

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND EVERYDAY LIFE  
IN THE LONG FIFTEENTH CENTURY  
(1350–1570)

NEW COMMUNITIES OF INTERPRETATION  
CONTEXTS, STRATEGIES, AND PROCESSES OF RELIGIOUS  
TRANSFORMATION IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

VOLUME 2

*General Editors*

*Sabrina Corbellini, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen  
John Thompson, Queen's University Belfast*

*Editorial Board*

*Pavína Rychterová, Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften  
Ian Johnson, University of St Andrews  
Géraldine Veysseyre, Institut de recherche et d'histoire des  
textes (CNRS), Université Paris IV-Sorbonne  
Chiara Lastraoli, Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance  
(CNRS), Université François Rabelais, Tours  
Pawel Kras, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin / Katolicki  
Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II  
Marina Gazzini, Università degli Studi di Milano Statale  
Marco Mostert, Universiteit Utrecht  
Rafael M. Pérez García, Universidad de Sevilla*

# Religious Practices and Everyday Life in the Long Fifteenth Century (1350–1570)

*Interpreting Changes and Changes of Interpretation*

*Edited by*

IAN JOHNSON *and*

ANA MARIA S. A. RODRIGUES

BREPOLS

This work is financed by national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P,  
in the scope of the projects UIDB/04311/2020 and UIDP/04311/2020.



© 2021, Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium.

This is an open access publication made available under a  
CC BY-NC 4.0 International License: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>. Some rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, for commercial purposes, without the prior permission of the publisher, or as expressly permitted by law, by license or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics rights organization.

D/2021/0095/75

ISBN 978-2-503-59355-5

eISBN 978-2-503-59356-2

DOI 10.1484/M.NCI-EB.5.122657

Printed in the EU on acid-free paper.

# Table of Contents

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>List of Illustrations</b> | 9 |
|------------------------------|---|

**Introduction: Interpreting Changes in Daily Religious Practice and Changes of Interpretation in the ‘Long Fifteenth Century’**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Ian JOHNSON and Ana Maria S. A. RODRIGUES | 13 |
|---|----|

Religious Practices and Everyday Life: The Monastic Experience

**Religious Practices of the Canons Regular of St Augustine in the Czech Lands: The Statutes of Roudnice**

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Adéla EBERSONOVÁ | 23 |
|------------------|----|

**The Devotional Book in Context and Use: Catalan Poor Clares and English Birgittines: Spaces, Performance, and Memory**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| David CARRILLO-RANGEL, Blanca GARÍ, and Núria JORNET-BENITO | 49 |
|---|----|

**Literacy, Books, and the Community: Textual Evidence from a Portuguese Dominican Nunnery**

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Gilberto Coralejo MOITEIRO | 77 |
|----------------------------|----|

Religious Practices and Everyday Life: The Laity

**Change and Continuity in Lay Devotion as Evidenced by Prayer Beads in Medieval Poland and Central Europe**

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Monika SACZYŃSKA-VERCAMER | 101 |
|---------------------------|-----|

**A Daily Devotion of the Long Fifteenth Century: Italian Literature on the Rosary**

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Erminia ARDISSINO | 129 |
|-------------------|-----|

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>The Prayer Book of George of Poděbrady and Books of Private Devotion in Post-Hussite Bohemia</b><br>Jan DIENSTBIER  | 151 |
| <b>The ‘Goostly Chaffare’ of Reginald Pecock: Everyday Craft, Commerce, and Custom Meet Syllogistic Polemic in Fifteenth-Century London</b><br>Ian JOHNSON                                       | 175 |
| <b>The Reformation and the First Book in the Lithuanian Language</b><br>Dalia Marija STANČIENE   | 201 |
| Preparing for <u>Death</u> and the Afterlife   |     |
| <b>‘The Kingdom of Heaven cannot be denied to you justly because you have fought correctly’: Tracing the Evolution of <i>Ars moriendi</i> Literature in the Fifteenth Century</b><br>Joost ROBBE | 217 |
| <b>Caxton and the Reception of the <i>Artes moriendi</i></b><br>Delphine MERCUZOT  | 241 |
| <b>Death Multiplied: The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Bohemian Art in the Context of Late Medieval Religious Practice</b><br>Daniela RYWIKOVÁ                                | 273 |
| <b>De praeparatione ad mortem: The Dying and Death of Charles V (1500–1558)</b><br>Nikola SAMARDŽIĆ  | 305 |
| Continuity and Change in Religious Practices: <u>Christianity</u> and Islam  |     |
| <b>The Phenomenon of Crypto-Christianity in the Balkans during the Sixteenth Century</b><br>Vladimir ABRAMOVIĆ and Haris DAJČ  | 323 |
| <b>Traditions and Transitions: Examples of Parallel Practices in a Sixteenth-Century Central European Region</b><br>Marcell SEBŐK  | 335 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>Continuity and Discontinuity in Everyday Religious Life in Southern Hungary before 1526 in the Light of Supplications to the Holy See</b><br>Melina ROKAI                             | 355 |
| <u>Conclusion</u>  |     |
| <b>Books and Objects Supporting Quotidian Devotion: Conclusions and Prospects for Investigating Daily Religious Practices during the ‘Long Fifteenth Century’</b><br>Géraldine VEYSSEYRE | 377 |
| <b>Index</b>   | 403 |



## List of Illustrations

### **Adéla Ebersonová**

- Figure 1.1. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 202<sup>v</sup>. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 26
- Figure 1.2. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 32
- Figure 1.3. Prague, National Library of the Czech Republic, MS XIX B 3, fol. 12<sup>v</sup>. Photo: National Library of the Czech Republic. Reproduced with permission. 33

### **David Carrillo-Rangel, Blanca Gari, and Nuria Jornet-Benito**

- Figure 2.1. *Ordenaciones* (constitutions) of the monastery of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara of Barcelona. Montserrat, Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Benet de Montserrat, Fons del Monestir de Santa Clara de Barcelona (AMSBM/MSCB), Ordenaciones religiosas de la provincia de Tarragona (1617). Reproduced with permission. Photo: Blanca Gari and Núria Jornet. 55
- Figure 2.2. Diurnal of the monastery of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara of Barcelona. Montserrat, Biblioteca de l'Abadia de Montserrat (BAM), Ms. 13. Diurnal, Original binding. Reproduced with permission. Photo: Blanca Gari and Núria Jornet. 56

### **Monika Saczyńska-Vercamer**

- Figure 4.1. The tombstone of Bolko II, Duke of Ziębice and his wife Duchess Jutta, mid-fourteenth century, Henryków, Silesia, Poland, the post-Cistercian church, a Silesian sculptor. Photo: Michał Kurzej. 104
- Figure 4.2. Hedwig Codex, Silesia, Poland: Hedwig praying to Saints Lawrence and Bartholomew and blessing the sick with a statute of the Virgin Mary. Los Angeles, Collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, file no. 83. MN.126, MS Ludwig XI 7, fol. 46<sup>v</sup>. 1353. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. 106

- Figure 4.3. The breviary of Jan of Středa, Bishop of Litomyšl, the second half of the fourteenth century, folio 69<sup>v</sup>: the initial G the scene of the Annunciation; Prague National Museum, file XIII A 12. After Brodský, *Katalog Iluminovaných rukopisů Knihovny Národního Muzea v Praze*, fig. XXVI. 114
- Figure 4.4. *Ecce Homo*, c. 1500, Gdańsk, St Mary's Church, an unknown painter from Gdańsk; Warsaw, National Museum, inventory Śr. no. 77. Photo: Teresa Żółtowska-Huszczka / Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. 116
- Figure 4.5. The Third Commandment 'Remember the Sabbath day, keep it holy' from The Ten Commandments Tablet, 1480–1490, Gdańsk, St Mary's Church, an unknown painter from Gdańsk; Warsaw, National Museum, inventory Śr.36. Photo: Teresa Żółtowska-Huszczka / Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie. 120
- Figure 4.6. *Hornig Codex*, Silesia, Poland, 1451, fol. 58<sup>v</sup>: Pilgrims going to Saint Hedwig's grave in Trebnitz, Wrocław, Wrocław University Library, file No. IV F 192 (after *Legenda o św. Jadwidze / Legende der hl. Hedwig*). 121

### Jan Dienstbier

- Figure 6.1. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 12<sup>r</sup>, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.92. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 155
- Figure 6.2. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 12<sup>r</sup> (detail), Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 157
- Figure 6.3. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 3<sup>r</sup>, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 158
- Figure 6.4. Prayer book of George of Poděbrady, fol. 33<sup>r</sup>, Prague, 1466, The Morgan Library, MS M.921. Courtesy of The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift: Fellows, with funds from the Belle da Costa Greene Fund, 1965. 160

### Daniela Rywиковá

- Figure 11.1. The Last Judgement, the Parable of Wise and Foolish Virgins, the Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead, and Triumph of Death. Broumov, former Charnel House, front wall, c. 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 278

- Figure 11.2. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Broumov, former Charnel House, c. 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 279
- Figure 11.3. The Triumph of Death. Broumov, former Charnel House, c. 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 280
- Figure 11.4. Christ the Judge. Broumov, former Charnel House, right side wall, c. 1340. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 281
- Figure 11.5. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. České Budějovice, Dominican Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, southern wall, after 1381. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 289
- Figure 11.6. Jean de Noir, The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead. Psalter and Prayer Book of Bonne of Luxemburg, before 1349. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloister Collection, MS 69.86, fol. 320<sup>v</sup>–321<sup>r</sup>. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image in the Public Domain. 291
- Figure 11.7. The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead and Triumph of Death. Pisa, Campo Santo, after 1336. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 292
- Figure 11.8. Pietà, St George fighting the dragon, the Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead (the side wall); and St Christopher (the front wall). České Budějovice, Dominican Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, after 1381. Photo: Daniela Rywиковá. 294

### **Nikola Samardžić**

- Figure 12.1. Nicolaas Hogenberg, Funeral Procession in Brussels on the Occasion of the Death of Emperor Charles V. Sheet 24-25. 1559. © The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. Reproduced with permission. 315
- Figure 12.2. The mummified body of the Emperor Charles V in the Escorial. Photograph of a painting by V. Palmaroli y González. Wellcome Collection. Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0). 315



IAN JOHNSON AND  
ANA MARIA S. A. RODRIGUES

---

## Introduction

### *Interpreting Changes in Daily Religious Practice and Changes of Interpretation in the 'Long Fifteenth Century'*

A chief intention of this book is, by looking at religious practices in the context of everyday life, to explore and add range to understandings of transitions and changes in religious life in late medieval and early modern Europe and to make these understandings more nuanced and broader than those currently available. The essays in this collection accordingly bring to light and analyse continuities and shifts in daily religious practices across Europe — from Portugal to Hungary and from the Balkans to the British Isles — in the 'transition' from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. While some of these changes, such as the increasing use of rosaries and the Europe-wide turning of secular

**Ian Johnson** • is Professor of Medieval Literature and Head of the School of English at the University of St Andrews. He was Co-Director of the Queen's Belfast-St Andrews AHRC-funded project *Geographies of Orthodoxy: Mapping English Pseudo-Bonaventuran Lives of Christ, 1350–1550* (2007–2011). With Alastair Minnis he edited *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume II. The Middle Ages* (2005). He is founding General Editor of *The Mediaeval Journal* and was for many years General Editor of *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. His latest books are *The Middle English Life of Christ: Academic Discourse, Translation and Vernacular Theology* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); *The Pseudo-Bonaventuran Lives of Christ: Exploring the Middle English Tradition*, edited with Allan Westphall (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); *The Impact of Latin Culture on Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, edited with Alessandra Petrina (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2018), and *Geoffrey Chaucer in Context* (Cambridge: CUP, 2019). He was a Working Group Coordinator and Management Committee member of the COST Action *New Communities of Interpretation: Contexts, Strategies and Processes of Religious Transformation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (2013–2017).

**Ana Maria S. A. Rodrigues** • (MA Sorbonne; PhD University of Minho) is Associate Professor at the University of Lisbon. Previously, she lectured at the University of Minho. She has written extensively on economic and religious history. Her most recent publications concern medieval monarchy and gender: A. M. S. A. Rodrigues, M. S. Silva, and J. Spangler (eds), *Dynastic Change: Legitimacy and Gender in Medieval and Early Modern Monarchy* (London: Routledge, 2019); 'The Crown, the Court and Monastic Reform in Medieval Portugal: A Gendered Approach', in *Queens, Princesses and Mendicants: Close Relations in a European Perspective*, edited by N. Jaspert and I. Just (Zurich: Lit, 2019), pp. 53–63; 'Spirituality and Religious Sponsorship in the 15th-century Portuguese Crown: Kings, Queens and Infantes', in *Women's Networks of Spiritual Promotion in the Peninsular Kingdoms (13th–16th Centuries)*, edited by B. Garí (Barcelona: IRCVM, 2013), pp. 205–20.

folk to the *Ars moriendi*, were the consequences and symptoms of the rise of a more personal and interiorized faith, other changes had different causes. These included the spreading of the Reformation over Europe, the expulsion or compulsory conversion of the Jews in the Iberian peninsula, the emigration of Bohemian Hussites from their native land to southern Hungary, and the conquest of large portions of eastern Christianity by the Turks — all of which forced people, who all too often suddenly found that they had become religious minorities, to adopt and adapt new ways of living and new strategies for understanding, safeguarding, and expressing their religiosity.

A challenging accumulation of varied yet converging evidence from the ‘long fifteenth century’ (1350–1570) suggests that all around Europe religious practices did not simply spread — they themselves changed in the very processes of effecting change. Often, they became intensified and more personal — hence the multiplication of books, leaflets, images and also other types of material objects (such as rosaries) whose production seems to have been prompted by an array of significant and revealing demands and issues. Such religious tools and their accompanying (self-)disciplinary behaviours correspondingly supported and modified daily devotions in their own telling ways.

The essays in this volume give special attention to the different religious rhythms and ways in which religious and lay people’s hours, days, weeks, months, years, and lives were structured; the dynamic materiality of religious tools and devotional rituals; the institutional and social contexts for religious gestures and behaviours; the social dimension of religious life and the various forms of socialization and social behaviours connected with them; the dynamics within and amongst written texts, images and oral culture, and the intervention of spiritual and ecclesiastical guidance at crucial moments of human existence, especially death.

These essays have their origins in an international colloquium entitled ‘Religious Practices and Everyday Life (1350–1570)’, hosted by the University of Lisbon in March 2016 as part of the ongoing programme of activities under the umbrella of the European Union-funded COST Action 1301, *New Communities of Interpretation: Contexts, Strategies and Processes of Religious Transformation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, which ran from September 2013 to September 2017. This COST Action involved over 300 researchers from twenty-four countries. Its remit was to re-examine, and open up dialogues about, the traditional religious, cultural, social, linguistic, and geographical rifts and connections of late medieval and early modern Europe, as well as the common national narratives that have influenced and distorted (and continued to influence and distort) the construction and maintenance of historical identities and beliefs.

The essays in this volume therefore develop the philosophy and approach of the COST Action by modifying and adding scholarship on religious change in the ‘long fifteenth century’. The Action’s ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ spells out the context for this:

In spite of the pivotal importance of the analysis of the long fifteenth century as a turning point in European history, the period is relatively understudied in its complexity, multiplicity and fluidity, i.e. as a period in which the simultaneous presence of tradition and innovation and old and new media and modes of communication, offered multiple and divergent options for the formation of religious and cultural identities.<sup>1</sup>

Echoing further the words and ambitions of the Action's 'Memorandum of Understanding', the studies in this collection cast a spectrum of new yet profoundly historical light on themes of seminal relevance to present-day European society — doing so by analysing patterns of inclusion and exclusion, and examining shifts in hierarchic and non-hierarchic relations articulated through religious practices in the lives of groups and individuals.<sup>2</sup> The academic team assembled for this enterprise (featuring contributors with institutional affiliations in the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, and the United Kingdom) is internationally European as well as interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary in its methodology. Individual studies offer fresh perspectives and a compelling set of approaches to social, religious, and cultural change. It is hoped that, as a collection, their particular multiple interconnectivities may help to give a bigger, more vivid, and nuanced picture of the nature and significance of changing religious practices during this period. Our contributors go beyond issues of indoctrination and beyond confessional and other binary oppositions (although they do not ignore them). They also add to discrete disciplinary strands in their own right, such as, for example, the religious history of medieval Christendom from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century; developments in medieval and early modern religious literary forms; the changing status and roles of European vernacular languages (both in themselves and in their relationships with Latin); and crucial changes in late medieval and early modern book culture. More importantly, however, our contributors share a common recognition of the need to create new, more capacious, and self-aware European narratives, not least by rethinking existing modern national narratives of late medieval and early modern history and culture. They set about this by taking account of the mobility and agency of people, ideas, languages, texts, and a whole host of different cultural forms, social cross-currents, and religious practices.<sup>3</sup>

The collection starts with three essays focusing on life in religious orders. In 'Religious Practices of Regular Canons of St Augustine in the

---

1 'Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of a European Concerted Research Action designated as COST Action: New Communities of Interpretation: Contexts, Strategies and Processes of Religious Transformation in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe' (Brussels: COST Association, 2013), accessible at: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/IS1301/#tabs{Name:overview}>, p. 5.

2 See 'Memorandum of Understanding', p. 2.

3 See 'Memorandum of Understanding', p. 6.

Czech Lands: The Statutes of Roudnice’, Adéla Ebersonová investigates the rules and customs governing the conduct of the Czech canons in the Middle Ages, and provides an examination of the implications of the official *consuetudines* (customs) for the structures and dynamics of everyday social and individual living. The Roudnice *consuetudines* would prove immensely influential, spreading to what is now modern-day Poland, Slovakia, Germany, and Austria. The next essay does not discuss a phenomenon spreading across territories but one with two comparable instantiations in different parts of Europe, namely Catalonia and England. In ‘The Devotional Book in Context and Use: Catalan Poor Clares and English Birgittines: Spaces, Performance, and Memory’, David Carrillo-Rangel, Blanca Gari, and Nuria Jornet-Benito bring together the Poor Clares of Barcelona and the sisters of the convent of the Birgittine Order of Syon Abbey (just outside London) with regard to the performative and spatial contexts in which devotional manuscripts interacted with the lives of communities and individuals. In the next essay, ‘Literacy, Books, and the Community: Textual Evidence from a Portuguese Dominican Nunnery’, another case study centred on written materials produced for women religious, Gilberto Coralejo Moiteiro takes care to place the use of written materials by female congregations in a broader European context, with special consideration being given to the female branch of the Dominicans and the telling case of a foundation chronicle penned by a woman author aiming not just to authorize the history of the community but also to shape its future agenda, identity, and corporate consciousness.

Moving now from the cloister to the everyday life of the laity, the next group of studies commences with a pair of essays on traditions of prayer beads. Monika Saczyńska-Vercamer’s ‘Change and Continuity in Lay Devotion as Evidenced by Prayer Beads in Medieval Poland and Central Europe’ traces the complex dialogic between, on the one hand, the material use of prayer beads in devotional exercises and, on the other, the changes in the forms of prayer and of the contemplative exercises that typically accompanied them. Here we find a narrative of constant adjustment and flexibility that testifies to the versatility of a stable and widespread yet minutely evolving tradition. Continuing with the theme of the rosary and the prayerful telling of beads, Erminia Ardissino presents, in ‘A Daily Devotion of the Long Fifteenth Century: Italian Literature on the Rosary’, a history of Italian rosary tradition, paying particular attention to the authoritative texts informing it. She then extends her study to a discussion of how vernacular poets responded creatively to this tradition. Such texts are an eloquent guide to the possibilities of this tradition in its construction of a deeply personal sensibility governing the daily religious lives of laypeople, male and female, of various social and education conditions.

Another personal material medium for the exercise of an individual religious sensibility on a daily basis was the prayer book, and in our next chapter, Jan Dienstbier’s ‘The Prayer Book of George of Poděbrady and Books of Private Devotion in Post-Hussite Bohemia’, the codex in question is the remarkable illustrated prayer book of a monarch famously preoccupied with the clash of

orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Here, however, we turn from the fraught public sphere to a more personal level of spiritual interiority and daily devotions. This particular essay, like others in this volume, devotes space to examining relationships between text and image; it also represents a groundbreaking intervention in the study of somewhat neglected post-Hussite (as opposed to pre-Hussite) manuscripts supporting practices of private devotion.

The Bohemian Hussites were, of course, heavily influenced by English Wycliffites — the very people whom the ill-starred Bishop of Chichester, Reginald Pecock, sought to bring round to orthodoxy through his programme of vernacular argument and exposition of mainstream doctrine. ‘The “Goostly Chaffare” of Reginald Pecock: Everyday Craft, Commerce, and Custom Meet Syllogistic Polemic in Fifteenth-Century London’, by Ian Johnson, gives an account of how and why Pecock inserted into his hyper-rationalistic manuals and treatises arguments invoking the occupational and social behaviours of his intended lay audience, whom he sought to turn into rudimentary vernacular theologians and philosophers. This implicit brokerage between the lay and the learned (with Pecock as go-between) attempted to license lay adjudication of high clerical matter through everyday secular skills and knowledge. Unfortunately for Pecock, however, this enterprise of vernacular dissemination failed spectacularly. Such was not the case somewhat later in Lithuania when, in the sixteenth century, the first books in the Lithuanian language were printed as a response to the broader European Reformation. In ‘The Reformation and the First Book in the Lithuanian Language’, Dalia Marija Stanciene discusses how the first Lithuanian book was not merely a Lithuanian Catechism but also provided Lithuanian grammar and linguistic terminology, as well as marking the birth of secular printed Lithuanian poetry, music, and history. The publication of this book was also the foundation stone of the written and literary standardization of the Lithuanian language. It is immensely valuable that this highly important historical material is now available to international modern academe in the current European *lingua franca* of English.

The next section of the volume consists of a quartet of essays on the topic of death, or, to be more accurate, the practices with which the individual and society prepared for death and attempted to maximize the possibility of salvation. The first two essays in this grouping deal with the extremely important international literary tradition of the so-called ‘Arts of Dying’. Delphine Mercuzot’s ‘Caxton and the Reception of the *Artes moriendi*’ discusses the motivations and opportunities observed by the ‘Father of English printing’, William Caxton, when he translated and published two different versions of the *Ars moriendi*, *The Art and Craft to Know Well to Dye* (1490) and *The Craft for to Die* (1491). These two editions, both Caxton’s own translations from the French, reveal how, as the fifteenth century wore on, religious rites surrounding death were intensifying and becoming more personal. This meant that, through the *Artes moriendi*, the crucial moment of death was being inscribed more and more into the fabric of everyday life as the inalienable responsibility of

each individual Christian. The individual nature of this inescapable mortal burden is also discussed in “‘The Kingdom of Heaven Cannot Be Denied to You Justly Because You Have Fought Correctly’: Tracing the Evolution of *Ars Moriendi* Literature in the Fifteenth Century’. Here, Joost Robbe assesses three *ars moriendi* texts of the 1400s side by side. Focusing on the interaction and the agency of the ‘stock characters’ (in particular the dying person) in his trio of exemplary texts, Robbe shows how the development of the *ars moriendi* genre in the fifteenth century reflects a crucial late medieval shift towards an understanding of death predicated upon the autonomous responsibility and self-consciousness of the individual undergoing preparation for death. This approach, he concludes, conceivably represents the foundation of modern Western attitudes towards mortality.

Another late medieval tradition configured to help individuals cope with the challenges of mortality and damnable sin is discussed in Daniela Rywíková’s ‘Death Multiplied: The Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead in Bohemian Art in the Context of Late Medieval Religious Practice’. This reconsideration of the internationally widespread Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead shows in vivid detail how late medieval death was never reduced to a unitary phenomenon confined to the extinction of one individual life. When, in the examples interpreted by Rywíková, the living and the dead encounter each other, we are given shockingly salutary reminders of just how permeable the barrier between this world and the next was for the late medieval imagination. As with the case of the *ars moriendi* genre, the Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead became part of daily life — a reminder that although salvation could never be assured in advance, it should always be the object of fervent hope.

In the next essay, ‘*De praeparatione ad mortem*: The Dying and Death of Charles V (1500–1558)’ by Nikola Samardžić, the universal theme of how to die well becomes all the more personal by being attached to a famous name. Here, Samardžić, rethinking the remarkable mortal trajectory traced by one of the most powerful and intriguing personalities of the early modern period, Emperor Charles V, contextualizes the life, dying, and death of this monumental European figure within broader intellectual and religious developments (such as the influence of Erasmus of Rotterdam).

The final section of the book considers the various plights, identities, and practices of communities negotiating the boundaries and overlaps between different religions and/or different sectarian identities and/or affiliations. An array of extraordinary religious and cultural blends is the subject of ‘The Phenomenon of Crypto-Christianity in the Balkans during the Sixteenth Century’ by Vladimir Abramović and Haris Dajč, who give a fascinating account of how, in the wake of the Ottoman conquest, secret Christian practices and incomplete Islamization, to say nothing of remarkable hybrid mixtures of Christian and Muslim customs, informed social and religious life in the Balkans in the sixteenth century. It would appear that some hybrid customs survived right up until the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1922.

The next essay in this section, Marcell Sebök's 'Traditions and Transitions: Examples of Parallel Practices from a Sixteenth-Century Central European Region,' addresses some rather different manifestations of how social, cultural, and religious practices interacted amongst different communities. Framing his investigation within a somewhat more theoretical approach than that taken by most of the essays in this volume, Sebök reconsiders both periodization and confessional/ideological paradigm shifts. His case study of Szepes county in the Kingdom of Hungary sheds light on coexisting traditions, in which something as specific as a single hymn may reveal a spectrum of informing affiliations at once humanist, Catholic, Melancthonian, and Lutheran.

In 'Continuity and Discontinuity in Everyday Religious Life in Southern Hungary before 1526 in the Light of Supplications to the Holy See,' Melina Rokai takes us through a remarkable corpus of documents disclosing a wealth of interactions between the Catholic faithful of southern Hungary and the institution of the papacy. This relationship was articulated through an astonishing variety of petitions focusing on such issues as the absolution from sin; absolution from excommunication; supplication for forgiveness of sins in advance of committing them, or even absolutions from oaths and covenants.

The book closes with an illuminating drawing-together of the threads of the preceding essays in the form of Géraldine Veysseyre's afterword, 'Books and Objects Supporting Quotidian Devotion: Conclusions and Prospects for Investigating Daily Religious Practices During the "Long Fifteenth Century"'. Here, it is pointed out that the variety of accessible and comparable case studies of the 'long fifteenth century' in the book should, it is hoped, provide specialists from different areas with opportunities to compare and contrast their own materials and methods. Suggestions are also made here as to how research in this field may be carried forward in the future, be it in terms of materials, themes, or methods.

It is the hope of the editors of this volume that, throughout this collection, much new light will have been shed on theoretical and methodological issues relevant to bridging the gaps between, on the one hand, extant documents and objects and, on the other hand, the social and material contexts in which they were created and the daily settings in which they were used and manipulated. By recovering and analysing the cultural dynamics and connections amongst power, knowledge, and practices in their everyday religious manifestations, the studies in this book, for all the variety of their materials and provenance, contribute to a common transnational endeavour to reconsider and enrich our understanding of one of the most critical phases of Europe's cultural history. At the same time, whether taken individually or in concert, they reconsider and at times challenge existing narratives of the development of (early) modern identities that still, all too often, dominate the self-understanding and recurrent beliefs of contemporary European society.

**Acknowledgement:** The editors would like to express their considerable gratitude to Abe Davies for compiling the index.