



HNRS 2030: The Lives of Saints

Professor Bradley K. Storin

Tuesdays and Thursdays
10:30-11:50am
(Online Synchronous)



This course investigates writings about the lives of saints, or “hagiography,” in late antique Christianity (ca. 100-700 c.e.). Through a critical engagement with these texts in translation, students will encounter apostles, martyrs, mystics, and holy people from Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Syriac literature. In our seminar-style discussions and individual research, we will examine attributes of the saints (special powers and their relationship to the transcendent divine) and address issues of gender, embodiment, power, and identity. How do these texts define and construct holiness? To what extent does hagiography constitute a literary genre in late antiquity? What kinds of problems do they pose to historians who want to use them to learn about the past? No prior knowledge of Christianity is assumed.