

HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY

A Message from Laura Ackerman Smoller, President-Elect

As I prepare to step into Cathy Mooney’s very big shoes and to follow in the footsteps of Sherry Reames, Kathy Ashley, Alison Frazier, and Neslihan Senocak, I find myself humbled and overwhelmed by gratitude.

I first became aware of the Hagiography Society, as best I can remember, through a conversation with the late Tom Head, who was then putting together his hagiography reader and who kindly invited me to contribute some translations from the canonization process for Vincent Ferrer. He also soon invited me to one of the Society’s fabled summer meetings, a symposium entitled “Sanctity and Ritual” held at an odd religious retreat called Ammerdown, a few miles outside of Bath, England, in July 1998. There I learned that Tom Head’s generosity to a young scholar just starting to work on saints was typical not just of Tom (whose amazing web pages are still in incredible resource for researchers), but of the Hagiography Society as a whole.

I’m not sure that I ever encountered deeper intellectual stimulation—or had a better time—at an academic meeting than I did at Ammerdown. By day, we sat around a single seminar table listening to and discussing one another’s take on ritual in our own sources. At night, we repaired to the pub to watch World Cup matches, and as I recall, several participants had brought their spouses with them, and they joined us with great gusto in these viewings. I was in Europe that summer with my husband and two sons in tow—they had just finished third and fifth grades—, and the organizers of the symposium graciously fitted us up in a room with bunk beds for the kids. Society members seemed to vie with one another in seeking to make my children part of the fun. George Ferzoco especially delighted them with his trick of turning his eyelids inside out and tantalized them that on our excursion we might see a sculpture of a man “hanging the moon.” The level of conviviality at Ammerdown was exceeded only by the truly appalling quality of the food, and that became something of a running joke amongst us all. (The highlight of the dinners, hands down, was when we were served Spam.) Every evening, Jane Tibbets Schulenberg would appear before my family and cheerfully ask, “Well, boys, what do you rate it tonight?” (cont.)

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I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that the few days at Ammerdown changed the course of my career. I encountered there scholars from a range of countries and disciplines, persons who never failed to answer even the most naïve of my questions with respect and genuine help and who listened to my own developing ideas about Vincent Ferrer with a kindness I will never forget. They welcomed me into a scholarly conversation and demonstrated by example true intellectual community. Their openness and support emboldened me to take intellectual risks I might never have dared, and I became a better historian for it.

At the time, what struck me was the way in which in the Hagiography Society senior scholars more or less naturally folded us less experienced researchers under their wings. It did not then occur to me that the benefit might be mutual. But over the years, I've come to appreciate how much I am continually learning from the fresh perspective of those just starting out in the field.

For that reason, I've come to love the part of the annual luncheon at Kalamazoo (so greatly missed during COVID) in which Society members bring forward ideas for sessions at subsequent meetings. The breadth of topics, the creativity of approaches, the temporal and geographic expansion of our interests, and the excitement of looking at old sources in new ways all have been inspiring and invigorating to me. I often bring home from this luncheon ideas that I take straight into my classroom. My students have never responded with such enthusiasm as they did when I coupled a visit by Leah DeVun with readings from Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt's *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*, a volume

that grew out of sessions sponsored by the Hagiography Society and suggested at one of those luncheons. Frankly, I can't wait to come home from this May's meeting with another set of new ideas to spring on my students this fall.

For all of this, I am grateful: grateful to Sherry Reames, whose warmth and generosity still permeates the work of the Society, grateful to those who have shepherded it in subsequent years and whose vision has broadened the Society's work, grateful to those who quietly keep it running day to day, and grateful to the members of the Society who continue to share in its spirit of cooperative and open inquiry.

And, hence, I am humbled. It is no small thing to carry on the work of those who have so ably led this group before me. The challenges facing those currently engaged in humanistic inquiry are enormous, and the prospects of those seeking to enter an academic career are bleak. But I tell myself that I can depend on the generosity of the Society's members to assist me in this new undertaking, just as they did when I first began writing about saints. I hope that my reminiscences might inspire each of you to reflect upon the Hagiography Society's role in your own career, and I invite you to share with me your memories and your hopes for the Society's future. I'll be counting on your help.

Laura Ackerman Smoller,
President-Elect
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Annual Business Meeting at the International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University

When and where?: May 12th, 12:00–1:00 p.m. in the Fetzer Center 1035

The Executive Committee is excited to hold its annual business meeting luncheon at ICMS! The annual meeting provides an opportunity to chat with folks working on similar topics in hagiography. It will also feature the presentation of awards and updates on our book series. We will also vote on the sponsored sessions for the 2024 conference. Please email your panel proposals for the 2024 conference to the Programming Chair, Anna Harrison anna.harrison@lmu.edu by Friday, May 5th. Feel free to email Anna with inquiries, ideas, and suggestions!

Preview for HS Elections, 2024

The Hagiography Society will be soliciting nominations for three positions on the executive committee: Program Chair, Communications Chair, and Outreach Chair. These positions carry a three-year term beginning at the International Congress on Medieval Studies held at Kalamazoo Michigan, 2024. Descriptions for all three positions can be found below and in the Hagiography Society Constitution on the Society's website (http://www.hagiographysociety.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/01/HS_Constitution2020official.pdf). Those interested in running for each position are welcome to contact the current office holders.

- Communications: Lydia Walker (lmwalker@barton.edu)
- Programming: Anna Harrison (anna.harrison@lmu.edu)
- Outreach: Stephanie Grace-Petinos (stephanie.grace.petinos@gmail.com)

It should be noted that all 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. If you would like to nominate either yourself or someone else, please email the Treasurer, Amy Ogden at avo2n@virginia.edu. If you are not interested in running but would like to serve on the nominations committee for this election, please put your name forth as well.

Sponsored Sessions at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, WMU (May 11-13)

Thursday 10 am, Session 14, Bernhard Center 211

The Two Faces of Illness: Suffering and Miraculous Healings by Holy Individuals

Presider: Matthew W. Brunit, Univ. of Mary

Organizer: Anna Harrison, Loyola Marymount Univ. and Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Univ. of Pittsburgh.

- When Friends Are Suffering: Compassion and Miracle in the Canonization of Delphine de Puimichel, Nicole Archambeau, Colorado State Univ.
- Trauma Science and the Expressive Writing of Julian of Norwich, Kayleen J. Bobbitt, Independent Scholar
- Framing Visual Impairment in Thirteenth-Century Hagiographies, Donna Christine Trembinski, St. Francis Xavier Univ.

Thursday, 1:30pm, Session 68, Valley 3 Stinson 305

Teaching the Saints: “Autohagiography” (A Roundtable)

Presider: Anna Harrison, Loyola Marymount Univ.

Organizer: Anna Harrison

A roundtable discussion with Catherine R. Osborne, Hispanic Theological Initiative; Jennifer Fast, Newman Theological College; June-Ann Greeley, Sacred Heart Univ.; Mark Weedman, Johnson Univ.; and Meg Cotter-Lynch, Southeastern Oklahoma State Univ.

Friday, 10:30 am, Session 158, Fetzer Center 1040/1050
Saints and Their Day Jobs

Presider: Thomas R. Liszka, Pennsylvania State Univ.–Altoona

Organizer: Anna Harrison, Loyola Marymount Univ. and Thomas R. Liszka

- “A rough and work-worn man”: Francis of Assisi and Manual Labor, Holly J. Grieco, Siena College
- “L’habit ne fait pas le moine”: Professional and Spiritual Conflict in the Life of St. Martin of Tours, John Jay Thompson, California Polytechnic State Univ.–San Luis Obispo

- Remembering Devotional Labor: Mechthild of Diessen’s Work as a Scribe, Martha G. Newman, Univ. of Texas–Austin
- Bishop, Royal, and Monk Saints as “Temple Priests”? Testing Ian Wood’s “Temple Society” Thesis on Seventh-Century Merovingian Hagiographies (St. Eligius, St. Bathild, and St. Columbanus), Silvio Lorenzo Ruberto, Univ. Utrecht

Saturday, 3:30 pm, session 438 in Schneider Hall 1245

Hagiographies as Relics: Medieval Vitae Rendered as Efficacious and Curative

Presider: Anna Harrison, Loyola Marymount Univ.

Organizer: Anna Harrison and Ella Johnson, St. Ambrose Univ.

- Hagiographic Relics in the English Birth Girdles, Mary L. Morse, Independent Scholar
- Holy Text as Relic? Gertrude of Helfta’s Miracle-Working Autohagiography, Ella Johnson
- Unreadable Texts and Translating Power in Lydgate’s *Life of St. Giles*, Clara Wild, Wake Forest Univ.
- Guthlac’s Psalter: Invented Relic or Translated Text?, Meredith A. Bacola, St. Paul’s College, Univ. of Manitoba

The Sherry L. Reames Graduate Student Travel Award Winners:

- #158, Bishop, Royal, and Monk Saints as “Temple Priests”? Testing Ian Wood’s “Temple Society” Thesis on Seventh-Century Merovingian Hagiographies (St. Eligius, St. Bathild, and St. Columbanus), Silvio Lorenzo Ruberto, Univ. Utrecht (1st Place)
- #434 Holy Strategy: Gender Transition in the Old English Life of Saint Smaragdus/Euphrosyne, Antonio Lenzo, Stanford Univ.
- #27 Holy Flesh, Holy Doubt: Race and Female Sanctity in the Old English ‘Life of Saint Mary of Egypt’, Thelma Trujillo, Univ. of Iowa



Sponsored Session at IMC, University of Leeds (July 3-6)

Tuesday, July 4 4:30-6pm, Session: 819 in the Clarendon Building: 1.06

NETWORKS AND ENTANGLEMENTS IN THE CULT OF SAINTS

Sponsor: Marco Institute for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville /
Hagiography Society / Episcopus: Society for the Study of Bishops & Secular Clergy in the Middle Ages
Organiser: Samantha Kahn Herrick, Department of History, Syracuse University, New York and Lauren
L. Whitnah, Marco Institute for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Moderator: Courtney Luckhardt, Department of History, University of Southern Mississippi

- Paper 819-a: Networks of Northumbrian Saints in the 12th Century (Language: English) Lauren L. Whitnah
- Paper 819-b: Martyrdom, Memory, and Reform: The Hirsau Network and Crusader Saints in the 12th Century (Language: English) John Eldevik, History Department, Hamilton College, New York
- Paper 819-c: Lazarus, Medieval Autun, and the Crusades (Language: English) Yossi Maurey, Department of Musicology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Paper 819-d: Narrative Networks and Entanglements in Apostolic Hagiography (Language: English) Samantha Kahn Herrick

HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY CFPS

The Hagiography Society typically sponsors paper and/or roundtable sessions at several conferences each year, and our membership generally writes the proposals for the sessions the Society submits to conference organizers.

For the next round of conferences, please keep in mind the following dates by which you will need to submit to the Society the proposals to be sponsored by the Society. Be in touch with me, Anna Harrison, Program Coordinator, at anna.harrison@lmu.edu to submit proposals and with any questions or comments on the process.

American Academy of Religion

Proposals due to HS APRIL 15, 2023
(Due to AAR early May, 2023)

Renaissance Society of America

Proposals due to HS on JULY 15, 2023
(Due to RSA around August 15, 2023)

International Congress of Medieval Studies (Kalamazoo)

Proposals due to HS on MAY 15, 2023
(Due to ICMS June 1, 2023)

International Medieval Congress—University of Leeds

Proposals due to HS on SEPTEMBER 1, 2023
(Due to IMC September 30, 2023)



CFPs and Conferences

October, 13-14, 2023. There Will Be Blood: The Medieval Blood Conference C. 1000-1150, Cambridge, St John's College. Medieval blood was life and death, sickness and health, salvation and damnation, brotherhood and otherhood. Blood was at the beating heart of many traditions of medieval thought, which this conference will explore over two days of stimulating panels and discussion at King's College, Cambridge. The theme is both rich and inherently interdisciplinary, and we warmly invite speakers from various backgrounds with interests including but not limited to the following areas over the period c.1000- C.1450:

- Devotional literature
- Medieval medical theory and practice
- Visual depictions of blood Kinship and consanguinity
- Blood in apocalypticism
- Menstrual blood
- Eucharistic theology

We are now accepting 300 word abstracts (deadline 7th June) at medievalbloodconf@gmail.com.

May 18–20, 2023, The Other Sister: New Research on Non-Cloistered Religious Women (1100-1800) University of Toronto (and online)

Throughout Christian history, there have been groups of women who lived recognizably religious lives but outside of traditional monastic structures. Despite leaving a substantial documentary and (in some cases) visual record, they are conspicuously absent from the dominant scholarly tradition. By defining and contextualizing the experiences of these women, we can begin to understand the ways they fit into the ecclesiastical and lay landscape of the worlds in which they lived. Our conference focuses on new research on non-cloistered women religious including (but not limited to) beguines, bizzoche, tertiaries, pinzochere, canonesses, and house ascetics. By looking beyond the limitations generally imposed by geography or time period, we

can begin to think of the connections that existed between these women and society, cloistered nuns, or clerics. In order to attend the conference via Zoom or in person, please email us at tos2023conference@gmail.com. For the full program see: <https://othersisters.hypotheses.org/>

June 26-27, 2023, The Medieval Church: From Margins to Centre, University of York (and online) This interdisciplinary two-day conference brings together medievalists from across the disciplines of history, archaeology, art history and literary studies in order to explore the relationships between the Church and the marginalized in medieval society – minority genders and sexualities, racial minorities, disabled people, non-Christians, and the poor. Download the full programme as a PDF, or consult the plain-text version [here](#). Registration is now open for the conference. There are three ticket rates: for those attending in-person, the cost is either £30 for the full rate, or £20 for unwaged/early career researchers/students. There is no charge for attending online, but you will need to register in order to receive the link to the livestream. Registration will close on 31 May.

Sept. 29th- Oct. 1- 19th Biennial Conference of the American Cusanus Society, Gettysburg PA

Our focus will be on war, peace, and religious violence during the long late Middle Ages in Europe and the Middle East. While we will look closely at the life and works of Nicholas of Cusa (1401- 1464), we will also consider major events before, during, and after his career. Our goal is to reevaluate options and actions for war and peace during this crucible moment in history with an eye, as always, toward historical lessons for the contemporary world.

<http://www.americancusanussociety.org/biennial-gettysburg-conference>



New Books

Bolle, Pierre. *Saint Roch. L'évêque Le Chevalier Le Pèlerin (Viie-Xve Siècle)*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2022.

Dalarun, Jacques et al. *A Female Apostle in Medieval Italy: The Life of Clare of Rimini*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022.

Lynch, Tom. *Making Miracles in Medieval England*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2023.

Mitrea, Mihail, ed. *Holiness on the Move: Mobility and Space in Byzantine Hagiography*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2023.

Smirnova Victoria. *Medieval Exempla in Transition: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogus Miraculorum and Its Readers*. Collegeville Minnesota: Cistercian Publications/Liturgical Press, 2023.

Temmerman, Koen De , Julie Van Pelt, and Klazina Staat, eds. *Constructing Saints in Greek and Latin Hagiography: Heroes and Heroines in Late Antique and Medieval Narrative*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2023.

Tully, Ken, and Pamela D. Johnston, eds. and trans. *The Hagiography of Saint Abercius: Introduction, Texts, and Translations*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2023.

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

