

## The Legacy of Birgitta of Sweden

# Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions

*Edited by*

Christopher Ocker (*Melbourne and San Anselmo*)

*In cooperation with*

Tara Alberts (*York*) – Sara Beam (*Victoria, BC*) – Falk Eisermann (*Berlin*)  
Hussein Fancy (*Michigan*) – Johannes Heil (*Heidelberg*) – Martin Kaufhold  
(*Augsburg*) – Ute Lotz-Heumann (*Tucson, Arizona*) – Jürgen Miethke  
(*Heidelberg*) – Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer (*Tucson, Arizona*) – Ulinka  
Rublack (*Cambridge, UK*) – Karin Sennefelt (*Stockholm*)

*Founding Editor*

Heiko A. Oberman †

VOLUME 242

The titles published in this series are listed at [brill.com/smrt](http://brill.com/smrt)

# The Legacy of Birgitta of Sweden

*Women, Politics and Reform in Renaissance Italy*

*Edited by*

Unn Falkeid  
Anna Wainwright



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Unn Falkeid and Anna Wainwright - 9789004540040  
Downloaded from Brill.com 01/10/2024 01:09:21PM  
via Open Access. This is an open access title distributed under the terms of  
the CC BY 4.0 license, which permits any use, distribution, and reproduction  
in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited.  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



This is an open access title distributed under the terms of the CC BY 4.0 license, which permits any use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited. Further information and the complete license text can be found at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The terms of the CC license apply only to the original material. The use of material from other sources (indicated by a reference) such as diagrams, illustrations, photos and text samples may require further permission from the respective copyright holder.

Cover illustration: Agostino d'Antonio di Duccio, Saint Bridget of Sweden Receiving the Rule of Her Order, 1459. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Image in the Public Domain.

The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available online at <https://catalog.loc.gov>

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: [brill.com/brill-typeface](http://brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 1573-4188

ISBN 978-90-04-43178-2 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-54004-0 (e-book)

DOI 10.1163/9789004540040

Copyright 2023 by Unn Falkeid and Anna Wainwright. Published by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill nv incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Hotei, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau and V&R unipress.

Koninklijke Brill nv reserves the right to protect this publication against unauthorized use.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

# Contents

Acknowledgments	VII
List of Figures	IX
Notes on Contributors	XI

Introduction	1
<i>Unn Falkeid and Anna Wainwright</i>	

- 1 Birgitta and Pseudo-Birgitta: Textual Circulation and Perceptions of the Saint 34  
*Brian Richardson*
- 2 Making Birgitta Italian: The Time of Translation 56  
*Jane Tylus*
- 3 Prophetic Theology: The Santa Brigida da Paradiso in Florence 80  
*Isabella Gagliardi*
- 4 A Lineage of Apocalyptic Queens: The Portrayal of Birgitta of Sweden in Domenico Narducci's Sermon to Caterina Cibo (1533) 107  
*Clara Stella*
- 5 The Fifteen Prayers Attributed to Birgitta and Their Circulation in Early Modern Italy: Private Devotion, Heterodoxy, and Censorship 129  
*Marco Faini*
- 6 Ventriloquizing Birgitta: The Saint's Prophetic Voice During the Italian Wars 155  
*Jessica Goethals and Anna Wainwright*
- 7 The Semantics of Obedience. Birgittine Influences on Paola Antonia Negri's Letters 184  
*Eleonora Cappuccilli*
- 8 Discourses on the Virgin Mary: Birgitta of Sweden and Chiara Matraini 210  
*Eleonora Carinci*

- 9 “Consenti, o pia, ch’in lagrimosi carmi ...” Birgitta in the Verse, Thought,  
and Artistic Commissions of Angelo Grillo 242  
*Virginia Cox*
- 10 “The Most Illustrious and Divine of All the Sibyls.” Saint Birgitta in  
the Prophetic Visions of Tommaso Campanella and Queen Cristina of  
Sweden 277  
*Unn Falkeid*
- Appendix: One Life, Many Hagiographers: The Earliest Vitae of Birgitta  
of Sweden 309  
*Silvia Nocentini*
- Bibliography 327
- Index 360

# Acknowledgments

This book is the result of a collaboration between the two editors which started several years ago. After an enthusiastic discussion about the role of women writers in Renaissance Italy, and specifically about the role of widows and the possible influence of Birgitta of Sweden whose texts circulated widely from the late 14th century to the 17th century, we decided to apply for a grant for an extensive research project. The application was successful. We received funding from the Norwegian Research Council for three years (2018–2021), including funding for a PhD-student, a postdoc, and several workshops and conferences. Little did we know at that point about the obstacles to be caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and which came to delay the project considerably. Still, despite the many hindrances along our way, we were able to organize two conferences, the first in Rome in September 2018 and the second in Oslo in June 2022. The project's core group consisted of the principal investigator (Unn Falkeid), the researcher (Anna Wainwright), the postdoc (Eleonora Cappuccilli), the MSCA-fellow (Clara Stella), the PhD-student (Francesca Canepuccia), and the research assistant (Victor Frans). Between the two conferences, this group managed to gather for several minor workshops, in Rome, in Naples, at Vadstena in Sweden, and in Oslo, although our activities were far more limited than planned. Slowly the volume – the first extensive investigation of the political, literary, religious, and intellectual legacy of Birgitta of Sweden in Renaissance Italy – saw the light of day.

The editors are grateful to many people and different institutions that in various ways have assisted in the publication of this book. We would like to thank the Norwegian Research Council that generously funded the project, and which allowed us to extend the grant by one year. The staff at the Norwegian Institute in Rome and the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo, provided invaluable assistance with the organization of the two conferences, and hosted many of the team for long periods of research. We would also like to express our gratitude to the staff at different libraries who helped us with finding sources, even in periods with limited access: Carolina Rediviva (Uppsala University Library), the Azzolino Archive in the Biblioteca Comunale di Jesi, Biblioteca Angelica, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Biblioteca Casanatense, Biblioteca Nazionale in Naples, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati in Siena, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, The National Library in Oslo, The New York Public Library, the Morgan Library in New York, the Huntington Library in Los Angeles, and Manuela Michelloni at the Norwegian Institute in Rome. We are

grateful to Victor Frans and the IT-staff at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oslo for their tenacious work in establishing the project's database, which has been most valuable for all the contributors to this book as well as all the scholars connected to the project. Warm thanks go to Brill and to our editor, Ivo Romein, who were positive from the very first moment when we presented the book project, and to the two anonymous reviewers for their enthusiastic reports. Several colleagues and friends have supported this project from its very beginning, and we want to thank each of them, in alphabetic order: Kristin Blikrud Aavitsland, Roger Andersson, Lina Bolzoni, Abigail Brundin, Claes Gejrot, Tamar Herzig, Angela La Delfa, F. Thomas Luongo, Shannon McHugh, Maria H. Oen, Meredith K. Ray, Sara Risberg, Diana Robin, Alessandra Bartolomei Romagnoli, Maria Serena Sapegno, Ramie Targoff, Lynn Lara Westwater, Elissa B. Weaver, and Gabriella Zarri.

Above all, we would like to express our deep gratitude to all our contributors for the valuable time invested in the project and for their unique contributions. It has been an immense pleasure and a most treasured learning process to work with this group, all specialists in their different fields, who generously accepted our invitation to devote their time to the study of the reception of Birgitta of Sweden. Unn thanks her beloved husband, Hans, and their three children, Emma, Therese, and Bernhard, for everything. Anna thanks Jim, Clara, and baby Sylvia for their adventurous spirit and companionship in Rome, Oslo and New Hampshire. Finally, we thank each other for the years of friendship and dialogue on this topic dear to our hearts.

# Figures

- 0.1 Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, c.1647–52. Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome. Scala / Art Resource, NY 6
- 0.2 Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Blessed Ludovica Albertoni*, c.1617–74. Church of San Francesco a Ripa, Rome. Scala / Art Resource, NY 7
- 0.3 Stefano Maderno, *Statue of St. Bridget*, c.1590's. Basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome. Image provided by Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna 8
- 0.4 Stefano Maderno, *Martyrdom of St. Cecilia*, c.1599–1600. Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome. Manuel Cohen / Art Resource, NY 9
- 0.5 Niccolò di Tommaso, *Saint Bridget's Vision of the Nativity* [center], c.1375–76. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA. The Philadelphia Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY 19
- 2.1 Bernardino Pinturicchio, *Pius II canonizes St. Catherine of Siena, June 29, 1461*, c.1508. The Piccolomini Library, south west wall, Santa Maria della Scala (Duomo), Siena. © Ghigo G. Roli / Art Resource, NY 71
- 2.2 School of Lippo Vanni(?), *Miniature author portrait of Saint Birgitta*, after 1399. Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati, I.V.25, fol. 11v. © Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati, Istituzione del Comune di Siena, Italy 77
- 5.1a ss. *Crocefisso di San Paolo in Roma che parlò a S. Brigida*. Woodcut. Milan, Civica Raccolta Bertarelli, Sacre Popolari m. 36, 54 136
- 5.1b *Il ss. Crocefisso di San Paolo in Roma che parlò a S. Brigida*. Woodcut. Milan, Civica Raccolta Bertarelli, Sacre Popolari m. 36, 55 137
- 5.2 *Rivelazione fatta dalla bocca di Nostro Signore Gesù Cristo*. Woodcut. Milan, Civica Raccolta Bertarelli 143
- 5.3 *Quindecim orationes sanctae Brigittae de passione Domini* (Rome: Stephan Plannck, ca. 1495), fol. 2v. Biblioteca de Catalunya, Inc. 26/1–12° 144
- 5.4 a/b Giovanni Battista Porcelli, *Scriniolum Sanctae Inquisitionis Astensis [...]* (Asti: apud Virgiulium de Zangrandis, 1612), 56–57 146
- 5.5 *Modo, et regola di espurgare li ufficij, & altri libri di orationi* (Romae: per gli Heredi d'Antonio Blado Stampatori Camerali). Piacenza, Biblioteca Passerini Landi, (C) TT.03.034.04 148
- 5.6 *Decretum Sacrae Inquisitionis [...]*, June 30, 1671 (Romae: ex typographia Reverendae Camerae Apostolicae, 1671). Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense 150
- 6.1 Raphael Sanzio, *The Four Sibyls*, 1514. Chigi Chapel, Church of Santa Maria della Pace, Rome. Adam Eastland Art + Architecture / Alamy Stock Photo 156

- 6.2 Baldassarre Peruzzi, *Virgin and Child flanked by St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Birgitta of Sweden, and Cardinal Ferdinando Ponzetti*, 1515. Ponzetti Chapel, Church of Santa Maria della Pace, Rome. Vito Arcomano / Alamy Stock Photo 156
- 6.3 *Ptolemy, Aristotle, the Sybil, Birgitta, and Reinhart*, from Johannes Lichtenberger, *Pronosticatio*, woodcut, 1492. RB 104561, The Huntington Library, San Marino CA, 104561 176
- 6.4 Detail from Johannes Lichtenberger, *Pronosticatione ouero iudicio vulgare* (Venice: 1511), sig. Biv r. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale. With permission of the Ministero della Cultura / Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze. Further reproductions are not permitted 177
- 9.1 Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *Christ after the Flagellation*, after 1665. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Ernest Wadsworth Longfellow fund. Photograph © 2022 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 247
- 9.2 Stefano Maderno, *Statue of St. Bridget*, late 1590s. Basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome. Image provided by Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna 264
- 9.3 Tino di Camaino?, *Crucified Christ*, 1310. Basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome. Sergio Feola / Alamy Stock Photo 265
- 9.4 Matteo Greuter, *S. Paolo Basilica sive templum divi Pauli in via ostiensi*, from Giovanni Maggi's *Le dieci basiliche del giubileo*, engraving, 1625. Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, Rome. Fondo Lanciani, BiASA, Rome XI.132.60. Photo by Nicola Camerlenghi 269
- 9.5 Giuseppe Ghezzi (attributed), *St. Bridget Talking to the Crucifix*, after a lost painting by Ludovico Cardi, called Cigoli, c.1683–1693. Museo of the Basilica di San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome. Image provided by Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna 270
- 9.6 Jacques Callot after Lavinia Fontana, *The Martyrdom of St. Stephen*, plate 1 from 'Les Tableaux de Rome, Les Eglises Jubilaires' (The Paintings of Rome, The Jubilee Churches), c. 1607–1611, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 272
- 9.7 Giuseppe Ghezzi (attributed), Detail of *St. Bridget Talking to the Crucifix*, after a lost painting by Ludovico Cardi, called Cigoli, c.1683–1693. Museo of the Basilica di San Paolo fuori le mura, Rome. Courtesy of the Papal Basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura. Photo by Unn Falkeid 274

## Notes on Contributors

### *Eleonora Cappuccilli*

holds a Ph.D in History of Political Thought from the University of Bologna (2016) and is research fellow at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies. She was previously postdoctoral fellow in History of Ideas at the University of Oslo. Her research focuses on women's political and religious thought in Renaissance and early modern Europe, feminist political theory and the history and critique of patriarchy. She has published two monographs: *La critica imprevista. Politica, teologia e patriarcato in Mary Astell* and *La strega di Dio. Profezia politica, storia e riforma in Caterina da Racconigi* (2020).

### *Eleonora Carinci*

(Ph.D Cantab) is Marie Skłodowska Curie postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas at the University of Oslo with a research project on the literary representation of the Virgin Mary. Her interests include early modern Italian literature and culture, with particular focus on women's writings. She has published a number of journal articles and chapters in edited volumes on various authors, as well as a modern edition of Camilla Erculiani's *Lettere di philosophia naturale* (Agorà & Co 2016). She is the editor of the English translation of Erculiani's work in 'The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe' series (Iter Press 2021), and her book on Sister Felice Rasponi is forthcoming (Classiques Garnier).

### *Virginia Cox*

is Senior Research Fellow at Trinity College Cambridge. Her research interests are Italian Renaissance literature and intellectual history, women's writing, and the history of rhetoric. She is the author of *The Renaissance Dialogue* (Cambridge: 1992); *Women's Writing in Italy, 1400–1650*, *The Prodigious Muse: Women's Writing in Counter-Reformation Italy*, and *Lyric Poetry by Women of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: 2008, 2011, and 2013). Her recent publications include three co-edited volumes: *A Cultural History of Democracy in the Renaissance*, with Joanne Paul (London: 2021), *Vittoria Colonna: Poetry, Religion, Art, Impact*, with Shannon McHugh (Amsterdam: 2022), and *Drama, Poetry, and Music in Late-Renaissance Italy: The Life and Works of Leonora Bernardi*, with Lisa Sampson and Anna Wainwright (London: 2023).

*Marco Faini*

is Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo (SUNY). He has worked and published on religious print and the history of devotion, unorthodox literature, and the history of doubt. He is the co-editor of *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy* and *Domestic Devotions in the Early Modern World* (Leiden-Boston: 2018); *A Companion to Pietro Aretino* (Leiden-Boston: 2021); *Le doute dans l'Europe moderne* (Turnhout: 2022). His latest book *Standing at the Crossroads: Stories of Doubt in Renaissance Italy* is forthcoming with Legenda/MHRA (Cambridge) in the Italian Perspective series.

*Unn Falkeid*

is Professor of History of Ideas at the University of Oslo. Her research interests centre on medieval and early modern intellectual history, religious reform movements, women's contribution to the early modern history of knowledge, Renaissance humanism, and book history. Her publications include the co-edited volumes *The Cambridge Companion to Petrarch* (Cambridge: 2015), *Rethinking Gaspara Stampa in the Canon of Renaissance Poetry* (Farnham: 2015), *Sanctity and Female Authorship: Birgitta of Sweden & Catherine of Siena* (New York: 2020), and the award-winning monograph *The Avignon Papacy Contested: An Intellectual History from Dante to Catherine of Siena* (Cambridge: 2017).

*Isabella Gagliardi*

is Professor of History of Christianity and Churches at the University of Florence and Membre Associé of Laboratoire d'études sur les monothéismes and Directeur d'Etudes Associé, DEA 2022 at Fondation Maison de Sciences de l'Homme in Paris. Her research concerns the history of religious movements from the Ancient to Early Modern societies in the Euro-Mediterranean context with a comparative perspective and with special attention to the history of women. Her latest book is *Anima e corpo. Donne e fedeli nel mondo mediterraneo (secoli XI–XVI)*, Roma, Carocci, 2023.

*Jessica Goethals*

is Associate Professor of Italian at the University of Alabama. In addition to her monograph *Margherita Costa, Diva of the Baroque Court* (University of Toronto Press, 2023), she has published on the Italian Wars and is currently writing a book provisionally entitled *The Literary Sack of Rome: Anticipation to Aftermath*. Her articles on the subject have appeared in *Renaissance Studies* (2023), *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (2014), and *Italian Studies*

(2013). She has held long-term fellowships at the University of Pennsylvania, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and Villa I Tatti – The Harvard Center for Italian Renaissance Studies.

*Brian Richardson*

is Emeritus Professor of Italian Language at the University of Leeds. His research interests centre on the history of the Italian language and the history of the circulation of texts in manuscript, in print and orally in late medieval and Renaissance Italy. His publications include *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470–1600* (Cambridge: 1994), *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: 1999), *Manuscript Culture in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: 2009), *Women and the Circulation of Texts in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: 2020) and an edition of Giovan Francesco Fortunio's *Regole grammaticali della volgar lingua* (Rome and Padua: 2001).

*Clara Stella*

holds a Ph.D in Italian studies from the University of Leeds. From March 2022 she is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Integrated Philologies at the University of Sevilla. She has previously been a Marie Curie Fellow at the Department of History of Ideas at the University of Oslo with the project *Women Writing Saints*. Stella's research focuses on early modern women's writing, the *querelle de femmes*, the history of anthologies, and models of sanctity. Her publications include *Lodovico Domenichi e le Rime diverse d'alcune nobilissime et virtuosissime donne* (1559) (Paris: 2022) and "Speaking with Authority: Reading Catherine of Siena in the Times of Vittoria Colonna", *Renaissance and Reformation*, 44/4(2022):9–50.

*Jane Tylus*

is Andrew Downey Orrick Professor of Italian and Professor of Comparative Literature at Yale University. She specializes in late medieval and early modern European literature, religion, and culture, with secondary interests in 19th–20th century fiction. Her work, including the award-winning *Reclaiming Catherine of Siena: Literacy, Literature, and the Signs of Others* (2009), has focused on the recovery and interrogation of lost and marginalized voices – historical personages, dialects and "parole pellegrine", minor genres such as pastoral, secondary characters in plays, poems, and epics. She has also been active in the practice and theory of translation. Her current book project explores the ritual of departure in early modernity, especially how writers and artists sent their works into the world.

*Anna Wainwright*

is Assistant Professor of Italian Studies and Core Faculty in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of New Hampshire. Her research considers gender, race, politics, and emotion in medieval and early modern Italy. Her book, *Widow City: Gender, Emotion, and Community in Renaissance Italy*, investigates the cultural and political significance of widowhood in early modern Italy from Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, to the women poets of the Counter-Reformation (Delaware, forthcoming). She is the co-editor of the volumes *Innovation in the Italian Counter-Reformation* (Delaware: 2020) and *Teaching Race in the European Renaissance: A Classroom Guide* (ACMRS, 2023).