

Riccardo, Katia

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"disobbedienza" religiosa nei secoli XII-XV]**

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Závěrem několik kritických poznámek. Je škoda, že čtenář na předkládanou publikaci musel čekat devět let. Je evidentní, že řada studií musela být dávno sepsána a jen čekala na vydání. To je škoda právě kvůli tomu, že monografie z jistého pohledu opomíjí klíčové posuny – především v německém kulturním kontextu – v posledních několika letech. Dnešní islám v Německu předkládá řadu nových témat, které logicky monografie nereflektuje (vnitroněmecká politická situace, hnutí požadující znovuoobnovení chalífátu, teroristické útoky, válka na Ukrajině...). Snad se dočkáme třetího možného dílu, který by zmapoval právě tyto soudobé trendy?

Po přečtení monografie vyniká jedno všudy přítomné téma, a to kritika orientalismu, post-koloniální a de-koloniální studia. Autoři se tímto tématem v řadě případů krátce či hlouběji zabývají. Ovšem škoda, že k tématu nebyl přizván odborník na toto téma. Karel Černý jistě představuje dobrý základ ve zde publikovaných studiích, ale do budoucna by to jistě chtělo i v českém prostředí přizvat někoho, kdo by téma zpracoval novodobým diskurzem (vč. gender studies, feminismus...).

Kvalita jednotlivých studií je ovšem nadprůměrná a islám je zde představen nesmírně rozmanitě. Šíře užitých metod dokazuje, že se česká islamologie rozhodně nestrání nových trendů v religionistice, a dokáže produkovat skvělé myslitele ze sociologického nebo antropologického zázemí. Monografie také zcela jasně potvrzuje, že religionistika, potažmo islamologie jakožto její disciplína, je interdisciplinární.



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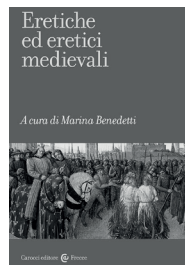
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Marina Benedetti, ed. *Eretiche ed eretici medievali.*

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KATIA RICCARDO



Centre for the Digital Research of Religion, Department for the Study of Religions, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia

• katia.riccardo@mail.muni.cz • <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1997-3588>

Recent scholarship on medieval heresy has shifted from overarching narratives to more source-critical approaches, attentive to the ways dissent was constructed in

specific historical contexts. The volume *Eretiche ed eretici medievali*, edited by Marina Benedetti, Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Milan, is a significant contribution to the study of religious nonconformity in the Middle Ages, engaging with fundamental questions of identity, marginalization, and historical categorization. The volume positions itself within an area of research that stresses the importance of archival sources in studying the lived experiences of men and women accused of heresy. Rather than treating heresy as an abstract category imposed by ecclesiastical authorities, the volume foregrounds the individuals at the heart of these movements, analyzing their self-perceptions alongside the identities ascribed to them by inquisitors and chroniclers. The volume is structured into four thematic sections: the multiple identities of heretics, the role of women in religious dissent, heresy as a “cultural movement”, and interpretations and representations of heretics over time. A central theme running throughout the volume is the process by which individuals and groups were labelled as heretics. Rather than accepting the category of heresy as self-evident, the volume interrogates the language through which dissent was constructed, both in medieval sources and in modern historiography. This imposed identity not only shaped contemporary perceptions but continues to influence modern historiography.

The first section, *Un'identità molteplici*, offers some of the volume's most stimulating contributions, particularly in its attention to rigorous source criticism. Francesco Mores' chapter on Arnaldo da Brescia follows the path opened by Arsenio Frugoni (*Arnaldo da Brescia nelle fonti del secolo XII*, first published in 1954) in emphasizing that each document must be analyzed individually, without distorting interpretative frameworks or forcing artificial connections between disparate sources. Through a close study of sources on Arnold of Brescia, Mores underlines the need for a hierarchy of evidence—not to establish a single authoritative narrative, but to recognize the varying degrees of ideological projection present in different accounts (p. 41). This methodological lesson is crucial for scholars of medieval dissent: Mores cautions against uncritical readings of institutional narratives, emphasizing that historians must strive to distinguish rather than conflate, resisting the temptation to construct overly cohesive accounts from sources marked by power dynamics and ideological agendas. A similarly nuanced approach is found in Grado Giovanni Merlo's discussion of Waldesians, where he highlights both the revolutionary implications of Valdo's evangelical choice and the fluidity of Waldensian identities among his followers in the years following his excommunication in 1184. The very act of translating biblical texts into the vernacular—so that laypeople could access scripture without clerical mediation—represented a radical shift. Over time, doctrinal and behavioral differences multiplied, making their identification increasingly complex (p. 62, 70). For this reason, Merlo argues, we should speak of Waldensianisms in the plural—a perspective that resonates with the volume's broader theme

of plurality of identities. Daniel Toti's chapter on the Cathars in Italy also contributes to this theme of textual transmission, making a crucial distinction between "Cathar sources" (texts produced by them) and "sources on Cathars" (primarily inquisitorial records and polemical accounts). This differentiation provides an essential tool for evaluating the biases embedded in the surviving evidence, shedding light on the complex process by which these groups were documented, interpreted, and ultimately remembered. The section closes with Marina Benedetti's study on Guglielma, a case that encapsulates one of the volume's broader methodological concerns. Benedetti begins by reconstructing the discovery of the notarial records from the Milanese inquisition, emphasizing how understanding the history of documentation is the first step in any historical investigation—what she calls the beginning of the "scientific adventure" (p. 67). Her analysis then turns to one of the book's key themes: dimorphism in medieval heresies. Guglielma, venerated as a saint by her followers, was posthumously condemned as a heretic in 1300. This apparent paradox—holiness and heresy coexisting in the same figure—is not unique to Guglielma but recurs in other cases, such as that of Armanno Pungiluppo, whose posthumous trial similarly illustrates how sanctity and suspicion could be deeply intertwined.

One of the most significant contributions of *Eretiche ed eretici medievali* is its attention to gender. The second section, titled *Silenzio delle donne, silenzio sulle donne*, addresses the paradox of female participation in religious movements: while some women played central roles in heretical communities, their presence was often marginalized in historical narratives. Benedetti's chapter on Guglielma thus serves as a bridge between the discussions of sources and the broader theme of gender. Not only does the chapter retrace the history of this extraordinary female figure, but it also reflects on the complexities of the sources that shaped her legacy. The chapter ultimately underscores the plurality of Guglielma's identity, shaped not only by the fragmented inquisitorial records but also by the later hagiographical traditions, sacred representations, and artistic depictions that reinterpreted her legacy over time. As Benedetti notes, the slippage between historical documentation and literary, devotional, or artistic narratives complicates any attempt to reconstruct a singular, linear account of her story. Instead, Guglielma is best understood as a figure whose meaning was continually reshaped by the sources that sought to define her—a plurality that reflects the "kaleidoscopic play of mirrors" (p. 99), molded by the perspectives of different sources. Anna Benvenuti's discussion of beguines and *bizzoche* (non-cloistered religious women) highlights how institutional anxieties about lay female religiosity led to increasing restrictions on their spiritual practices. As she observes, the canonical redefinition of penitential life in this period—particularly the clericalization of Third Orders and the progressive enclosure of female communities—ultimately marginalized and expelled any form of spirituality deemed too unorthodox

(p. 146). Marina Benedetti's essay on female itinerant preaching builds on these themes, challenging the assumption that apostolic preaching was an exclusively male domain. As Benedetti notes, inquisitorial records often obscured female religious agency, either by overextending masculine terminology or by dismissing women's spiritual roles with pejorative labels, such as *mulierculae oneratae peccatis* "little women burdened by sin" (p. 21). Yet, as the four contributions in this section demonstrate, women who engaged in religious dissent displayed remarkable intellectual and physical dynamism, navigating spiritual paths that were often fraught with risk. Particularly compelling is Adriana Valerio's study on Marguerite Porete, whose *Mirror of Simple Souls*, with its radical emphasis on divine love and spiritual annihilation, challenged ecclesiastical structures by advocating an intimate, unmediated relationship with God. The transmission of *The Mirror*—which circulated anonymously after her death—further exemplifies the erasure of women's voices in religious and literary traditions. Stripped of its author's name and removed from the immediate context of her execution, the text is no longer perceived as heterodox but as the mystical work it is. The classification of texts and of individuals as heretical was not inherent but contingent on the circumstances in which they were read, copied, and condemned. The textual history of Marguerite's work aligns with one of the volume's central concerns: how female religious agency was not only marginalized in inquisitorial records but also in the long-term reception of its ideas. Similarly, Marina Montesano's chapter on *Joan of Arc* underscores how religious and political anxieties intersected in her trials, shaping the perception of female visionary figures. Joan, like Marguerite, defied established norms of spiritual authority, embodying a form of charismatic leadership that the Church found both threatening and difficult to categorize (p. 213-215).

The third section addresses the intellectual dimensions of heretical movements, particularly in relation to textual traditions. Anne Brenon's study revisits the long-standing debate over the historical reality of Catharism, addressing claims that it was merely a construct of clerical polemic, and arguing that such interpretations misread the extant sources. Shifting focus to the *boni homines* of Languedoc, she traces their identity through surviving sources, underscoring the learned nature of their religious movement, characterized by a deep engagement with biblical texts, a referential use of scriptural authority, and an original approach to exegesis (p. 240). This was an intellectual tradition, yet one that also resonated with broader society. The *boni homines* built a religious community capable of responding to the spiritual and emotional aspirations of ordinary medieval Christians across social strata. It was this combination—an erudite dissidence with deep popular roots—that made it so resilient and, ultimately, so threatening. As Brenon notes, only a concerted effort by both the papacy and the French monarchy could uproot it (p. 241). Following is Elizabeth Solopova's study on

Lollardy, where she highlights the extensive transmission of Wyclif's Bible and related texts, such as the *Revised Psalter Commentary* and *Glossed Gospels*. Despite censorship, Lollard writings contributed to the development of the English language, written culture, and biblical studies. Their influence extended beyond theological controversy, shaping intellectual and literary traditions in ways that endured well beyond the immediate context of heresy. František Šmahel's chapter on the Hussites similarly highlights the revolutionary potential of religious dissent, demonstrating how theological critique could evolve into a broader socio-political movement. A key aspect of this movement was the production of didactic religious literature in the vernacular, which sought to improve the spiritual lives of the lower classes. The Hussites' demands for reform were thus closely tied to efforts to make religious knowledge more accessible. This push for vernacular texts, combined with their call for freedom of speech within the Church, fueled tensions that culminated in both inquisitorial trials and armed conflicts. Šmahel's analysis highlights how textual culture played a crucial role in the development and resilience of the movement, demonstrating that Hussite reform was as much a battle over access to religious knowledge as it was a military and political struggle. Marina Benedetti's discussion of the Alpine Waldensians underscores the intimate relationship between dissident communities and manuscript culture. Unlike the centralized, Latin-based liturgy of the Church, Waldensian devotional life was shaped by a direct and personal engagement with books. The *Barbes*, itinerant preachers, did not deliver sermons within institutional spaces but brought texts into domestic settings, where manuscripts were displayed, read, and touched—an anthropological shift that redefined religious practice. This vibrant circulation of manuscripts exemplifies the idea of heresy as a "cultural movement", in which religious dissent was sustained not only through oral transmission but also through the material presence and use of texts.

These chapters emphasize how the translation of sacred texts into the vernacular was not merely an act of facilitating linguistic accessibility but an epistemological transformation. Rendering sacred texts into the vernacular reconfigured access to religious knowledge, fostering critical engagement among audiences previously excluded. Translation was perceived as an act that "set the brain in motion" (p. 93), a process that encouraged interpretative agency and independent scriptural reflection. The discussion of heretical books also ties into the materiality of texts—how they were copied, circulated, and read in domestic and communal spaces.

The fourth and final section, *Interpretazioni e immagini al rogo*, shifts the focus from dissident communities to the mechanisms of their suppression, the historiographical challenges surrounding their interpretation, and the evolving uses of heresy as a polemical category. Rosa Maria Parrinello's chapter on the Bogomils questions the historical foundations of the so-called Bogomil heresy, emphasizing the tenuous link between the movement and its supposed founder.

Andrea Nicolotti's study of the Templar trials similarly engages with the problem of definition and historiographical distortion: while the Templars were accused of behaviors associated with heresy, their condemnation relied on confessions obtained through coercion rather than substantive evidence, a process that later fueled both conspiracy theories and romanticized myths about the order. This section also expands the discussion beyond the medieval period. Franco Mores' examination of the 1907 condemnation of Modernism by Pope Pius X further illustrates how heresy remained an instrument of control well beyond the medieval period, with Modernism denounced as the "synthesis of all heresies" precisely because it threatened ecclesiastical authority by advocating religious and intellectual renewal. Finally, while seemingly an odd inclusion, Pavel Helan's discussion of Mussolini's writings on Jan Hus reveals how heresy, as a historical concept, was reinterpreted for ideological purposes: in Mussolini's early socialist and anticlerical thought, Hus was transformed from a condemned heretic into a symbol of revolutionary defiance against reactionary oppression. Across these studies, heresy emerges not as a static or self-evident category but as a designation shaped by institutional power, historiographical debates, and shifting political agendas.

Eretiche ed eretici medievali succeeds in offering a multifaceted exploration of medieval heresy, balancing detailed case studies with broader thematic discussions. Its strength lies in its close engagement with primary sources and its awareness of historiographical biases, particularly in relation to terminology and gender. The volume also contributes to ongoing debates on the intellectual and cultural dimensions of dissent, demonstrating that so-called heretical movements were not merely instances of deviation from orthodoxy but were often deeply integrated in the religious and social fabric of their time.

For scholars of medieval religious history, this book is a valuable resource, offering both new insights and a synthesis of recent historiographical research. The overall structure and thematic coherence make it accessible to a broader audience interested in the complexities of medieval dissent. The book's editorial approach also reflects its accessibility, while losing nothing in scholarly rigor. Rather than relying on footnotes, each chapter provides a comprehensive bibliography at its conclusion, ensuring that references remain clear while allowing for an uninterrupted reading experience. This structure enhances the volume's usability for both specialists and a broader academic audience.

Ultimately, the great merit of *Eretiche ed eretici medievali* is its ability to confer both methodological and conceptual depth to a significant portion of the current debate on medieval heresies. By interrogating historical labels and emphasizing the materiality of sources, the volume not only provides a reassessment of religious dissent but also challenges assumptions about how heresy has been—and continues to be—constructed in historical discourse.



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Suzanne Owen and Angela Puca, eds. *Pagan Religions in Five Minutes.*

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MICHAL PUCHOVSKÝ

Institute for Sociology of Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia

• michal.puchovsky@savba.sk • <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1387-2767>



The publishing house Equinox, which in past years launched the book series *Religion in 5 Minutes*, recently published *Pagan Religions in Five Minutes*, edited by Angela Puca (Leeds Trinity University, also known for her podcast *Angela's Symposium*) and Suzanne Owen (Leeds Trinity University). This collection of essays contains 70 short chapters by a broad range of authors, including many renowned names in Pagan studies (Ronald Hutton, Michael York, Caroline M. Cusack, Sabina Magliocco, Douglas Ezzy), as well as a younger generation of scholars (Angela Puca, Mary Hammer, Jennifer Uzell) and a few selected experts from various modern Pagan subgroups. As the title already suggests, the aim of this collection is to provide science-based information about modern Paganism to a wider audience, in a format that is both useful for scholars and accessible to the general public. Did the editors achieve their goals? What are the main benefits of this collected volume in the wider context of Pagan studies? And what about the quality of the chapters?

The book is divided into five subcategories – *Paganism*, *Pagan Religions*, *Pagan Beliefs and Practices*, *Pagan Discussions*, and *Studying and Teaching Pagan Religions* – to offer an easy-to-navigate structure for both scholars and the general audience.

The first section, *Paganism*, contains chapters that aim to provide readers with a foundational understanding of what modern Paganism is—whether it is a religion, when it began, how many modern Pagans exist, and what worldviews they hold. Since modern Paganism is more like a family of new religious movements with a shared interest in the (re)construction of pre-Christian Pagan traditions, the authors correctly point out the difficulty of providing definitive answers to some questions due to the multi-faceted nature of Paganism. This