

THE SPIRITUALLY BENEFICIAL TALES OF PAUL, BISHOP OF MONEMBASIA pdf

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The 'spiritually beneficial tales' of Byzantine Christianity grew out of the desert Apophthegmata. Written at a time, and at a social level, not remarkable for its literary output, the spontaneous and often naive tales shamelessly despoil the common treasure-house of the tradition while creating a new genre of spiritual admonition.

While he was still a layman and a collector of the royal tax, it happened that he stayed in a certain monastery. Seeing ravens landing on the fruit trees, breaking off branches with fruit and carrying them away, Paul wondered at this, and followed them with the monks to see where they were taking the fruit. Going thus, they came upon an impassable forest. The ravens landed at the bottom, deposited the broken fruit branches, and quickly returned. Paul and the monks investigated, and discovered a cave in which three women ascetics were living. The oldest one related their life story to them: She was of noble birth, from Constantinople. When her husband died, another nobleman wanted to take her as his wife by force. However, she decided that after the death of her first husband she would spend the remainder of her life in chastity. Therefore she distributed her wealth to the poor and fled to this deserted place with two of her maidservants. They lived there for eleven years in fasting and prayer, seeing no one and seen by no one but God. God the Provider arranged for the birds to bring them fruit for nourishment. Then they asked the abbot to bring them Holy Communion. Three days after they had received Holy Communion, all three of these holy women reposed, and the monks honorably buried them. Written at a time, and at a social level, not remarkable for its literary output, the spontaneous and often naive tales shamelessly despoil the common treasure-house of the tradition while creating a new genre of spiritual admonition. Through his eyes we see the monastic and ecclesiastical world of ordinary tenth-century eastern Christians. The careers of these holy women demonstrate some of the divergent paths to sanctification in Byzantium, through mortification of the body, unquestioning obedience to a monastic superior, repentance, acts of charity, prophecy, and miracle-working. These vitae, ranging from the fifth to thirteenth centuries, also supplement traditional narrative histories by providing information on such aspects of Byzantine civilization as the impact of Arab and Bulgarian raids, iconoclasm, the monastic routine in convents, everyday family life and household management, and a smallpox epidemic in Thessalonike. Nuns Disguised as Monks 1. Matrona of Perge B. Mary of Egypt 4. Theoktiste of Lesbos C. Elisabeth the Wonderworker 6. Athanasia of Aegina 7. Theodora of Thessalonike D. Mary the Younger 9. Thomais of Lesbos E. A Saintly Empress Theodora of Arta Like this: Related This entry was posted on September 7, at You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2. You can leave a response , or trackback from your own site.

2: Staff View: The spiritually beneficial tales of Paul, bishop of Monembasia and of other authors /

"The Spiritually Beneficial Tales of Paul, Bishop of Monembasia" is a charming collection of 23 separate English translations of medieval Greek short tales, all products of the Middle Byzantine Empire.

3: Bishop of Monemvasia Paul | LibraryThing

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The 'spiritually beneficial tales' of Byzantine Christianity grew out of the desert Apophthegmata. Discover the spiritual world of Paul, tenth-century bishop of Monembasia and through his eyes see the monastic and ecclesiastical world of ordinary tenth-century eastern Christians.

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