Entangled Hagiographies of the Religious Other

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Edited by

Alexandra Cuffel and Nikolas Jaspert

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INTRODUCTION

ON ENTANGLED HAGIOGRAPHIES: PERSPECTIVES AND RESULTS

NIKOLAS JASPERT

This book is about men and women who were considered venerable or even holy by their contemporaries or by later generations, about the places where they were revered and about the stories told about them. It is also about opposition to such figures and about the way narratives were adapted or even distorted in order to fulfil very tangible purposes in very concrete historical and social circumstances. The aim of this collection is to substantiate the claim that the field of hagiography provides important evidence for studying varied processes of transcultural interaction in premodern times.[1]

At first glance this might come as a surprise. The veneration of saints—or for that token of holy men and women in the wider sense of the word, including spiritual mentors, model individuals and charismatic masters[2]—might easily be seen as a practice that reifies cultural identities and

[1] This claim is not unique: Arietta Papaconstantinou, ed., *Writing 'true stories': historians and hagiographers in the late antique and medieval Near East*, Cultural encounters in the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010); Stanislava Kuzmová, Ana Marinković and Trpimir Vedriš, eds., *Cuius Patrocinio Tota Gaudet Regio. Saints' Cults and the Dynamics of Regional Cohesion*, Bibliotheca Hagiotheca. Series Colloquia, 3 (Zagreb: Hagiotheca, 2014); Dietlind Hüchtker and Kerstin S. Jobst, eds., *Heilig: transkulturelle Verehrungskulte vom Mittelalter bis in die Gegenwart* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2017). Thanks to Alexandra Cuffel (Bochum) for valuable advice concerning this introduction.

[2] Peter Robert Lamont Brown, "The rise and function of the holy man in Late Antiquity," *The journal of Roman studies* 61 (1971): 80–101; Susanna Elm and Naomi Janowitz, eds., *The "Holy Man" Revisited (1971–1997):*"Charisma, Texts, and Communities in Late Antiquity", *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 6,3 (1998); Averil M. Cameron, "On defining the holy man," in *The cult of saints in late an-*

creates cohesion by the forming of in and out-groups. Indeed, many cases prove that hagiography frequently fulfilled this function of a demarcational device that constructed common identities.[3] Such processes necessarily went hand-in-hand with othering and exclusion. Stories about saints and the religious Other thus provide important indications about how societies were thought to have seen and treated each other or their religious minorities, and—vice versa—how such minorities imagined their relationships with other religious communities. Evidently, such references to inter-faith relations cannot be read at face value, and neither do they stand for any one religion in its totality. This needs to be underlined and kept in mind from the outset, as there is a tendency to apply the ultimately contested notion of "religion" as a normalizing concept to describe non-Christian traditions.[4] Furthermore, even when using the term with all due caution,

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tiquity and the middle ages: essays on the contribution of Peter Brown, ed. James Howard-Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 27–43.

[3] Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Order and exclusion: Cluny and Christendom face heresy, Judaism, and Islam (1000–1150)* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 275–356; Ana Marinković and Trpimir Vedriš, eds., *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints*, Bibliotheca Hagiotheca. Series Colloquia, 1 (Zagreb: Hagiotheca, 2010), particularly Ildikó Csepregi, "The Theological Other: Religious and Narrative Identity in Fifth to Seventh Century Byzantine Miracle Collections," ibid, 59–72; Arietta Papaconstantinou, *Writing 'true stories;'* Robert Bartlett, *Why can the dead do such great things? Saints and worshippers from the martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); Nike Koutrakou, "Language and Dynamics of Communication in Byzantium: the 'Image' of the Arabs in Hagiographical Sources," in *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and Convivencia in Byzantine Society*, eds. Barbara Crostini Lappin and Sergio La Porta, Bochumer Alterumswissenschaftliches Colloquium, 96 (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2013), 45–62. Comparatively, on exegesis as a demarcational devices and the importance of "textual communities": Ryan Szpiech, ed., *Medieval exegesis and religious difference: commentary, conflict, and community in the premodern Mediterranean* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015); Richard E. Payne, *A state of mixture: Christians, Zoroastrians, and Iranian political culture in late Antiquity*, The transformation of the classical heritage, 56 (Berkeley University of California Press, 2015), 16–20, 37–40. See the theoretical thoughts on religious demarcation in Licia Di Giacinto's paper in this volume as well as Gerd Baumann and Andre Gingrich, eds., *Grammars of identity / alterity: a structural approach*, EASA series, 3 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004).

[4] On the contestations of the term "religion" see Derek R. Walhof and Darren R. Peterson, eds., *The invention of religion: rethinking belief in politics and history* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Jonathan Z. Smith, *Relating*

we need to bear in mind that it cannot fully reflect but actually tends to conceal the immense diversity of practices, loyalties, beliefs, doctrinal variations and individual commitments within any one religion. Only with these caveats in mind will the term be used in this volume.

The hagiographical Others who were fashioned in order to construct identity could take on many hues. They could be those coreligionists who are less perfect than the holy man or woman, i.e. those who are not able to comply with divine rules or expectations to the degree that exceptional figures can. In much more extreme cases, the other can also be the very Devil, Demons or other diabolic creatures or powers of Evil. In other instances in contrast, members of other cultural or religious communities fulfil this function of supplying a cultural counterpart. They are often depicted in negative terms in order to highlight and boost the morale of a given group. It is here that we enter the field of transcultural relations.[5]

Hagiography and Transculturation

Transculturation, that is the transformational effects of cultural interaction over extended periods of time, is often implicitly understood to have occurred in a more or less harmonious way. The liquid metaphors of movement used to describe such processes—flows, entanglements etc.—produce associations of unhindered transfer.[6] In order to extend our under-

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religion: essays in the study of religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[5] Stefano Mula, "Muhammad and the Saints: The History of the Prophet in the Golden Legend," *Modern philology* 101 (2003): 175–188, with an analysis to James of Voragine's sources; Marcus Graham Bull, "Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in miracle stories, c.1000–c.1200: reflections on the study of first crusaders' motivations," in *The Experience of Crusading, vol. 1: Western Approaches*, eds. Norman Housley and Marcus Bull (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 13–38; James Robinson, Lloyd de Beer and Anna Harnden, eds., *Matter of faith: an interdisciplinary study of relics and relic veneration in the medieval period* (London: British Museum Press, 2014), 151–294; Immacolata Aulisa, "La polémique entre Juifs et Chrétiens dans les textes hagiographiques du haut Moyen Âge," *Vetera Christianorum* 47 (2010): 185–219; Hans Martin Krämer, Jenny Rahel Oesterle and Ulrike Vordermark, eds., *Labeling the religious self and others: reciprocal perceptions of Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Confucians in medieval and early modern times*, Comparativ, 20 (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010); Arietta Papaconstantinou, *Writing 'true stories'*.

[6] On the transcultural approach, its potentials and shortcomings see: Michael Borgolte, Juliane Schiele et al., eds., *Mittelalter im Labor: die Mediävistik testet Wege zu einer transkulturellen Europawissenschaft*, Europa im Mittelalter, 10

standing of transculturation, however, one also needs to take oppositional forms of transfer processes into account. Put in general terms: Transculturation seldom takes place in an uncontested or even harmonious manner. To fully grasp transcultural dynamics, one rather needs to understand them as complex processes of constant realignment, oscillation and negotiation. This also includes determining to which extent negative depictions of members of other religious communities transported knowledge despite their original aim of building identity through othering. Seen from this perspective, certain negative depictions of individuals or groups adhering to alien religions can even be read as examples for "entangled hagiography". For on closer reading, some hagiographical texts show that writings aimed at contrasting the self and the other in fact might be strongly marked by the effects of mobility and transculturation. At times their authors reveal that they based their "enemy knowledge" precisely on exchange across religious divides. For example, even glaringly distorted and false depictions of Muslims, their beliefs and practices by Christian hagiographers of the high Middle Ages sometimes transport smatterings of factually correct information.[7] Anti-hagiography, i. e. "biographical narra-

(Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2008); Wolfram Drews, "Transkulturelle Perspektiven in der mittelalterlichen Historiographie. Zur Diskussion welt- und globalgeschichtlicher Entwürfe in der aktuellen Geschichtswissenschaft," *Historische Zeitschrift* 292 (2010): 31–59; Melanie Hühn, ed., *Transkulturalität, Transnationalität, Transstaatlichkeit, Translokalität: theoretische und empirische Begriffsbestimmungen*, RNE, 62 (Berlin: Lit, 2010); Michael Borgolte and Matthias M. Tischler, eds., *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen im mittelalterlichen Jahrtausend: Europa, Ostasien, Afrika* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2012); Madeleine Herren-Oesch, Martin Rüesch and Christiane Sibille, *Transcultural history: theories, methods, sources* (Berlin: Springer, 2013); Antje Flüchter and Jivanta Schöttli, eds., *The dynamics of transculturality: concepts and institutions in motion* (Cham: Springer, 2015); Netzwerk "Transkulturelle Verflechtungen im Mittelalterlichen Euromediterraneum (500–1500)," *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen: mediävistische Perspektiven* (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2016), 12–21, 63–65, 72–80; Hüchtker and Jobst, *Heilig*.

[7] Jerold C. Frakes, ed., *Contextualizing the Muslim other in medieval Christian discourse* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Nikolas Jaspert, "Mendicants, Jews and Muslims at Court in the Crown of Aragon: Social Practice and Inter-Religious Communication," in *Cultural Brokers at Mediterranean Courts in the Middle Ages*, eds. Marc von der Höh, Nikolas Jaspert and Jenny Rahel Oesterle, Mittelmeerstudien, 1 (Paderborn: Fink-Schöningh, 2013), 107–147, particularly 133–147; Christof Paulus, "Als die schwarzen Männer kamen oder: Transformation der Mission," in *Heilig*, eds. Hüchtker and Jobst, 45–66. As an example for the same phenomenon in Islamic texts: Sevket Küçükhüseyin, "Some

tives of individuals understood as saintly in one or more traditions, which are then told in such a way as to make the holy individual the very opposite of holiness",[8] can therefore be interpreted not only as a response to and as a contestation of multifaceted forms of interaction, but also as a result of these very dynamics. Such instances remind us that persistence and contestation are just as much part of transculturation as entanglements and flows.

Important as this often overlooked interrelation between contestation and transculturation is, entangled hagiography is nevertheless a much wider field of research than a focus on oppositional transfer processes might make us believe. In order to frame it comprehensively, we must first define our terminology. In this collection, we will not limit our understanding of the term hagiography to texts written about people venerated as holy. Rather, we would like to amplify our perspective, for example, by including other types of scripts portraying venerable individuals and by considering the practices of veneration or the media related to them. This is not meant to imply that a focus on hagiographic sources in the stricter sense of the word would leave us with an unsophisticated or simple field of research. For such texts show a wide typological spectrum ranging from miracle stories and biographies to more technical genres such as the *translationes* and *elevationes* of Latin Christianity.[9] But a wider approach including poems, epics and other genres will arguably open up new questions and lines of research.

Five Fields of Hagiographic Entanglements

Seen from such an extended perspective, one can discern at least five fields of research that are particularly well equipped to provide information about the interface between hagiography and transculturation. The first of them focuses on stories which contain information on direct communication and exchange between members of different creeds. A close reading of narrative sources can reveal references—sometimes explicit, more often only in passing—to such forms of contacts across political, military or cultural borders. The famous report of the way in that Saint Mark's body was stolen and transferred from Alexandria to Venice by

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Reflections on Hagiology with Reference to the Early Mawlawi-Christian Relations in the Light of the Manaqib al-carifin," *Al-Masaq* 25 (2013): 240–251.

[8] See below, p.170.

[9] See the overview by Klaus Herbers, "Hagiographie," in *Aufriß der historischen Wissenschaften 4: Quellen*, ed. Michael Maurer (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 190–214.

Latin Christians for example is only a particularly prominent case in point: in their attempt to explain how the venerated corpse reached Venice, the hagiographers not only provided information about commercial exchange between Egyptian and Venetian merchants, but also about Christian minorities under Muslim rule.[10] A less well known, 10th-century miracle story tells of a Calabrese official who decided to sail to a Muslim doctor in Palermo because no Christian physician could heal him. The gist of the tale is, that Saint Elia Speleota then prayed to God, upon which the ill Calabrese, who was already en route to Muslim ruled Sicily, experienced a vision showing a pig jumping out of his belly. He quickly turned tail and sailed back to Christian territories.[11] At first glance an account designed to demonstrate the saint's powers, this tale in fact reveals everyday contacts between Calabrese Christians and Sicilian Muslims in the 10th century.

A second field of research has been strongly developed in recent years due to growing interest in spaces and places of worship and veneration,

[10] Patrick J. Geary, *Furta sacra: thefts of relics in the central Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: University Press, 1978), 106–115, 187 and references to further cases of thefts from the dar al-Islām ibidem 183–190; Elizabeth Rodini, "*Translatio Sancti Marci": Displaying the Levant in late Medieval and early Renaissance Venice* (Diss. Phil., University of Chicago, 1995); Paolo Chiesa, "Santità d'importazione a Venezia tra reliquie e racconti," in *Oriente cristiano e santità: figure e storie di santi tra Bisanzio e l'Occidente*, ed. Sebastiano Gentile (Milan: Centro Tibaldi, 1998), 107–115; Corinna Fritsch, *Der Markuskult in Venedig: symbolische Formen politischen Handelns in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Berlin: dissertation.de, 2001), 48–78; Reinhard Lebe, *Als Markus nach Venedig kam: Venezianische Geschichte im Zeichen des Markuslöwen* (Gernsbach: Katz, 2006); Emanuela Colombi, "Translatio Marci evangelistae Venetias (BHL 5283–5284)," *Hagiographica* 17 (2010): 73–129; Netzwerk, *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen*, 108–110; Irmgard Fees, "Der Heilige Markus und das Meer," in *Ein Meer und seine Heiligen: Die hagiographische Strukturierung des Mittelmeerraums im Mittelalter*, Mittelmeerstudien, 18, eds. Nikolas Jaspert, Christian Neumann and Marco di Branco (Paderborn – München: Fink-Schöningh, 2018), 327–339.

[11] "Vita s. Eliae Spelaeotae," in *Acta Sanctorum Septembris*, vol. 3, (Antwerpen, 1750), 871 (cc. 59–60); *Vita di Sant'Elia il Giovane*, ed. Giuseppe Rossi Taibbi, Istituto siciliano di studi bizantini e neogreci. Testi 7 (Palermo, 1962), 70 (c. 34); "La Vita latina di sant'Elia la Speleota," ed. Maria Vittoria Strazzeri, *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 59 (1992): 1–108. Cf. Vera von Falkenhausen, "Il mare nell'agiografia italogreca," in *Ein Meer und seine Heiligen: Die hagiographische Strukturierung des Mittelmeerraums im Mittelalter,* Mittelmeerstudien, 18, eds. Nikolas Jaspert, Christian Neumann and Marco di Branco (Paderborn – München: Fink-Schöningh, 2018), 137–159

doubtlessly a result of the so-called "spatial turn" in the cultural sciences.[12] Within this area of investigation, places of joint veneration have received particular attention.[13] Places like Saydanāyā in Syria[14] or Santa María de la

[12] Josef W. Meri, *The cult of saints among Muslims and Jews in medieval Syria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Elka Weber, "Sharing Sites: Medieval Jewish Travellers to the Land of Israel," in *Eastward bound: travel and travellers, 1050–1550*, ed. Rosamund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 35–52; Barney Warf and Santa Arias, eds., *The spatial turn: interdisciplinary perspectives*, Routledge studies in human geography, 26 (London: Routledge, 2009); Moritz Csáky and Christoph Leitgeb, eds., *Kommunikation – Gedächtnis – Raum: Kulturwissenschaften nach dem „Spatial Turn"* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009); Susanne Rau, *Räume: Konzepte, Wahrnehmungen, Nutzungen*, Historische Einführungen, 14 (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag, 2013); Reinhold Glei and Nikolas Jaspert, eds., *Locating religions. Contact, Diversity and Translocality*, Dynamics in the History of Religions, 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[13] Dionigi Albera, ed., *Religions traversées: lieux saints partagés entre chrétiens, musulmans et juifs en Méditerranée* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2009); Michele Bacci, "'Mixed' Shrines in the Late Byzantine Period, in," in *Archeologica Abrahamica: Studies in Archaeology and Artistic Tradition of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. Leonid A. Beljaev (Moscow: Indrik, 2009), 433–444; Alexandra Cuffel, "Environmental disasters and political dominance in shared festivals and intercessions among medieval Muslims, Christians and Jews," in *Muslims and Others in Sacred Space*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 108–146; Dorothea Weltecke, "Multireligiöse Loca Sancta und die mächtigen Heiligen der Christen," *Der Islam* 88 (2012): 73–95; Dionigi Albera and Maria Couroucli, eds., *Lieux Saints en Partage: Explorations Anthropologiques dans l'espace méditerranéen* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2015); Stefan Rohdewald, "Sari Saltuk im osmanischen Rumelien, der Rus' und Polen-Litauen. Zugänge zu einer transottomanischen Erinnerungsfigur," in *Heilig*, eds. Hüchtker and Jobst, 67–98; Glenn Bowman, "Lieux Saints Partagés: An Analytical Review," *Medieval worlds* 1,2 (2015): 89–99, on the discussion triggered by Robert M. Hayden, "Antagonistic Tolerance. Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites in South Asia and the Balkans," *Current Anthropology* 43,2 (2002): 205–231. The debate has been continued: Glenn Bowman, ed., *Sharing the sacra: the politics and pragmatics of inter-communal relations around holy places* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Robert M. Hayden, ed., *Antagonistic tolerance: competitive sharing of religious sites and spaces* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016).

[14] Paul Peeter, "La légende de Saïdnaia," *Analecta Bollandiana* 25 (1906): 137–157; Enrico Cerulli, ed., *Il libro etiopico dei miracoli di Maria e le sue fonti nelle letterature del medio evo latino* (Rome: Bardi, 1943), 231–289; Bernard Hamilton, "Our Lady of Saidnaya: An Orthodox Shrine Revered by Muslims and Knights Templar at the Time of the Crusades," in *The Holy Land, Holy Lands, and Christian History*, ed. Robert N. Swanson, Studies in Church History, 36 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), 207–215; Benjamin Zeev Kedar, "Convergences of Orien-

Ràpita in Catalonia where Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ was venerated by Muslims and Christians alike.[15] One could add the similar case of the miraculously healing spring of Matariya close to Cairo, where the Virgin Mary is said to have washed the infant during their flight to Egypt and where both Christians and Muslims tended to bathe in search of healing.[16] Hebron, too, which attracted Jewish, Christian and Muslim pilgrims, must be seen as an archetypical center of joint worship, not to speak of the multi-confessional nodes such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem that attracted a multitude of different Christian denominations.[17]

Focusing on the physical dimension of hagiography, one might attempt to identify specific landscapes which are particularly prone to bringing forth shared cult sites or even shared saints. In which relation did these areas stand to other types of places, such as politically and geographically defined areas? The Mediterranean for example has been termed a "Sea of faith" because it formed a cross-road between Jewish, Muslim and Chris-

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tal Christian, Muslim, and Frankish worshippers: the case of Saydnaya," in *De Sion exibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, ed. Yitzhak Hen, Cultural encounters in late antiquity and the middle ages, 1 (Turnhout, 2001), 59–69; John V. Tolan, "'Veneratio Sarracenorum': Shared Devotion among Muslims and Christians, according to Burchard of Strasbourg, Envoy from Frederic Barbarossa to Saladin (c. 1175)," in *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages*, ed. John V. Tolan (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), 101–112.

[15] Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: a history of the Virgin Mary* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), 382–385; Amy Remensnyder, "Mary, Star of the Multi-Confessional Mediterranean: Ships, Shrines and Sailors," in *Ein Meer und seine Heiligen: Die hagiographische Strukturierung des Mittelmeerraums im Mittelalter*, Mittelmeerstudien, 18, eds. Nikolas Jaspert, Christian Neumann and Marco di Branco (Paderborn – München: Fink-Schöningh, 2018), 299–325.

[16] Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: a history of the Virgin Mary*, 172–173; Michelina Di Cesare, *Studien zu Paulinus Venetus De mapa mundi*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Studien und Texte, 58 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), 114. See also Enrico Cerulli, *Il Libro Etiopico dei Miracoli*, 148–157.

[17] Kaspar Elm, "'Nec minori celebritate a catholicis cultoribus observatur et colitur'. Zwei Berichte über die 1119/20 in Hebron erfolgte Auffindung und Erhebung der Gebeine der Patriarchen Abraham, Isaak und Jakob," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 49 (1997): 318–344; Marcel Poorthuis, ed., *The centrality of Jerusalem. Historical perspectives* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publications House, 1996); Lee I. Levine, ed., *Jerusalem. Its sanctity and centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (New York: Continuum, 1999); Martin Biddle, ed., *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre* (New York, NY: Rizzoli, 2000); Colin Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the Beginning to 1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

tian cultures.[18] But can one relate the sea to entangled hagiographies? Was the Mediterranean a zone that united peoples of different creed who were all equally threatened by the dangers of a hostile environment?[19] Rereading our sources and combining recent academic interest in religious transfer processes with approaches and issues raised in the wake of the spatial turn is a promising undertaking, because it might help re-configure our imaginaries of physical space, our "mental maps". A 14th century nautical map now kept in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Rome shows the coasts of Mediterranean Sea marked by flags depicting the respective patron saints of important towns, thus structuring the sea as a devotional space.[20] We need to learn more about the centrality and the function of islands as nodal points within networks of religious veneration, and the same holds true for well-connected urban centers such as harbors.[21] The

[18] Stephen O'Shea, *Sea of faith: Islam and Christianity in the medieval Mediterranean world* (New York: Walker, 2006); Adnan Ahmed Husain and Katherine Elizabeth Fleming, eds., *A faithful sea: the religious cultures of the Mediterranean, 1200–1700* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007); Euangelia K. Hatzetryphonos, ed., *Routes of faith in the medieval Mediterranean: history, monuments, people, pilgrimage perspectives* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2008).

[19] Henri Dubois, Jean Claude Hocquet and André Vauchez, eds., *Horizons marins, itinéraires spirituels Ve–XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1987); Michele Bacci, "Portolano sacro: santuario e immagini sacre lungo le rotte di navigazione del Mediterraneo tra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna," in *The miraculous image: in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, eds. Erik Thunø and Gerhard Wolf, Analecta Romana Instituti Danici. Supplementum, 35 (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004), 223–248; Ewald Kislinger, "Making for the Holy Places (7th–10th centuries): The Sea-Routes," in *Routes of faith in the medieval mediterranean: history, monuments, people, pilgrimage perspectives*, ed. Euangelia K. Chatzetryphonos (Thessalonike: University Studio Press, 2008), 119–124; Michele Bacci and Martin Rohde, eds., *The Holy Portolano: the sacred geography of navigation in the Middle Ages*, Veröffentlichungen des Mediävistischen Instituts der Universität Freiburg, Schweiz, 36 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014); *Ein Meer und seine Heiligen: Die hagiographische Strukturierung des Mittelmeerraums im Mittelalter*, Mittelmeerstudien, 18, eds. Nikolas Jaspert, Christian Neumann and Marco di Branco (Paderborn – München: Fink-Schöningh, 2018).

[20] Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 2972, fol. 109v–110r (ca. 1321), cf. http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.2972.

[21] Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public, *Ports maritimes et ports fluviaux au Moyen Âge: XXXVe congrès de la SHMES*, Publications de la Sorbonne, 81 (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2005); Reinhard von Bendemann, Annette Gerstenberg, Nikolas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, eds., *Konstruktionen mediterraner Insularitäten*, Mittelmeerstudien, 11 (Paderborn: Fink-Schöningh, 2016); Sebastian Kolditz, "Horizonte maritimer Konnektivität,"

Virgin of Trapani on Sicily became a pan-Mediterranean saint who was not only venerated by Latin Christians, and Island shrines such as the cave on Lampedusa where both Mary and a Muslim saint were revered served as focal points to Muslim and Christian voyagers alike.[22] To which extent should cults and hagiographical texts that spread along certain spatial lines and conduits of exchange be understood as expressions of a particular, hagiographic dimension of medieval "connectivity"?[23] The dynamic relation between the worlds of faith and the maritime sphere still offers many possibilities for research—not only in the Mediterranean, but also in other seas.[24]

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in *Maritimes Mittelalter: Meere als Kommunikationsräume*, eds. Michael Borgolte and Nikolas Jaspert, Vorträge und Forschungen, 83 (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2016), 59–107, particularly 84–91.

[22] Ivan Arnaldi, *Nostra Signora di Lampedusa: storia civile e materiale di un miraculo mediterraneo* (Milano: Leonardo, 1990); Michele Bacci, "Portolano sacro", 236–241; Wolfgang Kaiser, "La grotte de Lampedusa: practiques et imaginaire d'un 'troisième' lieu en Méditerranée à l'époque modern," in *Topographien des Sakralen. Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne*, eds. Susanne Rau and Gerd Schwerhoff (München: Dölling und Galitz, 2008), 306–329; Simon Mercieca and Joseph Muscat, "A Territory of Grace: Lampedusa in Early Modern Times," *Öt Kontinens* 3 (2013): 53–68; Wolfgang Kaiser, "La Madone et le marabout," in *Lieux Saints en Partage: Explorations Anthropologiques dans l'espace méditerranéen*, eds. Dionigi Albera and Maria Couroucli (Arles: Actes Sud, 2015), 104–107; cf. Remensnyder, "Mary, Star of the Multi-Confessional Mediterranean" and her forthcoming study tentatively entitled *Island of Trust in a Sea of Danger.*

[23] On this concept, see: Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The corrupting sea: a study of Mediterranean history* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 53–88; Peregrine Horden, "Situations Both Alike? Connectivity, the Mediterranean, the Sahara," in *Saharan Frontiers: space and mobility in northwest Africa*, eds. James McDougall and Judith Scheele (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 25–38; Sebastian Kolditz, "Horizonte maritimer Konnektivität."

[24] For other seas see, i.a.: Pádraig Ó Riain, "Hagiography without Frontiers: Borrowing of Saints across the Irish Sea," in *Scripturus vitam: lateinische Biographie von der Antike bis in die Gegenwart. Festgabe für Walter Berschin zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Dorothea Walz (Heidelberg: Mattes, 2002), 41–48; Anu Mänd, "Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia," in *The clash of cultures on the medieval Baltic frontier*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 191–223; Carsten Selch Jensen, Tuomas Lehtonen et al., eds., *Saints and Sainthood around the Baltic Sea. Orality, Literacy and Communication in the Middle Ages* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2017); cf. in future the proceedings of a congress held in Edinburgh in 2014, specially: George Quinn, "Faith comes from the sea: Maritime symbolism in the origin stories of three Muslim pilgrimage sites in Java," in *Holy Places in medieval Islam. Functions, typologies and narratives* (forthcoming).

This spatial dimension of hagiography is closely related to its material side, our third field of research.[25] Objects and artifacts related to particular venerated individuals might well have originated in cultural settings completely different from those of their later use.[26] Avinoam Shalem and others have shown to which extent such wanderings of objects have been the fruit or—in contrast—the origin of cultural transfer processes.[27] Indeed, recreating the "careers" or "biographies" of these objects makes us more receptive to the varying dynamics of things, both natural and man-made.[28] These careers (object biographies, artefact biographies) can be the result of transcultural interaction from their very outset, that is: since their moment of fabrication. Containers fashioned to hold or transport venerated objects or to decorate shrines sometimes reveal uncommon artistic or cultural influences. They might be created by artisans belonging to religious minorities within any given realm or even be the result of artistic import. In other cases, their transcultural features were not related to their creator(s), but

[25] Netzwerk, *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen*, 122–138. On the material turn in the humanities see Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce, eds., *Material powers: cultural studies, history and the material turn* (London: Routledge, 2010); Thomas Meier, Michael R. Ott and Rebecca Sauer, eds., *Materiale Textkulturen: Konzepte – Materialien – Praktiken*, Materiale Textkulturen, 1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015); Anna Mühlherr, Heike Sahm et al., eds., *Dingkulturen: Objekte in Literatur, Kunst und Gesellschaft der Vormoderne*, Literatur – Theorie – Geschichte, 9 (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2016).

[26] Anja Eisenbeiß and Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch, eds., *Images of otherness in medieval and early modern times: exclusion, inclusion and assimilation* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2012).

[27] Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized: Islamic portable objects in the medieval church treasuries of the Latin West*, Ars faciendi. Beiträge und Studien zur Kunstgeschichte, 7 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1996); Idem, "Reliquien der Kreuzfahrerzeit: Verehrung, Raub und Handel," in *Die Kreuzzüge: kein Krieg ist heilig*, eds. Hans-Jürgen Kotzur and Brigitte Klein (Mainz: von Zabern, 2004), 212–227; Idem, *The oliphant: Islamic objects in historical context*, Islamic history and civilization, 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Cecily J. Hilsdale, "The Thalassal Optic", in *Can We Talk Mediterranean?: Conversations on an Emerging Field in Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, eds. Brian A. Catlos und Sharon Kinoshita (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 19–32.

[28] Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Christopher Gosdon and Yvonne Marshall, "The cultural biography of objects," *World archaeology* 31 (1999): 169–178; Linda Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture* (London: London: Routledge, 2007); Hans Peter Hahn and Hadas Weiss, eds., *Mobility, meaning and the transformations of things: shifting contexts of material culture through time and space* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2013).

were rather the outcome of these objects' sometimes contingent biographies: Some items were reinterpreted and re-attributed at a later date or they were physically transferred and acquired new meaning in fresh contexts. In these cases, the forms of later reception or adaption were utterly unforeseen and generally unforeseeable at the time of their production. Islamic glass vessels used as Christian reliquaries or dismantled Christian bells that were turned into lamps for mosques are but two examples for such unforeseen careers.[29]

Not only physical objects wandered, so did notions and stories: Our fourth field is the vast topic of wandering hagiographic tropes and legends.[30] Not surprisingly, different societies brought forth similar stories of holy men or women without necessarily being interconnected (a phenomenon known as polygenesis). To a certain extent, hagiography followed and still follows the rules of the open market. Holy men and women fulfilled a concrete demand at a certain period of time, which is precisely why they could experience shifting periods of popularity. The veneration of saints, of masters and spiritual mentors could be adapted to developments and diversifications within society, be it in the field of politics, economy, knowledge or technology. In this way, not only objects, but the very saints themselves could undergo careers, as they were adapted to changing societal needs.[31] A case in point is Mary—venerated within

[29] Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized*, 56–71, 147–151; Henri Terrasse, *La Mosquée Al-Qaraouiyin à Fès* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968); Jerrilynn D. Dodds, ed., *al-Andalus: the art of Islamic Spain* (New York: Distributed by H.N. Abrams, 1992), 278–279.

[30] For example, several articles (by A. Binggeli, J. Bray, S. Davis, N. Khalek and T. Sizgorich) in Arietta Papaconstantinou, *Writing 'true stories'* touch upon the wandering of motives and hagiographic réécriture; see also Netzwerk, *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen*, 183–192; Sebastian Rothe, "Konzeptualisierungen heiliger Asketen im transkulturellen Vergleich. Eine Analyse hagiographischer Lebensbeschreibungen des heiligen Antonius und des Ibrahim b. Adham," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 50 (2016): 45–98.

[31] See the typologies of sainthood in: Claudio Leonardi and Antonella Degl'Innocenti, eds., *I santi patroni: Modelli di santità, culti e patronati in Occidente* (Napoli: cT, 1999); Monique Goullet and Martin Heinzelmann, eds., *La réécriture hagiographique dans l'Occident médiéval: transformations formelles et idéologiques*, Beihefte der Francia, 58 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2003); Alessio Geretti, ed., *Il potere e la grazia: i santi patroni d'Europa* (Milano: Skira, 2009); Monique Goullet, Martin Heinzelmann and Christiane Veyrard-Cosme, eds., *L'hagiographie mérovingienne à travers ses réécritures*, Beihefte der Francia, 71 (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2010); Jan-Dirk Müller, Peter Strohschneider et al., eds., *Helden und Heilige: kulturelle und literarische Integrationsfiguren des*

Christianity at different times and within different contexts as mother, Queen, virgin, noble lady, lover and sufferer.[32] Commercial and technological diversity was reflected in Christian devotion to saints, as long established cults were associated with new developments—St Barbara for example became the patron of cannoneers, and St John the Baptist the patron of printers.[33] Such dynamics of hagiography were not caused by developments within one religious community alone, but can also be the result of interreligious contacts, be they between dominant and minority

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europäischen Mittelalters, Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift. Beiheft, 42 (Heidelberg: Winter, 2010). On hagiographic careers see Nikolas Jaspert, "Communicating Vessels: Ecclesiastic Centralisation, Religious Diversity and Knowledge in Medieval Latin Europe," *The Medieval History Journal* 16 (2013): 389–424, especially 400–403; recent case studies: Stefan Rohdewald, "Sari Saltuk im osmanischen Rumelien, der Rus' und Polen-Litauen. Zugänge zu einer transottomanischen Erinnerungsfigur," in *Heilig: transkulturelle Verehrungskulte vom Mittelalter bis in die Gegenwart*, 67–98; Konrad Petrovszky, "Die Makellose und ihre unheimlichen Avatare. Der Paraskeva-Kult in Südosteurooa als kulturelle ‚bricolage'," ibidem, 113–140; Marija Wakounig, "Hemma von Gurk – Hema Krska. Das Werden einer Heiligen," ibidem, 141–159.

[32] Enrico Cerulli, Il libro etiopico dei miracoli di Maria; Klaus Schreiner, *Maria: Jungfrau, Mutter, Herrscherin* (München: Hanser, 1994); Dominique Iogna-Prat, Éric Paluzzo and Daniel Russo, eds., *Marie. Le culte de la vierge dans la société médiévale* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1996); Amy G. Remensnyder, "The colonization of sacred architecture: the Virgin Mary, mosques, and temples in medieval Spain and early sixteenth-century Mexico," in *Monks, nuns, saints outcasts: religion in medieval society. Essays in honor of Lester K. Little*, eds. Sharon A. Farmer and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 189–219; Stephen J. Shoemaker, *Ancient traditions of the Virgin Mary's dormition and assumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Ruthy Gertwagen, "The Emergence of the Cult of the Virgin Mary as the Patron Saint of Seafarers," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 16 (2006): 149–161; Catherine Oakes, *Ora pro nobis: the Virgin as intercessor in medieval art and devotion* (London: Harvey Miller, 2008); Miri Rubin, Mother of God: a history of the Virgin Mary; Amy G. Remensnyder, *La Conquistadora: The Virgin Mary at War and Peace in the Old and New Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Pauline Allen, Andreas Külzer and Leena Mari Peltomaa, eds., *Presbeia Theotoku. The Intercessory Role of Mary across Times and Places in Byzantium (4th–9th Century)*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Denkschriften, 481 (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015).

[33] Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The coming of the book: the impact of printing 1450–1800* (London: NLB, 1976), 140; *Santa Barbara: nella letteratura e nel folklore: atti della giornata di studio del 14 maggio 1988* (Rieti: Pliniana, 1989); Rolfroderich Nemitz and Dieter Thierse, *St. Barbara: Weg einer Heiligen durch die Zeit* (Essen: Verlag Glückauf, 1996).

religions within any given society, or between subjects of different realms. In any case however, concrete social and historical contexts and very specific goals such as societal reform or moral improvement provide the ever changing settings for entangled hagiographies.[34]

Due to such interconnections, stories about holy individuals or objects could travel from one region or religious community to another. For example, the evolutionary transformation of the Jataka tales, the Pantachantra, Balaam and Josephat, or the Prince and the Sage, which traveled from India through Central Asia or into parts of Africa, the Middle East and finally even to Northern Europe,[35] not only reveals the transfer of motifs, but also reflects the dynamics of resistance, demarcation, adoption, transformation, even expansion.[36] On the western Mediterranean rim of the Muslim world, holy men were ascribed with miraculous faculties very similar to those of Christian saints, not only fulfilling the same functions as intercessors, but also integrating traits of their opposites.[37] The mounted

[34] Klaus Herbers, "Hagiographie im Kontext: Konzeption und Zielvorstellung," in *Hagiographie im Kontext. Wirkungsweisen und Möglichkeiten historischer Auswertung*, eds. Dieter R. Bauer and Klaus Herbers, Beiträge zur Hagiographie, 1 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2000), 9-28.

[35] Johannes Hertel, *Das Pañcatantra: seine Geschichte und seine Verbreitung* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1914); Marlène Kanaan,"'Le roman de Barlaam et Joasaph', transmutation d'un conte bouddhique en légende hagiographique," *Parole de l'Orient* 30 (2005): 199-210; Marion Uhlig and Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, eds., *D'Orient en Occident: les recueils de fables enchâssées avant les 'Mille et une nuits' de Galland (Barlaam et Josaphat, Calila et Dimna, Disciplina clericalis, Roman des sept sages)*, Cultural encounters in the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014); Donald Lopez and Peggy McCracken, *In Search of the Christian Buddha: How an Asian Sage became a Christian Saint* (New York: Norton, 2014).

[36] These thoughts were laid down in Bochum in 2014 by Alexandra Cuffel as an introduction to the workshop giving rise to this collection of essays.

[37] Yusuf Ragib, "Al-Sayyida Nafisa, sa légende, son culte et son cimetière," *Studia Islamica* 44 (1976): 61–86; Idem, "Al-Sayyida Nafisa, sa légende, son culte et son cimetière," *Studia Islamica* 45 (1977): 27–55 (Yûsuf Rāġib); Christopher Schurmann Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous. Ziyara and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt*, Islamic history and civilization, 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Valerie Hoffman, "Muslim Sainthood, Women, and the Legend of Sayyida Nafisa," in *Women saints in world religions*, ed. Arvind Sharma (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 107–144; Mohamed Cherif, "Saints, navigation et piraterie en Méditerranée d'après les sources hagiographiques maghrébines médiévales," *Histoire médiévale et archéologie* 13 (2002): 131–138; Allaoua Amara, "La mer et les milieux mystiques d'après la production hagiographique du Maghreb occidental (XII^{e}–XV^{e} siècle)," *Revue des mondes*

dragon-slayer for example became a venerated figure in Central Asia and the Near East as well as in Europe.[38]

Alone, however, such explorations tell us little about inter- or intra-religious relations. They need to be enriched by references to encounters with the religious other that traveled from one cultural or geographical area to another, and how these narratives changed as the result of cultural, religious, geographic, or chronological displacement. Why are some stories in certain cultures relatively more "friendly" toward the religious Other than others, and very condemnatory in other cultures though the story at its core is the same? How and why are certain hagiographies of encounter taken over by more than one religious community and either used as a form of resistance or simply co-opted and claimed by the new group? Such questions make us more susceptible to the forces that caused tension and persecution.

To give an example: in 1322, a Muslim by the name of *Abdala Abenxando* (possibly ʿAbd Allah ibn Shāhd) of Xàtiva was executed in Aragon, because he had broken the King's law against publicly reciting the *adhān*.[39] Prohibitions against fulfilling the Islamic call to prayer had been officially announced some years before. Arguably, the Muslim perpetrator knew full well that by calling the Prophet's name he was in fact

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musulmans et de la Méditerranée 130 (2012): 33–52; Mohamed Cherif, "La piraterie en Méditerranée d'après les sources hagiographiques maghrébines," in *Seeraub im Mittelmeerraum. Piraterie, Korsarentum und maritime Gewalt von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, eds. Nikolas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, Mittelmeerstudien, 3 (München-Paderborn: Schoeningh-Fink, 2013), 83–103.

[38] Oya Pancaroglu, "The Itinerant Dragon-Slayer: Forging Paths of Image and Identity in Medieval Anatolia," *Gesta* 43 (2004): 151–164; Andreas Hammer, "Der heilige Drachentöter: Transformationen eines Strukturmusters," in *Helden und Heilige*, eds. Seidl and Hammer, 143–180; Ethel Sara Wolper, "Khidr and the Politics of Place: Creating Landscapes of Continuity," in *Muslims and Others in Sacred Space*, ed. Margaret Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 147–163; Netzwerk, *Transkulturelle Verflechtungen*, 185–188.

[39] Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, *Els sarraïns de la corona catalano-aragonesa en el segle XIV: segregació i discriminació*, Anuario de estudios medievales. Anex, 16 (Barcelona: Consell Superior d'Investigacions Científiques, 1987), 236 (doc. 27). The issue continued to be dealt with at court and at church councils: Olivia Remie Constable, "Regulating Religious Noise: The Council of Vienne, the Mosque Call and Muslim Pilgrimage in the Late Medieval Mediterranean World," *Medieval encounters* 16 (2010): 64–95, 77–81; Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, Els sarraïns de la corona catalano-aragonesa en el segle XIV: segregació i discriminació, 92–95; Nikolas Jaspert, "Religious Movements in Mudéjar Communities: Identity and Relational Dynamics in the Crown of Aragon" (forthcoming).

calling death upon himself. Was he seeking martyrdom? If he was, one might ask for the models behind such action, since within Islam, martyrdom is generally associated with and legitimised by fighting in defence of one's faith.[40] *Abdala Abenxando*'s death in contrast recalls the deeds of the so-called "Franciscan Martyrs of Morocco": Latin Christian Friars who sought for and indeed found martyrdom at the hands of Muslims by publicly vilifying the Prophet's name. Conspicuously, the very first extensive accounts of the Franciscan martyrs' deaths (which supposedly occurred in 1220) were written precisely in the 1320s.[41] All this raises questions as to the relational dimension of these occurrences, as to the entanglements of hagiographic models. We need to ask to which extent ideals of meritorious religious behaviour could be picked up even across supposedly conflicting lines, and which were the discursive strategies that lay behind such transfers.

Indeed, probably the case of *Abdala Abenxando* even had political consequences, for the Egyptian Mamluks put the topic of Muslim minorities under Latin rule on their political agenda at this very moment in time. This leads us to our fifth and last form of entangled hagiography: diplomatic and political cross-cultural interconnections related to revered individuals.[42] In life and even more so after their passing away, these individuals

[40] Wolfram Drews, "Heilige Männer im Kampf. Formen religiösen 'Heldentums' im christlichen und islamischen Mittelalter," in *Helden und Heilige*, eds. Seidl and Hammer, 47–68; David Cook, *Martyrdom in Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[41] Isabelle Heullant-Donat, "Martyrdom and identity in the Franciscan order (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries)," *Franciscan Studies* 70 (2012): 429–453; Christopher MacEvitt, "Martyrdom and the Muslim World through Franciscan Eyes," *Catholic Historical Review* 97 (2011): 1–23; Idem, "Sons of Damnation: Franciscans, Muslims, and Christian Purity", in *Discourses of Purity in Transcultural Perspective (300–1600)*, eds. Matthias Bley, Nikolas Jaspert and Stefan Köck, Dynamics in the History of Religions, 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 299–319, particularly 304; Jaspert, *Religious movements*.

[42] Denise Aigle and Pascal Buresi, eds., *Les relations diplomatiques entre le monde musulman et l'Occident latin: (XIIe–XVIe siècle)*, Oriente moderno, N.S., 88 (Roma: Istituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, 2008); Mohamed Ouerfelli, "Personnel diplomatique et modalités des négociations entre la commune de Pise et les États du Maghreb (1133–1397)," in *Les relations diplomatiques au Moyen Âge: Formes et enjeux; XLI^{e} congrès de la SHMES (Lyon, 3–6 juin 2010)*, ed. Thierry Kouamé, Histoire ancienne et médiévale, 108 (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2011), 119–132; Nikolas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, "Christlich-muslimische Außenbeziehungen im Mittelmeerraum: Zur räumlichen und religiösen Dimension mittelalterlicher Diplomatie," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 41 (2014): 1–88.

could become objects of political negotiations across cultural borders. Saints' relics could be used as pawns on the diplomatic chessboard or for commercial purposes,[43] thus becoming objects of medieval "Dingpolitik".[44] Some Christian sovereigns in particular went to great pains in order to acquire the bodily remains of holy men or women. Muslim rulers were well aware of this and sometimes made use of the fact that Christian cult sites lay within their realms. For example, the above-mentioned Aragonese Kings of the 14th century negotiated with the Mamluk sultans for decades in order to obtain the relics of St Barbara.[45] Time and again, the sultans played this strategic trump card in times of crisis to improve their political position vis-à-vis their Christian counterparts (without ever complying with their promises).

The five fields of entanglement delineated above—hagiographic tales of intercultural communication, shared spaces, mobile material objects, wandering typologies and negotiated saints, to which one should add as sixth field the cases of hagiographic "enemy knowledge" with which we began this paper—might be used as a framework to analyse the articles

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[43] Ibidem, 29–30; Stefan Altekamp, "Crossing the Sea – The Translation of Relics to and from North Africa," in *Multiple Mediterranean realities: current approaches to spaces, resources, and connectivities*, eds. Achim Lichtenberger and Constance von Rüden, Mittelmeerstudien, 6 (München-Paderborn: Fink-Schöningh, 2015), 207–222.

[44] Mark Häberlein, ed., *Materielle Grundlagen der Diplomatie: Schenken, Sammeln und Verhandeln in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, Irseer Schriften, NF., 9 (Konstanz: UVK, 2013); Bruno Quast, "Dingpolitik," in *Dingkulturen: Objekte in Literatur, Kunst und Gesellschaft der Vormoderne*, eds. Anna Mühlherr, Heike Sahm et al., Literatur – Theorie – Geschichte, 9 (Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 171–184.

[45] Johannes Vincke, "Die Gesandtschaften der aragonesischen Könige um die Reliquien der heiligen Barbara (1322–1337)," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 60 (1940): 115–124; Amada López de Meneses, "Pedro el Ceremonioso y las reliquias de Santa Bárbara," *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón* 7 (1962): 299–357. During the same period, the Kings of Aragon also conducted similar diplomatic missions to Armenia and Greece in order to acquire the relics of St Tecla and St George, respectively – Vicent Baydal Sala, "Santa Tecla, San Jorge y Santa Bárbara: los monarcas de la Corona de Aragón a la búsqueda de reliquias en Oriente (siglos XIV–XV)," *Anaquel de estudios árabes* 21 (2010): 153–162; Joan Molina Figueras, "Sotto il segno d'oriente. La monarquía catalano-aragonese e la ricerca del sacro nelle terre del levante mediterraneo," in *Representations of power at the Mediterranean borders of Europe (12th–14th centuries)*, eds. Ingrid Baumgärtner, Mirko Vagnoni and Megan Welton (Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2014), 71–90.

collected in this volume. Such an exercise is indeed helpful in order to highlight their respective focus and delineate their approach.

Eight Approaches to Entangled Hagiographies

An attempt to relate this volume's papers to the six fields of entangled hagiography delineated above reveals stark imbalances: While wandering material objects of religious devotion do not figure prominently in any of the contributions, and the role of venerated individuals in political cross-cultural contact is only touched upon in Licia Di Giacinto's paper, other forms of interconnections are more pronounced. Hagiographic references to intercultural communication can be gleaned from Şevket Küçükhüseyin's tales of Muslim mystics and Barbara Roggema's study on the highly influential Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā. The notion of shared spaces of devotion in turn is important to Paul Fenton's argument that the town and region of Safed was a meeting and exchange point of Muslim and Jewish devotional practices, and it can also be identified in Gregor Rohmann's study of contested spaces of veneration in Lucania. More significant still are the last two fields hagiographic entanglement—wandering typologies and hagiographic "enemy knowledge". The first is dealt with extensively by Licia di Giacinto, who reveals how Confucian and Buddhist tropes were adapted to Daoist thought. Mihai Grigore's study of the ways Buddhist and Greek orthodox narratives were picked up and modified in 16th century Central Eastern Europe is also an analysis of wandering motifs. The Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā analyzed by Barbara Roggema made a career amongst several Christian confessions during the Middle Ages. Paul Fenton in contrast focuses on a different form of mobility, that of itinerant devotional practices.

Entanglements as an unintended element of oppositional, even antagonistic approaches to alien religions and their adherents are studied in depth in Alexandra Cuffel's rendering of anti-Muslim arguments and tropes employed by Jews in their polemics against Christians. Matthew Mesley also focuses on an anti-hagiography (a defamatory life of Moḥammad), but is less interested in its non-Christian elements than in the use of older literary and cultural motifs and traditions. Barbara Roggema can demonstrate that the Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā is not only a counter-history of the foundations of Islam, but in fact underlines Islam's similarities and ties to Christianity. The anti-pagan polemics studied by Gregor Rohmann again show profound knowledge of late antique cults and religious practices on the part of their Christian detractors, whereas the anti-Christian polemics of

the Arabic *Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn* are rather more stereotype, as Şevket Küçükhüseyin demonstrates.

Helpful as this exercise of classifying academic approaches and relating them to this volume's articles is: neatly fitting the papers into a rigid typology and thus tucking them into academic drawers alone would ultimately do injustice to their diversity and richness. Therefore, it might also be worthwhile to briefly present each of them in order to outline their respective analytical approaches and findings.

For two reasons, Gregor Rohmann's paper is a fundamental opening to this collection of essays: First, he provides valuable systematic reflections on the subject of religious syncretism as well as on forms of transfer and iteration. Second, he exemplifies these thoughts by analysing the discursive strategies employed in two rich hagiographic texts, the 6th-century *Passio* of Saint Vitus and the 9th-century *Vita* of Saint Potitus. Both must be read as the retrospective invention of traditions on the part of a triumphant belief system (here Christianity). On close reading, the *Passio* in particular reveals striking, though indirect references to pre-Christian Neo-Platonism and late antique cults, particularly those of Osiris, Isis and Dionysos. They were employed in order to prove Christianity's alleged superiority over superseded cults, generally by inversion, i. e. by using a symbol of the overcome religion as a parody. In contrast, the author of the *Vita* of Saint Potitus no longer saw the necessity to include anti-mythical or anti-cosmological arguments, but rather adapted elements of Vitus's martyrdom and adjusted them to create the story of a super-martyr. Syncretistic elements in hagiographic texts are thus interpreted as specific instruments employed in particular times and circumstances.

Barbara Roggema examines the early medieval Syriac versions of a highly influential text, the so-called Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā. The tale, later transferred to other languages, picks up Islamic traditions, but uses them in order to belittle the Prophet Muḥammad and depict Islam as a distorted spin-off of Christianity. Allegedly, a Christian monk named Sergius provided the Prophet with the foundation of Islam, which were later deformed by an unscrupulous Jewish convert. By retelling the history of the Other from one's own viewpoint, the Legend of Sergius Baḥīrā functions as an emblematic and significant counter-history, even an anti-hagiography. More importantly, however, it reveals how Syriac Christians under Muslim rule considered their own position in Islamic society. For Roggema's careful reading reveals that—contrary to its apparently polemic stance—the text did not emphasise Islam's alterity, but rather highlighted its similarities to Christianity. Despite allegedly having laid the foundations of Islam, the monk Sergius is not depicted as a renegade (as repeat-

edly claimed in academic studies), but rather as a Holy Man of God who operates under the protection of a recognised missionary, possesses prophetic and thaumaturgic abilities, advises rulers and locals alike, works miracles in life and death—in short, is imbued with important traits of a saint. By conveying a strong hagiographic message to the story, its author(s) accommodates the rise of Islam to Christian notions of time, power and divine will, thus providing explanations for the contemporary position of Christians under Muslim rule.

Moving east, Licia Di Giacinto's paper shows, to which extent changing depictions of Laozi drew on Confucian and Buddhist ideals over time. After theorising on the varied forms of demarcation that can shape interreligious dynamics, she identifies several of these modi of self-differentiation in the renderings of Laozi's life and actions: violent suppression, outright rejection, selective absorption of specific ideas and motifs as well as a "grammar of encompassment", i.e. the subjugation of two different religions under a given category. The paper succinctly demonstrates how holy men can undergo a hagiographic career: by the beginning of the third century C. E., images of Laozi had evolved considerably—from those of a very old man to an immortal and later to a main God. To adequately understand such processes, we need to take the respective social contexts into account, as di Giacinto rightfully underlines. For example, the concrete settings of royal courts at a given period in time provide an influential backdrop to these hagiographic constructions and to the changes they reflect.

A similar stand is taken by Matthew Mesley. He presents a potent anti-hagiography—the lives of Muḥammad that were written by high medieval Christian authors. In their venomous and denigrating tales about the Prophet, these writers drew upon elements found in early Islamic texts, but distorted them nearly beyond recognition. Mesley illustrates the contemporary social contexts that marked his concrete case study: the work of the 12th-century author Gerald of Wales. This archdeacon and courtier aimed at reforming fellow Christians and criticising failures within his own Church. It is therefore both significant and telling that Gerald compared Islam and its Prophet with contemporary Christian heresies such as the Patarenes. Historicising his book *De instructione principum* in this fashion necessarily requires identifying its inter-textual dynamics: Hugh of Fleury's *Historia Ecclesiastica* provided most material for Gerald's depiction of Moḥammad, to which he added thoughts of his own that reflect contemporary issues related to the Third Crusade.

Şevket Küçükhüseyin in contrast finds it far more difficult to identify the basis for the description of non-Muslims in the *Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn*

(The Feats of the Knowers of God), a rare example of Muslim hagiography written by the Mawlawi Dervish Aḥmad-i Aflākī in the middle of the 14th century. It is one of the few extant Muslim sources that provide insights into the fashioning of the religious Other in late medieval Anatolia. In fact, as a detailed analyses of three reports within this praise of Muslim mystics shows, neither are depictions of the Christians in this work particularly expressive; rather, they echo stereotypical Muslim accusations of idolatry. In one instance, however, the tale of a water spirit ("lord of the water") can be interpreted as a distant reflection of pre-Christian cults in late medieval Anatolia.

Alexandra Cuffel's paper focuses Northern Europe, a region traditionally considered less important for the history of anti-Islamic Jewish invectives than the Mediterranean. However, the *Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*, written at the turn of the 13th to the 14th century by an Ashkenazi author, contains passages in which Jesus is slandered using arguments levelled by Christians against Muḥammad. The text provides an unusual example of the usage of non-learned polemics, for the author arguably drew on images spread by the *Chansons de Geste* and the *Ritterromane* of his time. This case shows a triple entanglement of Jewish, Christian and Muslim polemics against the religious Other while providing proof for the intertwining of Christian and Jewish life-worlds in medieval Germany.

Narrative wanderings of a different kind a presented by Mihai Grigore's study. It focusses on a little known rendering of two extremely momentous texts: The story of Barlaam and Josaphat is an eminent exemplar for the wandering of literary material from East to West, and the late antique *Physiologus*, too, experienced an impressive career due to its multiple adaptions in medieval culture. Both of these works found their way into a 16th-century Mirror of Princes probably written for his son by the Wallachian ruler Neagoe Basarab (died 1521). Grigore shows differences between Latin and Orthodox versions of Barlaam and Josaphat and reveals the traditions of Slavonic translations the supposed author could have fallen back upon. He also raises a programmatic call to extend our notion of hagiography by including texts dealing with holiness and things holy in general instead of limiting our scope to biographical works alone.

Wanderings and entanglements of religious devotional practices are the subject of Paul B. Fenton's paper. It deals with a form of venerating and approaching holy men that can be identified both in Islam and Judaism: The notion that visualising a living or deceased saint can create a direct linkage between the devotee and his master was prominently advocated in Central Asia by the Naqšbandī order of the late Middle Ages and was also adopted by other Sufi movements. This mystical technique—often carried

out at the tomb of the deceased and based on a number of elaborate practices including breath control—can also be discerned amongst Jewish Lurianic Kabbalists of the 16th century; it was later adopted in 18th century European Ḥasidism and lives on to this very day. Fenton suggests direct linkages between these phenomena and convincingly advocates that Jewish mystics picked up Islamic traditions. This might have been the result of the spatial proximity between Muslim and Jewish devotional sites in the region of Upper Galilee around the town of Safed, where common spaces of veneration are attested and where Lurianic traditions were taken up by European Ḥasidism.

These few introductory remarks and short summaries can of course not do credit to the many stimulating ideas and findings laid out in the papers that follow. These articles impressively prove a claim expressed in the opening of this paper: A transcultural approach to holiness, saints and their veneration harbours significant heuristic and epistemological potential for cultural and religious studies—particularly, if contemporary social and historical contexts are duly taken into account. Such interrelations are an important corrective to ultimately simplified or even reified notions of religion which tend to presume that religious beliefs and structures of religious authority primarily or even exclusively defined medieval societies. Unhindered flows, contested rivalries and violent appropriation alike shaped the entangled hagiographies of Asia and Europe.