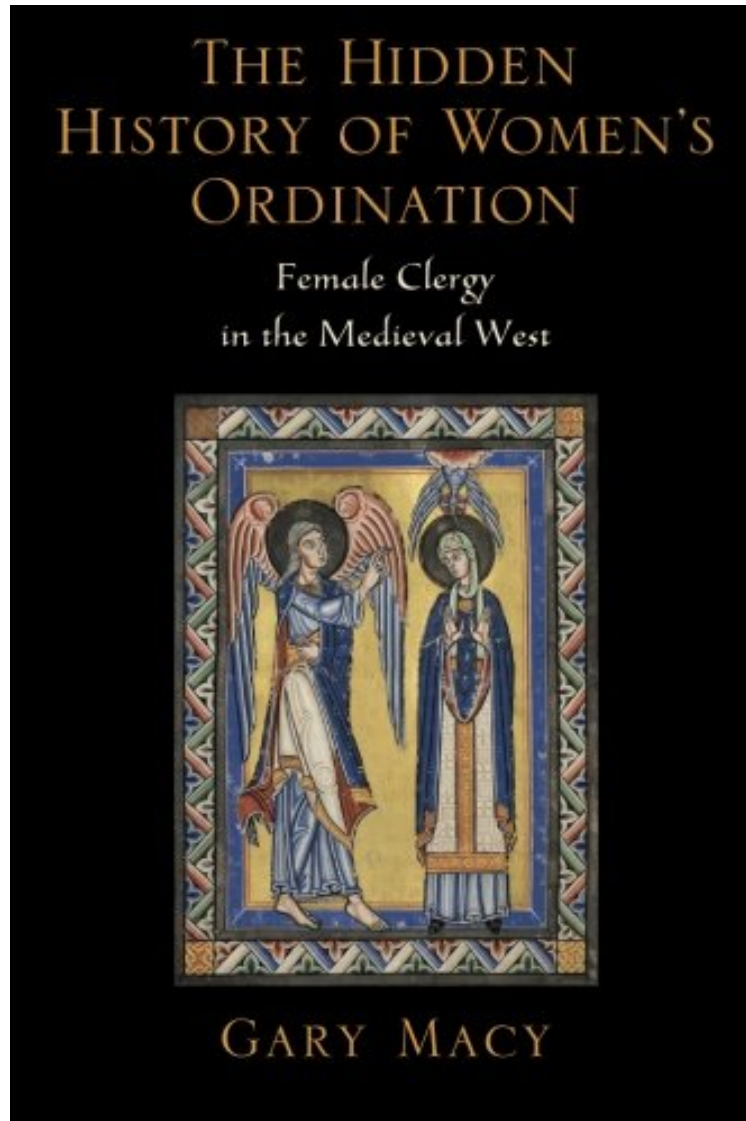


[Ebook free] The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West

The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West

Gary Macy

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#642385 in Books Oxford University Press 2012-10-01 2012-10-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 6.10 x .60 x 9.101, .92 #File Name: 0199947066280 pages | File size: 67.Mb

Gary Macy : The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West:

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful historical research per Oxford Univ Press! By land lover Published by Oxford University Press, this is a must read. Women, as it turns out, WERE ordained in the early

church. The definition of "ordained" was changed in the Middle Ages, then projected back in time. A huge "error" historically. Shame on the church!

6 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Essays on the subject which give an overview
By S. The essays are repetitive, but the subject is very important. It is worth having this book. If you are not familiar with the historical case for a female diaconate, the book is crucial. If you are interested in the changing meaning of the term 'ordination,' the book is fascinating.
8 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Long on speculation, but very short on actual facts
By bomorris
The author, Gary Macy, bases his argument on the possibility that there were women bishops and Priests on reports that there may have been women bishops and priests in obscure places far from the centers of mainstream Christianity. He also argues that there are some tombs and pictures of women with the title *episcopa* and *presbyteria* that the ancient Church had women bishops and priests. He barely mentions the possibility that *episcopa* could have been the title for the wife of a bishop and *presbyteria* the title for the wife of a priest, as is the case today for the wife of a priest in the Greek Orthodox Church. The only real evidence he offers that there were women bishops was the case of St. Bridget of Ireland. However, he also reports she was consecrated a bishop because the bishop who meant to bless her an abbess had bad eyesight and read the prayer for the consecrating a bishop instead of the prayer for blessing an abbess. Such an accident can hardly be taken as a valid consecration of a bishop or as evidence that the ancient Church had women bishops. He places great emphasis that the ancient Church ordained deaconesses, but never actually described what deaconesses did. Dr. Kyriaki Karidoyanes Fitzgerald has written several excellent studies of the role of deaconesses that show that although they are ordained a deaconess is not simply a woman deacon, but had very different duties, that did not include the same liturgical role in the worship of the Church as a male deacon. A deaconess ministers to women and children. One reason that the office arose was because adults were Baptized in the nude and it was inappropriate for a man to baptize a naked woman, so deaconess baptized women. The main ministry of a deaconess is to women and children. I use the present tense because unlike the West the office of deaconess was never abolished in the Eastern Orthodox Church, but exists today, especially in women's monasteries. He does provide a valuable discussion on the rise of clericalism in the West due to the influence of Scholasticism.
Fr. John W. Morris

The Roman Catholic leadership still refuses to ordain women officially or even to recognize that women are capable of ordination. But is the widely held assumption that women have always been excluded from such roles historically accurate? In the early centuries of Christianity, ordination was the process and the ceremony by which one moved to any new ministry (*ordo*) in the community. By this definition, women were in fact ordained into several ministries. A radical change in the definition of ordination during the eleventh and twelfth centuries not only removed women from the ordained ministry, but also attempted to eradicate any memory of women's ordination in the past. The debate that accompanied this change has left its mark in the literature of the time. However, the triumph of a new definition of ordination as the bestowal of power, particularly the power to consecrate the Eucharist, so thoroughly dominated western thought and practice by the thirteenth century that the earlier concept of ordination was almost completely erased. The ordination of women, either in the present or in the past, became unthinkable. References to the ordination of women exist in papal, episcopal and theological documents of the time, and the rites for these ordinations have survived. Yet, many scholars still hold that women, particularly in the western church, were never "really" ordained. A survey of the literature reveals that most scholars use a definition of ordination that would have been unknown in the early middle ages. Thus, the modern determination that women were never ordained, Macy argues, is a premise based on false terms. Not a work of advocacy, this important book applies indispensable historical background for the ongoing debate about women's ordination.

"Here is a truly groundbreaking book, essential reading for anyone interested in the complex story of how the ministry of women has been valued (and devalued) within the Christian church. Gary Macy convincingly demonstrates that in the early church women were ordained into various roles, but in the eleventh and twelfth centuries a new definition of ordination was rigorously applied, which served to exclude them. This study is of crucial importance not only for an understanding of the development of medieval Christianity but also for the material it brings to contemporary debate on the ordination of women." --Alistair Minnis, Yale University
"The Hidden History provides a revelatory synthesis of the evidence for women's ordination in the late antique and early medieval church in addition to tracing the process of its occlusion in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. With admirable clarity and compelling detail, Macy reveals fundamental changes in western understandings of ordination and suggestively explores their ecclesiological implications. This book is essential reading for medieval ecclesiastical historians, illuminating a profound transformation in the western church and its clergy." --Maureen C. Miller, author of *The Bishop's Palace: Architecture and Authority in Medieval Italy*
"In a clear narrative, supported by massive scholarly evidence, Macy had revealed a lost component of first millennium Christianity that should serve as an inspiration for the churches of the third millennium." --Jo Ann Kay McNamara, author of *Sisters in Arms*
"This is an important book that brings together and makes sense of a series of recent findings about the history of women's ordination. ...The book is beautifully produced and will change how we teach and think about the medieval church." --Church History
"Highly recommended." --

Choice "Macy's excellent *Hidden History* is both a scholar's book and a comfortable read that is hard to put down." -- Catholic Historical "Careful scholarship based on solid historical method and backed up by 97 pages of dense Latin citations and documents drawn from a bibliography consisting of five pages of primary sources and thirteen pages of secondary material make this book definitive on the question of women's ordination in the early middle ages. ...[P]ainstakingly written and worthy of equally painstaking study." --Catholic Books "Exceptional in its thoroughness and thoughtfulness both in addressing the state of the question in the medieval period and in challenging Rome's tradition-based theological position." --Anglican Theological About the Author Gary Macy is John Nobili, S.J. Professor of Theology in the Department of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University.