

The Feminist Research Institute Presents

*Lives in Translation: The Vitae of Juliana and Katherine and
Late Anglo-Saxon and Early Anglo-Norman England*



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Medieval Studies

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SUB Cherry/Silver

One of the most prominent media for both monastic and lay education in medieval Europe was the hagiography, a work denoting the life of a saint. Studying the surviving corpus of saints' lives can reveal a great deal about a culture during a specific moment in history. When looking at the Old English corpus, it is significant that while the vernacular lives of male martyrs depict the martyrdom of native Anglo-Saxon saints, there are none depicting native Anglo-Saxon *female* martyrs, leaving a gap within the hagiographic tradition that could not (or would not) be filled by the native ranks. Hagiographers instead turned to earlier, non-native sources for these models. This paper examines the tenth-century Latin life of Juliana as it appears in British Library, Harley MS 3020, an unedited work. As this life was written towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon era, it is representative of a transitional period in Anglo-Saxon history. Exploring how this life would have been read by a tenth-century Anglo-Saxon audience, this paper will establish its place within the context of earlier Anglo-Saxon versions of this life, as well as its role in later transmissions of this text, suggesting that the transmission of this life, along with the lives of other Mediterranean female martyrs in England, might be read as a single phenomenon, rather than as separate ones.

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