Women in the Middle Ages

Michaela Zimmerman[1]

1. Introduction

What is the role of a woman? The answer to that question varies from culture to culture, from century to century and from generation to generation. What may seem completely normal to us today may have caused outrage only a few generations ago, such as women studying at public universities or become soldiers. Roles change as the values and traditions of a generation or a culture change.

In our age one of the most urgent questions is “Where do we come from?” It indicates a certain loss of awareness of our roots. And while the question may be meant in a metaphysical rather than a historical way, it is still important to be aware of what our ancestors thought and valued. Only then can we appreciate the social, historical and even ethical changes that brought us to where we are now. For this reason, this article studies the role women played in the Middle Ages, an era that has had an immense influence on Western culture to this very day.

There has long been a debate over when exactly the Middle Ages begin and when they end, though the latter is usually narrowed down to within about 60 years, depending on whether you choose the discovery of the Americas in 1492 CE by Columbus or the invention of Gutenberg’s printing press as the advent of the modern age. As for their beginning,

[1]Lecturer, Department of Western Languages, Faculty of Humanities, Ramkhamhaeng University

personally, I prefer the year 800 CE with the coronation of Charlemagne as the first Holy Roman Emperor as the decisive date. The reason for this preference is that 800 is the year in which the fundamental structures of medieval society fall into place: through a pope creating the first Holy Roman Emperor (1) the interdependency of the Christian church and a Christian monarch was established, and (2) in Charlemagne a Frankish king rose to power in Europe whose tribe's feudal system would eventually be adopted from Portugal to the steppes of Russia and from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean.

Researching the role of women in the Middle Ages used to be a rather neglected field, to the extent that Christine Klapisch-Zuber, editor of a collection of essays called *Silences of the Middle Ages*[2] almost rants in her introduction of a section of women and the arts when she says:

> "When it comes to women, the presumptuous discourse of men cannot be taken as gospel. Nor can we correct the picture simply by examining how women reacted to men's ideas about them. The time has come to attempt a portrait of women in their own right, to round out our image by looking at objects representing women and at artifacts [sic!] created or used by women." (1994, p. 321)

In fact, things had begun to change in the 1980s, with Edith Ennen's groundbreaking study *Frauen im Mittelalter* in which she describes different aspects of lives of women from Frankish queens to medieval craftswomen. Over the next thirty years, research on women in the Middle Ages has become a very important part of Medieval Studies. And while there

---

[2]Volume two of the series *A History of Women in the West*

is still not enough documentation available to be entirely certain of every aspect of women's lives in the Middle Ages, we still have far more source material than for most prior epochs – and certainly for the mostly oral Celtic societies – to allow us a relatively conclusive insight. This always holds true for the aristocracy and for members of the church, but increasingly also for ordinary citizens and farmers as demonstrated by Arnold Esch's recent collection *Wahre Geschichten aus dem Mittelalter. Kleine Schicksale selbst erzählt in Schreiben an den Papst*, a collection of written appeals and letters by all sorts of people to the pope about all aspects of life.

The downside of the documentation we have is that, for the better part of the Middle Ages, most of it is legal – court reports, church records, legal complaints. Needless to say that in such writings we are presented with extreme cases rather than the rule. So it is sometimes necessary to remember that while there may be the occasional woman taking an abusive husband to court, we cannot deduce from those few cases that such behaviour was the rule – neither the woman taking her husband to court nor the abuse.

At the same time, we also have to regard medieval literary evidence with as much caution as an ancient myth. Often, literature presents us with both wish fulfilment and reality, even though this reality may be long past and far removed from our own. In this part of the research, it is therefore important to establish the common ground for women in medieval Europe as can be deduced from non-literary source material.

2. Women in medieval society

Celtic women, at least those who belonged to the aristocracy, largely enjoyed considerable privilege and respect. If we take a closer look at women in the Middle Ages, this attitude

has undergone an enormous change, as Paulette L'Hermite-Leclercq (1994, p. 247) points out:

> Those areas in which the Germanic heritage survived longest, including Germania, England prior to the Norman conquest, and Visigothic Spain, maintained, up to the eleventh century, a view of the world much more favourable to women, and particularly to those women who remained in the world. But that older view was on the wane everywhere, primarily among the aristocracy, where the principles of masculinity and primogeniture were diminishing the role of women. (...) Medieval society was one in which men had the initiative and women were passive. In contemporary texts women usually figure as direct objects. A father "marries off" or “gives away” or “conventizes” his daughter.

In one of my previous studies of women in the Middle Ages (Zimmermann, 2002), I have come to much the same conclusion: if a woman was lucky – preferably well-off and married to a man who did not drink or beat her too much – she could enjoy relative comfort. But her rights were far from what minstrels and fairy tales would have us believe. Again: so much for the use of literature as the only source material of an age...!

L'Hermite-Leclercq’s statement mentions three of the four roles a medieval woman was supposed to conform with: (1) while unmarried, she was defined as father's *daughter*, (2) after her marriage, she was defined as her husband's *wife*; if she followed a religious vocation, she was defined (3) as the *bride of Christ*.

In addition, there is the fourth role: if a woman fulfilled her marital duties and gave birth to children (preferably sons for both dynastic and financial reasons), she was defined as a *mother*. It seems that there was no great difference between high-born and low-born women in this respect, for this model held true for all layers of society. It may come as a surprise that, leaving the aside the privileges regarding social status and physical labour that came to aristocrats by way of birth, it was the women of the lower classes who appear to have had more personal freedom and who were, at least in certain situations, allowed to act on their own behalves.[3]

Another interesting aspect in L'Hermite-Leclercq's statement is the difference in the treatment of women on the continent and in Britain. The reasons for adopting a rather limiting view towards women in both France and Britain (which had both been Celtic territories and therefore had had a different concept of femininity before Germanic law was introduced into these countries), is twofold. For one, Roman law had become the standard in most of Western Europe following the gradual adoption of Roman customs and law by Germanic tribes after the fifth century[4]. It has been established above that women under Roman law were not as unprotected legally as they had been in Greece, but they were still

---

[3]It was, for instance, not uncommon before the sixteenth century for women on the continent to run their own shops or travel to their business partners themselves to acquire goods for their trade. And in some crafts, women were admitted in guilds employed just as readily as men - even though (or rather because) they were paid less (see Claudia Opitz, 1994, pp. 292-305 or Maurice Keen, 1990, p. 45)

[4]By this time, Britain itself as well as Gaul had long been integrated into the Roman Empire and thoroughly romanized - it was left to the Welsh, the Scots and the Irish to maintain the Celtic traditions. For a more detailed discussion see Fonay Wemple, 1994.

far from being granted equal rights, as Evans Grubbs' collection and interpretation of Roman Law as pertaining to women clearly shows. The second, and equally severe, impact on early medieval society was Christianity.

3. Women within the feudal hierarchy

For a person living during the Middle Ages, the Celtic concept of the woman warrior would have been a subject best left to dreams and fairy tales. The only time a woman actually presented herself as a warrior and leader of a *country's* army she ended up burnt at the stake as a witch: the medieval world was a man's world and a woman like Joan of Arc – the lady I refer to – was considered an abomination.

For this reason, I shall have to forego a direct comparison and take a different approach. The obvious choice is to see how the roles medieval women actually were *allowed* to take were defined and how they differed from those of their Celtic ancestors. I shall begin with the mundane aspects of a woman's life before discussing her religious life.

3.1 Marriage

It used to be very popular during the early Middle Ages to send one's daughters to a convent, but this attitude changed during the twelfth century. Feudal lords had come to realize that the dowries which were generally prerequisite for a woman's entry into a convent were irretrievably lost to them (see Fonay Wemple, 1994, p. 241). Very often that meant land as well as treasure, and both could be better used to maintain a feudal family's security as well as their standard of living. But most of all they were needed to make alliances with other powerful families.

As had been the case in earlier societies, including the Celts', marriage in the Middle Ages was used to establish alliances between families and, in the case of royal marriages,

between kingdoms. But unlike Celtic women, their medieval counterparts had generally no say in whether or not they wanted to marry the chosen candidate. And whereas, from the thirteenth century onwards, the Church viewed marriage as “an indissoluble union based on mutual affection and the consensus of both partners” (Opitz, 1994, p. 273), the facts as we know speak a different language. For one, the age of consent was rather young: twelve for girls and fourteen for boys (see L'Hermite-Leclercq, 1994, p. 217). This is a certain sign that it was undoubtedly the parents who found their children's future husbands and wives. Other and rather clear evidence of a different approach of “real life” towards love in marriage is the establishment of ecclesiastical courts of appeal. This was where women could, theoretically at least, apply for annulment on the grounds of having been forced into marriage against their will. It is quite significant, however, that there do not seem to have been very many appeals. This could either mean that marriages were not that unhappy after all. Indeed, Keen (1990, p.183f) suggests that in a number of cases at least a certain affection if not love apparently did evolve. But it could also have been the symptom of quite a different state of affairs as L'Hermite-Leclercq justly remarks, because women had to go to considerable lengths, standing up against their husbands, at the risk of the opposition – if not the alienation– of their own families and their in-laws, and most certainly causing a scandal. The reason for the low number of appeals to ecclesiastical courts may therefore have simply been fear, especially since the outcome of the trials tended to go in one direction: blaming the woman for not having fled from her husband on the wedding night before the marriage was consummated. A Celtic (aristocratic) woman might very well have done just that, and her status would most certainly have allowed her to do so without repercussions. But where could the medieval woman have gone?

How could she have resisted the will of her family? They could virtually have her destroyed for not obeying and marrying the chosen candidate. After all, as L'Hermite-Leclercq (1994, p. 219f) states:

> Dowries were bestowed on [women] by parents, or, if the parents were dead, by brothers. If a girl wished to marry a man other than the one chosen by her parents, her dowry might be withdrawn or her allowance withheld. In many areas, particularly in the south of France, customary law allowed fathers to disinherit disobedient daughters; lords could seize the person and property of undesired suitors.

In order to escape from such an unwanted marriage and be granted the protection of the Church, it was safer to take a vow of chastity and enter a convent as Christina of Markyate did, right after the wedding ceremony[5].

Another variation of forced marriage was *marriage by capture*, the so-called *Raubehe*. Here, neither the bride nor her family had any say in choosing the husband, she was simply abducted. A prominent example is Eleonor of Aquitaine, who, after her divorce from the French king, had two narrow escapes from such abductions – one of them by Geoffrey Plantagenet, the brother of the very man she was on her way to marry. There was little either the woman or her family could do once the wedding had taken place and the

---

[5]Christine of Markyate was the niece of the bishop of Durham, Ranulph Flambard's wife/concubine, and had family connections throughout the country. She was virtually beaten into church for the wedding ceremony, and experts on ecclesiastical law, called upon by her father whose honour she had challenged, were divided over the issue. The archbishop of Canterbury advised her to flee to a convent, which she did. L'Hermite-Leclercq (1994, pp. 220ff) insists that she received this advice and support only because she intended to “achieve the sacrament of virginity”,

marriage was consummated, rape or no rape[6]. Even though the ecclesiastical courts of appeal were one means of protest, little could be done against a *fait accompli*. In Celtic times, marrying a woman against her wishes and raping her would have been a deed for which heads would literally have rolled – and more than likely the bride would have been the one to wield the blade. But, says Opitz (1994, p. 275):

> Since the medieval perspective left no room for autonomous action of the part of women, such brides were regarded as victims of male aggression. The event was described as “kidnapping”, that is, the result of purely male activity, although in most cases it could not have occurred without the young woman's participation.

I can neither verify nor gainsay the latter statement, but it would certainly be negligent to describe women's social rank as completely suppressed and without any rights whatsoever, no matter how bleak the description may have sounded so far. While much depended on the family a woman was born into and whether or not daughters were considered as having an own independent will and intellect by their parents as well as the other members of their family, a woman's personality surely mattered as well. For while examples of self-

---

[6] It should be noted that under "Burgundian law rape and seizure were among the most serious breaches of law that could be committed against a woman"! (see Fonay Wimple, 1994, p. 173)

confident, influential and even powerful women must not be generalised, they certainly did exist, as personalities such as Marie of Montpellier[7] or Eleanor of Aquitaine prove. And yet, in both cases it was only freedom and power to a certain degree, granted them by their husbands. Both Pedro of Aragon and Henry II of England curbed their wives' independence when they saw things going against their private or political intentions. Marie died before divorce proceedings had gone through and Eleanor spent fifteen years in prison after enticing her sons into open rebellion against their father. It is significant that the sons were forgiven but the mother was not, having acted decidedly against the common concept of being the devoted servant and "handmaiden" of her husband whose will she was supposed to put above hers (see L'Hermite-Leclercq (1994, p. 219f). Thinking of Queen Medb and King Ailill of Ireland[8] and their power struggles we can imagine that this concept would fall very flat indeed in their society.[9]

While, at least unofficially, the partner of a feudal lord was not expected to interfere in

---

[7] She was the daughter of Guillaume III of Montpellier and was married, after her first husband's death and divorce from her second husband, to Pedro, king of Aragon. She was the only child of her father's first and unsuccessful marriage with Eudoxia, the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor – a marriage divorced in favour of a union with Agnes of Castille, which produced several sons. Throughout Marie's life there were struggles first between her and her father, and then between her and her half-brothers' factions, in the course of which Marie appealed to the pope and was recognized as the lawful heir on the grounds that her father's second marriage was in fact bigamist - which rendered the sons born in that union illegitimate bastards. But it was not until the citizens of Montpellier decided themselves, in favour of Marie (!), that the struggle was settled (see Foney Wemple, 1994, p. 236ff)

[8] They are the legendary Queen and King of the Irish national epic, the *Tain Bo Cuailgne*.

[9] However, to my knowledge there is no historical record of how such conflicts were dealt with in pre-Christian Celtic societies if they arose – as they surely did! – so further comments would be pure speculation.

politics[10], her occupation still was one that demanded considerable capacities for management. Among the responsibilities of a noblewoman of the higher ranks was the education of foster children sent to her court by allied families – she would probably not be raising her own children who, from a certain age onwards, were in turn sent away to other courts.[11] She was also the one who managed a wide part of her and her husband's estates, especially in his absence when she did not only have to oversee the household (as the symbol of her office, she was given possession of the keys) but was also supposed to make sure that everything - from the buying and selling of agricultural goods to almsgiving and even to the armed defence of the castle if need be - ran as smoothly as though the lord of the castle were organizing it himself (see Anderson/Zinsser, 1988, p. 274). This constitutes a rather drastic clash of ideas about women: on the one hand it sees them as weakness and fickleness personified, while on the other hand it considers them as quite

---

[10] However, they could, at certain times, be mistresses of their own estates and were also employed as mediators (see Vecchio, 1994, pp. 130ff and Anderson/Judith P. Zinsser, *A History Of Their Own* (Vol. I) (1988). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books,1990, p.277ff.

[11] See Bonnie S. Anderson, Judith P. Zinsser, *A History Of Their Own* (Vol. I). The system of fosterage was a concept well-spread in the Celtic societies; just as in the Middle Ages, it was a means of strengthening existing alliances but also served as some type of exchange of child hostages. It is next to impossible to say whether this was a custom that was originally Celtic and was then taken over by other cultures, since it was practised in Rome as well, and the *Walthari* epic mentions three children (Hagen, Walther and Hildegund) who were given away as safeties by their families to be raised by the Huns. I have mentioned before that there seem to have been close relationships between Celts and Germanic tribes so that there may well be one trait of the Celtic societies that survived far into later centuries.

capable of contributing to and securing the welfare of their families, their household and all those connected with it. Today this may seem a contradiction but apparently it was not seen as such during the Middle Ages.

One last point that has to be discussed, if briefly, is divorce. While divorce was easy to achieve in Celtic societies – all that was needed was mutual consent or, if that was not feasible, a year of separation and *then* divorce – the proceedings were not so easy anymore once the church proclaimed marriage as a sacred and indissoluble sacrament in the thirteenth century. In the early Middle Ages, a marriage could be divorced on the grounds of blood-ties down to the seventh degree, but in 1215 this was changed to the fourth degree. It appears that previously, it had been far too easy for members of the aristocratic families to find mutual relatives *somewhere* up their pedigrees if a marriage went wrong. Changing the law from the seventh to the fourth degree made it a little more difficult for partners to dissolve a marriage even if they both agreed to a divorce[12].

---

[12] See L'Hermite-Leclercq, 1994, p. 215. Fonay Wemple (1994, p. 180) gives a very telling example of how obtaining a divorce even before this new regulation was not exactly easy through the case of Lothar II of Lotharingia and his wife Theutberge. Theutberga was a politically desirable bride but did not become pregnant, so Lothar wanted to divorce her in favour of his concubine Waldrada. Pope Nicholas refused the divorce and Lothar then had his Theurberge confess to all kinds of perversities (includig incest and an abortion following "abnormal intercourse"). When she wanted to clear herself, it had to be by ordeal. Lothar bribed papal legates and finally persuaded Theutberga to claim that she herself desired the divorce because she was barren and wanted to become a nun. Following all this, Lothar eventually travelled to Rome, received absolution from Hadrian II, Pope Nicholas' successor – and died on his way home.

3.2 Women and the church

In the eyes of the Church there were basically two kinds of women. First and foremost they were “daughters of Eve”, weak-willed, of rather limited mental capacity, and certainly of a dangerously fickle character, all of which made them easy prey for the crafts of the devil and rendered them a deathly trap for men's souls. At the same time, once again true to the contradictory character of the Middle Ages, the exact opposite view co-existed, for there were also theories, especially during the tenth and eleventh centuries, that saw women as personifications of the pure Virgin Mary or the repentant sinner Mary Magdalene (see Dalarun, 1992, p. 29).

It would seem that the clergy was most disturbed by women's sexuality, which, they protested, kept both them and their husbands (as well as almost all who come in touch with women) from concentrating on the well-being of their souls. It is therefore not at all surprising that the church encouraged women to lead a life of virginity and seclusion in order to save their endangered souls. Especially during the ninth and tenth centuries in France and Italy as well as in England after the Norman conquest, the founding of monasteries became, for obvious reasons, fashionable. So did sending one's daughters into these institutions, either merely for education before marriage – or for good. For a woman sent to a convent at an early age (which was quite common during the Middle Ages), virginity was a feature of their environment, and so adherence to the ideal of chastity and heavenly salvation was supposed to be easier for them than for the greater part of womankind. In order to include the married part of said womankind among the saved, the church made allowances for “chaste” wives. They were supposed to give their husbands children (therefore unable to abstain from intercourse altogether), but as long as they were

faithful wives and did not take sensual pleasure in sex they, too, were in some sort of lower virginal state. A widow who took her vow of chastity rather than remarry attained near-virginal purity.

Thus, there was a division of womankind into three “orders of merit: virgins would be rewarded a hundred times their deserts; widows, sixty times; and wives, thirty times. This scheme, first proposed by Jerome ... remained in common use until the fifteenth century” (Dalarun, 1994, p. 29). In short: the Church idealised virgins, welcomed widows and sanctioned chaste wives.

Socially, the concept of chastity was of equal importance, for the only guarantee that a man had for the legitimacy of his children was the faithfulness of his wife. Thus, the punishment for a woman's adultery by far outweighed the sanctions a man had to face for the same crime (see Opitz, 1994, p. 277).

Life within monasteries and convents did in essence not differ very much from the outside world. It was strictly hierarchical with the abbess or mother superior at its top, followed by “various officials, choir nuns, novices, and lay sisters” (L'Hermite-Leclercq, 1994, p. 243). They all were supposed to adhere to the place and role allocated to them according to their social or ethnic origin, so there was in effect very little of the theoretical equality in a convent where the only true distinction between the women was supposed to have been “that of the spirit” (L'Hermite-Leclercq, 1994, p. 240). Indeed, there are both women and men who avoided this kind of life in religion altogether and became recluses and hermits, a movement in the tradition of the Desert Fathers which was particularly popular from the twelfth century onward through to the Late Middle Ages (L'Hermite-Leclercq, 1994, p. 244).

Next to nothing is known about the lives of Celtic women when it comes to their being part

of organized religion. However, in light of the fertility rites such as Beltane it may be safe to speculate (though very carefully) that virginity and chastity will not have been as central for them as for Christians when it came to the status/respect given to a women. And since inheritance was matrilinear in pre-Christian Celtic societies, there would not have been any pressure on the community to enforce marital faithfulness on the part of the women, either – at least not any more than it was for men.

4. Summary

In this article, I sketched some of a medieval woman's basic roles: from the point of view of the Church, she was considered either a second Eve or a reincarnation of the Virgin Mary. In either case, she had to be controlled by their fathers or husbands in order to be protected from harmful influence from the outside world, and at the same time she needed to be kept from causing harm to the eternal souls of herself as well as to the souls of those surrounding her. This protection was to be achieved best by entering a monastery, which at the same time was almost a guarantee of spiritual salvation.

Legally, women had theoretical means to fight for their own rights, but this largely depended on their own character (especially when it came down to opposing husband and family in an appeal for annulment of a marriage) and certainly on their social position. A woman was not allowed to testify in court herself, so she had to find a spokesman who was willing to do it for her and this would cost. This may appear to be in true tradition of Roman law, but as Evans Grubbs' work shows, the Roman Empire itself allowed for many loopholes and exceptions. In the same vein, women of poor means could simply not afford a court trial, and even if a woman's family was rich enough very often, though not always, it was her husband or legal guardian, who had control over her finances – so that he also

had the power over whether or not she could freely dispose of her riches or not.

Marriage as such was considered indissoluble, and while there were certain grounds on which a marriage could be annulled, the Church considered it a sacred sacrament and would not easily grant a dissolution of a marriage unless there were good reasons: theological, political – or financial. But again, where there are powerful husbands in the picture, there tends to be a way to either divorce or "depose" of an unwanted wife.

Lastly, women may not have been very powerful *officially*, but their influence can be found in their own surroundings and mainly in the largely independent management of their family's estate. During their husband's absence, their responsibilities even extended to military operations, although they tended not to fight themselves. There are examples of politically very powerful women such as Eleonore of Aquitaine or Isabella, the so-called 'She-wolf of France', wife of English king Edward II, but their influence would only go as far as they had the backing of either their husband or another equally powerful (male) person within the innermost circle of authority. If they lost that support, they would lose their position as well.

If we wanted to close the circle, we might now look at our society today – Western or Thai – and ask ourselves how far women have really come and how much (or how little) the roles of women have really changed and progressed. But that would be a topic for another study...

Further Reading

Andersson, Bonnie/Zinsser, Judith P. (1988). *A history of their own* (Vols I -2*)*. London: Penguin.

Dalarun Jacques. (1994). The clerical gaze. In Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (ed.): *Silences of the Middle Ages.*

Ennen, Edith**.** (1994). *Frauen im Mittelalte***.** (5th revised and enlarged edition). München: C.H. Beck.

Esch, Arnold**.** (2010). *Wahre Geschichten aus dem Mittelalter: Kleine Schicksale selbst erzählt in Schreiben an den Papst*. München: C.H.Beck.

Evans Grubbs, Judith**.** (2002). *Women and the law in the Roman Empire: A sourcebook on marriage, divorce and widowhood.* New York: Routledge.

Fonay Wemple, Suzanne**.** (1994). Women from the fifth to the tenth century. In Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (ed.) *Silences of the Middle Ages* (pp. 169-201). Cambridge Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Hopkins, Andrea**.** (1994). *The book of courtly love: The passionate code of the Troubadours.* New York: HarperSanFrancisco.

Keen, Maurice**.** (1990). *English society in the Later Middle Ages*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane (ed.) (1994). *A history of women in the West Vols 2: Silences of the Middle Ages.* Cambridge Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Leyser, Henrietta**.** (1995). *Medieval Women: A social history of women in England 450 – 1500.* London: Phoenix.

L'Hermite-Leclercq, Paulette. (1994). The feudal order. In Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (ed.), *Silences of the Middle Ages* (pp. 202-249). Cambridge Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Opitz, Claudia. (1994). Life in the Late Middle Ages. In Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (ed.), *Silences of the Middle Ages* (pp. 292-305). Cambridge Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Pernoud, Régine. (1995). *Königin der Troubadoure: Eleonore von Aquitanien* (13th ed.). München: dtv.

Veccio, Silvana. (1994). The good wife. In Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (ed.), *Silences of the Middle Ages* (pp. 105-135). Cambridge Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Weir, Alison. (2000). *Eleanor of Aquitaine: By the wrath of God, queen of England*. London: Pimlico.

Zimmermann, Michaela. (2002). Frauen im europäischen Mittelalter: Was ist dran an Hollywood? In: *TDLV-Forum 7*, pp. 280-290.

Zimmermann, Michaela. (2001). Keltische Elemente in Gottfried von Straßburgs Tristan. In: *TDLV-Forum 6*, pp. 100-108.

Zimmermann, Michaela. (1999). Die Ursprünge der höfischen Liebe. In: *TDLV-Forum 4*, pp. 26-33.