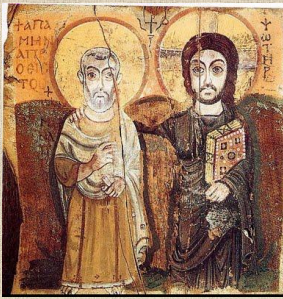


5. Saints and Society in the Justinianic Era



HIST 302 Spring 2012

Early Monastic Movements

Pachomius (290-346)

- cenobitic monasteries
 - male and female together
- organized Egyptian Christians on a large-scale
- wrote a Rule (would influence Benedict)
- manual labor essential to monastic life

Basil (329-79)

- developed ideas of Pachomius
- did not emphasize acts of asceticism
- considered true founder of monasticism of Eastern Church

Early Monastic Movements

St. Anthony (d. 356)

- hermits in Egypt
- reputation of holiness and fervent asceticism
- followers would settle in the desert to live near him
- solitary lives coming together only occasionally to pray



Rise of the Holy Man:

- Desert monks leave solitude for cities
 - Minister to the poor
- *parabalani* of Alexandria
 - “bath attendant” fanatical mob for Bishop
 - New type of ascetic monk
- Holy Men seeking special solitude
 - Simeon the Stylite

Simeon the Stylite



- withdrew from the monastery and lived in an empty well in the nearby mountains
- dwelt in a stony cave for three years
- spent the entire forty days of Great Lent without food or drink
 - endured this strict fast.
- From that time he abstained from food completely during the entire period of the Great Lent, even from bread and water.
 - For twenty days he prayed while standing, and for twenty days while sitting, so as not to permit the corporeal powers to relax

6th century depiction of Simeon on his column. Christ is shown at the top in a mandorla, blessing Simeon; the serpent represents demonic temptations (Louvre).

Influential Saints

- Symeon the Fool (6th century)
 - born in Edessa
 - 30 years in the desert
 - *Life* written by Leontios of Neopolis
- Theodore of Sykeon
 - survived bubonic plague
 - Bishop of Anastasiopolis
 - wanted to retire to contemplate

Theodore of Sykeon (d. 613)

- monk and bishop of Anastasiopolis in Galatia
 - life was extremely austere, living on vegetables, but of these he partook most sparingly, and wore an iron girdle about his body
- as a schoolboy he often deprived himself of food to spend time in church
 - The desire for isolation led him subsequently to live in a cave in a nearby mountain
 - assumed the monastic habit when on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and received ordination to the priesthood
 - endowed with the gifts of prophesy and of miracles including those of healing.
- after ten years as bishop he succeeded in obtaining leave to life as a monk.
 - invited by the emperor and the patriarch to visit Constantinople where he miraculously cured the emperor's son of elephantiasis.
- He returned to Sykeon where he died on May 5, 613.

Byzantine World View

- Constant unseen warfare between light and dark forces
- Locked in continuous combat
 - Manichaeism



Icons and Miracles

Icon of Christ Pantokrator

- encaustic on panel
- St. Catherine's monastery, Sinai
- 6th century (?)



Life on Earth

Lived on 2 levels

- visible
- Invisible
- ordinary mortals were not aware of the contests between opposing forces for their salvation

Spiritual acuity

- Innumerable host of demons
 - Should not dismiss this out of hand
- Life was a battleground between battalions of good and evil
 - In literature, struggle against demons usually couched in military terms
- Variety of spirits
 - Each had a defined function and location

God's Retinue

Rigorously stratified and differentiated

- Infinite number in God's army
 - officers, generals, emissaries (*magistriani*)
- Each had a function
 - guarded individuals, churches, altars, cities
- Michael was the *archestratêgos*
 - had several cult centers
 - Asia Minor; no fewer than 24 churches in capital

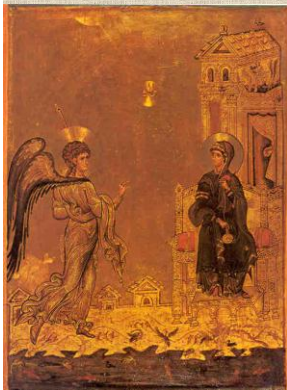
Two Ideas About Angels

not pure in spirit

- made of very fine matter that could be seen by pious men

immaterial

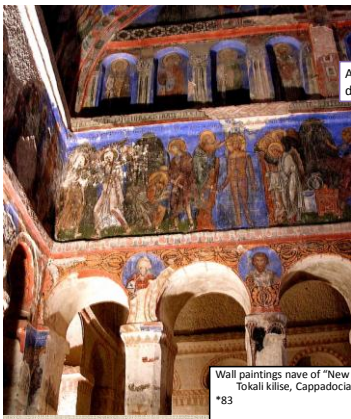
- capable of assuming bodily form
- usually in the guise of a youthful eunuch
- e.g. Simeon the Fool
 - angel comes to cook a meal for Epiphanius



Angels

- sexless
- god's attendants
 - eunuchs
 - could be a military commander
 - Narses

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Archangels function in daily spiritual life

Wall paintings nave of "New Church", Tokali kilise, Cappadocia *83

God's Court

Mirrored Emperor's family

- Mother of God
 - Theotokos
- veil (*maphorion*)
 - saved Constantinople from the Avars and Persians in 626 and from the Rus in 860
- girdle (*zōnē*)
- John the Baptist



12 Archangels
12 Apostles
St. Sophia
Dome Mosaic of
the Ascension
(885)
Thessaloniki

*82

Demonology 101

- Entered bodies of humans or animals
- warmth and moisture
 - like parasites
- Coward, liar, emitted a bad smell
- Could assume a form
- Caused
 - various diseases
 - derangement of the senses
- Only an exorcist could help

Hierarchy of demons

- Officer class
 - "captain" of 100 or 1000
- In charge of:
- Fornication
 - Boredom or despondency
 - Somnolence and yawning
- shows the militarization of spirituality

The Process of Exorcism

- Often struck the "patient" in chest
- Thrown to the ground, step on neck
- A fleeing demon might cause
 - levitation
 - convulsions
 - tearing of clothes
 - unconsciousness

"Prayer of Exorcism" St. Basil

"Take fright, leave, flee, depart, O unclean demon...wherever you happen to be...whether you have the form of a serpent or the face of a beast or are like vapor or like a bird,...whether you appear in the morning or at noon or at midnight, or at some other untimely hour or at dawn,...whether you are in the sea or a river or under the earth...depart to a waterless desert and untilled land where no man dwells"

Osogovo Monastery, Macedonia

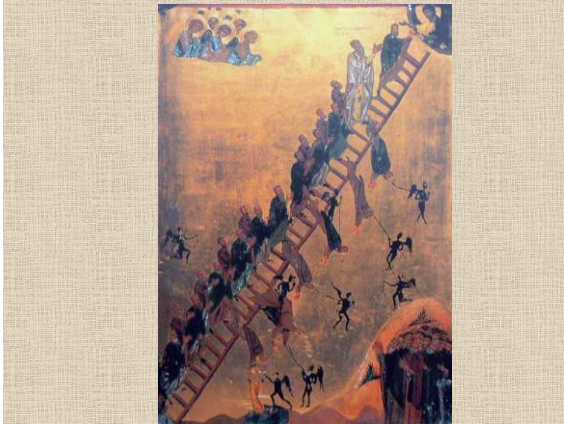


On the Deathbed

- hosts of demons would come to take possession of the soul
- once the body died, spirit went into the air
- had to pay various customs dues at toll houses (*telônia*)
 - manned by demons
 - pay tolls with records of good works
 - demons had a ledger
 - already an idea with Life of Anthony (Egypt)

21 Toll Houses of Sins

slander	abuse	envy
falsehood	wrath	pride
inane speech	usury/deceit	drunkenness
resemblance of evil	sorcery	gluttony
idolatry	heresy	homosexuality (m & f)
adultery	murder	theft
fornication	hardness of heart	avarice



Prayer for the Dead

Saint Simeon the Fool's prayer for his mother:

"Grant her, O Lord, an escort of angels to protect her soul from the evil spirits and pitiless beasts of the air who attempt to swallow all that go by."

- offerings to the church on the 4th, 9th, and 40th days

Bring Out Your Dead

- souls of righteous went straight to heaven
- the wicked—straight to HELL
- for the average person, 3 possibilities:
 1. temporarily relegated to earthly paradise
 2. purgatory near the convex of the boundary of air
 3. subjected to *telônia*
 - considered by Byzantine theologians the most probable

The Monk Cosmas (10th century)

- chamberlain of Emperor Alexander
 - retired from the world in 933
 - fell ill; falls into a trance
 - 6 hours later, he tells people his vision
 - black devils
 - kingdom of perfection
- read the passage
