



VOL. XXXI ISSUE 2 ~ AUGUST 2021

HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY

President's Report

New Initiative and Resources for Hagiography Society Members:

You will soon hear from us about some new initiatives. We will be reaching out to Hagiography Society members and other scholars to gather syllabi, single lesson plans or ideas, topical bibliographies, and video material regarding saints and hagiography. Hagiography Society members will be able to draw on these resources for their own teaching, research, and other projects. The more we all collaborate on these initiatives, the more helpful we will be to each other, so I invite you to strengthen our esprit de corps and the field of hagiography by contributing your syllabi, lesson ideas, and other resources.

Hagiography Society Elections: Help strengthen the Hagiography Society by nominating yourself or a respected colleague for one of the two open positions, noted below.

Hagiography Society Book Series: We have yet another wonderful publication to announce. Carmen Florea's *Cult of the Saints in Late Medieval Transylvania: Universal Developments Within Local Contexts*, is now ready for pre-order. Professor Florea's monograph is another addition to the high quality scholarship being published in the Hagiography Society's *Sanctity in Global Perspective* book series.

Catherine Mooney, President

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Reames Graduate Student Travel Award

The Sherry L. Reames Graduate Student Travel Award for Hagiographical Studies

Given that the ICMS organizers have now decided to hold the 2022 conference virtually, this year's Reames Travel Award will be adjusted to cover the costs of registration. We encourage all graduate students to apply, and we look forward to supporting your scholarship in hagiography!

Named in honor of the beloved founder and long-time leader of the Society, the award, in 2022, will cover registration fees for the International Congress on Medieval Studies, held annually at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI.

Eligibility:

Students who are Hagiography Society members and enrolled in a graduate program (anywhere in the world) are eligible to apply if their paper, on a topic involving hagiography, has been accepted for inclusion on a regular panel (not a round table or other format) in the program of the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI, at the time of application. They are also expected to attend the annual Hagiography Society Business Meeting held at the International Congress on Medieval Studies.

Application:

Please submit the following documents, combined in a single .PDF file, by 1 November to the Secretary / Treasurer of the Hagiography Society avo2n@virginia.edu:

- a current curriculum vitae
- the abstract for the accepted paper, identifying the panel on which it will be presented
- a cover letter, addressing the following questions:
 - How does this paper fit into your scholarly trajectory?
 - Have you presented at a scholarly conference before?
 - Have you received other funding for travel (this paper or others)?

Successful applicants will be informed of the results by December 15.



Given that the ICMS organizers have now decided to hold the 2022 conference virtually, this year's Reames Travel Award will be adjusted to cover the costs of registration. We encourage all graduate students to apply, and we look forward to supporting your scholarship in hagiography!



Elections

The Hagiography Society is now soliciting nominations for two positions on the Executive Committee: President, and Secretary-Treasurer. Both positions carry a three-year term beginning at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, normally held at Kalamazoo Michigan, to be conducted virtually this year in May 2022.

Hagiography Society officers are expected to attend the Society's business meeting and Executive Committee meeting at Kalamazoo the year they are elected and the two following years during their terms. I can attest that serving on the Executive Committee is a wonderful opportunity to meet, engage, and network with many scholars studying saints and hagiography.

If you would like to nominate either yourself or someone else, please do so by January 31, 2022 by emailing the Outreach Chair, Stephanie Grace-Petinos (spetinos@wcu.edu). Further questions may also be directed to her. If you are not interested in running but would like to serve on the Nominations Committee for this election, please let Stephanie know.

Descriptions for the two positions open can be found to the right and in the Hagiography Society Constitution on the Society's website under the "About" tab. Those interested in running for a position are welcome to contact the current office holder for more information: Catherine Mooney for President (catherine.mooney@bc.edu), and Amy Ogden for Secretary-Treasurer (avo2n@virginia.com)

The President shall be responsible for:

- overseeing the Society's correspondence with other scholarly organizations
- appointing (with the advice of the Outreach Chair) any ad hoc committees necessary to carry out the purposes of the Society
- serving as an ex officio member of the planning committees for any symposia, conference sessions, or other events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Society
- working in collaboration with the Communications Chair and Outreach Chair to compose the newsletter and items for the listserv and website
- overseeing the Society's book and article prizes by receiving prize submissions, handling correspondence with authors and publishers, appointing a judging committee for each prize, personally notifying prize winners and non-winners of the judging committees' evaluations, and, only after such notification, publicly announcing the prize winners.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall have primary responsibility for the Society's day-to-day business. In particular, the Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for:

- maintaining records of current addresses and dues payments by members
- keeping the official list of members who are in good standing and sending dues reminders to members who are not
- maintaining the online directory of members
- receiving and depositing all dues payments and other income of the Society
- paying routine bills and keeping proper accounts
- submitting a brief annual financial report of income and expenditures to the Executive Committee.



Request for Syllabi, Lessons, Bibliographies, and Videos

The Hagiography Society is eager to collect a body of materials that will support our members in their varied teaching commitments related to the study of holy people and their worlds, an initiative that builds on our Teaching the Saints at ICMS 2021 and which reflects our commitment to supporting teaching in global sanctity. We are seeking the following teaching-related materials related to hagiography, broadly conceived: syllabi, single lesson plans, bibliographies, and videos.

In order to be most helpful, we plan to create a searchable collection on our website. We will be sending out a request via email for these materials soon, and we encourage you to prepare submissions in advance. Our request will come with the following form:

Syllabi

- Drop down menu (select as many as you wish)
 - Field of instruction
 - Art History
 - Ethnic Studies
 - English
 - Gender Studies
 - Philosophy
 - Religious Studies
 - Theology
 - Women's Studies
 - Other
 - Student audience
 - Undergraduate
 - Lower division
 - Upper division
 - Graduate
 - Country(ies) or region(s)
 - Time period
 - Key words (up to six)—faculty member to provide

Videos of high content quality

- Drop down menu (select as many as you wish)
 - Field of instruction
 - Art History
 - Ethnic Studies
 - English
 - Gender Studies
 - Philosophy
 - Religious Studies
 - Theology
 - Women's Studies
 - Other
 - Student audience
 - Undergraduate
 - Lower division
 - Upper division
 - Graduate
 - Country(s) or region(s) the video covers
 - Time period the video covers
 - Key words (up to six) —faculty member to provide



Outlier Saints: The Case of Zita of Lucca

by Mary Harvey Doyno (Humanities & Religious Studies, California State University, Sacramento)

In my book *The Lay Saint: Charity and Charismatic Authority in Medieval Italy, 1150-1350* (Cornell Univ. Press, 2019) I dedicate a chapter to exploring the rise and significance of Zita of Lucca's civic cult. Zita (d. 1278) was the domestic servant of a prominent Lucchese family, the Fatinelli. She earned a saintly reputation not only for her religious rigor, her charity and the many miracles that sprang out of those twin pursuits but also for her dedication to hard work. As her late thirteenth-century *vita* (anonymously authored but likely the work of a canon from her neighborhood church, San Frediano) describes, no matter how taken up Zita was by her prayers, visions or concern for the poor, this serving saint always made sure her employer's floors were mopped and their bread perfectly baked. And it wasn't just the Fatinelli whom Zita impressed: her Lucchese neighbors were keenly aware that they had a saint living amongst them. After her death, as her corpse was carried towards its burial plot, a great crowd jockeyed to touch Zita and rip off a bit of her clothing so that they might be left with a tangible memento of their saintly neighbor.

A key part of my interest in Zita's civic cult sprang from the way in which it exhibited traits so distinct from the tropes and conventions I had identified in other lay civic cults in communal Italy. Unlike those other cults, Zita's cult made no mention of her undergoing a conversion experience (she had simply always demonstrated saintly behavior) and said nothing of Zita having the kind of ongoing relationship with a confessor that marked the religious lives of other female lay saints such as Margaret of Cortona or Umiliana dei Cerchi. Moreover, I noticed that much of Zita's saintly profile articulated ideas and ideals that I was coming increasingly to associate with the civic cults awarded to laymen. Not only was Zita celebrated for seamlessly integrating her penitential life with her working life (as was Pier 'Pettinaio' of Siena), and for taking extensive pilgrimages (as was Giovanni of Urbino), the descriptions of her spiritual ecstasies, while often dramatic and arresting, retained an insistently outward focus. Like so many of the laymen I was studying, Zita's *vita* remained uninterested in reporting how she interpreted or processed her moments of spiritual frenzy.

But an aspect of this outlier cult that I didn't explore and which continues to perplex me is the mendicant orders' seeming disinterest in Zita. Unlike every other thirteenth-century female lay saint I studied (Margaret of Cortona, Rose of Viterbo, Umiliana dei Cerchi, Vanna of Oriveto, and Margaret of Città di Castello), Zita would not be subject in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries to the historical revisionism Alison More has recently explored in her work on female religious identity. Thus, Zita would never be reimagined into a fictive history of the mendicant orders' early interaction with female lay penitents and would never be subject to a hagiographic campaign aiming to associate her with so-called "mendicant" traits or ideals. An absence I find all the stranger for the fact that when Zita's cult arrived rather mysteriously in England (renamed Sitha) in the fourteenth century, it seems to have been of particular interest to English Dominicans.

What was it about Zita's profile that kept her outside the purview of such fictive reimagining? Why did neither the Dominicans nor the Franciscans feel the desire, or perhaps more to the point, the need, to enfold her into their histories? Often our study of the cult of saints focuses on the myriad of meanings, connections, and charges placed upon these, to borrow Peter Brown's term, "very special dead." But I am left wondering what might be learned from thinking more about opportunities that are not taken up—saintly profiles that are passed over or discarded. What might they tell us about the complex web spun to create a saint's cult?



Sponsored Sessions at ICMS 2022: CFP

The Hagiography Society is sponsoring several panels and a roundtable at the International Congress of Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, May 9-14, 2022. The Congress will be online. Please submit paper proposals by September 15 to individual session organizers, noted below. Proposals for papers must include the paper's title and an abstract of no more than 300 words. If you wish to participate in the roundtable, please discuss the questions to be addressed in no more than 300 words. (Any abstract we do not accept we will forward to the Congress organizers to be considered for general sessions.) If you are a graduate student and your proposal is accepted, don't forget to apply for a Reames award to cover your registration fees (see above)!

Iberian Sainthood—Panel

The proposed panel invites papers dealing with the construction of Iberian sainthood and local saint-based pilgrimage in hagiographies from the Visigothic period through the 15th century. Special consideration will be given to papers dealing with high medieval (~900-1200) Iberian sainthood, since this area is especially neglected in scholarship. Possible topics include institutional or individual patronage of hagiography-writing, the function of hagiography in establishing destinations for pilgrims in Iberia, relationships between political, ecclesiastical, and/or monastic figures as represented in hagiographies, distribution and popular reception of hagiographies in Iberian societies, liturgical matters represented in hagiographies, manuscript studies of script/colophons/illuminations of hagiographies, and art and architecture associated with hagiographies and the pilgrimage sites associated with them. This list is simply illustrative and should not be considered exhaustive.

CONTACT: Kate Perl, cperl1@nd.edu, AND Anna Harrison, annaharrison@lmu.edu

Global Saints/Global Holiness—Roundtable

For this roundtable, we seek scholars from any and all disciplines (BOTH the non-Western/ non-Christian/non-European tradition as well as the Western/ Christian/European) for a comparative look at saints and saintliness across cultural, linguistic, religious, and geographic borders during the Middle Ages. The major driving question behind this roundtable is: what is holiness? What are the characteristics, definitions, categories, and considerations that make a person truly holy? Who/What determines when holiness has occurred or can be bestowed upon an individual?

CONTACT: Stephanie Grace-Petinos, stephanie.grace.petinos@gmail.com



Please submit
paper proposals
by September 15
to individual
session
organizers.



Sponsored Sessions at ICMS 2022: CFP, cont.

Saintly Dismemberment—Panel

This panel seeks to explore the notion of dismemberment with respect to sainthood. In its most obvious/frequent form, saints' bodies are dismembered postmortem in order to be distributed as relics. There are, moreover, several saints who experienced dismemberment during their lifetime, or for whom dismemberment was the cause of death and, thus, their vehicle for sainthood. This panel takes a broad look at the relationship between dismemberment and saints/sainthood/saintliness. Some possible themes/ ideas/questions that could be addressed in this panel are (though by no means an exhaustive list): Examining dismemberment through the lens of disability; the materiality of dismemberment; monstrosity and dismemberment; dismemberment vs healing; becoming 're'membered.

CONTACT: Stephanie Grace-Petinos, stephanie.grace.petinos@gmail.com

Saints and Animals II—Panel

Animals have figured significantly in the lives of the saints since early Christianity. This session explores the relationships between animals and saints and welcomes paper proposals that shed light on how these relationships deepen our understanding of themes pertinent to hagiography and/or animal studies. Themes paper proposals might address include but are not limited to: the function of animals within hagiographic texts, emotions binding saints and animals, animals themselves as exemplary or even saintly figures, animal stories within exempla literature, the symbolic meanings of animals, and theological approaches to animals and nature.

CONTACT: Catherine Mooney, catherine.mooney@bc.edu

Saints and Sermons—Panel (Cosponsored with the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society)

The ways in which medieval hagiography and sermon literature intertwined were myriad. The lives of the saints furnished preachers with lively material, preachers authored vitae collections, and some famed preachers were themselves canonized as saints (or treated as such). Manuscripts further reveal the enmeshed nature of both genres, as compilers and copyists organized sermons by saints' days and punctuated exempla collections with saints' stories. Each genre sought to edify and instruct their audiences toward moral behavior. Saints and Sermons, therefore, seeks to highlight new research that emphasizes the link between hagiography and sermons, which in turn will provide a promising venue for collaboration among scholars from these two overlapping fields.

CONTACT: Jessalynn Bird, jbird@saintmarys.edu AND Lydia Marie Walker, lmwalker@barton.edu

Other CFPs and Upcoming Conferences

September 17–18, 2021, (Online) “Amassing Perspectives: Current Trends in Syriac Iconography” The aim of this conference is to gather diverse scholars from across the globe whose research touches on all aspects of Syriac iconography and visual culture in any geographic region from late antiquity throughout the Middle Ages, to roughly 1400 C.E. We seek representation across academic disciplines—from art historians, archaeologists, historians, philologists, and more—and welcome the latest research being conducted on Syriac visual culture in any form. Papers might analyze the presence of varying artistic traditions in a particular monastic site or manuscript; evaluate unifying, transtemporal thematic imagery within any of the Syriac church traditions; propose a theoretical framework for the study of Syriac art; examine how medieval Syriac authors and theologians engaged with iconoclasm; study the migration and employment of artisans through architectural continuities between multiple sites; or consider the role of portable objects in artistic exchanges. This call is open to and aimed at scholars in all stages of their career, from graduate students to senior scholars. All are invited to submit abstracts related to any topic on Syriac iconography and visual culture from the late antique and medieval periods. Abstracts should be between 300–500 words and should be submitted to acady@princeton.edu by March 15, 2021. Women; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) scholars; and people traditionally underrepresented in Syriac studies are especially encouraged to apply. Authors will be informed in early April of the results, and accepted papers will be due September 1, 2021. The conference is hosted by the Department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University with support from the Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity (CSLA) and the Center for Collaborative History (CCH). Interested persons may contact Alyssa Cady (acady@princeton.edu) or Emily Chesley (echesley@princeton.edu) with any questions.

November 9th (Online) Saints in the Slavic Christian World (900-1400) Jointly hosted by Lund University, Ghent University and the Balkan History Association. The various Slavic realms of the early medieval period converted to Christianity in different pace and modes. This religious turn was also one that encompassed cultural and social change, which is mostly visible in the broad ranges of Slavic hagiographies and religious literature airings after 900. The formation of Slavic saints provides in-roads into the Slavic societies and their cultivation and localization of Christian culture and religion. The early Christian Slavic literature calls for further examination and assessment to shed further light on the shaping of culture, power, religion and language, which we hope this seminar will provide room for. In this seminar, a range of scholars are invited to present and discuss this particular Slavic sense of Christianity in order to bring together different perspectives and methods on the topic. We invite speakers to focus on the brokering and shaping of Slavic Christian culture, power, religion and language, as it comes to the surface in these types of sources. Papers focusing on conversion, power and hagiographies are in particular welcomed, as well as papers that discuss the development of Slavic saints and hagiographies in relations to Byzantium, Scandinavia or Western Europe. For more details on the website of the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University Please send a title, abstract (200 word) and short bio to emil.saggau@ctr.lu.se before 30. September 2021.

Other CFPs and Upcoming Conferences

4-7 July 2022, IMC 2022 The Not-So-Secret Lives of Mystics: Lived Experience in Mystical Texts. The Mysticism & Lived Experience Network is organizing a series of panels that seek to broadly probe the different ways in which the biographical and personal impacts the textual products surrounding medieval mystics and visionaries – both hagiographical and self-authored works. We seek expand current scholarly dialogue that explores how lived experiences can offer us new insights into the spiritual and theological outlook of individual mystics and holy persons. We will consider how approaching these texts from a lived experience perspective enables us to look beyond the overarching master tropes that are generally used to interpret such works: how the biographical is weaved into these master narratives of what are generally very genre-determined texts, creating individual versions that are shaped by their local context and personal memories. We welcome papers on subjects including but not limited to:

- Explore how lived experiences, such as illness, trauma, pain, childbirth, motherhood, or a life of celibacy, are reflected in the texts of medieval holy persons
- Lived experiences impact on the conceptualization of the sacred for visionaries and mystics * Methodological issues/approaches
- Construction of authority
- Reading hagiographical texts alongside visionary and/or self-authored works
- The influence of gender
- Queering the mystic canon through lived experience

We seek proposals for 15-20-minute papers, exploring how lived experience as a research lens can contribute to scholarship on medieval mystical or visionary texts. Please submit abstracts of up to 300 words to Amanda Langley and Einat Klafter at lifeandmystics@gmail.com by 12 September 2021. Additionally, as the IMC has proposed a combination of in-person and online papers, please indicate which option you would prefer.

New Books

Ashley, Kathleen, *The Cults of Sainte Foy and the Cultural Work of Saints* (Routledge, 2021). 20% Discount Available – enter the code FLY21 at checkout.

Mooney, Catherine M. *Clare of Assisi and the Thirteenth-Century Church: Religious Women, Rules and Resistance* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). Now in paperback, 25% Discount Available- enter promo code FA21PP (Americas or Caribbean), elsewhere FA21PP.

Rigopoulos, Antonio, *The Hagiographer and the Avatar: the Life and Works of Narayan Kasturi* (State University of New York Press, 2021).

Vuille, Juliette, *Holy Harlots in Medieval English Religious Literature: Authority, Exemplarity and Femininity* (Boydell & Brewer, 2021).

