

Annotated Bibliography on St. Monica

Reverend Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Saints: Complete Edition*. (London: Catholic Way Publishing, 2015).

This collection of biographies in English, divided into feast days, is the definitive Roman Catholic hagiography from Victorian England, and for May 4 (St. Monica's feast day) it includes an account of Monica's life (heavily based on Augustine's *Confessions*, which Butler quotes directly), the housing of her relics and their translation. Despite his treatment of some information being characterised as uncritical or dated, this source is useful in understanding how St. Monica was received in its context in time, place and tradition. Also, other female saints known from popular works by or about male saints can be found in *The Lives* and St. Monica's life can be compared with these to help understand the effect that *The Confessions* had on the Cult of St. Monica.

M.R., "St. Monica", in *The Irish Monthly* (Dublin: Irish Jesuit Province, 1911), pp. 269-273

A May 4 hagiography by a Jesuit author who makes use of Augustinian sources to find the unique role (comparable to Mary the Mother of God) that St. Monica could have for Augustinians; one Augustinian quoted in the article describes himself as a son of Augustine, and is therefore a grandson of Monica. This article is not biographical and collects sermons, hymns and poetry from a variety of periods and places. While Butler's work attempts to create a factual biography, this work is focused on recognising a personal understanding of St. Monica from those that venerate her and is useful in understanding St. Monica's role in modern Catholic devotion from a number of its different traditions. As the article quotes sources in full, it is also useful as a collection of primary sources into previous periods of devotion to St. Monica.

Karen J. Johnson, "Beyond Parish Boundaries: Black Catholics and the Quest for Racial Justice.", in *Religion and American Culture* 25.2 264-300 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015),

Included in this article is a history of St. Monica's parish in Chicago, founded during segregation by Ven. Augustine Tolton, the American Roman Catholic Hierarchy's only Black priest at the time. Although Fr. Augustine intended St. Monica's to be integrated, after he died the church was made exclusively Black. Although this source looks at many churches, it includes a large section on St. Monica's and its mixed reception, as well as the confused reaction from Europeans who were unfamiliar with American culture. This source is of more limited use to this essay than some of the others, but it can be used as one source among many to explore how Monica's Africanism was received outside of Africa, both from the perspective of Europeans who expected one reaction and African-American Catholics who expressed another.

Jean M. Heimann, *Seven Saints for Seven Virtues* (Cincinnati, Servant Books, 2014)

A recent American devotional work that noticeably focuses equally on Monica and Augustine, in contrast to the often subordinate role she has had. In line with Mediæval hagiography and the early books of *The Confessions*, Monica is made to exemplify the patience that she exercised during her marriage to Patrick rather than her widowhood, which was Butler's primary focus for her *vita* because of the role of consecrated widow within mainstream hagiography. This source is useful as Heimann shows the continued effect that Augustine's *Confessions* had on St. Monica's cult, which failed to maintain independent traditions but it should not be used alone as it directly represents the opinion of only one author.

Mary L. Daniel "But Why *Santa Mônica*?", in *Romance Notes*, Spring 1988, 28.3 187-193 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Spring 1988),

This article reviews how and why St. Monica was used in *Dom Casmurro* by the Brazilian author Machado de Assis. While de Assis was heavily influenced by Augustine, the story itself features Monica more. This article explains the context that a reference to St. Monica brings with it to an early republican Brazilian audience, so it is useful not only to see the influence that Augustine's *Confessions* had on de Assis (an immensely important author in his own right) but to see how *The Confessions* were received more generally and why a focus on St. Monica was a more powerful figure for de Assis to employ.

Elizabeth Rees, "Christian Widowhood.", in *New Blackfriars* 76.896 393-400 (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 1995)

This source understands Monica as a part of the order of widows mentioned by St. Paul in 1 Timothy 5:9-10, leaders for the typically younger order of consecrated virgins. This source is not a discussion of Monica herself (although she is mentioned), but is a useful and thorough investigation into a clerical role that no longer exists. The understanding of consecrated widows (whether as an order of their own or regular nuns) shapes how St. Monica's portrayal in *The Confessions* was received. This source is useful as it brings to light an important part of how St. Monica was understood in the past that is largely unknown to modern audiences.

Alison Frazier, "A Layman's Life of St. Augustine in Late Medieval Italy: Patronage and Polemic.", in *Traditio* 65 231-286 (New York City: Fordham University Press, 2010)

A detailed look at a Mediæval Italian hagiographic source that draws heavily (but not exclusively) from Augustine's *Confessions*. The source, written for a wide audience, was popular so it does not represent Monica's reception from a top-down church-and-state perspective, but from how she was understood and venerated from the grassroots level. She embodies patience, asceticism and pious learning, at first in contrast to Augustine and then in concert after his conversion. The text is notable for additions, such as Monica and Augustine sightseeing in Rome together and commenting on the vanity of the Roman Empire. As these sections are entirely unique to this text, they are useful for recognising the Mediæval understanding of Monica.

Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Nancy Nienhuis. "Battered women and the construction of sanctity.", in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion: JFSR* 17.1 33-61 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001)

This series of articles discusses a number of saints whose cultus is associated with battered women including St. Monica and it discusses whether she should be understood this way as she sometimes has been (though this is often firmly rejected). This interpretation comes from Augustine's unreliable narrative as he cannot recall how Monica was treated before his birth and, as Patrick died during Augustine's youth, he may not have known what indicated an abusive relationship. The article follows a modern reading of Augustine's *Confessions* and implications it may have for earlier readers should be used with caution, but the evidence for Monica being included in a continuum of battered women saints should be considered carefully. This article is useful for understanding historic Christians who venerated Monica as a battered woman saint and for a modern feminist understanding.

Marianne Djuth, "'Vera Philosophia" in Augustine's Thought After 396", in *Augustiniana* 53.¼ 53-68 (Leuven: Peeters Publishers: 2003)

This article counters the claim that Augustine ceased to be a philosopher c. 396, claiming instead that he embraced Monica's *Vera Philosophia* (True Philosophy) as Monica was Augustine's "Christian philosopher *par excellence*", allowing readers to notice Monica's contributions to Augustine's work. In Augustine's *Retractationes*, Monica's lack of liberal arts is finally appreciated as truly positive by Augustine, who previously appreciated her *in spite* of it. Djuth suggests this allowed Augustinianism to be appreciated by "...dialecticians like Augustine trained in the liberal arts and devout Christians like Monica capable of interrogating the truth.", strongly contributing to its success. This article is useful as it not only as it proves Monica's influence, but shows how she had been recognised throughout history as a philosopher and not only a supportive figure for Augustine.

Ian Holgate, "The Cult of Saint Monica in Quattrocento Italy: Her Place in Augustinian Iconography, Devotion and Legend.", in *Papers of the British School at Rome* 181-206 (London: R. Clay and Sons, 2003)

This article reviews the Italian revival of the Cult of St. Monica, following the translation of her relics to Rome. Monica was already significant as an "ancestor", co-founder and female counterpart to Augustine but the wider success of her cult produced new myths seemingly contradictory to *The Confessions*; evidence for greater independence from Augustine. St. Monica's Sororities showed the independent role Monica received, moving her outside the ranks of the Augustinian saints and more into the general field of women saints. This source is useful as its investigation into the effect that Augustine's *Confessions* had on St. Monica's Cult proves that it may not have been entirely positive when compared to the effect that independent traditions had.