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“Veronica della Dora is a topophilic, a person in love with a specific place. But like a woman who falls in love with a prisoner, she has lost her heart to somewhere that she is forbidden to visit.... Athos is a place where myths, and versions of myth, have superimposed themselves to form a virtually impenetrable conglomerate.... They are candles to light other candles, to keep alive the flame of the pure faith.”

—*Wall Street Journal*

IMAGINING MOUNT ATHOS

Geographer Della Dora Offers a Detailed Investigation of the Elusive “Mountain of the Monks”

A lone pyramid emerging from the sea, Mount Athos has been one of the most chronicled yet least accessible places in the Mediterranean. The dwelling place for thousands of monks, it has for the past ten centuries been the site of rare cultural stratification gazed at and imagined by a variety of visitors and nonvisitors alike. In **IMAGINING MOUNT ATHOS: Visions of a Holy Place from Homer to World War II (April 2011; UVA Press)**, Veronica della Dora offers an in-depth study of the place of Mount Athos in our geographical imagination.

Uncovering a set of alternative and largely unexplored perspectives on the Holy Mountain of Christian Orthodoxy, della Dora asks such questions as:

- Why do places like Mount Athos, that few people have actually visited or experienced, become more significant than accessible destinations?
- Why do these seldom-visited places persist, while others fade into oblivion?
- How does a place become a “landscape of myth”?
- How does a landscape become a place beyond physical experience?

Written from beyond the boundaries of Athos, **IMAGINING MOUNT ATHOS** spans Hellenic studies, cultural geography, environmental history, cultural history, religious studies, history of cartography, and art history to offer a unique view on this oft-imagined cultural and spiritual landmark.

Veronica della Dora is Lecturer in Geographies of Knowledge in the School of Geographical Sciences at Bristol University and the coeditor of *High Places: Cultural Geographies of Mountains, Ice, and Science*.