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**Abstracts****Michaela Hohkamp, Full Sisters and Sisters-in-Law in Early Modern Noble Society from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century**

This article investigates the significance of being a sister in the European noble society during the Early Modern period. Although the time span between the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the nineteenth century is usually seen as the time of the rise of patrilineal social order, female relatives played a key role in inheritance matters. Using concrete case studies relevant for the political history of the Holy Roman Empire during the Early Modern period, this article describes sisters as important agents within transmissions of succession and property in premodern noble societies. Combining perspectives of conceptual history, history of law and political history with those of gender and the new kinship studies, the article will systematically develop the “soror” as a gendered person switching between different kin-roles. More generally, the article is about kin as a key social concept and presents the “married sister” as a highly ranked judicial and political figure during the European Early Modern period until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the majority of female kin lost their hereditary rights and sisters became a de-gendered part of sibling pairs.

**Stefani Engelstein, The Sibling in Modern Epistemology**

The long nineteenth century turned to genealogy as an organising principle for knowledge across fields as diverse as evolutionary theory, linguistics, race theory and comparative religion. In a genealogical system, the sibling – neither quite the same, nor quite other – is a boundary figure that enables, but also undermines, the delineation of neighbouring terms, whether within systems of species, languages, races, religions, or subjects. However, the sibling was never gender-neutral. The evolutionary, racial, linguistic and familial genealogical trees of the nineteenth century attest to the desires of Europeans both to control the contours of kinship and to naturalise – and hence legitimate – systems of classification and knowledge. Repeatedly, the sexuality of sisters is implicated in establishing affiliation. The parthenogenetically imagined lineages of language development could turn the sister language into a pure arbiter of identity, in contrast to the category race, which, susceptible to the mingling of kinships, subjected female sexuality to policing. A family affect fostered between siblings in the nursery grounded both gender differentiation and the financial allegiance at the heart of emerging capitalism. However, this education left traces that challenged rather than reinforced both the innateness of gender and the integrity of the subject. Hence, the sibling became the

privileged figure for negotiating identity in literature, while sibling incest haunted the cultural imaginary.

### **John Lavers, “Der Zorn ist eine unduldsame Liebe”: Gender, Anger and Sisterhood in Letters by Karoline von Günderrode and her Sisters**

The correspondence by Karoline von Günderrode (1780–1806) and her younger sisters was situated within a network of aristocratic and bourgeois sister groups from the Free Imperial City of Frankfurt and surrounding cities at the start of the nineteenth century. As the sisters addressed letters to one another, they negotiated positions of rank, status and class within their exchange network of sibling groups. Expressions of anger were just as important as dedications of love and commitment and demonstrate the capacity for sisters to contest and negotiate their respective social positions. Expressions of anger in correspondence were rhetorical and textual emotional styles with social exigencies. The expression of anger in letters by younger aristocratic sisters maintained positions of precedence and deference among the hierarchy of sisters based on birth order. The eldest sister was a node of influence in the networks of German-speaking aristocratic families. Karoline von Günderrode and the eldest sister of a bourgeois family, Kunigunda Brentano (1780–1863), adopted a Romantic aesthetic in their correspondence. The expression of anger by two eldest sisters questioned the commitment behaviour among exchange partners, strengthening or contesting commitment in the exchange of letters, and were instrumental to forging new networks between families of different social backgrounds by employing a Romantic emotional style.

### **Sebastian Kühn, Kitchen Politics. Approaches to Subaltern Agencies in Courtiers’ Households in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**

Courtly daily life – and therefore politics – took place to a great extent in the households of courtiers, where numerous male and female servants were present. From their perspective, seemingly clear categories looked differently: By focusing on the kitchen in noble households the article examines a space that is considered private, purely functional, entirely apolitical and particularly gender-coded – thus the opposite of the spheres of the political and the public realms, connoted as male and noble. The emphasis on kitchen politics, however, reveals different kinds of agency and gender settings beyond these binary constructs. In so doing, the article questions a concept of agency that has to be historicised and differentiated. By using the example of seventeenth and eighteenth century Brandenburg and Saxon noble households, the everyday life of kitchen servants in the kitchens and beyond the households will be analysed to find out how actions of servants were charged with meaning and incorporated into concepts of agency. It is only in this context that the term “kitchen politics” can be determined in detail.