

Hagiography Society Newsletter

Volume XXV, no. 2, July 2015

Executive Committee Elections

Elections for two executive committee positions will be held this coming year. We are soliciting nominations for the positions of: **President** (currently filled by Alison Frazier), and **Secretary-Treasurer** (currently filled by Amy Ogden). The terms are three years.

If you are interested in these positions, or wish to nominate someone, please email our current Nominations Chair, Nikolas Hoel, at n-hoel@neu.edu by December 1. Short bios of the nominees will be in the December newsletter and elections will take place in early 2016. For a description of the positions, please see our website: http://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page_id=97



Call for Leeds 2016 Session Organizers!

The Hagiography Society would like to thank Anne Bailey, Helen Birkett, and Kate Gerry for their efforts over the past few years making sure that the Hagiography Society has a presence at Leeds by organizing sessions for the International Medieval Congress at Leeds. While Kate will continue to help with sessions, we need volunteers willing to help construct panels and vet papers for Leeds 2016, whose theme is "Food, Feast & Famine." If you are planning on attending Leeds and would like to help out organizing a session under the Hagiography Society's aegis, please contact the Programming Chair, Sara Ritchey, at ritchev@louisiana.edu as soon as possible.



CFP: Hagiography Society Sessions at Kalamazoo 2016

Holy Celebrity: Saints and/as Social and Economic Capital

Organizers: Alicia Spencer-Hall, Barbara E. Zimbalist

Scholars have often commented on the link between sanctity and celebrity. Both the saint and the celebrity are elevated above the everyday, with identities carefully crafted by cultural producers to respond to the needs and desires of an audience, region, or temporality. Sacralisation/celebrification entails a series of processes which (re)formulate a subject into a product fit for social, political, and economic consumption. Yet sanctity/celebrity is not simply exploitative, but enjoyable and perhaps

even empowering. What does it really mean to be a medieval celebrity? How does celebrity intersect with sanctity? What does such a categorization add to the study of hagiography? Can fame resonate on both a social and spiritual level, and how does the medieval idea of fame generate, overlap with, and inform contemporary discourses of fame, celebrity, and sanctity?

Relevant topics for this session include: Saints as commercial products and/or economic agents; the construction of Sanctity and Communal Identity; Audience reaction(s) to a saint and textual reception; Power dynamics between celebrity/saint and star-maker/confessor or hagiographer/cleric/scribe; The social function of celebrity/sanctity; Film theory's contribution to the study of sanctity more generally

Please send a 300-word abstract and Personal Information Form to Barbara Zimbalist (bezimbalist@utep.edu) by **September 15**.

Holy Landscapes and Sacred Space

Organizer: Monica A. Ehrlich, Emory & Henry College

In recent years, medieval scholars have increased their attention to ecology and the material world. The rich interdisciplinary research in the fields of ecocriticism, environmental history, ecomateriality, geocriticism, and geoaesthetics attest to the profound impact that environment plays in building medieval communities.

This interdisciplinary panel seeks to investigate further the role played by hagiography in transforming the global landscape and shaping environmental ethics. Possible avenues of inquiry include but are not limited to: depictions of holy landscapes in hagiography, art, and architecture; Material engagements with art and architecture and their connection to hagiography; The influence of hagiography in building monastic communities and shaping environmental ethics; the environmental and topographical impact of the development of saints' cults and/or construction of sacred sites; The invocation of the material and natural worlds to illustrate theological ideas; connections between hagiography, the environment, and pilgrimage routes.

Please send a 300-word abstract and Personal Information Form to Monica A. Ehrlich (mas2vv@virginia.edu) by **September 15**.

In addition, the Hagiography Society is co-sponsoring two sessions honoring Thomas Head, one with Episcopus and one with CUNY Graduate Center and the Medieval Club of New York. Please look for contact information for those sessions in the Kalamazoo CFP.



Sponsored Session at the Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference

The Hagiography Society is sponsoring one session at the SCSC, October 22 at 3:30; Vancouver BC:

Roundtable: Transatlantic Sanctity: Perspectives from the Spanish Empire

Moderator: Alison Frazier (University of Texas at Austin)

Panelists:

Katrina Olds (University of San Francisco)

Cornelius Conover (Augustana College)

Erin Rowe (Johns Hopkins)

Cristina Cruz González (Oklahoma State University)

Katie Harris (University of California, Davis)

Hope to see you there!



CFP: Book Series “Sanctity in Global Perspective”

Series Editors: Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, University of Pittsburgh, USA; Shahzad Bashir, Stanford University, USA; and John Stratton Hawley, Barnard College, USA

Published under the aegis of The Hagiography Society, this series is dedicated to exploring the concept of sanctity in ideational, literary, artistic, and sociohistorical dimensions. “Sanctity in Global Perspective” publishes monographs and edited volumes that illuminate the lives of saintly figures, the communities dedicated to those figures, and the material evidence of their cults. Our aim is to foster critical scholarship that offers novel conceptualizations and the possibility of crosspollination of ideas across traditions, geographical regions, and academic disciplines. The series is open to all areas of scholarship, without restriction as to religious traditions or time periods.

Proposals should take the form of either

- 1) a preliminary letter of inquiry, briefly describing the project; or
- 2) a formal prospectus including: abstract; brief statement of critical methodology, table of contents; sample chapter; estimate of length; estimate of the number and type of illustrations to be included; a c.v.

Please email your letter or proposal to the Ashgate contact for this book series: Erika Gaffney, Publishing Manager, egaffney@ashgate.com



Calls for Papers: Conferences

Hull, UK, 6-8 January 2016. The Gender and Medieval Studies Conference 2016 will have as its theme “Gender and Emotion.” The medieval world sought to express, perform, idealise and understand emotion. Yet while such expressions of emotion are frequently encountered by medievalists working across the disciplines, defining, quantifying and analysing the purposes of emotion and its relationship to gender often proves difficult. Are personal items placed in early Anglo Saxon graves a means for the living to let go of, or perpetuate emotion, and how are these influenced by the body in the grave? Do different literary and historical forms lend themselves to diverse ways of expressing men’s and women’s emotion? How does a character expressing emotion on stage or in artwork use body, gender and articulation to communicate emotion to their viewer? Moreover, is emotion viewed differently depending on the gendered identity of the body expressing it? Is emotion and its reception used to construct, deconstruct, challenge or confirm gender identities?

This conference seeks to explore the manifestations, performances and functions of emotion in the early to late Middle Ages, and to examine the ways in which emotion is gendered and used to construct gender identities. We welcome scholars from a range of disciplines, including history, literature, art history, archaeology and drama. A travel fund is available for postgraduate students who would otherwise be unable to attend.

Please email proposals of no more than 300 words to organiser Daisy Black at d.black@hull.ac.uk by **7 September 2015**. All queries should also be directed to this address. Please also include biographical information detailing your name, research area, institution and level of study (if applicable). Further details will be available on the conference website: www.medievalgender.co.uk

Ghent, 18-20 February 2016. The ERC research group *Novel Saints* (Ghent University) welcomes abstracts for an international conference on the construction of heroism in Late Antique and Early Medieval hagiography. The ERC research group *Novel Saints* (Ghent University) builds on and contributes to a recent trend in scholarship of studying late antique and early medieval hagiography (4th-12th cent.) *as literature*. We welcome paper proposals for our first, international conference, which will deal with literary constructions of characters as hero(in)es in different types of late antique and early medieval hagiographical narrative (*Lives, Martyr Acts*, hagiographical romances, etc.). We envisage contributions on hagiography from different linguistic traditions (Latin, Greek, Syriac, Georgian, Coptic, Armenian, Persian and Arabic). The conference aims to explore definitions of and aspects/concepts relevant to heroism in Christian narrative. What does it mean to be a

hero(ine) in these narratives? Are there different types of hero(in)es (and of heroism)? To what extent can narratological concepts provide useful tools for evaluating hagiographical constructions of heroism? The other central question is *how* saints (and/or, possibly, other characters) are characterized, shaped, imagined and/or constructed as hero(in)es.

Abstracts can be sent to novelsaints@ugent.be by **20 September 2015**.

Tours, 12-14 October 2016. “Saint Martin, expansion and revivals in his popularity from the origins to the present day” is a conference celebrating the 1700 anniversary of his birth. The international symposium organized in Tours in 2016 aims to address the « martinian figure » in all its breadth and all its influence. Several scientific fields, History, Archeology, Art History, Literary Studies, Ethnology and Anthropology, Theology, Economics, are called to focus on some fundamental issues that may arise in the following way: How to locate the cult of St. Martin in this perspective in Italy, in the British Isles, Spain, in the Germanic area, in the Scandinavian area, in the Slavic area, in Hungary; In a broad periodization: Origins, Carolingian, Central Middle Ages, late Middle Ages, modern era, the nineteenth century, the twentieth century; Finally, the historiographical question, especially in the nineteenth century, should not be forgotten.

Proposals will be formulated in one page and may be submitted in English, French, German or Italian. The deadline for submitting proposals is **30 April 2016**.



Other Upcoming Conferences

Tampere, Finland, 6-8 August 2015. The Sixth International Passages from Antiquity to the Middle Ages conference will focus on social approaches to traveling, mobility, pilgrimages, and cultural exchange in a conference whose theme is “On the Road: Travels, Pilgrimages, and Social Interaction,” to be held at the University of Tampere. The conference aims at concentrating on social and cultural interaction before, during and after traveling. We welcome papers that have a sensitive approach to social differences: gender, age, health, and status. We encourage proposals that integrate the theme of traveling into wider larger social and cultural contexts. We aim at a broad coverage not only chronologically but also geographically and disciplinarily (all branches of Classical, Byzantine and Medieval Studies). For further information, please visit <http://www.uta.fi/trivium/passages/>

Ennis, IE, 22-25 August 2015. “Monastic Europe: Landscape and Settlement,” is being organized by The Discovery Programme as part of their Monastic Ireland research project. In addition to an impressive array of speakers and a wide range of pan-European topics, a particular highlight will be the daily field trips to some of the best preserved, if little known, monastic sites of late medieval Ireland.
<https://monasticeurope.wordpress.com/2015/01/13/monastic-europe-programme/>

Oxford, UK, 10-12 September 2015. “The Influences of the Dominican Order in the Middle Ages” will take place at Lincoln College and Blackfriars in Oxford. From the modest group of St Dominic and his sixteen followers, the Dominican Order grew rapidly in the first century of its existence, establishing itself across Europe as a learned Order of Preachers. This interdisciplinary conference will seek to explore the influences of the Dominican Order on all aspects of medieval life. The conference theme of ‘influence’ can be interpreted in its broadest sense, encompassing the large-scale influences of the Order and the legacy of its prominent figures, or can be examined on the personal level, such as the impact that the Order had on those that came into contact with it, both within and outside the Order. All enquiries should be sent to Eleanor Giraud: eleanor.giraud@lincoln.ox.ac.uk

Huddersfield, UK, 16-17 September 2015. “Transforming Male Devotional Practices’ from the Medieval to the Early Modern” is a conference that will be held at the University of Huddersfield. The conference, co-hosted with the Universities of Reading and Liverpool Hope, aims to explore the social, economic and spatial factors underpinning the changing way men demonstrated their commitment to God and the church(es) in a period of significant turmoil. Please send inquiries to devotionalpracticeconference@gmail.com.

Boulder, CO, 22-24 October 2015. “Religion and (the Master) Narrative: An Interdisciplinary Conference on Medieval and Early Modern Belief and Practice,” is the Second Annual CMEMS Conference. Recent scholarship on medieval and early modern religion has begun to question fundamental categories and to destabilize the meaning and chronological divisions between medieval Europe and Reformation Europe, the pre-Christian and the Christianized. A more complex and nuanced portrait of belief and practice has emerged. To this end, bringing medieval and early modern ideas about religion into conversation with twenty-first century accounts of secularity and religiosity, globalization, and religious plurality is one of the overarching goals of this conference. Plenary Speakers include Sarah Beckwith (English, Duke University), Kenneth Mills (History, University of Toronto/University of Michigan), Nina Rowe (Art History,

Fordham University) and John Van Engen (History, University of Notre Dame).

Rome, 25-29 November 2015. The conference “Concilium Lateranense IV. Commemorating the Octocentenary of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215” explores how Lateran IV still stands as the high-water mark of the medieval papacy, as deemed the most significant papal assembly of the later Middle Ages. The conference will move to different locations on different days, in part as a tribute to the movement of clerics around Rome as part of the many events surrounding the council. Please direct any questions to fourthlateranat800@gmail.com

Oxford, UK, 4-6 April 2016. The British Archaeological Association will hold the fourth in its biennial International Romanesque conference series in Oxford on 4-6 April, 2016. The theme is “Romanesque: Saints, Shrines and Pilgrimage,” and the aim is to examine the material culture of sanctity over the period c.950-c.1200. The Conference will be held at Rewley House in Oxford from 4-6 April, 2016, with the opportunity to stay on for two days of visits to Romanesque buildings on 7-8 April.



Book (and Other) Announcements

Maureen Bolton, *Sacred Fictions of Medieval France: Narrative Theology in the Lives of Christ and the Virgin, 1150–1500* (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2015).

The story of the life of Christ and his mother was told in many texts in various French vernaculars (Anglo-Norman and Old Occitan, as well as Old and Middle French) between the middle of the twelfth century and the end of the fifteenth; there are more than a hundred such texts, extant in at least 400 manuscripts. These “sacred fictions” are the subject of this book. The writers of these works made deliberate formal choices which their audiences recognized and which provided one frame of reference for reading them. Professor Boulton here classifies the different lives of Mary and Jesus according to the various narrative forms they take: epic, romance, allegory, chronicle, and meditative text. In addition, because a text’s embodiment in its codex reflects how it was encountered by medieval readers, each chapter considers the transmission of the texts, as well as their often radical alteration in different manuscripts when in multiple copies.

The Latin text of the *Life* of Saint Francis of Assisi by Thomas of Celano recently discovered by Jacques Dalarun is being published in *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. 133 (2015), fasc. I. Discover the summary on <http://www.bollandistes.org/publications-analecta.php?pg=analecta2015>

A new book by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *The Strange Case of Ermine de Reims: A Medieval Woman between Demons and Saints*, has been published by University of Pennsylvania Press. Please find further information here: <http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15344.html>

Barbara Newman’s substantial review of Robert Bartlett’s *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?* (Princeton, 2013) appeared in the *London Review of Books*, 7 May 2015.



Selected Saint’s Feast Days



August 12th:
St. Jane Frances
de Chantal

St. Jane Frances de Chantal (d. 1641) was the founder of a religious community called the Visitation nuns under the spiritual directorship of St. Francis de Sales. According to AmericanCatholic.org: “After three years Francis told her of his plan to found an institute of women which would be a haven for those whose health, age or other considerations barred them from entering the already established communities. There would be no cloister, and they would be free to undertake spiritual and corporal works of mercy... The usual opposition to women in active ministry arose and Francis de Sales was obliged to make it a cloistered community following the Rule of St. Augustine.”