

Susan Wessel
School of Theology and Religious Studies
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Catholic University of America
Washington, DC 20064
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Education

Ph.D., Columbia University, New York, NY, 2000
Department of Religion, Dissertation with distinction
S.T.M., Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY
M.T.S., Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA
J.D., Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA
B.A., Smith College, Northampton, MA
Music History and Theory, *cum laude* and *Phi Beta Kappa*

Books

Passion and Compassion in Early Christianity (Cambridge University Press: New York and Cambridge, 2016)
Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome, *Vigiliae Christianae Supplements* (Brill: Leiden, 2008); paperback edition (Brill: Leiden, 2012)
Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic, *Oxford Early Christian Studies* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2004)

Translation

The Greek Life of St. Leo bishop of Catania (BHG 981b), text and notes by Alexander Alexakis, translation by Susan Wessel (Société des Bollandistes: Brussel, 2011)

Articles in Periodicals and Collections

“The Suffering of Christ, Humanity, and the Lepers in Gregory Nazianzen,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 68, 4 (2015) 379-395
“Religious Doctrine and Ecclesiastical Change in the Time of Leo the Great,” ed. Michael Maas, *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila* (Cambridge University Press: New York and Cambridge, 2014) 329-345
“Theological Argumentation: The Case of Forgery,” ed. Scott F. Johnson, *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (Oxford University Press: New York and Oxford, 2012) 916-934
“The Formation of Ecclesiastical Law in the Early Church,” ed. W. Hartmann, K. Pennington, *The History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500* (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 2012) 1-23
“The Theology of *Agape* in Maximus the Confessor,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 55 (2011) 319-342
“The Morality of Disgust in John Chrysostom and Jerome,” *Augustinianum* 50 (2010) 147-162
“Human Action and the Passions in Nemesios of Emessa,” *Studia Patristica* 48 (2010) 3-13

- “Memory and Individuality in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*,”
Journal of Early Christian Studies 18 (2010) 369-392
- “The Reception of Greek Science in Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*,”
Vigiliae Christianae 63 (2009) 24-46
- “The Politics of Text and Tradition in the Council of Constantinople III (AD 680/1),”
Annuario Historiae Conciliorum 38 (2006) 35-54
- “The *Nouthesia* and the Law of Moses,” *Byzantion* 73 (2003) 530-542
- “Forgery and the Monothelete Controversy: Some Scrupulous Uses of Deception,”
Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies 42 (2001) 201-220
- “The Ecclesiastical Policy of Theodosius II” *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 33
(2001) 285-308
- “Socrates’ Narrative of Cyril of Alexandria’s Episcopal Election,” *Journal of
Theological Studies* 52 (2000) 98-104
- “Nestorius, Mary, and Controversy in Cyril of Alexandria’s *Homily IV (De Maria
deipara in Nestorium, CPG 5248)*,” *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 31
(1999) 1-49

Encyclopedia Entries

Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity (Oxford University Press; Oxford and New York),
forthcoming, entries: Barsauma; Ephesus, Councils of; Eutyches; Heracleides, Bazaar of;
Nestorius and Nestorianism; Peter Fuller; Tome of Leo the Great

Selected Book Reviews

- Review of Johannes Zachhuber and Alexis Torrance, *Individuality in Late Antiquity*
(Ashgate: Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT 2014), in *Journal of Roman Studies* 105
(2015) 463-465
- Forum review of Peter Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul*, in *Catholic Historical Review*
(2015)

Academic Positions

- Area Director, Church History, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic
University of America, Washington, DC, Spring 2011-present
- Associate Professor, Church History and Historical Theology, School of Theology and
Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Fall 2009-
present
- Assistant Professor, Church History and Historical Theology, School of Theology and
Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Fall
2004-2009
- Lecturer, Department of Classics and the Program in Hellenic Studies, Princeton
University, Princeton, NJ, Fall 2003
- Lecturer, Department of Religion and the Program in the Ancient World, Princeton
University, Princeton, NJ, Spring 2003
- Mary Seeger O’Boyle Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Program in Hellenic Studies,
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 2001-2002
- Mellon Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow, Department of Classics, Cornell University,
Ithaca, NY, 2000-2001

Teaching Assistant and Researcher, Department of Religion, Columbia University, New York, NY, 1995-1999

Administrative Service

Member, Failing Grades Committee, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Spring 2016-present
Member, Committee on Structures, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Fall 2014-present
Chair and Member, PhD Proposal Committee, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Fall 2012-present
Co-Chair, Strategic Plan Committee, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Spring 2012-Fall 2012
Member, Executive Council, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Spring 2011-present
Area Director, Church History, School of Theology and Religious Studies, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Spring 2011-present
Member, Executive Council, Center for the Study of Early Christianity, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Fall 2004-present

Current Research

Affective compassion, healing, suffering, the emotions; translation of Nicephoros' treatise on Iconoclasm; article on compassion and healing for *Dumbarton Oaks* collected volume; chapter on Leo the Great and theology of the law for Cambridge University Press volume on the history of Christian law

Courses Taught

Lecture courses: Ancient and Medieval Church History; Church Through the Ages: Paul to Luther; Women in the Christian Tradition; Byzantine Theocracy: Church and State from the Fourth to Eighth Centuries AD; The Formation of Orthodoxy from Nicaea I to Nicaea II; Introduction to Postclassical Greek from the Late Antique to the Byzantine Era

Seminars: Theology of Compassion; Maximus the Confessor; Patristic Thought and the Emotions; Irenaeus and the Gnostics; Patristic Anthropology; Gregory of Nyssa; The Cappadocian Theologians; The Writing of Church History; Coptic Language and Literature; Byzantine Iconoclasm; Topics in Greek Patristics

Independent Studies: Maximus the Confessor; Basil of Caesarea's *On The Holy Spirit*; Introduction to Sahidic Coptic; John Chrysostom and his polemic against the Jews

Dissertations Directed

"Motion and Anthropology in the Writings of Gregory of Nyssa"
"Metaphors of Sickness and the Social Body in the Constantinian Era"
"St. Paul as a Model and Teacher in the Writings of St. Gregory the Great"
"How St. Basil and Origen Interpret Genesis 1 in the Light of Philosophical Cosmology"
"*Psyche* in Origen: Origen of Alexandria's Doctrine of the Soul in Relation to the Middle Platonic Philosophical Tradition"

“The Ebionites and ‘Jewish Christianity’: Examining Heresy and the Attitudes of the Church Fathers in Patristic Theology”

Selected Lectures and Invited Conferences

Response to Georgia Frank, “Managing Affect Through Rhetoric: The Case of Pity,”
Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on Emotions in Byzantium, Washington, DC,
December 2015

Response to John Gavin, “Becoming an Example for God: Three Early Interpretations of
‘Forgiveness’ in the Lord's Prayer,” Boston Colloquy in Historical Theology,
Boston College, Boston, MA, July 2011

“Mind and Sensation in Gregory of Nyssa,” Morning Lecture, Oxford International
Patristics Conference, Oxford, England, August 2007

“Text and Tradition in the Monothelete Controversy,” International Byzantine
Conference, London, England, August 2006

“Forgery in Early Byzantium,” Central European University, Budapest, Hungary,
November 2003

“Forgery and the Monothelete Controversy,” Center for Hellenic Studies, Princeton
University, Princeton, NJ, December 2001

Grants and Fellowships

Grant-in-Aid, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC, Summer, 2008

Mellon Research Fellow, Department of History, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ,
Spring 2003

Mary Seeger O’Boyle Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Program in Hellenic Studies,
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 2001-2002

Mellon Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship, Department of Classics, Cornell University,
Ithaca, NY, 2000-2001

President’s Fellowship, Columbia University, New York, NY, 1994-1999

Exchange Scholar, Department of Religion, Brown University, Providence, RI,
Fall 1996

Languages

Greek, Latin, Coptic, French, German

External Reader

Journal of Late Antiquity

Journal of Early Christian Studies

Dumbarton Oaks Papers

Studia Patristica

Professional Associations

American Academy of Religion

Additional Work Experience

Attorney, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, Boston, MA, 1988-1989

Member of litigation department that practiced international corporate law and handled *pro bono* criminal cases

Attorney, Rädler, Raupach & Partner, Munich, Germany, 1987

Drafted international partnership documents, translated international corporate documents from German into English, wrote article on choice of law problems affecting international corporations: "Sitz- und Grundungstheorie im internationalen Gesellschaftsrecht," *GmbH-Rundschau* (jointly) (November 1988)

Musician, Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Springfield, MA, 1982-1985

Performed flute and piccolo in symphony orchestra