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## The Medical Saints of the Orthodox Church in Byzantine Art

(with plates 1–6)

As is known, the Church celebrates the memory of a multitude of Saints who are esteemed as champions of the Faith and as the friends of Christ. While yet on this earth they were raised to high spiritual attainments by the grace of God, and had reached the pinnacle of perfection, even as we are commanded in the Sacred Scriptures. This was due to their humility, their love of God, and their great spiritual exertions, aided by the abundant mercies of God. Among the many Saints, the faithful have come to distinguish differences according to some characteristic quality of grace that each Saint had while living in this life, and after his passing from this life.

In general, Christianity has received the Saints as the friends of God and as intercessors to Him in times of various needs. This exists to this day in the Orthodox Church. We insist on this detail, because often, outside the Church and Orthodox tradition, the relation between the faithful and the Saints is misunderstood or even blamed, in favour of what is mistakenly believed to be a more spiritual religion. Nevertheless, the Holy Church always remembers the words of the Lord for the one who truly and fervently believes in Him, for His genuine friend and Saint: “the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). The Church honours the Saints greatly, but always in a manner that remains centred on Christ: that is why the pinnacle of a Saints festive commemoration is nothing less than the celebration of the divine liturgy of the body and the blood of the Saviour.

This article will concern itself with the healing arts and medical topics, and we shall briefly review those Saints who received a special grace to heal men, and animals as well, due to their compassion extended to all of creation. These Saints share certain characteristics. The Saints who are revered as healing Saints, in general studied the medical arts of their own age, and granted healings both with medicines and with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Some of the Saints in this category did not study medicine, but they were granted the grace to effect cures, and the faithful have come to reverence them together as wonderworking healers. Yet others studied medicine, but were not able to bring this into practice in that their lives were cut short by martyrdom, as was the case with Saint Catherine. Yet others have been included in this category because of the miracles of healing for which they became renowned after their deaths, wrought at their tombs and at the veneration of their sacred relics by the faithful. And yet another group are known for their healing of animals. All of these share one common characteristic, and that is the grace given to each to bring about healings. They are referred to as “Unmercenary Physicians” (*Anargyroi*) in that they never exacted payment for their cures. They are commemorated as a special category of Saints liturgically. At the preparation of the holy gifts, the priest places on the paten commemorations for each category of Saints: these include the Holy Angels, the Prophets, Apostles, Hierarchs, Martyrs, Righteous, and the Unmercenary Healers.

### THE HOLY EVANGELIST LUKE

Examining these in chronological order, we begin with the holy apostle and Evangelist Luke<sup>1</sup>, who was both a physician and a painter. Born in Antioch, he was the companion of Saint Paul on his missionary journeys, who refers to him as a physician in his epistles. Together with the Apostle Paul, and alone, he travelled to many places, especially in Greece, and preached the Gospel. He passed away in old age, in the city of Thebes (in central Greece), having lived some eighty years. After his death, God glorified His servant the

<sup>1</sup> For his commemoration on 18 October, see *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. H. DÉLÉHAYE (= SynEC). Brussels 1902, 147–48.

Apostle and Evangelist Luke. On his feastday, water would flow from his tomb which was celebrated for its cure of illnesses of the eyes and other diseases.

Historically we should mention that when Saint Constantine the Great built the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople (which afterwards served as a mausoleum for him and the Byzantine emperors), the holy relics of Saint Luke were enshrined there, together with the relics of the Apostles Andrew and Timothy, as a great treasure of the City<sup>2</sup>.

Saint Luke has been honoured, and almost exclusively depicted, as an Evangelist, his main service to the Church being the composition of his Holy Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles<sup>3</sup>. But in some rare cases his characteristic as Healer is also depicted, as in a fresco in the Catacomb of Comodilla in Rome<sup>4</sup>, dated 668–685 (pl. 1, fig. 1). In this example, he is depicted holding a small bag (*sakkidion*) in his left hand, a typical iconographic detail for medical doctors according to ancient iconography. In this example both characteristics of Saint Luke, as Evangelist and physician, are successfully combined.

### SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIAN

The Saints who are known above all as “Healers and Unmercenaries” in Orthodox tradition, who are referred to simply as “The Holy Unmercenaries” without further need to include their names, are Saints Cosmas and Damian<sup>5</sup>. There are three pairs of brothers having the names Cosmas and Damian, who are celebrated as Unmercenaries in the preeminent sense. The foremost were brothers from Asia Minor<sup>6</sup> who lived in the third century, sons of a faithful and wealthy woman named Theodota, who was a Christian from her childhood. After the death of their father, she instilled in her children a profound Christian piety and virtue, and provided them with an excellent education, especially in the healing arts. Following this, they devoted themselves to acts of charity, healing both souls and bodies in the name of Christ. They healed the sick and infirm, and gave all their goods to the poor. After their death, their relics became a great source of healings for all who revered them, calling upon the Saints with faith and humility. Their memory is celebrated in the Orthodox Church on November 1, together with the memory of their mother Theodota.

The second pair of brothers of the same name were from Rome, and were martyred in 284. They were also educated as physicians. Their memory is celebrated on July 1<sup>7</sup>. The third pair were from Arabia, together with three other brothers, by name Entropios, Anthimos, and Leontios. They passed through every town and countryside, healing the sick and preaching the Name of Christ. For this reason, during the time of Diocletian and Maximian, they were brought before the ruler of the town of Lycia. They were cast into the sea with stone weights attached to them, but were miraculously preserved, after which they were beheaded. Their memory is kept on October 17<sup>8</sup>.

Because of the similarities of their lives, and the correspondence of their names, some scholars have doubted that they were actually separate Saints, but this is an ancient tradition in the calendar of the Orthodox Church. One confirmation of this tradition are the separate centres for the veneration of each of these Saints dating from very early times, such as the shrine in Cyros (in Asia Minor), where one pair of brothers of that name were buried. In Constantinople there was a large shrine dedicated to them dating from the fifth Century, known after the name of Saint Cosmas as the *Cosmedion*<sup>9</sup>. Also, in Rome an oratory was built in their

<sup>2</sup> R. JANIN, *La Géographie Ecclésiastique de l' Empire byzantin. Première partie: Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat Oecuménique*, tome III: Les églises et les monastères. Paris <sup>2</sup>1969, 41–50.

<sup>3</sup> For his iconography, see *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie (= LCI)* VII 448–64.

<sup>4</sup> J. BECKWITH, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*. London <sup>2</sup>1979, ill. 132.

<sup>5</sup> On their hagiography, see A. J. FESTUGIÈRE, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien, Saints Cyr et Jean, Saint George*. Paris 1971, 83–213; K. HEINEMANN, *Die Ärzteheiligen Kosmas und Damian. Ihre Wunderheilungen im Lichte alter und neuer Medizin*. *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 9 (1974) 255–317; A. WITTMANN, *Kosmas und Damian, Kulturausbreitung und Volksdevotion*. Berlin–Bielefeld–München 1980; H. DÉLÉHAYE, *Les recueils antiques de Miracles des Saints*. *AnBoll* 43 (1925) 8–18; also *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* IV, 223–5; *LThK* VI 566–7; *RAC* III 1135–6; *RbK* II 1078–80.

<sup>6</sup> For their commemoration, see *SynEC* 185–6.

<sup>7</sup> For their commemoration, see *SynEC* 791.

<sup>8</sup> For their commemoration, see *SynEC* 144–6.

<sup>9</sup> JANIN, *op. cit.* 296–300.

honour during the time of Pope Symmachus 498–514; later, under Pope Felix (526–530), a basilica was erected in their honour, containing a splendid mosaic portraying the Saints, dating from the same time<sup>10</sup>.

In Greece, ancient Asclepia (in Athens, Epidauros, and other places) were transformed into centres in honour of these Saints<sup>11</sup>. Also, importantly, in the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Sinai, at the ancient city of Pharan, an early Christian church in their honour has been excavated, identified by an inscription unearthed there. The archaeological remains indicate that it served as a hospice, where monks and pilgrims who became ill could receive care<sup>12</sup>.

The presence of Saints Cosmas and Damian in art is as ancient as their cult<sup>13</sup>. Their oldest surviving portrayal is to be found in the Church of Saint George in Thessalonica (the “Rotunda”),<sup>14</sup> and is dated a little before the year 400 (pl. 1, fig. 2). The Saints are portrayed in full stature, each one designated with the inscription *iatros* (“physician”). Another example should be mentioned, that in the Church of the Virgin “Drosiané” on the island of Naxos (in the Cyclades of Greece), dating from the first half of the seventh century; an excellent and rare example of pre-iconoclastic art in the East<sup>15</sup> (pl. 1, fig. 3).

In the iconography of the three pairs of Saints Cosmas and Damian, generally there does not exist sufficient distinction to determine exactly which pair are portrayed in these examples. This is much easier in those cases where Saint Theodota is also depicted, which would clearly distinguish them as the pair from Asia Minor. This is the case in the frescoes of the Church of Christ Pantocrator on the island of Zakynthos (in western Greece), dating from the twelfth century<sup>16</sup> (pl. 1, fig. 4). The same iconographical scheme is to be found in the frescoes from the Church of Episkopè of Eurytania (now in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens), dating from the thirteenth Century<sup>17</sup> (pl. 2, fig. 1). In these examples, their characteristic iconography emerges with greater clarity. They are wearing the *chiton* and *chlamys*. In their right hand they hold a cross, a sign of their martyrdom, or a medical spoon or medical knife<sup>18</sup>, and in their left hand, a small box of medicines. In the cases mentioned above, and in older examples in general, there is to be seen a small band of cloth something like a deacon’s *orarion*, with both ends visible on the front of the body (the ancient type of the priest’s *epitrachelion*). This was the emblem of doctors during the classical and late Roman periods, a detail that was retained in the iconography of the Holy Unmercenaries.

In general, there is a tendency to depict the Saints from Asia Minor without beards, though this is not always the case. Only in later Byzantine iconography, at the time of the Palaeologues, are the Saints from Arabia sometimes distinguished by wearing Arab turbans (as is the case with icons of Saint John Damascene).

With the passage of time, the cult of the Saints became more widespread, and it is not unusual that they are depicted, among other healing Saints, in the Byzantine enamels of the Pala d’Oro (eleventh century)<sup>19</sup>. Also, some of the churches that figure most prominently in the history of Byzantine art are dedicated to them, as is the case with the church in Kastoria (dating from the end of the twelfth century), where the patron Saints are depicted on the south-eastern pillar of the basilica, both being crowned by Christ Himself<sup>20</sup>. From the

<sup>10</sup> BECKWITH, *op. cit.* 125–6, ill. 103; R. BUDRIESI, *La basilica dei Ss. Cosma e Damiano a Roma*. Bologna 1968; G. MATTHIAE, *S. Cosma e Damiano e S. Teodora – Mosaici medioevali di Roma*. Roma 1948.

<sup>11</sup> For the Athen’s Asclepeion, see L. TRAULOS, in *ThEE* I 722–6.

<sup>12</sup> P. GROSSMANN, *Die antike Stadt Pharan*. Ein archäologischer Führer. Kairo 2002, 66–74; IDEM – M. JONES – Y. MEIMARIS, Report on the season in Firan – Sinai (February–March 1995). *BZ* 91 (1998) 346–8, 355–8.

<sup>13</sup> For their iconography, see R. SKROBUCHA, *Kosmas and Damian*. Recklinghausen 1965; M. L. DAVID-DANEL, *Iconographie des saints médecins Côme et Damien*. Lille 1958; C. H. WENDT, *Die Heiligen Ärzte in der Ostkirchenkunst*. *Centaureus* 1 (1950/51) 132–9; also *LCI* VII 343–52.

<sup>14</sup> E. KOURKOUTIDOU-NIKOLAIDOU, *Η Ροτόντα. Η Θεσσαλονίκη και τα μνημεία της*. Thessalonica 1985, 34–43 and ill. on 36; W. E. KLEINBAUER, *The Iconography and the Date of the Mosaics of the Rotonda of Hagios Georgios, Thessaloniki*. *Viator* 3 (1972) 27–107.

<sup>15</sup> N. DRANDAKES, *Οι παλαιοχριστιανικές τοιχογραφίες στη Δροσιανή της Νάξου*. Athens 1998, 74–5 and tab. IX a–b.

<sup>16</sup> Βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή τέχνη. Athens 1986, 39–40 (no. 25).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem* 47–8 (no. 36).

<sup>18</sup> For the objects carried by the Healer Saints see A. XYNGOPOULOS, *Το αναγλύφον των Αγίων Αναργύρων εις τον Άγιον Μάρκον της Βενετίας*. *AD* 20 (1965) *Meletai* 84, note 5.

<sup>19</sup> For Cosmas, see W. F. VOLBACH, *Gli smalti della Pala d’Oro*, in: *Il Tesoro di San Marco – La Pala d’Oro*, ed. H. R. HAHNLOSER. Firenze 1965, 48–9 (no. 96), tav. L; for Damien *ibidem* 68 (no. 157), tav. LVIII.

<sup>20</sup> St. PELEKANIDES – M. CHATZIDAKES, *Καστοριά*. Athens 1992, 30 (ill. 7).

same church and period there comes the “household” icon of the Saints<sup>21</sup> with the oldest iconographic cycle in existence in the East depicted on the frame of the icon (the icon was later repainted, but it has recently been cleaned, with the repainting removed and separately mounted) (pl. 2, fig. 2). The next cycle chronologically is to be found in the frescoes of Saint Demetrios in Mistra, from the Palaeologan era<sup>22</sup>. It is no exaggeration to say that the fresco of Saint Damian in Pantokrator Monastery on Athos (fourteenth century)<sup>23</sup> is an excellent example of Byzantine art (pl. 2, fig. 3).

### SAINTS CYRUS AND JOHN

The Stavrotheke of Philotheos<sup>24</sup> (pl. 2, fig. 4), a Byzantine silver piece dating from the twelfth Century, now in the Moscow Kremlin, is an excellent example conveying the Byzantine ideal about Healing Saints. The centre is a *Stavrotheke* (“reliquiary of the True Cross”), and Saints Cosmas and Damian are depicted in full stature, while on the upper part Saints Cyrus and Panteleimon (Pantaleon) the Healer are represented in half figure, as *imago clipeata*.

Saint Cyrus and his fellow-martyr John<sup>25</sup> are two healers, also known as “Unmercenaries” but not as emphatically as Saints Cosmas and Damian. It is significant that they are commemorated twice in the year. Their main feast is celebrated on 31 January<sup>26</sup> while the feast of the translation of their relics is held on 28 June<sup>27</sup>. This acts as evidence of their wide-spread cult. Saints Cyrus and John lived at the end of the third century, at the time when Diocletian was emperor. Cyrus was from Alexandria, and John from Edessa of Mesopotamia. Cyrus was a physician with much experience, and of great compassion, caring both for the souls and bodies of the sick. During the persecution of the Christians, Cyrus departed from Arabia where he had lived as a monastic, reaching a high level of virtue and spirituality. Through him God wrought miracles, healing every sickness and infirmity whenever Saint Cyrus would make the sign of the Cross over the sick. Saint John was a soldier. While in Jerusalem he heard about the miracles of Saint Cyrus, and came to him in order to assist him in his labours. The occasion of their martyrdom arose when a woman named Athanasia with her three daughters were apprehended by the authorities. The Saints visited them in prison to encourage them not to deny Christ. In this manner they were also apprehended and suffered martyrdom together with Athanasia and her three daughters, after many torments. Their memory is kept on 31 January.

The relics of Saints Cyrus and John were placed in the basilica of Saint Mark in Alexandria, but due to the great veneration of the faithful which they received, Saint Cyril of Alexandria had them translated to a shrine at Menuthis, which later became known as Abu Kyr<sup>28</sup>. Patriarch Sophronios of Jerusalem, healed by them from a disease of the eyes, wrote an encomium in their honour, and recorded seventy miracles from the hundreds that had taken place down to his own days<sup>29</sup>.

Their cult was widespread in the Christian world, and is well attested<sup>30</sup>, with many examples in art as well<sup>31</sup>. A good example of this is their portrayal in the Church of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome<sup>32</sup>, executed

<sup>21</sup> Affreschi e Icone dalla Grecia. Atene 1986, 65–7 (no 28).

<sup>22</sup> G. MILLET, *Monuments byzantins de Mistra*. Paris 1910, tabs. 73–4; for the date of the frescoes, see M. CHATZEDAKES, *Νεώτερα για την ιστορία και την τέχνη της μητροπόλης του Μυστρά*. *DchAE* 4 (1959) A 72–9.

<sup>23</sup> E. N. TSIGARIDAS, *Τοιχογραφίες της περιόδου των Παλαιολόγων σε ναούς της Μακεδονίας*. Thessalonica 1999, ill. 37.

<sup>24</sup> H. C. EVANS – W. D. WIXON (ed.), *The Glory of Byzantium*. New York 1997, 80–1 (no 39).

<sup>25</sup> On their hagiography, see FESTUGIERE, *op. cit.* 215–56; DÉLÉHAYE, *recueils antiques* 19–32 and 67–69; also *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* IV 2–5; *LThK* VI 716–7.

<sup>26</sup> For this commemoration, see *SynEC* 433–5.

<sup>27</sup> For this commemoration, see *SynEC* 775–6.

<sup>28</sup> For their cult in Menuthis, see: R. HERZOG, *Der Kampf um den Kult von Menuthis*, in: *Pisciculi Festschrift F. J. Dölger (Antike und Christentum. Erg.-Band 1)*. Münster 1939, 117–24; H. DÉLÉHAYE, *Les saints d' Aboukir*. *AnBoll* 30 (1911) 448–50.

<sup>29</sup> Text: PG 87, 3373–3690; new edition N. FERNANDEZ MARCOS, *Los thaumata de Sofronio – contribucion al estudio de la incubatio cristiana*. Madrid 1975.

<sup>30</sup> J. EBERSOLT, *Constantinople, Recueil d'études d'archéologie et d'histoire*. Paris 1951, 97; C. HUELSEN, *Le Chiese di Roma nel Medioevo*. Firenze 1927, 151 seqq.

<sup>31</sup> *LCI* V 2–4; G. KAFTAL, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting*. Florence 1965, 341–4; H. AURENHAMMER, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, I. Wien 1959, 6–7.

<sup>32</sup> J. WILPERT, *Die römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom 4.–13. Jahrhundert*, IV. Freiburg /B. 1916, tabs. 145.1 and 196A.

around 760 (pl. 3, fig. 1). Here Saint Cyrus is depicted holding a scalpel and a box of medications in the classic iconography of Unmercenary Healers. The Saints are also portrayed with the other Unmercenary healers on the Pala d'Oro at San Marco in Venice<sup>33</sup>, in the mosaics of Hosios Lukas, and in the frescoes of Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessalonica<sup>34</sup>, all three examples dating from the eleventh century. As an instance of their widespread cult, we mention here their representation in the frescoes of Timotesubani Monastery in Georgia<sup>35</sup> (thirteenth century) (pl. 3, fig. 2–3). It is clear that in most cases the painters depict Cyrus as an old monk, in contrast to the much younger John. Saint John is depicted regularly as a young man, for example in a later fresco at Zagora (in Pelion, Greece)<sup>36</sup>, dated 1645/6 (pl. 3, fig. 4).

### SAINTS PANTELEIMON (PANTALEON) AND HERMOLAOS

The next pair of Healing Saints are Saints Panteleimon (Pantaleon) and Hermolaos, of whom Saint Panteleimon is the more prominent, his veneration rivalling that of Saints Cosmas and Damian. They are depicted together in the Church of Saint Nikolas Orphanos in Thessalonica, in a fresco dating to the beginning of the fourteenth century<sup>37</sup> (pl. 4, fig. 1). Saint Hermolaos<sup>38</sup> was a priest in Nikomedia, and the teacher of Saint Panteleimon in Christian faith. He was beheaded under Maximian in the year 304, and is venerated in association with Saint Panteleimon. He is depicted in ancient monuments in Cappadocia, in Kiliçlar Kilisse (circa 900)<sup>39</sup> and in Şakli Kilisse (circa 1070)<sup>40</sup>, and among the healers in the Pala d'Oro (eleventh century)<sup>41</sup>. Being a priest, he is always depicted in priest's vestments<sup>42</sup> usually holding the Gospel in his hands, as is the case in a beautiful repoussé plaque now in the collection at Dumbarton Oaks, dating from the eleventh century<sup>43</sup> (pl. 4, fig. 2).

Saint Panteleimon<sup>44</sup> was also from Nikomedia, and was martyred at the same time as Saint Hermolaos. His father was a Greek and idolater, Eustorgios by name. His mother, a Christian from her parents, was named Euboula. Saint Panteleimon studied the medical arts under his teacher Euphrosynos, who was a celebrated physician. It was from Saint Hermolaos that he learned the spiritual healing of souls, which is the Christian faith, the medicine of Christ. Saint Panteleimon restored to life a child who had been bitten by a snake, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and also restored the sight of a blind man. He was beheaded after many tortures. His memory is celebrated on July 27.

Many churches are dedicated to Saint Panteleimon, and there are innumerable representations of him<sup>45</sup>, the oldest being a relief from North Africa<sup>46</sup>, dating from the fifth and sixth centuries. In the church of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome there is a depiction of Saint Panteleimon dating from 705<sup>47</sup>, where he is represented together with Saints Cosmas and Damian. This iconographic type became the one most cherished by the faithful, joining the three more famous healers in a single representation. He is depicted twice in the enamels

<sup>33</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 69 (no 161), tav. XLVIII & LVIII.

<sup>34</sup> K. PAPAPOPOULOS, Die Wandmalereien des XI. Jahrhunderts in der Kirche Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki (BV2). Graz-Köln 1966, 34.

<sup>35</sup> E. L. PRIVALOVA, Rospis ' Timotesubani. Tbilisi 1980, tabs. XLVI and XLVII.

<sup>36</sup> A. TOURTA, Οι ναοί του Αγίου Νικολάου στη Βίτσα και του Αγίου Μηνά στο Μονοδένδρι. Athens 1991, tabs. 124a.

<sup>37</sup> A. TSITOURIDOU, Η εντοίχεια ζωγραφική του Αγίου Νικολάου στη Θεσσαλονίκη. Thessalonica 1978, ill. 95.

<sup>38</sup> For his commemoration on 26 July, see SynEC 843. Hagiographical references: Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis, ed. P. Peeters. Brussels 1910, 183; *BHL* I 575, III 312; Bibliotheca Sanctorum V 65–7; *AASS* Jul VI, 426–9.

<sup>39</sup> G. M. JERPHANION, La voix des monuments, I. Paris 1930, tab. 59.3.

<sup>40</sup> M. RESTLE, Die byzantinische Wandmalerei in Kleinasien. Recklinghausen 1967, vol. II, ill. 21, 25, 42, III, ill. 436.

<sup>41</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 69 (no 159), tav. XLIV and LVIII.

<sup>42</sup> For this iconography, see *LCI* VI 511–2.

<sup>43</sup> EVANS – WIXON, *op. cit.* 159–60 (no 106).

<sup>44</sup> For his commemoration on 27 July, see SynEC 847–8. On his Hagiography, see *BHG* II 166–8; Bibliotheca Sanctorum X 108–17; *LThK* VIII 25; H. DÉLEHAYE, Les origines du culte des Martyres. Bruxelles 1912, 181 seqq., A. PONCELET, Miracula S. Pantaleonis. *AnBoll* 17 (1898) 179–90.

<sup>45</sup> For his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 112–5; L. REAU, Iconographie de l'art chrétien. Paris 1955, III/3 1024–6; KAFTAL, *op. cit.* 837–45; K. KÜNSTLE, Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst I: Prinzipienlehre–Hilfsmotive–Offenbarungstatsachen. II: Ikonographie der Heiligen. Freiburg / B. 1926–1928, II 485.

<sup>46</sup> Ch. COURTOIS, Sur un carreau de terre-cuite représentant Saint Pantaleon. *Karthago* 3 (1951/52) 207–13.

<sup>47</sup> WILPERT, *op. cit.* IV, tab. 165.

of the Pala d'Oro<sup>48</sup>. It should be noted that there are iconographic cycles of his life and martyrdom, the oldest example being in the Church of San Angelo in Formis in Italy, dating from the eleventh century<sup>49</sup>, while the iconographic cycle in Nerezi (from 1064)<sup>50</sup> comes from a church dedicated to him. This monument is one of the most important examples of the Comnenian style of iconography. One of the most eminent depictions of Saint Panteleimon is the renowned and beautiful icon from the early thirteenth century, preserved at the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai<sup>51</sup> (pl. 4, fig. 3). This is a large icon, and on the frame is depicted the Saint's life, beginning with his catechesis by Saint Hermolaos at the upper left corner, and concluding with his death and burial at the bottom right. His portrayal in the centre shows him as a young man with curly hair, like Saint George. He is holding a box containing medications in his left hand, and a cross in his right.

#### OTHER UNMERCENARY SAINTS

Saint Samson<sup>52</sup> the Hospitable and Saint Diomedes<sup>53</sup>, two other healers, are depicted together in the Church of Saint Nikolaos Orphanos in Thessalonica, painted in the fourteenth century<sup>54</sup> (pl. 4, fig. 4). In this case and in an effort to depart from the strict iconography of the Unmercenary Healers, Saint Samson is depicted holding not a box of medications, but a large vial. Saint Samson lived at the time of the emperor Justinian. He was a native of Rome. In the year 541 he gave away all his possessions to the poor and departed for Constantinople. There patriarch Menas ordained him a priest. He was a haven of refuge for the sick and the poor. He was also an experienced physician. By the grace of God he healed the emperor Justinian of a chronic illness. For this the emperor, marvelling at his virtue, honoured him by building a large hospital for all who were in need of physical and spiritual assistance. Saint Samson reposed in God, and his relics were entombed in the Church of Saint Mokios, who is also honoured among the Healing Saints. There they emitted a great fragrance, and wrought all manner of healings. The memory of Saint Samson is celebrated on June 27.

Saint Diomedes was from Tarsos of Cilicia, also a physician by training. He healed both bodies and souls at the time of the emperor Diocletian. He lived in Nicaea of Bithynia. When the ruler learned that he was a Christian, he sent soldiers to behead him, but he passed away before they arrived. In spite of this, they beheaded him to show his head to the ruler, but were blinded. At the command of the ruler, the head of the Saint was restored to its place, and they again received their sight. His memory is kept on August 16. He is depicted with other Unmercenary Saints on the Pala d'Oro in Venice<sup>55</sup>.

Other Healing Saints are Photios and Aniketos<sup>56</sup>, Mokios<sup>57</sup>, and Thalelaeos<sup>58</sup>, (who is depicted among the Healers on the Pala d'Oro)<sup>59</sup>. More frequently we meet with depictions of Saint Tryphon<sup>60</sup>, who was a goose

<sup>48</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 62 (no 140), tav. XLII and LVI, 68 (no 158), tav. XLV and LVIII.

<sup>49</sup> Bibliotheca Sanctorum X, ill. 107.

<sup>50</sup> R. HAMANN-MACLEAN – H. HALLENSLEBEN, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien von 11. bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert*. Giessen 1963, 18, ill. 45.

<sup>51</sup> EVANS – WIXON, *op. cit.* 379 (no 249).

<sup>52</sup> For his commemoration in 27 June, see SynEC 773. On his hagiography, see F. HALKIN, *Saint Samson le xénodoque de Constantinople (VI siècle)*. *RSBN* n.s. 14–16 (1977–1979) 5–17; *BHG* II 230. For his iconography *LCI* VIII 309.

<sup>53</sup> For his commemoration in 16 August, see SynEC 901. On his hagiography, see Bibliotheca Sanctorum IV 629–30; L.G. WESTERINK, *Textes inédits sur Saint Diomede*. *AnBoll* 84 (1966), 161–227. On his iconography, see *LCI* VI 58.

<sup>54</sup> TSITOURIDOU, *op. cit.*, ill. 96.

<sup>55</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 67 (no 155), tav. XLVIII and LVIII.

<sup>56</sup> For their commemoration on 12 August, see SynEC 885–6. On their hagiography, see Bibliotheca Sanctorum I 1265–6; *BHG* II 209. For their iconography, see *LCI* VIII 211.

<sup>57</sup> For his commemoration on 11 May, see SynEC 674–5. For his hagiography, see Bibliotheca Sanctorum IX 512; F. HALKIN, *Une Passion de S. Mocius*. *AnBoll* 83 (1965), 5–22; H. DÉLÉHAYE, *Saints de Thrace et de Mésie*. *AnBoll* 31 (1912) 162–87, 225–32; *BHG* II 124; *LCI* VIII 24–5.

<sup>58</sup> For his commemoration on 20 May, see: SynEC 697–8. For his hagiography, see F. HALKIN, *S. Thaléléé, anachorete ou martyr?* *AnBoll* 95 (1977) 72; R. BRÖCHER, *Der Hl. Thalelaios*. Münster 1976; Bibliotheca Sanctorum XII 109–11; *BHG* II 266; on his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 428.

<sup>59</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 67–8 (no 156), tav. XLII and LVI.

<sup>60</sup> For his commemoration on 1 February, see SynEC 437. For his hagiography, see Bibliotheca Sanctorum XII 656–657; *LThK* X 382–3; 307–9; *BHG* II 307–9; *BHL* 1206–7. For his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 501–2.

herder, and is portrayed as a young beardless man, as for example in Göreme in Cappadocia, circa 1070<sup>61</sup>, this being one of the earliest representations of him that survives. He is also depicted on the Pala d'Oro<sup>62</sup>, and in Nerezi<sup>63</sup>. In post-Byzantine iconography as well as in contemporary examples, he is also depicted holding a pruning knife, symbolizing his role as a protector of vineyards, as may be seen in the frescoes of Saint Michael's Church at the Backovo Monastery in Bulgaria<sup>64</sup>, dating from 1841 (pl. 5, fig. 1). We should mention that his cult was developed in the Greek Empire of Nicaea (1204–1261), where he was declared a patron of the Laskarid rulers.

Saint Antipas<sup>65</sup>, Bishop of Pergamum, mentioned in the second chapter of the Book of Revelation of Saint John, suffered martyrdom under Domitian in the year 83. He is called upon for the healing of teeth. The basilica at the Sinai Monastery includes a chapel to his memory, on the north side, as well as celebrated icons of the Saint<sup>66</sup>.

Saint Stelianos<sup>67</sup> a native of Paphlagonia, gave away all his earthly goods and took up the monastic life. He was very ascetical, and later departed into the wilderness, where he received food from the Holy Angels. He is renowned to this day as a healer of infants and children, being entreated in times of need by their parents, and that is why he is usually depicted holding an infant in his arms<sup>68</sup>.

### WOMEN HEALING SAINTS

A number of women Saints have also been venerated as Unmercenary Healers, although not exclusively. In the pre-iconoclastic Church of the Virgin "Drosiané" on the Island of Naxos (in the Cyclades of Greece) there are traces of a depiction dating from the seventh century, showing a woman Saint with the attributes of an Unmercenary Physician<sup>69</sup> (pl. 5, fig. 2). Unfortunately, the obscurity of the painting does not allow a precise identification, but in her left hand we see the small bag of medications that we saw earlier in the depiction of Saint Luke from the Roman catacombs.

Saint Thekla<sup>70</sup>, a companion of Saint Paul, was held in great veneration as a Healer in the east. Her shrine was located in Seleukeia. Also held in great honour was Saint Hermione<sup>71</sup>, the daughter of the Apostle Philip, her temple located in Ephesos. Could the Saint in the church at Naxos be Saint Thekla or Saint Hermione? In addition, it should be noted that Saint Photine<sup>72</sup>, the woman with whom Christ spoke at the well of Samaria, was held in great veneration in Constantinople, as is well attested<sup>73</sup> and this was where she was revered especially for miracles of healing and afflictions of the eyes<sup>74</sup>.

In Late Byzantine times, Saint Paraskeve<sup>75</sup> the righteous virgin-martyr, became venerated for such miracles, and from the first half of the fourteenth century and later, there exist iconographic cycles of her life and martyrdom, the oldest surviving being that in the Church of Donja Kamenica in Yugoslavia (fourteenth century)<sup>76</sup>. In her martyrdom it is recorded that she healed the blindness of the ruler who was interrogating her,

<sup>61</sup> RESTLE, *op. cit.* II, ill. 25.

<sup>62</sup> VOLBACH, *op. cit.* 63 (no. 141), tav. XLII and LVI.

<sup>63</sup> G. MILLET, *La peinture du moyen age en Yougoslavie*. Album présenté par A. FROLOW, I. Paris 1954, tab. 20.4.

<sup>64</sup> C. MUTATOV, *Medicinata v bulgarskata ikonopis*. Sofia 1992, ill. 4.

<sup>65</sup> For his commemoration, see SynEC 595–8; for his iconography, see *LCI* V 201.

<sup>66</sup> K. MANAPHES (ed.), *Σινά – Οι Θησαυροί της Ι. Μονής Αγίας Αικατερίνης*. Athens 1990, 36–7 (ill. 3).

<sup>67</sup> For his commemoration, see SynEC 259–60.

<sup>68</sup> For his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 410–11.

<sup>69</sup> N. DRANDAKES, *op. cit.* 41–42, 72, tabs. 11d and VIa. The author suspects that this Healing Saint could be identified with Saint Anastasia *Pharmakolytria* ("Healer of potions").

<sup>70</sup> For her commemoration on 24 September, see SynEC 75–78. For her hagiography, see G. DAGRON, *Les miracles de Sainte Thècle*. Bruxelles 1978; FESTUGIÈRE, *op. cit.*, 11–82. On her iconography, see *LCI* VIII 432–6.

<sup>71</sup> For her commemoration on 4 September, see SynEC 14–5. On her iconography, see *LCI* VI 511.

<sup>72</sup> For her commemoration, see SynEC 549–52. On her iconography, see *LCI* VIII 210.

<sup>73</sup> JANIN, *op. cit.* 499–500.

<sup>74</sup> Alice-Mary TALBOT, The posthumous miracles of Saint Photeine. *AnBoll* 112 (1994) 85–103.

<sup>75</sup> For more bibliography about the various texts of her Passion, and a good study of her iconography, see S. ΚΟΥΚΙΑΡΕΣ, *Ο κύκλος του βίου της Αγίας Παρασκευής της Ρωμαίας και της εξ Ικονίου στη χριστιανική τέχνη*. (PhD) Athens 1994. See also *LCI* VIII 118–20.

<sup>76</sup> B. ŽIVKOVIĆ, *Donja Kamenica (cirtezi fresoka)*. Beograd 1987.

and from this she became venerated for healings of the eyes. She is held in great honour, especially among the shepherds in the rural parts of Greece. Her icons, adorned with precious metal covers, have been regarded as veritable spiritual treasures, as is the case of an icon with a silver cover dating from 1784, brought to Greece by the Christians when they left Asia Minor as refugees<sup>77</sup> (pl. 5, fig. 3). In the twentieth century she is almost always depicted holding a small plate with a pair of eyes. This is an element of western iconographic influence, evidently taken from depictions of Saint Lucia of Syracuse in Sicily<sup>78</sup>, who has been widely venerated for healing of blindness in the Latin west.

Among the women Saints, mention must also be made of the patron of the Sinai Monastery, Saint Catherine<sup>79</sup>, who was renowned for her study of medicine. As it is recorded in her Life, “She was educated in all Greek literature, and had learned all the poets, Homer, Virgil, Aristotle, and Plato; and not only the philosophers, but also the books of the physicians, Asclepius, Hippocrates, and Galen.” She suffered martyrdom soon after her baptism, martyred under Maxentius in the year 305, and was, thus, unable to exercise this gift within her lifetime. But her relics are fragrant, preserved in the Monastery of Saint Catherine to this day, and the multitude of miracles that have been wrought at her intercessions are witnesses to her healing ministrations. At the Monastery, a ring is given to all who venerate her holy relics, not only because of the mention in her Life, that she received a ring from Christ, token of her union with Him, but as a way of getting to the faithful this spiritual grace of healing. A venerable icon dating from the thirteenth century, depicting her in the vesture of a princess, with a full iconographic cycle of her life and martyrdom included in the border<sup>80</sup>, has recently been exhibited in Saint Petersburg and London (pl. 5, fig. 4).

#### SAINTS WHO ARE HEALERS OF ANIMALS

In a later post-Byzantine icon of 1776, in addition to Saints Cosmas, Damian, and Panteleimon, the renowned healers of men, on the right we see Saints Modestos and Mamas, protectors and Healers of animals<sup>81</sup> (pl. 6, fig. 1). The lives of these Saints record their great love and protection for animals, and they are venerated as having received a special grace for miracles in the animal kingdom. There are also special prayers included in the *Euchologion* associated with these Saints and read for the blessing of animals.

Saint Mamas<sup>82</sup>, who was martyred in Caesarea of Cappadocia, was the son of martyred parents<sup>83</sup>. He gave away his property to the poor and lived in the wilderness, sustained by the milk of wild animals; a Christian ascetic living like the first-created man (of ecological significance). Two excellent encomia in praise of this Martyr have been preserved, one composed by Saint Basil the Great and another by Saint Gregory the Theologian, both of whom lived not far from the shrine of the Saint. Saint Mamas is frequently depicted with animals, especially on the back of a lion, as is the case in a repoussé “tondo” of the eleventh century, in Georgia<sup>84</sup>. The same iconography is repeated many times, a small lamb being added in his arms, as is the case of a beautiful icon painted in the Byzantine style on Cyprus in the sixteenth century<sup>85</sup> (pl. 6, fig. 2).

Saint Modestos<sup>86</sup>, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who died in 634, did much to restore the Holy Land from the destruction of the Persians, and in keeping with his veneration in popular piety, he is known as the protector

<sup>77</sup> P. LAZARIDES, Ειδική έκθεση κειμηλίων προσφύγων. Athens 1982, 65, ill. 94.

<sup>78</sup> On her iconography, see *LCI* VII 415–20, esp. 416.

<sup>79</sup> For her commemoration on 25 (or alternatively 24) November, see SynEC 253–4. On her iconography, see *LCI* VII 290–97. G. GALAVARIS, Η Αγία Αικατερίνα σε εικόνες της Ι. Μονής Σινά. *Sinaitika Analekta* 1 (2002) 1–38. On her hagiographical texts, see D. TSAMES – K. KATSANES, Το Μαρτυρολόγιον του Σινά. Thessalonica 1989, 35–133.

<sup>80</sup> O. BADDLEJ – E. BRJUNNER – Ju. PJATNIZKIJ, Sinai – Bizantija – Rus. Pravoslavnoe iskusstvo s v do načalo 20 veka. Sankt Peterburg 2000, 244–6 (no S60).

<sup>81</sup> L. PRASKOV – E. BAKALOVA – S. BOJADSEV, Manastirite v Bulgaria. Sofia 1992, 250 (ill. a).

<sup>82</sup> For his commemoration on 2 September, see SynEC 5–7. Hagiographical texts: H. DÉLÉHAYE, Passio Sancti Mamatis. *AnBoll* 58 (1940) 126–41. On his iconography, see *LCI* VII 483–5.

<sup>83</sup> For his hagiographical texts, legends, cult and art as well, see A. MARABA-CHATZINIKOLAOU, Ο Άγιος Μάμας. Athens 1953.

<sup>84</sup> R. MĒPISASHVILI – V. TSINTSADZE, The Arts of Ancient Georgia. Leipzig 1979, 261 (ill. a and b).

<sup>85</sup> D. PAPANIKOLA-MPAKIRTZE – M. IAKOBOU (edd.), Βυζαντινή μεσαιωνική Κύπρος. Leukosia 1997, 230–1 (no 153).

<sup>86</sup> For his commemoration on 16 (or 18) December, see SynEC 313–4. Hagiographical References: S. EUSTRATIADOU, Αγιολόγιον της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας. Athens 1960, 340; Ch. PΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, Ιστορία της Εκκλησίας Ιεροσολύμων. Jerusalem–Alexandria 1910, 245–7; *LithK* VII 516. On his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 20.



of cattle<sup>87</sup>. A late icon from the Island of Paros (in the Cyclades, Greece), dating from the seventeenth century (pl. 6, fig. 3), stresses this capacity, depicting him holding a calf in an idyllic composition<sup>88</sup>.

### SINAI HEALERS

Two Saints who lived at Sinai were renowned for their gifts of healing. The first is Saint Moses of Pharan<sup>89</sup>, who spent most of his life in Rhaitho. He was a great ascetic, and lived a most abstemious life. God fulfilled all his requests, and he was given a special grace from God for the healing of illnesses and the casting out of unclean spirits. Because of this, all the inhabitants of Pharan came to believe in the Holy Trinity and received baptism. Pharan became the see of the bishop of Sinai. Saint Moses lived in the fourth century. His memory is celebrated on November 27<sup>90</sup>, but no representation of him survives.

When a certain Isauros was abbot of the Sinai monastery, the Virgin Mary appeared to one paralytic in the *nosokomeion*, commanding him to be taken to the abbot, that he might regain his health. He was brought into the abbot's presence, and he placed a relic of the cincture of the Virgin Mary upon him, and from that moment he was healed of his paralysis and returned to his home, restored to health and praising God<sup>91</sup>. Isauros might have been the founder of the *nosokomeion*, according to a letter of Pope Gregory the Great, who (in 600) sent equipment for this institution, called *hierochomium*<sup>92</sup>. It is unclear, if "Isauros" is the abbot's Christian name or if it simply denotes his native country, Isauria in Asia Minor. In the latter case "Isauros" may be identified with Saint Longinos<sup>93</sup>, who was abbot of Sinai at the time when the emperor Justinian built the great basilica. In a unique example Saint Longinos is depicted as a priest in an *imago clipeata* in the apse mosaic of the Sinai basilica, dating from the sixth century<sup>94</sup> (pl. 6, fig. 4).

### MODERN HEALING SAINTS

Among those Saints who are especially venerated in Greece today for their miracles of healing are Saint Spyridon<sup>95</sup>, the fourth century Cypriot bishop whose relics are preserved on the island of Kerkyra; Saint Gerasimos<sup>96</sup>, an ascetic of the sixteenth century, whose relics are on the Island of Kephallonia; and Saint Dionysios of Zakynthos<sup>97</sup>, who was active in the early seventeenth century. The relics of each of these Saints are incorrupt, the goal of pilgrims, and renowned for their healings, and they are enshrined on these three islands along the western coast of Greece.

In the sixteenth century there lived also the Righteous David<sup>98</sup>, founder of the Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration on the Island of Euboia, whose tomb became the site of many miracles, where illnesses are cured and evil spirits cast out. He is held in esteem as the protector of fields and of agriculture, and his feast-day is kept on November 1, together with that of Saints Cosmas and Damian.

Mention must also be made of Saint Nektarios of Aegina, who died in 1920<sup>99</sup>. He is celebrated throughout the world for the innumerable miracles of healing that have been wrought through his intercessions. Saint

<sup>87</sup> St. IMELLOS, Ο Άγιος Μοδέστος εν Νάξω. *Epeteris Etaireias Kykladikon Spoudon* 4 (1969) 376–81.

<sup>88</sup> A. MITSANE, Εικόνες και κειμήλια από τη συλλογή της Εκατονταπυλιανής Πάρου. Athens 1996, 26–7 (no. 7).

<sup>89</sup> D. TSAMES (ed.), Το Γεροντικόν του Σινά. Thessalonica 1988, 186–8.

<sup>90</sup> For his commemoration, see Σύναξις πάντων των Σιναιτών Αγίων. Athens 1998, 174–5.

<sup>91</sup> F. NAU, Le texte grec des récits du moine Anastase sur les saints pères du Sinai. *Oriens christianus* 2 (1902) 79–80 (no XXXIII).

<sup>92</sup> Epist. XI 2 (S. Gregorii Magni registrum epistularum libri VIII–XIV, ed. D. NORBERG, CCSL 140, Turnholt 1982, 860). Another recit of Anastasios maintains, that a Pope of Rome has been the hospital's founder: NAU, *op. cit.* 82–3 (no XXXIX).

<sup>93</sup> TSAMES, *op. cit.* 138. V. BENEŠEVIĆ, Sur la date de la mosaïque de la transfiguration au Mont Sinai. *Byz* 1 (1924) 153–64.

<sup>94</sup> MANAPHES, *op. cit.* 82 (ill. 15).

<sup>95</sup> For his commemoration on 12 December, see SynEC 303. On bis hagiography, see P. VAN DEN VEN, La légende de Saint-Spyridon, évêque de Trimithonte. Louvain 1953; H. DÉLÉHAYE, Saints de Chypre. *AnBoll* 26 (1907) 239–41. On his iconography, see *LCI* VIII 387–9.

<sup>96</sup> Ch. PAPADOPOULOS, Ο Άγιος Γεράσιμος ο Νέος Ασκητής Κεφαλληνίας. *Theologia* 18 (1940) 7–27.

<sup>97</sup> B. MATTHAIΟΥ (ed.), Ο Μέγας Συναξαριστής της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας XII 484–99.

<sup>98</sup> MATTHAIΟΥ, *op. cit.* XI 67–86.

<sup>99</sup> MATTHAIΟΥ, *op. cit.* XI 269–97.

Arsenius of Cappadocia is one of the Saints of Greece, glorified only in the last decade. He came from Cappadocia in Asia Minor, where he was celebrated for working miracles for both Christians and Moslems. He died in Greece in 1924. He is entreated especially by women bearing children.

In the Holy Gospels, numerous miracles are recorded, wrought by the Incarnate Logos, who healed infirmities of both soul and body. It is of critical importance to understand this link between body and soul. Miracles have been wrought since by the Holy Apostles and all the Saints — Martyrs, Hieromartyrs, Hierarchs, Righteous —, who exercised this beneficial activity for suffering man, whom they perceived in his wholeness. In this we have the understanding that illnesses are symptomatic of fallen human nature. Our lives are closed by death in the providence of God, that evil should not become immortal. But in Christ, as the New Adam, we can return to that state which Adam enjoyed before the Fall. In Christ we can also be restored to physical Well-Being, though we cannot escape the inevitability of death. And for believers, in the kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem, (which is the goal of human life and all creation), all men will be fashioned anew, to abide with Him for all eternity, body and soul reunited at the Last Day, on the Second Coming of Christ, when new life will commence in glory in the Uncreated Light of the Holy Trinity.

We pray and ask that the grace of all the Saints of the Church — but especially those who are renowned for their grace of healing, and whom we have enumerated briefly here, and whom we venerate in the holy icons, our veneration being accorded to the prototype, as Saint John of Damascus has set forth, — may grant us all healing and health of both body and soul.

*(Mr. Nicholas Fyssas, historian of Byzantine Art, was of great assistance in the preparation of this paper)*