

Antonio Paglia, San Francesco di Paola Saves a Carpenter, Church of San Giovanni Battista, Brescia



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Dipartimento di
Filosofia e Beni
Culturali

16 June 2023
16.00-17.30 (CET)
Sala Morelli,
Palazzo Malcanton
Marcorà

Organiser:
Marie-Louise Leonard

For the Zoom link
please contact:
marie-louise.leonard@unive.it

Giulia Zanon, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Health, Safety and Work: an Analysis Through the Lens of Devotions to Saints

The paper investigates how devotions responded to the problem of health, safety and work in early modern Italy. Focusing on the cult of San Francesco di Paola, I aim to show how this particular figure was perceived as beneficial for health and safety issues associated with specific occupations. In the first part of the paper, I will analyse the miracles of the saint, using both devotional books and visual representations, such as engravings, paintings, and frescoes. The saint acted in various ways to heal and revive workers (especially those involved in the construction of new convents of the order). Similarly, some of his miracles prevented some kind of harm to these workers, either by stopping natural disasters or by miraculously providing water and food to sustain them and their work.

The second part will uncover the circulation of the devotion to the thaumaturge saint in different geographical areas of the Republic of Venice, due to, amongst other things, the protection offered by the saint to some specific workers, such as seafarers and farmers. As a result of the spread of this cult, I will investigate the Venetian context in more detail, examining the role of some confraternities dedicated to the saint which, although not linked to any particular profession, offered assistance to the sick in various ways. The paper argues that the mobility of cults of saints occurred for many different reasons, and among them, the protection that a saint gave to certain categories of work, special environments and particular social strata.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 894976 'OccupationalHealth'