

*latere* to King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, Croatia, and Bohemia, near the end of the fifteenth century. Chapter 2, “Rights and Powers,” is notably praiseworthy not only for its prodigious research and analysis, but also for the generous space given to footnotes in Latin (for which, in both cases, credit is due to the publisher for allowing the author to offer this material). He concludes that permanent papal nuncios increasingly, though not completely, replaced the legatine system, which we expect would have been an organic structural development given the early modern rise of the nation-state.

Kalous makes no pretense at offering the final word. Early on, he points out that much work has been done on individual legations—most readers will be familiar with the well-known though quite-troubled legation of Nicholas of Cusa to German territories, 1450–53—while noting that this subject has received little comprehensive treatment. Graduate students and researchers would profitably heed Kalous’s advice on what is needed next (215): a complete list of legates in a database that would in turn allow for deeper and comparative analysis. He concludes that his contribution in this volume was to move the discussion along by framing important issues and providing a *status quaestionis*. In this, Kalous places us in his debt by demonstrating where the field of legatine studies might next travel and how it should be pursued.

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*Visions of Sainthood in Medieval Rome: The Lives of Margherita Colonna by Giovanni Colonna and Stefania*. Larry F. Field, trans. Lezlie S. Knox and Sean L. Field, eds.

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*Visions of Sainthood in Medieval Rome*, translated by Larry F. Field and edited and introduced by Lezlie S. Knox and Sean L. Field, presents the first full English translation of two hagiographies of the holy woman and visionary Margherita Colonna (ca. 1255–80). Born in Rome into the baronial Colonna family, Margherita was inspired by early Franciscan spirituality. Venturing first to the Colonna family compound on Mount Prenestino, she then moved to the Church of St. Mary Vulturella, followed by a brief stay in the household of the “Lady Altruda of the Poor,” in Rome, and then back to Mount Prenestino, where she died, at age twenty-five. Margherita’s choices in pursuing a life of charity and prayer puts into relief the variety of interpretations of both Franciscan spirituality and the multiple paths available to women desiring a religious or semi-religious life during the period. Margherita never took formal religious vows, yet she wore a habit and led a community of female followers from the time she left her family home. After her death, her female followers adopted the rule of the *Sorores Minores Inclusae*, and resided at the monastery of San Silvestro in

Capite, in Rome. The vitae—the first authored by the layman Giovanni Colonna (*Vita I*), Margherita's eldest brother, and the second by Margherita's female follower Stefania (*Vita II*), her successor as leader of the female community—recount the progression of Margherita's unenclosed religious life, ascetic practices, visions, and miracles. The pairing of a layman's and a woman's rendering of Margherita's life adds a new dimension to the scholarship on hagiographic authorial voice, while also exposing alternative views and uses of sanctity linked to status, gender, and lineage.

The primary purpose of this volume is to bring attention to Margherita Colonna, and to place her among contemporary spiritual women renowned for visions, from the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. The vitae, indeed, shed further light on the role of visionaries in medieval society and contain unique details, while conforming to the established hagiographic tradition. The uniqueness of these compositions, however, does not only lie in some of the details contained within the texts. It also lies in authorship. Both layman-authored and female-authored hagiographies were rare for the period. Between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, only four hagiographies were composed by women who knew those about whom they were writing. Only one of these, the *Life of Isabelle of France* (ca. 1283), written by the Franciscan abbess Agnes of Harcourt, preceded Stefania's vita of Margherita. Giovanni Colonna's vita is similarly rare, both because he was a layman and because he was writing about his biological sister. The care with which the editors date the compositions, demonstrating Stefania's knowledge of Giovanni's vita, which was written between four and seven years earlier, and contextualize what was at stake for both authors—lineage, civic status, and legacy, on the one hand, and community legitimacy, female relationships, and claims of authority, on the other—allows the reader to juxtapose the motivations and strategies of the authors. It also offers an opportunity for comparison to hagiographies of holy women written by male confessors.

Beyond the content of the vitae, this volume has much to offer to both scholars and students. The editors provide a thorough introduction to the larger context bearing on the composition of the vitae, ranging from the baronial environment of medieval Rome, Colonna family aspirations, and papal politics, as well as the civic value of local holy women, female Franciscan identities, and the range of women's spiritual expression and experience. In addition to the vitae, the volume includes the papal bulls establishing San Silvestro in Capite, in 1285; the papal bulls promulgated two years later, during the open conflict between Boniface VIII and the Colonna; and the early sixteenth-century account by the Franciscan Mariano of Florence of the translation of Margherita's body to San Silvestro in Capite. The translations are highly accessible and the editors provide notes on grammatical points, biblical allusions, and finer contextual information, as well as where text was missing in the manuscript and reminders of earlier statements when the texts begin to meander (which both do, to an extent). The selected bibliography

provides a solid starting point for further research on the immediate and broader contexts with which the vitae and their authors interacted.

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*Ruling the Spirit: Women, Liturgy, and Dominican Reform in Late Medieval Germany.* Claire Taylor Jones.

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*Ruling the Spirit* investigates the role of the Divine Office during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and its emblematic value in the religious life of Dominican cloistered women in southern Germany and neighboring regions (Alsace; Brabant; the Rhineland; such Swiss cities as Bern, Basel, and St. Gallen; and Austria). Sixty-five nuns' monasteries were located in this territory, designated by the Dominican order as the Province of Teutonia. Of these, Saint Katherine's, in Nürnberg, was important for acquiring and composing textual resources that were made available for copying and diffusion among the monasteries. To accomplish its task, the book explores an array of sources: annals of women's religious life (known as "sisterbooks"), legislation internal to the Dominican order, liturgical books utilized by the nuns, preaching addressed to them, and literature that supported and formed their spiritual lives.

Of paramount importance for the practices and perspectives recommended to the monasteries was the Divine Office, endorsed for its efficacy in cultivating spiritual growth and its significance as a source of Dominican identity. Author Claire Taylor Jones argues as follows: soon after its founding in the thirteenth century, the Dominican order assigned a prominent place to the office in the life of the nuns, but not until the fourteenth century did a "liturgical piety" develop among German women in the order. Accordingly, the office became a locus of spiritual experience and of a community's association with the order as a whole; reports of ecstatic behavior, rather than representing a subversion of male ecclesial authority, suggested the spiritual benefits bestowed upon women's communities when under the order's jurisdiction and adopting its distinctive liturgy. In the fifteenth century, the liturgy likewise established the nuns' identity—i.e., as participants in the order's Observant reform movement (1–3).

Addressing a scholarly audience, especially those familiar with studies of religious women in medieval Germany, the book's substantive analysis and argumentation invite the engagement of specialists in medieval women's history, the history of Christian spirituality, the history of the Dominican order, and liturgical studies. Jones begins her account with the formal encouragement given to the nuns' liturgical practice by the order's leadership and its legislation. Later, the teachings of Henry Suso