EDITORIAL[1]

As we open the second issue of *Foundations* the FMG is still in its infancy. Nevertheless we have received a very positive response to the first issue, along with sufficient articles for this issue plus promises of further material. We are of course very reliant on readers to contribute to future issues, so if you have anything from a brief note to an in-depth study we would be pleased to hear from you.

One article in issue 1 has generated particular interest, on that perennial question of the parentage of Agatha, mother of St. Margaret[2]. The author, William Humphreys, comments "*Recent writers have had the opportunity to assimilate the work of authors such as Mason (1990) and Darlington and McGurk (1995)* [see Humphreys' article[2]]. *What emerges is the potential continuity between Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, William of Malmesbury (who wrote the Vita Wulfstani) and John of Worcester who collated the work of others to form Chronicon ex Chronicis. Secondly, these authors provide sufficient evidence for it to be not unreasonable to suggest that the work of William of Malmesbury preceded the collative work of John of Worcester.*" He hopes that the relevant passages in which '*filia germani imperatoris Henrici*', '*caseres maga*' and '*Agatham reginae sororem*' exist will be critically reviewed, and likely scribal dates proposed.

Dave Kelley[3] has asked whether anyone knows precisely (or approximately) the date of Agatha's death? He comments that this affects the relative reliability of our sources. He notes that Alison Weir (1996)[4] suggests that she died after her daughter St. Margaret's death in 1093[5], but Weir does not cite the source for this assertion.

The late René Jetté noted (shortly before his untimely death earlier this year) that "*Mr. Humphreys is right when he said that the Slavic solution is not a new one. Ronay himself, believe it or not, was a Slavistic [sic]. Barrow (1981)*[6] *writes that 'Agatha was possibly a member of the Russian Family of Kiev', adding in a footnote, p.29, that 'I owe the suggestion to the investigations of Mr. Gabriel Ronay'.*"

Humphreys suggests further that a different approach might help "*Yes, she was, as William of Malmesbury attested, the sister of a Queen (or dynastic equivalent). Yes, she was of noble birth, and yes was taken to wife in Russia by Edward (as attested by Roger of Hoveden). Also, yes, her family did go back to the Emperor's family who ruled over Rome - a generic Rome, however, i.e. the third Rome - Byzantium. …… As a very wild thought, could Agatha have been sister to Maria of Byzantium, wife of the Kievan prince Vsevolod? This would infer descent from the leading noble families of Byzantium and more than adequately reconcile the onomastic heritage and the route of introduction to Edward 'The Exile'.*"

Those wishing to discuss the topic further are encouraged to contact the editor.

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1 These notes have been compiled by Joseph Edwards (co-director of the FMG) from emails and correspondence received in response to *Foundations* issue 1.

2 Humphreys, William (2003). Agatha, Mother of St. Margaret: The Slavic versus Salian solutions – a critical overview. *Foundations*, **1**(1): 31-43.

3 See p.75 of this issue for contact details.

4 Weir, Alison (1996). *Britain's Royal Families*. London: Pimlico

5 '*Upon reaching old age, she became a nun at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, probably after the death of her daughter, Queen Margaret of Scotland, in 1093.*'

6 Barrow, G W (1981). *Kingship and Unity, Scotland 1000-1306*. Toronto: University Press.