Name: Block:

**Renaissance Life: Primary Sources**

**Selecting a Bride in Renaissance Florence, Alessandra Macinghi Delghi Strozzi (1464-1465)**

[April 20, 1464] … Concerning the matter of a wife [for Filippo], it appears to me that if Francesco di Messer Guglielmino Tanagli wishes to give his daughter, that it would be a fine marriage. … Now I will speak with Marco [Parenti, Alessandra's son-in-law], to see if there are other prospects that would be better. … Francesco Tanagli has a good reputation, and he has held office, not the highest, but still he has been in office. You may ask: “Why should he give her to someone in exile?” There are three reasons. First, there aren’t many young men of good family who have both virtue and property. Secondly, she has only a small dowry, 1,000 florins, which is the dowry of an artisan. … Third, I believe that he will give her away, because he has a large family and he will need help to settle them. …

[August 17, 1465] … Sunday morning I went to the first mass at S. Reparata … to see the Adimari girl, who customarily goes to that mass, and I found the Tanagli girl there. Not knowing who she was, I stood beside her. … She is very attractive, well proportioned, as large or larger than Caterina [Alessandra's daughter]. … She has a long face, and her features are not very delicate, but they aren’t like a peasant’s. From her demeanor, she does not appear to me to be indolent. … I walked behind her as we left the church, and thus I realized that she was one of the Tanagli. …

[September 13, 1465] … Marco came to me and said that he had met with Francesco Tanagli, who had spoken very coldly, so that I understand that he had changed his mind. … I believe that this is the result of the long delay in our replying to him, both yours and Marco’s. Now that this delay has angered him, and he has at hand some prospect that is more attractive. … I am very annoyed by this business. …

[Filippo Strozzi eventually married Fiametta di Donato Adimari, in 1466.]

**FOCUS QUESTIONS:** What challenges did Filippo have in finding a bride? What social class does he come from? How do you know?

**Scandal in Renaissance Florence: The Maid is Pregnant, Bernado Machiavelli (1475)**

My wife told me that from certain signs which she had observed, our servant girl Lorenza, also called Nencia di Lazerino, had missed her period and that she appeared to be pregnant. … I told her to confront the girl alone and to use threats and persuasions to find out the truth from her. I had to go away, and upon my return in the evening, she told me that she had the girl alone in a room and that, after cajoling and threatening her, she had learned that the girl was pregnant by Niccolo di Alessandro Machiavelli. When asked how this had happened, she said that after we had returned from the country last year, on November 8, she had often gone at night through the window over the roof, and then through the little window next to the kitchen hearth to Niccolo’s house to stay with him. …

The truth was that he, Niccolo, had never had anything to do with her. Francesco had done this, and his only fault had been his failure to tell me.

In reply, I complained bitterly of his [Niccolo's] injury to me, which would have been grave in any event, but which was even worse, since he was my neighbor … and a close blood relation. [I said] that I had never done anything similar to him or his father, and that I did not understand how he could have held me in such low esteem. For both here [in Florence] and at the villa, he was often in my company and had never said anything to me so that I might prevent my house from becoming a bordello. He should also consider the nature of this affair, for this girl was not a slut but came from a good but impoverished family of Pistoia, and her father and brothers were men of some worth. I did not want the girl in my house any longer, and I had no choice but to inform Giovanni Nelli, who had given her to me, or to arrange for her father and mother to come for her. Niccolo replied that he was aware that he had injured me, but that it was Francesco who had harmed the girl, and that his error had been in not telling me. …

**FOCUS QUESTIONS:** What happens to the maid? Why is Bernado offended? What does this tell you about Renaissance society? About religion?

**Classroom Rebellion: Students Berate a Renaissance Teacher, students of Conrad Celtis (c. 1500)**

By your long and incessant scoldings, with which you frequently consume half the hour, you force us to make some reply in the name of truth. You accuse us of madness and charge that we are stupid barbarians, and you call wild beasts those whose fees support you. … This we might have borne with better grace, but for the fact that you yourself abound in the faults of which you accuse us. For what of the fact that, while you carp about us, you yourself are so torpid from dissipation that in private conversation your drowsy head droops to your elbow like a figure eight. You touch on many points in questions, but you speak neither plain argument nor cultured speech nor elegant Latin expositions; nor do you observe true coherence and order of speaking. Yet you have at hand the motto, “He teaches clearly who understands clearly.” Either you lack understanding–a shameful thing in a doctor–or you think us unworthy of your learning, which is incredible. For you certainly experience daily studious auditors, sometimes learned men, calculated to adorn you with great praise. Or you dislike the labor of lecturing, as we clearly comprehend, understand and see. In this one point you both derogate from your own reputation and seem to us all deficient. But now we have clearly expressed ourselves on that point. Wherefore, if you are ready and willing to vindicate the name and dignity of a preceptor and doctor, to fulfill your professional duties, we will be more attentive. If first, as befits you, you clear yourself of the fault you impute to us, you will make us more diligent by your diligence, which has now long been lacking, if you can conquer and overcome your dislike of study and tardiness in work. If you do less, we shall have to take more stringent measures.

**FOCUS QUESTIONS:** Why are these students angry? What type of teacher is described? What does this tell you about the school system?

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