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HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY

Annual Dues

All Hagiography Society members should have received a message in mid December from Secretary-Treasurer Amy Ogden letting you know either that you are in good standing or need to send in dues for the coming year. Please note: if you did not receive a message, a security measure may have created an obstacle. Please write to Amy at avo2n@virginia.edu to let her know so that she can use a different method for sending status messages. Don't risk inadvertently losing your membership!

Medieval Academy of American 2022 Fellows

The Medieval Academy just announced the 2022 Class of MAA Fellows, and it includes Laura Ackerman Smoller, Professor of History at the University of Rochester, and member of the Hagiography Society. Her second monograph: *The Saint and the Chopped-Up Baby: The Cult of Vincent Ferrer in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), was the winner of the 2016 La corónica International Book Award. Congratulations to Laura!

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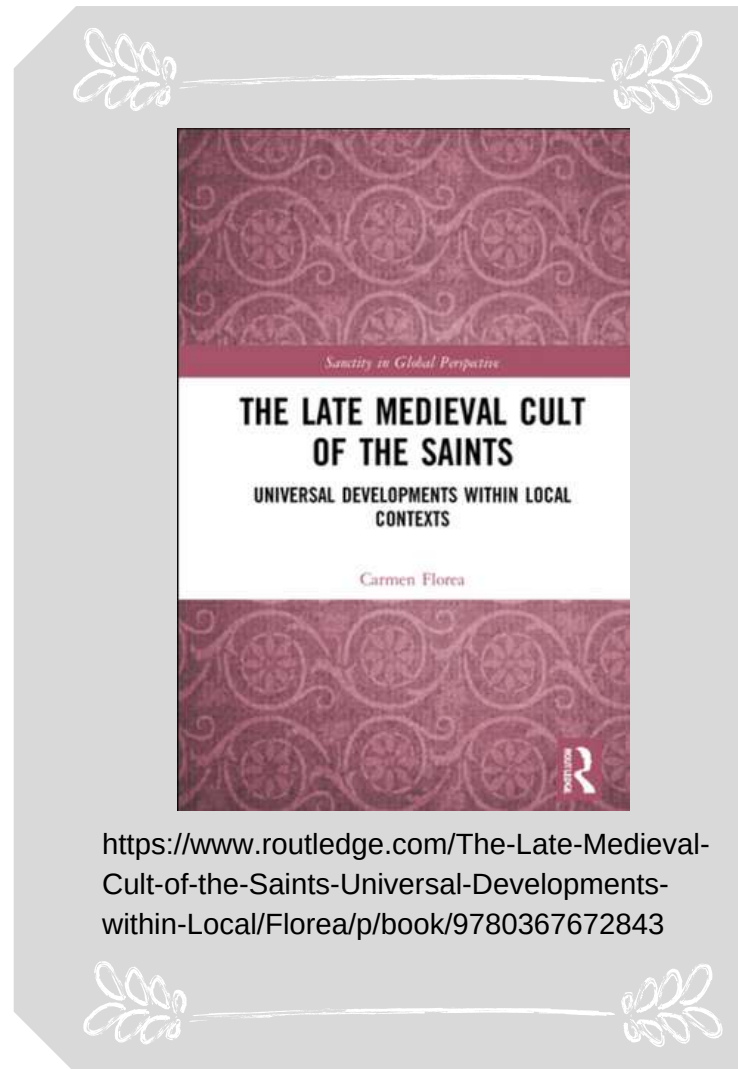
Sanctity in Global Perspective: New Book

The next book in our book series is just out and available for purchase!:

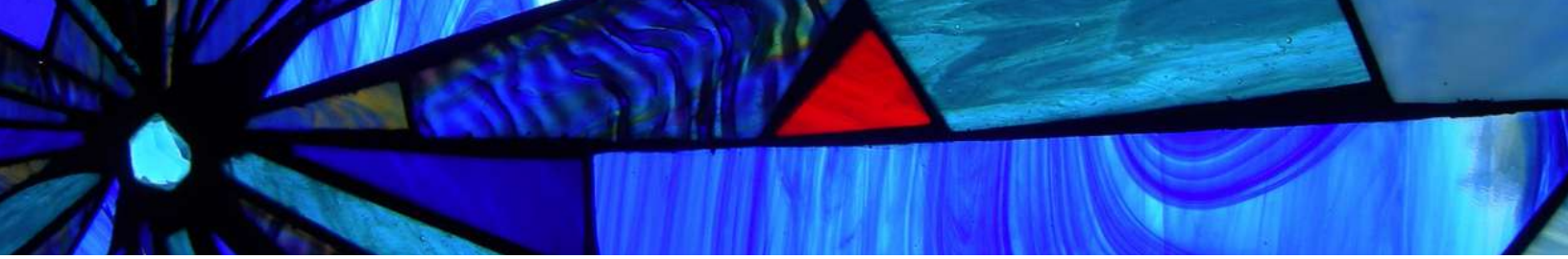
The Late Medieval Cult of the Saints: Universal Developments within Local Contexts by Carmen Florea, lecturer in the Department of Medieval, Early Modern and Art History, Faculty of History and Philosophy at Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania.

This is a book that explores the nature of sainthood in a region at the margins of medieval Latin Christendom. Defining the model of sanctity that characterized Transylvania between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, the study considers how the cults of saints functioned within specific local social and cultural contexts. Analyzing case studies from a multi-ethnic region influenced by both the Latin and Eastern Christian traditions, this book provides a close reading of little-surveyed primary sources and offers a comprehensive understanding of sainthood in Transylvania, enhancing the broader study of medieval saints' cults and their relationship to social power structures.

It will be of great interest to scholars of medieval religion, researchers in medieval studies, and religious studies scholars engaged in comparative research.



<https://www.routledge.com/The-Late-Medieval-Cult-of-the-Saints-Universal-Developments-within-Local/Florea/p/book/9780367672843>



Translating to Resist Betrayals

by Amy Ogden (Department of French, University of Virginia)

How would modern ideas of the Middle Ages shift if every member of the Hagiography Society, alone or working in groups, published a translation of a hagiographic text? In my field—French literature—such an effort would, first and foremost, vastly increase non-specialists’ access to premodern sources that feature women and people from the eastern Mediterranean and from Africa. With such access, more people could see for themselves how early texts can challenge modern misconceptions of the past. Think of all the studies HS members have published showing how sources in many traditions challenge common ideas about medieval social groupings and relationships, reveal concerns about daily life absent from other types of texts, and communicate a rich diversity of perspectives even within seemingly homogenous communities. The audiences for these studies, however, usually do not include many non-specialists.

Writing this in Charlottesville just after the trial of those who, in 2017, incited violence here among a mob bearing medieval-inspired symbols, I am acutely aware that medievalists bear a large part of the responsibility for what the public knows about the Middle Ages. The stories told about the past to give authority to stories about the present depend significantly on the primary sources the general public can access. The more people hear and read for themselves the plurality of voices from earlier times, the harder it is for white supremacists to claim that their ideal society of simple racial, gender, and religious hierarchies ever had a stable, realized past. Having more readers from more backgrounds engage with hagiographical sources leads to new ways of understanding history, illuminating not only the complexity of human relations over time and the harm of romanticizing the past, but also the historical depth of non-normative ideas that may be in line with more people’s aspirations now.

Hagiography Society members have already published a number of translations of texts about holy people, but there is a lot more work to do. If we in the HS know how fascinating and challenging the full range of our sources are—and how useful they could be in our classrooms and beyond—what keeps us from putting more of them in more hands? The foremost cause, I suspect, is the perception that translation is impossibly hard: *traduttore, traditore* – *traduire, c’est trahir* – the translator (inevitably) betrays. My experiences translating *The Life of St Eufrosine* and consulting on a translation of Wace’s *Lives of St Margaret and St Nicholas* have convinced me both that the dictum is valid and that it hides the delights and rewards of the challenge. (cont.)



It is undeniably true that no translation ever fully captures the original. However, a facing page format to show the original and plenty of annotations to explain choices can overcome many limitations. Even when these options aren't possible, a thoughtful translation contributes enormously to broadening knowledge of the source. Collaboration can also make longer and more difficult works much easier to translate.

A second cause for hesitation is likely that this hard work risks remaining unrewarded in our profession, with its continuing worship of the scholarly monograph. This situation necessitates two courses of action. Untenured and non-tenure-track scholars can inquire about their institutions' policies: it may well be that a university is more enlightened and would welcome translations as scholarship. If not, translation is an activity that can benefit from slow progress, and putting in fifteen minutes every so often can lead to a publishable piece (and complement work on an analytical study of the source) without detracting from "countable" publications. Tenured scholars can work on their own translations and they can strive to ensure that promotion and tenure committees and upper administration officials understand, first, the scholarly effort involved in translating medieval texts and, second, the long contribution of translations to the scholarly community and beyond. After all, how many of us teach translations published decades ago while we rarely cite criticism more than twenty years old?

Translating necessitates some betrayal, but not translating allows even greater betrayals. If we want our sources to reach the widest audiences, we can't just write about them: we need to make the texts themselves accessible. A number of publishers are keen to help us do so, including our own Hagiography Society Book Series, which welcomes translations from all traditions and time periods. You can find more information about our series at https://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page_id=80.



Call for Publication in an Edited Volume

Saints and Animals

Editor: Mathilde van Dijk (University of Groningen)

Power over the animals has been a characteristic of saints from their beginnings in the early Church. By no means restricted to Christian saints, but including similar figures in other religions, this volume will explore how the connection between those very special humans and animals is constructed: the saint as a human rising beyond humanity, touching the divine, and the animal as a creature, which is connected to and yet removed from humanity. To what extent do these creatures have agency like humans? The existence of animal trials would suggest that they do, but does this go for all animals in the same way? The volume will also explore the symbolic value of animals, how they function as symbols of virtues and vices, and the educational uses of both saints and animals: how were saints, in their connections to animals, portrayed as being models, or, for that matter, how did the animals function in this respect?

This volume will operate on the cusp of two most exciting fields: hagiographical and animal studies. Although present at least from the seventeenth century, hagiographical studies became a main part of cultural historical studies beginning in the 1960s. More recently, animal studies began to flourish under the influence of genetic and ethological research, which minimizes the boundaries between humans and animals, and the current ecological crisis, in which the status of humankind as the lord of Creation is increasingly questioned.

We are in conversation with the editors of the Hagiography Society Book Series, Sanctity in Global Perspective about publishing this volume.

Please send your abstracts by February 1st, 2022 to mathilde.van.dijk@rug.nl.

Time Schedule:

- February 2022 Abstracts
- October 2022 Article, First Draft
- Jan 2023 Article Second Draft
- June 2023 Publication

Call for Papers

20-24 June 2022 (virtual format), Mysticism and Lived Experience Network [M&LEN] Annual Conference, “Charity and Poverty in the Lives and Works of Medieval Mystics”: Charity and poverty were fundamental values of medieval religious life. Theologians emphasized the importance of charity, with Thomas Aquinas naming it as the foundation of all virtues, while poverty was embraced as an apostolic way of life, particularly with the birth and proliferation of the mendicant orders in the late-medieval period. References to these two virtues also appear frequently in mystical texts, and intersect in multiple ways in the biographies and views of medieval visionaries. This year, the annual M&LEN conference will explore the role that charity and poverty play in the lives and texts of mystics. We will investigate how these virtues are employed in textual production and whether they are prioritised by mystics or are supplanted by other values more central to the visionary figure. We welcome papers on subjects including but not limited to:

- Discussions of poverty/charity within visions and dialogues with the Divine
- The personifications of poverty/charity in visions
- The role of poverty/charity in the vitae of mystics
- Different approaches to poverty/charity based on gender, class or historical context
- The place of charity/poverty vis a vis other values
- How charity/poverty are communicated to the mystic’s audience

We seek proposals for 15-to-20-minute papers, discussing the role of charity and/or poverty in a range of pre-modern mystical or visionary works. Please submit abstracts of up to 300 words to AJ Langley and Einat Klafter at lifeandmystics@gmail.com by January 15, 2022. *Please note that accepted papers and sessions will be recorded, and speakers may be asked to supply a copy of their paper or presentation for distribution to those with accessibility issues.

Have a CFP, new book,
or other news of
interest to our
members?
Please send an email
addressed to the
Communications
Chair, Lydia Walker at
lmwalker@barton.edu





Upcoming Workshop

11-12 February 2022, Fresno, CA (in person): “Sacred Space(s)”: Fresno State University will host the Mediterranean Seminar’s Winter 2022 Workshop on the topic “Sacred Space(s),” which will take place in person in Fresno, California on Friday 11 February and Saturday 12 February 2022.

In Antiquity, the Mediterranean was home to an array of agnate pagan, mythic, and magical religious traditions while in late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, it came to be dominated by the “Abrahamic faiths.” Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all developed in the Mediterranean region. They shared a common scriptural and theological tradition yet in many contexts saw each other as illegitimate competitors. Whether real or imaginary, sacred space played a critical role in the self-definition and ideological toolkit of the religious traditions of the premodern Mediterranean. In the intense environment of Mediterranean cultural interaction, religious leaders, political elites, and believers of differing confessions and praxes continually negotiated, appropriated, and shared sacred spaces. Sacred spaces were used to more sharply delineate communities or to blur lines between them. Religious and political elites supported or destroyed sacred spaces to enhance their own status and legitimacy. Texts, images, and buildings also signaled to their readers what type of space they were about to enter or were forbidden from entering. This workshop will explore how sacred spaces helped shape, and were shaped by, inter-communal dynamics in the Mediterranean from prehistory to the modern era.

This two-day meeting includes three workshop papers, a keynote presentation by Daniella Talmon-Heller (Middle Eastern Studies, Ben Gurion University of the Negev), three round-tables, and many opportunities for conversation and collaboration.

Lunch is provided. We regret that no travel support is available for non-presenting participants.

Registration is open until 1 February and is free.

Register here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeOYOF_cVdqHj1gYf3rhZgOdYGXdx2TyA5EmHLG7_o1BxIl2Q/viewform



New Books

Falcioni, Anna. *Lives of Saints, Men and Women: Franciscans in Pesaro (XIII-XV Centuries)*. Studi Storici Carocci, 2021.

Lifshitz, Felice. *Writing Normandy: Stories of Saints and Rulers*. Routledge, 2021.

Manterfield, John, ed. *The Life and Times of S Wulfram by William Glaister*. Grantham Civic Society, 2020.

Newman, Barbara. *The Permeable Self: Five Medieval Relationships*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021.

Piro, Sylvain. *Christine l'Admirable: Vie, chants et merveilles. éditée et traduite du latin en collaboration avec Armelle Le Huërou*. Vues de l'esprit, 2021.

Rotman, Tamar. *Hagiography, Historiography, and Identity in Sixth-Century Gaul. Rethinking Gregory of Tours*. Amsterdam University Press, 2021.

Rousseau, T. K. *The Limits of Pilgrimage Place*. Routledge, 2022

Watt, Mary Alexandra. *Dante's Golden Legend: Auto-Hagiography in the Divine Comedy*. Mercer University Press, 2021.