The Hagiography Society Article Prize

It was wonderful to see so many friends and members at the Hagiography Society Business meeting at ICMS. At that time, we officially announced the winner of the Hagiography Society Article Prize. Thank you again to our judges:

- Lezlie Knox (Marquette University, Department of History)
- Patrick J. Geary (School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study)
- Claire Waters (University of California at Davis, Department of English)

Their hard work directly strengthens the mission of the society. Thank you!

_The winner is:_ Austin Powell, "Manuscript Miscellanies, Jerome’s Letters to Women, and the Dominican Observant Reform in Fifteenth-Century Italy," _Renaissance Quarterly_ 74.3 (2021): 722-762. From the judges: "Extensive research with manuscripts and incunables allows Austin Powell to demonstrate how Observant Dominicans used Jerome’s letters and saintly exemplarity to justify their pastoral relations with women in an era when that role, as well as women’s spiritual activity, was often treated with suspicion. We were impressed both by his codicological work, as well as the ways he builds on earlier scholarship to extend models of Dominican _vitae Fratrum_ into the later Middle Ages."

The judges also selected an honorable mention: Mary Doyno, "Roman Women: Female Religious, the Papacy, and a Growing Dominican Order," _ Speculum_ 97.4 (2022): 1040-1072. From the judges: "As part of Mary Doyno’s argument about the complex and traumatic institutionalization of religious women in thirteenth-century Rome, she rehabilitates Sister Cecilia’s _Miracula beati Dominici_. More than the pious confabulations of an elderly nun, Doyno demonstrates how the text records the women’s lived religious experiences and negotiations with the nascent Dominican Order and ecclesiastical hierarchy."

The next article prize will be for essays and articles published in 2023 and 2024. Deadline for submission: January 31, 2025. Please send an electronic copy of your published submission to Laura A. Smoller (laura.smoller@rochester.edu). Submissions for the book prize are for books published in 2022 and 2023. Deadline: January 31, 2024.
HS Elections, 2024 – Step right up!

The Hagiography Society will soon 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. Brief descriptions for all three positions can be found below and longer ones 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.

But first! We need to constitute a Nominations Committee of a few good members able to make a very small time commitment, happy to meet others who share an interest in hagiography, and eager to ensure the vitality of the Hagiography Society. If you are willing to serve on the Nominations Committee—or even just curious about it—please contact the Secretary-Treasurer, Amy Ogden at avo2n@virginia.edu by September 15.

The Program Chair shall have primary responsibility for the Society's annual sessions at the ICMS in Kalamazoo and shall play as active a role as possible in other program-related activities of the Society. The Program Chair’s specific responsibilities include conducting the discussion of potential session topics at the Society's annual business meeting at the ICMS, drafting CFPs and related announcements, and soliciting suggestions for the speakers and session chairs on a given topic and inviting them to participate.

The Communications Chair shall have primary responsibility for the Society's newsletter and website. The Communications Chair’s specific responsibilities include writing and editing the Society's newsletter, collaborating with the other officers to compose and edit new content for the website, and regularly verifying the quality and currency of the material posted on the website.

The Outreach Chair shall have primary responsibility for the Society’s digital platforms (listserv and social media accounts), recruitment, and nominations, with the goals of conveying Society news broadly and encouraging active participation in the Society. The Outreach Chair’s specific responsibilities include maintaining the social media accounts and the listserv, working to circulate Society news via the social media.

Timetable for elections...

- September 30 – Nominations Committee constituted and begins soliciting nominations
- Late January/early February – candidates’ brief statements circulated to the HS membership.
- Late February/early March – all members in good standing receive a link to their online ballot by March 30 – election results announced on the website & listserv.
CFPs, International Congress on Medieval Studies (May 9-11, 2024), Kalamazoo

All those interested in presenting a paper are encouraged to submit their abstract directly to the Confex system (https://wmich.edu/medievalcongress/submissions#papers) before **September 15th**. Please note the modality listed for the sessions (in person or hybrid).

**Saints and Crisis: Saints and the End of Days (In person, ID: 4986)**
Organizers: Hannah Jones (hjones3@binghamton.edu) and Laura Ackerman Smoller (laura.smoller@rochester.edu)
This panel explores the relationship between saintly charisma and apocalyptic expectations through considering the ways in which holy persons (broadly defined) deployed visions, devotional practices, and other mystical experiences to proclaim the nearness of End Times or even to insert themselves (or their contemporaries) into the apocalyptic drama. To what extent did an apocalyptic sensibility empower such persons to challenge or subvert existing social, religious, political, or gender norms? How did others react to or appropriate their words and actions as prophetic authority? The organizers would especially welcome proposals from a variety of disciplines, geographical areas, and time periods.

**Saintly Voices, Worldly Noise: Sounding Nature and the Supernatural in Medieval Hagiography (In person, ID 4999)**
Organizer: Catherine Saucier, Catherine.Saucier@asu.edu
This session explores the intersection of natural and supernatural sounds associated with saints and their environments, as depicted in a variety of media. From the sweetness of angelic singing to the terror of thunderous noise to the mystery of unintelligible speech, sanctity was signaled through a broad spectrum of sounds that merit interpretation. What motivated such variety of saintly sounds? How did they interact with the sonic environment of the natural world? How were they perceived and how can they be understood? Hagiographic analysis might engage with any number of other methodologies drawing from, but not limited to, mythology, biblical exegesis, environmental studies, and sensory perception.

**Broken Bodies: Relic-Making and Embodiment in Hagiographic Sources (Hybrid, ID: 4994)**
Organizer: Lydia Walker (lmwalker@barton.edu)
The role of relics in the development and perpetuation of the veneration of holy people remains a rich topic for investigating the multifaceted notions of the human body. Transported, encased, and venerated, these varied processes by which pieces of holy bodies were imbued with power, started with the physical fragmentation of a human body. This session seeks papers that explore evidence for the process of fragmentation as revealed in hagiographical materials—understood broadly. How were bodies broken and distributed? How do textual and visual sources treat these fragmentations? Endeavoring to centralize the human body in the consideration of the relic-making processes, this session aims to contribute to scholarly conversations on both bodies and sanctity.
Spiritual G(Race): Race & Medieval Hagiography (In person, ID 5002)
Organizers: Thelma Trujillo (thelma-trujillo@uiowa.edu) & Amy Ogden (avo2n@virginia.edu)
Many scholars have examined medieval hagiography for gender, sexuality, and the body; however, few have considered how sainthood can be inflected by the category of race. Race is a social-cultural position that changes over time and place, moving beyond language into institutional practices used to structure systems of power. Furthermore, race is an interpretive lens through which we can understand how a community viewed themselves and others in their respective historical moments. This session invites papers that consider race and medieval saints. Topics include but are not limited to: How are multiracial experiences represented in hagiographical accounts? In what ways can we productively integrate the critical study of race and medieval hagiography? How does religion accommodate or erase racial and ethnic identity? How is spiritual grace and race configured in visual representations of saints? How have Black, Indigenous, and people of color claimed medieval saints in their own communities?

Saints and Sermons (In person, ID: 4987), co-sponsored by the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society
Organizer: Jessalynn Bird (jbird@saintmarys.edu)
Building on the interest from our successful co-sponsored panels at ICMS 2022, Saints and Sermons, 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.

Organizer: Jessica Barr (jbarr@umass.edu).
Early-career as well as more established scholars need help navigating the world of publishing; our jobs and the intellectual vibrancy of our field depend on it. This roundtable contributes to helping scholars at all levels of the profession understand the current publishing context. We invite submissions of short presentations (no more than 10 minutes) that explore the ins and outs of publication; offer advice for new, established, and/or prospective authors; or rethink aspects of academic publishing more generally. Editors and published authors with experience publishing in any genre are welcome to submit abstracts for this session.

Holy Bishops: Bishops, the Cult of Saints and Holiness in the Medieval World (ID: 5060), co-sponsored by EPISCOPUS
Organizer: Kyle C. Lincoln (kyle.c.lincoln@gmail.com)
Medieval Bishops and their clerics were intimately tied to the work of the cults of saints. The wide array of saints and their cults across Christendom--many of which were promoted, suppressed, surveilled and politicized by Bishops--speaks to the importance of both institutions in the Medieval Church. This session is intended to offer new and exciting contributions from scholars of the Medieval Secular clergy and Hagiography for Kalamazoo 2024.
CALL FOR PAPERS FOR SESSION PROPOSAL SPONSORED BY THE
HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY, INTERNATIONAL MEDIEVAL CONGRESS (IMC
2024), UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS JULY 1-4, 2024

In recent years, the word “crisis” has come to dominate the perception of and
discourse about the world we live in. Yet, “crisis” has been used to describe
many things in many time periods, including the Middle Ages. Scholars have
begun to see “crisis” as both a phenomenon to be explored and a category of
analysis to be applied. Yet, what exactly is a “crisis” and when they occurred,
for whom was it one? It could be personal, public, minor, or devastating. It can
include climate and environmental issues such as epidemics, famines, and
floods, political issues such as the breakdowns of dynasties and popular revolts,
and socio-cultural issues such as religious apocalypticism and the questioning
of faith. Furthermore, saints and other venerated individuals were present at
times of crisis. This panel, which is being sponsored by the Hagiography
Society, will explore the role these individuals, the texts about them in all
genres, and the concept of sanctity played before, during, and after “crisis”
broadly conceived. This panel is looking to explore the relationship between
sanctity and crisis from an interdisciplinary, multi-thematic, and global
perspective and welcomes papers that address any related questions, including
but not limited to:

- What role did saints or other venerated individuals play in times of crisis?
- What crises, broadly defined, did saints or other venerated individuals face?
- Did crises lead to veneration, sanctification, and canonization?
- What do hagiographic and hagiological texts tell us about crisis, broadly
defined?
- How were these texts and individuals, both real and constructed, used to
cope with crisis, both external and internal?
- How does the relationship between sanctity, texts, and crisis vary across
time, place, and tradition?
- By looking at these relationships, do the analytical category and actual
phenomenon of crisis -help us to deconstruct or at least problematize
sanctity, saints, or hagiographical texts?

Please submit a 250- 400-word proposal (in English) for a 15-20-minute paper,
a 100-word abstract of the paper, and a short CV, of no more than 800 words,
including e-mail, institution, and profession. The session is planned to be in-
presence. Please submit all relevant documents by 10 September, 2023, to
Nikolas Hoel at nohoel@neiu.edu and/or Silvio Lorenzo Ruberto at
s.ruberto@students.uu.nl
Saintly Reparations
Barbara Newman, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

This newsletter’s guest columnist is Prof. Barbara Newman who is the John Evans Professor of Latin and Professor of English, Classics, and History at Northwestern University. For over thirty five years now, Barbara’s esteemed work has shaped and contributed to the fields of hagiography, women’s spirituality, and medieval religious culture. Her two most recent publications, The Permeable Self: Five Medieval Relationships (Univ. Pennsylvania, 2021) and The Works of Richard Methley (Liturgical Press, 2021) speak to her continued innovative and cross-disciplinary approach, and point to her ongoing efforts to make the medieval world more accessible through the translation of primary sources.

What penance, what payment, could possibly compensate for the horrors of slavery—or of colonialism, or the Holocaust? Clearly none. Yet few public issues of our time arouse more controversy than this matter of reparations. The recent firestorm over the fall of affirmative action is a case in point. Even when the original wrong seems beyond repair, we feel a profound moral need to do something, to perform some kind of public penance. At the very least, what was stolen can be returned. Whether it be Native American remains or Egyptian mummies, art collections confiscated by Nazis or Greek antiquities in the British Museum, our institutions are regularly shaken by demands to repatriate plundered artifacts. Such gestures have been called “merely symbolic,” but when the actual harm to human lives is beyond telling (let alone mending), symbolism matters.

We may think of reparations as a uniquely modern issue, but it is no such thing. I would argue that the penitential character of medieval hagiography, especially in its more theatrical forms, stems in part from the saints’ awareness that the rich have always robbed the poor, while elites profit from the labor of the marginal. This theme is especially prominent in vitae from the thirteenth century, an age when the oppressions of the old feudal economy competed with those of the new mercantile economy. Saints who stemmed from wealthy backgrounds (as most did) often began their careers by trying to expiate the guilt of wrongful gains. When young Francesco di Bernardone stripped bare before the bishop of Assisi, renouncing his father’s trade, he was not only choosing “naked to follow the naked Christ” but also to live in solidarity with the poor, who had no access to the commercial profits that had enabled his lavish lifestyle. Angela of Foligno, one of the more flamboyant Franciscan mystics, longed to divest herself of her ample possessions, but passing through the needle’s eye was not easy. When she sold her country villa to give to the poor (“it was the best property that I owned”), many said she was possessed by the devil, and at least sometimes she agreed with them. So great was her need for public, theatrical penance that she desired to walk naked through the streets, with rotting fish and meat tied around her neck, while everyone mocked her.

continued
Saintly Reparations

Medieval preachers’ denunciations of usury can make us nervous, partly because they often had anti-Semitic overtones, partly too because our own bank accounts depend on the practice. But the “unnatural” way that money could breed money, with no equal exchange of goods or services, aroused reformers’ fervent antipathy. Women who inherited such wealth could endure agonies of contrition. Ida of Nivelles gave her community forty pounds from her inheritance, only to be tortured by scrupulosity—despite her friends’ assurance that her alms were not usurious but stemmed from her father’s “fully justified commercial efforts.” The young widow Yvette of Huy stripped her father’s house of furniture to give it piece by piece to the poor. But he retaliated by taking her children away, so to get them back she agreed to invest their patrimony at a profit. That decision led both Yvette and her hagiographer to tie themselves in moral knots: was it simple prudence or shameful avarice? The devil take the hindmost!

My favorite example of saintly reparations comes from the vita of a French nobleman, John of Montmirail. When this prince, once “famed for his great cruelty and power,” experienced an evangelical conversion, he became a Cistercian at Longpont. Sometime after his profession he devised an elaborate ceremony of reparations. En route to his old demesne of Oisy, he made a sort of anti-triumphal procession, including a surreal episode in which three hundred gravediggers in Cambrai “shouted with uproarious laughter as he passed.” Upon reaching the town of Havrincourt, John had arranged for a huge mound of silver to be amassed on a table and summoned his former peasants to attend. Kneeling before them in prayer, he begged both poor and rich to forgive his sins, then distributed the cash to “make restitution to them for the goods he had once seized.” But prayer and restitution were not enough; there had to be ritual theatre too. So the monk made a show of kissing the hands of all the peasants he had oppressed. When a “little old woman, poor and despicable,” refused her hand, he kissed her foot instead. One wonders if the hagiographer really got the saint’s point, for to him this woman still signifies “the very meanest class,” while he praises the prince-monk John as a “refined, elegant man.”

And there’s the rub. To our jaded sensibility, such saintly reparations can look like just another form of self-display or even narcissism. Humility is not always meek; it can be showier than pride. Not only penance, but even charity can have a self-aggrandizing character. Nevertheless, we too need ritual theatre, and some of the most successful social justice movements of our time have profited from it. The shenanigans of ACT UP and Greenpeace in the 1980s, or more recently, the toppling of Confederate monuments, have focused attention on urgent needs and brought many to a change of heart, leading in turn to legal remedies. If the short-lived Occupy Wall Street protest had had a saintly leader at its head, a Rosa Parks or a Cesar Chavez, might real reparations have been possible? We will never know.
February 22-24, 2024, New Work on Old Dance: A Pre-1800 Dance Studies Symposium (virtual),
What does it look like for historical expressions of dancing and movement arts to break out of traditional academic and performative boxes? How do scholars and practitioners escape the boundaries of discipline, chronology, geography, and methodology subsumed under the conventional appellation of “early dance”? Conversely, how can we demonstrate the ways in which our work complements and completes the work of other disciplines in light of these distinctions? This symposium explores early dance as an idea, a time, a place, a locus of cultural meaning and aims to draw together scholars working across disciplines and geographies who are nevertheless invested in “early” dance and movement.

We invite papers for this virtual symposium from scholars across disciplines, exploring aspects of dance and movement from all methodological perspectives, finding commonality in the antecedental nature of their work. Whether looking at the musical, literary, cultural, political, religious, or social contexts of dance, or expanding knowledge of its somatic and kinesthetic dimensions, we find unity in the chronological earliness of our work. We encourage papers that explore dance outside of Western European frameworks of knowledge and movement production, including comparative or transhistorical perspectives on pre-1800 or “early” dance.

Submission due date: Sept. 15, 2023. For more details please see: https://web.sas.upenn.edu/earlydance/call-for-papers/

International Medieval Congress: Leeds 1-4 July 2024, Sessions Sponsored by the Norse Hagiography Network, The Norse Hagiography Network invites proposals for papers on any aspect of Old Norse hagiography. As the thematic focus of this year’s IMC is ‘Crisis’, we particularly encourage abstracts exploring Norse hagiography through this lens. Crisis is at the heart of hagiography; saints’ lives take place at tense moments of social, political, and religious crisis. The saints themselves endure suffering and death – crisis can be both personal and societal. We hope the theme of ‘crisis’ will present opportunities to explore topics including but not limited to gender identity, religious conflict, education, translation, etc. within Old Norse hagiography.

This year, the Norse Hagiography Network is also organising a panel focusing on the symbol of the Cross in the medieval North. The Cross, once a symbol of crisis at the death of Christ, transforms into an important devotional object that inspires worship, pilgrimage, and religious writings. The importance of the Cross as a symbol in medieval Iceland and Scandinavia is understudied; the Network seeks to encourage and platform scholarship on the Cross in our Leeds panels.

Strand 1: Crisis in Norse Hagiography
- Hagiography as a reflection of social or cultural crisis
- Depictions of suffering, torment, and crisis within saints’ lives
- Intersectional approaches to crisis in the Norse Hagiographies

Strand 2: The Cross in the Medieval North
A special thematic strand exploring the symbol of the Cross in the medieval North. Papers can examine literary or material culture.

Please send abstracts of approximately 250 words to Natasha Bradley (natasha.bradley@lincoln.ox.ac.uk) by the 10th of September.
Saints in Crisis: Emotional Responses to Sanctity in the Middle Ages, International Medieval Congress (IMC 2024), July 1-4, 2024 University of Leeds

They were frightened and they hit in great pain their heads and hearts - How do people react when they encounter the sanctity of saints? How do they feel? Are they in crisis - crisis for whom? Does crisis change individuals?

The proposed session focuses on the emotional responses of individuals/communities in relation to sanctity. Suggested topics on the emotional reactions of individuals or communities, from any geographic area or time period (between 300-1500), may include, but are not limited to:

- Visual representations of emotions (behavior of the body, gestures, looks);
- Textual sources on emotional reactions (hagiographies, miracle stories, narratives in relation to crisis and sanctity);
- Medical (psychological, neurological, physical, and mental) responses;
- Liturgy and music culture;
- Regions/areas of communities (rural, urban, monastic, ecclesiastic), emotions, and sanctity;
- Living saints, discoveries of saints, relics – reliquaries, icons, and viewership reactions;
- Performance, sanctity, and emotions;
- External crisis/internal crisis, positive/negative emotional reactions, and sanctity;
- Conversion stories/lack of conversion/otherness and emotional reactions;

Submissions from a variety of disciplines are accepted including but not limited to: history, art history, visual culture, social history, cultural history, hagiography, religious studies, cultural studies, textual studies in a transdisciplinary perspective.

Please submit a 250-400 word proposal (in English) for a 15-20 minute paper. Proposals should have an abstract format and be accompanied by a short CV, of no more than 800 words, including e-mail, institution, and profession. The session is planned to be in-presence. Please submit all relevant documents by 12 September, 2023, to Andrea-Bianka Znorovszky, University of Salamanca: znorovszkyandrea@usal.es

Preaching and Conflict 24th International Medieval Sermon Studies Symposium Prague, 12–16 July 2024, Hosted by the Czech Academy of Sciences & Charles University

The International Medieval Sermon Studies Society invites early career researchers and established scholars to submit proposals for 20-minute papers on the subject of “Preaching and Conflict”. We welcome papers from all areas and religious traditions for the period of ca. 500–1500 CE. We also encourage proposals for the poster session. Topics may include but are not limited to:

a) preaching about conflicts - reflection of controversy in sermons - preaching as a discursive weapon - preaching and reconciliation - use of antithesis in religious rhetoric
b) conflicts about preaching - quarrels about the authority to preach - controversial content of sermons - preachers accused, investigated, and sentenced - turmoil aroused by preaching

Proposals should include paper or poster title, your name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), and e-mail address. Proposals for papers should additionally include an abstract of max. 350 words and an indication whether you plan to come in person or present virtually. Please send proposals before 1 November 2023 to Pavel Soukup (soukup@flu.cas.cz).

Call for Papers, International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University

May 9-11, 2024, HMML is soliciting papers for "Saints from East and West: Hagiography across Cultures and Languages."

For the session, HMML invites proposals for presentations on all aspects of medieval and early modern hagiography, with an emphasis on Eastern Christian traditions in languages such as Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Slavonic, and Arabic. Papers on Western traditions will also be considered, especially as they relate to Eastern hagiographical traditions. To make a proposal, visit https://wmich.edu/medievalcongress/call

Deadline: Friday, September 15
Call for Papers, 59th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, May 9-11, 2024, Online Event, This special session wishes to analyze the power of the Virgin Mary’s relics as triggers not only to processions and pilgrimages but also to Marian cults competition. The scientific importance of the session lies in understanding how these devotional objects could be perceived as activators of civic prestige. The possession of these relics encouraged a deep local cohesion outside the church. Therefore, how did the custody of a Marian relic interact and enhance rivalry between cities? And finally, how did the forgery and reproducibility of these relics contribute to developing the Marian cult by enhancing the creation of sacred topographies?

The session will encourage an interdisciplinary approach. Civic, political, and religious powers were deeply interconnected to control devotion to Marian relics. For this reason, these aspects will be examined in relation to the instauration of civic identity and religious authority to understand the adaptation of the Virgin’s cult to the local needs. This approach provides the groundwork for new perspectives on Medieval relics’ devotion in general. Moreover, the analysis of case studies will not only aim to highlight specific aspects and general phenomena in Late Medieval Europe but also to define identities and devotees’ experiences about relics.

Scholars are invited to submit a 300-word abstract, excluding references. Proposals should also include name, affiliation, email address, the title of the presentation, 6 keywords, a selective bibliography, and a short CV. Please send the documents to maryandthecity.imc2022@gmail.com by September 15, 2023.

Call for Papers, 59th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, May 9-11, 2024, "Making Space: Women's Agency within a Patriarchal Hegemony" This in-person panel, sponsored by the University of Notre Dame Medieval Institute, seeks to highlight the agentic force of medieval women who operated within the patriarchal norms of their time. Specifically, how did religious women, lay or monastic, live their own lives, create their own spaces, and make their own choices within the medieval patriarchal hegemony? We encourage papers which focus on hitherto understudied women or communities of women. Deadline for submission is Sept. 15, 2023. For questions or more information, email acrafto2@nd.edu
New Books


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