to focus on the gender perspective, while on the field of Gender history, interest shifted to the gender specific (re)construction of socio-political (sub)systems such as nation, the state, military, and war. A meeting in Berlin brought scholars of both branches together, showing not only the fruitfulness of cooperation but also the danger of remasculizing gender history, a risk feminist historians should be aware of.