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In *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, Patrick J. Geary devotes microscopic attention to the way medieval Christians and merchants raided tombs, plundered churches, and scoured the Roman catacombs in order to obtain sacred relics. Although Geary rejects the notion that cults of saints were "pure manifestations of religious devotions" devoid of cultural associations, he honors the religious impulses of some truly outrageous behavior.

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His exposition of the medieval view that saints resided with and participated actively in the affairs of the communities possessing their relics is essential to understanding the function of saints in this society and the desire of communities to steal or, as he argues, to 'kidnap' them., This is a fascinating study of a medieval way of thinking which in certain circumstances countenanced thefts of sacred relics from tombs, churches, and Roman catacombs. . . .

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*Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* by Geary, Patrick J. and a great selection of related books, art and collectibles available now

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"Furta Sacra" is a scholarly, yet easy to read, well-written and documented book on the peculiarly medieval phenomenon of relic thefts. Maintaining that in medieval hagiography a successful theft of a relic indicated that a stolen saint actually WANTED to be "translated" elsewhere, Dr. Geary, citing dozens of actual medieval theft cases, examines how and why relics were stolen.

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**Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages ...**

Bachrach, B. S. (1979). Review--Patrick Geary, FURTA SACRA: THEFTS OF RELICS IN THE CENTRAL MIDDLE AGES. THE HISTORIAN, 41, 763-764.

**Review--Patrick Geary, FURTA SACRA: THEFTS OF RELICS IN ...**

Christian myth and legend. In Christianity: The Middle Ages. ...that described the practice of furta sacra ("holy theft"). These accounts, most famously that of St. Nicholas, detail the practice of stealing saints' relics--removing relics from one shrine and placing them in a new one. The narratives describe the miracles that occurred in the process, including the saint's unwillingness to...

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