



CALL FOR PAPERS

Northern Lights: Late Medieval Devotion to Saints from the North of England

28-30 March 2019, University of Lausanne

Plenary speakers: Julian Luxford (University of St Andrews), Catherine Sanok (University of Michigan), Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Fordham University)

Despite widespread interest in the cults of northern English saints (600-1200) in the early middle ages, comparatively little work has been carried out on the ways in which these cults evolved between 1300 and 1500. This international conference aims to shed new light upon this understudied period.

Focussed on the cults of Bede's lauded northern saints (Cuthbert, Hilda, Aebbe, Ninian, Aidan, Oswald, John of Beverley, and others), alongside early post-conquest saints in the same northern tradition (Godric of Finchale, Robert of Knaresborough, Aelred of Rievaulx, William of York, etc.), this conference will examine the ways in which these northern saints were remembered and venerated between 1300 and 1500. Pursuing an interdisciplinary approach, it will take account of new textual, architectural, artistic, and liturgical productions, pilgrimage cultures, and shrine economies, the relations of northern saints to their monastic custodians and local communities, and their utilisation to serve regional and national agendas.

Possible paper topics might include:

- Texts produced about northern saints in Latin, Middle English, or Anglo-Norman in the post-1300 period (new *vitae* and *miracula*, short *vitae* in Latin and vernacular legends, literary references, saints' plays, liturgical offices, hymns and prayers, listing in kalenders)
- The status and utilisation of the writings of northern hagiographers in the post-1300 period (Reginald of Durham, Jocelin of Furness, Aelred of Rievaulx, Geoffrey of Coldingham, John of Tynemouth, etc.)
- The late medieval material culture of northern saints (revisions of shrines and ecclesiastical architecture, new stained glass programmes and panel paintings, statues and manuscript illuminations, movements and locations of relics)
- The contribution of early northern saints to late medieval religious culture in the north (Richard Rolle's writings and cult, northern religious poems, treatises, and manuscript miscellanies)

- The relation of northern saints to the religious orders curating their shrines (remodelling of cults to serve monastic and mendicant agendas, monastic contention over possession of cults and relics, place of saints in monastic/episcopal disputes)
- The economic and social circumstances of northern cults in the post-1300 period (shrine organisation and revenue, pilgrim numbers and itineraries, saint's-day fairs and processions, the function of the saint within civic life, secular patronage)
- The relation of northern cults to midland, southern, and Scottish cults, and to Scotland and the Scottish border (collaboration, competition, appropriation, cross-border veneration, the function of northern saints in Anglo-Scottish military campaigns)
- The presence of northern saints' cults in continental Europe and Scandinavia (texts, churches, relics)
- The relation of northern saints' cults to late medieval constructions of 'northernness', 'Englishness', and other categories of ethnicity
- The extent to which northern saints' cults mediate local, regional, or national interests, and the interplay between those interests
- The degree to which northern saints follow or modify normative hagiographical constructions of gender (what is northern saintly masculinity/ northern saintly femininity?)
- The relation of northern saints to the physical environment (the northern landscape, birds and animals, the North Sea, rivers, natural territorial boundaries)

If you are interested in applying to give a 20-minute paper, please send a 250-word abstract and brief CV to Christiania Whitehead (christiania.whitehead@unil.ch) and Hazel Blair (hazel.blair@unil.ch) by **15 September 2018**.

The conference is organised by Denis Renevey, Christiania Whitehead, and Hazel Blair as part of their ongoing Swiss National Science Foundation project 'Region and Nation in Late Medieval Devotion to Northern English saints', based at the University of Lausanne. Further details about the project can be found on the conference webpage: <https://wp.unil.ch/regionandnation/northernlights2019/>

The conference will include optional cultural and historical outings in the Vaud and Valais regions of Switzerland. Full details to follow on the webpage. Conference registration will open in summer 2018.

The conference hashtag is **#Lights19**. You are warmly invited to follow us on Twitter **@NorthEngSaints**.

Header image: St Cuthbert's coffin and bearers, by Fenwick Lawson, in Church of St Mary the Virgin, Lindisfarne. Photograph by kind permission of Prof. Howard M.R. Williams, University of Chester

