

The Focus on Union with Christ in Late Medieval Women's Piety

Catherine Perl

In this paper, I offer an analysis of aspects characteristic of late medieval women's spirituality. I argue that the piety of medieval women was characterized by intense physicality that did not, however, undermine their claimed mystical experiences but complemented them. I focus on Jacques de Vitry's *Life of Marie d'Oignies*, and I use the scholarship of Caroline Walker Bynum and Amy Hollywood to situate the life of Marie d'Oignies in the larger context of the medieval women's movement. This was religious movement that historian Herbert Grundmann, writing almost a hundred years ago, identified with the thirteenth-century beguines (quasi-religious women who lived in community without taking vows) and as led by women and for women. I argue that late medieval women's spirituality was fundamentally shaped by a desire to achieve unity with Christ; women enacted this desire by understanding themselves to be brides of Christ, by engaging in ascetic practices, and through Eucharistic devotion. I begin by discussing Marie's piety. I then consider Marie's spirituality in the context of larger patterns of medieval female religiosity. I argue that what underpins this religiosity is women's preoccupation with the physical humanity of Christ and their own physical union with him. I conclude that this perception was not a rejection of spiritual union; rather, women had simultaneously intensely physical and intensely mystical experiences.

The People of Our Tsar: A Translation

Mariya Lipmanovich

Liudmila Ulitskaia is a well-established novelist in the contemporary Russian literary scene. Her short story collection *Liudi nashego tsaria* (*The People of Our Tsar*, 2005) represents a sharp political and social critique of the Soviet era and contemporary Russian society. This project translates the first of the book's four parts, consisting of the prologue and ten stories. With the intent of staying accurate to the original and yielding an authentic English equivalent, I have explored various translation techniques and studied the author and her other books (using published English translations as guides for the project). I have employed a self-devised, three-tiered approach which starts with a literal text-oriented translation and gradually moves toward a more free-flowing, reader-oriented translation. This project aims to balance between these two extremes on the translation spectrum, so as to produce a faithful representation of Ulitskaia's writing style, message, and spirit. Since this work has not been previously published in English, I hope it will provide English-speakers with a better understanding and appreciation not only of Russian history, but of their own cultural heritage as well. While these short stories offer a glimpse at cultural particulars, ultimately they illustrate the universal human experience that knows no political boundaries.