

PHYLLIS G. JESTICE, EDITOR

Holy People *of the World*

A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia



HOLY PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia

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HOLY PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

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VOLUME 1: ENTRIES A TO G

Phyllis G. Jestice, Editor

Foreword by Lionel Rothkrug

A B C  C L I O

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Compassion and Holy People
Contemporary Holy People
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Devotion
Disciples
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Founders of Religions as Holy People
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Teachers as Holy People
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 Ramakrishna Paramahansa
 Ramanand
 Ramanuja
 Ramdas
 Ramprasad Sen
 Ransom-Kehler, Keith
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 Ravidas (Raidas)
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- Sabas the Goth
 Sadashiva Brahmendra
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 Sakawa
 Sakya Pandita
 Salif Taal, Cerno Bokar
 Salman al-Farisi
 Samantabhadra (Chin.: Bu-xian, P’u-
 hsien p’usa; Jap.: Fu-gen)
 Samson of Dol
 Samthann
 Samuel of Waldebba
 San Trance Dancers
 Sana’i, Abu al-Majd Majdud
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- Shoah
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 Taixu (Tai Hsü)
 Takla Haymanot
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 Tapas
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 Taqi Muhammad
 Tara
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 Theodore
 Theodore of Tarsus (or of Canterbury)
 Theodore the Studite
 Theodosius of Kiev
 Theophilus the Penitent
 Thérèse of Lisieux
 Theseus
 Thomas
 Thomas Aquinas
 Thomas Becket
 Thorlákur Thórhallsson (Thorlac)
 Tianhou (T'ien-hou) (Empress of Heaven)
 Tijani, Ahmad al-
 Tillich, Paul
 Tilopa
 Tiresias
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 Toyotomi Hideyoshi
 Trisong de Tsen
 Triumph
 Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa (tsong kha pa blo bzang grag pa)
 Tukaram
 Tukt'ong Kihwa
 Tulsi
 Tulsidas
 Turner, Nat
 Tusi, at- (Shaykh at-Ta'ifah)
 Tusi, Nasir al-Din at-
 Tutu, Desmond Mpilo

 Tyagaraja
 Tzaddiq

 Uich'on
 Uisang
 Ulrich of Augsburg
 Upagupta
 Upaka
 Upali
 Ursula
 Uthman dan Fodio (Shehu)

 Vacchagotta
 Vairocana
 Vairotsana
 Vaishnava Sahajiyas
 Valentine
 Vamaksepa
 Vasubandhu
 Vedanta Deshika
 Vemana
 Veneration of Holy People
 Verbermacher, Hannah Rachel
 Veronica
 Vestal Virgins
 Vianney, Jean-Baptiste Marie
 Vidyaranya
 Vieira, Eduardo Duarte
 Vijayakrishna Goswamin
 Vimalakirti
 Vincent de Paul
 Vincent Ferrer
 Vincent of Saragossa
 Violence and Nonviolence
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 Vyas, Hariram
 Vyasaraaya (Vyasa Tirtha)

 Wafi Ahmad
 Waiyaki wa Hinga
 Walburga
 Waldès, Peter
 Wali Songo
 Wang Yangming
 Wang Zhe (Wang Che)
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 Ward, Mary

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 Wenceslas
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 Yu the Great
 Yunus Emre

Zahir, al-
 Zakariyya, Baha' ud-din
 Zaynab, Sayyida
 Zeno
 Zhang Daoling
 Zhang Zai (Chang Tsai)
 Zhisheng
 Zhiyan (Chih-yen)
 Zhiyi (Chih-i)
 Zhou Dunyi (Chou Tun-i)
 Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi)
 Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu)
 Zongmi (Tsung-mi)
 Zoroaster (Zarathustra)
 Zosima and Savatii of Solovki

FOREWORD

This encyclopedia gathers in a single reference work scattered information about founders, leaders, heroes, shamans, holy people, and many other figures venerated or honored in indigenous traditions and imported religions throughout the world. People with access to the supernatural in African and Native American religious practices are cross-referenced with articles about their counterparts in Buddhism, Judaism, Confucianism, Shinto, Islam, Baha'i, Jainism, Hinduism, the Sikh faith, and Christianity.

In English, individuals intimate with the divine are called *holy*. The word is distinguished from *sacred*, and the distinction is an important one. Originally a past participle of a now-archaic verb, *sacren*, meaning to consecrate, *sacred* may be used to describe human veneration; whereas *holy* often refers to an object or a person hallowed by God. A pious Christian refers to the “*sacred* books of the East,” and calls the Bible *holy*.

Holiness is often linked to death. A Christian martyr who conquers death reenacts Christ's paradoxical victory on the cross in anticipation of a bodily resurrection: “O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Cor.15:56). Neither the historical Buddha nor Muhammad was a martyr. But the Buddha, like Christ, overcame death. This was not the case for Muhammad; and relic cults had only a minor importance in Sunni Islam—the sanctity ascribed to sufi graves is an exception. Each world religion has a unique attitude toward the body; and in every case the founder defined the body's relation to holiness.

The case of Gautama, the historic Buddha (543–586 B.C.E.), is instructive. He left no writings and his teachings were not written down until near the turn of the millennium. Yet his authority was so great that works attributed to him have been composed in many languages and in many lands over many centuries. The distribution of Gautama's bodily remains at his death set the stage for early Buddhist relic worship. By the third century B.C.E. the Mauryan em-

peror Ashoka built hundreds, perhaps thousands of stupas (burial mounds) containing the Buddha's relics. Pilgrims believed that veneration caused the Buddha's remains to multiply, while a decline of pilgrims would lead his relics to shrink and gradually disappear. Worship animates the holy person's remains. Miracle stories describe the Buddha's past activities. And arrival of pilgrims at shrines locates these supernatural events in the present, where they can aid the personal faith of the worshipper.

Thus the “life” instantiated by the faithful has both a collective and an individual orientation: one, turned toward the past, seeks the welfare of departed souls; the other looks forward to the devotee's own postmortem deliverance. Reciprocity also governs relations with the personage entombed at the shrine. Even in folk Daoism a god's powers (his *ling*) lies with patronage—a forgotten god is a disempowered deity. Only pilgrims can instantiate the sanctity ascribed to the deceased—for, as we saw, without pilgrims the Buddha's relics shrink and disappear. Moreover, ritual devotion makes the entombed personage an intermediary. In sum, a multitude of reliquary shrines unites living and departed souls into a community that persists throughout time.

In Ashoka's reign pilgrimage sanctified the rise of voluntary associations, a movement directly opposed to the Vedic enumeration of priestly, ruling, mercantile, and servant castes. Yet Buddhists accepted, in modified form, the Vedic doctrine of karma, a system of rewards and punishments attached to one's actions over several lifetimes. Buddhists see redemption as a release (*moksha*) from reincarnation. In contrast, Christians believe God himself lived out a human life in Jesus of Nazareth. The Hebrew Bible says, “God created [both male and female] in his own image” (Gen. 1: 27). The imagehood of God in the human being, as described in Genesis, however, offers no *theological* message. God's incarnation in Jesus, does, however, equate redemption with a bodily resurrection.

This belief distinguishes Christians from Buddhists. Buddhists developed a *generic* view of the body. A doctrinal belief in the three bodies of the Buddha (the *Trikaya*), however, cannot be equated with the Christian Trinity. Buddhists saw life as an event in a beginningless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, composed of the realms of gods, demigods, humans, animals, ghosts, and hell beings. This panoramic view of the body was also expressed in sacred writings called “dharma relics”—alphabetical formulae with no lexical meaning (called *mantras* and *dharani*) and sutras—that were inserted in stupas and sacred images with the dissemination of scripture throughout Asia from about 100 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. To help their practitioners escape reincarnation Buddhists abolished sacrifice and made desire the source of karmic consequences. Since desire is common to all living beings it is a faculty consistent with a generic view of the human body. And dharma relics, especially mantras, offer a language free of desire. They are written words representing sacred sounds which, having no lexical meaning, are often understood to be the literal words or sounds of the Buddha.

Mantras—originally sung in Vedic religion to invoke the gods during sacrificial rituals—not only were inserted, sometimes along with sutras, in stupas and images, but these formulae were also chanted in tantric rituals throughout Asia. They acted in the place of the Buddha’s bodily relics. Incantations such as OM MANI PADME HUM (an invocation of the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara) express on the popular plane the Buddhist ideal of holiness or *nirvana* (a “blowing out”). The sanctity ascribed to writings without lexical meaning was thought to be indescribable in the same sense that cessation of craving is indescribable. Dharma relics preserved essential aspects of Indian oral traditions at a time when vast collections of Buddhist scriptures were disseminated throughout Asia.

Kings, monks, wandering holy people, and itinerant merchants were major figures in the rise of Buddhism and Christianity. They all contributed, albeit in different ways, to transform the sanctified, the memorialized, and the despised or forgotten dead into figures with distinctive cultural traits.

To some extent there was a comparable process in Islam, but cultural fusion was more difficult to attain. Conflicting teachings and dissimilar, often incompatible, burial practices contributed to the rise of Islam in the first half of the seventh century. A century after Muhammad (570–632) died, Islam had reached the Atlantic in one direction and the borders of China in the other. It now counts about a billion adherents, with followers in most countries of the world. Islam’s diffusion is often likened to a flow of water over ground in the sense that the cult tends to take on the ideological hues of the regions of the earth it flows over.

Mortuary practices varied locally and to some extent even the afterlife escaped a uniform definition. Perhaps as a result, Sunni orthodox theology has always been rather wary of the tombs of holy people. As mentioned earlier, Islamic religious experience largely came out of conflict with other monotheistic religions, and this fact is linked to the relative paucity of relic cults. Another contributing factor to the slow development of saints’ shrines in Islam is the lack of a clear distinction between spiritual and temporal realms. Like other cults with ambivalent relations to the dead, Islamic culture is also obsessed with purity. All creatures and things are perceived to be inherently pure or polluted.

In short, different religions have developed varying attitudes toward the remains of the holy dead, attitudes that both reflect and help shape worshippers’ attitudes toward themselves, their communities, and the divine. Even religious expressions that initially rejected the whole notion of a relic cult have often accepted key elements of a cult of “holy people,” especially at the level of popular religion. Around the world, different religions’ positions on holy people have influenced each other, as people across the face of the earth have tried to make sense of their purpose in the universe.

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PREFACE

Holy People of the World: A Cross-Cultural Encyclopedia focuses on the relationship between humans and the divine in the world religious traditions. Its particular theme is that most effective intermediary between heaven and earth: the holy human being who has a foot in both realms. It is intended as a contribution to the study of comparative religion, seeking to understand both diversity and similarities in world religions through this aspect of popular religion. The encyclopedia is largely biographical in format and comprises 1,183 entries; more than 1,000 of these are biographies of holy people from around the world—well known and obscure, representatives of many religions, and from all periods from which traditions of holy people survive. A concise selection of articles treats specific types of holy people (for example, Bhakti saints and Imams). In addition, there are major articles on attitudes toward holy people in many religions, ranging from the cult of saints in Christianity to the less familiar role of holy people in African and Amerindian traditions. In an effort to consider some of the common themes of holy people around the world, there are also 64 comparative articles on such issues as miracles, purity and pollution, and sexuality and holy people.

But what is a “holy person”? This encyclopedia has employed a broad definition, seeking to explore the variety of religious experience without privileging the Roman Catholic traditional definition of a “saint.” Even the term “saint” has been avoided except in the case of Christianity, lest the reader be drawn into preconceptions that do not necessarily fit other religious traditions. Instead the encyclopedia examines “holy people”—human beings who have been regarded as efficacious contacts to the holy, who because of a special sense of “otherness” have been held up as objects of veneration as well as paradigms for human behavior. The role of the holy person depends on personal charisma, rather than ecclesiastical office, and exists either in the mainstream or on the margin of most world religions.

What this encyclopedia offers is very much a sampler pack of holy folk from around the world. Adequate biographies of Muslim holy people alone could easily fill many volumes; a compilation of all significant holy people of the world would fill a library rather than a three-volume encyclopedia. Therefore we have attempted to be representative rather than comprehensive. The holy people chosen for inclusion are intended to show major trends in attitudes about the human being as a bridge to God, the gods, the forces of heaven—however the divine or supra-human is defined in a given religion. The advisory board members, experts in the various religious traditions, were asked to suggest a variety of holy people over a wide range of time, in the hope that various “fashions” in holiness would emerge by looking at a broad chronological sweep. We also did our best to allow for the large regional variations of any religion that has moved into a variety of cultural contexts, for example including Muslim holy people not just from the traditional Islamic lands but from India, Africa, and America. The women and men included in this encyclopedia are founders of religions, mystics, healers, sages, reformers, and teachers.

Coverage is uneven, because in the final analysis this project is only a single step in scholarly understanding of the phenomenon of holy people especially as an expression of popular religious belief and practice. In some religious traditions, holy people have been studied for generations and play a central role—in traditional European Christianity, for example, scholarly studies of saints began in the seventeenth century, and the official hierarchy of the church fully embraced the idea of a “communion of saints” as a valued element of religiosity by the second century C.E. It is only much more recently, though, that Protestant Christians have begun to escape the Reformation polemical line that insists that there are no special mediators between God and humans except Jesus and to acknowledge the charismatic role of great churchmen and -women as spiritual guides, even if they are

not intercessors in a conventional Roman Catholic sense. Similarly, Judaism has tended to downplay the role of the individual charismatic holy person, some scholars of Judaism even arguing that there are no holy people in the religion.

In other religions, the issue of the holy person has as yet won little study. Sunni Islam has tended to be suspicious of a privileged role of holy people, as a result of which there have been many fewer studies than of a comparable phenomenon in Christianity. The study of popular Buddhism can fairly be said to be in its infancy, again creating what is probably a skewed picture of Buddhist holy people. Buddhist scholars are better covered in this work than more popular sorts of holy people, not necessarily because the latter were rare but because a body of specialized studies has not yet been produced that could underpin their appearance in a reference work. Recent studies of African holy people show enormous promise of providing a wider definition of the holy person, both in the universal religions of Islam and Christianity and in the indigenous religions, whose details are only beginning to come into focus. A project like the present one, undertaken in the year 2020, would probably be very different because of advances in scholarship in many traditionally understudied fields.

In part, this encyclopedia's contents were also determined by the current composition of religion and history departments at universities around the world. There are many people ready and willing to write about fifteenth-century Christian female mystics—many fewer have studied indigenous African religions, or have been willing to explore the issue of holy people in Judaism. Similarly, the editor had twenty-one offers from scholars of ancient philosophy who all wanted to write the article on Plotinus, but finding anyone to write articles on ancient Mediterranean hero cults was much more complicated and at times impossible. A particular challenge was finding Islamic scholars able to commit the time to providing articles because of the disruption to many of their

lives and many new calls on their time in the wake of the World Trade Center attack.

This encyclopedia was the product of many hands and minds. First thanks are of course due to the busy scholars who nevertheless agreed to serve as members of the advisory board, providing lists of holy people to be included, coming up with lists of possible authors, and acting as a resource in everything from how to alphabetize Islamic entries to obscure questions of Aztec god-kings. Two hundred and sixty-nine people from over twenty countries wrote articles, some of them providing whole collections of beautifully crafted articles on holy people in their field of expertise. The recruiting process was long and difficult, and would have been impossible had it not been for so many scholars who were generous in opening their own professional contacts to my importunities, whether the referrals were to friends and students or to whole internet discussion lists on religious topics (among whom the H-Buddhism list is surely outstanding in courtesy, kindness, and helpfulness). The ABC-CLIO editorial staff has been consistently helpful and patient with the many delays that seem inevitable in a project of this magnitude, especially Karna Hughes and Martha Whitt. Copyeditor Kathy Streckfus did her uttermost to impose consistency in the face of great diversity. Thanks are also due to Lionel Rothkrug and David Bundy, whose idea this encyclopedia was in the first place. These volumes are dedicated to my colleagues in the History Department at the University of Southern Mississippi, who have made me so welcome and have provided a refuge in an often chaotic world.

Phyllis G. Jestice
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University of Southern Mississippi
On the feast day of St. Boniface
June 5, 2004

A

Aaron

(14th cent. B.C.E.)

Hebrew leader, priest

In the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), Aaron is the brother of both Moses and Miriam, the husband of Elisheba, and the father of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. He is the first biblical high priest and the eponymous ancestor of the Aaronite priesthood, whose members trace themselves not only from the tribe of Levi but specifically through Aaron, who is ordained by God. In the book of Exodus, Aaron is introduced as the eloquent speaker who will assist Moses and act as God's agent to the Israelites and the Egyptians. Prophetic literature states that Aaron was sent by God to liberate the Israelites along with Moses and Miriam (Mic. 6:4).

In the story of the liberation from Egypt and the desert wanderings, Aaron is subordinate to his brother. God speaks to Moses, Moses speaks to Aaron, and Aaron repeats the message, often with associated signs and wonders, to the pharaoh or the people. This chain of command is established in Exodus 4:14–16 and confirmed in Numbers 12. Although Aaron's role is secondary, his actions and responsibilities with regard to the pharaoh are somewhat similar to those of Moses so that during the period of bondage the brothers act in concert with one another. They are together when God or pharaoh speaks to them, especially in the initial phases of the plague account in Exodus. Aaron often performs the actions meant to intimidate the Egyptians. For example, it is his staff that is changed into a serpent, which then swallows those of the Egyptians, and that brings the first three plagues of blood, frogs, and lice. His position as a coleader with Moses during this period is underlined in Exodus 11:10: "Moses and Aaron had performed all these marvels before Pharaoh, but the LORD had stiffened the heart of Pharaoh so that he would not let the Israelites go from his land." Aaron is not as conspicuous in



Victorian depiction of Aaron as high priest. (Library of Congress)

the rest of the plague narrative. He takes his next active role after the liberation once the Israelites have crossed safely into the wilderness.

Aaron's role as coleader with Moses wanes throughout the wilderness sojourn, and to some extent the text begins to show his leadership abilities in a negative light. For example, in Exodus 32 he participates in fashioning the molten calf and building an altar before it, and in Numbers 12 he incites the Lord when he and Miriam overtly show disloyalty to

Moses. Aaron's role finally changes from that of coleader to that of high priest.

Aaron and his sons provided the models for the priesthood, and Aaron is seen as the progenitor of the elite priestly class. He and his descendants are charged with the responsibility of administering the sacrificial system in the desert, in the newly entered land, and, ultimately, in the Temple at Jerusalem (1 Chron. 6).

—Sharon R. Keller

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Miriam; Moses; Priests

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'Abata, Muhammad Hasan

(d. 1941 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Muhammad Hasan 'Abata was an Egyptian sufi of the Rifa'iyya order. He is attested, like most Muslim saints, to be a descendant of the prophet Muhammad. His son Hashim (d. 1985) separated from the Rifa'iyya to establish a separate sufi order, called the Qushayriyya Hashimiyya, in the 1940s. In the 1950s, this group was reincorporated into the Rifa'iyya as a semiautonomous branch known as Bayt 'Abata.

"'Abata," which means "stupidity," is a nickname attached to Muhammad Hasan because of his foolishness during his years of *gazz* (*jadhba* in classical Arabic), a mental derangement resulting from the shock of mystical revelation. He wore his hair long and in braids and sometimes wore women's clothes. His father, Hasan, had been an important Rifa'iyya shaykh in Asyut province. Shaykh 'Abata died in 1941 and is buried in a humble shrine in the cemetery opposite the mosque of Sayyida 'A'isha in Cairo, along with his wife, Zaynab, and his teacher, Shaykh Rihani. Hashim is buried nearby, but not in the shrine itself.

Shaykh 'Abata is honored with a weekly visitation on Wednesdays accompanied by performance of sufi *dhikr* (ritual recitation of the names of God with songs praising the prophet Muhammad). By the 1970s his visiting day was attracting ever-increasing numbers of worshippers. This group was known for its use of the *dabbus*, a metal ball equipped with small, sharp blades at the end of chains that was swung about during *dhikr* in order to pierce the body. The ritual was said to prove the blessing of the shaykh upon those who suffered no injury (de Jong 1976, 34). The practice

was later abandoned by order of the shaykh of the Rifa'iyya following its denunciation by the head of the supreme council of sufi orders.

After Shaykh Hashim's death in 1985, attendance at the weekly visitation declined dramatically. Shaykh Hashim's son refused to shoulder the burdens of a sufi shaykh, and without a teacher the disciples scattered. The loyal few who remain are mainly illiterate and desperately poor. Nonetheless, *mawliids* (annual commemorative festivals) are held to honor Shaykhs 'Abata and Hashim on the anniversaries of their deaths.

—Valerie J. Hoffman

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Sufism; Veneration of Holy People

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Abbo of Fleury

(c. 950–1004 C.E.)

Christian monk, reformer, intellectual, martyr

Abbo of Fleury, Benedictine monk, intellectual, educator, hagiographer, and abbot of Fleury, was born near Orléans, France, in about 945–950. Studying at Paris, Rheims, and Orléans, he succeeded in becoming one of the great scholars of the tenth century, producing works on *computus* (the calendar, especially the problem of movable feasts), logic, canon law, and grammar. He was also one of the most important leaders of tenth-century European monastic reform, a wide-ranging movement to establish spiritual and liturgical discipline and exert independence from external interference among the Benedictine abbeys of England and the continent.

For many years Abbo served as *armarius* at Fleury, an office that combined the functions of archivist, librarian, and schoolteacher. The monastery at Fleury enjoyed enormous intellectual prestige. Abbo's biographer, Aimoin, claimed that teaching was Abbo's first love, and the fame that he acquired from this activity served as a magnet for students from a number of countries.

In 985, Abbo failed in an attempt to become abbot of Fleury and in the wake of this defeat responded to the request of the Anglo-Saxon archbishop, Oswald, that Fleury send a teacher for the monks of Ramsey Abbey. Despite his lament that the beer of England had made him permanently fat, the years that Abbo spent in England, 985–987, were both personally rewarding and intellectually productive. While at Ramsey, Abbo produced the first literary account of the martyrdom of St. Edmund of East Anglia, a work permeated by

the spirit of monastic reform that existed in both England and on the continent. His pupil, Byhrterth, became one of the most prolific writers of the next generation.

Returning to the continent to become abbot of Fleury, Abbo faced considerable difficulties, including both dissension within the ranks of his monks and the territorial and jurisdictional ambitions of the local nobility and the bishop of Orléans. Because of these factors Abbo worked both to safeguard the independence of his abbey (the political aspect of the reform movement) and to strengthen the moral progress of the monks under his care. Thus, the abbot of Fleury appealed to both the pope and to the French monarchy on behalf of his monastery and worked to strengthen that monarchy theoretically. Asked to restore discipline at the Gascon monastery of La Reole, an institution that had frustrated three previous reformers, Abbo became a martyr to reform as he was slain by a recalcitrant monk in 1004 during a riot that resulted from his reform activities.

—Robert W. Zajkowski

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Edmund of East Anglia; Oswald of Worcester; Reform and Reaction; Scholars as Holy People

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‘Abdu’l-Baha

(1844–1921 C.E.)

Baha’i leader

‘Abdu’l-Baha (‘Abbas Effendi) was appointed by his father, Baha’u’llah, to be his successor as head of the Baha’i faith. He was named as the Center of the Covenant between Baha’u’llah and his followers, the perfect exemplar of the Baha’i teachings, and the authorized interpreter of the Baha’i scriptures. He carried out these functions from the death of his father in 1892 until his own death in 1921.

‘Abdu’l-Baha was named ‘Abbas at his birth in Tehran on May 23, 1844. He grew up during the turbulent years of the Babi upheavals in Iran, in which his father was much involved. In 1852, the whole family was exiled to Baghdad, and subsequently to Istanbul and Edirne in Turkey and finally to Akka (now in Israel). As he grew up, ‘Abdu’l-Baha increasingly assumed responsibility for organizing the household, for supervising and vetting the stream of visitors and pilgrims who came to see his father, and for managing all contacts between the small community of exiles and government officials, thus leaving his father as free as possible to

concentrate on dictating the words that would form the Baha’i scriptures. Even as a young man, he came to prominence because of his character, his grasp of mysticism and philosophy, and his ability to attract and inspire those whom he met. In later years, Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge University described ‘Abdu’l-Baha in this manner: “Seldom have I seen one whose appearance impressed me more. . . . One more eloquent of speech, more ready of argumentation, more apt of illustration, more intimately acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, the Christians and the Muhammadans, could, I should think, scarcely be found” (1890, quoted in Balyuzi 1987, 4).

When ‘Abdu’l-Baha took over the leadership of the Baha’i faith in 1892, it was still a movement confined to the Middle East and India consisting almost exclusively of Iranians. During his ministry, he expanded the reach of the religion to North and South America, Europe, East Asia, and Australasia. Through his two visits to Europe and North America (in 1911 and 1912–1913), he strengthened these nascent communities, spoke at numerous prestigious venues, and met many prominent persons, including religious leaders, philosophers, and statesmen. The newspapers of the time frequently referred to him as “the Persian prophet.” Wherever there was a sufficiently large Baha’i community, he initiated the establishment of Baha’i administrative institutions.

The writings of ‘Abdu’l-Baha and the texts of the talks that he gave during his journeys to the West have an important place in Baha’i literature. He kept up a voluminous correspondence with people, both Baha’is and others, from all parts of the world and wrote on philosophical, mystical, historical, social, and political themes. ‘Abdu’l-Baha suffered greatly during his life. It was not until he was sixty-four years old, in 1908, that the restrictions that he had been under since going into exile in 1852 were finally lifted. On several occasions, his life was in great danger. He died in Haifa on November 28, 1921, and is buried in the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel in Haifa.

All accounts agree that ‘Abdu’l-Baha had a charismatic personal presence that radiated a serene, majestic, and authoritative air. He was always very kind in his personal dealings and generous to the point that his own family members complained that they were left with nothing. He had a keen sense of humor and frequently used amusing anecdotes to make his point understood. His personal life was very simple and the furnishings of his rooms spartan. He ate and slept little and spent some hours every day in prayer and meditation. He was greatly venerated by the Baha’is and sometimes restrained them from making exaggerated claims about him. He always insisted that his highest station and greatest honor was to be ‘Abdu’l-Baha (“the servant of Baha’[u’llah]”).

—Moojan Momen

See also: Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Hereditary Holiness; Shoghi Effendi; Veneration of Holy People

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Abiodun Akinsowon, Christiana

(1907–198? C.E.)

Christian visionary, church founder

Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon was born to B. A. Akinsowon, a Saro clergyman from Porto Novo in Benin, and Alaketu of Ketu in 1907. She went with two cousins to see an annual Corpus Christi procession in Lagos on June 18, 1925, and there saw an angel and fell into a trance. The details are unclear, but one account reports that the angel followed Christiana home, where she remained in her trance state. When she did not improve, her uncle sent for the miracle worker Moses Orimolade Tunolase. When he arrived, Christiana asked him three questions from the Bible that the angel had told her to ask. Orimolade answered the questions, and she came out of her trance.

Another account holds that when Christiana was in the trance she traveled with the angels to heaven and was taught spiritual mysteries. A new angel took her on a trip that lasted several days. They visited a council of other angels, where she had to take a test from the Bible. They told her that if she answered all the questions she would become conscious again. Since this was a difficult task, an angel who had befriended her from the beginning stood by her and assisted her with the difficult questions. All of this time, she was in a comatose state, and her relatives sent for an evangelist to come. In any case, Christiana and Orimolade later formed a prayer group, which they called the Seraphim Society (later the Cherubim and Seraphim Society) in 1925. This movement became one of the many Aladura churches that emerged in Nigeria as indigenous expressions of Christianity. (Aladura means “owners of prayer.”)

Visions remained an important feature of the meetings and subsequent organization of the Cherubim and Seraphim Society. During services, the leaders often told the congregation their visions, and members were also invited to share their own visions and dreams. They received support from some of the local ministers, but their critics argued that the group had set up Joseph Babalola as “rival authority to the churches” (Peel 1968, 73). Others were concerned that the new group opposed local medicines and indigenous religious ideas. The members of the new group continued their work, picking up a millennial fervor. They held processions

with members wearing white uniforms and Orimolade and Captain Abiodun (as Christiana was now called) seated in a go-cart. Eventually, the congregation split because Abiodun wanted recognition as a cofounder. In 1929, Orimolade wrote to Abiodun accusing her of insubordination and suggested that she form her own group of followers. Orimolade then called his group the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim, while Abiodun called her group the Cherubim and Seraphim Society.

Captain Abiodun was an active evangelist. In 1927, when she was still a young woman of seventeen, she led a tour of western Nigeria, including Abeukuta and Ibadan, preaching and organizing Cherubim and Seraphim groups. She exhorted the people to turn away from idols and juju and depend only upon prayer. Abiodun played a central role in the Cherubim and Seraphim churches. It is believed that she worked for the unity of the Aladura churches before her death.

—Elias K. Bongmba

See also: Authority of Holy People; Babalola, Joseph Ayo; Orimolade Tunolase, Moses

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Abishabis

(d. 1843 C.E.)

Native American prophet

Abishabis was a Cree born in the area west of the Hudson Bay who led a Native American religious movement known as the “Track to Heaven.” Between 1842 and 1843, the movement took hold of Native Americans living in the area between Churchill, Manitoba, and Albany, Ontario, Canada. It was influenced by Christian teachings and Native American interpretations of Christian hymns that had been written in the Cree syllabic system by Methodist missionary James Evans.

Abishabis, who took the name “Jesus,” apparently to strengthen his claims to prophetic power by associating himself with Christianity, and his companion Wasiteck, or “Light,” were thought to have visited heaven and returned with teachings and blessings for the people. They declared that they had the ability to draw the “Track to Heaven” on paper or wood and used art to communicate their prophetic message, which included warnings against white ways, promises of game, and assurances of heavenly rewards for those who followed their teachings. Followers sang psalms, observed the Sabbath, and painted books.

As his influence as a prophet grew, Abishabis received gifts of clothing and other goods from his followers. The movement eventually declined because of white opposition and also because of the declining popularity of Abishabis himself. A Hudson's Bay Company officer detained Abishabis in 1843 on suspicion of robbing and killing a York area Indian family. Abishabis was seized from detention and killed by Indians who suspected him of becoming a *windingo*, a cannibalistic being that would endanger people if not destroyed.

—*Timothy E. Williamson*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Abraham

(c. 20th cent. B.C.E.)

Patriarch of Judaism and Christianity, prophet of Islam

No single figure plays a more important role in the traditions of Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike than Abraham. In the Hebrew scriptures, known to Christians generally as the Old Testament, the saga of Abraham occurs chiefly in Genesis 11:26–25:10, with further material on his sons Isaac and Ishmael in subsequent chapters. The story begins, arguably not long after 2000 B.C.E., with God calling the already seventy-five-year-old Abram (his original name), son of Terah, to set out from his homeland of Ur in southern Mesopotamia and to journey first to Haran and ultimately to a land where God would establish his descendants. When famine struck the land of Canaan, Abram and his people traveled to Egypt. The bulk of the saga recounts Abram's peregrinations across the region within fifty miles or so of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, his encounters with local rulers and prominent figures, such as Melchizedek, king of Salem, his covenant with God, and the beginnings of his own portentous family life.

Milestones in the biblical version of Abram's life include the covenant (Gen. 15–17), to be symbolized by the new name Abraham (Father of Many Nations) and the sign of circumcision, together with the promise that Abraham's descendants would possess much of what is now the central Middle East; the birth of Ishmael to his wife Sarai's slave girl, Hagar; the divine promise that the ninety-nine-year-old patriarch would have a son (Isaac) by Sarah (his wife's new covenant name) (Gen. 18); Abraham's bargaining with God over the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19); and the



Abraham preparing to sacrifice his son. Eighteenth-century engraving. (Art Directors)

early years of Isaac, including the story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice the boy to God (Gen. 21–22).

Beyond the Torah's accounts of these seminal events in the life of the patriarch, Abraham functions throughout the Hebrew Bible as the paragon of trust in God. It was this divine being who continued to be invoked as the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Abraham is above all the man to whom God made the initial promise to establish a particular people in a specific land, though descriptions of that Promised Land would gradually speak of a territory much reduced from the earlier expanse "from the Nile to the Euphrates." A late first-century C.E. extrabiblical Jewish text called the *Apocalypse of Abraham*—probably written in Hebrew or Aramaic, though the original is now lost—is one of only a few "apocryphal" texts associated with Abraham. It is worth noting that both the genealogy in Genesis 25:1–4, which lists the descendants of Abraham's other wife, Keturah, and that in Genesis 25:12–18, listing Ishmael's descendants, explicitly connect the patriarch with Arab tribes.

Abraham and Sarah, along with Isaac and Jacob and their wives Rebecca and Leah, respectively, are believed to have

been buried in a cave at Machpelah in the present-day town of Hebron. David would later choose Hebron as his first royal capital prior to deciding on Jerusalem as the ideal site. Since medieval times, a mosque has marked that spot as sacred to Muslims as well as Jews.

In the Christian New Testament, Abraham's foundational importance is largely presumed rather than described in detail. The patriarch plays a background role and appears only in more "theological" texts rather than in extended narrative. These references are indicative of distinctively Christian reinterpretation of Abraham's significance for the new tradition. Romans 4:1–25 and Galatians 3:6–4:31 contain perhaps the most theologically important Christian texts about Abraham. There, Paul contrasts Abraham's example of faith with the Law and its works, arguing that the true descendants of the patriarch are those who have faith in Christ. In Galatians, Paul sees in Sarah and Hagar an allegory of the two covenants—Hagar representing bondage to the Law, Sarah liberation through Christ. Along a somewhat different line, Hebrews 7:1–28 presents the biblical priest Melchizedek, to whom Abraham offered tribute, as a type of Christ. Abraham was the Father of the Jews (Matt. 3:9), but in John 8:33–59, Jesus claims to be greater than Abraham and cautions that merely tracing one's genealogy back to Abraham means little of itself. Today, in a number of Middle Eastern cities with Christian populations one finds churches dedicated to St. Abraham.

Islam's sacred scripture, the Qur'an, makes numerous references to both biblical and extrabiblical stories about Abraham, whose Arabic name is Ibrahim. For Muslims, Ibrahim's status is that of a prophet, a recipient of God's direct revelation. That he does not function as a patriarch in Islamic tradition is significant, for Ibrahim's primary theological role is not that of the father of a chosen nation, but that of the first "muslim"—the first human being to whom God revealed explicitly the call to be a seeker after divine unity and, therefore, the first to "surrender." The Arabic term *muslim* means "one who surrenders" to God and who thereby enacts the full meaning of the term *islam* (submission).

Fundamental to this aspect of Ibrahim's Islamic role is the tradition that the prophet's father, Azar according to the Qur'an, made his living by carving idols. Though Ibrahim grew up in an environment of idol worship, he nevertheless had the spiritual gift of seeking after the one true God. He was thus the first *hanif*—a term that was also used to describe Muhammad himself as a man driven by a spiritual quest. One account (Qur'an 6:74–82) tells how God revealed his oneness to Ibrahim. One evening Ibrahim came out and beheld a star, and he said, "This is my Lord." But when the star disappeared, he said, "I love not things that set." And when the moon rose, he took that for his Lord; but when it, too, sank from view, he sought divine protection from error.

And when the sun rose, he thought this must surely be his Lord, for it was greater by far. Then even the sun set. And Ibrahim said to God, "I have surrendered" (become a Muslim). Other related texts are Qur'an 19:42–49, 21:52–70, 26:69–104, 29:15–24, and 37:81–96.

Perhaps the most peculiar of all the biblical Abrahamic texts (Gen. 15:8–19) occurs in an intriguingly different version in Qur'an 2:260. In Genesis, Abraham asks God for a sign that he will indeed possess the land promised. God tells him to bring a heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a pigeon. Abraham then cut the animals—all but the birds—in two and separated the pieces. God then passes between the pieces while Abraham is sleeping to formalize his covenant. In the Qur'an, the prophet wants a sign that God has the power of life. Ibrahim is instructed to take four birds, cut them into pieces, and put a portion on various hills. He must then call to them and they will fly together as proof of God's power.

Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an connects Abraham with Nimrod, whom Genesis mentions only briefly and much earlier than Abraham (Gen. 10:8–10). In Islamic lore, Nimrod functions as the prophet's nemesis. Qur'an 21:68–70 alludes, without naming the evil king explicitly, to Ibrahim's conflict with the unbeliever. According to the important Islamic religious genre called Tales of the Prophets, Nimrod was to the child Ibrahim what pharaoh would be to Moses and Herod to Jesus—a mortal enemy bent on the infant's destruction. Failing in his earlier attempts, Nimrod manages to capture Ibrahim and catapult him into a bonfire. But there in the flames, Gabriel appears to transform them into a pleasant garden for the prophet.

Another distinctively Islamic take on the Abraham story has to do with interpreting the tradition that God commanded the prophet to sacrifice his "first-born son." By Islamic reckoning, Isma'il merits that distinction, since he was indeed born before Isaac. The Qur'an does not specifically name the boy whom Ibrahim is prepared to sacrifice, but the tradition presumes, by this logic, that it was Isma'il. Jewish and Christian tradition discount the son of Hagar as illegitimate and therefore not truly Abraham's son. The Tales of the Prophets devote considerably more attention than the Qur'an (11:72–78, 37:100–113, 51:24–34) to the individual birth stories of the two sons.

Finally, Islam's mystical poets delight in transforming the prophet into a paragon of mystical love. Ibrahim was a "sighful" man (*awwāh*—the Persian expression for "sigh" means, literally, "heart-smoke") whose heart bubbled over when he thought of God. They say you could hear his heart "bubble" for miles, so intense was his longing.

—Jack Renard

See also: Isaac; Isma'il; Jacob; Judaism and Holy People; Matriarchs, Hebrew

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Abraham ibn Ezra

(1089–1164 C.E.)

Jewish poet, philosopher, exegete

Abraham ibn Ezra of Tudela was a polymath whose career spanned the transition in Jewish society and culture from Muslim al-Andalus to the kingdoms of Christian Spain. Born in 1089, ibn Ezra was the first Andalusí Jewish religious and literary intellectual to compose all of his various works in Hebrew. A Hebrew grammarian, literary critic, prolific poet of devotional and social Hebrew verse, a Neoplatonic philosopher, astronomer, and astrologer, and above all a seminal biblical exegete, ibn Ezra abandoned Spain in 1140 and spent the remainder of his adult life traveling through North Africa, Italy, France, and England.

Ibn Ezra originally produced biblical commentaries on all the books of the Hebrew Bible. Some of these texts are no longer extant, whereas others survive in more than one version. His witty and frequently acerbic commentaries (in which other scholars and even authorities are taken to task) are written in an unmistakable style. They reflect a synthesis of the diverse hermeneutical trends prevalent in the "Spanish school" of biblical exegesis and represent the different ways rationally minded Andalusí Jewish literary intellectuals understood the Hebrew Bible in the twelfth century. On the one hand, ibn Ezra's commentaries focus upon the Hebrew grammatical, lexical, and stylistic features of the biblical text and aim to clarify the so-called "plain sense" of scripture. On the other, they are suffused with highly laconic and frequently enigmatic philosophical and scientific observations and contain obscure excursions often designed to suggest esoteric cosmological and theological doctrines ("the wise will understand") that are reserved for religious intellectuals (*maskilim*) as opposed to common folk. Although he did not apply them as extremely as some other Andalusí exegetes, the methods ibn Ezra typically employs are rationalistic. For instance, ibn Ezra is thought to have been the first to ascribe the second part of the book of Isaiah to an anonymous prophet of the Babylonian exile. He also alludes to the likelihood of post-Mosaic interpolations in the Pentateuch. Many

of his textual insights, and certainly his method, anticipate developments in modern biblical criticism.

Abraham ibn Ezra's rationalism coexisted with a devotee's profound longing for restoring the soul's connection to its sublime Source. Indeed, ibn Ezra's verse reflects the poet's apparently strong preference for liturgical over social poetry and reveals him as a passionate advocate of the divinely inspired sacred poetry of ancient Israel. Through ibn Ezra's attempts to promulgate Andalusí Jewish learning and its approach to knowledge, that culture continued to serve as a model for the Jews of other Mediterranean lands even as it exerted an influence over Jewish culture in northern Europe.

—Ross Brann

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People**References and further reading:**

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Action in the World

Can a holy person be active in secular society, or is "the world" so besmirching that the only true holy person is the monk or hermit who locks himself or herself away from all possible causes of sin? This is a question that has deeply concerned religions such as Buddhism and Christianity, which advocate withdrawal from the world through the institution of monasticism. At its heart, the problem is insoluble: Secular society desperately needs the wisdom and skill of holy people to act as intermediaries with the divine, but in popular estimation at least the world is so dirtying that after long exposure the holy person will no longer be holy. The solution that both Buddhists and many denominations of Christians have reached is a seesaw model of balance—time spent in the world (only advocated for the spiritually advanced) must be counteracted by periods of retreat and meditation. Interestingly, that is the solution reached by many other religions of the world in the first place; in the religions of both America and Africa the holy person is periodically separate in retreats to reinforce contact with the divine, but comes back to minister to the people.

A life of complete retreat is often perceived as selfish. Basil of Caesarea, while formulating a plan for monastic life, warned of the dangers of too much isolation in terms of "Who would you teach? Whose feet would you wash?" The Buddha's disciple Upali similarly asked for permission to become a hermit in the forest, but was refused because in the forest he would learn only meditation; in human company, he would learn the Buddhist teachings, too.

In general, the model is to learn, and then to teach. This concept is central to Confucianism, which advocates inner cultivation of the self—but not as an end in itself. For the Confucian, ultimate self-fulfillment lies in the world of action, and even when statesmanship is not possible the perfected individual can still serve as a living example and teacher to a community. In other traditions the correlation is not so strong: A person who has been perfected *may* share wisdom with others but does not *have* to do so. Sometimes holy people have felt the need for a specific period of retreat as preparation for work they intend to undertake in the world. A famous example is the Christian Paul of Tarsus, who was converted, preached in Damascus, then spent several years in seclusion, years that came to an end with three great missionary journeys. Similarly, after his exile from Iran the Baha'i prophet Baha'u'llah spent two years as a hermit in a cave, preparing for the task to come. Similar tales are told of Muslim sufis such as Shaykh 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166), who, after finishing his education, went into retreat for about twelve years before beginning public preaching. The theme also appears occasionally in Judaism, as in the case of the sage Simeon ben Yohai (second century), who is said to have spent thirteen years in a cave studying Torah. He emerged and was so angry when he saw mundane activities all around him that everything he looked at caught fire; he had to retreat to the cave for another year before he was able to be constructive in the world.

Both Christianity and Buddhism have the strong topos of the holy person longing for solitude, study, or self-cultivation only to be forced by a combination of conscience and external pressures to play a role in secular society. A common pattern in Chan/Zen Buddhism is for a person who has reached enlightenment to go into a long retreat—for ten, twenty, or even thirty years. For example, the Chan master Nan-ch'uan P'u-yuan (748–835) lived as a hermit for more than thirty years on a mountain; finally some monks talked him down, and he became a monastic teacher. The modern Hindu Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950) liberated his mind, then spent twenty years in silence; gradually, people forced him into a public role by coming to him from all over India. In a more folkloric example, the Christian Kevin of Glendalough (d. c. 618) hid in a cave, and he was only found when a wandering cow licked his feet and then gave such good milk that her owner went to find out where she had been grazing, then carried the protesting saint out on his back.

Are the protests of these holy men, longing for their solitude with God, to be believed? Probably in some cases the answer is yes. But it is more likely that often popular belief created the image of the reluctant holy person—because if a holy person *wants* an active role in the world, he or she cannot really be holy. Even so, the world diminishes spiritual potency; as Martin of Tours's biographer said, his hero worked

fewer miracles as a bishop than he had while a hermit. Many holy people have, however, reached a balance, and the greatest of them, when forced by circumstance to take on a public role, have been a model to others. The balance is fragile for those in positions of authority. But Losang Gyatso (1617–1682), the great fifth dalai lama, balanced out his role as a very active ruler and writer with five or six hours of meditation daily, strengthening himself for his secular tasks. Even more comprehensively, Gregory the Great, the first monk to become pope, laid out a definitive statement for Christians in his Pastoral Rule, a stand that can effectively be applied in many religious contexts: The need of the world makes it necessary for those who are qualified to take on the burdens of a pastor. But life in such circumstances must be lived in balance between the active and contemplative roles, contemplation strengthening the mind to bear action, and action providing a goal for contemplation.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Baha'u'llah; Basil the Great; Gregory I; Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir; Kevin of Glendalough; Losang Gyatso; Maharshi, Paul; Ramana; Simeon ben Yohai; Upali

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'Ad Sheykh "Holy Family"

Islamic holy dynasty

The 'Ad Sheykh (lit. "the people [descendants] of the sheykh") is a leading family among the Tigre of Eritrea whose members serve as important Muslim leaders, traditionally assuming posts as religious teachers (*sheykhs*). The history of the 'Ad Sheykh (or, in their South Semitic language, 'Ad Shek) begins with Sharif Husayn, who migrated from Mecca to the adjacent African coast several centuries ago. Originally speaking Arabic, his descendants and followers bred camels and taught on the Eritrean coast and later, under Ottoman suzerainty, adopted the Tigre language of the local nomads.

These semiarid and arid regions were well traveled by Muslim traders and pilgrims to Mecca from the ports of Sawakin and Massawa. But owing to the proximity of the

Christian empire of the Habesha (Abyssinia), which in ancient times had dominated the whole coast, many local ethnic groups, including the Tigre, traced their origins to the ancient Axumite kingdom and followed Christianity. The Tigre regularly migrated, following rainy seasons, from the lowlands to higher-lying plains, thus staying in close cultural connection with the Christian highlanders. When in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Christian empire disintegrated into several independent states, the Christian influence on the coastal peoples faded. The political changes, and the necessary protection of the trade routes, especially the traditionally Muslim ports and the Muslim kingdoms in northern Sudan, led to a reorientation of the locals, who started to accept Islam in the early nineteenth century.

This change gave the 'Ad Sheykh a crucial role and a new identity as they assumed a central religious role among the Tigre. The late eighteenth-century sheykh al-Amin bin Hamid bin Naf'utay was the key figure during this period of the clan's history. Through his teaching and miracles he gained widespread fame. Marrying the daughter of the chief of the most influential Tigre group of the Bet Asgede, he set the foundation for repeated and complex genealogical connections with the leading clans of the coastal areas. These connections resulted in the conversion of the Bet Asgede in the early nineteenth century.

Al-Amin's group settled in Sahel in today's northern Eritrea and quickly grew with the "adoption" of escaped slaves and Tigre vassals into the family. Because these new members of the community had left their former masters, the enrootment of Islam in the region constituted a social revolution. Through conversion, new alliances were settled and the feudal serf system weakened. Moreover, the 'Ad Sheykh based in the nearby fertile Barka valley, traditionally camping in Bisha, had overwhelming success in converting their whole area to Islam. This was perhaps helped by the hope of the locals, when the *mudiriyya* of Taka in the Sudan started to claim Barka, that conversion might reduce the threat by Egyptian armies.

In the mid-nineteenth century, virtually all Tigre groups, nomadic and semisedentary alike, had converted to Islam. The veneration of the 'Ad Sheykh, expressed through gifts, led to an amassment of wealth. In Sahel, a saintly cult developed around Sheykh al-Amin, while at the coast his grandson Sheykh Muhammad bin 'Ali (c. 1808–1877) is still venerated as a saint today at his grave in Emberemi in the vicinity of Massawa, which attracts yearly pilgrimages.

—*Wolbert Smidt*

See also: Hereditary Holiness; Islam and Holy People; Mission

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Adalbert of Prague

(c. 956–997 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr, apostle of Bohemia and Prussia

Adalbert (Voitech, Voytiekh) was born to a noble family in Bohemia around 956 and died on April 23, 997, in Pomerania, near Danzig, at the hands of Prussians whom he was attempting to convert to Christianity. Educated in Magdeburg by St. Adalbert, he assumed the same name as his teacher at either baptism or confirmation. Upon returning to Bohemia, the youthful Adalbert was elected bishop of Prague, having entered the city barefooted, and was consecrated at Mainz in 983. Balancing his youthful energy, enthusiasm, humility, and zeal, he set about trying to convert Bohemia from its largely pre-Christian beliefs.

It was a task that he abandoned after some five years owing to what may have been a combination of personal and political reasons. He traveled to the monastery of Sts. Boniface and Alessio in Rome, where he became a monk and remained for a number of years before returning to Prague. He then founded the Benedictine monastery at Brevnov, one of the few foundations that he would develop, which was consecrated in 993. He left the city again after excommunicating some of its dignitaries for killing a woman who had been found guilty of adultery and had been given refuge by Adalbert in his church.

Adalbert spent the rest of his life preaching and converting people to Christianity in Hungary, Poland, and Prussia. It was while attempting to convert the Prussians that he was killed. It is claimed that his body was bought back from the Prussians for its weight in gold. Friend and protégé of Pope John XV, Duke Boleslaus, Emperor Otto III, St. Astrik, and St. Bruno of Querfurt, he was a significant figure in the politics of central Europe, and his importance can be seen in his speedy canonization in 999. Originally buried in Gniezno, his body was translated in 1039 to Prague. He is credited with having composed the war song "Boga-Rodzica," which the Poles have often sung before entering battle.

More than eighteen different scenes from Adalbert's life are represented in medieval art, ranging from his birth to his burial and including the appearance of Christ to him, his conversion of the Prussians, and his investiture. The fully vested cleric widely venerated in central Europe is always shown dressed as a bishop with his crosier and book. He was



Adalbert of Prague, depicted in the full regalia of a late medieval bishop, a lance piercing his heart to show his form of martyrdom. (Library of Congress)

rarely represented before the fourteenth century (only five examples are known, among which is a scene of his martyrdom [Stuttgart, Landesbibliothek, Bible, Fol. 415, fol. 34r]). He is understandably well represented in his native Prague, where all of the images date to the fourteenth century and focus on his close relationship with Christ. These include depictions on the cathedral itself (on the exterior of the southern and eastern sides, as well as on a panel in the interior). The bronze doors of the cathedral of St. Wojciech in Gniezno, which date to the second half of the twelfth century, are among the finest of the memorials.

—Colum Hourihane

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Adechina (Remigio Herrera)

(c. 1811–1905 C.E.)

Santería high priest

Known universally by his African name, Adechina was an African-born Cuban who established the fundamentals of Yoruba religious practice in the Americas. Born around 1811 and enslaved as a young man in his native Yorubaland (now

Nigeria), he was brought to Matanzas, Cuba, around 1830 to labor in the sugar industry. Little is known of his early life, but he was able to achieve freedom and join a growing Afro-Cuban working class. He worked as a mason and before his death in 1905 had become a prosperous property owner in the town of Regla across the harbor from Havana.

Adechina's fame rests upon his becoming one of the most influential figures in the development of Yoruba religious traditions in diaspora. Known as Lucumi, the many thousands of Yoruba men and women who had been taken to Cuba established themselves as an important force in the island's ethnic mosaic. Their religious practices achieved wide recognition by the Spanish term *Santería* (Way of the Saints). Adechina was a leader of the Lucumi community and a high priest of *Santería*.

Among his other achievements, Adechina is credited with carving the first set of sacred *batá* drums in Cuba. The rhythms of the *batá* are used to praise the *orisha* spirits of the Lucumi, and the preparation of the drums requires extensive sacred knowledge as well as carving skills. Adechina's drums were said to call the *orishas* so beautifully that they were called, in Spanish, *la voz de oro* (the voice of gold).

Adechina was also a founder of one of the most famous of Lucumi religious organizations, El Cabildo Yemaya de Regla (The Yemaya Association of Regla). Yemaya, protector of the seas, one of the most prominent of the *orisha* spirits, corresponded to the Catholic Virgin of Regla. On her feast day, the Cabildo would honor both the Catholic saint and the African spirit in public processions. Adechina passed on the leadership of the Cabildo to his daughter Josefa "Pepa" Herrera, who built the processions into a national institution famous throughout the island in the 1930s and 1940s.

Perhaps Adechina's greatest contribution to African spirituality was his development of the *Ifá* priesthood in Cuba. *Ifá* is a Yoruba oracular system of great subtlety that organizes and makes available the medical and spiritual knowledge of the Yoruba ancestors. Ordination as an *Ifá* priest takes many years of arduous training. Adechina set a standard of excellence that is recognized today by every practitioner. He trained the majority of the most influential *Ifá* priests of the next generation, and nearly every practitioner today will claim Adechina as part of his priestly lineage.

—Joseph M. Murphy

See also: Orishas; Priests; *Santería*

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Adelheid (Adelaide)

(931–999 C.E.)

Christian empress

Adelheid, a queen of tenth-century Italy and empress of Germany, has been venerated since her death on December 17, 999. Described as beautiful, virtuous, humble, and compassionate by her biographer Odilo, abbot of the monastery of Cluny, in his *Epitaphium Adelheidae* (Epitaph of the august lady, Adelheid), written shortly after her death, she was an extremely generous supporter of the church. Despite her political status and wealth, she was well known for her modesty and charity to the poor. Odilo promoted her as worthy of veneration and the reason behind the prosperity in the kingdom and the expansion of its borders. Moreover, she liberally supported Cluny and founded monasteries at Payerne, Pavia, and Selz and endowed them with gifts of land, buildings, gems, and precious vestments. She was canonized a saint by Pope Urban II in 1097.

Adelheid was born in 931, the daughter of King Rudolph II of Burgundy and Bertha of Swabia. She married King Lothar of Italy in 947 and bore a daughter. Upon Lothar's death three years later, Adelheid ruled alone until her kingdom was attacked by Berengar of Ivrea, who took the throne for himself and threw her into prison. Odilo describes her eventual escape to the castle of Canossa in northern Italy as miraculous and ordained by God. Adelheid's appeal for help was answered by King Otto I of Germany, who defeated Berengar and married her in 951, linking both kingdoms under his rule and influence. In 962, Pope John XII crowned the couple emperor and empress, titles of enormous political and even sacred status. They had two children, the future Emperor Otto II and Matilda. The latter would become abbess of the convent of Quedlinburg, which had been founded by Adelheid's mother-in-law, St. Matilda.

Adelheid's political activities as a powerful member of her husband's court were as well known as her pious actions. When Otto II succeeded to the throne upon his father's death in 973, Adelheid retired to her brother's lands in Burgundy, apparently after an estrangement. They reconciled, however, before he died ten years later. His son and successor, Otto III, was only three years old when his father died, and Adelheid served as coregent in his name with her daughter-in-law, Empress Theophanu. She ruled alone as regent after Theophanu's death in 991 until Otto III came of age. At last able to retire, Adelheid devoted her final years to holy and charitable pursuits. She also participated in preserving a cult of remembrance for the Ottonian dynasty. It was her habit to celebrate the memories of her husband and son on the anniversaries of their deaths by making donations in their names for prayers to be said for their souls. She died in 999 at the age of sixty-eight, and, according to Odilo, God revealed her sanctity through the many healing

miracles that occurred at her tomb at Selz during the years that followed.

—Helen A. Gaudette

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Matilda; Odilo of Cluny; Rulers as Holy People

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Adham, Ibrahim ibn

(c. 730–777 or 790 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Ibrahim b. Adham b. Mansur b. Yazid b. Jabir al-'Ijli, a celebrated sufi mystic, has become a symbol of the devout renunciation considered necessary on the sufi path of spiritual elevation. Century after century, the anecdotes regarding his generosity to others, austere habits, simple lifestyle, and earnest prayers have been the lore of Muslim mystics across regions and cultures.

Born in around 730, Ibrahim ibn Adham was descended from an affluent Arab family that had settled in Balkh. In 754 or earlier, he traveled to Syria in search of a spiritual path, leading a quasi-nomadic life and traveling to various parts of the greater Syrian and Palestinian regions. As he sought spiritual transcendence, he maintained himself by engaging in various types of labor, such as reaping or grinding grain or toiling in orchards. He did not believe in begging or in becoming a burden to others. He also engaged in military operations at the Byzantine border. He apparently participated in two land and two naval expeditions, dying in the second naval expedition sometime around 777 or later from an illness of the stomach. A variety of locales have been reported as his place of burial, including a Byzantine island, Egypt, Tyre, Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Jabala on the Syrian coast.

Ibrahim's life story is explored in his medieval biography, which is based on plausible historical data, as well as in hagiographical and legendary lore. He has been portrayed as a ruler of Balkh who abdicated to embark on a spiritual quest after meeting with the immortal guide Khidr. It is difficult to determine the circumstances that may have resulted in the creation of this lore, connected as it is with the legend of the Buddha. Alternatively, it is surmised that his migration from Khorasan to Syria could have been due to sociopolitical factors.

Far-flung literature regarding Adham attests to his popularity for more than a millennium. In Persian literature, the figure of Ibrahim takes on many extraordinary features. In Farid al-Din 'Attar's early thirteenth-century *Tazkiratul-awliya'* (Muslim saints and mystics), he is presented as a good-natured and ardently pious person who was constantly engaged in ameliorating the condition of his fellow humans and was deeply engrossed in a spiritual nexus with God. In the non-Arabic realms of south and Southeast Asia, especially those that were influenced by the Persian literary diaspora, the narrative of Adham has taken on many hyperbolic details. In Turkish, Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, and Bugis, as well as in several languages of the Indian subcontinent, Ibrahim is endowed with fanciful and saintly characteristics. Hence, many anecdotes of Ibrahim's life as well as his opinions have become permanently integrated in the rich tapestry of Muslim spirituality. For instance, one often-repeated didactic tale concerns the idea of repentance, that is, the conscious effort to transform and transcend the mundane self. In the story, one night Ibrahim hears sounds on his roof and, upon investigation, finds a man hunting for his camel. When Ibrahim suggests the absurdity of this action, the man proclaims the utter uselessness of Ibrahim trying to find spiritual elevation while surrounded by luxury. Ibrahim repents, gives up his belongings, and embarks on his quest for transcendence.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Hagiography; Mysticism and Holy People; Status; Sufism

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who wished to honor and pay homage to him celebrated the moment of his arrival. The event, termed the *adventus*, was sometimes considered an occasion for miracles, but more often it was a time for oratory, adulation, and a series of religious rites, such as the burning of incense, lighting of altars, and sacrifice.

The motivation, however, for such an outpouring of joy and exultation was not entirely religious. It was also inherently political. Typically notified in advance of the anticipated *adventus*, the subjects could therefore be expected to arrange elaborate festivities, which sometimes were taken as a reflection of their loyalty. Some emperors appeared to seek and virtually require the attention and accompanying ceremonies practiced in their worship; others would attempt to arrive secretly to avoid the commotion and financial burden such an event would cause. Seemingly, the emperors most anxious to encourage worship and who expected the greatest attention, such as Caligula, Nero, and Commodus, were often the most unpopular.

The roots of the imperial *adventus* can be found in the earlier provincial tradition of greeting governors and other prominent Romans with a large reception. Moreover, similar receptions and processions were held for the arrival of certain imperial images, a symbolic way of worshipping the emperor in his absence and creating the feel of his presence. Although the solemnity of the *adventus* of an emperor remained intact, the role of spectators and certain religious rites faded into the background with the later Christian emperors. Sacrifices were no longer part of the event and direct prayer to the emperor was discouraged.

—Shannon H. Neaves

See also: Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People;

Rulers as Holy People; Triumph

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Adinatha

See Rishabha

Adventus

(1st–4th cent. C.E.)

Roman imperial cult ritual

In the imperial state cult of Rome, the emperor was worshipped as a god. Rarely seen by the public, especially in the provinces, he was generally a remote figure. There was great anticipation and awe whenever he was to visit, and those

Aegidius

See Giles

Aelred of Rievaulx

(1110–1167 C.E.)

Christian monk, theologian

Aelred, Cistercian monk and abbot in Yorkshire, England, is remembered today especially for his theologically bold statement that “God is friendship.” Aelred believed in the practice

and centrality of friendship in monastic and Christian life. His writings *Speculum caritatis* (The Mirror of charity) and *De spirituali amicitia* (Spiritual friendship) are some of the finest expressions of a spiritual revolution that took place in western Europe in the twelfth century. Continuing the initial impulses of monks such as Anselm of Canterbury, Aelred welcomed the presence of individual emotional bonds in the monastery as a means to strengthen the life of the community. Ignoring a tradition going back to the Egyptian and Syrian deserts, where friends were considered to be a threat to salvation, Aelred could not imagine life without friends, in whom he found the image of Jesus Christ.

Aelred remained loyal to his Anglo-Saxon roots and celebrated the memory of the local saints of his native area around Hexham and Durham in the north of England. In his youth, however, he was sent farther north, to the court of the Scottish king, where he enjoyed material success but felt guilty and even suicidal because of his attraction to other men and especially because of an attachment to one other youth. In joining the newly founded Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire in 1134, however, Aelred entered into a way of life in which he could combine his love of other men with his desire to live in chastity and inner harmony.

Aelred was a natural-born leader and in 1143 was sent out to found a new daughter house of Rievaulx in Lincolnshire. In 1147, he was recalled to Rievaulx to become its abbot, a post he enjoyed until his death in 1167, combining spiritual counseling of his monks with political involvement in the society of his day. The portrait of Aelred provided by his biographer, the monk Walter Daniel, points to a man who enjoyed his life in community and insisted that even an abbot can have special friends. Under Aelred, Rievaulx expanded its numbers and founded new daughter houses, which Aelred regularly visited. His most revealing spiritual statement is his *Precatio pastoralis* (Pastoral prayer), where he summed up the concerns of his spiritual life and his love of the monastic life in friendship and community. He has never officially been canonized but is considered by Cistercians today as one of their fathers and saints. His feast day is January 12.

—Brian Patrick McGuire

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People

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Aesthetics and Holy People

In many of the world's religions the holy person as creative artist is an occasional theme; it plays a central role, though, in the identification of holiness in the religions of India and Japan. The association of holy people with poetry, song, dance, and the visual arts, whether they are used to convey a religious message or as a mode of self-expression and contact with the divine by holy people, has led to new forms and practices in various cultures.

As far as the sources allow us to see, many founders of world religions were creative geniuses in their ability to express their messages in clear, compelling, attractive terms. For example, the seventeen short hymns attributed to Zoroaster are models of poetic genius, and the works of the Sikh gurus are similarly valued in the Sikh religion. Tales also tell that Mani was renowned as an artist, illustrating accounts of his visions in an effort to make their sense clear to others—he is still remembered in the Muslim world as the greatest painter who ever lived.

In Indian religions, however, poetry, music, and dance have been regarded not simply as a means to convey religious ideas but as acts of worship and paths to enlightenment in their own right. Much of popular Hindu religious practice is the singing of hymns, a practice that helps to explain the great number of poet-saints of Hinduism. Especially important is the belief that music can articulate the order of the cosmos itself, thus making the musician a part of the greater order of the universe. This is central, for example, in the hagiography of Chaitanya (1486–1533), the great Hindu god-saint famed for ecstatic devotion, which he expressed in dance and song, in that way participating in divine creativity itself. The *sants*, poet-saints, are especially noted for their utter devotion to a particular god, expressed in often-ecstatic poetry and hymns that circulated for centuries in large areas of India. Hundreds of examples can be found of Hindu holy people most clearly defined through their devotion expressed through poetry and music, such as the Alvars, a group of twelve great devotional poets of the sixth through ninth centuries, whose very name means “saintly masters.”

Poetry seems to have taken on a more central role in Hindu religion at about that time as part of the transformation of Hinduism to respond to the Buddhist challenge. For example, the Tamil poet and holy man Manikavacakar, who lived in the eighth or ninth century, was repelled by the impersonality he saw in Buddhism and turned instead

to poetry as an expression of his intense devotion to the deity Shiva. Similarly, the Nayanars, a group of sixty-three singing poet-saints of the seventh to ninth centuries, spread devotion to Shiva with their hymns. In general, these holy people seem to have used their hymns for a dual purpose: to experience love for their god in a deeper way than was otherwise possible, and to express that love as a lesson to others. (The Hindu poet Kamalakanta Bhattacarya (c. 1769–1821) even charmed a gang of highway robbers by singing to Kali.) Many were prolific composers, and pious legend has probably increased the numbers of their works. For example, the great female poet-saint Bahinabai (c. 1628–c. 1700) wrote nearly 1,000 devotional songs, while Purandaradasa (1485–1565) proclaims in one of his songs that he had composed 475,000 (of which about 1,500 are extant). This emphasis on music and dance for both the personal journey to God and to instruct others also appears among Muslim holy people of India, such as the sufi Muinuddin Muhammad Chishti, who actively encouraged music and chant as a way to feed the soul.

Similarly, the religions of Japan have defined holy people with a strong stress on aesthetic sensibility as central both to the holy person's own development and as a teaching aid for those less spiritually endowed. Thus, the Japanese Pure Land teacher Ippen created the practice of dancing for joy while chanting the *nembutsu* (the praise of Amida Buddha). It was in Zen, though, that aesthetics grew to a central holy characteristic. Zen calligraphy is a holy act in which the writer comes to participate in the buddha-nature of everything in the cosmos. Many Zen masters emphasized beauty as a way to the divine. The scholar Muso Soseki (1275–1351) was renowned for his poetry and the creation of the “Zen garden”; Ikkyu (1394–1481) was a great developer of Zen arts and a noted poet; Hakuin Zenji (1685–1769) was an important painter, calligrapher, and sculptor—just to name a few of the many Zen masters best known for their aesthetics. Several of Japan's Neo-Confucian holy people emphasized similar artistic qualities, and beauty is central to Shinto belief; it is an ancient belief that beautifully phrased speech can bring blessings from the *kami* (sacred powers)—and vice versa.

In other religions, holy people have formed a special connection to the divine through their skill in music or the arts. A particularly famous case is that of the Greek Orpheus, in legend the son of Apollo (god of music) and a muse, whose music was so powerful it could win over the gods of the underworld, and whose head kept singing even after it had been cut off. In Christianity, the Byzantine saint Romanos the Melodist (c. 490–c. 560), the greatest hymn writer of the Eastern church, was reputed to have gained his skill because the Virgin Mary visited him and gave him a scroll to eat; the sixth-century Yared, creator of the Ethiopian liturgy, was said

to have been mystically carried to the Garden of Eden to hear the seraphim singing before he took the music back to earth. Relatively few Christian saints are noted for their skill in other arts, but among them are the metalworking saints Bernward and Eligius, the Renaissance artist Fra Angelico (c. 1387–1455), and the great Russian icon painter Andreas Rublev (fifteenth century).

Other poets and hymn writers, although not regarded as creative geniuses, have sought to express their own impressions of the divine and inspire others. Several Christian saints are known for their hymns, such as Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373), Paulinus of Nola (c. 354–431), and Godric of Finchale (c. 1065–1170), the author of the first extant lyric poems in English. Poets such as John of the Cross (1542–1591) and Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889) have inspired many with their poetic vision. Similarly, Judah Halevi (c. 1075–1141) was a brilliant poet in Hebrew, and the great Tibetan saint Milarepa (1052–1135) produced a series of spontaneous songs after his enlightenment that are still an important source of inspiration to Tibetan Buddhists.

In Islam, vernacular verse was a powerful tool to convert the countryside, used by reformers such as Uthman dan Fodio in eighteenth-century West Africa; his mystical verses were said to have a hypnotic effect on his followers. Muslim Turkish poetry by such holy men as Yunus Emre (c. 1241–1320/1321), Kaygasuz Abdal (fifteenth century), and the modern mystical poet Asaf Celebi (1907–1958) have been especially central in making mystical Islam comprehensible to a vernacular audience. Indeed, much of the mystical writing of the Muslim sufis is poetic, often of great beauty, and many of the great sufi mystics, such as Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273) and Omar Khayyam (c. 1048–1122), are best known today as poets. But Rumi, especially, went beyond poetry to a complete aesthetic experience as a means to religious expression and enlightenment, leaving typical Muslim practice to give music and dance a central place. He especially instituted a circular dance for his followers to replicate the movement of the heavenly bodies and all of creation dancing with joy around God—his sufi order is known to the West as the “whirling dervishes.” Hasidic Jewish leaders such as Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1811) also encouraged dancing as a religious experience.

Dance is also important to the religious traditions of Africa and the Americas. African spirit mediums often dance to attain a trance state that allows them to speak to spirits of gods, as do practitioners of Native American religions. The power of dance has been adopted by several modern religious leaders, such as Kitamura Sayo (1900–1967), the founder of the Japanese new religion Tensho Kotai Jinguiko. Her movement is known as “the dancing faith” because of the central role of dance to induce ecstatic states. Similarly, churches in America are dedicated to the jazz mu-

sician “Saint” John Coltrane (1926–1967), who was possessed by spirits while making music. In Santería, the ability to make the sacred drums that can call the gods is itself regarded as a holy trait.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bahinabai; Celebi, Asaf Halet; Chaitanya, Krishna; Chishti, Muinuddin; Ephrem the Syrian; Godric; Halevi, Judah; Hopkins, Gerard Manley; John of the Cross; Judah ha-Levi; Kamalakanta Bhattacharya; Kaygusuz Abdal; Khayyam, Omar; Milarepa; Nahman of Bratslav; Orpheus and Orphism; Purandaradasa; Romanos the Melodist; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Yared; Yunus Emre

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Æthelwold

(d. 984 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, reformer

Born to a prosperous English family sometime during the reign of Edward the Elder (899–924), Æthelwold received an early education in sacred literature. While still a youth, he joined the court of King Athelstan and in time received holy orders. While at court, Æthelwold and Dunstan became interested in the monastic reform movement then emanating from continental centers such as Cluny and Fleury. This became their inspiration for the revival of monasticism, which had virtually disappeared from England after decades of Viking incursions.

When Dunstan became abbot of Glastonbury (c. 939), Æthelwold became a monk there. He also continued his education, reading deeply in the church fathers and acquiring a command of Latin grammar and metrics that was remarkable for his day. His interest in reform continued, and he considered entering the stricter discipline of a monastery overseas. King Eadred (r. 946–955), however, forestalled him, offering him the abbacy of a long-neglected monastery at Abingdon instead. With royal patronage, Æthelwold turned Abingdon into a well-regulated community governed by the Benedictine Rule. To ensure that his household conformed to the highest standards, he dispatched one of his monks to Fleury to observe continental customs firsthand.

When in 963 King Edgar (r. 957–975) made him bishop of Winchester, Æthelwold carried his reforms into the churches of his see. He replaced the cathedral canons with monks from Abingdon, establishing a model of monastic

cathedrals replicated elsewhere in England. He then established other monastic communities in Winchester and elsewhere, including formerly Danish East Anglia. He endowed his foundations generously with lands and legal privileges and, when necessary, pursued legal action to protect their rights. To ensure proper knowledge of monastic practice, he translated the Benedictine Rule into Old English, and he compiled the *Regularis concordia* (Concordance of rules), a set of regulations to promote monastic discipline throughout England.

In many respects, Æthelwold was a model tenth-century churchman, working for reform in concert with his king. An able administrator, he saw his churches prosper: The fame of Winchester’s Old Minster grew when Æthelwold promoted the cult of St. Swithin there and rebuilt the church to accommodate throngs of pilgrims. Although he lived austere and governed his subordinates with strict discipline, he also had a reputation for generosity and compassion, selling church treasures to provide for the poor in times of famine.

Æthelwold died from an illness on August 1, 984, and his tomb became a cult center where miracles reportedly occurred. But his true legacy is illustrated by the vision ascribed to St. Dunstan while he was still at Glastonbury: In the vision, a huge tree spread its limbs over all England, and on every branch hung monks’ cowls. Æthelwold’s own cowl stretched high above the rest, protecting them all. The vision may be legend, but it reflects Æthelwold’s role in the reestablishment of English monasticism. His reforms, supported by a revival of learning, were carried on by his pupils, many of whom occupied places of authority in the English church.

—Nancy M. Thompson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Dunstan; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Afra of Augsburg

(d. c. 304 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Afra, a female Christian martyr of the late Roman Empire, was the original patron saint of Augsburg in southern Germany. Little is known about the historical Afra, although her grave was visited in 565 by the scholar and poet Venantius Fortunatus. Martyred during the Christian persecutions of the Roman emperor Diocletian (284–305), she is first mentioned in the Martyrology of St. Jerome, which

was composed around 450 in northern Italy. Centuries later, several accounts of her martyrdom were composed to accompany the solemn celebration of her feast day, August 5.

Written in the eighth century, these earliest narratives portray Afra as a former prostitute in Augsburg who was converted to Christianity by an otherwise unknown Bishop Narcissus from Gerona in Spain. Arrested for being a Christian, she refused to renounce her new faith and was burned at the stake. When her mother and servants, who were also Christians, tried to bury her remains, they were discovered and likewise burned in the tomb where they were hiding. None of these accounts, however, have any historical value and probably arose from the original author's misreading of the Martyrology of St. Jerome. By contrast, three eleventh-century saints' calendars from Augsburg call Afra a "virgin," and given the unreliability of the earlier accounts, this description seems more plausible. Later on, in the twelfth century, crusaders brought the oral tradition of St. Afra's legend with them to the Holy Land, and a version of her life was composed in Armenian.

Through many centuries St. Afra's cult was kept alive by monks of the monastery dedicated to her in Augsburg. During rebuilding of the monastery in 1064, a Roman sarcophagus supposedly containing the charred remains of a female body was discovered, which to this day is preserved under the church's main altar. When the rebuilding was completed in 1071, the monastery was rededicated to Sts. Ulrich and Afra, honoring both its traditional patron and the city's new saint, Ulrich, who was canonized by Pope John XV in 993. In the long run, the cult of the surely historical and well-documented St. Ulrich superseded that of St. Afra, whose veneration remained largely localized within the diocese of Augsburg. In medieval imagery, Afra is often shown with a tree, to which she was supposedly bound before being burned.

—Steven Sargent

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Ulrich of Augsburg

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African Religions and Holy People

Historically, holy or exceptional persons in the vast area lying south of the Sahara desert (also known as sub-Saharan Africa) have been based in their own ethnic communities, residing among people speaking a common language or dialect. There are diverse linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious identities defining the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa.

These identities have emerged under the auspices of holy people who have defined and helped to develop the different ways the inhabitants of the continent have related to religious beliefs over the years.

Suffice it to mention that there are perhaps as many or even more religious practices and systems than the more than 2,000 languages spoken presently in sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, most indigenous religious and cultural practices in Africa are generally subsumed within the different existing ethnicities among clans and families. Each group has its own religious systems with sets of beliefs and practices that they follow. However, there are exceptions to the rule that wed ethnicity to the practice of religion. In fact, some African communities, such as the Kiga, Hutu, and Tutsi, on the one hand, and the Matumbi, Hehe, and Zaramo, on the other, share deities, spirits, and cults. In sub-Saharan Africa, foreign religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hindu, Baha'i, and Judaism are practiced across ethnic divides without restrictions. Since their importation onto the continent, these religions have attracted adherents from different cultures beyond ethnic and linguistic boundaries, being accommodated into the different linguistic groupings.

Religion in the entire region is imbedded and can be discerned in beliefs, rituals, ceremonies, and the roles of religious officials. The religious officials occupy important positions as mediators between the spiritual realm and the physical world of human experience. Setting themselves apart from the main group of followers as leaders, mediums, priests, and interpreters of the divine order and as social innovators with rare skills in their societies, holy people have led the masses in a wide range of religious and political experiences, in economic development, and in the achievement of general social stability. The leaders of various religions and cultural systems in sub-Saharan Africa have claimed that they possessed natural gifts and exceptional personal qualities of divine kinds. The gifts have provided them with opportunities to occupy positions of privilege above other members of society, and they have used them to extend their influence and power over members of society. In short, holy persons have claimed to possess divine leadership to guide their communities in a wide range of sociocultural and economic activities. These activities include religious, political, military, economic, and technological endeavors. In addition, holy persons in sub-Saharan Africa have been expected to exorcise evil spirits and to heal the sick and the physically afflicted members of their societies.

Those individuals who have led their communities into these different realms, including the divine, have more often than not been held in high esteem and venerated as holy. They have helped in the various aspects of development in their societies by generating new ideas. The aristocracy, medicine people, priests, and other holy people have had



Dogon elder reading oracles. Sangha Village, Mali. (Art Directors)

leadership responsibilities of managing cults and ensuring that they serve the plebeians. Given that there are different forms of holiness in sub-Saharan Africa, it is imperative to analyze separately the perceptions of holy people within the specific realms in which they have made their contributions: religion and healing; political and military; and economic and technological. Moreover, their activities have been accomplished in five regions of the continent: eastern Africa, the Horn of Africa, western Africa, central Africa, and southern Africa and the Indian Ocean islands.

Even with the above-mentioned categories, one cannot exhaustively tabulate all characteristics that have been used in Africa to define a person as holy. Instead, it is important to adopt an approach that will simplify holiness or sainthood and explain these concepts in generalized yet clear terms. That is, holy people can be defined as exceptional persons believed to possess divine powers of various kinds for the benefit of individuals in society. Some scholars of African religions have correctly argued that indigenous African spirituality permeated the realms of divination, rainmaking, prayer invocations, faith healing, blessings and salutations, sacrifices and offerings, religious mediumship, and custodianship of shrines. The functions of diviners, mediums, oracles, and seers have been to find out hidden secrets or forms of knowledge that are not easily accessible to everyone, to

simplify the messages, and then to pass them on to other members of society.

Normally, diviners have worked with both male and female medicine people in the local communities to decipher complex social phenomena and experiences. The main preoccupation of diviners is to identify sources of physical, psychological, and social afflictions troubling people. Diviners are concerned with finding out which spirit may be troubling a possessed person, its intentions, and what ought to be done to stop the malaise associated with it. According to common knowledge, the work of diviners is complemented by that of holy persons with the special gift of communicating with the spirit world at will, known as mediums. Indeed, in their communication with the spirit world, mediums may only be possessed by one spirit, and in such a case they are said to be married to the spirit that supposedly controls them. Priests generally have been responsible for training mediums in the religious ritual of communicating with the spirits.

Seers are people who claim to have natural power to see certain things or symbols not readily comprehensible to ordinary people. They foresee and interpret events before they take place and as such command respect from other members of society because of their high sense of intuition. Unlike other holy people, however, seers do not undergo training of

any sort but possess natural gifts that distinguish them from the rest of the people. The work of seers is complemented by the roles ritual elders play in society. The ritual elders perform ceremonies in their villages and for entire communities when needed. Ritual elders hold the office courtesy of exemplary leadership abilities they possess and because of their advanced age and experience compared to other members of the community. These people are versed in the social procedures of ritual and prayer and possess profound knowledge in local customs.

Another group of significant holy persons is the rainmakers, a hereditary position in most African communities. Rainmakers heal the hungry land by undertaking rituals and ceremonies believed to bring rainfall when needed in the cultivation of land and for livestock tending, thus ensuring society's continued reproduction. The son or daughter of a rainmaker takes special training for the position from childhood at the feet of an experienced elder in the art. Because rainmakers are healers of the land, rainmaking has been a highly respected profession that has often been combined with other forms of leadership, such as chieftainship or priesthood. In cases where rainmaking was not hereditary, individuals have claimed to have received the gift through dreams or messages from spirits.

Priests and priestesses constitute the last group of holy people. Their work is to take care of religious places, to lead people into worship, and to receive offerings and sacrifices on behalf of God or the spirits of ancestors. In some instances, they have also acted as seers and mediums. Priests and priestesses have usually received training in temples or religious sanctuaries from other holy persons. All spiritual officials have had the task of ensuring a continuous relationship between the Supreme Being and the people by interpreting the divine order. Thus, they have often become leaders in the wide range of religious ritual as venerated persons in their communities.

Religion and Healing

The most famous holy people in sub-Saharan Africa are those who have reworked local cultural ontology and religious practices in novel ways to create unique or outstanding creolized identities of multiple cultural sheds. Most holy people fall under the categories of mediums, faith healers, and innovators of local religious cultural practices and beliefs. They have reworked the ontological views of indigenous people and their belief systems in ongoing processes that ensured continuity of tradition as well as cultural adaptations and change. By reworking indigenous beliefs, holy persons have accommodated while rejecting at the same time those elements they perceived to be anachronistic in favor of modern ways in consonance with the new socio-economic realities of their communities.

On the one hand, holy people such as Ezana and Haile Selassie of Ethiopia; Ogún and Oyá of Nigeria; Nongqawuse of South Africa; Nyabingi of Rwanda; Mirambo, Nyungu ya Mawe, and Kinjikitile Ngwale of Tanzania; Moraa Moka Ngiti, Koitalel arap Samoei, and Waiyaki wa Hinga of Kenya; and Ayuel Longar of Sudan, among others, led their communities in cultural and spiritual realms by building on indigenous forms of knowledge to bring about continuity and change in cultural practices. They served as protectors of their peoples' interests, conducting rituals and making libations in honor of their ancestors and generally organizing activities to appease local heroes and divinities. On the other hand, however, are those individuals who have synchronized local ideas with new religious concepts from Europe and Asia such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism to create new communities of religious followers with new ideologies. These synchronizations led to the emergence of various independent churches, Muslim brotherhoods, and sects such as the Bayudaya community (indigenous African Jewish sect) in Uganda.

Christianity and Islam are perhaps the two most important religions that have been adopted and their rituals reworked to suit various African social and political environments. The religious and cultural encounters of indigenous societies with those of these incoming sects have given rise to creolized independent religious movements as a result of negotiation of local and foreign elements in Africa. Some of the independent movements and sects include indigenous religions such as Kimbanguism, led by Simon Kimbangu; Dini ya Musambwa, led by Elijah Masinde; and the Mouride brotherhood, led by Cheikh Ahmad Bamba. Other holy persons who have contributed to religious innovations include Nana Asma'u Fodio, Uthman dan Fodio, and Shaykh Sidi al-Mukhtar-al Kabir al Kintu in western Africa; Semei Kakungulu (the founder of an indigenous African Jewish community in Uganda), Kalemba Mulumba (Wante) Matthias, Charles Lwanga, and Janani Jakaliya Luwum in Uganda; and Alice Lenshina and Johane Masowe in southern Africa, among others. Different communities in sub-Saharan Africa remember such people in praise songs, heroic epics, works of art, legends, and folklore as holy or people of exceptional divine-acquired skills because of the role they played in the social and ideological transformations of the communities.

Among the Dinka of southern Sudan, tales abound of the heroic deeds of a holy person called Ayuel Longar who possessed magical means of getting water for his cattle by pulling up tufts of grass. This mysterious act kept his cattle fat and sleek. In most of central and western Africa, there are revered people such as Mami Wata, a legendary figure venerated as a goddess who heals illness, especially infertility, and brings prosperity to those who make a living from the ocean, rivers, and lagoons through fishing and commerce. In the Sudan, a scholar called Ahmed Baba, a holy man of faith who

excelled in theology at a learning center of Timbuktu, is revered. Another man of great reverence was Cheikh Ahmad Bamba of Senegal, who had a great following because of his qur'anic teachings. Others, such as Mbatian, ruled over the Maasai with distinction as a medicine man who not only healed but foretold the future of his people before the onset of British colonialism in Kenya. Kalembe, Lwanga, and Luwum died as Christian martyrs, and Kakungulu founded an independent sect of Judaism in colonial Uganda as a challenge to colonial Christian churches.

Political and Military Leaders

Many communities in sub-Saharan Africa have had political rulers and military leaders who were chiefs, kings, queens, rainmakers, and priests, among others. Because these offices derived their legitimacy from the Supreme Being, people have considered them to be holy, regarding the occupants as mystical and religious heads. In short, they have often served as a divine symbol of their people's health and welfare. Indeed, the sacred nature of the offices explains why religious ceremony and ritual has characterized day-to-day activities. Local folklore and legends in most sub-Saharan African societies have linked kingship or chieftainship with God. In fact, myths of various kinds claim that founder leaders of communities possessed powers emanating from God. In social imagination, therefore, such leaders appeared mysteriously from the sky or from a spiritual world imbued with divine or sacral powers as representatives of God in the universe. People came to regard them as God's earthly viceroys, according them highly elevated positions and titles, such as "savior," "protector," and "chief of divinities."

Given the argument that leadership is divine, kings, chiefs, and queens acquired praise names. For example, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was named the "Lion of Judah" to denote that he was "the chosen one of God." There are many other instances in Africa that lend credence to the argument about divine leadership. There was an indigenous cult in southwestern Uganda and Rwanda known as Nyabingi that was named after its founder, a formidable woman leader. The Nyabingi cult has had various priests and priestesses who popularized it among the Hutu and Kiga people of the region. According to the Nandi people of Kenya, Koitalel arap Samoei was a distinguished leader who gallantly fought European colonialism. Legend has it that arap Samoei was filled with divine power. The Kikuyu people remember Waiyaki wa Hinga for leading his people in war against the Maasai and the British imperialists in Kenya. Folklore in Tanzania is awash with various charismatic political and military leaders possessing special gifts that are considered to be holy or saints. These persons include Mirambo, Nyungu ya Mawe, and Kinjikitile, among others. They draw a large following because of their special abilities in politics

and warfare. Communities in Tanzania believe that war medicine played an important role in the campaigns of these individuals and that their leaders needed the foundation of legitimate ritual chieftainship to rule them. In their campaigns, these people forced the conquered rulers to forfeit their ritual powers to them, thus becoming divine rulers. Using medicine assumed to be divinely acquired, Kinjikitile mobilized the Hehe people in a revolt against colonial German rule in Tanganyika.

Economics and Technology

Holy people in sub-Saharan Africa have often been involved in the day-to-day economic activities in their societies, including metalworking, mining, pottery, fishing, hunting, and weaving and basketry, among others. The field of metalworking—iron smelting and goldsmithing—not only requires specialized skills but historically was couched in esoteric ritual and ceremony, the domain of a few members of the communities who were the experts. Indeed, in most of sub-Saharan Africa, metalworking was a secret trade whose practitioners supposedly possessed magical powers to undertake the profession skillfully and responsibly for the larger society. The professions of metalworking were generally confined within particular families or clans and passed on from parents to their offspring. Metals such as iron and gold were used in the manufacture of ornaments and other paraphernalia for leaders, tools, implements, and weapons, including spears and arrows.

Given the highly specialized functions that metals performed, they were considered sacred—hence a special group of individuals in society was accorded the responsibility of closely controlling and regulating their use. In fact, holy people presided over special rites and ceremonies during the processing of mining, smelting, and manufacturing items from the metals. Because of the significance of metals in the lives of the people of sub-Saharan Africa, most communities believed that there were special deities that controlled the process of producing metals and products made out of them, a belief of which elements remain today. Since metals were used in the day-to-day activities of individuals, such as clearing and farming the land, hunting, and animal husbandry, as well as in initiation ceremonies such as circumcision, metalworkers were honored as holy. Moreover, the metals that were used in war, such as spears, arrows, and swords, required the performance of special rituals, normally by metalworkers themselves.

Similarly, professions such as pottery-making and fishing were considered sacred because of their importance in society—a belief that new religions have not completely eradicated. Society believed that the individuals who made their livelihood from such professions were divinely endowed with the Supreme Being's power and goodwill. For instance,

pottery was important in numerous ways—pots were used for cooking food, brewing alcohol, storing water, boiling and cooking herbs, and storing the insignia of medicine people. Holy people also made some special pots for ritual purposes. Consequently, in some sub-Saharan societies, individuals who presided over the production of pottery were revered and considered holy. In communities that practiced hunting, hunters were viewed as exceptional people who braved dangerous grounds full of fierce wild animals of various kinds. Holy people used some animals' parts in healing, in carrying out general medical practices, and in casting spells or exorcising spirits. Fishermen were revered in fishing societies because they sojourned in mysterious, dangerous waters thought to be the abode of spirits. The fact that fishermen brought home fish of various types bore testimony to their mystical powers, especially in sea waters considered to have taken some of their ancestors during the period of slave trade.

—*Hannington Ochwada*

See also: Ancestors; Apotheosis; Asma'u Fodio, Nana; Bamba, Ahmad; Ezana; Hagiography; Haile Selassie; Heroes; Intermediaries; Islam and Holy People; Johane Masowe; Kalemba Mulumba (Wante) Matthias; Kidongoi; Kimbangu, Simon; Kinjikitile Ngwade; Legendary Holy People; Lenshina, Alice; Luwum, Janani Jakaliya; Masinde, Elijah; Mbatiany; Miracles; Mission; Mnkabayi ka Jama; Nature; Nehanda Nyakasikana; Nongqawuse; Nyabingi; Ogün; Oyá; Priests; Prophets; Ritual; Sages; Santería; Shamans; Uthman dan Fodio; Waiyaki wa Hinga; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Aga Khan I

(1817–1881 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Aga Khan I, Hassan 'Ali Shah, was the hereditary spiritual leader of the Muslim group called the Shi'a Imami Nizari

Isma'ili. He was the forty-sixth in a sequence of spiritual guides who trace their descent to the prophet Muhammad via his daughter Fatima, who was married to 'Ali b. Abi Talib.

The title of Agha Khan (spelled "Aga" by the family) was bestowed upon him by the Iranian king Fateh 'Ali Shah in 1818. This auspicious honor had followed a tragic event. His father, Imam Khalilallah 'Ali, had been assassinated in Yazd. His mother, Bibi Sarcar Mata Salamat, brought Hassan 'Ali with her to Tehran to seek justice from the king. She was successful in the presentation of her grievance. An imperial order was issued whereby the governor of Yazd, Haji Muhammad Zaman Khan, was commanded to arrest Hussain Yazdi, the main culprit, together with his accomplices. To show his special favor, the king bestowed on Hassan 'Ali Shah the title of Aga Khan and designated him governor of Mahallat and Qum. He also presented him his oldest daughter, Sarv-i Jahan Begum, as bride, together with 23,000 tumans to pay for wedding expenses. The investiture as Aga Khan was performed at a beautiful palace called the Qasr-i Qajar. Henceforth the family has used this title.

After the sudden death of Fateh 'Ali Shah in October 1834, his successor, Muhammad Shah, became inimical toward Hassan 'Ali. Hassan 'Ali attended the coronation of the new king in January 1835 and was subsequently appointed governor of Kirman. Twenty months later he was replaced by another governor and recalled to Tehran. Mirza Aghashi, the prime minister, treated Hassan 'Ali with disrespect and attempted to disparage him. Hassan 'Ali decided to make a stand for his rights in Kirman. Eventually, in 1840–1841, he migrated to the province of Sind in India and was welcomed by the Talpur notables. He also developed a firm friendship with Sir Charles Napier, the British governor-general of Sind. Later, as a result of his constant support of the British, he was granted the hereditary right to be called "his highness." Also, the Prince of Wales who later became King Edward VII visited his residence during his tour of India, further honoring him.

From Sind, Hassan 'Ali came to Bombay in 1845. Here, however, the long hostility of Muhammad Shah reached him. He was made a political prisoner in Calcutta when the Qajar ruler suggested to the British government that he was very close to Iran. Finally, in 1848, with the end of Muhammad Shah's reign, Hassan 'Ali returned to Bombay, where he established his main center (Darkhana), and deputations of his followers freely arrived from parts of the subcontinent as well as from remote places such as Central Asia, Iran, Syria, Yeman, and Africa. He devoted himself zealously to uplifting his community in India and elsewhere until his death in 1881. His final resting place is in Mazagon in Bombay. The site of his mausoleum, called Hasanabad, is frequented by many Isma'ili Muslims. Devout and pious, he refrained from

strife at all costs, even if migrating was the only option. His legacy of peace and of helping humanity has endeared him to many.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aga Khan II; Aga Khan III; Aga Khan IV; Fatima bint Muhammad; Hereditary Holiness; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad; Politics and Holy People

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Aga Khan II

(1830–1885 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Shah 'Ali Shah, Aga Khan II, was the forty-seventh hereditary imam of the Shi'a Imami Nizari Isma'ili Muslims. He succeeded his father as imam in 1881. Known for his piety, he was referred to as *pir* (holy elder). He was not only interested in spiritual elevation but also participated in the political process to further assist the Muslims of India and initiated many projects to promote the socioeconomic development of his community. For several years he was the president of the Muhammadan National Association. He also served as a member of the Bombay Council for Making Laws and Regulations.

In Bombay Shah 'Ali instituted the first of many Isma'ili schools with a modern curriculum for children. This was necessary at a time when Muslims lagged behind in “modern” education and hence could not be full participants in British-based opportunities. In addition to his many talents in education, public welfare, and spirituality, he was famed for his interest in the sport of hunting. In his personal life he faced much tragedy, however. After the death of his first wife, Marium Sultan, he remarried. His next wife, who belonged to a family that had come from Shiraz and resided in Bombay, also died. He then married Nawab 'Alia Shams al-mulk, a granddaughter of the Persian shah Fateh 'Ali Shah. The marriage ceremony was in Kirman in 1867. In the early 1880s, his two eldest sons from his first marriage died in quick succession. He was very saddened, and in 1885 he died in the city of Poona in India after serving as imam for only four years. Subsequently he was buried in the city of Najaf in Iraq. He was succeeded as imam by his son, Sultan Muhammad Shah.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aga Khan I; Aga Khan III; Aga Khan IV; 'Ali Shah; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Aga Khan III

(1877–1957 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Shah Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III, was the forty-eighth hereditary imam of the Shi'a Imami Nizari Isma'ili Muslims. He succeeded his father, Shah 'Ali Shah, in 1905 when he was not quite eight years old. As the imam for more than seventy years, Sultan Muhammad Shah directed the affairs of his community with dynamic and charismatic leadership. With vision and zeal, he managed to transform the very ethos of his followers spread over several countries. Within decades, they were changed from the sociophilosophical realm of rural semiliterate farmers to the sophisticated and educated world of industry and commerce. His grandson Aga Khan IV praised him for accomplishing more for the community than could otherwise have been done in many generations.

Aga Khan III received several honors and awards. In 1911, when Emperor George V visited India for his coronation durbar, Aga Khan III was made a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India (G.C.S.I.). For his positive contribution in World War I, in 1916 he received an eleven-gun salute from the British, a rare diplomatic honor. Subsequently he was accorded the status of a first-class ruling prince of the Bombay Presidency, though he did not possess a territorial principality.

The Aga Khan actively participated in the struggles of the Muslim community. In every way possible he sought to help Muslim nations struggling to gain freedom from colonial control. In 1906, he headed a Muslim delegation that requested the British viceroy to consider the Muslims as a nation within a nation rather than a minority so that they would be entitled to adequate representation in local and national representative councils. In 1907, the Aga Khan helped found the All-India Muslim League, over which he presided until 1912. The aim of this organization was to provide a political forum to the Muslims of India. To provide Muslims with proper education, he spearheaded the plan to make the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh into an academically prestigious university. Aligarh University was established in 1920 with the Aga Khan as first vice-chancellor. In 1928, he presided over the All-India Muslim Conference at

Delhi, formulating Muslim policy on future independence for India. With the guidance of the Aga Khan, the interests of the Muslims of India were articulated and a demand was made to the governing authorities that their rights be safeguarded within the context of a federal, self-governing India.

As the struggle for independence continued in the sub-continent, the Aga Khan persisted in ensuring that the British did not ignore Muslim interests. In 1930, he headed the delegation of the Muslims of India at the Round Table conference in London, which discussed the political future of India. The Aga Khan's political activities were not only for Muslims but also for issues of human welfare more generally. Thus, in 1932, he was the representative for India at the World Disarmament Conference. In 1937, he was elected president of the League of Nations. This great honor attests to the international stature of his reputation as a "citizen of the world." Indeed, he was among the founding members of the League of Nations, finding the organization deeply compatible with Islam's revelation of peace. In fact, he considered life per se as a divine gift to be cherished and felt that it is only with peace that the true potential of life may be experienced. He actively promoted world peace and strove consistently for the prosperity of the underprivileged. In his *Memoirs*, he stated, "Life is a great and noble calling, not a mean and groveling thing to be shuffled through as best we can, but a lofty and exalted destiny." For him, "The spiritual dimension of existence is the defining characteristic of humanity" (Aga Khan III 1954).

His view of the singular sacredness of life led Aga Khan III to work throughout his life for the development of charitable organizations in health, housing, education, and economic activities. He donated substantial personal funds toward charities and social welfare projects and conducted regular fund-raising. In addition, on three occasions the Isma'ili followers of the Aga Khan attempted to raise funds for the imam's welfare projects, thus saluting him for his extraordinary concern for those in need. These occasions were on his fiftieth, sixtieth, and seventieth anniversaries as imam. These events (spread over approximately two decades) have been referred to, respectively, as the Golden, Diamond, and Platinum Jubilees. On each occasion, his followers literally put him on the scale and donated the equivalent of his weight in gold, diamonds, or platinum. The proceeds went toward numerous social welfare projects, including schools and libraries, hospitals, housing societies, vocational centers, banking institutions, industrial and technological development, and scholarships for students. He urged his community to participate in the modern progressive world and encouraged the emancipation of women. He especially encouraged the participation of women in community matters. Because of his leadership, many women were provided with opportunities for secular education and socioeconomic welfare.

In 1905, as imam of the Nizari Isma'ilis, the Aga Khan had instituted a constitution. This reorganized the administration of the community and formulated a hierarchy of councils dealing with various matters such as health, sports, youth, women's issues, welfare, and so on. This constitution was revised in 1926 and then periodically amended to suit the changing times. As imam, he also issued verbal and written directives, called *farmans*, to guide his community. In addition to numerous treatises and letters to the editors of various Indian and European newspapers, the Aga Khan wrote two very important books that express his views and provide an insight to his times and his sociopolitical milieu. These include *India in Transition: A Study in Political Evolution* (1918) and *The Memoirs of the Aga Khan: World Enough and Time* (1954).

This champion of Islam died on July 11, 1957, in his villa near Geneva. He was subsequently buried in a mausoleum in Aswan overlooking the Nile River. He was survived by two sons, Prince Aly Khan and Prince Sadruddin, and two grandsons, Prince Shah Karim al-Husaini and Prince Amyn Muhammad. In his will, he designated his grandson Shah Karim al-Husaini as the forty-ninth imam, directly descended from the prophet Muhammad.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aga Khan I; Aga Khan II; Aga Khan IV; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad; Rulers as Holy People

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Aga Khan IV

(1936 C.E.–)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Shah Karim al-Husaini, Aga Khan IV, is the forty-ninth hereditary imam of the Sh'ia Imami Nizari Isma'ili Muslims. He became imam on July 11, 1957, after his grandfather, Sultan Muhammad Shah, passed away. During World War II, the future Aga Khan and his younger brother spent four years in Kenya, after which he attended Le Rosey School near Geneva and then entered Harvard University. He graduated from Harvard in 1959.

Over the years the Aga Khan has become a dominant philanthropist. He instituted several organizations to consolidate his humanitarian and cultural activities. Subsequently

he reorganized his philanthropic work through the establishment of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which has divisions working on education, economic development, health, and culture, as well as two universities.

Globally, the Aga Khan has made a tremendous global impact in the field of health, especially in the underdeveloped countries of Asia and Africa. His most important contribution is the Aga Khan Hospital and Medical College together with a nursing school in Pakistan. The medical services and educational programs offered here, along with the research conducted into diseases specific to that part of the world, have made this foundation worthy of emulation. Another avant-garde institution established by the Aga Khan is the University of Central Asia with its focus on the mountain people and their society and culture. This university is to have three campuses in the mountain regions of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. Additionally, the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London serves to further the academic study of Islam.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture was established in 1978 to create an awareness of the fine architectural tradition of Muslim civilization. The award serves as a cultural bridge between Islamic lands and the rest of the world. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture also has served to foster various aspects of Muslim culture, including musical instruction, preservation of the ancient Delhi Gardens at the tomb of the second Mughal emperor, Humayun (r. 1508–1556), and construction of a park and garden at al-Azhar University in Cairo. To rebuild war-torn Kabul, the Aga Khan pledged US\$75 million, the greatest contribution of any nongovernment organization. His organization also facilitated the building of the Tajik-Afghan bridge. Other important philanthropies of the Aga Khan include the Industrial Promotion Services, which has set up a series of industries in various developing countries, the Tourist Promotion Services, and FOCUS, which provides disaster relief. The Aga Khan has received many prestigious international honors and has met with leaders worldwide who have honored him for his humanitarian work.

The Aga Khan is particularly mindful of the traditional humanistic values of Islam that ought not to be eroded in the rush for material development. He believes there is danger in a “frontier capitalism” whereby the gains and profits are not “recycled” into society. Above all, he has advocated a balance between Western materialism and the Eastern “spiritual, human and cultural traditions,” encouraging both secular and religious elites to preserve the Muslim cultural heritage while leading their lands progressively. Indeed, the nature of Muslim societies is a theme of constant reflection in his speeches. The Aga Khan’s attitude was perhaps best summed up in a March 1976 speech in which he pointed to the example of the prophet Muhammad’s “integrity, loyalty, honesty,

generosity both of means and of time, his solicitude for the poor, the weak, and the sick, his steadfastness in friendship, his humility in success, his magnanimity in victory, his simplicity, his wisdom in conceiving new solutions for problems that could not be solved by traditional methods, without affecting the fundamental concepts of Islam.” He added, “Surely all these are foundations which, correctly understood and sincerely interpreted, must enable us to conceive what should be a truly modern and dynamic Islamic Society in the years ahead.”

The Aga Khan focuses, above all, on human contact with the transcendent. As he has stated, “The day we no longer know how, nor have the time nor the faith, to bow in prayer to Allah because the human soul that he has told us is eternal, is no longer of sufficient importance to us to be worthy of an hour of our daily working, profit-seeking time, will be a sunless day of despair.”

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aga Khan I; Aga Khan II; Aga Khan III; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Imams; Islam and Holy People

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Agatha

(d. c. 250–253 C.E.)

Christian martyr

According to her legend, the young virgin Agatha suffered mutilation and eventually a martyr’s death in about 250 for her Christian faith at Catania on the island of Sicily. Agatha was one of the most popular of the medieval women saints believed to have been martyred during the persecution of the early Christian church. Evidence of her veneration appears in the late fifth century, and she is named or her story retold in at least forty manuscripts, religious calendars, or martyrologies dating before 1100. Although both Palermo and Catania claim to be her birthplace, no reliable record survives to authenticate her historical existence.

Medieval European Christians believed that during Agatha’s torture both of her breasts were cut off, an act often depicted in her iconography. Such sexually charged physical mutilation was often part of the suffering associated with

young female virgin martyrs. In Agatha's case, the punishment was administered on the orders of the polytheist Roman consul Quintianus, who had attempted to seduce her. Like other Christian model maidens impervious to pain, Agatha employed articulate arguments in the defense of her faith and the virginity she believed essential to it. The enduring popularity of Agatha's story is part of a virgin martyr genre especially attractive to women. Her feast day is celebrated on February 5.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Sexuality and Holy People

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Agha Khan

See **Aga Khan I**; **Aga Khan II**; **Aga Khan III**; **Aga Khan IV**

Agnes

(d. c. 300 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Agnes, a Christian virgin martyr, is believed to have died in Rome in the late third or early fourth century. A basilica was built on the Via Nomentana around 350 over what was thought to be her remains. This structure and her early cult veneration suggest that the legend of St. Agnes may have been based on the life of a young girl of that name. However, no documentation survives to corroborate the tradition.

Various versions of Agnes's story appear in numerous *vitas*, inscriptions, and religious calendars dating from the early fourth century. Like other young virgin martyr legends, hers includes a princely, non-Christian persecutor who desires her, her rejection of him, an account of humiliation at the hands of her captors, sexual temptation, and her own eloquent arguments in defense of her virginity as a matter of faith. Most accounts tell of Agnes's incarceration in a Roman brothel and her eventual execution.

Agnes was one of the young virgin heroines whose stories appealed to medieval Christians as exemplars of sacrifice and the triumph over temptation. St. Agnes was sometimes invoked as part of the liturgy when young nuns took their vows of chastity. In her iconography, Agnes appears with a lamb, likely an association with her name—in Latin *agnus* means “lamb.” Her feast day is celebrated on January 21.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Sexuality and Holy People

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Agnes of Montepulciano

(c. 1268–1317 C.E.)

Christian nun, mystic

Agnes of Montepulciano, an Italian nun famous for her visions and miracles, founded a convent and church for Dominican nuns in Montepulciano. Agnes was born around 1268 to the noble Segni family in Gracciano Vecchio (near Montepulciano) in Tuscany, Italy. From an early age, she wished to devote herself to the religious life, and when she was nine she was sent by her parents to a Franciscan convent of the “Sisters of the Sackcloth,” so named for their humble garments. Within several years, Agnes and her teacher, Sister Margarita, moved to a newly founded house in Proceno, where Agnes's pious reputation attracted many girls and women to the new foundation. At the age of fifteen, she was made abbess, an act that required special papal approval because of her young age.

According to her *vita*, while still in Proceno Agnes received a vision of the Virgin Mary, who told her that she was to found a church in Montepulciano. In 1306, Agnes returned to Montepulciano in order to join a newly founded convent and church, which she placed under the Order of Preachers (Dominicans). She governed the convent until her death on April 20, 1317. She was canonized in 1726.

The events of Agnes's life come to us from the *vita* written by Raymond of Capua (1330–1399), the Dominican confessor (and later biographer) of St. Catherine of Siena. Raymond of Capua had been the chaplain of the Dominican monastery in Montepulciano in the 1360s, and both he and Catherine were intensely devoted to Agnes. In order to write her *vita*, he interviewed older nuns who had known Agnes personally.

According to Raymond of Capua's account, Agnes knew from a very early age that she wanted to dedicate herself to a celibate religious life. Having joined the convent, her personal devotions and ascetic practices included long vigils of prayer, during which she was often seen levitating above the ground. She slept on the ground with a rock for a pillow and fasted almost continuously on bread and water. Afflicted with a serious illness at the age of thirty, she had to relent somewhat on her strict dietary regime. She remained in ill health, however, until her death.

Throughout her life she experienced a number of heavenly visions. The Virgin Mary appeared to her several times, once even offering Agnes the opportunity to hold the infant Christ; when Agnes did not want to hand Christ back to his mother, a struggle ensued. Agnes's intercessory powers also brought about a number of miracles recorded in her vita. These miracles include being showered with manna like falling snow, changing water into wine, multiplying loaves of bread, curing illnesses, and expelling demons from local households. When she died, infants previously unable to utter words reportedly spoke of the pious woman and her death. Over fifty years later, when Catherine of Siena came to visit the convent at Montepulciano and kiss the relics of Agnes, Catherine experienced the miracle of Agnes's foot lifting to meet her lips.

—Christine F. Cooper

See also: Catherine of Siena; Christianity and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People

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Agnivesh

(1939 C.E.–)

Hindu religious leader, renunciant

Agnivesh, a Hindu religious leader and Indian social activist, was born Vepa Shyam Rao on September 21, 1939, in Shakti, a princely state in what is now known as Madhya Pradesh in central India. He received advanced degrees in business and law but, in 1968, decided to devote himself fully to the Arya Samaj, a Hindu reformist movement founded in the nineteenth century by Dayanand Saraswati. In 1970, Agnivesh took the vow of *samnyas*, which entailed a complete renunciation of all his worldly possessions. As a *samnyasi*, Agnivesh is addressed as "Swami-ji" (lord) and wears the saffron-colored robe and turban associated with this fourth and final stage of Hindu life.

Swami Agnivesh often identifies three chief influences upon his life and thought: Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx, and the Vedic understanding of *dharma* (duty). With Gandhi, Agnivesh shares a passionate concern for rearticulating the Hindu tradition to address India's poor. Agnivesh has denounced practices such as untouchability and widow burning as contrary to the Hindu tradition. He is also the founder of the Bandua Mukti Morcha (The Bonded Labor Liberation Front), which seeks to abolish the widespread practice of bonded labor. Swami Agnivesh has argued for the abolition

of child labor in India and presently serves as chairperson of the United Nations Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. With Karl Marx, Agnivesh shares a concern for economic justice and redistribution of wealth. Agnivesh advocates a "Vedic socialism" that would nationalize production and provide free education and medical care to India's population. To pursue this economic and political vision, he has established a political party, the Arya Sabha, and has served as a legislative representative and minister of education in the north Indian state of Haryana. In his identification of dharma as the third crucial influence on his life, Agnivesh argues that opportunity to do one's duty is the greatest of all rewards. For him, this duty demands the religious and social reform of Hinduism and Indian society.

—Mathew N. Schmalz

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, Shaykh

(1753–1826 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim mystic, philosopher

Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i was a prominent religious leader in the Shi'i world who sought to combine all of the streams of Islamic mysticism and philosophy into a single teaching. After his death, his followers formed a separate school in Shi'i Islam that today has perhaps 300,000 to 400,000 adherents, mainly in Iran, southern Iraq, Kuwait, and the al-Ahsa region of Saudi Arabia.

Shaykh Ahmad ibn Zayn al-Din al-Ahsa'i was born in Rajab 1166/May 1753 in the village of Mutayrafi in the al-Ahsa region (now in Saudi Arabia) into a Shi'i family. He received a full religious education at the shrine cities of Najaf and Karbala in Iraq and was a distinguished scholar, receiving certificates of completion of his studies from leading Shi'i scholars of the time. From 1797 to 1806, he lived in various locations in southern Iraq. Then, in 1806, he traveled to Iran, where he was to remain for most of the rest of his life.

After a pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam Rida in Mashhad in northeastern Iran, he was invited to settle in Yazd. In 1814, he moved to Kirmanshah in eastern Iran at the invitation of the crown prince, Muhammad 'Ali Mirza. He remained there until the death of this prince in 1821, when he was invited to move to Qazvin by Mulla 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, a prominent religious scholar. It was during his residence in this city that he was denounced by Mulla Muhammad Taqi

Baraghani as a heretic in about 1824. He left Qazvin and, after another pilgrimage to Mashhad, settled in Karbala. After a short time there, he decided to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, but he died a few stages away from Medina in 1826 and is buried in the al-Baqi' cemetery there.

Shaykh Ahmad was a man of prodigious knowledge and wrote some 160 works on a wide variety of subjects, mostly in the area of mystical philosophy. He himself claimed, however, that the authority for his teaching came from the Shi'i imams whom he met in dreams and visions. His teaching is a synthesis of the various strands of the Islamic sciences, especially mysticism and philosophy, and attempts to reconcile rational and intuitive knowledge. He has been denounced by some clerics because he taught that some of the concepts in the Islamic tradition should be understood as spiritual or metaphorical truths rather than taken literally. This same teaching, however, made him important to the later Babi and Baha'i religions.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Aiakos and Aias

Ancient Greek heroes

Aiakos (Latin: Aeacus) was a mythical hero of ancient Greece whose cult, centered on his tomb, exerted a continuing impact on his community. He was traditionally associated with Aigina, an island lying in the Saronic Gulf of the Aegean Sea not far from Athens, and was considered the protector of the island's population. He was believed to be the mortal son of the god Zeus and the nymph Aigina, for whom the island was named.

The Aiakos cult was an ongoing force in Aigina's efforts to maintain its independence against encroachments by other Greek city-states, particularly Athens. In a late sixth-century B.C.E. military engagement, the sons of Aiakos were invoked as allies by Thebes in a war against Athens. The Athenians then tried to neutralize the influence of Aiakos by dedicating a shrine to him in Athens, thus effectively co-opting the power of his cult (Herodotos 5.81–88). On the eve of the Battle of Salamis, the Athenians enlisted the aid of Aiakos and his grandson Aias to fight on their side against the Persians (Herodotos 8.64). These incidents demonstrate how belief in the presence of a Greek hero could provide a valuable and effective psychological edge to a city-state's identity.

Aiakos, however, was unusual among Greek heroes in that, in addition to his regional following among the people of Aigina, he was much revered by Greeks in general for his personal piousness and high ethical standards. Several legends celebrated these qualities. According to one account, when Greece was threatened by a prolonged drought, the leaders of several cities petitioned Aiakos for help because his piety and his connection with Zeus made him a logical choice for leadership. The story maintains that Aiakos's prayers to Zeus were effective; in any case, a temple dedicated by all Greeks was built for him (Isocrates, *Evagoras* 14–15). His reputation for fairness apparently caused even the Olympian gods to turn to him for judgment (Pindar, *Isthmian* 8.50).

After his death, it was said, Aiakos was transported to the underworld, where he served as one of the judges of the dead along with the legendary Minos and Rhadamanthys, an honor he was later to share with Pythagoras, Plato, and Plotinus. Plato reported that Aiakos was responsible for judging the souls of all those from Europe (Plato, *Gorgias* 523e). His shrine on Aigina, supposedly the site where his prayers to Zeus ended the drought, was venerated as one of the major religious centers on the island and was a center of pilgrimage long after Aigina had ceased to be an independent city-state (Pausanias 2.29.6).

Aiakos's son Telamon was the father of Aias (Latin: Ajax), who belonged to the generation of the Trojan War. He was one of the greatest of the Greek warriors who fought at Troy, second only to his cousin Achilles. Like his grandfather, Aias was revered as a hero by the people of Aigina. He was also the object of cults in Salamis, Athens, and the Troad.

—*Lynn E. Roller*

See also: Aias Son of Oileus; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Intermediaries; Plato; Plotinus; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism

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Aias Son of Oileus

Ancient Greek hero

Aias (Latin: Ajax) son of Oileus was a Greek hero from the district of Locris. He bore the same name as the son of Telamon and descendant of Aiakos, and, like him, was one of the Greek warriors who, according to Greek legend, fought at Troy. He was always regarded as inferior in warfare to his namesake and therefore was called Aias the Lesser. Like other Greek heroes, however, he was the object of a cult during the historical period, and his spirit was invoked to protect his region and fight in its defense.

An unusual ritual was assigned to his influence. According to the *Iliupersis* (Destruction of Troy) by Arctinus, Aias son of Oileus was said to be responsible for the rape of Cassandra, daughter of the Trojan king Priam, and supposedly had committed the act after dragging her away from the altar of Athena where she had taken sanctuary after the capture of Troy. For this sacrilege he was drowned on the voyage home. One of the Olympian gods, either Athena or Apollo, demanded further recompense for his crime and sent a plague to Locris. When the Locrians inquired how they could end the plague, they were told to send two maidens every year to Ilion to serve in the temple of Athena there. The girls supposedly had to avoid hostile capture while making their way to the temple. This tradition, attributed to the prehistory of Greece's mythical past, was still being carried out in the third century B.C.E., when the Locrians finally refused to send any more young women to Ilion. At this point, further calamities fell upon the Locrians, and they were ordered by an oracle to resume sending the human tribute.

This practice, which is not attested before the third century B.C.E., demonstrates the continuing influence that Greek heroes had on the communities that claimed their protection. In this case, however, unlike other examples of the influence of Greek hero cults, the hero's power stemmed not from his bravery, piety, or other exceptional qualities but from his violent actions that transgressed social norms. Scholars are divided on the meaning of the episode. To some, it shows how Greek hero cult beliefs, in this case about pollution extending from the dead for an unatoned crime, could have an ongoing impact on a community's religious practices. Others have seen it as an aetiological myth because it explains the origins of a ritual, that is, the one in which young women were dedicated as priestesses at a local religious shrine, the sanctuary of Athena Ilios in Locris. Connecting this ritual with a figure of Greek epic brought a degree of Pan-Hellenic standing to the local community.

—Lynn E. Roller

See also: Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Intermediaries

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Aidan

(d. 651 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, missionary

Aidan was a monk of Iona and founder of the monastery of Lindisfarne, an island off the coast of England, in the sev-

enth century. Nothing about his early life is known for certain apart from the fact that he was from Iona, the famous monastery established by Colum Cille on the coast of Scotland in 565. Bede, the principal source for Aidan, praised his devotion and humility, a depiction of the saint that satirized the more lax clergy in Bede's day. Bede distanced himself from Aidan's retention of the Irish calculation for the date of Easter, however, a system that was considered unorthodox, and with which Bede had been associated.

Aidan came to the kingdom of Bernicia in northern England and the court of King Oswald as the replacement for a monk who held the English in contempt, and whom the English found less than friendly. Oswald's choice of Iona as source for a bishop can be explained in large part by the king's exile among the Irish during the reign of King Edwin. Oswald was converted to Christianity by the Irish and naturally looked to them, rather than to the "Romans" in the south. Oswald gave Aidan the island of Lindisfarne just off the coast from his capital in northern Northumbria, Bamburgh. Though a bishop, Aidan seems to have followed the Irish missionary practice, considering himself more a bishop of the Northumbrians than of any one place. Most of Aidan's missionary efforts seem to have been in Bernicia, that is, northern Northumbria. Great support for these missions, indeed their sanction, came from the king. Oswald even initially acted as interpreter for Aidan. After Oswald's death, Aidan found a good patron in King Oswin.

There are several stories of Aidan's charity and humility while at the king's table. According to Bede, King Oswin once gave the saint a wonderful horse, as he knew that Aidan most often walked wherever he went. Aidan met a beggar not long afterward and gave the horse to him. Upon hearing the news, the king asked Aidan why he had given away such a magnificent horse when there were any number of lesser mounts one might give to the poor. Aidan replied by asking King Oswin whether he cared more about the horse than he cared about a child of God. Later, the king prostrated himself before Aidan and promised never to ask such a question again. In this tale, Bede was able to suggest not only the wisdom of the saint, but also the humility of a good king.

Aidan died in 651 and was buried at Lindisfarne. He is remembered today as one of the most important Irish monks in the conversion of the English.

—James B. Tschenn Emmons

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Colum Cille; Mission

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Ajatashatru (Ajatasattu)

(c. 5th–4th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist ruler

King of Magadha, an ancient kingdom of northeastern India, and a contemporary of the Buddha in the fifth or fourth century B.C.E., Ajatashatru committed many murders (including that of his father), expressed remorse, and attained sainthood. According to some Buddhist texts, he received his name because he was his father's enemy even before he was born. Accounts say that his father, Bimbisara, loved him so much that he abdicated in his favor; Ajatashatru responded by imprisoning and then killing him. Most versions of the story refer to various other murders that he committed. The Theravada tradition portrays him as a cruel and selfish man who helped the Buddha's evil cousin Devadatta in his futile attempts to murder the Buddha.

As the years passed, Ajatashatru developed remorse for his crime and confessed his sins to the Buddha. The Buddha remarked that but for his father's murder, the eye for the truth would have arisen in Ajatashatru. Later, saddened by news of the death of the Buddha, Ajatashatru obtained a one-eighth share in the Buddha's relics and built a *stupa*, or shrine, over them in Rajagriha in India. He also extended support to the First Buddhist Council and proved to be a good host to the participants.

According to the Vinaya of the Mahasanghikas, Ajatashatru was by far the most preeminent among the lay followers of the Buddha. According to Taranatha, he was reborn in hell for a short period and then reborn among the gods, where, after having heard the teachings of Shanavasika, he attained the first fruit of emancipation (*shrotapanna*). However, according to Theravada tradition, after spending 60,000 years in one of the hells, he will attain deliverance as a Pratyekabuddha, a "Solitary Buddha," under the name of Viditavishesha (or Vijitavi). Some northern sources mentioned that after receiving help from the great Mahayana bodhisattva Manjushri, Ajatashatru purified his heavy negative karma and achieved the path of seeing.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gautama; Laity; Repentance and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Akhenaten

(r. 1372–1355 B.C.E.)

Egyptian ruler, religion founder

Akhenaten was a pharaoh of New Kingdom Egypt (eighteenth dynasty, ruling from 1372 to 1355 B.C.E.) who broke with Egyptian traditions by focusing the state cult on the worship of the sun disc Aten to the exclusion of other Egyptian gods. He has often been labeled the world's first monotheist. Although this description is likely not an accurate characterization of the belief system he imposed, his emphasis on the worship of Aten above other gods is unusual in Egyptian traditions.

Early in his reign, Akhenaten changed his name from Amenhotep as a theological statement of his association with Aten. He also moved the Egyptian capital to Akhetaten (modern Amarna), breaking from the prominent cult of Amun and its temple at Thebes. The artistry and iconography of this period also shows a marked difference from the canon that prevailed during other periods of Egyptian history. Artworks often interpreted as depicting a physical illness of Akhenaten's may be simply an increased emphasis on natural curves and lifelike poses. The image of the sun disc is particularly important, with arms radiating out to king and family and hands holding ankhs, which were symbols of life. The unfinished bust (now in the Berlin Museum) of Akhenaten's wife Nefertiti is perhaps the most famous piece of Amarna art.

The theology of Atenism was expressed in a composition that modern scholars call "The Hymn to the Aten." The object of veneration in this hymn is the physical disc of the sun. Similarities between this hymn and Psalm 104 have long been recognized, but how this composition came to be included in the Hebrew Bible is unclear.

Akhenaten's actual role in the worship of the Aten cult is also unclear. It is believed that nonroyal worship of the Aten was mediated through Akhenaten himself—the private individual worshipped the Aten indirectly by worshipping the king. This theory is supported by plaques (found in private residences at Amarna) depicting the royal family and Aten.

—Kevin McGeough

See also: Pharaohs of Egypt; Rulers as Holy People

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Akiba ben Joseph

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Jewish sage

The leading rabbinic sage of the early second century, Akiba ben Joseph was born in Palestine and was a shepherd as a young man. According to legend, although illiterate until the age of forty, he was an opponent of the rabbis' claims to leadership. The daughter of his rich employer was attracted by his humility and piety but would not marry him unless he became educated. He went away for twenty-four years and returned a famous master of Torah. When his zealous disciples tried to prevent a woman they did not recognize (the woman who had waited for him all these years) from approaching him, he rebuked them and said that everything he had achieved was due to her.

Akiba is remembered as an important shaper of the early rabbinic tradition. He carried out the first systematic compilation of rabbinic teachings and developed exegetical techniques to extract meaning from every letter of the Torah. His rival, Rabbi Ishmael, taught that "the Torah speaks in human language," but Akiba insisted that in scripture even grammatical particles are laden with significance. One narrative relates that Moses himself was greatly troubled at discovering that he could not follow Akiba's interpretations; his morale improved, however, when he heard Akiba say that everything he taught was tradition going back to Moses at Sinai. In keeping with his exegetical boldness, Akiba also engaged in semisecret mystical speculation. It was said that of the "four who entered the [mystical] Garden," only Rabbi Akiba "entered in peace and emerged in peace," whole in faith and whole in mind (Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 14b).

In various accounts, Akiba appears at the center of his colleagues' struggles for influence and power; often he seems to play the role of peacemaker or intermediary among opponents. These stories testify to both his colleagues' great respect for his integrity and learning and his own lack of ambition or envy. Akiba's successors revered him so deeply, however, that many stories grew up around him. These use the figure of Akiba to depict the behavior of an ideal sage. There is rarely any basis for determining which accounts portray real events and which do not: The stories about Akiba and his wife fit into this category.

One narrative depicts Akiba as a supporter of the failed rebellion of Simon b. Kochba in 132–135 against Rome, but modern scholarship remains divided as to the accuracy of this report. It seems more certain, however, that after the rebellion failed, Akiba was among those arrested for teaching Torah in public. He was held in prison and finally publicly tortured and killed. Akiba died joyfully, able at last to show his love for God "with all his heart." Thus,

even in martyrdom he served as a model for those who came after.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Ishma'el; Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Akindayomi, Josiah

(1909–1980 C.E.)

Pentecostal Christian sect founder

Founder of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Josiah Akindayomi was one of the leaders of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. Born in 1909 in Ondo town, southwestern Nigeria, Akindayomi received no formal education but was trained as a blacksmith through the traditional Yoruba apprenticeship system. He was baptized into the Anglican Church in 1927. In 1931, he joined the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Church, a brand of the popular Aladura (prayer-marked) movement, and became interested in prayer, fasting, and visions. By 1947, he had moved to Lagos, the capital of colonial Nigeria, where he carved a niche for himself as a man of prayer and a preacher of holiness. He became known as a prophet of God and in 1949 founded the Glory of God Fellowship. He eventually broke away from the C&S, and in 1952 he transformed his fellowship into the RCCG.

The healing miracles of Akindayomi made his fame spread throughout Lagos and beyond. The story is often told of a vision that he had in which the name of the church he was to form was communicated to him in English by God even though he was an illiterate who could barely read or write. According to this tradition, he was supernaturally enabled to write down the words on a piece of paper.

Akindayomi made many prophecies about his church that have been fulfilled. He predicted that the RCCG would spread to all the nations of the world and that mighty miracles and wonders would characterize its growth. He also said his church would be at the forefront of a Pentecostal explosion on the African continent. He chose a successor, E. E. Adeboye, who has actualized most of these predictions since Akindayomi's death in 1980, and this has been applauded as another supernatural feat.

The RCCG now has parishes in more than fifty nations. Akindayomi laid a solid foundation for the church. Indeed, the unprecedented expansion of the church has been attributed to

a “divine covenant” due to Akindayomi’s close relationship with God.

—O. A. Adeboye

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Prophets; Reform and Reaction

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Akkamahadevi

See Mahadeviyakka

Akshobhya Buddha

Buddhist primal buddha

Akshobhya (Tib.: mi-’khrugs-pa) is the buddha who resides and preaches in the eastern Pure Land of Abhirati, according to the early Mahayana texts. Akshobhya means “nonmovement” or “no anger” in Sanskrit. In various Mahayana texts, Akshobhya Buddha appears in conjunction with Amitabha Buddha of the west. In Abhirati, a mythical paradise, men and women live without deprivation of spiritual or material needs. According to the *Akshobhyavyuha*, one of the earliest Mahayana Buddhist texts, Akshobhya is one of the oldest of the buddhas.

As a *bodhisattva* (enlightened being), before his attainment of buddhahood Akshobhya took a long list of vows in front of his master, Da-mu, or “Great Eyes.” These included promises not to bring forth anger or ill will toward people, never to shrink from giving away parts of his body, and to go from buddha field to buddha field in one life after another, always making offering to the buddhas there. During many lives, Akshobhya carried out his vows and completed his promises. When he attained buddhahood, the earth shook six times as he touched it with the fingers of his right hand. Akshobhya belongs to one of the present buddha families and is believed to now exist and teach Buddhism in Abhirati. Auspicious signs, such as land shaking and the sound of a great roar, are supposed to occur when he dies. In the manner of a prophecy, the *Akshobhyavyuha* says that when Akshobhya dies, “he will send out magically produced versions of himself which will appear throughout the worlds, preaching the Dharma and causing sentient beings to attain Arhatship” (Nattier 2000, 85).

Although the land of Akshobhya Buddha apparently resembles Amitabha’s Pure Land, his followers, unlike those of Amitabha, were not encouraged to visualize the buddha himself. Nor were they to chant his names like a mantra. In order to be reborn in the Akshobhya’s land, one has to practice the rigorous bodhisattva path as Akshobhya did, “spending countless eons in the cycle of rebirth” and engaging in self-sacrifice and making offerings to the buddhas (Nattier 2000, 97).

In Vajrayana Buddhism, Akshobhya became one of the five buddhas placed in the vajra realm of the East. His statue is painted gold and characterized by his right fingers touching the earth. Akshobhya often is depicted with a halo around his head and one encircling his body, and sometimes he is riding an elephant. For the memorial rites of the deceased, he is the seventh among the thirteen buddhas allocated to the different phases of the rites.

—Mariko Namba Walter

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People

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Alacoque, Margaret Mary

(1647–1690 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, visionary, founder

A native of Lhautecour, France, from an early age Margaret Mary Alacoque showed a strong devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, which ultimately led her to enter the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial in 1671. There, in response to a series of visions of Christ, she was inspired to begin a devotion to the Sacred Heart and to establish the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Margaret Mary was born in 1647 to wealth and social status as the daughter of a royal notary. Her childhood was full of illness, but she directed her suffering to heaven and became devoted to contemplative prayer. In addition, as penance for her sins, Margaret engaged in various types of corporal mortification, such as tying cords around her body so tightly that they restricted her breathing and sleeping on sharp sticks. As a child and adolescent, Margaret received visions of Christ during his scourging and crucifixion, and she decided to devote her life to Christ. She took her final vows on November 6, 1672, and continued to self-impose penances to such an extent that she was reprimanded for disobedience of her superior by St. Francis de Sales, the order’s founder.

Between 1673 and 1675, Margaret Mary received three revelations from Christ directing her to honor the Sacred Heart. The first revelation told her to encourage and spread a devotion to the Sacred Heart; the second inspired her to establish an hour of prayer on the eve of the first Friday of every month and to receive Holy Communion on every first Friday; and the third requested a special feast day of the Sacred Heart on the Friday following the octave of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Until her death in 1690, Margaret Mary worked to implement the requests she received in her visions, often in the face of opposition.

Margaret Mary was buried under the altar in the chapel in Paray; in 1830, her tomb was canonically opened, at which time two instantaneous cures took place. She was beatified by Pius IX on September 18, 1864, and canonized by Benedict XV on May 13, 1920. Her feast day is October 17.

—Michelle Ruggaber Dougherty

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Devotion

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Alban

(d. 3rd cent. C.E.)

Christian protomartyr of Britain and the English Church

Tradition says that Alban was a non-Christian soldier in the Roman army assigned to Verulamium (now the city of St. Albans in Hertfordshire in England). The fifth-century *Life of St. Germanus of Auxerre* and Gildas, writing in the sixth century, provide the core texts describing Alban's martyrdom, which they place during the persecution of Diocletian (302–305). Modern historians doubt this late date, however, and suggest that he was martyred during the persecution of Decius (249–251).

Alban supposedly gave shelter to a fleeing Christian priest and was converted by him. For this, he was then arrested and beheaded. Bede, writing in the eighth century, provides an amplified account of the martyrdom complete with supernatural signs from heaven. Holmhurst Hill is considered the traditional scene of the martyrdom, and the great abbey of St. Alban was later built on the site by King Offa in the seventh century. During the late Anglo-Saxon period, Alban's relics are said to have been translated to the abbey at Ely due to various Danish incursions. St. Canute's in Odense claims to have relics of St. Alban as well, which Canute supposedly stole during his raid on the city of York in

1015. What remained of Alban's relics were destroyed or scattered during the English dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century. Alban's feast day is June 22.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great)

(c. 1200–1280 C.E.)

Christian friar, bishop, philosopher, theologian, scientist, doctor of the church

Albertus Magnus is referred to as "the Great" or "Universal Doctor" because of his comprehensive knowledge in all the fields of his day. Proficient in theology and philosophy, he also produced works in botany, physics, logic, astronomy, politics, and other disciplines. In fact, he left no aspect of medieval knowledge unexamined. His scientific erudition is legendary, and he is one of the great figures in the history of medieval thought. He is perhaps best known today for being the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, and he is said to have foretold the greatness of his student. His feast day is celebrated on November 15.

Albert was born around 1200 to a wealthy German family. Against their wishes, he entered the Dominican order in 1223 upon hearing the preaching of Blessed Jordan of Saxony, the second master general of the Order of Preachers. Albert then studied theology in Paris, and there he encountered the newly translated texts of Aristotle as well as the Aristotelian commentaries by the Islamic philosopher Averroës. The rediscovery of these Aristotelian texts in the thirteenth century presented a formidable challenge to the philosophical, theological, and scientific doctrines at the university, for Augustinian and Platonic doctrines had formed the basis of study for many centuries. Albert was one of the first to comment on these new texts and a key figure in incorporating Aristotelian doctrines within a Christian theological and philosophical perspective.

In 1248, Albert moved to Cologne and established the first Dominican house of studies in Germany. He joined Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure in Rome in defending the cause of the mendicant orders against the opposition of William of St. Amour in 1256. He was appointed bishop of Regensburg in 1260 but soon resigned to return to lecturing. He participated in the council of Lyons in 1274, and as

a venerable elderly scholar, he traveled to Paris in 1277 to defend against condemnations the memory and doctrine of his student Thomas Aquinas, who had died in 1274.

By the time of his death in 1280, Albert was widely known for his learning and the wide scope of his works. In 1622, he was beatified by Pope Gregory XV, and he was named a saint and doctor of the universal church by Pius XI in 1931.

—*M. V. Dougherty*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Thomas Aquinas

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Alexander Nevskii

(1220–1263 C.E.)

Russian prince

Alexander, son of Prince Jaroslav of Russia, is most famous for his victory over the Swedes in 1240 on the Neva River, for which he got his nickname “Nevskii.” Alexander Nevskii was canonized as a saint largely in recognition of his heroic role as the defender and liberator of Russian territories from the northern invaders. He was so beloved that in 1724 Peter the Great ordered the translation of his relics from Vladimir to the newly built capital, St. Petersburg.

Born in 1220, Alexander grew up in Novgorod, a city known for its strong *veche*, a citizen council that held regular meetings and had the power to invite and expel princes. He ruled in Novgorod with his older brother Feodor beginning in 1228; in 1236, after his brother’s death and his father’s departure to rule Kiev, Alexander became the sole ruler in Novgorod.

In 1240, the Swedish army marched through Russian territories as part of a papal crusade to the east and reached the delta of the Neva River. With a small retinue, on July 15 Prince Alexander defeated them in a famous battle. This glorious victory did not prevent the Novgorodians from expelling him from the city when he tried to rule single-handedly. However, in 1241, a new Swedish force in alliance with the Teutonic Knights and the Lithuanians threatened Novgorod again. In the same year, the Germans took Pskov and advanced toward Novgorod. When German soldiers started to rob the Novgorodian merchants, the *veche* asked for Alexander’s return. Alexander immediately took Koporie, the suburb of Novgorod, back from the Germans. In 1242, he freed Pskov and

pushed forward to Livonia. On April 5 of that year, Alexander Nevskii fought his second most famous battle, which took place on the ice of Chudskoe Lake. This resulted in the complete defeat of the Teutonic Order and its allies. The Germans asked for a peace treaty and promised to restore all the conquered territories and the captured prisoners to Novgorod.

Alexander’s rule also falls into the period of the Mongolian (Tatar) invasion of Russia. Even though Novgorod was not raided initially and remained an independent territory, it had to pay tribute to the Golden Horde, and the prince was expected to honor the khan of the Golden Horde with visits and receive a *jarlik* (a certificate that allowed him to rule) from the khan. Alexander Nevskii, who showed himself a strong military leader in the wars with the northern neighbors, adopted a conciliatory policy toward the Mongols, whom he had no hope of defeating. After his father Jaroslav died in 1246, Alexander visited the Golden Horde in hope of promoting his political career. He later made two other visits.

Alexander fulfilled the difficult diplomatic function of mediating between the Mongol rulers and the Russian population. During the uprisings of the citizens of Vladimir, Rostov, Suzdal, Periaslavl, and Iaroslavl against the Tatars in 1262, Alexander traveled to the Golden Horde for a fourth time in order to prevent another bloody raid. His peacemaking mission was a complete success. Alexander not only prevented the raid but also negotiated relief from military duty for the Russians. This was his final achievement: On the way back to Russia in 1263, he died from an illness. The metropolitan of Vladimir informed the citizens of the death of their beloved prince in the following words: “Dear children, may you know that the Sun of the Russian land has set” (Michell and Forbes 1970).

—*Margarita D. Yanson*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Rulers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Alexander the Great

(356–323 B.C.E.)

Macedonian king, god

Alexandros III of Macedon, later called Alexander the Great, is best known for his conquest of the Persian Empire. He



Icon of Alexander Nevskii. Ipatevskii Monastery, Kostroma, Russia. (Library of Congress)

came to believe himself to be a son of Ammon-Zeus, thus setting a precedent for similar divine claims made by Hellenistic rulers of the eastern Mediterranean successor kingdoms, which in turn created the Roman imperial cult itself. It is often assumed that this divine sonship included a request, even a demand, for divine honors, but that is a separate matter. In Greek religious thinking, to be the son of a god was not the same as being divine or immortal.

Ancient Macedonia buffered Greece's northern frontier and maintained a simple monarchical system with an informal (untitled) aristocracy. Alexander, born in 356 B.C.E., was raised to believe himself a descendant of Herakles on his father's side and Achilles on his mother's, and it would be anachronistic to impose the intellectual cynicism of southern Greece on Macedonia. As part of their royal function, Macedonian kings performed certain religious duties, including daily sacrifices for the health of the Macedonian people and what appears to have been a purification rite for the army each spring. Alexander conducted these duties piously, rising even from what would prove to be his deathbed to do so.

Myth lived for the Macedonians, and it was not past their conception that the gods still acted in the lives of "special" individuals. During his Egyptian campaign in the winter of 332/331, Alexander made a fateful trek through the Egyptian desert to the Oracle of Ammon at Siwah. Ammon was equated by the Greeks with Zeus. There, Alexander received a private oracle, and afterward he began to present himself as Zeus's son, not Philip's—to the increasing irritation of his veterans. Not all accepted it. But after his death in 323, stories of his divine conception were circulated, sacrifices were made, and carved images of the king in semiprecious stone were worn for luck. He had accomplished more in life than either Herakles or Dionysos, who had received apotheosis. If them, why not Alexander?

What precisely Alexander *himself* thought requires interpretation of events and actions that had political ramifications, as well. No clear evidence exists in the primary sources that he demanded deification during his lifetime, though it was given to him in 324, and though later successor kings did demand it, based on that example. Yet the impact of Alexander's romantic, larger-than-life person so affected the Hellenistic and Roman worlds that his "divinity" became an antecedent for the Roman imperial cult.

—*Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman*

See also: Apotheosis; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Rulers as Holy People

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Ali, Muhammad

(1942 C.E.–)

Muslim religious leader, athlete

Three-time world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali is known for his lyrical charm and spiritual charisma as much as for his athletic accomplishments. Ali enjoys an international reputation not just as an athlete but also as a role model for youth (he is often referred to as "the People's Champion") and as a holy person who preaches an Islamic principle of peace.

Born Cassius Clay in 1942, the boxer's name was changed by Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam leader, in 1964 when he converted. His name means "worthy of all praises, most high." Ali's conversion led him in 1967 to refuse military induction during the Vietnam War; as a result, he lost his boxing titles and his boxing license was suspended. Ali, however, evaluated these events, which devastated his career for nearly four years when he was in his prime as a boxer, as an opportunity to test his religious beliefs. Moreover, his verbal style, which evoked African American traditions, was a powerful assertion of black pride at a crucial time in the civil rights movement in America. Ali claimed he had searched his conscience and found he could not be true to his religion and accept military induction.

When he returned to the ring, Ali brought God with him, concluding each fight with praise to Allah. In recent years, however, this controversy has largely been forgotten, or rather, better understood. Ali has come to be appreciated worldwide as a holy man whose commitment to his Islamic faith, support for diverse charities and causes, and brave struggle with Parkinson's disease have earned him nearly universal respect and admiration. Ali gives countless public addresses and is especially fond of speaking to children, counseling them that love is like a net where hearts are caught like fish. He also believes that his illness is a divine gift, bestowed on him to make him more spiritual and to create a different destiny.

Ali is considered an icon of black pride, a global ambassador of peace, and a symbol of courage. The comedian and activist Dick Gregory remarked of Ali: "If people from outer space came to earth and we had to give them one representative of our species to show them our physical prowess, our spirituality, our decency, our warmth, our kindness, our humor, and most of all our capacity to love—it would be Ali" (Hauser 1996, 157).

—*Kimberly Rae Connor*



Muhammad Ali at the height of his boxing career. (Library of Congress)

See also: Suffering and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Ali Ber, Sonni

(d. 1492 C.E.)

Muslim/syncretist ruler

Sonni Ali Ber, founder of the Songhay Empire in West Africa, is considered a particularly holy figure in Mali, Niger, and parts of Nigeria. He reigned from 1464 to 1492, controlling one of the most expansive empires of medieval Africa. His territory covered central Mali and western parts of riverain Niger. Although he was Muslim, his ascent to

rule is reputed to have been due to his exo-Islamic magical powers. At present, his spirit is venerated by various West African cults.

Songhay by ethnicity, Sonni Ali Ber was raised “animist” by his mother, who was from Sokoto, Nigeria. She came from the Faru, an ethnic group renowned for their abilities as sorcerers. Ironically, her name was Baraka, which in Arabic refers to “spiritual grace” or “divine blessing.” Indeed, these qualities were readily attributed to Sonni Ali Ber by followers during his reign, and to this day Muslims and non-Muslims alike in West Africa consider him a spiritually powerful, charismatic holy man.

Early in his rule, Sonni Ali Ber realized that the considerable power held by the Muslim scholars in Timbuktu (and in general) came by virtue of their religious authority. As such, he made efforts to couch his rule in Islamic terms despite the fact that his adherence to Islamic dogma was decidedly questionable. Thus, although his adherence to the requisites of Islam was intermittent at best, his status as a powerful and influential holy man was widely appreciated by Muslims and non-Muslims alike throughout the empire.

Upon his death in 1492, Sonni Ali Ber’s son Aboubcar Dao succeeded him, but he was quickly overthrown by Askia Mohammed, Sonni Ali Ber’s nephew and a former commander in his army. Although Askia Mohammed was far more dedicated to Islam than his uncle was, popular sentiment nevertheless attributed his rise to power to the assistance of Sonni Ali Ber’s spirit.

At present, Sonni Ali Ber’s spirit is venerated by spirit possession cults in Mali and Niger. His spirit occupies a distinct place in the cosmological pantheon. Owing to his considerable conquests and expansive reputation while alive, his spirit is considered “noble” and held to be the progenitor of a whole lineage of powerful modern-day Songhay spirits. Songhay nobles hold this lineage of spirits, and his spirit especially, to be particularly influential in their lives.

—Noah Butler

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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'Ali ibn Abi Talib

(600–661 C.E.)

Muslim caliph, imam, martyr

'Ali b. Abi Talib was the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad. The fourth caliph of the Muslim *ummah* (community of Muslims) and the first Shi'i imam (656–661 C.E.), 'Ali was born in Mecca in 600, the son of Abu Talib, a highly esteemed member of the Quraysh tribe. Muhammad received his first revelations in 610, and 'Ali is considered to be one of the first converts to Islam, either second after Muhammad's wife Khadija, or third after Abu Bakr.

As Muhammad was raised by his uncle, 'Ali's father, the boys were more like brothers than cousins. On the night of the Emigration to Medina (*hijra*) in 622, Muhammad and Abu Bakr escaped from Mecca in order to save themselves from being killed, and 'Ali spent the night in the prophet's bed in order to trick the assassins who kept watch over his residence. 'Ali's actions allowed Muhammad to escape to Medina, where the Muslim community reestablished itself. It was around this time that 'Ali married Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad and Khadija. 'Ali and Fatima had two sons: Hasan, who became the second Shi'i imam, and Husayn, the third imam.

While Muhammad was alive, 'Ali participated in many military campaigns. He often served as the flag bearer, although he was the commander of the army in the battles of Fadak (628) and Yemen (632). After the prophet Muhammad died in 632, 'Ali no longer participated in military expeditions, although he did fight in two significant battles (the Battle of the Camel in 656 and the Battle of Siffin in 657) during his reign as caliph and imam. While Muhammad was alive, 'Ali served as his secretary and companion.

Following Muhammad's death, a debate regarding the succession of leadership in the Muslim community emerged. A group of Muslims devoted to 'Ali (which later became known as the Shi'at 'Ali, or Shi'ites; literally the "partisans of 'Ali") asserted that Muhammad had designated his cousin and son-in-law to become the next leader. It is argued that during Muhammad's final pilgrimage to the Ka'aba in Mecca, which later became known as the Farewell Pilgrimage, Muhammad designated 'Ali to be his successor at a place called Ghadir Khumm. When Muhammad died shortly after the Farewell Pilgrimage, however, the companions of the prophet decided to elect Abu Bakr as caliph of the Muslim

community. It was not until 656 that 'Ali was finally elected caliph, following Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman.

'Ali was often at odds with both 'Umar and 'Uthman, whom he considered to have deviated from the Qur'an and Sunnah (the tradition of the prophet Muhammad). 'Ali's piety and strict observance of Islamic law caused him to disagree frequently with them. In 656, the third caliph, 'Uthman, was murdered, the implications of which directly affected 'Ali. On June 17, 656, 'Ali accepted the nomination to the caliphate. Many of his critics were opposed to his nomination, arguing that he had protected 'Uthman's murderers. In 661, 'Ali was stabbed and killed by a Kharijite (a sect that had separated from the Shi'a) named 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn Muljam, and he died two days later in Najaf, Iraq. 'Ali's shrine in Najaf is one of the most holy pilgrimage sites for the Shi'a.

Many sufi orders trace their lineage back through 'Ali to the prophet Muhammad. 'Ali is revered for his piety and dedication to Islam. In the tenth century, his sermons, letters, and sayings were collected by Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Radi into the *Nahj al-Balagha* (Peak of eloquence). There is a rich hagiographic tradition, both Shi'i and sufi, which focuses upon 'Ali's exemplary piety and unique qualities.

—Karen G. Ruffle

See also: Fatima bint Muhammad; Hasan b. 'Ali; Hereditary Holiness; Husayn b. 'Ali; Islam and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Muhammad; Politics and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Zayn

(658–713 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim imam

The great-grandson of the prophet Muhammad, Zayn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn was present with his father at the massacre in Karbala in 681 but was spared from death because he was too ill to fight. Born in 658 to the daughter of a Persian king and the grandson of the prophet, 'Ali was known as "the son of two noble parents."

In Sunni circles, 'Ali is highly respected because of his piety, asceticism, and generosity. He is also regarded as a re-

liable transmitter of traditions and an authority in legal matters. Owing to his intense prayer and devotion, 'Ali was bestowed the honorific title "Zayn al-'Abidin" (ornament of the worshippers) by al-Zuhri, a famous traditionist.

The Shi'is regard Zayn al-'Abidin as the fourth divinely appointed imam. He is also known for his ascetic practices and piety. Many beautiful and moving spiritual discourses preserved in books such as "The Psalms of Islam" have been attributed to him. The famous poet al-Farazdaq composed numerous verses that extolled 'Ali's eminent status, noble lineage, and position as the leader of the Shi'is of his time.

After the events at Karbala, 'Ali led a quiet life in Medina. He refused to back Mukhtar's (d. 687) uprising against those who had killed his father in Karbala, and he remained neutral in other politico-religious movements in Medina, especially in Ibn Zubayr's (d. 692) revolt against Yazid. Due to his neutral stance, many Shi'is decided to join the Kaysaniyya movement associated with his uncle, Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, who believe that he was the *mahdi*, or "rightly guided one."

Shi'i hagiographic literature contains numerous anecdotes of his miracles. When his uncle challenged him over the leadership of the community, the dispute was allegedly resolved by the black stone at the Ka'aba, which testified that 'Ali was the legitimate imam of the time. Toward the end of his life, 'Ali was able to gather a small group of disciples, including Aban b. Taghlib, Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari, and Abu Hamza Thabit b. Dinar, who saw 'Ali as the legitimate imam of the time. After his death in 713, a struggle for leadership emerged between two of his sons, Muhammad (also called al-Baqir) and Zayd.

—*Liyakat Takim*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Husayn b. 'Ali; Imams; Islam and Holy People

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'Ali Shah

(d. 1938 C.E.)

Muslim holy woman

Lady 'Ali Shah was the wife of Aga Khan II and a granddaughter of the Persian shah Fateh 'Ali Shah Qajar. After her husband's death, she devotedly cared for her son, Sultan Muhammad Shah, who became imam in 1885 when he was

not quite eight years old. Lady 'Ali Shah became very involved in the community and has been celebrated for her wisdom and vision. Endowed with a dynamic personality, she has been described as a "born leader." When her son, the imam, was away from India, she frequently stepped in as a mediator to resolve issues that arose. Her advice was also solicited on a series of matters dealing with personal domestic problems, business, communal resolutions, and health. She was especially accepting of various novel aspects of modern health care, such as inoculations.

Lady 'Ali Shah spent considerable time in prayer and in the study and discussion of spiritual matters. When she visited England in 1932, she was received at Buckingham Palace by King George V and Queen Mary and endowed with the title of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India. In 1937, she began to experience ill health and traveled to Basra by sea in the following year. She died in Najaf in 1938 and was buried next to the tomb of her husband, Shah 'Ali Shah. With her endearing manner and dynamism, she served as a beacon to members of her community, especially the women, who sought to emulate her in words and deeds. She is regarded as the paradigm of the traditional woman who is also progressive and hence bridges two cultures, the East and the West.

—*Habibeh Rahim*

See also: Aga Khan II; Gender and Holy People; Imams; Islam and Holy People

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Alinesitoué Diatta

(c. 1920–1944 C.E.)

Diola prophet

The best known of the Diola prophets of southern Senegal, Alinesitoué Diatta introduced a series of new spirit shrines (*ukine*) and rituals of supplication of the Supreme Being in 1941 and 1942 before being exiled by the French in 1943. She died in exile at Timbuktu the following year, but that was kept a state secret until 1987. During her two years of teaching, Alinesitoué claimed that the Supreme Being, Emitai, spoke to her and commanded her to instruct the Diola about a new series of rituals to procure rain.

The Diola number over half a million people and include the largest number of practitioners of an indigenous religion in Senegal. They are generally regarded as the finest rice farmers in West Africa. Droughts, however, are common, and this threatened the Diola with severe shortages of

food. The term *Emitai dabognol*, often translated as “prophet,” is an epithet that literally means “the one sent by God.” Before the colonial conquest there were eleven male prophets, including Atta-Essou of Eloudia. Beginning with the French occupation, women prophets became active among the southern Diola. Alinesitoué was the most influential of these but not the first woman prophet.

She was born in the southwestern Senegalese township of Kabrousse around 1920. As a teenager, she worked as a maid in the cities of Ziguinchor and Dakar. Early in 1941, while walking through the crowded Sandaga Market of Dakar, she reportedly heard the voice of Emitai, who told her that she must return home and teach about new spirit shrines that would ensure adequate rainfall and end the drought. Early in 1942, she summoned the elders of her community and taught them about these new rituals, most notably Kasila. This involved the sacrifice of a black bull and other livestock at a shrine created in the public square of each neighborhood of a Diola township. The ritual was described as a “charity” because, in sharp contrast to most Diola rituals, it did not provide the donor of the sacrificial animal with any ritual privileges. Alinesitoué opened the rituals to participation by the entire community: Men and women, young and old, rich and poor all had equal opportunities to become priests. For seven days and six nights, all meals were shared in common. Meals were followed by singing and dancing in honor of the ancestors, and people slept in the public square, reaffirming the strength of Diola communities. The drought came to an end.

Alinesitoué’s rituals attracted interest throughout the Diola areas of Senegal and in the neighboring colonies of Gambia and Portuguese Guinea. She earned the hostility of French authorities, however, by opposing their efforts to spread peanut cultivation, which lured men away from a collective family practice of cultivating rice with the promise of cash from the sale of peanuts, leaving the rice farming to women. She earned the enmity of French missionaries by insisting that Diola observe a day of rest, *Huyaye*, every sixth day, instead of following the Christian Sunday sabbath. An insecure Vichy colonial government ordered her arrest in late January 1943. She was tried under the *Indigénat*, the French “native” law code, for the offense of obstructing French colonial initiatives. Alinesitoué limited her defense to a claim that all she had done was to “transmit the directives He [Emitai] had dictated.” After her conviction and banishment, the drought returned. Since her death, there have been many other prophets, mostly women, who have claimed that Emitai sent them to follow in the tradition of Alinesitoué Diatta.

—Robert M. Baum

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Atta-Essou; Diola Prophets; Patriotism and Holy People; Ritual

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All Saints’ Day

Feast day of the Christian Church celebrated November 1

All Saints’ Day made its first appearance in the Christian church at Antioch in the fourth century as a commemoration of all holy martyrs and saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost. John Chrysostom, who preached in Antioch before he became patriarch of Constantinople, delivered annual sermons on this feast day. The feast spread rapidly through the Eastern Christian Church, and by the seventh century it was kept as a public holy day. When Pope Boniface IV introduced the Feast of All Holy Martyrs in 615, however, May 13 was the date assigned annually to its observance. Pope Gregory IV transferred the feast to November 1 in 844.

Pope Gregory IV also convinced the Frankish emperor Louis the Pious to introduce the feast into his territories. The reason for the date change is unclear, but scholars believe that the Feast of All Saints was meant to substitute for the pagan Celtic celebration of Samhain, when the spirits of the dead were said to be allowed to walk the earth. The early Christian Church often placed major feast days on non-Christian holy days, thereby gradually converting people to Christianity through gradual acceptance and similarity of traditions. This practice can also be seen in the assignment of Christmas, Easter, and Candlemas. Pope Sixtus IV established All Saints’ Day as a liturgical vigil and octave in 1484, but the octave was discontinued in 1955. The purpose of the feast is to remember the merits of all the saints through one celebration.

By the end of the Middle Ages, the merging of pre-Christian and Christian traditions on this date began to emerge as a celebration in England. Known as Hallowtide, the king and his court would celebrate by wearing costumes and ringing church bells. The concept of purgatory, whereby the living could assist the dead by praying for them, and the notion that the saints were intercessors between humans and Christ, boosted the importance of remembering the martyrs and saints working for human souls before God’s throne. The modern practice of Halloween, or All Hallow’s Eve, combines pre-Christian and Christian practices that developed over the centuries on this date.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Amandus of Maastricht

(c. 589–679 C.E.)

Christian monk, missionary, apostle of Belgium

Amandus of Maastricht was arguably the most successful Christian missionary of his day, a period that laid the foundation for the Christianization of Western Europe. His success resulted from his persistence, his personal example of a holy life, and his ability to work miracles.

Born in around 589 into a noble and devoutly Christian family in Aquitania (modern southwestern France), Amandus entered a monastery at the age of twenty and lived the life of a hermit for the next fifteen years. Drawn out of isolation by his desire to preach the Christian gospel, he undertook missions into Belgium and to the Slavs and the Basques. Appointed bishop of Maastricht in 649, Amandus quickly converted the surrounding region. He then resigned his see to take his mission farther afield.

Amandus's earliest biography, written soon after his death, not only recounts the course of his career and his many virtues but also provides insight into the methods that Christian missionaries used in this period. Amandus preached with great force and enthusiasm, but his words had an effect on his audiences only when miracles reinforced his message. For those of his time, he embodied the power of the Christian God. Amandus mediated disputes, spoke out against royal sins and abuses of power, destroyed the sacred sites of the native religion, and reportedly calmed a storm at sea, healed people's infirmities, and even raised the dead. Moreover, Amandus's apostolic fervor manifested itself in a willingness to endure repeated setbacks and even physical danger.

Amandus allied with powerful churchmen (notably Pope Martin I [pope 649–655]) and with Frankish kings (especially Chlothar II [r. 584–629] and Dagobert [r. 623–639]) to advance his missions. In this way, he helped to foster the Frankish/papal alliance so decisive for the future history of both Germany and the papacy. Amandus was also adept at turning the church's growing patrimony to spiritual use, buying up non-Christian slaves, baptizing them, and training them as missionaries to their own people. He used land granted to him by the Frankish kings to build monasteries that encouraged asceticism and educated those newly converted to the Christian faith. Among the monasteries Amandus founded were Mont-Blandin, Nivelles, and Elnon. Amandus retired to Elnon, where he spent his last years as abbot. His feast day is February 6.

—Elaine M. Beretz

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Monasticism and Holy People

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Amardas

(1479–1574 C.E.)

Sikh guru, hymn writer

Guru Amardas, the third Sikh guru, was a Vaishnava Hindu before joining the Sikh community run by Guru Angad at his center in Khadur. Following the Sikh tradition of nomination established by Guru Nanak (the first Sikh guru), Guru Angad passed over his own two sons, Dasu and Datu, and nominated Amardas to succeed him.

The resulting tension between Guru Amardas and Dasu and Datu forced Guru Amardas to move the center of the community to Goindval. At this new location, Guru Amardas added his own hymns to those of the first two gurus and collected them in a set of four volumes, now known as the Goindval Pothis. During his guruship the number of Sikhs increased significantly, and with these new members Guru Amardas institutionalized some Sikh ritual practices, such as the death, marriage, and birth ceremonies. The growing community also necessitated an administrative expansion, and twenty-two local centers (called *manjis*) were created to keep the community running smoothly. Guru Amardas continued the tradition of nomination, selecting his son-in-law, Jeth Chand (who became Guru Ramdas), as his successor before his death in 1574.

Guru Amardas's hymns reiterate many of the same themes found in the writings of the first two gurus. The language used to describe God continues to oscillate between a *nirguna* understanding (that is, describing God as formless and transcendent, "without attributes") and a more concrete understanding of God as royalty, the sovereign lord of the universe. The importance of the community is also emphasized: God protects his worshippers from unjust earthly kings. One who fails to turn to God is self-oriented (*manmukh*). The path to salvation leads one to the true community (*sat sangat*), and within this community the singing of and listening to the Word (*bani*) in the Gurdwara is essential.

Guru Amardas's emphasis on the importance of the Word is significant. In the Goindval Pothis he added the writings of some nirguna saints, including Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas, Beni, and others. However, he did not include all of their writings but chose only those compositions that fit with the overall temperament of the Sikh gurus. For example, the Kabir hymns he included are the ones that emphasize the power and transcendence of God, not those calling for the destruction of institutional forms of religion.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Gurus; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Amautas

Inca sages, recorders

According to colonial chroniclers and historians, *amautas* and *haravicus* were Incas who kept a record of historical events and preserved the literary works and traditions of their people. Some scholars make a distinction between the two terms, defining “haravicus” as wise men who recorded in their memory and recited poetry and ritual songs, and “amautas” as wise men who recorded all kinds of technological, scientific, and religious information.

“Amauta” seems to be derived from the Aymara language, rather than Quechua, although Aymara and Quechua are closely related Andean languages (Mignolo and Boone 1994). The amautas were considered highly knowledgeable and were in charge of the *yachaywasi*, the Inca house of knowledge, equivalent to school. The indigenous chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala identifies amautas with poets, astrologers, and philosophers. They were responsible for the education of Inca princes and the children of the high nobility.

Although all chroniclers registered the activities of the amautas, their specific functions have not been clearly established. However, amautas were also usually considered *quipucamayos* and *quilcacamayos*, individuals who had the capacity to record information and transmit it upon request. Today, the term “amauta” could be translated “maestro,” signifying a teacher, with emphasis on the person’s wisdom and achievement. The original meaning of the word in Inca times has not been sufficiently explained, however.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Quipocamayos; Scholars as Holy People

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Ambrose

(c. 339–397 C.E.)

Christian bishop, father of the church

An eloquent and politically astute bishop of Milan from 374 until his death in 397, mentor to Augustine of Hippo, and one of the Latin church fathers, Ambrose was born in Gaul, where his father was praetorian prefect, in around 339. His family moved to Rome after the death of his father in 354, and it was there that his older sister Marcellina devoted herself to an ascetic life as a consecrated virgin, yet remaining in the family home. Marcellina would have a strong impact on Ambrose, though he pursued a traditional Roman education in law in preparation for a secular career.

Ambrose’s eloquence in arguing cases brought him to the attention of the emperor Valentinian, who appointed him consular governor in Milan, the western capital of the Roman Empire at the time and a city with deep religious divisions between the Arian and orthodox Christians. When the bishop of the city died, Ambrose, known for his integrity and evenhandedness, was raised to the bishopric by acclamation of the people even though he was not yet baptized and held no position in the church.

Ambrose was known for his eloquent sermons, important theological treatises, and promotion of monasticism, and for the introduction of hymns, which he wrote himself, into the liturgy. He was also a powerful political force not only in Milan but also in the empire, frequently standing up to emperors and empresses. Ambrose was instrumental in the removal of the altar of victory from Rome in 382 when he wrote convincingly against the requests of Symmachus, prefect of the city of Rome. Disputes with the Arians erupted in 386, and Ambrose refused to yield and was besieged in his basilica, along with members of his congregation (including Monica, the mother of Augustine), by soldiers sent by the Arian empress Justina, the mother of the child-emperor Valentinian II. Ambrose prevailed and the imperial forces turned away rather than commit a massacre. Later, Ambrose stood up to the powerful emperor Theodosius I, refusing to say mass for him and ordering him to perform public penance for the massacre he ordered of thousands of citizens in Thessalonica. His eulogy for Theodosius, written for his funeral in 395, is a rhetorical masterpiece.

A few months after the near massacre of 386, Ambrose led his congregation to the discovery of the bodies of two early Milanese martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius. Ambrose was thus able to capitalize on the growing cult of the saints by providing Milan with its own powerful links to the divine.

Many works by Ambrose survive, including sermons, eulogies, treatises, and letters. Significant contributions include his treatise on virginity, dedicated to his sister, Marcellina, and his work on widows and widowhood. Accounts of Ambrose by those who knew him personally can be found in Augustine's *Confessions* and in Paulinus of Milan's hagiography of the holy bishop.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rulers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Amerindian Religions and Holy People

Only a very few culture groups in the Americas preserve written records of their cultural practices that narrate events before the arrival of the Europeans. For this reason, it is very difficult to document pre-Christian holy people separate from a European construction of “holy” or of religion. This is not to say that the concept of holiness did not exist in the Americas prior to the arrival of Christian Europeans, just that the construction of holiness and of religion in the Americas can be very different from that of many of the other world religions. What we know and understand about Amerindian religions comes mostly from the records of Christian explorers, settlers, and conquerors intent on eliminating the local religions as “pagan” or from Western scholars who brand Amerindian religions as “primitive” or celebrate them as “utopian.” Charles Darwin once classified the native people of Tierra del Fuego, including the Selknam (Ona) and the Yamana (Yahgan), as people without religion or government because they did not seem to exhibit any practices that corresponded to his own view of what religion should be. Further investigations revealed that these groups did have a rich spiritual life; it was just not easily measured against Darwin's ethnocentric concept of “religion.”

In addition, because of the vast geographical, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences, the spiritual practices of the Amerindians cannot be generalized into one or even several

identifiable religions. Some culture groups lived and continue to live in small groups of closely related families. In other areas, cosmopolitan cities rose and fell. The inhabitants of these cities practiced many different beliefs and worshipped a vast array of divine and supernatural beings. We have evidence of some of these groups from the archaeological record and from the narratives of European colonizers and mestizo and native chroniclers who learned to write in Spanish, French, or English upon the arrival of the Europeans in the Americas. We know about other groups from social scientists living among various groups doing fieldwork, and we know about several groups through their own written and more recently recorded words.

Because certain characteristics can be identified as trends in Amerindian religious practices, scholars can make connections between the various records to help better understand religious life and holy people in the Americas. From these records, it is clear that Amerindian religious practices and the holy people dedicated to them often serve to connect Amerindian communities with their natural surroundings. Amerindian holy people practice rituals and activities that help express the dangers and joys of life, and they attempt to assure their community's stability and success in providing sustenance, security, and shelter. Amerindian holy people often help the communities keep in contact with or revere ancestors who have passed before them and help connect the community's children with their past and present. An examination of specific examples in the areas of religion and sustenance, religion and ancestors, and religion and warfare will illustrate several important aspects of Amerindian religions and holy people as well as the role of Amerindian religions' influences on the practice of Christianity in the Americas.

Amerindian Religion and Sustenance

As holy people help the community thrive and sustain their members, the means in which communities sustain their people is often directly related to their individual religious practices. In the Americas, as in other areas, two main tendencies can be identified. Amerindian groups were either nomadic gatherers and hunters or settled agrarianists. In many cases, societies developed that were a combination of the two methods of sustenance. These three possibilities allowed for many variations of religious practices, but each emphasized specific talents or behaviors that assured success in providing food for the community.

Nomadic communities would often prize specific talents and activities that would aid successful collection of food. Nomadic gatherers and hunters appreciated talents such as swiftness, prowess with hunting instruments (bow and arrow, spear, atlatl, and so on), bravery, keen eyesight, and strength. In many cases, the strongest and most dominant hunter or the descendants of a legendary hunter led these



Dancers at USA Indian Pow Wow, Minnesota. (Art Directors)

groups. The religious devotion of this leader was often also very important, since to assure a good hunt, the proper respects would need to be paid to the land and to the animals that were to be the prey. Although nomadic Amerindian groups tended to respect hunting prowess and strength, agrarian groups possessed different priorities. These cultures celebrated fertility, hard work in the field, good planting strategies, weather forecasting, and other characteristics that made the harvest good and food abundant.

The different means of sustenance allow for differing cosmologies as well. Groups dedicated to gathering and hunting are often more dedicated to solar divinities as examples of hunting prowess since successful and less dangerous collecting can be performed during daylight hours. The divinities representing danger were often those of the nighttime since the darkness brings danger for those who do not reside in permanent dwellings. In contrast, groups practicing agriculture would find that rainy and dry season predictions were vital to the success of their crops.

The night sky in many parts of the Americas can be directly related to crop cycles. In many Northern Hemisphere locations, for example, the appearance of the constellation known in the West as the Pleiades corresponds with the planting season. In the Chaco region of South America, the Pleiades are called “Grandfather.” The Milky Way also represented the path of water in the rainy season and the frost in the dry season for Mesoamericans. In the Caribbean and central tropics, a reverence of tropical storms and hurricanes as well as droughts was vital to crop success and the avoidance of starvation. Juraqan (Hurricane) is a powerful ancestor present at the time of the Maya creation in the *Popul Vuh*, the great Mayan creation epic.

Amerindian Religion and Ancestors

Most of the cultures known throughout the hemisphere venerated their ancestors; contemporary groups continue this practice. Like other aspects of religion, however, “ancestor” can also be perceived differently among Amerindians than in the European tradition. Many Amerindian cultures narrate creation stories and other accounts in which animals, natural phenomena, and people once existed together as equals. Even when people and animals no longer possessed the ability to talk to each other, respect for these animal (and sometimes vegetable and mineral) ancestors as well as human ones was vital to a good and abundant life within the community. In the Americas, holy “people” could also be animals or other natural phenomena.

For example, the Lakota Sioux tell the story of creation in the voice of Tunkashila (Grandfather), who is a stone in a field of grass, speaking to a Lakota medicine man. Coyote, Jaguar, Anaconda, Dolphin, and Peccary often are represented as ancestors in Amerindian narratives. In many cases, no distinction is made between “myth” and “history” in these narratives. From the Arctic Circle to Mesoamerica and from the Amazon basin to Tierra del Fuego, these and many other animals, from condors to opossums, help native peoples establish the order of the cosmos and the connection to the world around them. Like Tunkashila, rocks, mountains, springs, caves, and rivers could be ancestors in the Americas.

Sometimes ancestors would be plants or celestial bodies in addition to animals and natural forces. Corn in its various stages is personified and worshipped in human form in Mesoamerica, for example. The Tzotzil in the Maya area still revere X’Ob the “Mother of Maize,” and if the fields are neglected to weeds she will move in to clean them. The soul of the corn is also personified as “Kox” in Tzotzil. He is linked to Christ and, as the son of the Sun, represents human vitality and blood. The moon and the sun also serve as ancestors throughout the Americas, sometimes even doing battle as a metaphor for day and night.

In addition to revered ancestors, Amerindian holy people were often great leaders who helped the community survive adversity or people who helped make use of a technology to better provide for the community's needs. Although many examples of great leaders in adversity or societal advancement, such as the Mexica Axayacatl, can be identified, examples of the second type are more difficult to find. One such example is Varinkoshi, who is responsible for introducing the peanut to the Shipibo of the Amazon basin. Another example of holy people who use technology for the advancement of the community are the *quipucamayos*, the people responsible for quantifying the goods and services of the Inca Empire by keeping the *quipu*, a series of knotted cords. Since this empire was designed in service to the Sun, the *quipucamayos* kept track of religious and administrative information in a ritualized and very organized manner, reflecting the *tinkuy*, or balance, vital to Inca spiritual life. Their labor was vital to the success of the empire, and their technology was very elaborate and very precise.

The veneration of ancestors takes as many different forms as there are cultures in the Americas. For the Yanomami of the Amazon jungle, the ancestors are so sacred that no one can repeat the name of a departed family member and no name may ever be used more than once. The Choctaw creation story explains that the ancient Choctaw carried the bones of their departed elders while they searched for a homeland. When they finally arrived in what is today Winston County, Mississippi, they buried the bones in a huge platform mound, which is still considered to be their Great Mother.

Amerindian Religion and Warfare

As cultures in the Americas came into contact with each other, elements of various cultures were shared, adopted, exchanged, or adapted. Nomadic groups that prized hunting skills sometimes also developed superior military prowess, or they cultivated talents as merchants by trading goods collected in their travels for the crops or other products of settled people. Agrarian people could provide stores of food in exchange for luxury items brought to them by nomadic people. In many cases, agrarian groups would cultivate an alliance with nomadic groups for protection, or the nomadic groups would become settled or semisettled for better nutrition or a more stable food supply. Sometimes the militaristic cultures would conquer the less physically able sedentary groups and subjugate them, or agrarian cultures would impress a nomadic group into servitude as guards or defenders. In areas where large cities emerged, such as Mesoamerica, Peru, the East Coast of the United States, and the Mississippi basin, religious practices emerged that indicate that both agrarian and nomadic groups contributed to the spiritual life of these vast cities. As huge trade networks be-

tween these prosperous cities became established, this, too, affected religious practices.

The religious life and holy people of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán (present-day Mexico City) offer one example of the practice of empire as a mediation between "civilized" and "barbarian" societies. Mesoamerica possessed a long tradition of public and private recording of historical and religious information graphically, so pre- and post-Hispanic accounts of Aztec (or better, Mexica) holy people exist. Additionally, the city was still inhabited in 1519 when Cortés arrived, so we have firsthand testimonies from both the Europeans and the Amerindians about religious practices at the time. During colonial times, the conquered Mexica, like many other culture groups of the area, wrote of their own cultural practices before and after the conquest.

At the same time, the European priests compiled vast encyclopedias of information about Mesoamerican religious practices in an attempt to document incidents in which their parishioners "lapsed into pagan ritual," so that future missionaries could be aware of these instances and suppress them. Despite the destructive reasons for the documentation, these encyclopedias provide an incredibly rich source of information about pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica, especially since some priests used native materials to make their encyclopedias and then frequently destroyed native-produced documents in the process.

From the cultural history of the Mexica in Tenochtitlán, we learn that the ethnic Mexica were a nomadic group devoted to a mythical warrior named Huitzilopochtli, "Hummingbird Mirror." This divinity is sometimes portrayed as a hummingbird whose foot is an obsidian mirror, or as a warrior dressed as a hummingbird whose foot is an obsidian mirror. The Mexica arrived in the valley of Mexico during the twelfth century after wandering in the desert on a migration from the northern city of Aztlan. Large cities established by several agrarian cultures already dominated the area. In the Mexica language, Nahuatl, the settled groups were called *tolteca*, "settled" or "civilized." The Mexica referred to their nomadic ancestors as *chichimeca*—"barbarian" or "uncivilized."

As with many "barbarian" forces, the Mexica began as servants defending one of the settled cities against the others in the area. As this able military force gained power, the Mexica eventually dominated the entire valley. They founded the strategic island city of Tenochtitlán and developed a vast empire that incorporated many other Mesoamerican cultures. The Mexica of Tenochtitlán called themselves *tolteca-chichimeca*, establishing their links to both their nomadic ancestors and the settled people whom they had conquered. They also adopted practices of the local dominated groups and of each of the cultures that they conquered.

The religion of the Mexica evolved as they incorporated other divinities and other ethnic groups into the empire.

Although Mexica theology reflected a deep devotion to military divinities like their patron Huitzilopochtli to assure the success in conquest endeavors, many rituals and celebrations also reflected a keen awareness of the agricultural needs of a city of 250,000 people. Mexica religion also reflected a need for the newly arrived conquerors to legitimize their right to rule by connecting to the historical power base. The Mexica ruled from a theocratic position; every political and military decision depended upon consultation with the divine. The leader, the *tlaotani*, was “he who speaks,” indicating that he communicated with both human and divine beings. Many pre-Hispanic images, and some poetic texts recovered from the colonial era, present the *tlaotani* preparing for communication with the divine. The first step in preparation for this event was to perform an auto-sacrificial bloodletting. Another method for assuring favor with the divine was the offering of human sacrifices.

The practice of human sacrifice is one of the most important tenets of Mesoamerican religion. The justification for this practice reflects an awareness of agricultural metaphor, yet its most widespread function at the time of the arrival of the Europeans is directly tied to Mexica military prowess. In Mesoamerica, several types of human sacrifice exist: auto-sacrifice, sacrifice to emulate a divinity, and prisoner sacrifice. In each case, the idea that blood is the most precious fluid and that it must be offered to please specific divinities serves to justify the practice. In auto-sacrifice, a person, usually a *tlaotani* or a priest, lets blood from the earlobe, the hand, the tongue, or the genitals in imitation of the divinity Tlaloc, who offers his precious fluid—water—as the rain. The written records throughout Mesoamerica illustrate auto-sacrificial rituals practiced by warriors preparing for battle and by rulers requesting or receiving counsel from their ancestors.

Many of the rituals based upon the calendar included the practice of human sacrifice to emulate a divinity. The victims, often chosen from the local population, would be dressed as a specific divinity and sacrificed in imitation of that divinity. These sacrifices were often performed by decapitation, and the victim’s skin would be used as the costume of a priest. In the ritual for celebrating the corn harvest dedicated to the divinity Xipe Totec, “The Flayed God,” the victim’s skin served as a metaphor for the dried cornhusks around the ripe ear of corn. Other divinities who received human sacrifices in imitation included Tlazoteotl, “She Who Eats Our Filth” (also known as Inn Tonan, “Our Mother”), and Tlaloc, the patron of rain who received the sacrifice of crying children to assure the proper amounts of rain. These sacrifices lean more to the agrarian focus of the empire than to the militaristic endeavors.

A third form of sacrifice combined both militaristic and fertility images. The practice of prisoner sacrifice became

the motivating force behind the Mexica military machine. The Mexica believed that the blood of a sacrificed warrior taken captive in battle would nourish the sun and assure its daily path across the sky. This was performed in emulation of the Aztec sun god Nanahuatl, who sacrificed himself into a bonfire in the ancient city of Teotihuacan to become the sun. After this auto-sacrifice, the new sun then demanded that the other divinities who witnessed the event sacrifice themselves to feed him with enough energy to move across the sky. The Mexica wanted to assure the rising of the sun each day, so daily prisoner sacrifices were instituted. These were usually heart sacrifices.

Prisoner sacrifice also resulted as the product of an alliance between Tenochtitlán and two neighboring states: Texcoco and Tlaxcala. During a severe drought, the rulers of the three states decided to implement the *xochiyaoyotl*, “Flowery War,” in which warriors would be captured for sacrifice to the divinity Tezcatlipoca, the patron of the military class. The blood of these warriors was supposed to coax the divinity to return a magical obsidian mirror that predicted floods and droughts. Agrarian concerns once again became part of the mechanics of military warfare and conquest. The forces would meet in ritualized battle on a monthly basis for the purpose of taking captives to sacrifice.

On the part of the warrior, the most glorious reward—the right to reside in the paradise of Tamoanchan after death—was reserved for those who died in battle. This honor was also bestowed upon women who died in childbirth. In some ways, the two deaths are similar. Both would usually result from a violent action causing the loss of large amounts of blood, and both would have been activities that furthered the military might of the Mexica Empire.

For the Mexica, warriors and rulers were considered extremely holy people whose success depended upon their celebration of the appropriate rites and rituals. For women, the role of the midwife was also sacred. One of the most powerful female divinities, Tlazoteotl, was the patron of midwives as well as the mother of Cinteotl, the young corn divinity. In the celebrations dedicated to her, the midwives would dress as warriors and run through the streets singing her songs and accompanying her impersonator. The Mexica adopted this divinity from the coastal Huastec culture; but again, images of fertility and agrarian concerns were adapted into the military focus of Mexica society. The celebration to a fertility divinity became the time of year to dedicate new weapons as the season for warfare was literally born during this festival.

Amerindian Religion and Christianity

Upon the arrival of the Europeans, Amerindians encountered serious threats to their lifestyles, their health, and their belief structures. Since one of the principal foci for the

Spanish crown was the conversion of new Christians, the “Catholic Kings,” Ferdinand and Isabella, immediately sent an army of missionary priests to their new colonies. In the Spanish colonies, these priests marveled at the fact that some of the groups they sought to convert became very devout Christians. These groups were celebrated and even held up as great models for Christian conduct to be emulated in Europe. Many Amerindians distinguished themselves within the Christian colonization process, but they also marked the Christianity practiced in the Americas with a decidedly different character. A visit to a rural colonial church in Latin America illustrates that the Amerindians brought their own voices and their own images to the new religion they were learning, and the priests allowed some fluidity, often incorporating pre-Christian practices into religious celebrations.

The Amerindians who became devout Catholics did not necessarily abandon their previous practices but adapted them to suit the priests of the new religion. One of the most powerful links between pre-Hispanic and Christianized Mesoamerica was the connection made between Quetzalcoatl and Christ. Colonial crucifixes elaborated by native artisans often contained an image of Quetzalcoatl inside. Pre-Hispanic musical and poetic forms once dedicated to human sacrifice and military prowess were incorporated to sing the praises of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and other important Christian figures. The devotion of the Americas to the Virgin of Guadalupe, for example, can be traced to a combination of pre-Hispanic and colonial religious ideas. In areas where Africans were brought to the Americas, Amerindian, African, and Christian practices became fused into the religious lives of local people. Vodun and Santería in the Caribbean and Candomblé in Brazil are examples of this process.

The children of Amerindian elite families and those of the conquistadors and their Amerindian brides (mestizos) were often educated in the Catholic schools. The narratives of some of these indigenous and “mixed-race” voices have helped contribute to an understanding of American and European religious influences in the Spanish colonies. Fernando Alva Ixtlixochitl, a mestizo educated in the Franciscan university in Texcoco, Mexico, documented the Mexican past in both Spanish and Nahuatl.

In Peru, the chronicles of mestizo Garcilaso de la Vega, “El Inca,” explained the Amerindian religious practices of his mother’s family from his perspective as a Christian educated in the Catholic tradition of his father. Although denouncing the “pagan” practices of his Amerindian heritage, he chronicled much information not otherwise available on pre-Hispanic Peru. Another Peruvian figure left a mark and a deepening intrigue on colonial letters: Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala. This indigenous voice criticized the Catholic presence

and the governmental organization of colonial Peru and celebrated the pre-Hispanic past.

Amerindian resistance leaders, from the Inca Atahualpa to Seneca Iroquois leader Handsome Lake and Lakota leader Sitting Bull, are normally considered historical figures in the Americas, but these and many other Amerindian resistance leaders also served as extremely important holy leaders. Resistance, like all other aspects of Amerindian life, was a spiritual endeavor and required the leaders to request and perform the appropriate rituals and blessings to assure the success of their communities. Not all Amerindian groups resisted European ways, however, and in recent years, the canonization of the first Amerindian saint, Kateri Tekakwitha, and the Nahua who witnessed the first appearance of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Juan Diego, have further linked the Amerindian and Christian religious practices of the Americas.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Ancestors; Apotheosis; Ethnopharmacology; Gender and Holy People; Handsome Lake; Huitzilopochtli; Intermediaries; Juan Diego; Kateri Tekakwitha; Midewiwin Brotherhood; Miracles; Mission; Mummy Bundles; Nature; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Quipocamayos; Ritual; Rulers as Holy People; Sages; Shamans; Sitting Bull; Suffering and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Amida

See **Amitabha**

'Amili, al-, Shaykh Baha'i

(1547–1622 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim mystic, poet

Shaykh Baha'i ad-Din Muhammad al-Juba'i al-'Amili was the leading Shi'i cleric in Iran during the reign of Shah 'Abbas (1588–1639), which marked the apogee of the Safavid Empire. He was a gifted polymath as well as a mystic and poet.

Shaykh Baha'i was born in Baalbek in Lebanon in 1547, but in 1558, when the execution of Shahid Thani, the leading Shi'i cleric in Lebanon, took place at the hands of the Ottoman authorities, Baha'i's father joined the large number of Shi'i religious scholars moving to Iran. There, the Safavid dynasty had recently proclaimed Shi'ism to be the state religion and was trying to impose this upon the populace. Baha'i settled in Qazvin, the Safavid capital, and pursued his studies there. Later, he was appointed shaykh al-Islam (religious leader) in the city of Herat, then regarded as part of the Persian province of Khorasan but now in Afghanistan.

In 1576, Shaykh Baha'i was appointed shaykh al-Islam of the new capital that Shah 'Abbas had established in Isfahan. This was the highest religious position in Iran, and over the next few years, Shaykh Baha'i was engaged in teaching students and building up the religious institutions of this Shi'i state. He even played a role in planning the city of Isfahan. By 1583, however, he had grown weary of high office and resigned his post to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. After this, he extended his travels, spending time in Egypt and Jerusalem before returning to Iran in about 1585. Rather than return to official duties, however, he had by this time taken to the life of a penniless wandering dervish, and he continued to wander about Iran, seeking the company of sufis and composing verses with mystical allusions. After thirty years of such a life, he settled in Isfahan, where he spent his last years. He died in 1622 and is buried at Tus near Mashhad in northeastern Iran.

Baha'i wrote some hundred works on an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. Among Shi'i scholars he is best known for his books in the field of religious jurisprudence, which were the standard works on the subject for a long time. He is regarded as the *mujaddid* (renewer) of Shi'i Islam for the eleventh Islamic century. Among ordinary folk he is better known for his *Kashkul* (The album), a potpourri of prose and poetry on a variety of subjects, and his poetry in both Arabic and Persian. He also wrote well-respected treatises on a wide range of subjects such as grammar, astronomy, mathematics, and alchemy.

—Moojan Momen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Amitabha (Chin.: Amituo Fo; Jap.: Amida Butsu)*Mahayana Buddhist buddha*

Amitabha, the buddha of the Pure Land of the west, is one of the most influential and prominent buddhas in the Mahayana tradition. Amitabha's western paradise, Sukhavati, like other mythical paradise lands of Buddhist thought, is not to be understood in terms of locality but rather as a state of consciousness. Amitabha is one of the main focal points in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism and is known as the embodiment of mercy and wisdom.

The word "Amitabha" is of Sanskrit origin: *amita*, meaning "infinite," and *abha*, meaning "light." The usual translation is "buddha of infinite light." The Japanese use the words "Amida" and "Amitayus," as well as "Amitabha," to refer to him. The Chinese have their own twofold form: "O-mi-t'o" (transliteration of "Amida") and "Amituo Fo."

Amitabha Buddha is said to be the ruler of the western Pure Land, which is accessible to all who have sincere faith in Amitabha. Pure Lands, by definition, are purified realms created by the buddhas of the six directions out of their unending compassion and great wisdom. The buddhas watch over these lands and teach there to aid other beings who are on the path to enlightenment. Even the commoner who has not had the opportunity to become literate has every possibility of achieving salvation with the simple utterance of Amitabha's name. Everything in this Pure Land is conducive to enlightenment, and once someone is there, nirvana will be obtained without fail in the individual's next lifetime.

Iconography of Amitabha and the Pure Lands is extensive and is especially seen in Japanese, Chinese, and Tibetan art. He is often depicted seated on top of a lotus flower, the symbol of purity. Adorned with precious jewels, he sits in the lotus position with his hands folded in a teaching posture. In representations where he has a shaved head, he is Dharmakara, a buddha whom he is believed to have been in a prior lifetime. Some artists picture Amitabha with a *mudra* (sign of power), along with the bodhisattvas Avalokiteshvara on his left side and Mahasthamaprapta on his right. Tradition says that Amitabha was a king who came into contact with Buddhist teachings, gave up his throne, and became the monk Dharmakara. His purpose was to create a paradise in which people could come after death to finalize their way to the nirvanic state. He took forty-eight vows, the eighteenth being the most important, to help sustain the followers of this path. The eighteenth vow states that at the time of passing Amitabha would be there to bring beings into his western Pure Land so that they, too, could achieve ultimate nir-

vana. On his merit alone, through thousands and thousands of years, he was able to create this Pure Land, which is also called the Land of Bliss.

Doctrinally, there are three Chinese sutras that comprise the Pure Land tradition: the Larger Sukhavativyuha, the Smaller Sukhavativyuha, and the less-studied Amitayurdhyana Sutra. They describe the teaching of Amitabha along with an account of what this “heaven” looks like and how it can be achieved.

—Jeff Flowers

See also: Buddha; Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People

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Ammachi

(1953 C.E.–)

Hindu guru

Ammachi, or simply “Amma” (mother)—also known as Mata Amritanandamayi (mother of immortal bliss)—is a prominent contemporary Hindu female guru commanding a large following of devotees of all ages, races, religions, and walks of life. Known as the Mother of Compassion and the “Hugging Saint,” since she has literally embraced millions of devotees, she is revered by her followers as the embodiment of the Divine Mother (Devi-Bhava).

Ammachi was born in 1953 as the fourth child of Sugunanandan and Damayanti in a poor, low-caste family in rural Kerala, south India. Her biographies claim that she was a spiritually gifted child endowed with mystical and suprahuman traits who rose from a life of poverty, abuse, and rejection to become a charismatic religious leader. The turning point in her spiritual career is linked to her religious experiences in late 1975, when she claims to have realized personal identification, initially with the Hindu god Krishna, and later with the Divine Mother. Ammachi is said to reveal her true identity in a weekly ritual in which she assumes the mood of the Divine Mother for the spiritual edification of her devotees.

Ammachi's spiritual fame spread throughout India and beyond as moving stories were told about her miraculous powers and the personal transformation she is said to effect through her spiritual embrace. The Amritapuri ashram, established in 1981 in Kollam, Kerala, serves as headquarters for the movement. Following her first spiritual tour to the

West in 1987, numerous transnational congregations (*satsang*) and centers emerged that Ammachi visits during her three-month annual tour. Most important among them is the Mata Amritanandamayi Center in San Ramon, California, which has grown into a full-fledged ashram housing several celibate aspirants. The Ammachi movement has grown today into a global spiritual movement with two dozen fully initiated male and female renunciants and several hundred celibate aspirants. The movement also has a vast network of educational, social welfare, charitable, and medical institutions concentrated mainly in India. Within the movement, religious authority, leadership, and power are hierarchically structured. Although spiritual power resides solely in Ammachi, the temporal administration of her institutions is—at Ammachi's personal choice—exercised by a band of trusted disciples.

Firmly grounded in Hindu philosophical, religious, mystical, and devotional traditions, Ammachi also has introduced several radical innovations to the Hindu ritual tradition, best exemplified in her reformulation of *darsan*, or spiritual embrace—her trademark—and the empowerment of women's public ritual roles. Ammachi transmits her core spiritual message of unconditional love through the medium of spiritual embrace. Involving intense physical contact in the form of hugging, kissing, and touching, *darsan* is also the most intimate and personal mode of interaction between Ammachi and her devotees. In redefining the traditional Hindu understanding of *darsan* from auspicious sight of the divine into an intimate, tactile encounter with the embodied divine, Ammachi defies and redefines orthodox Hindu norms concerning ritual purity, pollution, and bodily contact between the devotee and the embodied divine as well as Hindu social norms governing gender relations. Similarly, despite opposition from some Hindu leaders, she has installed a number of her female renunciants as temple priestesses authorized to perform public rituals (*puja*).

Ammachi's daring innovations are inspired by the need to acculturate her message to an ever-widening global audience that extends beyond the Indian frontiers as well as by an urge to reject obsolete Hindu ritual norms and practices. In her defiant rejection of orthodox norms and in the radical innovations she has introduced, Ammachi is calling her devotees—in India and abroad—to transcend the cultural constraints of a religious tradition and grasp its central message of god-realization through unconditional love. In her embodied self as guru and in her embodied *darsan* ritual, Ammachi concretizes and mediates this message of unconditional love. She is the recipient of several national and international awards, including the United Nations' Gandhi-King Award for Non-Violence in 2002.

—Selva J. Raj

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Intermediaries

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Amnon of Mainz

(10th cent. C.E.?)

Jewish legendary martyr

A legendary martyr, Amnon's story is known mainly through a late thirteenth-century copy of the *Sefer Or Zarua* (Explanations of talmudic problems) of Rabbi Isaac ben Moses of Vienna (c. 1180–c. 1250), which quotes Rabbi Ephraim of Bonn (1133–post 1197), who wrote a chronicle on the crusades and other anti-Semitic persecutions as well as a collection of liturgical poems, some of which celebrate Jewish martyrs.

The outline of the story is that a ruler in tenth-century Mainz, usually identified as the bishop, continually pressed Rabbi Amnon to convert to Christianity. At length, Amnon requested three days to consider. When he did not appear at the appointed time, he was forcibly brought before the bishop, where he requested that his tongue be cut out for not refusing immediately, since his agreement had led the bishop to believe that he might renounce his faith. Instead, the bishop ordered his limbs mutilated. Dying from these wounds, Amnon asked to be taken to the synagogue on Rosh Hashanah, where, before dying, he recited the “U-Netanneh Tokef Kesushat ha-Yom” (Let us tell the mighty holiness of this day). The prayer is used to this day in Ashkenazic liturgy and has also been adapted for use in Sephardic communities.

Various versions include more details—for example, reporting that the bishop ordered Amnon's feet cut off for having failed to carry Amnon to him. One breathtakingly graphic version says that the bishop had each of Amnon's limbs removed one joint at a time and salt poured on the wounds, then ordered him to be carried home with his severed limbs. Further, the legend says that, though Amnon died immediately after reciting the prayer, he appeared in a dream to Kalonymus ben Meshullam, taught him the prayer, and asked that it be circulated throughout the Diaspora for use on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The prayer, however, is much older, derived from an early Palestinian prayer found in old liturgical manuscripts and *genizah* fragments and later attributed to Amnon. The legend associating Amnon with the prayer seems to be a response to the increasing persecution of European Jewry and represents the effort to maintain steadfastness even in the face of torture.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Anti-Semitism and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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An Shigao (An Shih-Kao)

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Buddhist monk, translator

An Shigao was a Parthian Buddhist monk of the second century and one of the earliest recorded translators and transmitters of Buddhism into China. His real name was Anqing; An Shigao was a pen name. The son of a Parthian king, he was widely learned, skilled in astronomy and astrology, and especially versed in philosophical treatises (*abhidharma*). Having surrendered the succession to his uncle, An Shigao aspired to Buddhist scholarship and left his native land to wander about, eventually taking up residence in China during the reign of Emperor Huandi in 147 C.E. He stayed nearly twenty years and devoted his life to the translation of Buddhist scriptures. Around the year 170, An Shigao traveled to southern China and visited numerous places. Many miraculous stories about him were circulated in these places. However, very little is known about his old age.

An Shigao's translations are mainly Theravada texts related to the Buddhist scholastic treatises and meditation. He came to China at a time when Buddhism had already reached the Chinese court as well as society, and with the help of the Chinese he translated many Buddhist texts. The exact number cannot be ascertained, but, according to Daoan's catalog, there were thirty-five texts in forty-one fascicles, many of which are lost; today only twenty-two texts in twenty-six fascicles are extant. At any rate, his translation was a reliable one and it was basic to the further development of early Chinese Buddhism. Thus, An Shigao started the organized translation of coherent texts, which became in more or less uninterrupted sequence a series of Buddhist scriptures in Chinese translation.

—Guang Xing

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Anan ben David

(fl. 8th cent. C.E.)

Jewish scholar

Anan ben David is the first figure associated with what eventually became the Karaite challenge to the hegemony of rabbanite Judaism in the Muslim East. Apparently a scholar from an aristocratic Jewish background who flourished in the second half of the eighth century, and possibly claiming descent from the line of King David, Anan seems to have been one of the first to articulate a series of antirabbanite positions and to attempt to consolidate various antiestablishment tendencies among the Jewish communities in Iraq and beyond in an age when rabbanite authorities endeavored to centralize Jewish communities and systematize Jewish practice under their aegis. Followers of “Ananite” Judaism were thus the forerunners of mature Karaite Judaism of the ninth and tenth centuries, even if they were critical of Anan for not going far enough in his critique of rabbanite Judaism. Later sources of both rabbanite and Karaite provenance offer manifestly apocryphal, often fanciful accounts of Anan’s experiences and teachings, leaving us with images of a truly enigmatic historical figure.

Anan’s approach to Judaism is supposedly captured in a pithy saying later Karaites attributed to him: “Search well in the Torah, and do not rely upon my opinion.” This utterance obviously reflects the strict textual basis of Anan’s Judaism; it also captures his apparent distrust of an authoritative rabbanite tradition, his reformist tendencies, and his belief in individual interpretation. Indeed, Anan’s thinking and scriptural interpretations are documented in the *Sefer ha-Mitzvot* (Book of legal precepts), an Aramaic text (fragments have survived) whose literal approach to the Hebrew Bible stands in contrast to contemporary rabbinic readings.

In particular, Anan advocates ritual practices that became hallmarks of mature Karaism: direct lunar observation for setting the liturgical calendar (as opposed to rabbanite reliance on the astronomical calendar), and the prohibition of lights, sexual intercourse, and circumcision on the Sabbath, which in effect treated Sabbath observance as a day of mourning rather than as a festive holy day. In the main, it appears that Anan’s legal strictures were more rigorous and ascetic minded than the rulings of his rabbanite contemporaries even as they both utilized analogy as the principal tool of hermeneutics.

—Ross Brann

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Ananda

(c. 5th–4th cents. B.C.E.)

Buddhist monk, follower of the Buddha

Ananda is said to have been first cousin and personal attendant of the Shakyamuni Buddha, who personally ordained him in the second year of his ministry in the fifth or fourth century B.C.E. Soon after ordination, Ananda attained the first level of enlightenment (*shrotapanna*). Legends from different Buddhist traditions indicate that he was one of the greatest personalities in the history of Buddhism. All accounts of Ananda’s life contain the Buddha’s own tribute to his devotion and wisdom.

During the last twenty-five years of Shakyamuni Buddha’s ministry, Ananda worked as his personal attendant and was always by his side. The Mahaparinibbana Sutra gives many examples of his solicitude. Ananda was the Buddha’s equal in age (having been born on the same day), and it is touching to read of this old and most devoted attendant ministering to his eminent cousin. It is said that when the Shakyamuni was ill, Ananda became sympathetically sick. Different texts shower praises on Ananda for the exemplary manner in which he performed his duties as personal attendant. The Samyutta commentary calls him a “wise saint.”

Owing to his reputation as an expert on the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine), monks and laypeople alike often approached him for detailed exposition and he became known as Dharma-Treasurer (Dharmabhandagarika). The Buddha is reported to have said that one who wants to honor the dharma should honor Ananda. At the First Buddhist Council, Ananda helped the order led by Maha Kashyapa to rehearse the dharma, and at the end of the council, the doctrine was handed over to Ananda and his pupils to be preserved for posterity. In the first four Nikayas of the Sutra Pitaka, every discourse begins with the words “Thus have I heard,” the “I” referring to Ananda as he had personally heard every discourse from the Buddha. A collection of verses is also ascribed to him in the Theragatha.

It was on Ananda’s insistence that women were allowed entry into the Buddhist *samgha* (monastic community). This made him very popular with the nuns, much against the Buddha’s own inclination. His concern for the sick and his ability as a peacemaker among monks form the basis of many stories in Buddhist literature. According to the Anguttara Nikaya, the Shakyamuni ranked him the foremost monk in five respects: erudition, good behavior, retentive memory, resoluteness, and personal attention. Despite being the Buddha’s intimate disciple, Ananda attained enlightenment only on the eve of the First Council after the death of the Buddha.

Ananda is said to have lived to the age of 120. He seems to have spent the last years of his life teaching, preaching, and encouraging his younger colleagues. After his death, his

relics were divided into two parts and *stupas* (shrines) were built over them.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddha; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Hagiography; Veneration of Holy People

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Anandatirtha

See Madhva

Anastasius the Persian

(d. 628 C.E.)

Christian monk, martyr

Anastasius, a seventh-century Persian convert to Christianity, was murdered by adherents of his former religion, Zoroastrianism. His cult was very popular throughout the Mediterranean in the years following his death, largely because he served as a role model for Christian piety in a time of complex religious and political upheavals.

Originally named Magundat, before his conversion Anastasius was a political adherent of King Chosroës II (r. 590–628). He fought with Chosroës in the campaign that captured Jerusalem in 614 and was part of the retinue that carried the True Cross back to Persia as a gift for the Christian queen, Meryem. Encountering this most powerful of all Christian relics led Magundat back to Jerusalem to explore Christianity, and eventually to convert. He took the name Anastasius at his baptism. His earliest years as a Christian were spent in a monastery near Jerusalem, where depictions of the martyrs on the walls of the church inspired him to follow their example. He left the monastery to preach the gospel, hoping to die in the process. He felt that the surest way to achieve both goals was to target his former comrades in the Persian garrison.

His confrontational preaching style led to his capture and torture. Anastasius refused to recant his new religion. Eventually, he was carried off to Bethsaloe in Assyria. There, according to legend, his torturers tried a new tactic: tempting Anastasius with highest honors and wealth if he would return to his former religion. When Anastasius resisted, he was strangled.

Anastasius's body was originally buried close to his place of death. His relics were taken to Palestine in about 631 and

then translated to Constantinople after the Arab invasion of Palestine in 638. From there, his head and an icon were brought to a Greek monastery outside Rome sometime after 645. His various tombs were the sites of many miracles. A biography of Anastasius, written in Greek by 630 and widely circulated, was translated into Latin by about 650. Theodore of Tarsus, the Greek monk who became archbishop of Canterbury in 669, spread Anastasius's cult to England. His feast day is January 22.

—Elaine M. Beretz

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Zoroaster

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Anathapindika

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist layman

Anathapindika was a banker of Shravasti in India at the time of the historic Buddha around the fifth century B.C.E. Though his personal name was Sudatta, he became known as Anathapindika (feeder of the destitute) because of his unparalleled munificence. His first meeting with the Buddha took place while he was on a business trip in Rajagha during the first year of the Buddha's ministry. Immediately after this meeting, he was converted and attained the first level of enlightenment (*shrotapanna*).

Thereafter, he invited the Buddha to spend the rainy season at Shravasti. It is said that, to make the journey comfortable for the Buddha and the monks, he had many monasteries built along the way. At Shravasti, he erected the famous Jetavanarama, the Buddha's favorite rainy season retreat, and then presented it to the *samgha* (monastic community). This incident is recorded on one of the pillars of the Bharhut stupa. As a result of this and many other benefactions in the cause of the Buddhist order, Anathapindika was recognized by the Buddha as the foremost among all almsgivers. Besides feeding a large number of monks in his house daily, he also provided meals to guests, villagers, the physically challenged, and poor people.

It is said that as a result of his selfless generosity, Anathapindika was gradually reduced to poverty. The Buddha preached the Velama Sutra to encourage Anathapindika, who felt disappointed that he could no longer provide luxu-

ries for the monks. According to legend, a deity, on the advice of the god Sakka, helped him to become rich again. The Buddha is also said to have recognized him as a keen debater and defender of the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine).

Anathapindika went regularly to see the Buddha, but we are told that he never asked a question of the Buddha lest he should weary him. He did not wish the Buddha to feel obliged to preach to him in return for his munificence. The Buddha preached to him of his own accord, however, on various occasions. Anathapindika died before the Buddha. When he was on his deathbed, Shariputra preached the Anathapindikovada Sutra to him. He was said to have been reborn in the Tusita heaven, and the Sarabhanga Jataka of the Mahavastu identifies him as Shakra Shacipati, the lord of the deities.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddha; Buddhism and Holy People; Laity; Wealth and Poverty

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Ancestors

It has been estimated that ancestor worship is a part of religion for about 60 percent of world cultures. Dead ancestors are in many ways the ideal intermediaries between human beings and the divine: They have direct personal experience of the problems of human existence and maintain an interest in the communities and kinship groups of which they were members, but at the same time have transcended human existence. In some cultures, the dead continue as part of a kinship group; most societies, however, have focused on *important* ancestors—leaders of the community—as holy people worthy of special veneration. This is especially central to many popular religions, such as the “village religion” of India, in which the most important objects of worship are usually local heroes and goddesses who are often former members of the community. And, since only a limited number of people with special characteristics of birth or initiation can communicate with the dead ancestors, these people, too, have been regarded as worthy of veneration by their communities.

Many ancient cultures, including Egypt, the Incan Empire, China, and Rome, worshipped ancestors, especially the spirits of former rulers, who, it was believed, could form a link between living humans and the divine. Today, the practice is most common in sub-Saharan Africa, where



Reliquary figure in Gabon. Designed to perpetuate the memory of founders of tribes through family or community worship, it expresses forcefully the persistence and authority of ancestors, who thus remain doubly present on a material and symbolic level. (Art Directors)

ancestors are often venerated as guardians of the lineage of an ethnic group. In some African societies, such as on Madagascar, the ancestors are regarded as central to life, and there are shrines of ancestors in homes. But only leaders of the community or clan can become ancestors; common people simply become ghosts. Ancestors are also venerated in most Amerindian religions, where often a natural phenomenon or animal is regarded as the ancestor of a group. Thus, the ancestor Tunkashila is a stone. Perhaps more common, though, is the belief reflected in the Choctaw legend that the Choctaw brought the bones of their dead elders along with them while questing for a new homeland. On their arrival, they buried the bones in a huge platform mound that is still regarded as the “Great Mother” of the Choctaw.

In other cultures, some ancestral figures have been raised specifically to divine status. Thus, in early Chinese legend, the supreme being Shang-ti was the original ancestor of the

people of Shang (second millennium B.C.E.); similarly, many of the divinities of West Africa, the *orisha*, were especially significant and praiseworthy ancestors raised to divine status. In Zimbabwean belief, the great ancestors, “lion spirits” such as Nehanda, have reached divine status and are able to help in war, make rain, and perform other vital functions, working through spirit mediums. Even religions that have no formal mechanism for veneration of ancestors, such as Judaism, accept that the merits of the “fathers” can secure future blessings for descendants. In the case of Judaism, the good deeds of the patriarchs gained benefits for future generations of Jews.

In general, ancestors are intermediaries to the gods rather than gods themselves, as in the belief system of the Congo. What most differentiates them from Christian saints, who also play an important role as intermediaries, is the fact that only specific people, usually members of the same kinship group, can communicate with an ancestor, while anyone has access to a Christian saint. Thus, much of the authority of the Japanese emperors and empresses was based on the fact that only they could intercede with *their* ancestress, the sun goddess Amaterasu. A similar special link to the ancestors is important to the idea of leadership or kingship in many communities. For example, the Zulu royal family, both male and female, acted as vital intermediaries between the people and the important ancestors. Aztec rulers had to validate their right to rule by journeying to the otherworld, where they would receive the right to rule from the previous monarch.

Religious leaders have often claimed authority because of their ability to communicate with ancestors, continuing into modern times. For example, the central teaching of the Paiute prophet Wovoka, founder of the North American Ghost Dance movement (1889–1890), was that he had communicated with the ancestors and could teach others to do the same with ritual dance. With the ever-increasing encroachment of Islam and Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa, syncretic movements, such as the AmaNazeretha Church, founded in 1910 by Isaiah Shembe of South Africa, owe much of their popularity to their inclusion of ancestral spirits as an essential part of worship—Shembe claimed to be both king and diviner, and a link to the royal ancestral spirits.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Nehanda Nyakasikana; Orishas; Shamans; Shembe, Isaiah

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Andal

(9th cent. C.E.)

Hindu poet, avatar

Many Hindus consider Andal (She Who Rules), a ninth-century Hindu saint, to be an incarnation of Bhū Devi, the earth goddess. Andal was the only woman among the twelve Tamil poet-saints known as *alvars* (those immersed in the love of Vishnu). These poets lived between the eighth and tenth centuries C.E., and two centuries later their works were considered to be divinely inspired. Andal composed two well-known poems in the Tamil language, the “Tiruppavai” (Sacred Lady or Sacred vow) and the “Nacchiyar Tirumoli” (The sacred words of the Lady), in which she vividly depicted her passion for the Hindu god Vishnu. These poems are part of temple and home liturgies.

Hagiographies of Andal were written several centuries after her life. These report that Periyalvar, another of the twelve Tamil poets, found the baby Andal and called her Kotai (a wreath of flowers). Kotai grew up near a Vishnu temple in Srivilliputtur, a small town in southern India. Every morning, she wove flower garlands for the god enshrined in the temple. Refusing to marry a human being and insisting that she would marry only Vishnu, she undertook special rituals in the month of Margali (December 15–January 14). Several rituals highlighting Andal’s importance take place during this month in southern Indian homes and temples today. The biographies say that her father took her to Srirangam, an important temple town in the present Indian state of Tamilnadu. There, according to one version of the story, she merged with the icon of Ranganatha, a manifestation of Lord Vishnu. Other biographies say that she came back to Srivilliputtur, and a few months later, Vishnu came there and married her with due pomp. The wedding of Andal and Vishnu is celebrated every spring in the Srivilliputtur temple with considerable fanfare.

In the Tiruppavai, Andal takes on the role of a cowherd girlfriend (*gopi*) of Krishna, one of the incarnations of Vishnu. With her friends, she goes to Krishna’s palace and wakes him, asking him to promise that she can be with him forever. The Nacchiyar Tirumoli depicts Andal’s passion and longing for Vishnu and contains a set of songs in which she dreams of her marriage to him. This set of songs is recited or sung in the weddings of Vishnu devotees in southern India, especially in the Sri Vaishnava community.

The Sri Vaishnava community, which became important around the eleventh century, worships Vishnu and the god-

dess Lakshmi and venerates Andal along with the other alvars. This tradition also considers Andal's Tamil poems to be revelations equivalent to the Sanskrit scriptures called the Vedas. Starting in the thirteenth century, Sri Vaishnava theologians have extensively commented on her poems, both orally and in writing. The poems are recited daily and in annual rituals in Sri Vaishnava homes as well as in temples in India, Singapore, Canada, and the United States. They are also sung in classical music concerts, choreographed and performed in the classical Bharata Natyam style of dance.

Andal is considered both a human saint and an incarnation of the earth goddess. Enshrined and worshipped in Sri Vaishnava temples all over the world, she functions as a theological model for the community, depicting through her passion the ideal relationship that should obtain between the devotee and the deity.

—*Vasudha Narayanan*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Gods on Earth; Gopi/The Gopis; Hinduism and Holy People

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Andrew

(*d. c. 60 C.E.*)

Christian apostle, martyr

Before meeting Jesus and becoming a disciple, Andrew was a Galilean fisherman whose home was at Capernaum. He was also a disciple of John the Baptist when John baptized Christ. According to the gospels, Andrew was Christ's first follower, and it was Andrew who then brought Simon to the messiah, whereupon Simon was named Peter (rock) (John 1:40–42). Few references to Andrew appear in the gospels; however, some are significant, such as his role in feeding the 5,000 (John 6:8) and his participation in relaying a message to Jesus when visiting Greeks wish to meet him (John 12:22).

Sources other than the gospels, such as the Acts of Andrew, which connect him with Paul and Bartholomew, are unreliable. The Acts and Martyrdom of Andrew is based heavily on legend, and the Gospel of Andrew was condemned in the sixth century. Historically, it remains uncertain whether he became an evangelist, where he may have preached, his place of death, and where he was buried. However, traditional writings from the third to the ninth centuries refer to him as an apostle in several areas, including Epirus in Greece, Thrace, and Asia Minor (southern Russia). A known forgery credits

Andrew with establishing the church of Constantinople. Another traditional story, from Patras in southern Greece, claims that Andrew converted Maximilla, the wife of Aegeates, the Roman proconsul; for this, Andrew was apparently crucified at Patras on an X-shaped cross in about 60 C.E., but he managed to preach for two days before dying as a martyr. This story was used in 357 when Andrew's purported body was moved from Patras to Constantinople. Constantinople's desire to house apostolic relics followed shortly upon Rome's claim of possessing the relics of Peter and Paul.

Andrew's cult later became popular in the West, and churches in England, France, and Italy were dedicated to him. Legend tells that in the fourth century some of his relics were moved from Patras by St. Rule; guided by an angel, Rule traveled to Scotland to build a church for Andrew and then converted the Scots. This account is the basis for Andrew being chosen as the patron of Scotland. He is also the patron of Russia for his preaching and foundation of churches there.

In 1204, crusaders took his remaining relics from Constantinople; these relics reappeared in 1461 when despot Thomas Palaeologus presented Andrew's head to the pope. Although it was treasured by St. Peter's, Pope Paul VI returned the relic to Constantinople. Andrew's feast day is November 30.

—*Loretta Reed*

See also: Apostles; Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Peter; Veneration of Holy People

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Anhui

See Sthiramati

Anne

(*d. 1st cent. C.E.*)

Christian saint

Anne is known as the mother of the Virgin Mary and grandmother of Christ, though there is no historical or biblical evidence for this. Her story is based on the apocryphal Protevangelium of James (written in Greek around 150) and tradition. The Protevangelium holds that Anne and her husband, Joachim, were a pious Jewish couple forbidden from making offerings in the Temple because of their childlessness. In shame, Joachim left Anne to go into the wilderness and fast. Anne lamented her abandonment and infertility and was subsequently visited by an angel, who told her that God had heard her prayer and that she would conceive a child who would be

known to the whole world. Soon after, she learned that Joachim was returning, having been visited by an angel himself. Nine months after the angel's visitation and Joachim's return, Anne gave birth to Mary, whose bedchamber Anne made into a sanctuary to keep Mary holy. When Mary was three years old, Anne and Joachim took her to be raised in the Temple because they had dedicated their child to God in thanks.

Concerned with the life of Mary, little more is said about Anne in the Protevangelium, but it is the basis for further development of Anne's life and cult, which first flourished in the Eastern church. The eastern feast of Anne, on July 25, and three Marian feasts involving Anne were being celebrated by the eighth century. In the Western church, the Nativity of Mary was being celebrated by the end of the seventh century, but the feast of Anne, on July 26, was first officially celebrated in England in 1378, though not by the entire church until 1481, when her cult was at its height.

By this time, more stories of Anne's life had developed, primarily in reference to beliefs in Mary's perpetual virginity and her lack of original sin. To explain Jesus' brothers in the Bible as cousins, Anne was said to have been widowed by Joachim and remarried twice, giving birth to a daughter named Mary each time. These daughters were supposedly the mothers of the disciples James the Less, Simon, Jude, James, and John. Anne's family of three daughters and their offspring was called the Holy Kinship, and her threefold marriage termed the *trinubium*. The concept was popular among the laity. The story that Anne had actually conceived Mary when the angel visited her, instead of after Joachim returned, arose out of the idea that Mary could not have been without original sin if Anne and Joachim had conceived her carnally. This take on the Immaculate Conception was much debated among clergy and laity and was not resolved by the Roman Catholic Church until 1854, when it was officially accepted as Catholic dogma.

Anne was one of the most popular saints in the Middle Ages. Her cult waned after the Reformation, but she retained importance in Roman Catholicism, especially in France and North America. The shrine of Saint Anne d'Auray in Brittany became a pilgrimage site in the early seventeenth century, and French missionaries and settlers brought her cult to North America, where her most popular shrine is Sainte Anne de Beaupré in Quebec. The first church dedicated to Anne in Beaupré was built in 1658, and the shrine has been a pilgrimage site since 1670 when a relic of Anne was first displayed there. Healing miracles are attributed to Anne in Beaupré, and each year thousands of pilgrims visit the shrine.

Anne's vast patronage includes widows, infertile women, pregnant women, and mothers. She is often depicted teaching Mary to read, as matriarch of the Holy Kinship, or in the "St. Anne Trinity" (Anne, Mary, and Jesus).

—Elizabeth Brownell

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Mary, Virgin; Sexuality and Holy People

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Ansari, Abu Isma‘il ‘Abdallah al-
(1006–1089 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Born in 1006 in Herat in present-day Afghanistan, Abu Isma‘il ‘Abdallah al-Ansari, popularly known as Pir-i Herat, was a significant sage of the early mystical tradition in Islam. His contribution to the development of mystical literature has had an enduring influence. He was frequently quoted in the works of didactic and mystical writers such as ‘Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri, Farid al-Din ‘Attar, and Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, who flourished during the classical pre-Safavid period (1000–1500) in the greater Persian milieu.

‘Abdallah al-Ansari epitomizes the confluence of two streams of Islam, the legalistic and the mystical. He followed the strict Hanbalite legal school, which did not hinder but rather encouraged and complemented his esoteric or spiritual quest. He had two major teachers, the Hanbalite scholar Muhammad Taqi Sijistani and the mystical, quasi-literate Abu al-Hasan Kharraqani. ‘Abdallah al-Ansari's meeting with Kharraqani changed his life, and he embarked on a path of intense spiritualism after 1034. He also received intellectual vibrancy from his native Herat, a pivotal center of scholarship, second in importance only to Nishapur. Here, he participated in and refuted disputes between various theologians and philosophers.

With the fall of the Ghaznavids and the advent of the Saljuqids in eastern Iran, much hardship resulted for al-Ansari after 1041. He was persecuted, became destitute, and endured great suffering. He was exiled from Herat by the vizier Nizam al-mulk in 1066, but called back shortly afterward, and later honored by the caliph al-Qa‘im. By then, he was famous as an orator and preacher not only in Herat but in the surrounding regions as well. ‘Abdallah went blind in around 1081 and died in Herat on March 8, 1089.

‘Abdallah is celebrated for his Persian *Munajat* (Prayers). In simple flowing language, he proclaimed divine longing and focused on transcendent mysteries. In the *Kitab manazil al-sa’irin* (Stages for wayfarers), he provided his disciples with a comprehensive guide regarding the salient stages in the quest for transcendence. This concise work made him famous in the mystical tradition, and over the centuries numerous commentaries have been written on it. Al-Ansari is also renowned for his biography of the spiritual masters and sages, called *Tabaqat al-sufiya* (Biographies of sufis), which he developed from al-Solami’s (d. 1021) *Tabaqat* (Biographies). This biography has been an important source for later hagiographers; its text was revised and brought up-to-date in the late fifteenth century by Jami, also from Herat, in the *Nafahat al-uns* (Lives of the saints). ‘Abdallah is also known for several treatises, or *rasa’il* (singular: *risala*). For the most part, his writings are direct and simple. His style is unpretentious, imparting wisdom in aphoristic and rhythmical prose intermingled with *ruba’is* (quatrains), *gazals* (lyrics), and anecdotes, an effective medium for the wide diffusion of his ideas over the centuries.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; ‘Attar, Farid al-Din; Hujwiri, ‘Ali ibn Uthman al-; Islam and Holy People; Kharraqani, Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali al-; Mysticism and Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin

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Ansari, Shaykh Murtada

(1799–1864 C.E.)

Shi’i Muslim scholar

Shaykh Murtada Ansari was the leading Shi’i scholar of the mid–nineteenth century. Perhaps the first to consolidate the position of *marja’ al-taqlid* (focal point of emulation) in one person, he was famed for his cautious, methodical approach to religious law and his personal piety and abstemiousness.

Shaykh Murtada was born in Dizful in southwestern Iran in 1799. His designation “Ansari” signifies his descent from one of the Medinan companions of the prophet Muhammad. He received his religious education from the prominent religious scholars in Karbala and Najaf and then settled in 1833 in Najaf, where he would live for the rest of his life. Under the Usuli school of law that had triumphed in the previous century, anyone who is not a *mujtahid* (one who has undertaken

a prolonged course of study in religious jurisprudence and is considered competent to give independent rulings in matters of law) must follow a *mujtahid* in all matters relating to religious law and observances. A person who is a *mujtahid* and to whom reference is made on points of law is called a *marja’ al-taqlid*. By the 1840s, Shaykh Murtada was widely regarded as a leading scholar, and when Shaykh Muhammad Hasan al-Najafi died in 1850, within a few years he was regarded as the sole *marja’ al-taqlid* for the Shi’i world—perhaps the first person to achieve this (although some say that al-Najafi was the first). In the area of religious jurisprudence, Shaykh Murtada formulated a set of principles that enabled judgments to be given in cases where there was doubt as to what the correct legal judgment should be. As a result of the developments he initiated, he is called the *mu’assis* (founder) of the present system of jurisprudence in Shi’i Islam.

He was also a great teacher, said to have originated *masala-sazi* (the construction of hypothetical situations) as a method of teaching. He was famed for his memory and his speedy resolution of intellectual problems. An extremely pious and austere man, he was careful never to do anything that might displease God. He was cautious in giving judgments on religious matters and reportedly gave only a handful of *ijzas* (certificates of completion of religious education) during his entire life. At his death in 1864, it is said, he had assets of only eighty *qirans* (five dollars) to his name. His books on jurisprudence remain widely used to the present day.

—Moojan Momen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Anselm of Canterbury

(1033–1109 C.E.)

Christian monk, archbishop, theologian

Anselm was one of the greatest theological innovators of the Western European Middle Ages but is also today remembered for his renewal of the language of spirituality. After a difficult beginning in finding his vocation as monk and teacher, Anselm came to influence generations of monks participating in the renewal of church life and learning that was well under way by the middle of the eleventh century. As prior and later abbot of Bec in Normandy, Anselm befriended some of his monks and expressed these emotional bonds in letters to them. Later, in the

1070s, he wrote two meditations on the existence of God: the *Monologion* and the *Proslogion*. The latter contains the so-called ontological “proof” for God’s existence, attempting to show that the very concept of a “being than which no greater can exist” requires the existence of such a being. The *Proslogion*, however, needs to be read primarily as a heartfelt prayer to a god whose existence is a necessary fact of being. In 1093, Anselm took office as archbishop of Canterbury and did his best to head the clerical community. His difficulties, especially with the kings of England, brought out another side of his saintliness: his insistence on living according to God’s law, regardless of the requirements of politics and expediency.

Anselm was born at Aosta (northwestern Italy) in 1033 into a family that was probably on its way down in society. After the early death of his mother and a failed attempt to join a local monastery, Anselm found he could not get on with his father and, with a single manservant, left home forever. He journeyed for three years in what today is the south of France and Burgundy but ended up in Normandy at the abbey of Bec, where he was drawn by the reputation of the logician and theologian Lanfranc.

When Lanfranc became archbishop of Canterbury in 1070, he took with him some of the monks of Bec. As we can see from a number of Anselm’s letters, this move was hard for them, especially because of their closeness to Anselm. Here we find one of the greatest medieval expressions of monastic friendship in its depths and limitations. During these same years, Anselm also wrote prayers and meditations. These exemplars of a sublime latinity renewed the language of Christian spirituality, using bold new images for the relationship of the individual Christian to holy men and women.

In 1078, Anselm became abbot of Bec and involved himself more and more with church life, not only in Normandy but also in England. At Lanfranc’s death in 1089, Anselm was the popular choice for his successor as archbishop, but the king, William Rufus, kept the see vacant until 1093. Anselm was apparently reluctant to accept the office and dreaded the commitments and responsibilities it would entail. His letters from these years reflect his doubts and hesitations, but in their literary skill and self-awareness, they manage to provide us with the very journal of his soul.

Anselm found that he could satisfy no one in his ceaseless efforts to do justice to all: The clergy and monks of Canterbury resented what they considered to be his failure to care for their privileges; the English kings, first William II and then Henry I, demanded a political loyalty that Anselm could not give them; the former monks of Bec, some of them now bishops, missed their old friend. Because of his disagreements with royal policy, Anselm twice went into exile. The first absence, from 1097, was spent mostly in Italy, and here Anselm gained time to finish his great statement on the

workings of the redemption, the *Cur Deus Homo* (Why did God become a man?)

After the second exile, 1103–1107, Anselm and the pope worked out the relationship between kings and prelates: From then onward the English king no longer could hand over the symbols of spiritual authority to newly elected bishops. In reality, however, he still maintained great influence over their elections. The English compromise later became standard in the Western church.

Anselm often considered resigning his post, but he remained archbishop until his death in 1109. He becomes visible in an outstanding biography completed after his death by the Canterbury monk Eadmer, who loved his master for Anselm’s sensitivity to the Anglo-Saxon saints and traditions challenged by the Norman takeover. In the years after his death, a cult of Anselm began to develop at Canterbury, but it was submerged by the devotion to Thomas Becket. Anselm was never formally canonized but is today considered a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. His feast day is kept on April 21, and he is especially remembered at both Canterbury and at the abbey of Bec-le-Hellouin, which was refounded in the nineteenth century and to this day attracts visitors seeking the spirit of Anselm, medieval Christian spirituality, and reformed monasticism.

—Brian Patrick McGuire

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Thomas Becket

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Anti-Semitism and Holy People

An obfuscating nineteenth-century word (linguistically, “Semitic” includes non-Jewish groups) that conflates three distinct attitudes toward Jews, anti-Semitism is usually defined as racist or eliminationist sentiment arising in Europe after 1848 and related to social Darwinist views. A second meaning refers to religious opposition based on supersessionism, the idea that Christians are the “new Israel,” making God’s covenant with Abraham and Judaism superfluous. Such attitudes, dating from Christianity’s inception, are termed “anti-Judaism” by scholars such as Heiko A. Oberman, who note that Jews in premodern Europe could often convert to avoid



A 1493 German woodcut showing the "ritual murder" of Simon of Trent by the Jews. (Stapleton Collection/Corbis)

persecution. Later, conversion no longer removed Jewishness, which became ethnic. National Socialists (Nazis) persecuted Christian or atheist individuals of Jewish heritage. Dating anti-Semitism to the twelfth century, Gavin I. Langmuir (1990) uses a third definition: irrational beliefs about Jews inspired by Christian insecurities.

Each position has flaws: Proponents of "anti-Judaism" find it difficult to distinguish the language of racism or su-

percessionism from that of superstition. But calling all anti-Jewish sentiment anti-Semitism, as Daniel Goldhagen (2002) does, leads to charges that modern eliminationism was foreordained at Christianity's birth. Langmuir's position begs the definition of irrationality: Is belief in transubstantiation more rational than belief in ritual murder? Most recently, David Nirenberg (1998) has contested claims that medieval anti-Jewish violence was irrational, arguing that it

served as the tool for religious, kinship, and community debates and was not always popular but often controversial. Many “anti-Semites” demonstrably embrace more than one strain.

Three common associations between saints and anti-Jewish sentiment occur: scholars who held or preached anti-Jewish views (John Chrysostom); crusader saints who also persecuted Jews (Louis IX of France); and alleged victims of Jews (William of Norwich, Hugh of Lincoln, Robert of St. Edmundsbury, Dominic of Val, Werner of Oberwesel, and numerous others). Although explanations (including supercessionism, economic or political resentment, and anxieties about birthrates or Christian doctrine) are proposed to explain why Jews were the focus of violence, lepers, Roma, Sinti, and Muslims received similar treatment. During crusader persecutions after 1095, Jews were vilified as deicides or foreign bodies within Christian society.

Later, superstitions fused to religious belief, as demonstrated by the charge (after 1144) that Jews ritually crucified or circumcised Christian children; the blood libel (after 1235) that Jews took the blood of Christians, especially young males, for ritual use (particularly to make matzah, unleavened bread consumed at Passover); and the charge (common after 1290) that Jews tortured the consecrated host. Anti-Jewish violence did not always accompany such allegations, but distinctions between official and popular violence on such occasions are difficult to sustain. Pope Gregory X (pope 1271–1276) repeated predecessors’ criticisms of the blood libel; elite suspicion explains the difficulties many cults experienced in achieving recognition. Several remained local or did not advance beyond canonization. No theory completely explains the genesis of accusations creating the third group. Monks may have substituted Jews for Greco-Roman persecutors found in traditional martyrs’ tales; local priests promulgated the stories because of apotropaic appeal. Host torture tales bolstered the doctrine of transubstantiation (sanctioned in 1215).

Sainthood and anti-Semitism share an intimate, quirky, and contested connection. William of Norwich’s cult disappeared before 1500; Simon of Trent’s was suppressed by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1965. Blood libel accusations against Jews resurfaced in Germany in 1946. The cult of Anderl of Rinn (d. 1462) continued until Innsbruck Bishop Reinhold Stecher ordered his relics buried in 1985, forbidding the cult in 1994. A 1997 Belarussian state television broadcast supported claims that six-year-old Gavril Belatovsky, canonized by the Belarussian Orthodox Church, was ritually murdered in 1690. Observers became concerned about the canonization of the Romanovs, executed in 1918 by Bolsheviks, fearing it would fuel widespread beliefs in the former Soviet Union that the execution was a ritual murder. A 1996 Russian Orthodox Church commission denied that Jews conduct ritual murders or that Jewish participants in the execution were

religiously motivated. The beatification of Pius IX in 2000, who called Jews “dogs” and defended the 1858 kidnapping of six-year-old Edgardo Mortara on the grounds that he was secretly baptized, created controversy inside the church. Finally, recent charges of supercessionist anti-Semitism by Jewish groups influenced the content of the famous passion play held since the late seventeenth century in Oberammergau, Germany. The blood libel persists, however, despite scholarly efforts to discredit it, and it has been propagated not only in the West but in Chinese and Muslim groups.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Hugh of Lincoln; John Chrysostom; Judaism and Holy People; Luther, Martin; Tolerance and Intolerance; William of Norwich

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Antony of Kiev

(d. 1073 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox hermit, monastic founder

The first monk of the Kievan period of Russia to be described in medieval Russian texts, Antony is revered as the father of Russian Orthodox monasticism. Antony was a hermit who lived in a crypt near the medieval city of Kiev and became the founder of a small hermitage in the eleventh century. He was instrumental in the hermitage’s growth into a full-fledged monastery, though he never lived within its walls. The hermitage became the Kievan Cave Monastery still in existence today, and the saint thus played a role in the first important hermitage (*skete*) and cenobitic community in Russia. His written Lives emphasize the role of Mt. Athos in his spirituality and leadership.

There are two texts that contain vignettes of Antony's life and deeds: the *Primary Russian Chronicle (Tale of Bygone Years)* and the *Kievan Cave Patericon*. Both stress his dedication to the ascetic life and his role as a spiritual father. Antony's life is closely associated with his pupil, St. Theodosius, both of whom were memorialized by Nikon, a monk of the Cave Monastery who wrote the *Patericon* in the twelfth century. Antony supposedly came from the city of Liubek and traveled to Mt. Athos, where he was tonsured. After he returned to the Kiev region, unwilling to join other monasteries around the city, he finally settled in a small crypt dug by an earlier hermit and lived on donations from the surrounding population. Antony attracted other would-be hermits and appears to have been a spiritual father to Grand Prince Iziaslav, who donated a hill to Antony and his flock when the number of followers grew too large to live entirely in their original underground cell.

Eventually, Antony retired from the direct leadership of his small monastic flock and chose to live the remaining forty years of his life alone in a nearby crypt, only occasionally receiving his former pupils in order to proffer advice. He gave them permission to build a church, for example, helped them to choose their first two superiors, and convinced Prince Iziaslav to donate the land for the monastery. Antony's most notable follower was Theodosius (Fedor) of the Cave Monastery, who became the second father superior (after Varlaam) of the Cave Monastery and turned it into Russia's first cenobitic cloister. Antony died in 1073. Although he was only one of the many hermit-monks living in the region of Kiev, he is the first whose career has been carried down to us in texts. His feast day is commemorated on July 10.

—*Jennifer B. Spock*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People; Theodosius of Kiev

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Antony of Padua

(1195–1231 C.E.)

Christian friar, preacher, doctor of the church

"Friend of the Poor," "Wonder Worker," and "Repository of Holy Scripture" are some of the titles given to Antony of

Padua. He is considered the first teacher of the order of Friars Minor, having received permission from Francis of Assisi himself to instruct his fellow Franciscans in theology. He was respected for his great devotion to the eucharist and the word of God, for his Spirit-inspired preaching, and for his undying commitment to social justice. Antony's complete devotion to the child Jesus was key to his spiritual life and journey of faith.

Antony was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195 and first entered the religious life as an Augustinian canon. He transferred to the order of Friars Minor to devote himself to spreading the faith among African people. Ill health prevented him from fully carrying out his mission, and an unexpected storm at sea brought him to Sicily in 1221. He recovered from his illness in time to attend the last Franciscan chapter held during the lifetime of Francis of Assisi.

In 1224, Antony discerned his vocation as an itinerant preacher. From then on he traveled throughout Italy and southern France, teaching, preaching, and exhorting people to greater charity and devotion to Christ. He spent the last months of his life in Padua, where he died in 1231.

Inspired by the eucharist, Antony challenged people from all walks of life to share their daily bread with the hungry. His own spirit of compassion and generosity made him a staunch supporter of and advocate for the poor. Shortly before his death, for example, he requested that the laws of Padua be changed so that debtors would no longer be imprisoned. Out of their great respect for him, the people of the city complied and rewrote the laws.

Antony's preaching was especially effective among people addicted to drinking and gambling. They were moved by his message to surrender their problems to God and to renew their lives in service to the Lord and one another. Antony is also said to have performed great miracles of physical healing, and he is well known among the people as an intercessor in times of need and adversity.

Antony's deep spiritual connection to God and the human family came out of a profound and prayerful devotion to Jesus. He was able to see the face of Jesus in the lives of the poor and abandoned who surrounded him. Antony's primary mission in life was to imitate and teach others about Jesus. He encouraged the people to embody the teachings of Jesus in their everyday situations. He preached against the sins of greed, arrogance, and hypocrisy, and he did not hesitate to call the church's hierarchy to task for their lack of moral leadership in the church and in society.

—*Mary Ann McSweeney*

See also: Antony of Uvari; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Francis of Assisi

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Antony of the Desert

(fl. 300–340 C.E.)

Christian hermit

Antony, born an Egyptian of wealth and—though legend has denied it—learning, an early fourth-century monk, has been unquestionably the most authoritative figure in the history of Christian monasticism. Though his actual role in the development of monasticism can be disputed, traditionalists and reformers alike have returned again and again to his example for more than 1,700 years. His feast day is January 17.

Antony's *Life*, written in Greek shortly after his death by Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, not only inspired Eastern monasticism but, in an immediate Latin translation by Evagrius of Aquileia, profoundly affected Western Europe. Augustine narrates a famous passage in which two of his fellow Africans suddenly resolve to become monks after casually picking up, and then becoming mesmerized by, Antony's *Life*. The book was read and treasured by Martin of Tours and by the Irish monks, and it has remained a quintessential volume in every Christian monastic library into the present. It would not be an exaggeration to assert that the whole genre of Christian hagiography would be quite different were it not for Antony's activities as enshrined by Athanasius.

Nowhere is this more dramatically evidenced than in art, where the scene of Antony's temptations in the desert became a favorite motif throughout the Middle Ages and into modern times. Depicted in detail, the scene becomes lurid in the hands of Matthias Grünewald, Peter Breughel, Hieronymus Bosch, Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, and countless others; probably the most famous literary treatment is that of Gustave Flaubert.

That *Life* also became a template for the Lives of future monastic saints, particularly in terms of process. The pattern begins with a dramatic conversion and is followed by a period of eremitic isolation, the formation of a community of disciples, intermittent engagement with society, including miracles and doctrinal statements, and finally, an edifying death validating the spiritual principles by which the saint lived. Antony's experience of conversion was repeated in many legends: Entering a church, he accidentally heard one

of those radical passages in Christian scriptures that have transformed people's lives—"Be not anxious for the morrow" (Matt. 6:34)—and underwent a radical conversion that dramatically changed his life. One sees this same pattern in the life of Benedict, the founder of monasticism in the West, and countless others, including Ignatius of Loyola.

As is typical of such an influential religious figure, the historical Antony is elusive; luckily, a number of his sayings, and—more important—his letters, have survived, newly translated and annotated by Samuel Rubenson (1995). The figure that emerges is educated, sophisticated, and theological. Far from the retiring, small-town devotee depicted by Athanasius, Antony seems genuinely public, and eager to preach to his fellow enthusiasts and curious visitors.

Antony's choice locations for times of meditation were first abandoned tombs and forts, then oases; his monastery in eastern Egypt was spectacularly beautiful, so much so that one might well agree with his reported words, when a visiting Greek philosopher asked to see his books: "My book, O Philosopher, is created nature, and whenever I wish to read God's words, it is within reach" (*Sayings of the Fathers*, Book 21, 16). This communal and environmental dimension connects, in fact, to the rightful ascription of Antony as the father of desert monasticism. It is certain that isolation had earlier attracted holy men and women in Hellenistic culture, many centuries before Antony's time; the Greek term *ascesis*, from which we derive "ascetic," has, going back to Plato, strong associations with disciplined, focused physical exercise. The Jewish Essenes designed communities set apart from society even when they were physically juxtaposed. But Athanasius tells of an odd blending of desert and civilization—that Antony's companions "made the wilderness a city," where they became citizens of a higher empire than that of Rome. Although the desert is indeed a fitting venue to combat demons, it more essentially stands as a pure alternative to the city of man.

This was the true revolution that Antony accomplished in Western culture, to realize geographically a powerfully spiritual message of transcendence while remaining completely responsible to human society.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Athanasius; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; Hagiography; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People

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Antony of Uvari

(1195–1231 C.E.)

Medieval Christian saint, patron of Indian cult

Situated on the Pearl Fishery Coast, thirty miles north of Kanyakumari in southern India, Uvari is a tiny Catholic fishing village where a local version of the medieval St. Antony of Padua reigns supreme as the powerful patron of the village and its famed shrine. Known as the “Padua of the East,” the Uvari shrine and its patron saint are reputed for various miracles, earning the saint the local title “Million Miracle Saint.” Uvari Antony is the recipient of various vow rituals, collectively known as *asanam*, that include hair shaving, ear piercing, ritual bathing, animal sacrifice, and communal meals. Thousands of devotees of diverse religious and caste identities offer *asanams* to Antony for a number of earthly benefits ranging from finding suitable spouses, obtaining release from demonic possession, and gaining healing, fertility, marital stability, and agricultural prosperity to passing exams and securing lucrative jobs in the Gulf countries.

The original St. Antony of Padua—a native of Lisbon, Portugal, where he was born in 1195, but commonly referred to as the saint of Padua because he spent his mature years in the Italian city of Padua—is well known throughout the Catholic world as the “finder of lost articles” and the bestower of fertility. However, Uvari Antony is especially renowned for his powers over demonic spirits, particularly malevolent Hindu spirits that command the religious attention of a vast number of his local Hindu and Catholic devotees. Although his iconography is consistent with Antony of Padua’s typical representation in the Catholic world, where he is portrayed in Franciscan habit holding a book and the infant Jesus in his arms, Uvari Antony’s sacred persona and powers are radically recast to reflect indigenous assumptions concerning sacred figures and the existential human and spiritual needs of his local devotees. This recasting enables Uvari Antony’s religiously pluralistic clientele to embrace the European saint as their chosen clan or family deity (*kuladeiyvam*) equal in power and attributes to such popular Hindu tutelary deities as Mariamman, the Tamil goddess of disease and healing.

In incorporating indigenous traits, the cult of Uvari Antony represents a compelling case of the reconstruction and transformation of a European Catholic saint into a powerful indigenous tutelary. Uvari Antony’s ability to bring healing to both Hindu and Catholic devotees illustrates the complex negotiations and complicated identities of his devotees and their shared religious universe. The ritual mutuality among his devotees, and Uvari Antony’s supposed sacral powers over religiously diverse clients and disparate supernatural powers, suggest that the saint and his cult also serve as sacred metaphors for the living ritual dialogue among the religious masses as well as for the ecumenism of

deities characteristic of the popular Catholicism of southern India.

—Selva J. Raj

See also: Antony of Padua; Christianity and Holy People; Miracles; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Aoko, Gaudencia

(c. 1940 C.E.–)

Christian leader, Legio Maria

A Luo from western Kenya born around 1940, Gaudencia Aoko held leadership positions in two African-instituted churches (AICs). Her first involvement was with Legio Maria, Africa’s largest Roman Catholic–influenced AIC, with total membership of between 250,000 and 1.5 million. Aoko joined Legio soon after it started in 1962–1963. Her role was public from the outset. On Aoko’s testimony, she was not Legio’s cofounder, despite many reports saying she was. However, she was largely responsible for the growth of the church in the years after its founding.

When she met founder Simeo Ondeto (called Baba Messias, or “Father Messiah”), he was facing government prosecution. The ninety-year-old woman Legios regard as the “Black Mary,” Legio’s cofounder with Ondeto, was too old to travel widely—a task Aoko undertook. Living in a cultural setting with gerontocratic values, Aoko’s fierce charisma was impressive enough to mitigate the liability of youthfulness. Drawing crowds and converts, Aoko said mass, heard confessions, baptized, exorcised, healed, oversaw the burning of “witchcraft” paraphernalia, and ordained priests.

In its early days, Legio had both male and female priests. When more males joined Legio, men surrounding Ondeto, including Aoko’s ex-brother-in-law, decided to give Legio a male hierarchy. In June 1968, Aoko held a press conference to protest moving Legio from a priesthood open to any adult with a charismatic gift to one open only to men. Legio’s headquarters responded by closing the priesthood to women. Aoko then established a less hierarchical version of Legio, headquartering it adjacent to her natal home. The Kenyan government refused to register it as the Legio Maria Orthodox Catholic Church or the Holy Church of Africa, East Africa. Renamed Communion Church, Aoko’s new church received legal status in 1971.

During her Legio years, Aoko’s photogenic appearance and personal magnetism received much comment. In response, Aoko decided to lead a less public life. She now refuses to be photographed. She has repudiated stories that she went to heaven when her children died; that she died after eating her own placenta, put into a soup made by her co-wife; or that she was taken to heaven in a whirlwind. All

these stories have her being returned to earth to work for Legio. Aoko has based her religious work, both before and after Legio, on the more conventional route of visionary experience and divine blessing, claiming that Christ and Mary, white in color, came to her in a vision telling her to take the path for activism in African Christianity. Aoko's decision to remove herself from the public gaze and biomythography has led to reports that she left religion after Legio or even that she has died.

Post-Legio Aoko has engaged in several business ventures. She was successful enough to practice African woman-woman marriage as a "female husband" three times. African woman-woman marriage is asexual.

Aoko has kept the size of Communion Church small. Like Legio, it has a mostly Latin mass. It also uses rosaries and the twenty-four beaded *catena*, a symbol of devotion to the Roman Catholic Legion of Mary's "Catena Legionis" paean to Mary as a figure of power. It holds praesidium services ("Mary's masses") on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Different from both Legio and Rome, Aoko's church has women priests (who do not celebrate mass on days when they are menstruating). As with Legio, her church uses some Roman Catholic clerical titles. In contradistinction, however, children, adult laity, and clergy all wear the white biretta that Legio restricts to cardinals. For Aoko, the common biretta and communion chalice embroidered on members' religious robes symbolize that "all people are equal" in her church. The *East African Standard* newspaper contended that Aoko "pioneered a challenge to the discriminatory attitude toward women especially in the Catholic Church" (Gonza 1983). For many Kenyans, and for Aoko herself, this is one of her legacies.

—Nancy Schwartz

See also: Gender and Holy People; Mary/Mama; Ondeto, Simeo

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Apollonia

(d. c. 249 C.E.)

Christian martyr

The virgin martyr Apollonia dating from the third century protects against toothache and gum diseases and is the patron of dentists. Her feast day is February 9.

In his letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, included in Eusebius's *The History of the Church*, Dionysios, bishop of Alexandria, recalls Decius's persecution of Christians and describes Apollonia's martyrdom. An elderly deaconess of Alexandria, she was arrested in approximately 249 when she refused to offer to the state gods. They beat the old lady and broke all her teeth when she refused to recite the words they demanded. Upon her refusal to renounce Jesus, they prepared to burn her to death. The deaconess then threw herself on the pyre.

Christian authors embellished this account, most notably making Apollonia a young and beautiful virgin, and stressed sexual advances to show that love for chastity determines heroic behavior. Theologians have also discussed Apollonia's self-immolation: Even though her death seemed certain, is such a suicide acceptable behavior in a martyr, or is it, rather, a failure of trust in God? In art, she is figured with forceps holding a tooth.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Spiritual Guardians

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Apollonius of Tyana

(d. c. 120 C.E.)

Pythagorean holy man, sage

Apollonius was born to wealthy Greek parents at Tyana in Cappadocia (present-day Turkey) in the first century C.E. There are reports of favorable portents before and at his birth. His mother saw an apparition of the god Proteus just before Apollonius was born. Even in early youth, Apollonius was "conspicuous for his beauty and great strength of memory." When he reached his fourteenth year, his father took him to Tarsus to further his education under Euthydemus of Phoenicia, known as a teacher of rhetoric. Apollonius soon grew to dislike the city, and with his father's consent he went to the smaller town of Aegae to study at the temple of Asclepius.

Apollonius discovered Pythagorean doctrine in his sixteenth year and clung to it his whole life. The Pythagorean way of life consisted of developing the qualities of *sophrosune*, or serenity; *dikaiosune*, sincerity, right-mindedness, and commitment to the search for truth and justice; *andreia*, courage; and *philia*, equal active love for all living beings. Those who followed this path abstained from animal foods

and products, and so Apollonius became vegetarian. He renounced wine, wore white linen, allowed his hair to grow long, and never let a razor touch his face.

When his parents died, Apollonius gave most of his inheritance to his older brother and the rest to his poorer relations. He trusted in divine providence and spent five years in total silence. During this time he healed people, quelled riots, and was a benevolent influence in his travels. Apollonius claimed to remember some of his former incarnations and shared the Pythagorean understanding of the transmigration of souls from body to body. He traveled extensively in Asia Minor to further his knowledge and training. His visits may have included Babylonia, Persia, and India.

Apollonius attracted many students. He taught them healing, philosophy, and the Pythagorean way of life. Apollonius aspired to divine revelation by ritual means, and he is reported to have had the ability to understand the language of birds and animals. On many occasions, he predicted the future with pinpoint accuracy. He displayed charismatic abilities and was regarded as not merely a philosopher but also, by some, a demigod, half god and half man.

Numerous miracles were attributed to the sage, and his abilities were extraordinary. Some called him a magus. Apollonius is reported to have died during the reign of the emperor Nerva, or perhaps as late as 120 C.E. Popular tradition recorded his bodily ascension to heaven, and even that he appeared after his passing to certain persons who had doubted an afterlife. He may have lived at least eighty to one hundred years.

Temples and shrines to Apollonius were erected in Asia Minor, and the field where his mother gave birth to him in Tyana became the site of one of his cult shrines. Philostratus of Lemnos wrote the most famous biography on Apollonius about a hundred years after his death. Some of Apollonius's letters to his friends and disciples survive. The Arabic name for him is Master Balinas the Wise. He is cited by Geber (722–815) as having written the Emerald Tablet, a hermetic treatise.

—Phillip Meade

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Death

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Apostles

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian followers of Jesus

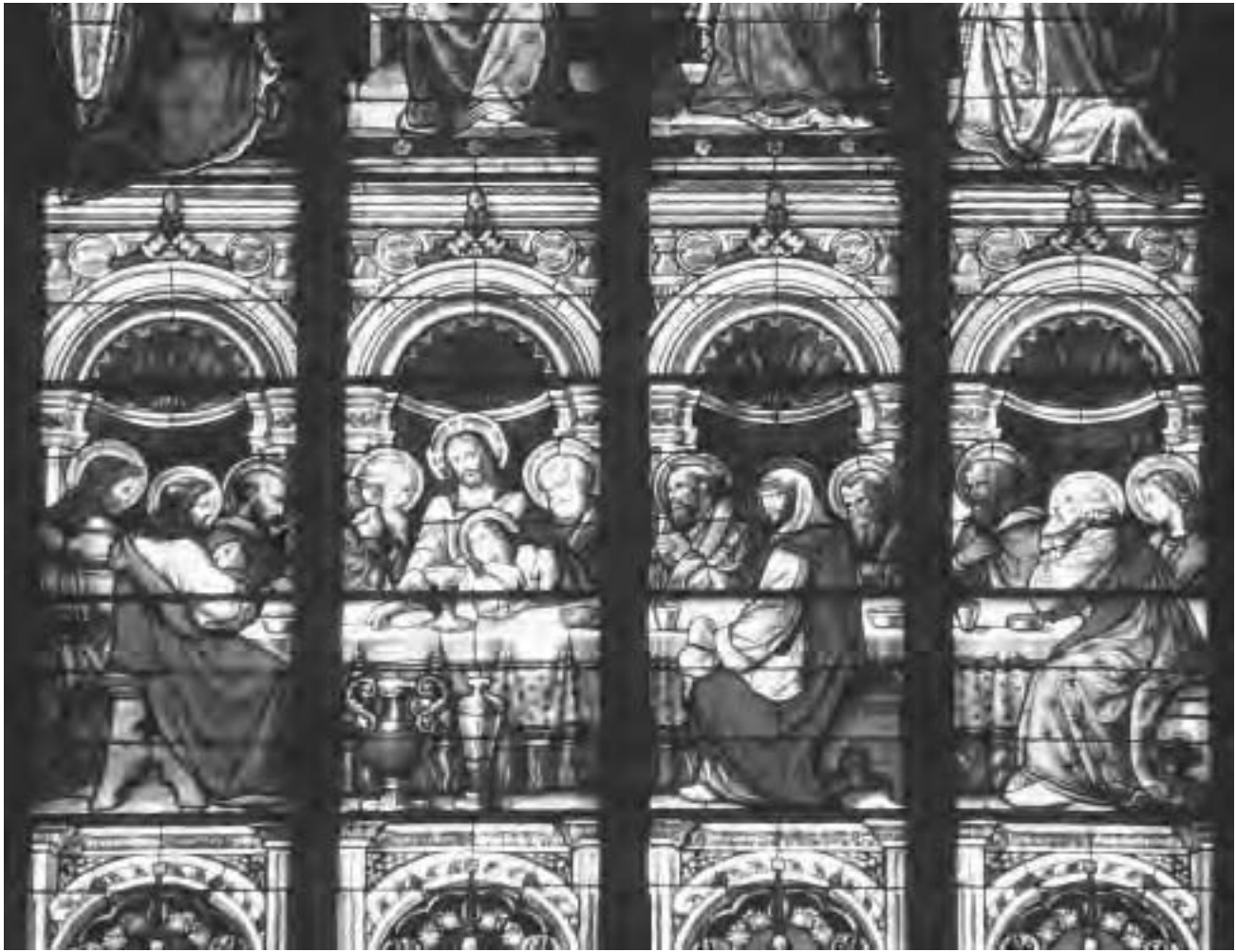
The term "apostle" is an English transliteration of the Greek word *apostolos*, meaning "one who is sent out." Each of the

synoptic gospel writers presents a list of twelve apostles, but the lists do not agree (Matt. 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:13–16; Acts 1:13). This would seem to indicate that the number twelve is symbolic, linking the saving activity of apostolic ministry back to the twelve tribes of Israel during the Exodus (Matt. 19:28).

Matthew, Mark, and Luke/Acts identify the apostles as Jesus' chosen few who are to fulfill his commission to spread the Christian message. They are depicted as the core group of his followers, and thus are in a unique position to absorb his teachings and ultimately carry on his work through the ministry of the church after his death. Matthew and Luke follow Mark's description of Jesus passing along the Sea of Galilee and choosing Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John in order to make them "fishers of men," although Luke's story seems to imply that those who are chosen follow because of the miraculous powers of Jesus rather than because of his authoritative command. Matthew and Luke also follow Mark's description of the more general choosing of the twelve; all three writers suggest that Jesus called to him those who were his "disciples" and from these selected his inner circle (Mark 3:13–15; Matt. 10:1; Luke 6:12–13).

The distinction between the larger group of disciples and the inner circle of the twelve is an important one. Mark, at least, implies that there was a group of followers from whom Jesus chose the twelve when he says that Jesus "called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him. And he appointed twelve" (Mark 3:13–14). Matthew is somewhat vague about how and when the inner circle is defined, as by the time he gives us the apostle list the twelve have already been chosen from the larger group of followers (Matt. 10:1). Luke makes the distinction between the larger group of followers and the inner circle explicit when he tells us that Jesus "called his disciples, and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles" (Luke 6:13).

Little is said about the larger group of disciples in the gospels, with the interesting exception of the women who followed Jesus during his ministry and who are accorded almost an apostolic status by the gospel writers. Luke, for instance, says that as Jesus went through the cities and villages, the twelve were with him and "also some women": Mary called Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and many others (Luke 8:1–3). Mary Magdalene, erroneously connected to the "prostitute" who anointed Jesus by later writers, is given a particularly prominent place among the numerous Marys of the gospels. Although she is with the "other" Mary, the mother of James, when she arrives at the tomb, it is Mary Magdalene whom Matthew, Mark, and Luke feature in their resurrection stories. In John, she actually goes to the tomb alone, holds the resurrected Jesus before his ascension, and reports to the disciples that she has seen the risen Lord.



Apostles at the Last Supper. Nineteenth-century stained glass windows, Madrid Cathedral, Spain. (Art Directors)

The difference between those who were merely followers and those who had been chosen by Jesus to share the more intimate experiences of his ministry becomes even more significant after the crucifixion and resurrection. The first issue that had to be resolved is how the inner circle, which was reduced to eleven after the betrayal and suicide of Judas, would be restored to twelve. In Acts, Peter makes the significance of the number plain when he stands among the brethren and tells them that “scripture had to be fulfilled”: In regard to Judas, “His office, let another take” (Acts 1:16 and 1:20b). Peter is adamant that the one who is to replace Judas must be “one of the men who have accompanied us during the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us” (Acts 1:21). Lots are cast and Matthias is chosen as the one to be “enrolled” as the twelfth apostle.

Peter’s insistence that the twelfth apostle must be someone who was there from the time Jesus was baptized by John until the day “when he was taken up from us” (Acts 1:22) has important implications in regard to Paul’s apostolic standing

in the postresurrection community. As eyewitnesses, the twelve, now including Matthias, represent the authentication of the postresurrection proclamation of the teachings of Jesus. Because Paul was not among the followers of Jesus, and in fact was a persecutor of Christians until his experience on the rode to Damascus, he would not fulfill Peter’s criteria for being an apostle.

But Paul defends his own apostleship, claiming that he was set apart by God before he was born to receive the “revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:15 and 1:12). Indeed, he claims that his own postresurrection experience of Jesus is more important than the pre-death, eyewitness experiences of the original apostles in that they did not receive their final apostolic confirmation or come to understand the true meaning of the gospel message until after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Thus, at least according to Paul, he was chosen as an apostle, through the grace of God, to fulfill the role of spreading the Christian message to the wider, gentile community.

The destruction of the Temple in the last third of the first century, the nonrealization of the *parousia* (“second coming”), and the passing of the original apostolic community forced a reassessment of the fate of the early church and made it necessary to rethink how authority was to be understood. In a period when eschatological expectation had declined, the idea of an apostle as one commissioned to spread the message of Jesus before his imminent return was redefined. From the end of the first century forward, the apostolic commission was bestowed upon those who would work to develop the structure of the Christian community.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Andrew; Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; Mary Magdalene; Paul; Peter

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Apotheosis

Polytheistic religions have a strong tendency to apotheose their holy people—to declare them to be gods. This process of apotheosis or deification can be a formal proceeding, such as the Roman Senate declaring Augustus Caesar to be a god after his death in 14 C.E., or it can be a deification in popular belief, such as the general belief that the Greek hero Herakles was raised to the ranks of the gods after his death. Indeed, the Greek Euhemerus in approximately 320 B.C.E. argued that all gods developed from legends about what were originally historical people who were great leaders. Similarly, the Chinese have traditionally emphasized the human origin of gods, promoted to godhood for their merit. In Christianity, one early sect argued that Jesus of Nazareth was a god “by promotion” in just this way, although this view was later declared to be heretical. With that exception, monotheism—the belief in a single god—does not allow scope for belief in deification as a possible end result of holiness during life.

Greek heroes, often said to be the children of one human parent and one divine one, were often raised to the ranks of the gods. This belief continued well into historical times; for example, when Plotinus, the founder of Neoplatonism, died in 270 C.E., an oracle proclaimed that he had gone to be a companion of the gods. Over time, though, Greco-Roman religion tended to reserve belief in apotheosis for rulers. Pre-existent Greek belief that great rulers joined the gods upon death became much more central after the deification of Alexander the Great after his death in 323 B.C.E. Soon, Hel-

lenistic rulers declared themselves to be state gods while still alive, a practice adopted by Roman emperors soon after the creation of the empire. Most rulers, however, enjoyed a very short-lived cult, as the same process was applied to each of their successors; only Alexander of Macedon and Augustus Caesar had a long career as state gods.

Heroes in other cultures have enjoyed the same process of apotheosis. One version of the legend of the Toltec hero Quetzalcoatl, tells that when he died by setting himself on fire he became the morning star. This apotheosis of heroic figures is especially prevalent in West African belief, where many of the 400 to 600 *orisha* (deities) are believed to have originally lived on earth as human beings, deified because of their great merits. For example, Shango, now god of thunder and lightning, is believed to have been the king of Old Oyo in what is now western Nigeria. Similarly, the Yoruba ruler Obatala, who lived in about 1000, has become synonymous with the god he represented in his lifetime. Beyond West Africa, the Rwandan princess Nyabingi in the second half of the eighteenth century, a famous rainmaker, was posthumously deified and is believed to speak through an organized system of mediums to her people. This African inclination to deify heroes has also expanded to other religions now practiced by Africans. For example, the Muslim prophet François Makandal of Haiti (d. 1758), leader of a long Haitian resistance movement, has been deified as a spirit in Haitian Vodou—although such a notion would be repellent to most Muslims.

Deification of great souls who served the state or otherwise proved their greatness is more central to Shinto than to any other religion. In part because Shinto was codified as a religion only in the early modern period as a means to strengthen the state and in reaction to foreign religions, veneration of such figures has served political as well as religious goals. Great mortals are apotheosed as *kami*, protective spirits. Thus Fujiwara no Kamatari (614–669), founder of the Fujiwara family and leader of the Taika reform movement that made Japan a centralized empire, later came to be recognized as a great god. Several emperors have been enshrined as *kami*, such as Ōjin and Meiji—whose birthday is a national holiday in Japan. The process of ruler deification could be very prosaic; for example, the great shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) ordered in his will that his body be installed as a deity in a newly built shrine. People of lesser status could be proclaimed *kami* for special virtues, especially loyalty and courage—all Japanese killed in action in World War II are enshrined as *kami* at the Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo, and the kamikaze are regarded as particularly holy because of the purity of their sacrifice. Less flamboyantly, Nogi Maresuke and his wife Shizuko committed suicide in 1912 on the day of Emperor Meiji’s funeral and have been enshrined as models of loyalty. There are also

cases of spirits enshrined as kami to avert their anger: A famous case is that of Tenjin, an administrator of the ninth century who was falsely accused of misconduct in office and banished. After his death, Kyoto was devastated by fires and pestilence, divine retribution for Tenjin's mistreatment. So a major shrine was built to him, and he became in time an important member of the Shinto pantheon.

China also has often deified servants of the state, such as the third-century general Guandi, now recognized as god of war. Buddhist *arahants* (fully enlightened people who will not be reborn) have also developed in Chinese belief in the direction of minor deities. But Daoism went the furthest in making apotheosis a central characteristic of holy people. One of the central goals of Daoism is to make oneself immortal. This is not necessarily done by superior virtue; Daoists have spent millennia questing for the alchemical secret of immortality, or practicing special exercises (often sexual) to gain eternal life. In popular belief, though, many Daoist deities were humans who won immortality through their prayers and self-cultivation, such as the Daoist goddess Bixia Yuanjun. Many Daoist holy people were officially granted divine status by emperors, especially in the Tang (618–907) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties. One of the great goals of Daoism is *fei-sheng*—ascending to heaven in broad daylight to join the ranks of the gods.

The process of declaring great holy people to be gods either during their lifetimes or afterward has by no means ended. To give just one recent example, Kitamura Sayo, founder of a new Japanese religion, is believed to have ascended to heaven in 1967, and followers of the sect now venerate her as a living god.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Alexander the Great; Augustus; Daoism and Holy People; Greek Ruler Cult; Herakles; Kamikaze of World War II; Makandal, François; Nogi Maresuke and Shizuko; Nyabingi; Orishas; Plotinus; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Shangó

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Aquila and Prisca (Priscilla)

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian evangelists, martyrs

A well-born Jewish married couple living during the reign of Claudius (37–54 C.E.), tent makers Aquila and Prisca fled Rome in 49 in response to an edict expelling followers of Judaism from Rome. They settled in Corinth, where they met the Christian apostle Paul, who had lately arrived from Athens (Acts 18:1–3). It is unclear whether Aquila and

Prisca had already converted to Christianity by the time they met Paul or were converted under his persuasive direction. Nevertheless, Paul became fast friends with them, having found common ground in a shared heritage and occupation (Acts 18:3).

In 52/53, when Paul left for Syria and Jerusalem, Aquila and Prisca went with him. They did not accompany him on his entire journey, however, but remained at Ephesus, where they gathered about them a small community of Christians (Acts 18:18–21). Aquila and Prisca were certainly involved in Christian evangelization at Ephesus: Acts 18:26 mentions that they instructed a Jewish Alexandrian named Apollos, identified as an eloquent and learned man, explaining to him “the way of God more accurately.” Later, during Paul's more than two-year stay at Ephesus, Aquila and Prisca helped him found a Christian community there: The “church” that was housed in their home is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 19.

The couple eventually returned to Rome: Paul greets Prisca and Aquila in Romans 16:3 as his helpers who, at the risk of their own lives, aided the spread of Christianity and again housed a Christian church in their home. They are believed to have returned to Ephesus again after Rome (2 Tim. 4:19), but little is known of their final fate. Possibly they were martyred by beheading in either Asia Minor or in Rome. Their feast day is July 8.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Aquinas

See Thomas Aquinas

Arap Koilegen, Kipchomber

(d. 1916 C.E.)

Kipsigis prophet, nationalist leader

The Kenyan Kipchomber Arap Koilegen was the son of Kimnyole from the famous Nandi Orgoiyot family. Before his death in 1890, Kimnyole instructed his sons not to accept a leadership position in Nandi. Arap Koilegen took over the spiritual and political leadership of the Kipsigis people, who were cousins to the Nandi. His brother, Koitalel arap Samoei,

ruled the Nandi community as his father's successor, despite his father's instructions.

Arap Koilegen was a powerful spiritual and political leader. The Kipsigis believed that his prophetic powers came from Asis (God), and Arap Koilegen is reported to have said that he was Asis's son. He prophesied many things during his lifetime, but only a few of the predictions are remembered today. Very often, people only recall that he said certain things when they see them happening.

When the British colonial powers occupied Kipsigis land in the early 1900s, Arap Koilegen led the resistance to British rule. His leadership and guidance were accepted by the Nandi, the Kisii, and the Luo communities. His influence among the Kipsigis was so strong that at one time British authorities expressed their inability to rule them. Douglas Braumage, the British district commissioner of Kericho, once said that the Kipsigis government was more efficient than the British administration but that it had been effectively dovetailed into British rule. He advised the British government that "If nothing is done to these people in four months to come then I don't see ourselves ruling in this part of the country."

Arap Koilegen's power among the Kipsigis is evident in a report of another district commissioner from 1911. Unhappy with the British use of Kipsigis people to spy for them, Arap Koilegen severely punished those who cooperated. "On one occasion we ourselves were speaking to a young headman who had incurred the displeasure of the Orgoiyot arap Koilegen," wrote the commissioner. Arap Koilegen had told the man that he would die the next day. "The man accepted the decision with fatalistic calm; going to his house, he lay down to die and news of his death reached us the following morning."

The British administration exiled Arap Koilegen to Nyeri in 1913, and he died in 1916. His influence among the Kipsigis is still felt. On March 6, 2003, more than 20,000 Kipsigis met for a cleansing ceremony at the site where his home had been burned down under the influence of the missionaries and British administrators.

—Adam K. arap Chepkwony

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Arjan

(1563–1606 C.E.)

Sikh guru, hymn writer, martyr

Guru Ramdas nominated his eighteen-year-old son Arjan as the fifth Sikh guru in 1581. The most prolific writer of all the gurus, Arjan added his many compositions to the four volumes created by Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas, and other Hindu saints of the *bhakti* (devotional) tradition. His systematic ordering of this mass of material in 1604 is now known as the *Kartarpur Pothi*. It contains, with the exception of the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the text of the *Adi Granth*, also called *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Under Guru Arjan, the Sikh community continued to flourish at the established center of Ramdaspur (the modern Amritsar, India) and expanded to more towns, including Tarn Taran, Sri Hargobindpur, and Kartarpur. Events in the Mughal Empire would soon affect the community, however, as the death of Emperor Akbar, known for his tolerance of all religions, led to the enthronement of his son Jahangir in October 1605. Less than a year later, in May 1606, Guru Arjan was called to Lahore by the new emperor and asked to swear his loyalty to the empire and the emperor. Guru Arjan refused and was subsequently tortured and killed. For the Sikh community, Guru Arjan had died the death of a martyr, refusing to renounce his faith and give his allegiance to the empire.

Building on the ideas of previous gurus, Arjan saw God as *Patshah* (emperor) of the Sikhs. The guru is God's representative on earth. Thus, Sikh gurus hold ultimate spiritual and temporal power. In this view, while in the spiritual realm one should give one's prayers and trust to God in return for his protection, so, too, in the worldly realm one should give one's tribute and trust to the guru, who in return gives protection from enemies. Indeed, the guru, according to Arjan, is God (*par-brahm*), and Sikhs were expected to remember him at all times. Thus, Sikhs were no longer looking to Lahore, the Mughal seat of power in Punjab, as their center, but rather to the Sikh seat of power at Ramdaspur.

The hymns of Guru Arjan also assign new attributes to God. He is the annihilator of the enemy (*satr-dahan*), the remover of misery (*dukh-banjan*), and the one who frees people from anxiety (*achint*). God, for Arjan, takes on the role as protector in both the spiritual and temporal realm, a protection that is dependent on complete submission to him.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Hargobind; Hereditary Holiness; Intermediaries; Ramdas; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Arnulf of Metz

(582–641 C.E.)

Christian monk, archbishop, statesman

Well educated in letters and in Christian virtue, Arnulf of Metz was one of the few civilizing forces of his time in Western Europe. He contributed to peace within church and state, and his virtue and charity provided a role model for the people around him. His life had long-term political, as well as spiritual, consequences. Arnulf was an ancestor of the Carolingian dynasty of Frankish kings, the most famous of whom is his great-great-grandson Charlemagne.

Arnulf was born into one of the leading families of the Frankish kingdom in 582. His earliest service was at the court of King Theodebert II of Austrasia (r. 595–612), where he became the king's most trusted adviser. The priorities of Arnulf's early career mirrored that of other nobles: military pursuits and the daily tasks of administering his estates. His marriage to a Frankish noblewoman produced two sons.

Arnulf was also dedicated to serving the church and was named archbishop of Metz sometime after 611, although legend suggests that he accepted the honor reluctantly. In that position, he continued to advise the kings and to mediate in the many civil wars of that period. He became the tutor of the young King Dagobert I (r. 621–637). Archbishop Arnulf protected the rights of his flock at the royal court and acted as a conduit of royal justice to the people in his diocese. He exhibited lavish charity toward the sick and the impoverished, even to the point of performing miraculous healings and multiplications of food.

Arnulf became increasingly uneasy in his secular duties. In about 626, he resigned his bishopric and withdrew to a hermitage at Habend (the future monastery of Remiremont) in the Vosges Mountains. There he lived in solitude and prayer until his death in 641.

Having St. Arnulf as a founder of their dynasty allowed the Carolingian kings to claim "holy stock." This gave them a powerful counter (one with ecclesiastical sanction) to the "charisma of blood" on which the previous dynasty, the Merovingians, had staked their claim to the throne. Arnulf's tomb in the basilica of the Holy Apostles at Metz, which eventually took Arnulf's name, became a cult center for the family. Carolingian court historians attributed the success of their patrons in part to the virtues of their saintly ancestor. His feast day is July 18.

—Elaine M. Beretz

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People**References and further reading:**

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Artemidorus

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Ancient Greek interpreter of dreams

The place of Artemidorus in the culture of holiness is connected to the wider Greco-Roman tradition of dream interpretation. Throughout antiquity, many dreams were thought to have been sent by the gods and for this reason to possess an abiding significance for humans. The difficulty, of course, lay in ascertaining precisely which of these dreams were divine and significant. Artemidorus's *Oneirocritica* (Interpretation of dreams), a five-volume work written in the second century, is a critical manual outlining the nature of dreams.

Unlike the oracular fashion of dream interpretation found in the Hebrew scriptures (as practiced by Joseph and Daniel, for instance), Artemidorus's treatment was systematic. He distinguished between mere nocturnal manifestations of daytime concerns (*enhyponia*), complex dreams requiring symbolic analysis (*oneiroi*), and explicit messages from the gods (*chrematismata*). Furthermore, he emphasized that valid explication must account for the customs of the dreamer's native land as well as for his age, occupation, wealth, and identity. In his scientific schematization and empirical method, Artemidorus anticipated the work of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. For ancient readers, the *Oneirocritica* provided a rational means for understanding the cryptic revelations of the gods.

—Christopher McDonough

See also: Intermediaries**References and further reading:**

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Aryadeva

(2nd or 3rd cent. C.E.)

In the Buddhist tradition, two Aryadevas are mentioned. One was a contemporary of Nagarjuna in the second or third century and the founder of the Madhyamaka school; the other was a practitioner of tantric Buddhism active around the seventh or the eighth century. The first Aryadeva (Tib.: 'phags pa lha; Chin.: Sheng tip; Jap.: Shodaiba) defended Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka tenets against both Buddhist and non-Buddhist opponents. He is known by such names as Kanadeva, Nilanetra, Pingalanetra, Pingalacaksuh, and Karnaripa, all names referring to the fact that he had blue eyes or was blind in one eye. He is considered to have been a descendant of a brahminical family of southern India.

Dating Aryadeva has been problematic because it is also difficult to date his teacher, Nagarjuna. Aryadeva is said to have been born either in southern India or in Ceylon. Xuanzang's *Xiyuji* (Travel to the western realm) and Candrakirti's commentary on Aryadeva's *Catuhśataka* (The four hundred) count him as a native of Ceylon who came to southern India.

Scholars disagree as to which of the works attributed to Aryadeva are authentically his. However, there is little doubt that the *Catuhśataka* was authored by him. This text is an early explanation of how a student may acquire the two requisites for enlightenment: the equipment (*sambhara*) of knowledge (*jnana*) and merit (*punya*). In this sense, the text can be understood as a precursor to Santideva's acclaimed text, the *Bodhicaryavatara*, which became famous through the debate of Samye.

Aryadeva, the renowned teacher of the Middle (Madhyamaka), although stabbed by a *tirthika* (non-Buddhist) and dying, cautioned his disciples not to pursue the murderer. Such an attitude most likely stemmed from his understanding of the nonsubstantiality of existence, that is, the way of emptiness (*sunya-vada*).

—Leslie S. Kawamura

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Asanga

(c. 4th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist monk, school founder

According to tradition, Asanga established the Yogacara (Buddhist mentalistic trend), a branch of Mahayana Buddhism in India, when he received teachings from Maitreya, who dwelt in Tushita Heaven. Because this trend focuses on the importance of the mind in human cognition, it is also known as “mind only” (*cittamatra*) or “consciousness only” (*vijnaptimatra*).

Asanga, born in the Gandara region of present-day Pakistan in the city of Purusapura (the modern Peshawar) as the third son of Prasannasila (or Prakasasila), was probably active around the fourth or fifth century. Buddhist sources tell the story of his encounter with Maitreya, which reportedly took place after Asanga spent twelve years in a cave meditating on Maitreya in the hope of meeting him. Having no luck, Asanga finally left the cave disgusted and encountered a dog infested with maggots. About to remove the worms with his hands, he saw that if he did so, the worms would perish, and that if the worms were not removed, the dog would perish. Thus, he shut his eyes and was about to remove them by using his tongue when the dog disappeared. It was at this point that Asanga beheld Maitreya. Because of Asanga's great compassion, Maitreya became his spiritual teacher (Maitreya-natha) and rewarded him with the Mahayana doctrines, now called the “Five Treatises of Maitreya.”

By means of such teachings, Asanga systematically presented the teachings of the Yogacara tradition, prescribing a graduated path (*marga*) of meditative praxis (*yogacara*), by which one attains the awakened state (*bodhi*).

Asanga was a prolific writer. The works attributed to him and found in the Tibetan and Chinese Buddhist canons total over twenty-one titles. Among them is a monumental encyclopedic work known as the *Yogacara-bhumi-sastra*. According to the Tibetan historian Bu-ston, Vasubandhu, his brother, is reported to have said this about it:

Alas, Asanga, residing in the forest
Has practiced meditation for twelve years.
Without having attained anything but this meditation,
He has founded a system so difficult and burdensome,
That it can be carried only by an elephant.
(Bu-ston 1931–1932, 2:143)

By means of these texts, Asanga systematized the Buddha's teachings into eight kinds of cognitions (*vijnana*), the three defining characteristics of reality (*trisvabhava* or *trilaksana*), and a system of praxis made up of the five paths (*pancamarga*) and the ten *bodhisattva* stages (*dasabhumi*). This tradition spread to Tibet, where it became the foundation for the Vajrayana, or Tantric, tradition, and into China,

where it became the basis for the Faxiang school (*zong*) of Buddhism.

—Leslie S. Kawamura

See also: Action in the World; Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Vasubandhu

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Ascetics as Holy People

Almost all the world religions include at least some element of asceticism, originally a Greek term that literally means “exercise.” In religious terms, the dominant element of asceticism is training, disciplining, or subduing the body, thus allowing mind and spirit to focus on higher truths without being distracted by “the world.” The most common ascetic practices are fasting, celibacy, poverty, seclusion, and rejection of home and family. Asceticism is suspect to mainstream modern Western culture, with its firm emphasis on alleviating pain as the highest good—and indeed, ascetic practices sometimes sound more like self-torture than any sort of spiritual exercise. Although abuses of asceticism can occur, stressing pain for the sake of the pain itself, as asceticism occurs among the holy people of the world it is always a tool, rather than an end in itself. Ascetic practices are rather suspect in the religions that most emphasize the goodness of the created world, such as Judaism and Islam, but even in these cases spiritual adepts have explored the value of ascetic disciplines. Perhaps the only exceptions are Zoroastrianism, which emphasizes the human’s duty to care for physical and mental health, and the Baha’i faith. Other religions, such as Jainism, have embraced asceticism as a fundamental part of any religious life, for laypeople as well as professional ascetics.

Religions differ widely over the proper level of asceticism to be allowed. Emphasis on extreme asceticism has sometimes caused reactions in splinter groups. Thus Buddhism rejected a high level of asceticism after Gautama, before becoming the Buddha, passed through six years of extreme self-abuse, nearly dying of it, and finally decided that the ascetic path could not lead him to awakening. This legend was central in creating the Buddhist Middle Path between self-indulgence and self-mortification. Monks are still held to a moderate daily routine that rejects the extremes of both hedonism and asceticism. Similarly, in Christianity cenobitic (communal) monasticism grew up in reaction to the harsh self-discipline of independent hermits of the Egyptian and Syrian deserts.

Throughout the hagiographical tradition, though, holy people have engaged in more ascetic practices than the pop-

ulation at large, usually proceeding two or three degrees beyond what is expected among the merely pious. Thus in Hinduism, a person must move to extremes before his or her ascetic discipline attracts comment, while among modern Protestant Christians a person who merely fasts occasionally will be worthy of note. In all cases, asceticism is based upon separation from the *normal*, and the goal is to liberate the practitioner from the mundane. In Hinduism, the ideal is that all men should pass through four stages of life, culminating in that of the renunciant who retires from involvement in the world as a precondition for higher spiritual development. This is also the traditional Christian ideal, and that of Neoplatonists such as Plotinus (c. 204/205–270).

Christianity has also stressed ascetic practices as penance for sin, and most notably in late antiquity and the early modern period many saints especially stood out as holy in the consciousness of the time because of their extremely austere lives of penance. Perhaps closest to this in other religions is Jainism’s belief that the soul can only be liberated by asceticism, which literally burns away accumulated karma. Islam emphasizes further than Christianity that the ascetic is opened to divine inspiration—those who purify their hearts with spiritual exercises toward this goal are an important category of holy people in Islam. In all of these traditions, ascetic practices by holy people can be an overt criticism of an overly luxurious society. The great Muslim preacher al-Hasan al-Basri (642–728), who led a frugal life as a criticism of the caliphal court, built a spiritual discipline based on contempt for worldly goods. Asceticism can be an even more direct weapon, as when Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) fasted to end the civil war in postcolonial India, or in the legend that Patrick of Ireland “fasted against God,” refusing to eat for forty days until he had won major concessions for the people of Ireland.

In some religions, extreme asceticism is believed to bring clearly manifest powers to the practitioner. In both Hinduism and Jainism, the *sadhus* (renunciants) are believed by their austerity and meditation to develop spiritual and even magical powers—a belief in the efficacy of asceticism that goes back to at least 1500 B.C.E. *Tapas* (Hindu asceticism) literally means “heat,” a creative heat that is generated to elevate the ascetic beyond normal human experience. This force can be stored up, making great ascetics, such as Gorakhnath (c. 1200), great miracle workers. Many Hindu stories tell of gods trying to prevent ascetics from gaining too much power, usually by trying to seduce holy people or make them angry. This is a very different notion from the Christian belief that asceticism, above all, tames the body, and is based on a very different relationship between body and soul that does not reject the world as tempting or evil. Especially striking is that in Hinduism, the intent of temptation is not to damn the subject but to lower him or her to the

status of everyday humanity. Japanese legend tells that En no Ozunu (late seventh to early eighth centuries), founder of the Japanese cult of mountain-worship, mastered magical practices by retreating to a mountain and there practicing asceticism. Often the “magical powers” of such ascetic holy people includes access to divine secrets. This linkage of asceticism and hidden knowledge also occurs in an early strand of Jewish mysticism (seventh to eleventh centuries) called *markavah* (chariot) mysticism. A strict ascetic and contemplative regime, it was believed, could make the practitioner a “chariot rider,” able to ascend like Ezekiel to heaven in a fiery chariot and then return to earth to tell its secrets.

The most common form of asceticism is fasting, either denying oneself food completely for more or less extended periods or restricting oneself to a very limited diet. Often holy people eat only bread and water, or only vegetable products (like the Pythagoreans), or they may reject wine; in the case of Hinduism, advanced yogis live only on milk. Historically, holy people have sometimes practiced fasting to the point of death. Indeed, in Jainism, one of the highest ideals is self-starvation. Christianity also admires such extreme fasting, but with a twist: Hagiographers admire extremely ascetic saints but often introduce an element of divine warning that makes them behave with more moderation. Thus the sixth-century Irish abbess Íte, in legend, practiced extreme fasting and refused to ease her discipline even when an angel told her not to be so hard on herself—finally, the angel forced her. Thus, she was able to have her cake and eat it, too: The spiritual longing was clearly presented for admiration, but the saint was able to survive to play a continuing role in the world. Legends of holy people delighting in astonishing feats of self-denial should be taken more as evidence of popular attitudes toward asceticism than as literal truth. Thus, a number of Christian female mystics of the later Middle Ages are reported to have lived on nothing but the consecrated eucharistic elements. The Indian sufi Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar (1175–1265) practiced a forty-day retreat, fasting—and hanging upside down in a well—for the entire time. And Jain *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) such as Mahavira (c. 500 B.C.E.) were so attuned to the spiritual world that they no longer needed to eat at all.

Choice of clothing is also recognized as an ascetic discipline. Most notable in this respect are the naked, or “air-clothed” (*digambara*), ascetics of India, both Hindu and Jain. They are completely subject to the elements, demonstrating in this way their conquest of passion. It should be noted that this has been almost completely a male prerogative. One of the few holy women who went naked was the twelfth-century Mahadeviyakka, who was at first criticized for such unfemale behavior, but she proved her spiritual status to a tribunal of holy men. Lesser Hindu ascetics wear a loincloth as a symbol of renunciation. In societies where clothing marks

status, to attire oneself as a beggar is an act of deep renunciation, as in the case of Gangamata Goswami (eighteenth century), who gave up his rule of Bengal, including fine clothes and jewelry. For many holy people, setting themselves apart from secular society with special clothing is the starting point of holiness. For example, the robes of Buddhist monks were originally made of rags sewn together, as was the habit of Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226)—who began his religious life by stripping off all his clothes and returning them to his father. Roman Catholic monks and nuns until the 1960s wore special clothing, and sufis wear a distinctive wool garment, the *khirqa* (Arabic “rag”), which symbolizes sufi rejection of the world. It should be noted, however, that some holy people have repudiated the idea of special clothing as a path to holiness. As the Indian poet-saint Kabir (c. 1450–1518) said, if it is possible to gain release from the world by going without clothes, the deer in the forest would be the first to attain it.

Filth has a strong attraction for holy ascetics, again as a rejection of the comforts of the world and as a sign that they have indeed managed to rise above the human condition. At least part of the awed admiration in which odoriferous ascetics were held must have arisen from amazement that a person could voluntarily subject himself or herself to such conditions, and even seem to enjoy it. For example, it is said of the Muslim ascetic Ibrahim b. Adham (c. 730–777 or 790) that one of the three times he was really happy was when he looked at the fur cloak he was wearing and couldn’t tell where the fur ended and the lice began, there were so many. Hindu ascetics leave their hair long and matted; Christian saint Benedict of Aniane rejected bathing as an improper luxury. The prevalence of such unhygienic saints incline one to redefine the “odor of sanctity.” Again, though, practice is not consistent. The dirty holy person has no place in Judaism, for example, a religion that places great emphasis on personal hygiene as a reflection of divine purity.

Still other ascetics have deliberately inflicted pain upon themselves through beatings, forced wakefulness, binding and wearing of chains, and even self-mutilation. An important Hindu ascetic practice is the five-fire penance, where one sits in the heat of the sun all day surrounded by four fires. This seems equivalent to the practice, in colder climes, of standing in cold water up to the neck while reciting psalms. In general, though, Christian holy people appear to have specialized more than those of other religions in purposeful infliction of pain. Tales of the desert hermits are replete with accounts of saints who refused to lie down to sleep or who abused themselves in other ways. Such extreme asceticism revived in other periods. For example, the tenth and eleventh centuries saw several saints who wore metal breastplates, or chains wrapped so tightly around their bodies that they grew into the flesh, and so on. The hair shirt, a garment

of rough goat- or horsehair that irritates the skin, is a uniquely Christian ascetic device. In all these cases, the purpose of pain was to discipline the body, making it conform to the longings of the soul.

Sometimes the infliction of pain is considered part of a special trial to prove one's ability to enter upon a deeply religious life. This theme is especially common in Buddhism, which tells admiringly of the Chan master Yang-shan Hui-chi (c. 810–c. 887), who chopped off two fingers to prove to his parents how determined he was to become a monk, and the second Chan patriarch Hui-k'ō (487–593), who cut off his left arm to show his serious intent when Bodhidharma at first refused to accept him as a disciple. Bodhidharma (d. 530) himself meditated motionless for so long that his legs fell off, and he is said to have cut off his eyelids so he would not fall asleep—legend says that a tea plant sprang from the ground where he threw his eyelids down, and that tea's ability to prevent sleep is a special gift of this holy man. Similar to Bodhidharma is the tale of the Ethiopian Christian Takla Haymanot (d. 1313), who prayed standing for so many years that one of his legs broke and came loose from his body. Another extreme case of initiatory mutilation is that of Naropa (956–1040), who became a great Buddhist tantric master. His master, Tilopa, was at first unwilling to accept Naropa as a disciple and only agreed after Naropa passed a series of painful tests, including crushing his penis between two rocks. Controlled self-injury is also important to Amerindian religious traditions, ranging from the auto-sacrifice (bleeding oneself from the ears, tongue, or penis) of Mesoamerican rulers and priests to the Plains Indians' practice of scarifying their flesh in ritual prayer, an ascetic method especially pronounced in the visionary Sitting Bull.

Leaving the familiar world as an ascetic practice can take a variety of forms, including leaving home to join a monastic community or become an independent hermit, adopting a permanently wandering lifestyle, or adopting very restricted living conditions. In the last category fall the Christian recluses, walled up in a single cell for life, and the stylite ("pillar-sitting") saints, who practiced the astonishing ascetic feat of living sometimes for decades sitting on top of a pillar. In the Christian case, the more extreme the renunciation, the more fame the practitioner could win in the popular eye. For example, thousands came to the first great pillar-saint, Simeon Stylites (c. 390–459) for advice and blessing, and such great recluses as Wiborada (d. 926) and the fourteenth-century Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1419) won a very high spiritual status even though they were women. Less extreme forms of separation from the familiar can include pilgrimage to holy places or temporary periods of retreat for prayer and contemplation.

Two of the most productive manifestations of the ascetic wandering of holy people in world history have been

the Irish practice of *peregrinatio* in the early Middle Ages and the centuries-long Buddhist quest for holy texts. Irish *peregrinatio*, ascetic homelessness, was above all an ascetic practice: Like Abraham, the practitioner gave up home and family and, trusting in God, went wherever God might direct them. Starting in the sixth century, accounts tell of zealous monks setting out to sea in small boats with neither oars nor rudders; survivors came to shore in other parts of Ireland, Iceland, England, or on the European Continent. The highest ideal of *peregrinatio* is expressed in the legend of Brendan the Navigator (c. 486–575), who sailed with a crew of monks on a long quest for the Isles of the Blessed, and may have reached North America in the process. But this ascetic ideal also produced considerable numbers of more practical monks (and a few nuns), who moved with their communities to Scotland, England, and many other countries of Europe. Once they settled, many of these monks, such as Columbanus (543–615) and the followers of Colum Cille (521–597), found themselves increasingly active as missionaries, playing an important role in the spread of Christianity throughout northern Europe. In a reversed case, asceticism was the by-product of Buddhist ventures abroad to find and copy holy texts or to study under the Buddhist masters in more spiritually advanced lands. Buddhist holy men often underwent great hardship, besides the alienation of leaving family, land, and native language for extended periods, in pursuit of this goal.

Usually religious traditions speak in favor even of extreme asceticism, recognizing ascetic practices as something that marks out a person of superior determination, resolve, and closeness to the divine (without which they could never persist in their severe self-discipline). A shocking number of Christian saints appear to have cut their lives short with their austerities; the number of saints who died in young adulthood, especially in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, a period that valued great asceticism, suggests that the rigor of the saints undermined the health of many. This result produced an anti-ascetic reaction. Philip Neri (1515–1595), for example, advocated care for others rather than abuse of self, and once gave a layman permission to wear a hair shirt—but only over his regular clothes. Protestant reformers in general also denounced asceticism. Earlier periods, too, saw statements that asceticism could be carried too far. For example, Paula (347–404) lived such an ascetic life in Rome that one of her daughters died of it. Her spiritual adviser, Jerome, was driven out of town for his advocacy of such rigor. But it should be noted that both Paula and Jerome are venerated as Christian saints—Jerome most often appears in Christian art pummeling his bare chest with a stone. The power of ascetics to astonish the general populace has over the centuries and around the world been an impor-

tant tool that brings people to listen to the messages of holy people.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Basri, al-Hasan al-; Benedict of Aniane; Bodhidharma; Colum Cille; Columbanus; En no Ozunu; Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gangamata Goswamini; Gautama; Hermits; Jerome; Julian of Norwich; Kabir; Mahadeviyakka; Mahavira; Monasticism and Holy People; Naropa; Neri, Philip; Patrick; Paula; Plotinus; Sadhus; Sexuality and Holy People; Simeon the Stylite; Sitting Bull; Takla Haymanot; Tapas; Tilopa; Wealth and Poverty; Wiborada

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Ashoka

(3rd cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist emperor

Ashoka, a famous Buddhist emperor of third-century B.C.E. India, is also known by the names Devanampiya (Darling of the gods) and Piyadassin (Kind-looking). In the history of Buddhism he is generally ranked in importance second only to Shakyamuni Buddha. Ashoka's father, King Bindusara, disliked him because of his ugly appearance. It took a long time for him to win his father's attention. After he proved his statesmanship by quelling a rebellion, he was appointed governor of Avanti province. Later, when Bindusara was dying, Ashoka came to the capital, Pataliputra, and declared himself king. This seems to have resulted in a protracted civil war. But three years later, after killing other claimants to the throne, he managed to get himself anointed as the king.

Initially, he had a malicious and impetuous nature and became notorious as Candashoka (Ashoka the Ferocious). However, as he himself points out in one of his inscriptions, a turning point came in his life after he waged a war against the kingdom of Kalinga. The death and destruction that he witnessed here made him so remorseful that he gave up war. Thereafter, he completely devoted himself to the work of *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) and became known as Dharmashoka (Ashoka the Righteous). According to another tradition, his heart changed after he met a young Buddhist monk in his prison where individuals were randomly tortured and killed. He found this monk seemingly immune to all the sufferings inflicted upon him. Tremendously impressed by this, Ashoka converted to Buddhism, destroyed

the prison, and undertook the meritorious task of building 84,000 *stupas* (shrines) across the empire.

Ashoka is also credited with sending Buddhist missionaries to different countries and patronizing the Third Buddhist Council. Some scholars think that he may have even become a Buddhist monk or donned the robe of a monk for some time. Through his edicts and rock inscriptions engraved on cliff faces and stone pillars, he set forth policies of righteous kingship. These policies were based upon active social concern, religious tolerance, nonviolence, ecological awareness, and animal welfare.

According to the *Divyavadana* (a collection of moral stories), toward the end of Ashoka's life his ministers became so much alarmed by his generosity to the Buddhist *samgha* (monastic community) that for fear of the state treasury being depleted they deprived him of all powers. He then began to give away his personal wealth, but even that was restricted. Destitute and powerless, in the end he was left with nothing but half of a myrobalan fruit. Even this he sent to the *samgha* as his final offering. Thereafter, having comprehended the vagaries of kingship, he passed away with a serene mind.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Mission; Repentance and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Askew, Anne

(1521–1546 C.E.)

Protestant Christian martyr

A Protestant martyr born in 1521, Anne was the youngest daughter of Sir William Askew of Lincolnshire, England. As a young woman, she married the Catholic gentleman Thomas Kyme of Friskney. The pious Anne alienated her husband when she formally converted to Protestantism. Forced to leave his home, she went to London, where she became associated with the court of Katherine Parr (1512–1548), sixth wife of Henry VIII (1509–1547), a known Protestant sympathizer. It was most likely this association that caused Anne to be arrested and interrogated.

Anne was examined regarding her heretical beliefs, particularly regarding the doctrine of transubstantiation (the

Catholic belief that the eucharistic bread and wine physically becomes the body and blood of Christ), which Anne refused to accept. She was harshly questioned and released three times. These initial releases may have been due to Anne's influential friends, including the queen's sister and several other suspected Protestants. Anne revealed nothing. On June 29, 1546, Anne was once again arrested and charged with heresy. This time her interrogators tortured her on the rack. Anne refused to recant her beliefs, or to incriminate anyone else, and eventually she was sentenced to death. Shortly before the sentence was to be carried out, several of Anne's fellow prisoners accused her of recanting. She vigorously denied this and spent most of her final days composing a denial of the false reports. On July 16, Anne refused a last-minute pardon from the king. She was burned at the stake along with three other accused heretics. By all accounts, Anne was so weak from prison and torture that she had to be carried to the stake tied to a chair.

Anne's martyrdom is historically significant because she wrote two accounts of her tribulations while imprisoned. These texts, entitled *The First Examynacyon* and *The Lattre Examynacyon*, were significant spiritual autobiographies. The Protestant bishop John Bale (1495–1563), who also wrote an extensive and inflammatory commentary, immediately published them as a testimony of faith, and Anne became a centerpiece of his "reformed martyrology." Similarly, John Foxe (1516–1587), in his *Actes and Monuments* (1563), retold Anne's story. It was in this form that Anne Askew became a household name. By the 1800s, almost every English home possessed a copy of Foxe's work.

Anne is also an important presence in early modern literary scholarship. Of course, her writings portray the state of doctrinal struggles in the mid-sixteenth century. However, her autobiographical writings, in which she details her interrogations, also illustrate the importance of biblical learning for women. In her sessions with the examiners, Anne used her extensive knowledge of scripture to confront the male hierarchy of church and state. Specifically, her rhetorical style reflects her biblical studies and the influence of Protestant sermons. Interestingly, Anne never denies the charges brought against her; rather, she argues against them, incorporating scripture when necessary. The rapid dissemination of her story and the many editions it went through are excellent examples of the impact of the printing press.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Asklepios

Ancient Greek hero, healer, god

An ancient Greek hero renowned for healing arts, eventually worshipped as a god in Greece and later throughout the Roman world, Asklepios (Latin: Aesculapius) was believed to be the son of the god Apollo, also renowned for healing. Details regarding his birth and homeland vary. The chief sanctuary of Asklepios was at Epidaurus, still famous for its theater. Other important sanctuaries were located at Athens, Kos, Knidos, Pergamum, and Rome. Healing usually occurred through a process known as "incubation." Asleep in a special room (the *abaton*), the devotee was visited in a dream by Asklepios, who would prescribe a cure. His success made him the most popular god of the Hellenistic age, invoked by the epithet "Savior." In artistic representations, Asklepios resembles a kindly version of Zeus. His symbols included the snake, often depicted entwined around a staff, and the dog. The most common sacrifice offered to Asklepios was the cock, famously attested by Socrates at the end of Plato's *Phaedo* (118a).

Homer referred to Asklepios as a mortal, the "blameless physician" (*Iliad* 4.405). According to the most popular myth, recounted by Hesiod, Pindar, and others, Asklepios was the offspring of Apollo and Coronis, a mortal woman who proved unfaithful to the god. Enraged, Apollo killed her, but he managed to pull the infant Asklepios from her womb as she lay on her funeral pyre. The boy was raised by the centaur Chiron, who taught him his healing arts. Asklepios became so great a healer that in time he could revive the dead. This Zeus could not tolerate, and so he killed Asklepios with a thunderbolt. Apollo got Zeus to transform him into a constellation, and so Asklepios became a god.

Later tradition attributes to Asklepios a wife, Epione, and five daughters, including Hygieia (a personification of health). His descendants were thought to include the Asklepiades, physicians who practiced primarily at the sanctuaries of Knidos and Kos. The latter was home of Hippocrates, the most famous of the Asklepiades.

—Jeffrey Brodd

See also: Heroes; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Miracles

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Asma'u Fodiyo, Nana

(1793–1864 C.E.)

Muslim teacher, scholar, poet

Asma'u bint Uthman dan Fodiyo, born in 1793, was a daughter of Shehu Uthman dan Fodiyo, leader of the Sokoto Jihad of West Africa. Asma'u is known by her honorific, Nana. A teacher, scholar, and poet, Asma'u was a legend in her own time and continues to inspire contemporary Muslim women, who cite her as a positive example of a woman who pursued an education, addressed social issues, and fulfilled her intellectual talents. As a member of the Fulani Fodiyo clan, Asma'u was a Sunni Muslim of the Qadiriyyah sufi order whose precepts defined her life and values.

As a child Asma'u spent time with her mother's co-wives, Aisha and Hauwa, who taught her ascetic practices and devotion to spiritual concerns. Everyone in the family was expected to make something useful, so young Asma'u understood that helping with the domestic tasks was part of her spiritual obligation. She was also trained in the classical canon of Islamic texts, beginning with the Qur'an, which she memorized, earning for her the title *hafiza*. She learned to speak four languages (Arabic, Fulfulde, Hausa, and Tamchek), and she wrote poetry in the first three of these. Indeed, she eventually became an accomplished poet, scholar, and beloved teacher. Her reputation extended beyond the region and into the scholarly circles of the Maghreb.

Asma'u played a major role in the transformation of the Hausa-Fulani social order following the upheaval wrought by the *jihad* that her father had led. She accomplished this by organizing female extension teachers known as *jajis* to instruct rural women students, or *'yan taru*. These women memorized Asma'u's poems as aids for teaching Islamic precepts to refugee and rural women and instructing them in how to live pious lives. Asma'u's sixty-one long poetic works address a wide range of topics, including attention to the Qur'an, divine truth, sufi women saints, signs of the day of judgment, the prophet Muhammad, jihad battles, and eulogies for revered individuals. Asma'u died in 1864, but her simple precept, "Go

home and instruct your relatives," is still spoken by her descendants, who teach her songs to *jajis* and *'yan taru* today.

As a Qadiriyyah sufi, Asma'u advocated attention to the higher things, aiming to live in the world without becoming attached to it. However, she is remembered as a teacher and friend to rural women living on the margins of society. Her tomb in Sokoto, Nigeria, remains a place of pilgrimage.

—Beverly B. Mack

See also: Gender and Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Uthman dan Fodio

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Astrology

The heavens were observed and mapped by a wide range of ancient peoples, from the Maya to the Chinese, but astrology as it has come down to the West dates to the Assyrians and Babylonians, and, in particular, to a group of Babylonian priests called Chaldeans. These early Mesopotamian astronomers named seven heavenly bodies that were visible to them without telescopes, determined their courses, and assigned meanings to their placement in the sky. In the Assyrian order, they were the Moon, the Sun, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, and Mars; their Akkadian names, however, were different: For example, Jupiter was Marduk. When the Greeks and Romans adopted and adapted Babylonian astrological practice, they changed these names to reflect their own mythologies, and it is the Greek and Roman names that are still used today.

The West was dimly aware of Chaldean astrology before the conquests of Alexander the Great, but it is afterward, during the Hellenistic age, that astrology moved into the Mediterranean basin as part of an extensive cultural exchange. It was considered a technology—a science—and the same Latin word (*mathematicus*) meant mathematician, astronomer, and astrologer. Astrologers themselves were viewed as one of two types: the crackpot or the professional. Among their ranks, one might find academicians, priests, members of the aristocracy, and even a Roman emperor or two (Tiberius and Hadrian). Yet for every Tiberius or Claudius Ptolemy who practiced astrology, there was a Cicero or Tacitus who disclaimed it (for example, Cicero's *On Divination*). Skeptics did exist, but they were typically skeptics of the practitioners, not of the practice itself.

Greco-Roman horoscopes were cast in the square (not round), and their primary function was predictive, not as a tool for psychological insight (a modern perspective). Because of this, ancient astrology came under repeated fire, and astrologers were occasionally expelled from Rome by governmental edict. Knowledge of the future might allow one to gain control over it, or at least to exploit developments by anticipating them, and that could lead to trouble, even treason. Like many forms of divination, astrology was later outlawed by the Christian church. Knowledge of the future, it was believed, should belong to God alone.

—*Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman*

See also: Intermediaries

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Athanasius

(c. 299–373 C.E.)

Christian bishop, theologian

Bishop of Alexandria from 328 until his death in 373, except for periods of exile from 356 to 361, Athanasius was one of the most influential ecclesiastical leaders and theologians of fourth-century Egyptian Christianity. His written works elucidate the complexities of doctrinal controversies with the Arians, Apollinarians, and Meletians of his day and should be situated further within the broader context of the imperial affairs of Constantine, Constantius, Julian, and Valens. Athanasius's tumultuous episcopal career as overseer of one of the largest Christian communities of the Roman Empire was coupled with a piety shaped by his encounters with urban and desert monasticism.

Little is known about Athanasius's early years. He was born sometime between 295 and 299 in Alexandria to a family of modest means and received a primarily Christian education. In 311, he became deacon to Bishop Alexander of Alexandria, a staunch opponent of Arius, a presbyter in the local church who had gained wide support from various bishops in the eastern part of the Roman Empire for his view that, as a created being, Jesus Christ was subordinate to God the Father. Arius and his followers were denounced at the Council of Nicea (325), which produced and effected a creedal statement claiming that Jesus Christ and God the Father were of the same substance or essence (*homoousios*).

After Alexander's death in 328, Athanasius became bishop of Alexandria in a hotly contested election and emerged as the principal spokesperson for the Nicene position in theological debates fueled by the council. Noteworthy

in this regard are his *Orations against the Arians* (339/340), which impressed upon its audiences the soteriological significance of the incarnation, namely, that the salvation of humanity required the full divinity of Christ, and the challenge posed by the contemporary views of a fellow anti-Arian bishop, Apollinarus of Laodicea, regarding the lack of a human will and intellect in Jesus Christ. In addition, his role in a synod at Alexandria (362), and his correspondence with his colleague and ally Bishop Serapion of Thmuis, are evidence that he extended his views to incorporate the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

Athanasius sought the allegiance of the urban and desert monastic communities in and around Alexandria in his struggles to rid the region of infiltrating Arian and Meletian influences. Sizable in number and in impact on the non-monastic Christian population, both types of monks proved significant allies or foes to these competing theological factions. There is considerable evidence that Athanasius worked hard to ensure that the urban monks in the local churches in Alexandria were brought under his episcopal governance. His *Letter to Dracontius* and his *Letter to Amoun*, a lengthy period of exile spent in hiding with groups of desert monks (356–361), and identifiable contact with several prominent monks, such as Antony of Egypt, betray his concern to do the same with those in the desert monastic communities surrounding Alexandria. Athanasius's authorship of the mid-fourth-century Christian hagiography, the *Life of Antony*, with its emphasis on the salvific end of Christ's incarnation and its strong anti-Arian and anti-Meletian teachings, is often cited as additional support of these efforts.

Athanasius was restored as bishop of Alexandria several years before his death on May 2, 373. His thought continues to inform studies in Christian theology and church history.

—*Bernadette McNary-Zak*

See also: Antony of the Desert; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Atisha (Dipamkara)

(982–1054 C.E.)

Mahayana Buddhist scholar, reformer

Atisha was an Indian Mahayana Buddhist scholar-saint who revitalized Buddhism in Tibet during the early eleventh cen-

tury. According to Tibetan tradition, Atisha was born in western Bengal of a royal family in 982. He was considered a prodigy, mastering Sanskrit and other literary skills at a young age. From his youth he was said to be guarded and influenced by the goddess Tara, perhaps an indication of the Tantric practices and affiliations he may have had in his adolescent years. He took monastic vows at the age of twenty-nine in a monastery at Bodhgaya, the site of the Buddha's enlightenment. Atisha mastered the monastic curriculum of his time, studying, among other topics, ethics (*vinaya*), logic and epistemology (*pramaa*), and Middle Way philosophy (Madhyamaka).

In addition to these lineages of teaching available in India in the eleventh century, Atisha traveled to Indonesia and studied there for twelve years under the Mahayana Buddhist master Dharmakirti-sri. From this master, he received the quintessential oral transmission lineage known as *lojong* (Tib.: *blo sbyong*), "training the mind." This lineage, emphasizing cultivation of love and compassion, fused with his emphasis on cultivating the "thought intent on enlightenment" (Skt.: *bodhicitta*), would become Atisha's greatest contribution to Indian and Tibetan Buddhism.

Atisha was invited to Tibet to revive and reform the Buddhist teachings that had been diminished by the persecutions of the anti-Buddhist Tibetan king Lang Darma. Although warned by his patron deity, Tara, that traveling to Tibet would shorten his life, Atisha proceeded with the journey. His arrival in western Tibet in 1042 is regarded as one of the greatest events in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

His contribution to Tibetan Buddhism is best exemplified in his composition of the *Bodhi-patha-pradipa* (Lamp for the path to enlightenment), a manual that indicates the "gradual stages to enlightenment" (*lam-rim*), instructional lineages of the profound view of emptiness, and the vast deeds of practice. Atisha indicates that the best religious life is that of a celibate Mahayana monk who diligently adheres to the monastic code and follows the gradual path to enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. His instructions and influence led to the founding of the Kadampa order, the first school of Buddhism in Tibet. Atisha died in 1054 at Nye-thang (*snye-thang*) just south of Lha-sa, where his relics are enshrined in a temple.

—James B. Apple

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Atta-Essou

(dates unknown)

Diola legendary prophet

According to Diola oral traditions, Atta-Essou had neither a father nor a mother but was created by the Supreme Being, Emitai, and was the first person to live in the Huluf/Esulalu region of southwestern Senegal. He reportedly founded the Diola township of Eloudia and created a number of spirit shrines (*ukine*) that are still used by the Diola today. The first in a long line of prophets that includes at least fifty-four followers of the Diola religious path (*awasena*), he was primarily concerned with praying for rain, fertility, and the general welfare of the community.

The Diola number over half a million people and include the largest number of practitioners of an indigenous religion in Senegal. Rural Diola earn their living largely from the cultivation of rice and are generally regarded as the finest rice farmers in West Africa. Rain is important to them because it brings life to their rice paddies and allows them to survive in a region where droughts are common.

Atta-Essou's home, Eloudia, was initially populated by people known as Koonjaen, a type of Bainouk. When the people known today as the Diola conquered them, Eloudia became a Diola township and its traditions of prophetic revelation became part of a Diola tradition. The Diola believe that Emitai gave Atta-Essou the power to control a number of different spirit shrines for prayer. These included Egol, the primary spirit shrine of the Koonjaen priest-king, and Djoenenandé, an important royal spirit shrine for Huluf and Esulalu.

Atta-Essou had thirty-nine sons. His descendants became the priest-kings (*oeyi*) of many Diola Esulalu and Huluf communities. It is said that Atta-Essou did not die but fashioned wings out of palm fronds and flew up to Emitai. His name literally means "of bird" or "birdlike" and refers to that event. To this day, it is thought that his descendants do not die but are only "lost."

The Diola believe that Atta-Essou continues to reveal himself to his descendants in their dreams, providing important instruction about the spirit shrines that he left to them. In recognition of these ongoing revelations, they created a spirit shrine, also known as Atta-Essou, that was abandoned after World War I. Two of his descendants, Aberman Manga of Kadjinol and Djemelenecone Diatta of Kolobone, also became prophets of Emitai. These descendants are not "lost" but returned to the heavens to be with Emitai.

—Robert M. Baum

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Death; Diola Prophets; Intermediaries; Miracles; Prophets

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'Attar, Farid al-Din

(c. 1117–c. 1231 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim sufi, poet

Farid al-Din Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Ishaq kadhkani, known as Farid al-Din 'Attar, or simply 'Attar (which literally means "pharmacist"), was born in eastern Iran near the modern city of Nayshabur. Although he is believed to have lived a very long life, his attributed birth and death dates (c. 1117–c. 1231) are highly speculative. He lived through the Mongol invasion of Persia but continued his studies in sufism and Islamic sciences with a number of masters. The most notable of his teachers was Najm al-Din Kobra, the founder of the Kubrawiyyah sufi order. Although 'Attar's sufi affiliation is not known, it is most likely this order that he identified with because its spiritual genealogy is traced to the eighth imam of the Shi'ites, who is buried in Mashhad, near the city of Nayshabur.

Although 'Attar was an erudite man who was learned in philosophy, theology, and other Islamic sciences, he was better known for his poetic genius. It was through this mode of expression that he was able to write commentaries upon a wide range of subjects. A number of his works were destroyed during the Mongol invasion of Persia; however, those that have survived provide encyclopedic knowledge of the intellectual sciences of his time. 'Attar's major achievements are his extensive commentaries on the spiritual path, his warnings against the dangers and pitfalls of mysticism, his specific guidance on ascetic practices, and his illustration of the states and stations of wisdom. He treats these themes poetically throughout his numerous works.

Within the context of sufism, 'Attar's work discusses a number of philosophical problems, such as how multiplicity came from unity, the ineffability of the knowledge of God and divine attributes, and the true function of the intellect. 'Attar's ingenious contribution lies in his imaginative use of the symbolism of animals in order to elaborate upon a wide range of philosophical problems. Speaking from the perspective of birds and other animals, he turns the world into a grand theater where humans, animals, and nature interact, with the ultimate purpose being the discovery of the sense of unity.

Twenty-four of 'Attar's works have survived. Of these, the most important is *Mantiq al-tayr* (Language of the birds), a

book of poetry that treats the philosophical problem of how multiplicity came from unity. Relying on allegory, 'Attar speaks through a group of birds who wanted to find the archetypal bird, the griffin (*simurgh*, literally meaning "thirty birds"). Through a long and arduous journey, they realize that unity was within them and that the search for truth in the external world is futile. Also important is the *Musibat Namah* (Treatise on tragedy), which gives an account of the spiritual journey of a seeker who ascends to different domains of reality and discusses the mysteries of the spiritual path, with the heavens and the earth, celestial beings, and the inhabitants of hell and heaven. The seeker meets the prophets and discusses the best path toward salvation with them. Written in Persian, it is one of the most exquisite examples of Persian literature.

—Mehdi Aminrazavi

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Nature; Sufism

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Attributes of Holy People

Most religions, at least the more popular and folk elements within them, credit holy people with special "marks" that prove their holiness to anyone with the wit to discern the signs. Belief in such significant attributes as markers of holiness has gone in and out of fashion at various times; for example, in the case of Christianity most medieval people assumed visible signs of sanctity, but the Protestant denominations for the most part turned against the notion of such manifest imprints of holiness. Nevertheless, there are examples of such belief in every major world religion—at least in individual cases, and sometimes as a central identifier.

Legends around the world tell of holy people born under specially auspicious circumstances. In Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, tales are prominent of mothers of saints who dreamt that they were bearing a star, a flowering tree, a sun, or, in the case of Shakyamuni Buddha, even a white elephant, who entered the mother's womb when she conceived. Jain legend reports that Mahavira's mother, Trisala, had a series of fourteen dreams before his birth, the portents of a great teacher. The mother of the Greek holy man Apollonius of Tyana (d. c. 120 C.E.) had a vision of the god Proteus just before she gave birth. Legends of Muhammad tell that a light radiated from his mother's womb—the

first sign of his future greatness. Some holy people are even believed to have been conceived asexually. Not only Jesus but several other Christian holy people, such as Kentigern (d. 612), were believed to be the products of a virgin birth, or at least a nonsexual union similar to that of the Virgin Mary, who conceived “through the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 1:18). The Daoist Wang Zhe (1112–1170) was conceived after his mother had a dream; she finally gave birth after a pregnancy that lasted twenty-four months. And the Buddhist master Padmasambhava (eighth and ninth centuries) was miraculously born from a lotus.

Although most holy people have been born in the usual way, at certain periods various religions have emphasized miraculous qualities attending the process of birth, at least for the greatest holy people. Thus, Irish legend very often describes the birth of saints as painless to their mothers—the baby just slides out unexpectedly. Perhaps most impressive is the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha: According to Buddhist legend, his mother, Maya, gave birth standing up, with her arm against a tree. The baby stepped out of her side, took three steps, and proclaimed his greatness. Holy people are sometimes specially protected after birth, too. For example, the first dalai lama, Gendun drubpa (1391–1474), was protected from robbers on the night of his birth by a miraculous raven. When the future rebel and holy man Nat Turner (c. 1800–1831) was born, his mother tried to strangle him with the umbilical cord—his survival “proved” that he was marked by God for special service.

Most dogmatic in the belief that a holy person is born with certain physical markers of holiness are the Jains and Buddhists. Buddhism has identified eighty features of beauty and birthmarks that signify a buddha, and lesser “superior beings” also have some of the markers. These features vary from list to list, but in general a Buddhist holy person is recognizable thanks to a perfectly formed body, elegance in movement, and a melodic voice. Beyond that, the person will have auspicious signs on their palms and on the soles of their feet. Thus, for example, accounts of the Shakyamuni Buddha at birth vary, but he is supposed to have had thirty-two major marks, and eighty minor ones, always including wheel symbols on his hands and feet, a protuberance on the crown of his head, and a circle of hair between the eyebrows. A wise person can recognize such signs; thus, when a wise old brahmin saw the signs on the infant Siddhartha’s (the future Buddha) body, he predicted that the child would become either a world emperor or a buddha and world savior. Similarly, all Jain *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) have fragrant breath; their skin doesn’t get dirty, their blood is milky white, they are never ill, they do not need to eat or excrete, and the weather and the people around them are always pleasant. Although these physical attributes are less fixed in other religions, the legend of Muhammad tells that he was

born with a raised oval birthmark between his shoulder blades, the “seal of prophethood.”

There are very few ugly saints. Whatever the religion, legends report personal beauty as one of the most common characteristics of the holy person. It is rare to find a saint who is small and unimpressive. Nevertheless, there are a few who stand out, such as Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226); Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) also disappointed many people at first sight. Most Hindu saints are described as beautiful, however; indeed, personal beauty forms a central attribute of holy people in Hinduism. Jagadbandhu (1871–1921), for example, was called Sundar (Beautiful One).

Instead of emphasizing personal beauty, several religions stress extraordinary physical characteristics. A good example of this is the Persian giant Artachaeës, who accompanied Xerxes on his march into Greece in 480 B.C.E. Artachaeës was reputed to be eight feet tall, with the loudest voice in Persia. He died on the march, but by Herodotus’s time the locals where he was buried worshipped him as a demigod. Other physical claims for holy people include invulnerability to injury and pain. This is particularly evident in early Christianity, which produced many stories telling of martyrs who felt no pain while undergoing ghastly tortures. This tradition had an interesting resurgence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when a variety of holy people claimed to be immune from bullets. Thus the Fiji holy man Sadiri in 1873 claimed to be immune from the bullets of European attackers and positioned himself in the front line in battle—he was subsequently shot. More successfully, the Amerindian chief and holy man Geronimo (1829–1909) was regarded as invulnerable to bullets thanks to the special protection of spiritual forces.

There are also qualities of mind and spirit that are common to holy people around the world, though the exact standards are less consistent than they are for physical beauty. These include eloquence, intelligence, strength, courage, and longevity. Of these, probably the least important is strength. Although it is an attribute of ancient Greco-Roman heroes, Amerindian legendary figures, and some African rulers, other religions have not usually emphasized physical strength as a characteristic of their holy people—preferring, perhaps, to emphasize qualities of mind over those of body, or the reliance of the human being on God’s strength.

Courage is a particularly universal quality. In Hindu belief, with spiritual enlightenment one has the ability to speak and act without fear. This is an essential feature of the holy person as a teacher of morals and as someone who goes beyond the accepted norms of a society. All religions have their martyrs—who would not be martyrs if they had not stood up courageously for what they believed in, even though they expected to die for it. It is rare in hagiography even to find an admission of fear that the holy person is able to surmount; in general, courage is regarded as a natural

corollary of holiness. Similarly, it is rare to find an unintelligent holy person; normally, holy people are noted for quick wits, and often for stupendous learning. They sometimes impress people with their skill in speaking. For example, the Hindu Manikavacakar's (c. 650–715) name means “ruby-worded,” and the Christian John Chrysostom (349–407) was so eloquent that he was given his nickname of “golden-mouthed.” Perhaps less eloquent holy people inspired less veneration. Holy people also model other virtues, such as obedience and conscientiousness. Rahula (c. fifth century B.C.E.), the son of the Buddha, is a good example of this principle.

Another common attribute, especially of the scholar-holy person, is longevity; with surprising frequency, legend credits sages with living 120 years—in such diverse cases as Moses, the Jewish sage Johanan ben Zakkai (first century C.E.), the Christian Romuald of Ravenna (eleventh century C.E.), and the Buddha's cousin Ananda (c. fifth to fourth centuries B.C.E.). Some made it even longer: The Jew Serah Bet Asher (c. 1300 B.C.E.), in legend, lived for millennia, as did the Buddhist Padmasambhava (eighth and ninth centuries C.E.), who played an important role in introducing Buddhism to Tibet—indeed, some believe that both are still alive. Similarly, especially in medieval legend, the evangelist John never died, while the Bible reports that the prophet Elijah (ninth century B.C.E.) was taken up bodily into heaven (2 Kings 2:11–12). The next best thing, if a holy person does die, is that the body never corrupts.

Besides all these marks of the living holy person, religions have developed means to represent saints iconographically. Thus they are often shown emanating light. Buddhist iconography includes halos around the heads of *arahants*, buddhas, and *bodhisattvas*, also standard in European iconography for the gods of the Roman Empire and for Christian saints. Daoist and Buddhist great masters are also often shown in Chinese and Japanese art with a *ju-i*, a scepter, with the end in the form of an immortality mushroom.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Gautama; Jagadbandhu Sundar, Prabhu; Jainism and Holy People; John Chrysostom; Rahula

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Augustine of Canterbury

(d. c. 604 C.E.)

Christian monk, first archbishop of Canterbury

Generally called the apostle of England, Augustine, born in the sixth century, was prior of St. Andrew's on the Coelian Hill in Rome when Pope Gregory I (the Great) sent him with

a band of forty monks to preach the gospel to the English in 596. During his seven-year apostolate, Augustine was able to plant the seeds that would eventually bring Christianity to the whole of England.

Gregory's famous incident of seeing English slaves being sold in the Roman marketplace, and relating their name (*Angli*) with the word “angel,” is considered the genesis for the English mission, although more emphasis should be placed on the needs of the English king, Ethelbert of Kent. Ethelbert had married a Frankish princess, Bertha, who was a Christian, and as part of the marriage arrangement he had promised to construct a Christian place of worship and to install a Christian priest to conduct ceremonies. Ethelbert soon joined the Christian faith, once Augustine arrived in 597, and many of the English followed his example. In 601, Pope Gregory I sent reinforcements, including personnel, books, sacred vessels, and relics, to consecrate altars. Augustine tried twice to work with the local British and Celtic priests, who still practiced Christianity to some degree in the northern and western portions of Britain, but they resisted the updated Roman practices that Augustine wished to bring to British Christianity.

With the help of Pope Gregory I, Augustine at first tried to reestablish the early episcopal structure of the Roman British church, which had supposedly been centered at London in the south and at York in the north. During Augustine's archbishopric, however, London was located in a predominantly non-Christian district that only indirectly paid homage to Ethelbert. So Augustine located his archbishopric in Canterbury, Ethelbert's capital city in Kent. Later attempts to relocate the English archbishopric to London and/or York were unsuccessful. All of the early archbishops of Canterbury came from Rome, and there were strong ties between Canterbury and the Roman Church for centuries.

Augustine's lengthy correspondence with Pope Gregory I survives, and it was extensively quoted and noted by the Venerable Bede in his history of the English race composed in the eighth century. Topics related to the destruction of non-Christian shrines, the adaptation of Gallican and British customs in the Roman liturgy, and the establishment and daily life of monks were some of the issues for which Augustine asked for help from the Roman pontiff. Augustine was able to establish two other episcopal sees during his lifetime, one in London for the East Saxons and one in Rochester. Augustine died in about 604; his feast day is celebrated on May 26 in England and on May 28 elsewhere.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Mission

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Augustine of Hippo

(354–430 C.E.)

Christian bishop, doctor of the church

Augustine is the greatest of the patristic fathers and is best known for his spiritual autobiography, the *Confessions*. He wrote extensively on theological and philosophical issues of his day, and his extant writings number over 100 philosophical, theological, and scriptural exegetical works, 500 sermons, and 200 letters. Augustine's contributions to philosophy and theology have been quite influential, and his views on a number of topics, including the nature of time, just war theory, the nature of lying, marriage, divine foreknowledge and human freedom, original sin, the nature of evil, memory, and the nature of the soul, are still studied today.

As a young man in Thagaste, North Africa, Augustine was trained in classics and studied grammar and rhetoric. At age eighteen, he read Cicero's *Hortensius*, which he credits with motivating him to pursue a life of seeking wisdom. Early in life he joined the Manicheans, a religious sect that postulated the evil of matter and described the universe as a struggle between the two forces of good and evil. As Augustine matured, he came to find the doctrines of the Manicheans untenable. His spiritual journey took an important turn while he was teaching rhetoric in Milan, for he came to hear the eloquent sermons of Ambrose, who was bishop there. After many prayers said on his behalf by his mother, Monica, he was baptized on Easter in 387. He was ordained a priest in the North African city of Hippo in 391 and became the bishop there several years later.

Much is known about Augustine's life and thought. Of supreme importance in this regard is the spiritual classic the *Confessions*, which, in addition to being a detailed autobiography, includes philosophical sections on such topics as time and memory, as well as theological investigations regarding the relation of the soul to God. In clear and beautiful prose, Augustine depicts such matters as the saintliness of his mother, his struggles with chastity, his difficulty in learning Greek, and the process of conversion to the Christian faith. The moving account of his conversion in Book VIII of the *Confessions* is one of the great texts of Western religious spiritual writing. Augustine describes a scene in a Milanese garden where he was weeping under a fig tree, wrestling with the indecision of his will, when he heard a voice saying: "Tolle lege; tolle lege" (take, read; take, read). He received these words as a divine command, and turning to scripture, his eyes alighted upon the text of Romans 13:13: "Not in rev-

eling and drunkenness, not in lust and wantonness, not in quarrels and rivalries. Rather, arm yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ; spend no more thought on nature and nature's appetites." By the time he reached the end of the passage, Augustine relates, he no longer had any doubts, and the light of confidence had flooded his heart.

After his autobiography, *The City of God* is perhaps Augustine's most influential work. The tasks of this large book are manifold, but the volume has as its general project the identification of the errors and intellectual deficiency of paganism as well as an account of the place of the Christian in history. In this work, Augustine explores his famous distinction between two kinds of cities: the *civitas dei* and the *civitas terrena*. The members of the city of God are marked by love of God (*amor dei*), whereas members of the earthly city are marked by self-love (*amor sui*). At the end of history, the members of the two cities will finally be separated. In this book other important Augustinian themes are discussed at length, including the distinction of use versus enjoyment, the providential role of God in history, and the spiritual life of the Christian as a pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*) to God.

Augustine's intellectual formation was influenced heavily by Platonic and Neoplatonic sources, in addition to the Latin authors who formed the subject matter of his classical education. Augustine believed that Platonic philosophical teachings were closer to the truths of Christianity than the teachings of other sects, and Neoplatonic influences are visible in many aspects of his thought. Among Augustine's other well-known works are *On Free Will* (where he discusses the origin of evil, divine foreknowledge, and human freedom), *On the Utility of Believing* (where the relationship of faith and reason is set forth), *On Christian Doctrine* (a book on scriptural exegesis), and *On the Trinity* (a monumental presentation of trinitarian theology).

Much of Augustine's literary corpus is composed of polemics against the heresies of his day. His principle targets, in addition to Manichaeism, included Pelagianism (the doctrine that human beings can save themselves by their own efforts), Donatism (a schism that occurred in the North African church), and Arianism (a heresy pertaining to the issue of the divinity of Christ). As well, he wrote extensively against those who defended classical Roman religion.

Augustine's influence on subsequent philosophy and theology was, and continues to be, quite vast. Until the time of Thomas Aquinas he was the greatest of the church's thinkers. His influence on religious figures such as Bonaventure, Martin Luther, and Søren Kierkegaard has been explored by historians and scholars, and others have alleged that modern philosophers such as René Descartes and Martin Heidegger owe a large debt to Augustine.

—M. V. Dougherty



Augustine of Hippo, undated engraving. Augustine's symbol in art is a heart, sometimes placed on an open book, to represent the intense love of God expressed in his scholarly works. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Monica; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Augustus

(63 B.C.E.–14 C.E.)

Roman emperor, god

Augustus is the title for Gaius Octavius, born in 63 B.C.E. as the great nephew of Julius Caesar. The first Roman emperor, Octavian was instrumental in creating the imperial cult, which associated living emperors with the gods and enabled the Roman Senate to acknowledge them as gods after their death. The architect of a new political system called the Principate, he was adopted as the son of Julius Caesar, who claimed descent from Venus and the kings of Rome, and he inherited a large fortune when Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C.E. Caesar was acknowledged as a god, thus making Octavian a *divi filius* (son of a god).

Octavian, Mark Antony, and Lepidus then formed the Second Triumvirate and ruled the republic until Lepidus retired in 36 B.C.E., after which tensions grew between Octavian, who ruled the west, and Antony, now allied with Cleopatra in a plan to create an eastern dynasty. Octavian won a great victory over them at Actium in 30 B.C.E., and Antony and Cleopatra later committed suicide. This victory changed Roman history forever, ended the republic, initiated the Principate and the Pax Romana, and promoted Octavian to superhuman and eventual divine status beginning with the decree of the Senate in 27 B.C.E. that gave him the title Augustus. This associated him with the gods, acknowledged him as sacred, and laid the foundation for the imperial cult that endured until Constantine became the first Christian emperor in the fourth century.

The historical background to the imperial cult can be traced to ancient Egypt, where for millennia the pharaoh was thought to be a god incarnate. After Alexander the Great created his Macedonian-Greek empire, he conquered Egypt,

where an oracle proclaimed him to be a god. The ruler cult was disseminated throughout the kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean during the Hellenistic Age (323–30 B.C.E.). With the emergence of Rome as the dominant political and military power in the Mediterranean from around 220 until 30 B.C.E., resulting in the fall of Macedonia, Carthage, Corinth, and other victories leading to Actium, the securing of Roman rule was accompanied by establishing the cult of Roma in the eastern provinces. From the time of the general Flamininus (191 B.C.E. onward), Romans of achievement in the east were honored with festivals, games, and sometimes temples (Galinsky 1996, 323).

After Actium, Octavian was increasingly viewed as a superhuman and a godlike being. The Senate decreed that libations be poured to the *genius* (divine essence) of Augustus at banquets. Eastern provinces promoted the cult of Roma and Augustus by building temples and appointing priests. The Assembly in Asia decreed to start the new year with Augustus's birthday, "the beginning of all things." The Pax Romana had dawned, and Augustus was perceived as its divine founder. Coinage was minted that depicted the new ruler as Neptune, and his statue in the Palatine Library in Rome possessed a striking resemblance to Apollo. In the west, his cult was established in Lyons (12 B.C.E.) and Cologne (9 C.E.) and spread to Spain and the North African provinces. As this was also the golden age of Latin literature, the poets Virgil, Horace, and Ovid contributed to the acceptance of Octavian's superhuman achievements as proof that a deity was present in their emperor, now hailed as Caesar Augustus. The Senate decreed that Augustus was a god after his death (14 C.E.).

The imperial cult begun by Augustus continued throughout the empire: Thirty-six of sixty emperors from Augustus to Constantine were apotheosized (Price 1987, 57). The cult played an important role in spreading Roman civilization, fostering civic pride and allegiance to Roman rule, assimilating traditional polytheism, and competing with the claims of Christianity that Jesus Christ was God incarnate.

—Michael Bland Simmons

See also: Apotheosis; Rulers as Holy People

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Aurobindo Ghose

(1872–1950 C.E.)

Hindu nationalist, reformer, spiritual leader

Aurobindo Ghose was a significant leader in the Indian nationalist movement and one of the most important spiritual figures emerging from India in the twentieth century. His early life reveals the tension and promise that was inevitable with British rule in India.

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of various Hindu reform movements in India, many of them in response—often defensive or apologetic—to British domination and Christian criticism of Hinduism. British and French schools in India had acculturated many Indians to Western cultural patterns, which included rationalist and secularist tendencies. Aurobindo, born in 1872, was deeply influenced by this process. Sent to England at the age of seven by his father, who was convinced of the superiority of Western culture, Aurobindo was trained privately as a youth, then attended St. Paul's in London, and finally studied at Cambridge University, where he showed flashes of brilliance. He returned to India at the age of twenty, ostensibly to begin a career in teaching, but soon immersed himself in Indian philosophy, on the one hand, and Indian nationalism, on the other.

In Bengal, he was an outspoken and passionate militant, forcefully arguing for the overthrow of the British. He was charged with sedition in 1908 and imprisoned for a year. During his incarceration, Aurobindo experienced a deepening transformation, which included extensive study of the Bhagavad Gita, the practice of yoga, and mystical experiences of Krishna. When he was released from prison, he left Calcutta and moved to the French enclave in the south of India, Pondicherry, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Aurobindo's intellectual and spiritual prowess was quickly manifest. He wrote voluminously and soon an ashram developed around him, organized and administered by Mirra Alfassa, later known as "The Mother." Aurobindo's thought represents a constructive version of modern Indian philosophy. Drawing upon ancient Indian resources, he nonetheless rejected the illusionism that is at the heart of some versions of Indian philosophy. Instead, he believed that the soul evolves in and through matter to "super-mind" and then is charged with "descending" to the world of matter in order to stimulate and to facilitate the transformation of all. This deeply incarnational philosophy—one that recalls that

of the French Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955)—is called "integral yoga." Aurobindo died in 1950. His legacy remains strong in Pondicherry. Auroville, an experiment in communal living not far from the city proper, has had considerable positive impact and success.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People; Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre

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Authority of Holy People

In many cases, a person who is acknowledged as "holy" claims a special divine authority, a mandate authorizing or demanding that he or she speak or act in the name of the divine. This special seal of approval, or "call," often comes in the form of visions. The next step in expressing that authority is then to win the approbation of at least a sector of the population. Beyond that, in several religions a person can be given special religious authority as "holy" by an official act. This is best known in the case of medieval Christian and modern Roman Catholic canonization, in which saints are officially recognized and placed on a list, a "canon" of the saints, through the authority of the pope. Although this process is carried out posthumously, authority figures of other religions have granted special status to holy people during their lifetimes. Foremost, however, has been the authority given by individual conscience, which is above that of any outside rubber stamp. As John Henry Newman said, "Conscience is the first of all the vicars of Christ," an authority that transcends that of the pope.

The history of holy people throughout the world is a history of visionary experience. Judaism holds that God spoke frequently and openly during the biblical period, but with the end of prophecy the divine voice became much rarer, heard sometimes in dreams but of central importance as the only direct contact between God and humankind. Dreams and visions occur as inspiration and granter of special authority in every religion, and belief that such experiences have occurred is often central to a society's designation of holy people. The earliest known prophet, Zoroaster (c. 1400 B.C.E.) started his career as holy person when he saw the god Ahura Mazda in a vision, after which he believed he had personally been set apart for his mission. Mani (216–c. 276 C.E.) began having visions at age twelve, and in one of them he

was called to a special apostolic position. The first Daoist celestial master (fifth century C.E.) was inspired by visions of Laozi. Sometimes, holy people have been inspired by visions to take a new path. According to legend, for example, the Christian apostle Peter turned back to be crucified when he was fleeing Rome after having a vision of Christ. Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997) dedicated her life to the poor after experiencing a visitation by Christ during a train trip. Visions have persistently given holy people the authority to transcend the normal rules of society, including established religion; a good case is the Kenyan Moraa (early twentieth century), a woman in a patriarchal society who was given authority that transcended gender through her visions. The list could be continued almost indefinitely.

A smaller category is made up of people who claim they have actually been to heaven. This claim was central to the appeal of the leader of China's Taiping Rebellion, Hong Xiuquan (1814–1864). The West African Cherubim and Seraphim Society had its start when Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon (1907–1982) in 1925 lay in a deep trance for several days and awakened to report that she had spent that time in heaven, where she was taught spiritual mysteries.

Especially in Buddhism and Hinduism, most recognized holy people have the authority of a teacher as an important claim to spiritual status; it is acknowledged as next to impossible to be “holy” without the aid of a guru. Thus, in these religions, a spiritual lineage is very important. It is not, however, absolutely necessary. For example, the Hindu Anandamayi Ma (1896–1982) reached spiritual attainment without a guru, despite her marriage at a young age, passing through the stages of yoga to a high spiritual state within six years. And sometimes this earlier authority can be mediated by the spirit of a dead holy person, rather than in living teaching. Thus, the Shi'a Muslim Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i (1753–1826) claimed that his authority came from the Shi'a imams—whom he met in dreams and visions.

Perhaps the most irrefutable authority given to a holy person is when a special charisma is passed on by heredity. Shi'a Muslims believe that on the Farewell Pilgrimage Muhammad designated his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661) as his successor. The early guardians of the Baha'i and Sikh faiths also were designated as successors to acknowledged holy men. Aztec rulers won the right to rule by journeying to the otherworld to claim their rights from the previous ruler. And sometimes authority has been passed on by a combination of inheritance and designation. For example, when Kublai Khan granted the Daoist “celestial master” Chang Tsung-yen (d. 1292) his title in 1276, he declared that the title could be passed on by inheritance; before, according to legend, a jade seal and sword had been passed from one celestial master to the next.

Sometimes holy people have won a special authoritative position through their actions, such as working miracles or winning debates with rivals. In Tibet, the Indian scholar Kamalashila (c. 740–795) won not only personal authority but also triumph for his school of Buddhism by defeating a group of Chan Buddhists in debate. More flamboyantly, the Jewish prophet Elijah (ninth century B.C.E.) had a trial of religious authority with the priests of Ba'al to see who could draw fire from heaven; the losers were then killed at Elijah's instigation (1 Kings 18).

Although hereditary succession bears great authority, more spectacular but open to argument is the claim of some holy people (or their followers) to be a great holy figure of the past who has come again. History is littered with people who have claimed to be Jesus or, in Islam, the hidden *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse). Mani preached that he was the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete of John's gospel. David Koresh (1959–1993), the modern American cult leader, identified himself with the Lamb of the book of Revelation. The Vietnamese neo-Buddhist Huyen Phu So (1919–1947) claimed to be a reincarnation of several earlier religious leaders. Such claims tend to lie on the fringes of religious experience, attracting extremists but powerful in showing the sort of authoritative position people *want* to have from their holy leaders.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, Shaykh; 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Canonization; Elijah (1); Elijah (2); Kamalashila; Mani; Moraa; Peter; Teresa of Calcutta; Zoroaster

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Avvakum

(1620/1621–1682 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox mystic, healer, dissenter, archpriest

Avvakum charismatically led a mass movement, called Old Belief, against Patriarch Nikon of Russia in the 1650s to protest Nikon's dramatic reforms in the Russian Orthodox Church aligning Russian rituals with Greek and Ukrainian practices. The rebellion led to the Russian schism of 1666–1667. For challenging the authority of the church, Avvakum was beaten, starved, jailed, deported, and finally burned at the stake in 1682.

Born in 1620 or 1621, Avvakum was married at about age seventeen, ordained as a deacon at twenty-one, and ordained as a priest at age twenty-three. He was raised to archpriesthood at age thirty.

The seventeenth century was chaotic in Muscovy, that is, medieval Russia. The Rurikid dynasty died out in 1598 and left Russia politically unstable until Mikhail Romanov rose

to power in 1613. Famine and plague struck Russia shortly after the turn of the century and again in the 1650s; Poland invaded Moscow in 1610, and Sweden invaded Novgorod in 1611. These pressures reemerged especially during the 1630s through the 1660s. In the midst of this, Avvakum provoked social and religious unrest with his conservative revolt against Patriarch Nikon.

We know of Avvakum primarily through his autobiography, a literary masterpiece of seventeenth-century Russia, which he wrote during the last years of his life while imprisoned at Pustozersk (Avvakum 1979). The account reads like a motivational speech and is spiritually and emotionally charged with vivid, bizarre, erotic, and mystical imagery. Avvakum strove through this work to motivate his followers to hold on to the sacred rituals handed down by the holy fathers and called them to faithfulness, even in the face of death.

Avvakum was a crude and lively leader full of contradictions. He was passive when persecuted, but at other times he was violent and abusive to others—and to himself. Though he demanded complete obedience to the church, he tearfully admitted his shortcomings. He portrayed himself both as sinner and saint; he argued with divine authority, yet he spoke of himself as “excrement and pus, an accursed man—just plain shit” (Avvakum 1979, 104).

The historiography of the schism may be divided into two basic schools of thought: those who think that the schism was primarily caused by genuine religious belief, and those who emphasize sociohistorical factors over belief. Robert Crummey (1970) offered a balanced view, taking seriously belief as a legitimate motivation. Georg Michels (1999), however, gave much less weight to belief, emphasizing sociopolitical motivations. For other perspectives from Russian historians, see the histories of Sergei Platonov (1929), who emphasized cultural pressures, and Sergei Soloviev (2000), who emphasized church-state politics and generational educational differences.

—Nathan S. Carlin

See also: Reform and Reaction

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Awakening and Conversion

The concept of “awakening” (*bodhi*, often translated as “enlightenment”) is central to the concept of the holy person in the religions of India, especially Buddhism. Gautama Siddhartha is the fully awakened one, “the Buddha”; the goal of all human existence is to become awakened to the reality of the cosmos as the Buddha was, and thus to escape the cycle of rebirth. Although this concept has reached a very high degree of theological elaboration especially in Buddhism, and no holy person in the Buddhist tradition is not an *arahant* (fully awakened one), it has interesting parallels in other religions, especially to the Christian and Muslim concepts of “conversion.” When used in the context of holy people, conversion is not simply accepting a religious faith: It is an inner transformation to *full* adherence to that religion, often through a sudden spark of revelation, which many holy people have described as something as abrupt as a thunderbolt, as dramatic as what struck Paul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Thus it is useful to discuss these two terms together, exploring their similarities and differences in Eastern and Western religions.

In the cases of both awakening and conversion, holy people have described their experiences as preceded by a period of great spiritual thirst, a “dark night of the soul” in John of the Cross’s (1542–1591) formulation. The Zen term *kokushitsu*, “a bucket of black paint,” is used to describe the state of total darkness the meditator passes through before the breakthrough to awakening. What marks a true holy person is that he or she does not give up in frustration at this stage but instead remains open to insight or divine aid, depending on the tradition. Then the actual turn of the soul, when ultimate truth can be seen, like the shifting of a kaleidoscope to suddenly create a clear image, can be effected by almost anything. For example, when the Buddha’s follower Kassapa (fifth century B.C.E.) asked the Buddha about ultimate truth, the master responded by holding up a flower—and Kassapa suddenly understood.

In the Christian Middle Ages, the awakening to a true religious life, described by the Latin term *conversio*, was often de-emphasized in favor of a model of holiness stressing that saints were marked out by God even before their birth and therefore were always completely attuned to the divine. When they are described, conversions most often occur because of a great personal crisis. Illness is the catalyst for many medieval and modern saints—for example, Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) and Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1419). A humiliation—as in the case of Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226)—or even sudden fear of hellfire—as with Adal-

bert of Prague (c. 956–997)—may also instigate conversion. Sometimes the conversion is simpler; a common theme is reading or hearing a gospel passage that suddenly brings an inner revelation, as in the cases of Augustine of Hippo (354–430), Antony of the Desert (fl. 300–340), and the Ugandan Apolo Kivebulaya (c. 1864–1933).

Such motivations also have started many Buddhists on the path to awakening, but they are not usually sufficient in themselves to bring about complete enlightenment. For example, in his autobiography, the Japanese Rinzai master Hakuin Zenji (c. 1685–1769) reported that he was drawn to Buddhism when he heard a priest describe the tortures of the eight hot hells. He became a monk, but his final awakening came only after a period of paralyzing doubt; he broke out thanks to the sound of a temple bell. Indeed, Buddhism distinguishes between the “first fruit of emancipation” (*shro-tapanna*) and full awakening; in many cases, it seems to be the former that Christian saints have experienced in their conversion to religion. Sometimes their spiritual position is unclear even to those undergoing the experience. Mainstream Christianity refuses to accept people as saints while they are still alive; it is only after death that the holy person is fully confirmed in his or her conversion, with no chance of relapse. Similarly, the Tibetan Buddhist Gampopa (1079–1153) was already a master when he met the great teacher Milarepa and realized that his first awakening was actually flawed and that he needed to be more profoundly awakened before he was truly “holy.” At other times, Buddhist tradition teaches that people can be instantly raised from the mundane plane of the laity to full enlightenment. Thus, according to legend, Queen Khema of Magadha (fifth century B.C.E.), who was infatuated with her own beauty, received a visit from the Buddha, who showed her the transitory nature of beauty so clearly that she instantly became an arahant.

In Christianity, there is no recognized mechanism for helping the devout to move to a higher plane of consciousness, marking a clear difference from Buddhism. Although post-Reformation Christianity, beginning with the work of Martin Luther (1483–1546) and continuing with John Wesley (1703–1791) and others, spoke of a process of “sanctification,” which followed conversion, or “justification,” this was thought to be the work of the Holy Spirit being carried out in the believer rather than a specific path or technique. In contrast, Buddhist monastic leaders developed tools to help people be awakened, and the successful development of such a technique has been an adequate ground to regard a Buddhist teacher as particularly holy. Two main attitudes toward awakening have developed, advocating gradual or sudden enlightenment. The missionary figure Kamalashila (c. 740–795) was an important proponent of the gradualist school, advocating meditation and

the gradual insight that accompanies it leading to ever-greater realization; this method became very influential in Tibet. More exciting, though still based on a discipline of meditation, are the shock tactics advocated especially by Chan Buddhist masters, who favored sudden enlightenment. They developed a confrontational style, including shouts, blows, and paradoxical questions and responses, all meant to startle a person into awakening. Important early proponents were the Chan masters Mazu (709–788), the first to use the method of asking unanswerable questions—while the disciple was struggling, the master was to shout at or hit him, jolting him into a new state of mind—and Huangbo Xiyun (d. c. 850). Although Buddhism recognizes that even a layperson can be awakened without any assistance, it is regarded as extremely rare, making the position of the master as spiritual guide very central in the spiritual quest.

The Jains emphasize the importance of the spiritual guide, or “ford-maker” (*tirthankara*), even more, recognizing awakening or “liberation” as the final goal of religious life but arguing that it is impossible except at times when a tirthankara is living on the earth. Since there have been only twenty-four tirthankaras in this cycle of the world, the last one, Mahavira, living in the sixth century B.C.E., the best that people can hope for is to be reborn in a spiritual realm that will make awakening possible in the next incarnation. The tirthankaras themselves attain liberation without the aid of a teacher, an attainment that makes them omniscient. Although this is the standard teaching, it should be noted that the holy Jain lay poet Banarsidas (1586–1643) disagreed and believed that he had been fully awakened.

Hinduism recognizes that a person can be *jivanmukta*, “one liberated while still alive,” freeing the self from the bonds of ignorance and becoming one with *brahman* (the supreme being), but regards this as extremely rare. One of the few holy people widely believed to have achieved this was Sadashiva Brahmendra, a renunciant of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886) was also recognized as a perfected being (*siddha*) during his lifetime, which suggests that he was awakened in the Buddhist sense. For the most part, though, Hindus are content with the less-defined “conversion” of Christianity, taking an important step along the path to religious perfection but not claiming to have fully arrived at the goal. For example, the Hindu singer-saint Kanakadasa (sixteenth century) dramatically converted on a battlefield where he had been left for dead; he regained consciousness to find Krishna there, claiming him as his servant.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Adalbert of Prague; Antony of the Desert; Augustine of Hippo; Banarsidas; Francis of Assisi; Gampopa; Huangbo Xiyun; Ignatius of Loyola; John of the Cross; Julian of Norwich;

Kanakadasa; Kivebulaya, Apolo; Mazu; Paul; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Sadashiva Brahmendra

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Axayacatl

(d. 1481 C.E.)

Aztec ruler

Tlatoani (speaker) of the Aztec Empire from 1468 until his death in 1481, Axayacatl, like other Amerindian leaders, enjoyed a divine right to rule, and his successful conquests reflected that divine blessing. The role of *tlatoani* was that of the highest political, military, and religious leader. The title indicates a person who speaks in both the divine and the human realms and who has received favor from the ancestors. To perform this role, the *tlatoani* must make auto-sacrifices and assure that the proper human sacrifices are made to the divinities. The Aztec Empire excelled at these tasks, although during the reign of Axayacatl, the distinction between “conquest warfare” and “flower warfare” (designed to provide captives for human sacrifice) became blurred. Conquest was necessary to assert a ruler’s claim to power, but sacrifice was the process that kept the cosmos in order.

Several of Axayacatl’s many campaigns are recorded in the songs, or *cuicame*, of the colonial document known as the *Cantares mexicanos*. In these, the *tlatoani*’s daughter Macuilxochitl and other famous poets of the era composed poetry in his honor, linking Axayacatl to his military hero ancestors and celebrating the great warrior’s dedication to Tezcatlipoca (Ipalnemoani), the divinity who was the patron of the military classes. These records detail the blessings of Aztec ancestors and the performance of the proper sacrifices to Ipalnemoani. At the same time they provided the details of military victories asserting Axayacatl’s right to power. By following these proper sacred rituals, Axayacatl was justly victorious in his accomplishments.

In texts from the conquest era, Axayacatl and other ancestors return from beyond to aid the Aztec forces battling the Europeans and their Tlaxcalan allies against the warriors of Axayacatl’s son Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin. The texts are further adapted in the postconquest era as popes and bishops (the speakers, or “*tlatoani*,” of the Spanish Empire) are substituted for the warlords and Christ takes the place of Ipalnemoani.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Chimalman; Huitzilopochtli; Mixcoatl; Nezahualcoyotl; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Rulers as Holy People; Tezcatlipoca; War, Peace, and Holy People

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ʿAziz-billah, Abu Mansur Nizar al-

(r. 976–996 C.E.)

Ismaʿili Muslim imam

Abu Mansur Nizar al-ʿAziz-billah (Al-ʿAziz) was the fifteenth Ismaʿili imam and became the fifth Fatimid caliph of Egypt in 976 after the death of his father, Abu Tamim Maʿadd al-Muʿizz. Al-ʿAziz inherited a successful empire. Soon after his accession, he concentrated his energies on the acquisition of Syria. Subsequently he also succeeded in formulating a treaty with the Byzantine Empire to remove commercial restrictions against the Fatimids. Toward the end of his reign, as a result of much diplomatic and military success, the Fatimid Empire reached its greatest heights. Al-ʿAziz’s power was acknowledged from the Atlantic and the western Mediterranean to the Red Sea, the Hijaz, Yemen, Syria, and Palestine. The ruler of Multan in India also acknowledged his authority.

To define more clearly the place of legal regulations and religious law in his domain, Al-ʿAziz instituted the post of *qadi al-qudat* (chief justice) and nominated Abuʿl Husayn ʿAli, a son of the famous *qadi* Nuʿman, to the position. He also consolidated the position of the chief minister, or vizier, appointing Ibn Killis, who had been in charge of finance and public administration under the preceding two rulers. Another first was the employment of Turkish soldiers in the service of the empire. Hitherto most of the troops had been Berbers. As expected, the Berbers disapproved of this policy.

Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, al-ʿAziz had a policy of great religious tolerance in his empire. Like other Fatimids, he assigned important administrative posts to Christians and Jews. Additionally, Al-ʿAziz’s wife, the mother of his surviving heir, al-Hakim-bi amr-allah, was a Christian. He allowed the Christians to rebuild the church of St. Mercurius near Fustat. After the death of Ibn Killis, he appointed a series of chief ministers in quick succession, finally selecting ʿIsa b. Nasturus, a Coptic Christian. It was indeed an interesting development. This degree of openness was rare during that period and is not very common in the contemporary world. Al-ʿAziz also encouraged friendly disputations between Bishop Severus of Ashmunayn and his chief justice ʿAli b. Nuʿman.

Al-'Aziz celebrated two important Shi'a occasions: the feast of al-Ghadir al-Khumm commemorating the occasion when 'Ali b. Abi Talib was declared by the prophet Muhammad to be the patron (*mawla*) for the entire community, and the commemoration of the 'Ashura in remembrance of the martyrdom of the imam Husayn b. 'Ali at Karbala. Al-'Aziz died in 996. He is remembered as an enlightened patron of learning who was also a proponent of good governance and tolerance.

—*Habibeh Rahim*

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Hakim, Abu 'Ali al-Mansur al-; Husayn b. 'Ali; Islam and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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B

Ba'al Shem Tov (Yisrael ben Eliezer; the Besht)

(1698/1700–1760 C.E.)

Jewish mystic

Yisrael ben Eliezer, spiritual leader and founder of modern Hasidism, was born in 1698 or 1700 in Okop, western Ukraine. Orphaned by the age of eight, he survived through the intercession of concerned villagers. Legendary accounts describe the young Yisrael as a dreamy and introspective child who preferred to wander about alone, inspired by eager communication with God. There are no specific references to his schooling; nevertheless, early on, Yisrael became immersed in the more mystical writings of Judaism as part of a new devotionism that had been emerging from the more conventional form of Judaism since the late fifteenth century. This enthusiastic spirituality did not seek to break with the historical practice of Judaism, but rather to bring a new emphasis to conventional practice and to assert new values in religious life.

As a young man, Yisrael ben Eliezer joined certain rabbis and spiritual leaders in calling for contemplative devotion as an authentic aspect of Jewish life, hopeful joy rather than despair in worship, worship based on an acute recognition of God's loving presence (*devekus*), and a recognition of daily experience as an appropriate locus of transcendent encounter. Eventually, Yisrael and his second wife, the daughter of a rabbi, journeyed to the Carpathian Mountains, where he worked for a time, but he was mostly immersed in study and prayer. He became proficient in herbal medicine but also gained recognition for his gentle piety and rapturous preaching. By 1734 or 1736, Yisrael ben Eliezer was more commonly recognized as Ba'al Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name, abbreviated as "the Besht"), a designation that clearly indicated his spiritual authority but also distinguished him from those kabbalists who were sometimes declared Ba'al Shem (Master of the Name).

By 1740, the Besht settled in Miedzyboz, Ukraine, where a group of disciples gathered around him. Collectively, they

were called *hasidim* by local Jewish leaders, but at that time the epithet did not carry the more familiar meaning of "pious ones" but instead was used pejoratively, as a play on the word *hashudim*, "those who are suspicious" (Green 1987, 153). Followers of the Ba'al Shem Tov were especially suspect because he had never officially studied for the rabbinate and was therefore not a formally sanctioned teacher; moreover, the religious practices of the group seemed to neglect (or discount) some of the more legalistic requirements of Jewish practice in the Orthodox community, such as observing fixed time for prayer.

Nonetheless, the charismatic appeal of the Besht was formidable, and his discipleship increased steadily, coming from the ordinary and uneducated as well as the learned. Soon they were indeed known as "Hasidim," but now the name assumed its original meaning of "pious" or "saintly." However, the Besht's followers transformed the term to stress central obedience to a *tzaddik*, a charismatic holy man of such singular spiritual authority that he stands, as it were, as the mediator between the world and the realms of the divine. Indeed, although he himself never formally assumed the title, the Ba'al Shem Tov became for later generations of Hasidim the exemplar of the *tzaddik*, also known as a *rebbe*.

Like so many other holy men, the Besht wrote down very few of his spiritual teachings. What is known of the spiritual direction of the Ba'al Shem Tov is derived primarily from the writings of his closest disciple, Jacob Joseph of Polonoie, whose *Toledot Ya'acquov Yosef* (The generations of Jacob Joseph) was the first text of Hasidism published. From that and other similar writings, it is apparent that the Besht encouraged his community to experience their faith by means of prayer so deeply meditative and private that the result is *hislahavus*, or the "bursting into flame," of the soul in exultation of the divine presence, making every daily act an act of worship and praise. The Besht believed that traditional forms of worship should be enriched with dance, song, and

revelry, in delight of the real presence of the divine, and he encouraged his followers to perceive the divine immanence in all things.

Near the end of his life, the Ba'al Shem Tov spent longer and longer periods of time in contemplative prayer and ec-static devotion. He died in 1760 after an extended illness and was buried in the town of Miedzyboz. The grave of the Ba'al Shem Tov quickly became, and continues to be, the focus of annual pilgrimages by Hasidim and other spiritual disciples.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Devotion; Dov Baer of Mezhirech; Hasidism; Judaism and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Tzaddiq; Veneration of Holy People

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Bab, The ("The Gate")

(1819–1850 C.E.)

Babi founder, prophet

The Bab was the founder of the Babi faith, a religious movement that shook Iran in the mid-nineteenth century. The Bab claimed to be the *mahdi* expected by all Muslims and the inaugurator of a new religious dispensation. His religion went on to form the foundation for the Baha'i faith.

Hajji Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad Shirazi was born in Shiraz, Iran (then called Persia), in 1819 to a merchant family that traced its descent from the prophet Muhammad. His father died when he was young and he was raised by his mother and maternal uncle. After a perfunctory primary education, he began to work as a merchant in the businesses of his maternal uncles. In 1841, he traveled to Karbala, where he attended for a short time the lectures of Sayyid Kazim Rashti, the leader of the Shaykhi school. After six months in Karbala, the Bab returned to Shiraz and was married to Khadijih Begum. The couple had one child who died shortly after birth.

In 1844, a number of the students of the recently deceased Sayyid Kazim Rashti, including Mulla Husayn Bushru'i and Ruh al-Quddus, came to Shiraz in search of a successor to their teacher. Here eighteen of them met the Bab and accepted his claim, thus becoming what he called the

"Letters of the Living" (they included Tahirih, who had not met the Bab but accepted him through correspondence). The Bab sent these Letters of the Living out to all parts of Iran and beyond to announce his claim. He himself set off for a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he proclaimed his mission, but without any response.

Upon the Bab's return from pilgrimage in 1845, he was arrested by the governor of Shiraz and kept under house arrest. In 1846, the Bab went to Isfahan, Iran, where he managed to gain the support of Manuchihr Khan, the governor. During this time, the number of his followers was growing throughout Iran (the number may have reached 100,000 adherents, out of a probable Iranian population of 5–7 million), and the Islamic religious leaders were becoming alarmed, not least because the Bab severely criticized them in his writings. After the death of Manuchihr Khan in 1847, the prime minister, fearful of the Bab's growing influence, prevented a meeting between the Bab and the shah and tried to isolate the Bab by imprisoning him, first in the fortress of Maku and then (because the Bab had won over his wardens there) in Chihriq, both in northwestern Iran. The prime minister tried to discredit him by putting him on trial in Tabriz, the provincial capital, in April 1848. The trial was a mockery, but the Bab used it to proclaim openly for the first time his claim to be the mahdi expected by both Shi'i and Sunni Muslims (prior to this he had worded his writings in such a way that many thought he was only claiming to be a representative of the mahdi).

After this open proclamation, events moved quickly: A conference of the Bab's followers (called Babis) gathered at Badasht in northeastern Iran in July 1848 and proclaimed the inauguration of a new religious dispensation; the old shah died in September and a new shah came to the throne—his new prime minister proving to be just as antagonistic to the Bab as his predecessor had been; some of the Babis, under Mulla Husayn and Quddus, were besieged and eventually massacred at Shaykh Tabarsi between October 1848 and May 1849; clashes between the royal forces and the Babis at Nayriz in southern Iran in May–June 1850 and in Zanjan in May 1850–January 1851 ended in the massacre of large numbers of Babis; and in other places, including Tehran, leading Babis were executed.

In the end, the prime minister decided to try to put an end to the upheaval caused by the Babi movement by executing the Bab in Tabriz on July 9, 1850. However, even this attempt to quash the Babi movement backfired by giving the Bab, at the hour of his death, an aura of the miraculous. The British minister in Iran reported: "He was killed by a volley of musketry, and his death was on the point of giving his religion a lustre which would have largely increased its proselytes. When the smoke and dust cleared away after the volley, Bab was not to be seen, and the populace proclaimed that he

had ascended to the skies. The balls had broken the ropes by which he was bound” (Momen 1981, 78). He was found completing a dictation to his secretary and was then shot by a second volley.

The Bab was mild-mannered and had a very attractive and engaging personality that captivated many of those who met him. The only firsthand account by a westerner was given by Dr. Cormick, an Anglo-Irish physician: “He was a very mild and delicate looking man, rather small in stature and very fair for a Persian, with a melodious soft voice, which struck me much. . . . In fact his whole look and deportment went far to dispose one in his favour” (Momen 1981, 75). One of the most convincing proofs of his station was the rapidity with which he produced his writings. One evening in Isfahan, before a roomful of high-ranking Muslim clerics, he was asked to write a commentary on a chapter of the Qur’an. He immediately proceeded to write a work of some 80–100 pages (depending on which manuscript one consults) rapidly and without pausing or correcting anything.

In addition, in all of his writings his style was remarkable—according to some, “miraculous”—in that he was able to draw together, in new and striking ways, themes and motifs particularly germane to Islamic messianic expectations, enchanting and emboldening the reader through a unique combination of the symbols and sacred vocabulary of the Islamic religious tradition. One of his most important works, the *Qayyúm al-asmá* (Maintainer of the divine names), was received as nothing less than the “true Qur’an” thought by Shi’is to be held in safekeeping by the hidden imam, who, upon his return, would promulgate it to the faithful. The Bab’s writings had a very powerful effect on those who were attuned to their themes and arguments. His holiness may be thought to reside, in large measure, in the very charismatic quality of these texts. Unfortunately, a large proportion of his writings fell into the hands of his enemies, and most of this has probably been destroyed. What remains, however, is still very extensive and comprises some thirty major works and numerous letters and other writings.

The Bab wrote of his claims that God had sent him with a mission and message in the same way that he had sent Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad in the past and would send others in the future. He stated that his coming was the Day of Judgment mentioned in all of the scriptures of the past. The prophecies concerning that day were to be understood as having been fulfilled spiritually and figuratively—not necessarily only literally. For example, the return of Jesus (prophesied in both the Bible and Qur’an) meant the appearance of a figure who had the same spiritual reality as Jesus—fulfilled the same function of being the representative of God on earth (that is, the Bab himself). The Bab also gave new laws that his followers were to obey, especially in his book the *Bayan* (Exposi-

tion). Above all, the Bab, especially in his later writings such as the *Bayan*, frequently referred to the future advent of “He whom God will make manifest.”

The religion of the Bab survived despite the intense persecution it suffered and the thousands of its followers who were killed. In 1863–1868, Baha’u’llah claimed to be “He whom God will make manifest,” and most of the Babis accepted this claim and became Baha’is.

—Moojan Momen and B. Todd Lawson

See also: Baha’u’llah; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Husayn Bushru’i; Islam and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Prophets; Quddus, Ruh al-; Shoghi Effendi; Tahirih; Teachers as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Babalola, Joseph Ayo

(1904–1959 C.E.)

Christian prophet, church founder

Joseph Ayo Babalola was born in 1904 at Odo Owa in Kwara, Nigeria, into an Anglican family. He had an elementary-school education and thereafter was trained as a mechanic. Receiving the call to preach in his mid-twenties, he abandoned his job as a steamroller operator with the Public Works Department of the colonial government and became a prophet. In the years that followed, he demonstrated extraordinary spiritual powers. In 1930, he joined Faith Tabernacle, one of the earliest independent churches in Nigeria. As an itinerant evangelist, he traveled far and wide in Yorubaland and also among the Akan people in Ghana. He had converts among kings and the masses, and his message permeated both rural and urban communities.

Babalola preached divine healing and emphasized the power of prayer. The rate at which people flocked to his meetings alarmed both the mainline churches and the colonial government, especially as mainline churches lost more and more members to his evangelistic campaigns. He encountered problems with the colonial authorities and was imprisoned for a period of six months in 1932 for launching a campaign against witches in Benin City. He came out of this ordeal even more determined to preach the gospel.

A split in Faith Tabernacle in the mid-1930s led to Babalola's exit, and he founded Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). He led the CAC as its general evangelist, while Isaac Akinyele was made president of the new church. Akinyele became the traditional ruler of Ibadan, the most populous indigenous city in West Africa, in 1955, and this brought additional prestige to the church. Babalola conducted mighty revival meetings that increased his popularity further. After his death in 1959, the CAC spread throughout Nigeria and beyond into other African nations and could also be found in Europe and the United States.

Babalola is remembered today for the great spiritual power he demonstrated through his numerous miracles and the great number of converts that he made. He was a pioneer of the indigenous Pentecostal movement in Nigeria, heralded by the Aladura (prayer-marked) genre, of which the CAC was an epitome. To date, the CAC in Nigeria has been active not only in the religious arena but also in the provision of valuable social services such as education and health care to complement governmental efforts.

—O. A. Adebayo

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Miracles; Prophets

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Babalú Ayé (Babaloo; St. Lazarus)

African American orisha

One of the holiest and most respected *orishas*, or divinities, in the Afro-Cuban religion of Santería, Babalú Ayé has been invoked to heal infectious diseases such as smallpox. In recent times, it is believed that he watches over those stricken by Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). In the Yoruba language of West Africa, his name means "father of the world." He is associated with Lazarus, the ailing beggar in the New Testament (Luke 16:19–31), the patron saint of the sick and poor in the Catholic Church.

According to traditional Santería beliefs, Babalú Ayé was originally a human being of the legendary past, the son of Nanú, who is usually depicted as an old grandmotherly woman. Babalú Ayé was married to Ochún, who left him because he was only interested in attracting women and enjoying parties. On a Good Thursday, Orula, the orisha of wisdom, warned him about his aberrant behavior. Babalú Ayé

refused to comply, and the next day he awoke with blisters on his body caused by smallpox. People walked away from his ill body with disgust, and only dogs approached him to lick his sores. Olodumare, the Supreme Being, refused to forgive him, and Babalú Ayé died. His former wife, Ochún, mediated for him, and Olodumare showed him pity and restored his life. Babalú Ayé returned to the world as a generous orisha who understood how much ill people suffer.

In West Africa, Babalú Ayé is a divinity feared by believers because he is believed to be the orisha who brings about smallpox. In Cuban Santería, he is portrayed as a kind-hearted and loving old man, dressed in sackcloth and walking on a pair of crutches that support his ill body, accompanied by two dogs. Babalú Ayé is revered as the most charitable, benevolent, and compassionate of all orishas.

In contrast to the rest of the orishas, who prefer the use of water in rituals, Babalú Ayé prefers libations of rum, which are poured on his statue during worship. Shrines to revere him, often built in a corner of the house of the *santeros* (worship leader), contain all the sacred items and foods associated with him—glasses of rum, bits of tobacco, pebbles, a cowrie-studded staff, grains of corn, rattles, cowbells, and special fabrics in the form of bandages. Doves and hens are the favorite animals offered in sacrifice.

His desired colors are purple and yellow. Festivities to honor Babalú Ayé in Cuba and other parts of Latin America are held every year on December 17. El Rincón, located in the outskirts of the Cuban capital of Havana, is the site of a Catholic sanctuary dedicated to the divinity in the name of St. Lazarus. This shrine is considered by followers of Babalú Ayé to be the residence of their generous orisha, where believers carry out acts of mortification to their deity for favors desired and received.

—Francisco Melara

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Apotheosis;

Compassion and Holy People; Orishas; Santería

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Babyllas of Nicomedia

(d. c. 250 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

One can draw only the briefest sketch of Babyllas's career, even though he is among the most famous bishops of Antioch, one of the most important sites of early Christianity. Babyllas was the twelfth bishop of Antioch (c. 237–250 or 251) and died a

martyr during the persecutions in the reign of Emperor Decius (249–251). His original tomb in the center of Antioch could not accommodate the crowds that venerated him, so a larger sanctuary was built in Daphne, directly outside the city.

Theological debate and political posturing obscure all but these few facts about Babylas. John Chrysostom (347–407) bears primary responsibility for this, since it was he who shaped legends about Babylas into a polemic directed especially against the policies and writings of Emperor Julian the Apostate (331–363). Julian had destroyed Babylas's sanctuary, claiming that the saint's presence interfered with the oracle of Apollo nearby, then stayed in Antioch to write a scholarly refutation of Christianity. A major point of Julian's argument was that Christian pacifism was cowardice. In response, Chrysostom portrayed Babylas as outspokenly frank and steadfastly courageous. According to legend, Babylas would not allow an emperor (probably Philip the Arab [244–249]) who had murdered a hostage to enter the church on Easter Sunday. Babylas was equally unyielding before his persecutors. Julian also had denounced what he called the Christian "worship of corpses," meaning not only Christ but also the relics of the saints. To counter this, Chrysostom emphasized the miracles at Babylas's tomb and their salutary impact on those who venerated them.

The cult of Babylas, fostered by Chrysostom, survived Julian's persecution. Babylas's relics were translated from Daphne to their original resting place in the city of Antioch, over which Bishop Meletius built a magnificent church in approximately 387. His feast day is January 24 in the Western church and September 4 in the Greek church

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; John Chrysostom; Veneration of Holy People

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Badawi, Ahmad al-

(1199/1200–1276 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, ascetic

Ahmad al-Badawi is the most popular holy person of Muslim Egypt. His followers call him simply al-Sayyid (lit. "the mas-

ter, or lord," but also a descendant of the prophet Muhammad) or Shaykh al-Arab because al-Badawi means "the Bedouin" in Arabic. As a sufi he also reached the *qutb* (pole or axis), that is, the highest degree in the hierarchy of the saints. A person receives this appellation in the sufi tradition only if he is regarded as an axis around which the world turns.

Ahmad was born in about 1200, probably in Fez (Morocco) to a family tracing its descent from 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet. In his youth, Ahmad was distinguished by qualities that won him the nicknames al-Attab and Abu'l-Fitya (intrepid horseman). Later he received the surnames al-Sammāt (the Silent) and Abu Farraj (the liberator [of prisoners]).

In approximately 1230, he seems to have suffered an internal crisis. He refused an offer of marriage and withdrew from life in society. After experiencing visions telling him to go to Iraq, he did so in 1236. There, he visited the tombs of the two axial saints Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Rifa'i (1106–1182) and 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166). It was while in Iraq that he seduced the indomitable Fatima bint Barri, whom he afterward refused to give up to any man, but also refused to marry. This episode has become a great romantic tale in popular Arabic literature.

Ahmad had another vision adjuring him to go to Tanta on the Egyptian Delta. In this village, he engaged in the most important activity of his life. Like Simeon the Stylite (c. 390–459), the Christian ascetic, on his column, Ahmad retreated to a terrace, where he remained without eating or drinking for forty days. His charisma was so great that it is said that the Mameluke sultan al-Zahir Baybars venerated him and kissed his feet. Ahmad died on August 24, 1276, and was laid to rest in an immense mosque-mausoleum erected in the center of the village.

Three of Ahmad al-Badawi's writings survive: a prayer, a collection of prayers (*salawat*), and a testament (*wasaya*). Abd-al-Rahman b. Mustafa al-Aydarusi wrote a commentary on the prayer collection entitled *Fath al-Rahman*. Many legends circulate about the miracles Ahmad performed both during his life and after his death. It is said that he began to speak at birth and that he was a great eater—and another of his nicknames is Abu al-kirsh (the man with the paunch). He was renowned for restoring prisoners and finding lost people and goods. His spiritual heritage was spread by his close disciples, especially Abd al-Al, who had the mosque built that contains Ahmad's tomb, organized his cult, and founded a mystic order around his teachings, the Ahmadiyya. His popular veneration has never died out. The pilgrimage to Tanta for his *mawlid* (anniversary festival), in October, draws tens of thousands of Egyptians, not just from the Delta but also from the capital and the south: Indeed, it is the great pilgrimage in Egypt.

—*Rachida Chih (translated by Phyllis G. Jestice)*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir; Mysticism and Holy People; Rifa'i, Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-; Sufism, Veneration of Holy People

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Baha'i, Shaykh

See 'Amili, al-, Shaykh Baha'i

Baha'i Faith and Holy People

The Baha'i faith is the religion founded by Baha'u'llah in the nineteenth century. It currently has more than 5 million members, and there are Baha'i communities in every country of the world. As a result of the successive banishments of its founder, culminating in his exile to the Ottoman prison city of Akka and his death and burial there, the spiritual center of the religion is fixed in Akka, now in Israel, while its world administrative center is established in the nearby city of Haifa.

Where Christianity has deified its founder and Islam insists that Muhammad was just a human being, the Baha'i teachings take an intermediate position, stating that the founders of the world's major religions belong to a realm that lies between that of God and humanity. They are the perfect manifestations of all of the names and attributes of God (hence they are referred to in Baha'i terminology as the manifestations of God). Ontologically, they are separate from God's essence, but because human beings can have no access to and no knowledge of God's essence, they are "as God" for human beings. Hence Baha'u'llah (1817–1892) said: "Were any of the all-embracing Manifestations of God to declare: 'I am God!' He verily speaketh the truth, and no doubt attacheth thereto. For it hath been repeatedly demonstrated that through their Revelation, their attributes and names, the Revelation of God, His name and His attributes, are made manifest in the world" (1974 [1862], 178). Baha'u'llah likened these manifestations of God to perfect mirrors reflecting God's qualities to humanity. It is also through these individuals that God acts in the world.

Baha'u'llah's specific claim was that the scriptures of all of the world's religions prophesy the coming of a messianic figure in the future who will usher in a golden age for humanity, and he claimed to be this figure—the fulfillment of these prophecies. The eschatological prophecies relating to the end

of the world and the day of judgment and resurrection found in the Bible and the Qur'an were explained by Baha'u'llah as referring to the spiritual upheaval and renewal brought about by his coming. He stated that it was his teachings that would bring about the golden age for humanity—the kingdom of God on earth. Baha'u'llah claimed to be of equal station—and indeed, spiritually the same reality—as the preceding founders of the world's religions. It is merely the fact that his message is the latest, and therefore fullest, revelation of God's will that makes his revelation of greater importance to the people of this age.

A central concept among the teachings of Baha'u'llah is that God has progressively revealed his will through the founders of the world's religions—in other words, that the message brought by each "manifestation of God" builds on what was brought by the previous one. This progressive revelation of God's purpose for humanity has now reached the point that it requires all humanity to unite in one common global family. Humanity must put aside all of the prejudices and hatreds that have caused endless wars in the past and inaugurate a world democratic federal government that will eventually lead to the "Most Great Peace." The nations of the world must set up an international system of collective security and submit their differences to arbitration rather than going to war. Ancillary Baha'i teachings include the need for multilateral disarmament (with the benefits from this going to help the poor), universal education, an international auxiliary language, the equality of women and men, and other such matters.

It is a fundamental Baha'i concept that what appear to be the political and economic problems of the world are at their root spiritual problems related to disunity, and thus that these problems can only be lastingly resolved if this disunity is tackled at the spiritual level, starting with the individual. Human beings must stop seeing themselves as primarily belonging to narrow sectional interests such as tribes, classes, religions, or nations and start thinking of themselves as citizens of the world. Baha'u'llah wrote: "It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the world" (1983 [1952], 95). Statesmen, educators, planners, and the generality of the people, he said, need to start thinking in this global way.

Baha'u'llah's desire to see a greater degree of unity among human beings can be discerned in some of the laws in his *Kitab-i-Aqdas* (The most holy book). He ordained, for example, that marriage can only occur with the consent of both the bride and groom and both sets of parents. He also abolished all laws related to holy war and ritual purity. Compared to religions such as Judaism and Islam, there are few laws in the Baha'i faith. Baha'u'llah considered that humanity had now collectively achieved maturity, and thus his writings tend to contain exhortations to his followers to improve their



Baha'i temple. Sydney, Australia. (Art Directors)

morals and character and to acquire spiritual qualities rather than giving specific and detailed laws.

Baha'is believe that the Baha'i faith is not just one more religious system to be superimposed on the mosaic of existing ones, but rather a restatement of the eternal verities underlying all the religions of the past. Baha'i teachings maintain that all the great religions of the world are divine in origin, that their basic spiritual principles are in harmony, and that they differ only in the nonessential aspects of their doctrines. Consequently, the Baha'i faith should aim to be a unifying force, instilling into the adherents of other religions a new spiritual vigor, demonstrating to them the fundamental unity of their religious doctrines, and presenting to them a vision of a united and peaceful world in the future. Baha'u'llah did not, moreover, claim any finality to his mission. A further manifestation of God will appear, but this will not be for at least a thousand years.

Apart from Baha'u'llah, the Baha'i faith has a number of other individuals whom it regards as holy. The Bab (1819–1850) is considered to have been not only a forerun-

ner of Baha'u'llah, heralding the advent of one greater than himself, but also to have been endowed with the authority of an independent prophet of God. Several of the major disciples of the Bab also occupy prominent positions in the Baha'i panoply of holy people, in particular his first group of disciples, the eighteen "Letters of the Living." His first disciple, Mulla Husayn Bushru'i; the last to be named a Letter of the Living, Ruh al-Quddus; and the only female Letter of the Living, Tahirih, are perhaps the best known, but Mulla 'Ali Bastami, another Letter of the Living and the first to be martyred for the new religion; Hujjat, the leader of the Babis in Zanjan, Iran; and Vahid, the leader of the Babis in Nayriz, are also held in great esteem. Children are often named after these individuals. All of the above-named fell as martyrs to the new religion, along with many thousand others. The brief and dramatic ministry of the Bab culminated in his own martyrdom and continues to stir the imagination and affect the emotions of Baha'is up to the present day, much as it did when news of it first spread to Europe in the 1860s.

Baha'u'llah's son and successor, 'Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921), occupies a position that is clearly lower than that of the Bab and Baha'u'llah theologically. He is not considered a manifestation of God but still occupies a station above ordinary human beings. Baha'u'llah referred to him as the "mystery of God," instructed the Baha'is to turn to him after his own passing, and made him the sole authorized interpreter of Baha'u'llah's writings. In emphatic terms, Baha'u'llah stated: "Whoso turneth towards Him hath turned towards God, and whoso turneth away from Him hath turned away from My beauty, hath repudiated My Proof, and transgressed against Me. He is the Trust of God amongst you. . . . They who deprive themselves of the shadow of the Branch [Abdu'l-Baha], are lost in the wilderness of error" (quoted in Shoghi Effendi 1991, 135). He is also stated to have been the perfect exemplar of Baha'u'llah's teachings, the embodiment and incarnation of every Baha'i virtue and ideal. The shrines of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and 'Abdu'l Baha, the three central figures of the Baha'i faith, in the Haifa-Akka area are a focus for Baha'i devotions and pilgrimage. All Baha'is turn to the shrine of Baha'u'llah in prayer every day.

In his will and testament, 'Abdu'l-Baha appointed Shoghi Effendi (1897–1957) as the guardian of the Baha'i faith and the sole authorized interpreter of the Baha'i scriptures. During Shoghi Effendi's ministry (1921–1957), the fact that he did not make public appearances meant that only the comparatively few Baha'is who made the pilgrimage to the Haifa-Akka area were able to meet him. Nevertheless, his powerful writings made a deep impression upon all of the Baha'is. After Shoghi Effendi's death in 1957 (he is buried in London), the Universal House of Justice, elected in 1963, became the supreme authority in the Baha'i faith. This body is elected by the members of all of

the national spiritual assemblies at an international convention. It has the function of coordinating and directing the affairs of the Baha'i community and legislating in any areas that are not expressly covered in the scriptures of the Baha'i faith.

Central to understanding the position of 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi in the Baha'i faith is the concept of the "covenant." This refers to Baha'u'llah's appointment of 'Abdu'l-Baha as his successor, 'Abdu'l-Baha's appointment of Shoghi Effendi, and the central authority of the Universal House of Justice. The words of Baha'u'llah concerning 'Abdu'l-Baha found an echo in 'Abdu'l-Baha's words concerning Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice: "Whatsoever they decide is of God. Whoso obeyeth him not, neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God; whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God" (1971 [1935], 11). Among the highest of Baha'i virtues, and indeed the identifier of being a Baha'i, is loyalty to the covenant, that is, obedience successively toward 'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice. This doctrine means that Baha'is are free to hold widely differing theological opinions and interpretations of the scripture (although no Baha'i can claim any authority for these) and still remain within the orbit of the Baha'i faith as long as their focus of loyalty is toward the center of the covenant.

The Baha'i faith has a teaching that in each religious dispensation, there has been a female figure who has outshone the other women in that dispensation and has acted as a paradigm and role model. In the Babi religion, it was Tahiri who played this role. In the Baha'i faith, it is considered to be Bahiyiyih Khánum (1846–1932), the daughter of Baha'u'llah.

Apart from the central figures of the Baha'i faith, the extent to which any individual Baha'i can rise to the position of being regarded as a holy figure is limited by a spirit of egalitarianism within the movement. Although not condemning all religious leaders, Baha'u'llah did nevertheless feel that they often led their flocks astray, especially at the time of the coming of a new manifestation of God. Having called for universal education to enable all to read the scripture for themselves (a major justification for religious leaders in the past), Baha'u'llah abolished individual religious leadership in his religion and stated that all Baha'is should regard themselves as being of one rank and one station. 'Abdu'l-Baha set the tone for the community when, despite the high praise and titles he had received from Baha'u'llah, he chose for himself the title 'Abdu'l-Baha (the servant or slave of Baha'u'llah) and wrote: "My name is 'Abdu'l-Baha. My qualification is 'Abdu'l-Baha. My reality is 'Abdu'l-Baha. My praise is 'Abdu'l-Baha. Thralldom to the Blessed Perfection is my glorious and refulgent diadem, and servitude to all the human race my perpetual religion. . . . No name, no title, no mention, no commendation

have I, nor will ever have, except 'Abdu'l-Baha. This is my longing. This is my greatest yearning. This is my eternal life. This is my everlasting glory" (quoted in Shoghi Effendi 1991, 141).

'Abdu'l-Baha may be said to have initiated hagiographic exposition in the Baha'i faith through his authorship of *Tadhkiratu'l-vafa* (Memorials of the faithful), which included brief descriptions of some seventy-two early Babis and Baha'is. It is perhaps significant for the ethos of equality in the Baha'i faith that most of these individuals were in fact only of minor importance historically and would perhaps have been forgotten if 'Abdu'l-Baha had not written about them in his book. He appears to have chosen what may be termed "ordinary Baha'is"; by writing of the qualities that they manifested, he implied that it is possible for all to strive to manifest such qualities—a democratization of sainthood.

Despite this emphasis on the equality of all Baha'is, a number of individual Baha'is were singled out for special honor by the central figures of the Baha'i faith, mainly because of the services that they performed. For example, they would sometimes write a "tablet of visitation" praising a particular Baha'i to be read at the individual's graveside. Many of those who fell as martyrs had tablets of visitation written for them. Shoghi Effendi, at the beginning of his ministry, posthumously named nineteen Baha'is as "apostles of Baha'u'llah" and nineteen as "disciples of 'Abdu'l-Baha." Later, during a ten-year spiritual crusade to spread the Baha'i faith that he launched in 1953, Shoghi Effendi named those who moved to a country where there were no Baha'is as "knights of Baha'u'llah," and he sometimes referred to other individuals who were the first to open a country to the Baha'i faith as the "father" or "mother" of that country.

During the first 120 years of the Baha'i faith, some fifty individuals were given the title "hand of the cause," some posthumously, in recognition of their services. The hands of the cause were given certain roles in spreading and protecting the Baha'i faith. These individuals are certainly considered holy by some Baha'is, and children are often named after them. Although, with the death of Shoghi Effendi, no further hands of the cause can be named, some of their functions have been carried forward by the institution of the Continental Boards of Counselors. These individuals are appointed by the Universal House of Justice and have auxiliary boards and assistants to help them in their work. Their role is, however, limited to advising and encouraging. They do not have any authority, nor are they generally held to be holy.

Authority in the Baha'i faith now rests with elected local, national, and international institutions (the local and national spiritual assemblies and the Universal House of Justice) as governing bodies—not even the individuals in these institutions have any authority. These elected institutions are

responsible for all of the social, administrative, economic, legal, and spiritual affairs of the community, and they act through a process of consultative decision making, which is the hallmark of the Baha'i administrative system.

Despite the determined opposition of such formidable foes as the kings of the Qajar dynasty in Iran, the caliphs of Islam, the Nazi regime in Germany, the Communist governments of Eastern Europe, and the forces of religious fundamentalism, the Baha'i faith has continued to grow and spread. It has been established in every country as well as most of the major territories, colonies, and dependencies in the world. Its elected national councils, the national spiritual assemblies, now number 182. It has gathered within its orbit representatives of most of the races of humanity and converts from most of the religions. Baha'i literature has been translated into more than 800 languages and published and disseminated in more than 500. It enjoys legal and official recognition in most countries, enabling it in many countries to secure exemption from taxation for its endowments and to solemnize Baha'i marriage. It has embarked upon development projects in the fields of education, agriculture, health, literacy, and community development, and it operates a number of Baha'i radio stations. In places around the world, the Baha'i community has taken a lead in healing social divisions, bringing the races together, advancing the role of women in society, and challenging religious leaders to resolve their differences.

—Moojan Momen

See also: 'Abdu'l-Baha; Bab, The; Baha'u'llah; Bahá'iyih Khánúm; Hereditary Holiness; Husayn Bushru'i; Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Recognition; Shoghi Effendi; Suffering and Holy People; Tahiri; Teachers as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; Wealth and Poverty

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Baha'uddin Naqshband

(1317–1390 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Baha'uddin Naqshband's roots are in Central Asia, primarily in the city of Bukhara, in what is now Uzbekistan, where he was born in 1317. His spiritual lineage is from the prominent sufi saints Abdul Khaliq Ghijduwani (d. 1220) and Yusuf Hamdhani (d. 1140). Baha'uddin Naqshband established the Naqshbandi sufi order in Central Asia, which quickly spread to North Africa, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and south and Southeast Asia. He emphasized adhering closely to Islamic law, following the customs of the prophet Muhammad, and learning to incorporate the wisdom of Muslim saints into one's own inner knowledge. These teachings appealed especially to merchants; indeed, merchants were largely responsible for the order's successful growth.

Naqshband also stressed different stages of divine encounter: a moment of intimacy (*uns*); longing for the encounter (*shauq*); reaching proximity with the divine (*qurb*); and assembling with the saints (*qurb an-nawafil*). While achieving each stage depended upon the disciple's ability to master gnostic knowledge and perfect his spirituality, Naqshband taught that every individual could access all the levels. For example, to reach the moment of intimacy with the divine was directly connected to realizing the divine beauty and the manifestation of God's compassionate qualities—part of awakening the sufi's heart.

In the area of longing for the encounter with the divine, Naqshband taught sufis to master specific spiritual exercises, such as maintaining awareness of one's breathing, watching over one's movements, concentrating on the inner mystical journey, engaging in constant recollection of God (*dhikr*), controlling one's thoughts, restraining all thoughts that are negative, and concentrating deeply on God. Generally, these spiritual practices fall under the category of dhikr, or remembrance. However, according to Naqshband, one must pay constant attention to perfecting each one of these exercises to increase gnostic knowledge (*irfan*) and open the self up to God's self-disclosure. Naqshband's teaching preferred silent dhikr as opposed to loud, communal dhikr accompanied by musical instruments and dancing. One other important contribution by Naqshband to the sufi tradition is the *suhbat*, the intimate conversations and lessons between the master and disciple. It is within this relationship that the master and disciple connect their lives for spiritual unity, faith healing, transcendence, miracles, and many other phenomena.

—Qamar-ul Huda

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism; Teachers as Holy People

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Baha'uddin Walad (Sultan Walad)

(1226–1312 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, order founder

Baha'addin Muhammad Sultan Walad was the eldest son of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, the famous mystic poet and spiritual founder of the Mawlawiyyah order, known in the West as the whirling dervishes. Even though Sultan Walad has been somewhat overshadowed by the presence and fame of his father, he nevertheless played a substantial role in the establishment of the order and its continuation after Rumi's death. He was born in Konya, Turkey, where his grandfather and father had migrated and settled during the Mongol invasion of the Khorasan region, in 1226. Sultan Walad was very close to his father and remained a committed disciple until his own death in 1312. He was falsely implicated in the death of Shams-i Tabrizi, Rumi's most beloved companion, who mysteriously disappeared one day (and to whom Rumi dedicated his book of poetry *Diwan-i Shams-i Tabrizi* [The poems of Shams-i Tabrizi]). Sultan Walad, who lived a long life, died in Konya and was buried next to his father. Thousands of pilgrims visit their tombs every year.

Sultan Walad wrote a number of books in prose and poetry. His most famous work, *Ma'arif* (Collection of talks and sermons), is a collection of spiritual counsels and sermons very close in style to his father's *Fihī ma fih* (Discourses). Written in simple language, the book addresses numerous issues related to the spiritual life and the teachings of the Mawlawiyyah order. Sultan Walad's greatest work, however, was the establishment of the Mawlawiyyah order itself.

Before his death, Rumi had many followers and his fame had already reached many parts of the Islamic world. Rumi, however, did not found the Mawlawiyyah order in its present form. Although Rumi was the first spiritual master (shaykh) of the order, it was Sultan Walad who, upon his appointment to this position at his father's death, gathered his father's followers, sent representatives to various places, and built a mausoleum for his father. The mausoleum quickly became the center of the Mawlawiyyah order. Some of the distinct

features of the whirling dervishes also go back to Sultan Walad. He is revered as one of the pillars of the Mawlawiyyah order as well as of Turkish-Anatolian sufism.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Shams-i Tabrizi; Sufism

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Baha'u'llah

(1817–1892 C.E.)

Baha'i founder

Baha'u'llah (lit. "the glory of God") was the founder of the Baha'i faith. He claimed to be the latest in the succession of messengers of God who have founded the world's religions, and indeed, to be the promised one of all religions. He stated that he had brought the teachings necessary to inaugurate the next stage in humanity's development—the unification of the human race.

Baha'u'llah was born Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri in Tehran, Iran, on November 12, 1817, into the family of a prominent government dignitary. When the Bab put forward his claim in 1844, Baha'u'llah became an enthusiastic follower and took the new message to his home region of Nur, Mazandaran. He was a leading participant at the Conference of Badashat, where the Bab's claim to inaugurate a new religious dispensation was first proclaimed. When the Babis began to be persecuted, he used his social position to protect individuals such as Tahirih, the only woman among the first disciples of the Bab. As a consequence, he himself became subject to attacks leading to his imprisonment in 1852 in the Siyah-Chal, an underground dungeon in Tehran, where he experienced a vision of a heavenly maid suspended in the air who announced to the world: "By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive" (Baha'u'llah 2002, 6). Baha'u'llah marked this event as the start of his ministry.

On his release from the Siyah-Chal, Baha'u'llah was exiled. He chose to go to Baghdad, which was then a provincial capital in the Ottoman Empire. Although he had not as yet made any claim, his natural leadership and charisma meant

that the followers of the Bab, the Babis, most of whose leadership had been eliminated in the fierce persecutions in Iran, came to look upon him as a source of guidance and inspiration. This led to much jealousy and resentment, particularly on the part of Baha'u'llah's half-brother Mirza Yahya (Subh-i Azal), who had leadership claims of his own. Not wanting to be the cause of dissension, Baha'u'llah left for the mountains of Kurdistan, where he lived alone as an ascetic for two years (1854–1856). Eventually however, he returned to Baghdad because he saw that the cause of the Bab was in danger of disintegrating. He set about rebuilding the Babi community. At this time, he wrote a number of books, such as *Kalimat-i Maknunih* (Hidden words), *Haft-Vadi* (Seven valleys), and *Kitab i-Iqan* (Book of certitude), which became highly regarded by the Babis in Iran. Baha'u'llah's increasing prestige in Baghdad led to calls by the Iranian government that he either be returned to their custody or sent further away from the borders of Iran.

In 1863, Baha'u'llah received orders from the Ottoman authorities to present himself in Istanbul. After three months in Istanbul, Baha'u'llah was further exiled to Edirne (Adrianople) in European Turkey. Privately, in a place called thereafter the Garden of Ridvan (paradise) just as he left Baghdad, and publicly in Edirne, Baha'u'llah announced his claim to be not only the one prophesied by the Bab (“He whom God will make manifest”) but also the Promised One of all religions. He put forward this claim in a series of letters addressed to the leading monarchs and religious leaders of his time (Baha'u'llah 2002). In his letter to Pope Pius IX, for example, Baha'u'llah asserted that he was Christ returned as the Father (2002, 55, 59). While in Edirne, the split with Mirza Yahya came to a crisis after the latter tried to poison Baha'u'llah. The poison left Baha'u'llah with a tremble in his hand until the end of his life. The false reports that Mirza Yahya sent to the government resulted in the further exile in 1868 of Baha'u'llah and his companions to Akka (Akko), then in the Ottoman province of Syria and now in Israel.

In Akka, Baha'u'llah was imprisoned for two years in the citadel and later subject to house arrest. It was during this period that he wrote his most important book, the *Kitab-i-Aqdas* (The most holy book), which contains the laws and teachings of his religion. Successive governors, however, fell under the spiritual influence of Baha'u'llah, and in 1877 he was allowed to transfer his residence to a building outside the city. In 1879, he moved to his final residence, the Mansion of Bahji, outside Akka. Here he secluded himself, concentrating on dictating to his secretaries replies to the letters that came to him, meeting with his followers, and allowing his son, 'Abdu'l-Baha, to deal with all other affairs. He provided for the continued evolution of the religion that he had founded by appointing 'Abdu'l-Baha as his successor.

It appears that Baha'u'llah possessed great charisma. There are numerous reports of individuals, some starting from a hostile position and some wanting to judge between him and Mirza Yahya, who were won over by his spiritual power and presence. E. G. Browne, a Cambridge University orientalist who met him in Bahji in 1890, wrote: “The face of Him on Whom I gazed, I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow. . . . No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain” (quoted in Balyuzi 1980, 371).

When Baha'u'llah passed away on May 29, 1892, he was seventy-four years of age and had spent forty of those years as a prisoner or in exile. In 1844, at the age of twenty-seven, he had voluntarily given up the life of comfort and prestige that he had inherited and entered the ranks of the poor and oppressed of the world. Baha'u'llah knew what it was like to lose home and possessions, to be stripped of all human rights, to be a prisoner and a refugee, to be beaten, to be subjected to unjust legal procedures, and to be the victim of corrupt officials. In Tehran in 1852 he had experienced the anger of a mob whipped into blind and senseless rage; on the road to Baghdad, he and his family had suffered from poverty, hunger, and exposure; during the course of his exiles, he and his wife had watched their children become ill and die; and in the early years in Akka he had experienced overcrowded accommodation, lack of food, unhygienic conditions, and the resultant diseases. When, therefore, Baha'u'llah wrote of the suffering of the masses of the people in our world today and of the need for society to look after the poor and disadvantaged and to guard against injustice and corruption, he was writing of things that he had experienced firsthand and about which he cared deeply. His shrine at Bahji, near Akka, is regarded by Baha'is as the holiest place on earth.

—Moojan Momen

See also: 'Abdu'l-Baha; Bab, The; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Messiahs; Prophets; Shoghi Effendi; Suffering and Holy People; Tahirih; Teachers as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Bahinabai (Bahenabai, Bahini)

(c. 1628–c. 1700 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

A woman “poet-saint” (*sant*) and brahmin, born in Devagao (modern Maharashtra), India, in about 1628, Bahinabai composed some 1,000 devotional songs in Marathi. Her chosen deity was the Hindu god Vitthal, and her chosen guru was her fellow Marathi *sant* Tukaram (c. 1607–1649). Her work is often autobiographical as well as devotional, and it is unique in its emphasis on the difficulties a married, high-caste woman of great devotional sense might have experienced in seventeenth-century India.

Bahinabai’s songs sometimes express a feeling of abandonment by Vitthal and reveal her efforts to remain faithful to her deity while reconciling this faith with her social obligation to her husband. She recalls that her husband disapproved of both her faith and her allegiance to her guru, Tukaram, a resistance that often elicited violent repression from her husband. In one song, she tells us that her husband had a disposition for rage. Upon discovering that Bahinabai had attended a performance of Tukaram’s songs, she reports, he “dragged me by my hair and beat me severely.” She relates that her “body accepted” the beatings, though we are led to believe that her faith remained unbruised. Perhaps due to her husband’s oppressive control, Bahinabai remained at a physical distance from Tukaram, taking spiritual education from him through his public discourses, as well as through visions and dreams.

One also hears in Bahinabai’s songs a striking ambivalence regarding a “woman’s duty” in society. She both attacks gender roles and defends them as necessary for social cohesion. In one song, for example, Bahinabai suggests that “the woman who gives herself to her husband in action, word, and thought finds God waiting at her doorstep.” Yet she also sings, “I’ve abandoned all feelings of shame and public decency; I’ve devoted myself to God. What can people expect from me, now that I have no fear, O Sister?” Bahinabai idealizes the role of the “perfect wife,” or *pativrata*, one who has made a vow (*vrata*) of fidelity to her husband, or “master” (*pati*). However, she also reports that when her husband would abuse her, the cows of the village—sacred to many Hindus—would refuse to eat, as if to protest this dishonorable treatment. Indeed, Bahinabai suggests in one song that the success of a partnership between a man and a woman, and the resulting spiritual elevation of the two together, requires the mutual vow of fidelity by both man and woman.

—*Christian Lee Novetzke*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Tukaram

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Bahíyyih Khánum

(1846–1932 C.E.)

Baha’i holy woman

In 1932, the Baha’i world community was devastated when Bahíyyih Khánum’s death was announced. Baha’u’llah’s eldest daughter and one of the most important members of the holy family, she is considered the Baha’i faith’s outstanding heroine and exemplar of womanhood. Her great-nephew, Shoghi Effendi, guardian of the Baha’i faith, called her station exalted and her life sublime. Known to Baha’is as the “greatest holy leaf,” Bahíyyih Khánum is the closest person that the Baha’is have to a saint.

Born in 1846, from the age of six, along with the rest of her family, she suffered through the imprisonments and banishments of her father, including the horrendous winter crossing over the Persian mountains to Iraq, the frozen sojourn in Edirne (Turkey) hovels, and the years in the worst of the Ottoman Empire’s prisons. At her mother’s death in 1886, she inherited the heavy charge of the household. With a large and constant flow of visitors, pilgrims, and the poor seeking aid and solace, her responsibility could be likened more to that of an executive manager. Yet, Baha’is who met her remember her primarily for her dignity, gentleness, decorum, loving-kindness, constant service, and silence.

Bahíyyih Khánum’s silence was misleading. Her greatest service to the Baha’i faith was the crucial role she played in the maintenance of the community’s unity. This began before her father died, but it was at his death in 1892 that she fully emerged as a pivotal figure in stopping family members from usurping her brother ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s position as successor. Then, when ‘Abdu’l-Baha died in 1921 and Shoghi Effendi became guardian, she was responsible for his acceptance as successor. Her role in maintaining the unity of the Baha’i community during these crisis periods cannot be overstated. During ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s lengthy trip to Europe, the United States, and Canada in 1911–1913, she was in charge of affairs that ‘Abdu’l-Baha could not take care of while he was abroad. Later, she advised Shoghi Effendi and was his most important supporter. During Shoghi Effendi’s many lengthy absences, she was the acting head of the Baha’i faith.

Revered during her lifetime, in her death she was referred to as having led a saintly life, and her remains are considered to be sacred. There are relics from Bahíyyih Khánum in the Baha’i International Archives at the Baha’i World Center. After her death, Shoghi Effendi and the Baha’is prayed to her for intercession, and miraculous healing was attributed to her. Baha’is who owned one of her relics, such as a gown or a ring, used them to increase the potency of their prayers. In

an unusual gesture, Shoghi Effendi designated the nine months after her death as an official period of mourning for the whole Baha'i community. Only administrative and devotional meetings were allowed, and individuals were asked to avoid personal celebrations for a full year. Shoghi Effendi erected a monument for her, and her grave is at the heart of the Baha'i World Center. Pilgrims still visit her shrine to pray.

—Loni Bramson

See also: 'Abdu'l-Baha; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Gender and Holy People; Shoghi Effendi

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Bakhita, Josephine

(1869–1947 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, social activist

Josephine Bakhita was formally recognized as a saint of the Catholic Church on October 1, 2000. Born in Olgossa, a village in Darfur, Sudan, in 1869, she is the first African native to be canonized who did not suffer a martyr's death. Through her life witness, she has become a hopeful symbol of emancipation and reconciliation for the war-torn and persecuted people of Sudan. Her personal history confirms the possibility of the restoration of dignity and rights to all people, especially women, who suffer from oppression and violence. Pope John Paul II named her "Our Universal Sister."

Bakhita was kidnapped from her village when she was about nine years old. "Bakhita"—meaning "the fortunate one"—was the name given to her by her captors. She was sold into slavery and suffered great abuse, including whipping, scourging, and the torture of sixty-six tattoos being carved on her breasts, belly, and arms.

The last family Bakhita was sold into was Italian, and it was in Italy that she encountered the Canossian Daughters of Charity. She later wrote, "The saintly Sisters helped me to know God, whom I had experienced in my heart since childhood. I had contemplated the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the things of nature, asking myself who could be the master of it all. I felt a keen desire to see him, know him, and pay him homage" (Stamwitz 1993, 50). Bakhita determined to join the Canossian community. Although the family she was living with tried to force her to return to Africa with them, it turned out that slavery was illegal in Italy, and she was, in every sense, a free woman. Bakhita was baptized in 1890 and took the name Josephine (Giuseppina). She was fully professed as a Daughter of Charity in 1896.

As a member of the religious community, Sister Josephine performed simple tasks such as cooking, sewing, and serving as sacristan and doorkeeper. The essence of her spirituality was in knowing that God is the master of every human life and that doing God's will means being intentional in our love for others and seeking the way to peace and reconciliation: "If I were to meet those slave traders who captured me, even those who tortured me, I would kneel down and kiss their hands, for if things had not happened so, I would not now be a Christian and a religious" (Stamwitz 1993, 51).

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People

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Bamba, Ahmad (Amadou)

(1850–1927 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, order founder

Shaykh Ahmad (Amadou) Bamba, a Muslim saint and the founder of the Mouridiyyah order, was born in Senegal in 1850. He received his Islamic education from his father and his uncle, Mouhammadou Bouso. Bamba admired sufism and was initiated into the Qadiriyyah order but established his own order, the Mouridiyyah, in 1905. The order focuses on Qur'anic recitation, long prayers, and the remembrance of God (*dhikr*). Bamba's disciples claimed that he performed numerous miracles. His order attracted many followers, especially among the Wolof people, who had been dehumanized by French rule and injustices. He refused to work for the Senegalese kings and chiefs, whom he perceived as "the instruments of Satan" for their collaboration with the French colonial rule.

Bamba demanded from his followers a total obedience to him and to other Mouridiyyah leaders. His disciples found in his spiritual teachings a sense of belonging and alignment with African culture. He was a charismatic religious leader whose prayers were believed to be answered. His simple lifestyle, devotion, love, and care for the poor attracted many followers. As his influence grew, the French administrators in Senegal became worried. The French exiled Bamba to Gabon, Congo, and Mauritania. He survived the French persecutions and returned to Senegal to spread his Mouridiyyah movement and unite his people through his sufi spirituality.

Bamba was a devout sufi of high character. He introduced his own special prayer litany (*wird*) in 1912 while in Mauritania. His litany focuses on intensive prayers and praises of

the prophet Muhammad. He initiated many disciples into the Mouridiyyah order, including women. Bamba was a man of peace who spent his time in devotion, reading, writing, and teaching Islam. He wrote a few books on Islam, especially on prayer.

Bamba encouraged his followers to be economically independent, and he considered hard work a religious duty and a means of appreciating God's blessings. Members of the order, then and now, have therefore worked hard and disciplined themselves. They engage in agriculture, produce groundnuts, trade, and network among themselves. They also engage in import and export businesses on local, national, and international levels. This financial independence allowed them to be free from the threat and financial pressure of the French colonial rulers.

Bamba died in 1927 and left behind a legacy that has created a community of loving, hardworking individuals who care for one another. Mouridiyyah members are found today in Africa, Europe, and North America. Those in Europe and North America assist those who are in Senegal by sending money home. They continue to revere Bamba and make pilgrimages to his tomb in Touba, Senegal, for they consider him an intermediary (*wasilat*) to God.

—Yushau Sodiq

See also: Fall, Cheikh Ibra; Intermediaries; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Bamdeb

See **Vamaksepa**

Banarsidas

(1586–1643 C.E.)

Jain lay poet

Banarsidas, a Jain lay poet of the Digambara sect (whose monks practice ascetic nudity), was born in 1586 in Agra, India, to a merchant family. His mystical poetry is comparable to that of Kabir and other northern Indian devotional poet-saints in its use of erotic imagery. Banarsidas became a leading exponent of the Adhyatmika (inner soul) movement,

an internally focused mystical Jainism inspired by the Digambara philosopher Kundakunda (c. second–third century), who propounded a doctrine of two levels of truth similar to that of the Hindu Shankara and the Buddhist Nagarjuna. Banarsidas and his followers led Digambara Jains away from ritualism and toward mystical devotionalism and a renewal of interest in Kundakunda's philosophy.

Banarsidas wrote an autobiography at age fifty-five. Called *Ardhakathanaka* (Half a story), it is the tale of the first half of his life, which he spent as an amorous and bookish youth and undisciplined businessman, then as a pious lay ritualist, and his gradual ascent along the scale of Jain stages of spiritual development until he attained a mystical experience similar to enlightenment. Banarsidas disagreed with the Jain traditions that limited the higher stages of spiritual development to a past age; in this respect, he foreshadowed later Jain mystics such as the nineteenth-century Shrimad Rajcandra. Banarsidas's later poetry reflects his mystical transformation, and unlike his earlier work, is not overtly erotic. Banarsidas, having experienced a "dark night of the soul" in which he lost his moral bearing, was able finally to integrate the two levels of truth, conventional and ultimate, and integrate his youthful eroticism and ritualism into a coherent experience, "half a story."

Except for a brief period of study with a Shvetambara (white-robed) monk, Banarsidas seems to have had little contact with renunciants, nor did he seem to feel the need of their presence to live as a good Jain. Although the Adhyatmika movement survived him by only about a century, Banarsidas is still influential among lay Jains, both Digambara and Shvetambara, notably the intersectorian lay movement founded by Shrimad Rajcandra and the Kanji Swami Panth.

—Jerome Bauer

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Devotion; Jainism and Holy People; Kanji Swami; Laity; Rajcandra, Shrimad

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Baqir, Muhammad al-

(676–c. 743 C.E.)

Shi'a Muslim imam

Muhammad al-Baqir was born in Medina in 676, more than four decades after his great-great-grandfather, the prophet Muhammad, passed away. He is considered the fourth imam by the Nizari Isma'ili Shi'a Muslims and the fifth imam by the Ithna-Ash'ari Shi'a Muslims. He was con-

nected to both of the sons of 'Ali b. Abi Talib and to the prophet's daughter Fatima. His mother was the daughter of Hasan, the elder son, and his father, Zain al-abidin, was the son of 'Ali's second son, Husayn. He was about four years old when his grandfather, Imam Husayn, was brutally assassinated by the troops of the Umayyad caliph, Yazid b. Muawiyah, in 680.

Muhammad was called al-Baqir [al-'ilm], "one who splits knowledge open," because of his learning and wise disposition. This designation was appropriate as he has been credited with systematizing many important aspects of Shi'i Muslim thought as well as the field of *fiqh* (jurisprudence). The ideas of the infallible imam and the necessity of the *natiq* (speaker) who would interpret the Qur'an were carefully propounded by him. Accordingly, it was only the imam who could correctly lead the community from the outward and evident meaning of the Qur'an to the inward and concealed meaning. Proficient in various aspects of sacred lore and literature, he was greatly sought after as a teacher. He was the foremost authority on the traditions of the prophet, the *sira* (history of the prophet), and the early community as well as on the apparent and hidden expositions of the verses of the sacred text of the Qur'an.

His brother Zayd, promising to deliver a Utopian existence to the masses, led a popular insurrection against the Umayyad caliph Hisham. Al-Baqir remained aloof from this movement, which was eventually crushed by the authorities. In fact, during his life he consistently stayed away from active involvement in politics and concentrated instead on scholarly activities. According to a narrative that may be either completely or partially apocryphal, he was once brought into the presence of Hisham. Here he ignored the caliph, who of course was extremely angered by this deliberate gesture and imprisoned him for a short time. The reason for the summons apparently had to do with al-Baqir's teachings. He was very concerned with the poverty of the majority of the population while the ruling elite lived in luxury. He constantly lectured on the need of the people to be fair and not to be extravagant in their lifestyles.

Muhammad al-Baqir was imam for nineteen years. He died about 743 and is buried in the cemetery of al-Baqi in Medina.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Fatima bint Muhammad; Hasan b. 'Ali; Hussayn b. 'Ali; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Muhammad

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Baqli, Ruzbihan

(1128–1209 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, writer

Sadr al-Din Abu Muhammad Ruzbihan b. Abi Nasr al-Fasa'i al-Daylami al-Baqi al-Shirazi, born in 1128, was one of the great Persian sufi writer-teachers who articulated the path of ecstatic passionate love (*'ishq*). Ruzbihan unabashedly recorded his own ecstatic, visionary, and unitive experiences as evidence of an investiture (*iltibas*) of autonomous spiritual authority related in its theoretical understanding to the sufi legacy and lineage of Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. c. 875) and Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922).

Ruzbihan's significance rests not only on his influence on later sufis but on his dramatic descriptions of his own mystical experiences. Few sufi writers draw one so deeply into their inner world of mystical states. Ruzbihan's colorful and vivid visionary prose and densely symbolic passages infuse his writing with poetic and paradoxical presence. He felt that in the "station of unveiling and witnessing" (*maqam al-kashf wa-l mushahada*) he experienced what he termed an essential union (*'ayn al-jam'*) and unification (*ittihad*) in which the borders between human and divine reality dissolved, opening him to witness the presence of God in all phenomena.

At the age of seven, Ruzbihan first experienced divine passionate love (*'ishq*); at age fifteen, he heard his calling as a "prophet," a claim made intelligible by his dictum that the "oceans of prophethood and sainthood interpenetrate." For fifty years, he preached at the principal mosque in Shiraz and taught students. Ruzbihan boasted of his spiritual visions and engaged in outrageous ecstatic utterances (*shathiyat*), earning him the sobriquet "ecstatic doctor" (*shaykh-i shattah*). Although he may have entered into discipleship with three sufi masters and practiced in the Kazaruni lineage, he did not claim this or any other affiliation as the basis of his knowledge and experience.

Explaining that the heart is the mirror of the angelic realm, Ruzbihan rooted his exegesis in experiential knowledge, which distinguishes it from the work of "the people of form" (exoteric exegetes) and scholars and philosophers. In what might be called a "hermeneutic of recognition," Ruzbihan found his own mystical experience mirrored in the Qur'an while also recognizing the Qur'an as a light by which his mystical vision was illuminated. Ruzbihan's visionary diary, *Kashf al-Asrar* (The unveiling of secrets) features initiatic encounters with God, the angels, the prophets, and saints, including, among other eminent spiritual directors, al-Khidr, the "Green One."

The famous world traveler Ibn Battuta (in 1325) and the geographer Hamd Allah Mustawfi (in 1336) reported Ruzbihan's tomb as a major pilgrimage site. Scholars propose that the Persian poet Muhammad Shamsuddin Hafiz (c. 1320–c. 1388) may have been inspired and guided by Ruzbihan's work, especially his attention to passionate theophanic witness in human form. Ruzbihan's great-grandsons created his two hagiographies, *Tuhfat ahl al-'irfan* (The Gift of the people of gnosis) and *Ruh al-jinan* (The Spirit of the gardens) and established the Ruzbihaniyya order and the cult of his tomb.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Bistami, Abu Yazid; Hafiz, Muhammad Shamsuddin; Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Mysticism and Holy People

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Barbara

(d. c. 303 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Barbara was venerated as a saint immediately after her death around 303 because of miracles that occurred at her tomb. She was patron of a monastery at Edessa and churches at Constantinople and Cairo before her cult spread throughout Europe, with the translation of relics to Ghent in 985. Numerous groups, including artillerymen, prisoners, architects, and librarians, celebrate her martyrdom on December 4. Considered among the "holy helpers" during the fourteenth-century plague, she has been invoked against fever and death without sacraments.

Her vita, composed of legendary materials, is a source for literary texts. In these sources, Barbara, daughter of the wealthy non-Christian Dioscorus of Nicomedia, now in Turkey, is an intelligent and beautiful girl. Her father imprisons her in a tower to prevent her from inflaming men's hearts. Nevertheless, a priest teaches her about Christianity and baptizes her. While her father is at war against the Christians, his workmen are ordered to build a bathhouse with two windows. Barbara, however, wants three, one for each member of the Trinity. Upon her fa-

ther's return, she announces her conversion. Furious, he attempts to kill her.

Barbara flees and finds sanctuary in a rock, but a shepherd betrays her. Captured, she is implored by her father to marry and rejoin their community. She refuses, because she has committed herself as the bride of Christ. Her father denounces her to the proconsul, who attempts to break her resolve by subjecting her to persecution that recalls Jesus' crucifixion. Virginitly triumphs; Jesus safeguards her body. Mad with rage, her father raises his sword and beheads her; at the same time, a thunderbolt shoots from the sky and lightning inflames and consumes his body. Artists have illustrated her in several poses: by a triple-lancet tower with palm and book; her beheading; and holding a chalice and viaticum.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Veneration of Holy People

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Barlaam and Josaphat

(c. 4th cent. C.E.)

Christian legendary holy people, bodhisattva

The most famous Buddha legend in Christianity dates from the seventh century. Attributed to John the Monk, *Barlaam and Josaphat* was reworked into Greek and Latin by the eleventh century. The Latin text was translated into vernacular languages for all literary genres. Thirteenth-century writers Vincent de Beauvais, Jacques de Vitry, and Jacobus de Voragine include it in their collections, which were among the most important sources for literary works in the later Middle Ages. The 1914 English translation of the text follows the structures of medieval courtly romances. The Roman Catholic Church canonized Barlaam and Josaphat, who might have lived in Ethiopia, called India in the text. Their names are found in the Roman Martyrology for November 27 and in the Greek calendar for August 26.

According to these sources, the Buddha figure, Josaphat, reached enlightenment through his love of Jesus Christ. The story takes place in fourth-century India. By then, many Indians had converted to Christianity and were, according to

the legend, being persecuted by King Avenir (Abenner). He and his wife remained childless for many years. Upon the birth of a son, astrologers warned them that he would become a Christian. To thwart that prediction, the king had a palace of pleasure built where the youth was reared. As in the story of the Buddha, the mature Josaphat was granted permission to leave his palace and explore the world. However, the king instructed escorts to prevent the prince from learning about unpleasant aspects of life. Nevertheless, Josaphat encountered a beggar, a leper, a blind man, and a gray-haired, toothless old man, in the process acquiring knowledge about illness and death.

Informed about the prince, the hermit Barlaam, disguised as a merchant, arrived in the capital city. Permitted to speak to the youth about the magical properties of a precious gem, the monk used the opportunity to talk to the prince about biblical matters, thereby offering an apology of Christianity. Impressed by the powers of God, Josaphat asked his mentor to make him a Christian. Barlaam baptized him at the pool in the king's palace garden.

Heartbroken at his conversion, the king wanted Josaphat to denounce Christianity. He organized a debate between one Christian and several pagan orators, but rigged it so that the astrologer Namor (Nachor), disguised as Barlaam, would lose the debate. Father and son agreed to follow the teachings of the victor. However, the trick turned against the king, for Namor and the audience became Christians. King Avenir converted, too, and he divided his kingdom so that both he and his son could rule. They broke idols and gave the pieces of silver and gold to the poor, destroyed temples, and built churches. Later, forty days after his father's death, Josaphat distributed his wealth and abdicated the throne so that he might conclude his life in the desert.

Josaphat left the country in the hands of his kinsman Barachias and set out to live with Barlaam. At Barlaam's death, Josaphat, following Barlaam's instructions, buried his mentor next to their cave. When, after thirty-five years in the desert, Josaphat died at age sixty, a monk buried him in the same grave as his spiritual father, and upon learning of the deaths of the two holy men, King Barachias had their remains transferred to a church in the capital. Healing miracles occurred and the people venerated Barlaam and Josaphat as saints.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Christianity and Holy People; Gautama; Legendary Holy People

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Basavanna

(1106–1167 C.E.)

Hindu Shaivite reformer

Basavanna (Basava or Basavesvara) led an egalitarian Hindu reform movement, the Virashaiva (energy of Shiva) movement, that flourished in Kalyan, India, during the twelfth century and claims several million followers today. Born in 1106 into a prosperous and scholarly brahmin family, as an adolescent Basava tore off the sacred thread that symbolized his high caste and traveled to a temple near the confluence of three rivers. There, he celebrated his vision of the divine as the energy of river merging with river.

In his late twenties, he left the temple and joined an uncle in the employ of Bijjala, the chieftain who later usurped the Chalukya throne. Basava was made Bijjala's accountant, given two well-connected wives, and promoted to chief treasurer. He moved to the capital city, Kalyan, where he and his wives nourished the Virashaiva movement physically and spiritually, establishing an assembly hall where thousands of mostly low-caste men and women were fed and encouraged to debate subjects ranging from astrology to vernacular education.

Guided by his guru, Allama Prabhu, Basavanna composed several hundred pithy sayings, all addressed to his lord of clashing rivers. In *vachanas* ranging from didactic to mystical, he taught that the divine is innate, gender illusory, caste meaningless, and work sacred. He promoted Kannada as a proper language for prayer along with Sanskrit, and he argued that priestly rituals are unnecessary, that the human body is all the temple that one needs, and that evil deeds are the only pollutants. Like other Virashaivas, he substituted for temples a small stone *linga* that he wore as an emblem of the Shiva-permeated world. He worshipped the divine in this *linga* form, in the form of living humans, and in the form of the guru.

In 1167, the priestly hierarchy, which viewed Basavanna as dangerous, persuaded Bijjala to execute two disciples responsible for arranging an inter-caste marriage. Riots ensued; Bijjala was assassinated by a Virashaiva, and Basavanna left Kalyan. According to hagiographers, soon afterward he merged with his lord in the rivers' confluence.

—Elizabeth Delmonico

See also: Apotheosis; Hinduism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Reform and Reaction; Ritual; Virashaivas

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Basho

(1644–1694 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist poet

Matsuo Basho is considered to be the creator of haiku. The poetic form of haiku existed prior to Basho, yet its significance was merely that of a literary pastime until he explored and refined the medium, eventually becoming the most influential Zen Buddhist Japanese poet of his time. The history of haiku can thus be seen as a history of Basho's transformation of haiku.

Basho was born near Ueno in Iga Province, Japan, in 1644. His father died in 1656, at which time Basho most likely had already entered into the service of Todo Yoshitada, a samurai of Iga Province, with the hope of becoming a samurai himself. His earliest known verse was written in 1662. It is probable that the death of Todo Yoshitada drove Basho into his life as a wanderer and a poet. He resigned from the service at this time, moving to Kyoto to take up the study of philosophy, poetry, and calligraphy.

Basho began writing critical commentary for haiku contests such as "The Seashell Game" and settled in the first "Basho hut." He found a striking spiritual resemblance between himself and a *basho* (banana plant) within the hut, which eventually earned him the nickname he gladly accepted. At approximately the same time that Basho's first hut was destroyed by fire, his mother died in Ueno. With these tragedies occurring in such close proximity in his life, Basho took to travel and produced *Nozarashi Kiko* (The records of a weathered skeleton). He also began practicing Zen Buddhism under the guidance of the priest Butcho (1642–1715).

Basho had a total of more than 2,000 students and wrote approximately 1,000 verses. His influence on haiku is crucial. It is thanks to Basho that haiku reached the more spiritually mature state in which it has remained.

—Max Clark

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People

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Basil the Great

(330–379 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, theologian, polemicist

Basil the Great is a unique combination of pastoral sensitivity, theological erudition, and ascetical discipline. His unswerving orthodoxy, administrative skill, and temperate personality earned him the title "the Great" and an enduring legacy. Notable for his writings on monastic and spiritual life and against Arianism, Basil represents a unique milieu in the Christian era.

The fourth century was a period of rapid growth and development for the church. Controversies of profound theological significance combined with freedom from persecution and the increasing social status of Christianity to create a volatile era. Many enrolled as catechumens in order to gain the benefits of the faith now favored even by the emperor. At the same time, imperial involvement in church affairs both benefited and afflicted the struggle to define orthodoxy and retain catholic unity. Basil himself came into conflict with the Arian emperor Valens, ultimately battling to victory.

Basil was a pivotal contributor to the rapidly developing monastic movement. Although the impetus for monasticism in early Christianity had many causes, the end of persecution in 313 seems to have had significant impact. Many, finding the newly approved faith too comfortable, sought a more disciplined and committed approach. Thus, the ascetical life became a form of bloodless martyrdom in which the individual sought to focus on spiritual matters above concerns of the flesh. Although not without extremism, the emphasis was not on the physical body as evil, but rather on the superior importance of the spiritual. Basil, whose grandfather had been a fugitive during the persecution of Maximian, clearly saw monasticism as an expression of the apostolic Christian ideal.

Basil and his close friend Gregory of Nazianzus founded a small monastic community on the banks of the Iris River in 358. In preparing for this life, Basil toured Egypt, the birthplace of Christian monasticism, coming in contact with the huge cenobitical communities of Pachomius and the multitude of hermits following the example of Antony of Egypt. As he formulated his own rules (both a long and short version), Basil moderated many of the more extreme practices of the desert hermits. His communal emphasis is seen in the establishment of his monasteries in cities (rather than in remote desert or wilderness). It was expected that the general population would benefit from daily examples of the monks living in their midst. Another important difference is



Modern Greek icon of Basil the Great, dressed as a bishop and holding a jeweled book to represent his importance as a doctor of the church. (Art Directors)

that he opened up monastic life to women, though in separate communities from those of the men.

The communal nature of holiness can also be seen in his emphasis on spiritual direction, common prayer, and humility. For these reasons, there is an antagonism toward eremitism (hermits cannot practice humility, since there is no one to humble oneself before). Charitable giving, hospitality, and mutual support were also part of Basil's ascetical teaching and personal life, the more so since Basil had to leave his monastic community in about 364, first as assistant to the bishop in Caesarea and, from 370, as bishop himself.

Perhaps Basil's most enduring and far-reaching contribution to the life of the Church was the liturgy that bears his name. Although significantly modified by later liturgical organizers, the liturgy of Basil the Great became the backbone of the Byzantine rite and influenced greatly the Syrian, Russian, and Slavic rites.

Moderate, well educated, erudite, compassionate, a leader and defender of orthodox catholic faith, Basil the Great was

a defining father of the Church at a critical juncture in history. More important, his legacy endured because his life so manifested those characteristics of a true man of faith.

—George R. Hoelzeman

See also: Antony of the Desert; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory of Nazianzus; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People; Pachomius

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Basri, al-Hasan al-

(642–728 C.E.)

Muslim ascetic, preacher

Al-Hasan al-Basri was a preacher and one of the most famous among the pious and abstemious second-generation Muslims known as *al-Tabi'un* (successors). Born in Medina in 642 during the period of the Umayyad dynasty based in Syria, he is said to have been the son of a slave who became a client of Zayd b. Thabit, the prophet Muhammad's secretary. Al-Hasan lived in Medina until about 658, when he moved to Basra in Iraq.

Basra was home to many of the prophet's companions during the time of al-Hasan. Al-Hasan soon acquired a reputation for honesty, scrupulosity, and moral uprightness in an era generally regarded as characterized by worldliness and moral laxity. His sermons exhorting people to righteous behavior and upbraiding tyrannical rulers for their wrongdoing have become justly famous. He was known as a brilliant orator, and many of his sayings have become classic gems of wisdom. Two well-known examples are: "Repolish these hearts [the site of true, religious knowledge] for indeed they quickly incline to rustiness"; and "Make the world a bridge which you cross and not a dwelling-place." Al-Hasan's fearless candor did not always go over well with rulers, however. He criticized some of the policies of al-Hajjaj (d. 714), the powerful and repressive governor of Basra, thereby incurring the latter's wrath, and was forced to go into hiding until the governor's death.

Al-Hasan tended to avoid the company of the wealthy and is said to have turned away a rich suitor for his daughter's hand. He was good friends, however, with the female mystic Rabi'a al-Adawiyya (c. 717–801 C.E.). Many are the stories told of the heartwarming camaraderie between them and of a selfless devotion to God that they shared. Other charming anecdotes point to al-Hasan's self-abnegation, abstemiousness, and self-deprecating wit. Because of his stalwart piety and resolute moral integrity, many later groups have claimed al-Hasan as one of their own, particu-

larly the sufis, the mystical practitioners of Islam, as have Sunni Muslims in general, the Mu'tazila (the rationalists), and chivalrous groups.

Since al-Hasan believed that the sinner was fully responsible for his actions, he has also been claimed by the advocates of free will (Qadariyya) as belonging to their school of thought. He is reported to have written a commentary on the Qur'an and a number of scholarly treatises on theology and political thought. Not much has survived of his writings, except for fragments of a few sermons and theological treatises. Many of his wise and pithy statements have been preserved in collections of anecdotes and homilies. Al-Hasan was also an avid narrator of *hadiths* (sayings) from the prophet Muhammad but is not universally regarded as a highly reliable transmitter of such.

—*Asma Afsaruddin*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Rabi'a 'Adewiyya; Sufism; Teachers as Holy People

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Bauls

Hindu/Muslim/syncretist mystics

Bauls (*bah'ool*; Bengali, "mad") are itinerant mystics known for their public performances of esoteric Bengali religious songs, especially in northeastern India and Bangladesh. The term may be derived from the Sanskrit *vyakula* (confused) or *vatula* (mad) and refers to the fact that Bauls deny most ordinary worldly conventions and pursue an intense "madness" for an indwelling divinity. Bauls are connected with both Hinduism and Islam, but they are nonsectarian, rejecting religious categories in favor of what they call the one true "religion of man" (Salomon 1995). Distinctively dressed in loose garments and coiffed with a rakishly angled topknot, Bauls sing of spiritual practices and divine love accompanied by a one-stringed drone instrument (*ektara*), drums, and cymbals.

The historical origins of the Bauls are unclear, although the word appears in Bengali texts from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Their beliefs and practices reflect the influences of a range of earlier religious traditions, including tantric Buddhism, devotional and tantric Hinduism, and sufi Islam. Bauls came to the attention of outsiders when a selection of songs composed by one of the greatest Bauls, Lalan Fakir (Lalan Shah; c. 1774–1890), was published by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore in 1915–1916. Tagore himself was deeply influenced by the Bauls, and he raised them as a model of Indian religiosity and artistry at a time

of rising Indian consciousness and nationalism. Yet Tagore and his followers, primarily intellectuals, the urban elite, and Bengali middle classes, emphasized the humanistic side of Baul songs while overlooking the Baul uses of tantric sexual rituals. This "sanitizing" of the Bauls continues today, yet it overlooks the transgressive core practices of many Bauls.

Bauls reject all forms of scriptural authority, from the Vedas to the Qur'an, in favor of the spiritual guidance of the guru. Their songs are composed in colloquial Bengali, using imagery and metaphors from daily life (for example, fishing, boating, trading) to express their belief in an esoteric inner path to the divine. Using ambiguous, enigmatic language, Bauls sing of their search for the elusive "man of the heart" (*moner manus*), the sacred being that dwells within the human body. Bauls believe that the human body and sexuality are necessary vehicles to reach the divine, and they employ a variety of sexual rituals, breath control, and devotional techniques to attain liberation. They reject celibacy and asceticism in favor of a form of *coitus reservatus*, in which the male is believed to draw both his own semen and the menstrual blood of his partner upward through the six "centers" (*cakras*) of the yogic body to the top of the head. This union of the male and female principles leads to the consciousness of *sahaja*, the "innate" or "natural" state of cosmic unity and bliss that precedes creation. Yet it is only through devotion (*bhakti*) and divine love (*prema*) that ordinary lust (*kama*) can be purified, leading to cosmic consciousness.

Bauls traditionally maintain their own households and communities, guided by a local guru. They perform in public places, on trains, and at outdoor fairs (*mela*). With their exotic appearance and enchanting songs, they remind the world of alternative ways of seeing reality.

—*Glen Alexander Hayes*

See also: Gurus; Insanity; Morality and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Ba-xian

See **Samantabhadra**

Becket

See **Thomas Becket**

Bede

(673–735 C.E.)

Christian monk, theologian, historian, doctor of the church

Bede, or the Venerable Bede, was a monk and priest at the remote Northumbrian monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow in England. Wearmouth/Jarrow was an oasis of culture and learning in a violent and desperate time. Bede, who entered the monastery at the age of seven, grew up amid the books and objects of art brought there from Rome and elsewhere by the monastery's abbots. By taking advantage of these resources, extraordinary in that time and place, Bede became a scholar greatly revered in his own age and in all ages to come, including our own. Among his writings are fifteen works of biblical commentary, five saints' lives, five educational or scientific works, and two histories. Although he was known best for his biblical commentaries in the Middle Ages, it is his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* that is the most important for modern scholars and from which we get most of what we know about early England. His work reveals careful scholarship, attention to objective truth, and a concern for the reliability and identity of his sources that was extremely rare in the early Middle Ages.

Bede's extraordinary abilities as a scholar and a teacher are emphasized most often, but he was also well known for his piety and asceticism. A devout monk, he embodied the saintly qualities of justice, mercy, and fairness. He was steadfast in his devotion to God and demonstrated the important combination of humility and strength. His great concern for precision of language and the correct copying of texts reflects the overall aim of his work, which was to better understand and interpret the Bible. He did not approve of the variant Christian practices, Roman and Irish, that had existed in England, but fully espoused the united and universal church of Rome and all its precepts and doctrine. In fact, he has been criticized by some modern scholars for suppressing knowledge of some of the activities of women in the early Anglo-Saxon church because such activities did not conform to the orthodox Roman insistence that women be restricted and cloistered.

Nevertheless, Bede was an extraordinary man and a great teacher. Born in 673, about seventy-five years after Pope Gregory I sent the first missionary to England, through his work he helped to repair the damage from a return to native religion and disintegration of learning and piety that occurred after the first brilliant bloom of Christianity. Due to Bede's diligent teaching, his pupils were able to help perpetuate his high standards in the dark days that followed his death. He continued teaching and correcting texts up to the last moments of his life, but in 735 he died with a hymn of praise to God on his lips. Although miracles occurred at his tomb after his death, his cult was not long-lived. It was as a

scholar that he achieved sainthood and eternal fame: He was named a doctor of the church in 1899.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Beguines

(12th cent. C.E.–present)

Christian religious movement

Arising in the twelfth century, the beguines were never a formal religious order, instead occupying a space somewhere between the secular and the sacred. They took their name from Lambert le Bègue, a priest from Liège who advised women to live in community and to minister to the needy. There was freedom within the movement to form whatever type of community was most appropriate for the women involved. All beguines swore chastity while living in the community, though they were free to leave at any time. They took no vows of obedience or poverty, instead pledging manual work. In this, the beguine movement was totally unique in the world of women's spirituality. Though most groups resided in an urban environment, even that was no prerequisite.

One common feature of the beguines was their predilection toward mysticism. Many of these devotions centered on either the image of the desert or the image of the mystical marriage of soul and Christ, which relied heavily on erotic metaphor. The movement was persecuted as a heretical sect beginning in the late thirteenth century, and troubles plagued the groups for years. Though most beguines were incorporated into the regular orders, there was a brief period of reform in the seventeenth century that resulted in the Belgian beguinages that exist today. Studies about women's spirituality in the late Middle Ages abound now, and many of these works touch on the beguine movement in some way.

During the height of the movement, there were vast numbers of beguines. However, today there are four women in particular who are associated with the movement: Beatrijs of Nazareth (1200–1268), Mechthild of Magdeburg (c. 1207–c.

1282), Hadewijch of Brabant (thirteenth century), and Marguerite Porete (d. 1310).

Beatrijs, a well-educated daughter of wealthy parents, voraciously read theological works. Originally from Tienan (in modern Belgium), she learned copying and illumination from the beguines in Rameia, then entered a convent at Maagden-dael before moving to a convent in Nazareth in the Low Countries. In 1237, she was elected prioress, a position she held until her death. Beatrijs enjoyed numerous spiritual ecstasies throughout her life. She was a prolific writer, compiling detailed spiritual diaries, most of which were destroyed upon her death. The only surviving text is a short prose work in Middle Dutch, *De seuen manieren van minne* (The seven manners of loving), a speculative mystic piece written using courtly love metaphors. Though not technically a beguine, Beatrijs is considered an associate of the movement because she was beguine educated, and because her particular type of mystic experience was evidenced most often among beguines.

Mechthild was born into a noble family. In 1230, she departed for Magdeburg to become a beguine. After living there forty years, she moved to the convent at Helfta, Germany. Her book, *Fliessende Licht der Gottheit* (Flowing light of the godhead), was written at the urging of her confessor, Heinrich von Halle. It consists of seven subparts, of which books one and two emphasize *minne*, the sensual relationship between the soul and God. The entire text consists of interwoven prose and poetry.

Though there is practically no extant information on Hadewijch's life, several of her writings survive. These include fourteen visions, forty-five poems, thirty-one letters, and a miscellaneous collection of poems and lists. Reconstruction of her life from letters indicates that at one time she led a group of mystically inclined beguines, though later she encountered problems that led to her isolation. Hadewijch's belief was that one must "live Love." Her letters and poems outline the process.

Marguerite Porete possibly resided at the beguinage in Valenciennes in France, but nothing is certain about her life. Of her death, we know considerably more. Porete was burned at the stake as a heretic in Paris on June 1, 1310, condemned for the distribution of her book *Le Mirouer des Simples Ames* (The mirror of simple souls), which had been publicly denounced and burned in 1306. The central idea of *Mirouer*, which takes the form of a dialogue, is the annihilation of the soul through loving submission. Strikingly, the book is addressed almost exclusively to women.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Laity; Mysticism and Holy People

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Behem, Hans (Boehm or Boeheim)

(pejoratively known as the "Drummer [occasionally "Piper"] of Niklashausen")

(d. 1476 C.E.)

Christian preacher, visionary

A youthful Franconian herder and sometime village musician burned at the stake by command of the bishop of Würzburg, Germany, in 1476, Hans Behem was born in nearby Helmstadt, but his age at execution is uncertain. The bishop issued his decree in order to end Behem's popular preaching, which had provoked a pilgrimage and a short-lived rebellion with perhaps 40,000 participants.

In mid-Lent, 1476, the Virgin Mary appeared to Behem, commanding him to burn his pipe and drum and preach against vanity and clerical oppression, which he did with the support of his parish priest. Reports spread that his sermons melted snow and would prevent the crop failures that threatened the area. Behem allegedly raised the dead and healed the lame, blind, and mute. Pilgrims brought giant candles and donations and took away scraps of his clothing. Episcopal attempts to suppress the pilgrimage failed; authorities in Bavaria, Nuremberg, and Wertheim feared rebellious pilgrims. On July 2, 1476, the Feast of the Visitation of Mary, Behem preached to huge crowds. Episcopal spies noted elements of his message, including a command to kill priests and a call to popular uprising on St. Margaret's Day (July 13). Pilgrims invaded Eichstätt cathedral, marching around its altars.

After Behem's arrest on July 12, some 16,000 peasants gathered, under the leadership of a local knight, Conrad von Thunfeld, to march, sing, and carry candles to Frauenberg fortress, the episcopal residence, where they demanded Behem's release. Threatened with cannon fire, some dispersed, and thirty-eight were killed when soldiers fired into the crowd. But some of those present reported witnessing another miracle when the Virgin appeared to protect them from the barrage. Behem recanted his teachings under torture before his execution. The Niklashausen pilgrimage and the sale of relics (ashes from his burning) continued until the parish church was placed under interdict. Conrad von Thunfeld lost his freehold but escaped unscathed; the bishop confiscated pilgrim donations, using them to build a wooden arch in his palace that burned in 1481, an event attributed by some to Behem's continuing power.

Several contemporary chronicles discuss these events, especially that of Benedictine abbot Johannes Trithemius. Contemporaries and historians remain divided on whether to interpret Behem's actions as symptomatic of religious enthusiasm or pre-Reformation Marian piety, influenced by a scheming cleric, or motivated by popular rebellion against the economic conditions of the fifteenth century.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Extremists as Holy People; Prophets

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Bektash Wali, Haji

(13th–14th cent. C.E.)

Muslim sufi, order founder

One of the most influential figures of Turkish sufism, the founder of the Baktashiyyah order, and the spiritual father of Turkish Alawism, Haji Bektash Wali, or “Hunkar” Haci Bektas Veli, as he is called in Turkish, was born in Nishapur in northern Iran into a prominent Turkish family. His dates of birth and death vary in the historical and apocryphal sources from 1209–1270 to 1248–1337. His father was governor of Khorasan, where Haji Bektash studied religious sciences, philosophy, and mysticism. He traveled extensively and settled in a village near the city of Kirsehir, Turkey, which carries his name today. His life, especially after he received “permission” (*ijazat*) from his master to give spiritual guidance and counseling, is shrouded in mystery and mixed with legends, stories of miracles, and oral traditions.

Haji Bektash lived during one of the most troubled periods of Turkish history. He saw the decline of the Saljuqid dynasty and the rise of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the Mongol invasion. After his move to Anatolia, he became the patron saint of Turkmen tribes and played a key role in maintaining the social and moral order of the community. The fact that he wrote most of his works in Turkish must have contributed to the rapid spread and popularity of his teachings in Asia Minor and the Balkans. Some of his Turkish-Alawi followers depict him as a protonationalist against the “Arabism” of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This portrayal of him as a primarily Turkish figure, however, was a posthumous development. He has also been called by some a crypto-Shi'i owing to the significance that he and the Bektashi tradition attach to 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law and the first imam of Shi'ism. Today, Haji Bektash Wali is the central figure of the Alawis of Turkey.

The Baktashiyyah order played a significant role in the Ottoman army corps known as the Janissaries. After the second half of the fifteenth century, many Janissary soldiers became followers of Baktashism. The Baktashis were known for their lax interpretations of Islamic law and rituals and their emphasis on communal bonds, fraternity, and love as a central theme. Thanks to this close proximity with the low-ranking members of the Ottoman military, the Baktashis were involved in a number of revolts against local rulers and in some cases against the Ottoman sultan. This has led many to describe Baktashism as a prominently antinomian mystical order. The abolishment of the Janissary corps in 1826 by Mahmud II forced the Baktashis to curtail many of their activities. In 1925, with the outlawing of all sufi orders in Turkey, the Baktashiyyah order was officially dissolved. It continues to exist today among the Alawi communities of Turkey and Albanian and Macedonian Baktashis in the Balkans.

Haji Bektash's spiritual teachings are recorded in his writings and spiritual discourses and cover a wide range of issues. However, it is difficult to distinguish between what belongs to Haji Bektash himself and what was developed by later Baktashis. His legacy is therefore open to multiple interpretations by scholars as well as by contemporary followers. Haji Bektash preached the basic teachings of sufism. Like his predecessors, he emphasized the inner dimension of religious life and rituals, focusing on the experience of the divine in the here and now. His esoteric teachings defy the conventional legal interpretations of Islam, which he opposed as a form of religious legalism devoid of spiritual significance.

Haji Bektash's legacy is a comprehensive system of ethical teachings and social manners. His ideas on honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and respect for others share the mainstream teachings of traditional sufism but have been

interpreted as a code of “humanist” and even secular morality by some of his modern followers.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Sufism

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Bellarmino, Robert

(1542–1641 C.E.)

Roman Catholic Jesuit, archbishop, cardinal, theologian, doctor of the church

Born in 1542 in Montepulciano, Italy, Robert Bellarmine joined the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) in 1560 and was ordained as a priest in 1570. Early in the 1570s, he taught theology at the University of Louvain in Belgium, then in 1576 he was appointed to the professorship of controversial theology at the newly established Jesuit Roman College in Rome. His lectures at the Roman College became the foundation for his far-reaching defense of Catholic teaching, the *De controversiis* (Disputations on the controversies of the Christian faith, 1586–1593). This work established his position as a leading scholar of the scriptures, the church fathers, and Protestant theology. As a leading apologist for the Roman Catholic Church, he sought to defeat through reason and argument opponents of the church including, most famously, King James I of England. Bellarmine also made important contributions to other fields of religious scholarship, including the revision of the vulgate Bible known as the Sixto-Clementine of 1592 and a catechism that remained influential for the next three centuries.

Bellarmino undertook an active career in the church. In 1592, he became rector of the Roman College, and later he was appointed provincial of the Naples province by the Jesuit father general Aquaviva. In 1598, he was named a cardinal, and in 1602 he was appointed archbishop of Capua. He took his responsibilities seriously as archbishop and resigned his see in 1605 when he was appointed prefect of the Vatican Library, as he was no longer able personally to fulfill his pastoral obligations. Upon his return to Rome, he also took an active role in the church's central administration. Bellarmine was noted for his austere lifestyle and exemplary life. His charitable activity, as when he ordered that the curtains in his apartment be taken down and used to clothe the poor, led to a reputation of piety and holiness during his lifetime.

In 1627, Bellarmine's important contributions to the church were recognized when he received the appellation of “venerable,” but he was not canonized until the twentieth century. Bellarmine did have supporters within the curia, however, and his beatification was unsuccessfully proposed in

1675, 1714, 1752, and 1832. The long delay was almost certainly the result of his moderate views on papal authority. Bellarmine consistently maintained throughout his life that the pope had only indirect, not direct, authority in temporal matters. This position brought him into disgrace with Pope Sixtus V and ran counter to the official position of the papacy during the century following the Council of Trent (1545–1563). Even if his views on papal authority had been acceptable, his position as a theologian and controversialist was not ideal for recognition as a holy man during the Catholic Reformation. No theologian or controversialist was canonized in the period between 1588 and 1776. Only in the twentieth century did the Catholic Church formally acknowledge Bellarmine (canonized in 1930) and his Jesuit colleague Canisius (canonized in 1925) as saints for their efforts in defending and renewing the church in the century following the Protestant Reformation.

—*Eric Nelson*

See also: Canisius, Peter; Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Benedict of Aniane

(c. 750–821 C.E.)

Christian monk, reformer

Second only to Benedict of Nursia in importance to the history of the Benedictine order, Benedict of Aniane served as the religious adviser to Louis the Pious (Louis I of France) and worked to reform monasticism throughout the Carolingian realm. Born Witiza, the son of a Visigothic nobleman, in around 750, Benedict was brought up at the Carolingian court. Around the age of twenty, he underwent a conversion to the religious life, practicing austerities in secret for three years. He finally entered the monastery of Saint-Seine in 774 after he witnessed the drowning of his brother while on the Lombard campaign. There he refused to follow the Benedictine Rule, preferring to follow the rigorous rules of Pachomius and Basil.

Benedict left Saint-Seine in 779 and retired to a hermitage on family property near Aniane. In 782, he constructed a monastery and instituted the Rule of Saint Benedict, recognizing it as the best form for monastic life. Benedict's success attracted the attention of Louis the Pious, who moved the abbot to a new abbey in the Inde valley, near

Aachen, and charged him with overseeing all monasteries in Francia. Benedict played a leading role in the synods of 816 and 817 that produced a series of decrees known collectively as the Monastic Capitulary, which required strict observance of the Rule of Benedict and standard ritual practices within monasteries. He lived the remainder of his days toiling to ensure the success of these monastic reforms. He died on February 11, 821, without seeing those reforms fully realized.

Benedict's work outside the monastery did not diminish his spiritual and ascetic convictions: He practiced the Benedictine ideal of manual labor, working alongside his monks; never ate the meat of four-legged creatures; and practiced the fullest charity toward others, denying himself worldly comforts. Although his contemporary biographer, Ardo, includes miracles in his vita, they are overshadowed by Benedict's monastic zeal. As a gifted scholar and lover of the monastic ideal, Benedict compiled a collection of monastic rules, the *Codex regularum* (Code of rules); he also compared the Rule of Benedict to other monastic rules in his *Concordia regularum* (Concord of rules). Benedict demonstrated his concern for orthodoxy when he joined Alcuin in opposing the Adoptionism of Felix of Urgel at a council in Catalonia in 799. To his contemporaries, Benedict represented the highest expression of the monastic ideal, and his reform effort shaped the future of Benedictine monasticism. His feast is celebrated on February 11.

—Amy Michelle Stout

See also: Benedict of Nursia; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People

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Benedict of Nursia

(c. 480–c. 547 C.E.)

Christian monk, father of Western Christian monasticism

According to tradition, Benedict was born at Nursia in central Italy in about 480, went to Rome for education as a youth, fled to become a hermit in a cave at Subiaco, and then founded a small community of monks at Monte Cassino, for whom he wrote his famous Rule of Benedict. He is thought to have died around 547. His rule began to circulate through Italy and then across the Alps. Under the Frankish emperor Louis the Pious, the monastic reformer Benedict of Aniane (c. 750–821) promoted it as the standard of monastic obser-

vance in the West. Every western European reform of religious life until the eleventh century, and a great many thereafter, took Benedict's Rule as its polestar.

Because Benedict stands among the greatest saints of the Christian West, it is ironic that almost nothing can be known with certainty of his life. The traditional dates of his birth and death are almost impossible to substantiate. Everything we know about the course of his life comes from the sixth-century *Dialogues* of Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540–604), himself a monk and abbot before assuming the papacy. Benedict is the subject of the second *Dialogue*, written at the end of the sixth century, which mostly relates stories of his miracles. A monumental text of Western hagiography, it is nonetheless of little value for reconstructing the biography of the saint, and some have even doubted its authorship, suggesting origins a century or more later. Yet it cannot be doubted that a body of oral tradition about the rule's author circulated among Italian



Benedict of Nursia holding a crozier. Below, Benedict gives commands to his model disciples, Placidus and Maurus. Thirteenth-century French massbook. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource)

monks from the earliest times, and in any case the rule had an author who was without question a wise and perspicacious leader of monastic communities. It is as author of the rule that Benedict is known and loved.

A fairly brief document of seventy-three short chapters, the Rule of Benedict establishes and regulates the life of a small community living under the authority of an abbot who administers with discretion and moderation. The life prescribed by the rule is one of humility, obedience, and hospitality, tempered at every turn by moderation and steeped in silence. It is a life of prayer balanced by simple manual labor; indeed, “prayer and work” has become a Benedictine motto. The rule’s regimen of communal prayer, the “opus dei” or “work of God,” consisting mostly of Psalms chanted seven times daily, became a model for the divine office in the West.

The author of the rule reveals himself as someone who is not only a wise monastic administrator but an astute student of previous monastic rules, most especially the anonymous and difficult *Rule of the Master*. After some decades of fierce debate about which was composed first, scholars are now more or less agreed that Benedict’s Rule borrows heavily from this text, often word for word—but there is no question that Benedict’s text comes out briefer, crisper, cleaner, and wiser.

The rule continues to animate Western monastic life and is observed by monasteries of men and women in the Benedictine, Cistercian, and Camaldolese orders. Whatever its biographical value, Gregory’s account of Benedict became one of the three or four most important Latin hagiographies of the Middle Ages, a text of monumental importance.

Benedict is said to have been buried at Monte Cassino, but the monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire in France claims to have stolen Benedict’s body in the ninth century. The dispute is still unresolved.

—Patrick J. Nugent

See also: Benedict of Aniane; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Hagiography; Monasticism and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians

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Benedict the African

(1526–1589 C.E.)

Roman Catholic friar

In many ways, Benedict the African’s holiness replicated that of the saints of the early Christian church. He under-

took a strict monastic lifestyle, cared for the poor, and offered advice and religious direction to those who sought it. Born of African servile parents in Messina in Sicily in 1526, he was freed at the age of eighteen and at first earned his living as an agricultural worker. Mocked in his early life for his poverty, race, and servile origins, he went on to join a group of hermits who lived in the hills near San Fratello under the direction of Jerome Lanza. When Jerome died, Benedict was immediately chosen as his successor. In 1564, Pope Pius IV disbanded the community of hermits and they were absorbed into the Friars Minor of Strict Observance. Benedict thus became a lay brother and cook at the Franciscan community of Santa Maria de Jesus at Palermo.

Although only a lay brother, Benedict was appointed superior in 1578. He accepted the office with some reluctance and successfully implemented the adoption of a stricter interpretation of the Franciscan rule. He later became novice-master, but his humility caused him to despise the post, and he returned to his former position as cook. He was a model superior, however. His advice and direction were much in demand, and he won the esteem and obedience of his fellow monks.

Benedict’s reputation for holiness and for being a sympathetic and understanding religious counselor brought him many visitors. He was respected for his deep, intuitive understanding of theology and scripture and for his feeding and clothing of the poor and hungry. Although he worked closely with other men and women, there was a sense in which Benedict was viewed as a distinct and more spiritual being, forming a connection between the human and the divine world. During his lifetime he had a reputation as a miracle worker. He even died at the hour he foretold, on April 4, 1589. Posthumously, cures believed to be miraculous followed his intercession. On his death, King Philip II of Spain paid for a special tomb for him in the Friary Church at Palermo. His body was reported incorrupt when exhumed several years later.

Benedict became patron saint of Palermo. His cult swiftly spread through Italy and further afield to Spain and even to South America. Yet he was not beatified until some 154 years after his death, and his canonization came even later, in 1807.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Miracles; Monasticism and Holy People; Status

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Benno of Meissen

(c. 1010–c. 1106 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Benno was bishop of Meissen (near Dresden in Germany) and is now patron saint of Munich and Bavaria. Though little is known of his life, he was likely born into a noble family in Hildesheim, Saxony, in 1010. He was a canon at the imperial collegiate church of Goslar, and thus a priest, when King Henry IV appointed him bishop of Meissen in 1066.

As bishop, he was one of several prominent Saxon figures during that region's revolts against the German king and throughout the Investiture Contest, a conflict in which the emperor and the pope fought for control of the church in Germany. Benno tended to oppose the king, yet several times he vacillated. Henry dispossessed Benno of his see in 1075, but Benno reconciled with him a year later. Benno turned against Henry again in 1077, supporting Rudolf of Swabia's campaign for the throne. Bishops subservient to Henry, now emperor, deposed Benno in 1085 at the synod of Mainz. By pledging obeisance to the emperor's antipope, Clement III (Guibert of Ravenna), in 1088, Benno regained his see. As the tide turned gradually against the emperor, Benno changed his allegiance in 1097 back to the pope in Rome, Urban II. Benno died in about 1106.

Much more is known about devotion to Benno after his death. Miracles at his tomb in the cathedral of Meissen are credited to his intercession from the thirteenth century on. A monk in Hildesheim wrote a short life story of Benno as a monk there. George the Bearded, duke of Albertine Saxony, took an interest in Benno's canonization and commissioned the humanist scholar Hieronymus Emser to write a new biography in the early sixteenth century. This work, *Divi Bennonis vita* (The life of St. Benno), first published in 1512, contains many stories about Benno that cannot be verified in older sources, and some are surely false. Emser, for example, described Benno as a persecuted bishop, always true to the pope, an ardent church reformer, and an effective missionary to the Slavs. Stories are told of Benno turning water into wine for the sake of parched field-workers; silencing frogs for disturbing his prayer, but then giving them their voice back once he decided that their croaking could give as much praise to God as his prayers; discovering in a fish served to him for supper the cathedral door key that he had tossed in the river years earlier to prevent the building from being vandalized; and appearing in ghostly form after his own death to an overbearing Meissen official, who consequently died of fright.

Pope Hadrian VI canonized Benno in 1523. In reaction, Martin Luther denounced devotion to Benno, and in particular, Emser's biography. In 1539, Albertine Saxony became officially Protestant, the cathedral of Meissen was sacked, and Benno's tomb was desecrated. In 1576, the duke of

Bavaria, as part of a broader strategy to reinvigorate Catholicism in the face of spreading Protestantism, succeeded in obtaining Benno's remains from Saxon officials. These relics were solemnly enshrined in Munich's Church of Our Lady, and Benno became the principal patron saint of Munich and Bavaria. He is also a saintly guardian of fishermen and textile workers and is invoked for protection against drought and bad weather. His feast day is June 16.

—David J. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Politics and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Bernard of Clairvaux

(1090–1153 C.E.)

Christian monk, spiritual writer

Bernard of Clairvaux is one of the outstanding figures of the medieval Christian church and to this day remains controversial in terms of his sanctity and involvements in the world. His decision in 1113 to join a fledgling new monastery at Cîteaux, France, provided a point of departure for the spread of a reformed monasticism that from 1119 became the Cistercian order, the first monastic order in western Europe. In 1115, Bernard was sent from Cîteaux with some of his brothers and school friends to found the monastery of Clairvaux in Champagne.

Under Bernard's abbacy, Clairvaux founded more than 150 daughter houses and became a spiritual powerhouse of the Cistercian order. From the late 1120s, Bernard began to involve himself in questions of church politics, and the second quarter of the twelfth century has been called "The Age of Bernard" in medieval Europe. At the same time that he was arbitrating the affairs of churches and monasteries, he was composing works of spiritual guidance that are among the greatest achievements of medieval monastic literature. Bernard's eighty-six sermons on the Song of Songs are masterpieces of Latin in terms of style, rhetoric, and depth of thinking.

Bernard was born into a prominent Burgundian family belonging to the lower nobility in 1090. We know little about



Late medieval representation of Bernard of Clairvaux, adoring the Virgin Mary and Christ child. The three young women below represent Love, Prudence, and Humility—the three great themes of Bernard's writings. (Art Directors)

his early years and education, but his Latin style indicates that he had good teachers, probably some of the secular canons at Châtillon-sur-Seine. Later stories about Bernard indicate that from his teenage years he attracted other men to his circle and at the same time felt strongly attracted to women. When he made his decision to enter a monastery, he looked around for likely candidates and apparently chose Cîteaux because of its reputation for asceticism and distance from worldly concerns. Bernard's abbot at Cîteaux, Stephen Harding, was an administrative genius who provided the foundation for the new Cistercian order. He seems also to have been an excellent judge of people and took the risk of sending Bernard off at the tender age of twenty-five in order to found one of the first daughters of Cîteaux, Clairvaux.

Bernard managed to attract capable young men from near and far, and Clairvaux was soon full of novices, who seldom were allowed to remain long in Bernard's proximity but were sent out to found new daughter houses. At the same time, Bernard was devoted to the spirit and letter of the Rule of Benedict and looked upon himself as both father and mother to his monks. His increasing involvement in church affairs, however, often kept Bernard away from his monastery, and in the 1130s his presence for almost three years in Italy in order to solve a papal schism may have caused some concern. There is at least a later story about how some of the monks of Clairvaux experienced Bernard returning to them at night in a spiritual fashion in order to inspect the monastery and see that all was well.

Bernard is today remembered and criticized especially for two activities: his pursuit of the scholar and teacher Peter Abelard as a heretic and his preaching of the Second Crusade. Bernard claimed that his campaign against Abelard was the result of the appeals of his friends to stop Abelard from spreading new and false teaching on the Trinity. It is an open question, however, whether Bernard understood what Abelard was saying, and it is difficult to defend Bernard's tactics in having Abelard condemned unheard. As for the crusade, Bernard had a much better grasp of the heavenly than the earthly Jerusalem and allowed his vision to convince him that it was time to send men of arms to defend Christian lands in Palestine and elsewhere. The result was a military disaster that shocked Bernard and perhaps drove him back to his monastery for his last years.

Bernard was and is a controversial person, whose holiness has been discussed and debated ever since his own time. He had enemies who temporarily blocked his official canonization as a saint, which did not come, despite Cistercian efforts, until 1174, more than twenty years after his death. But Bernard could also be a loyal and devout friend, and he contributed to an important new literature emphasizing the worth of bonds of friendship in the religious life. A spiritual lover to his friends, a terrible scourge of his ene-

mies, Bernard needs to be seen as representative of the religious passion of the first great medieval reformation of the Christian church. He can perhaps best be approached in his letters, which are works of literary art that still reveal a person. Also to be recommended are some of his treatises, such as *De diligendo Deo* (On loving God), where he gave advice to his monks and renewed the language of monastic spirituality. Bernard's feast day is still held, especially in the male and female houses of the Cistercian order, on August 20.

—Brian Patrick McGuire

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People

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Bernardino of Siena

(1380–1444 C.E.)

Christian friar, reformer, preacher

Bernardino of Siena, a Franciscan friar, was one of the greatest preachers of the late Middle Ages in western Europe and contributed to the last medieval reformation of the Christian church. Attaching himself to a reformed branch of the Franciscans, known as the Observants, Bernardino in the course of his career drew many men to his order and carried on the work of Francis in bringing the gospel to the byways of Italy. Unlike Francis, however, Bernardino involved himself intimately in political affairs, for he set out to clean up the ethical and moral practices of daily life in the rich and proud cities of the peninsula. He denounced gambling and usury as well as witchcraft and popular superstitions. Unfortunately, he was also an enemy of the Jews and a scourge of homosexuals.

Bernardino at the age of twenty joined with some of his friends in looking after plague victims in Siena and subsequently nursed a dying aunt. Joining the Observant Franciscans in 1402, he spent several years as a solitary in a cell at Fiesole outside of Florence. From 1417, however, he began to preach, and in the coming years he walked up and down the length of Italy with hellfire and damnation sermons that could last for two to three hours. He would regularly hold up

a card with the letters “IHS” (a standard abbreviation used to signify the name of Jesus), his attempt to spread devotion to the name of Jesus, as is seen in many fifteenth-century paintings of Bernardino.

At one point, Bernardino was accused of heresy and denounced to Pope Martin V, but eventually he was cleared of the charges against him. He was offered various bishoprics, but like his namesake Bernard of Clairvaux, he refused them, preferring to continue as a preacher. In 1430, however, he did accept the title of vicar general of the Friars of the Strict Observance. In 1442, he was present at the Council of Florence and supported its attempt to heal the schism of the Eastern and Western churches. In the final missionary journey of his life, he is said to have preached fifty days in a row.

In 1444, Bernardino died on the road at Aquila, where he was buried, much to the resentment of the citizens of his native Siena. Miracles were reported at his tomb, and he was canonized in 1450 by Pope Nicholas V. His feast day is May 20. Bernardino has been called the “People’s Preacher,” and in his passion for the imitation of Christ he represents the desire of late medieval Christians to live in harmony with the commands of the gospel. Some have criticized him, however, for the near-fanaticism of his religious enthusiasms.

—Brian Patrick McGuire

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People

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Bernward of Hildesheim

(c. 960–1022 C.E.)

Christian bishop, politician, patron of arts

Bernward was appointed bishop of Hildesheim (Germany) in 993. A remarkable patron of the arts, this well-traveled cleric was highly esteemed at the imperial courts of the Ottonian rulers Otto II and Otto III. Of noble birth, he served as a notary at the imperial court of Otto II from 977 and acted as tutor to the young Otto III (son of Otto II and the Byzantine princess Theophanu). He traveled extensively with the imperial household and on ecclesiastical business, including several journeys to Rome.

Bernward’s patronage of the arts is still evident today in a number of impressive works associated with the Benedic-

tine abbey church of Saint Michael at Hildesheim, which was built under his direction. With his supervision, the Hildesheim workshops of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries produced several notable works in cast bronze (an art revived at Hildesheim during this period), including candlesticks, a large bronze column for the interior of the church, and monumental bronze doors for the entrance. Perhaps inspired by works of ancient and early Christian art that Bernward had seen at Rome, these objects remain today among the most impressive examples of Ottonian metalwork. The narrative scenes on the column and the complex typological (pairing of Old and New Testament) scenes on the bronze doors have been credited to Bernward’s erudite direction. A number of smaller metalwork objects and manuscripts are also associated with Bernward’s patronage.

Bernward was canonized in 1193, and a vita composed around this period added further and legendary details to the deeds of this illustrious man, including descriptions of his own skills as an artist. His cult grew through the following centuries, and he is frequently depicted in art holding his bishop’s crosier and a cross reliquary, attended by an angel. His feast day is November 20.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People

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Beruria

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Jewish scholar

In rabbinic narratives, Beruria is the wife of Rabbi Meir, an important mid-second-century rabbi. She is described in early rabbinic texts as having been the most learned woman of her time, a person of impressive acuity and erudition. One text reports that Beruria studied 300 texts, with 300 teachers, every day; in context, this appears as a generic description of extreme devotion to the study of Torah, and it is noteworthy that Beruria, a woman, was chosen as the exemplar of such dedication. The only legal ruling ascribed to Beruria, however, is reported in a more widely circulated text in the name of a male authority (Rabbi Judah) who apparently endorsed her view; it seems that later rabbinic editors were more impressed by his endorsement than by Beruria’s having formulated the opinion in question.

Other narratives depict Beruria as a person of wit (sometimes sharp) and gentle sensitivity to others. She rebuked her husband because he prayed for the destruction of evildoers rather than of evil; a famous later story, not found in contemporary materials, relates that she delayed informing him of the simultaneous death of their two sons until the Sabbath was over, and then told him only that precious items that had been entrusted to them had been reclaimed by their owner.

A later commentator recounts that Beruria's femininity was eventually her downfall. When she chided her husband over the prevalent rabbinic opinion that "women are light-headed," he set out to defend his colleagues' view. He instructed one of his disciples to seduce her, and after much resistance on her part the young man succeeded. Beruria then killed herself out of shame, and Rabbi Meir suffered from remorse the rest of his days.

Several of the best-known stories about Beruria cannot be found in materials from her own time. The idea of a learned woman continued to fascinate (and disturb) later teachers, and they developed new materials reflecting their own reactions to this notion; even the story of Beruria's death ultimately serves to justify the patriarchal character of the tradition. It is therefore extremely difficult to assess the accuracy of any of the stories about this woman; she persisted in rabbinic memory as representative of a certain possibility rather than as an actual human being.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Gender and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Besht

See **Ba'al Shem Tov**

Bhakti Saints

Hindu devotees

In *bhakti* or devotional Hinduism—the most pervasive form of Hinduism practiced today—holy people play a central role, for within *bhakti*, religious authority is based on religious experience and the quality of a person's relationship with the divine rather than on hereditary priestly status or textual knowledge. The saints of *bhakti* composed songs of great love for God, which then became the principle texts of the tradition, and the stories of their lives were recorded in vast compendia called *bhaktamals* (garlands of devotees). It is the depth of their love for God that is the basis for their being treated as saints—a sainthood conferred by the con-

sensus of later devotees rather than by any centralized institutional authority.

The word *bhakti* comes from the Sanskrit root *bhaj*, which carries with it a complex set of meanings, including not only to love and adore but also to distribute, to partake of, to put on, to possess, to share, to practice, to choose, and to serve (Ramanujan 1981, 104). "Devotion" offers a shorthand for speaking about this complex relationship of love that exists between human and divine, ranging from humble adoration to an overwhelming and complete possession by the divine, such that only God remains. Every type of human love becomes a training ground and a language for speaking about this deeply personal relationship—the love between parents and children, the fidelity of servant for master, the bond of friendship, and the passionate desire of lovers. This love finds its expression in the mother tongue rather than in the formalized religious language of Sanskrit, and in the face of such love, caste and gender hierarchies appear meaningless and are directly challenged.

These Hindu devotees experience and speak of God in much the way Christians and Muslims might (though they view God as all in all, with the world in all its variation as a manifestation of God rather than God's creation). Recognizing their love of God, Muslims in India have venerated these Hindu saints and sung their songs, even as Hindus have venerated and sung the songs, or *pirs*, of sufi saints. These Hindu *bhaktas* (devotees) or *sants* (those who know the truth) may experience God in a particular form (*saguna*, or "with form")—as Vishnu or Vishnu's incarnations of Krishna or Rama, as Shiva, or as the Devi or Goddess—or as transcending any manifest form, that is, as *nirguna* (without form). Those claiming the latter experiences are the ones usually called *sants*.

These saints have emerged in the context of a series of religious reform movements, each with its own distinctive character and set of saints, in a radical democratizing of religion in Hinduism. Beginning in southern India in the Tamil-speaking region in the sixth to the ninth centuries, we find the Alvars (those "immersed in God"), who were devoted to Vishnu, and the Nayanars, who offered loving service to Shiva. In the Kannada-speaking region from the tenth to twelfth centuries, we find the Virashaivas, who embraced a radically egalitarian devotion to Shiva, and moving north, devotion focusing on Vitthal, a regional form of Krishna, beginning in the thirteenth century in the Marathi-speaking region.

From the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, a vast number of saints also appeared in northern India, some practicing a *nirguna* devotion, such as the weaver Kabir, the leatherworker Ravidas, and the founder of the Sikh tradition, Nanak. Vaishnava devotion to Krishna also flowered, with Vallabha founding the Pushtimarg, "the way of grace";

Surdas lovingly describing Krishna's incarnation; the followers of the ecstatic Bengali saint Chaitanya founding the Gaudiya tradition; and the royal woman devotee Mirabai singing of her great longing for her divine lover. Meanwhile, Tulsidas of Banaras composed a tremendously popular version of the story of Sita and Ram; Shaiva devotion developed in Kashmir; and devotion to the Devi grew in Bengal, epitomized in the songs of Ramprasad Sen. Regardless of sectarian affiliation that might be claimed on behalf of some of these saints, they also collectively constitute a wider family of saints who belong to all devotees of God, whether nirguna or saguna.

—Nancy M. Martin

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Kabir; Mirabai; Nanak; Nayanars; Ramprasad Sen; Ravidas; Surdas; Tulsidas; Virashaivas

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Bhaktivedanta, A. C., Swami

(1896–1977 C.E.)

Vaishnava Hindu teacher, founder

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, known to his followers as Prabhupada (lit. "at the feet of the master"), was the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in 1965 and the most prominent *acarya* (teacher by means of model behavior) for Hare Krishnas until his death in 1977. Considered by his followers to be a pure devotee of Krishna, he came to the United States from India in 1965 with only \$40 and a trunk of books and within a few years built up an international organization with more than sixty centers and about 5,000 followers around the world. He was a representative of the Vaishnava sect of Hinduism founded by the god-saint Chaitanya in the sixteenth century.

Born as Abhaya Caran De into a middle-class family in Calcutta in 1896, he completed his bachelor's degree at Scottish Church's College, but under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience movement he refused to accept the degree. He met his spiritual teacher, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, in 1922 and received formal initiation from him in 1933. In 1959, he was initiated as a *sannyasi* (renunciant)

under the name Bhaktivedanta Swami. Acting on the instructions of his guru, Bhaktivedanta Swami carried the message of Krishna consciousness to the United States, where he found fertile soil among discontented American youth of the 1960s.

Bhaktivedanta Swami was the author of English translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Bhagavata Purana (in sixty volumes), and the Caitanya-caritamrita (seventeen volumes) and wrote numerous other independent works. His message was that Krishna is the supreme personality of godhead and that all living beings are his eternal servants. The living beings of the material world have forgotten that relationship and thus suffer in the cycle of repeated birth and death. One can reestablish one's relationship with Krishna by chanting the Hare Krishna mantra (Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare; Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare) and engaging with one's body, mind, and speech in the service of Krishna.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Contemporary Holy People; Krishna

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Bhave, Vinoba

(1895–1982 C.E.)

Hindu religious leader, social activist

Born September 11, 1895, to a brahmin family in the village of Gagode in the Kolaba district near Bombay, Vinoba Bhave became one of the closest associates of Mahatma Gandhi. After hearing a speech by Gandhi at Benaras Hindu University, Bhave began to live in Gandhi's ashram, where he distinguished himself as a teacher and for his willingness to perform any task, however menial or polluting. Bhave was imprisoned several times for speaking against British rule, and in 1940 he was chosen by Gandhi to publicly fast against all war as part of Gandhi's strategy of nonviolent resistance, often known as *satyagraha* (firmness in truth). The record of numerous correspondences between Gandhi and Bhave testify to their closeness during the course of India's struggle for independence.

After Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, Bhave was seen as his natural successor. In the early 1950s, Bhave began to travel throughout India as part of his Sarvodaya (compassion for all) movement, which emphasized land grants to the poor. He also established the Shanti Sena, or "army of peace," composed of individuals dedicated full-time to the service of

the community. Bhave envisioned a social movement in which entire villages would share land, property, and communal responsibilities.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, Vinoba Bhave was a religious figure of international stature. He exerted a formative influence on Bede Griffiths, the English Benedictine who came to live in India as a renunciant. Griffiths (1966) wrote of meeting Bhave and envisioned Sarvodaya as an important ground of encounter between Catholics and Hindus. Although Bhave was for many “India’s walking saint” (Tennyson 1955), for others he was an object of ridicule. V. S. Naipal (1972), for example, lampooned Bhave and Sarvodaya as emblematic of the Indian inability to come to terms with modernity. As the focal point for such contending perceptions of the trajectory of independent India, Vinoba Bhave was indeed the successor to Mahatma Gandhi.

—*Mathew N. Schmalz*

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Griffiths, Bede

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Bhikshu, Acharya

(1726–1803 C.E.)

Jain reformer

The Jain reformer Acharya Bhikshu (Bhikanji) was founder of the rigorously ascetic and universalistic Terapanthi subsect of Shvetambara Jainism (whose monks wear white robes). He and his followers practice a radical form of *ahimsa* (nonviolence), going so far as to discourage, at least in theory, worldly acts of charity on the grounds that these acts bind one to this realm of transmigration. In practice, however, Acharya Bhikshu’s radically world-renouncing stance is complemented by an equally radical world-engaging stance: Terapanthis have become active reformers in India and abroad.

Acharya Bhikshu was born in Rajasthan in northern India into a pious merchant family in 1726. The influence of this upbringing can be seen in his writings, which frequently employ business metaphors, including an emphasis on plain dealing and honesty. He set out to purify his soul under the guidance of the Sthanakvasi (an iconic Shvetambara) teacher Raghunathji, who initiated him in 1751. However, he became increasingly dissatisfied with what he considered

the laxity, corruption, and doctrinal ignorance of the Jains of his day. In 1759, Bhikshu finally broke with his teacher over financial issues, especially mandatory almsgiving to monks by laity, which, according to his research, had no scriptural basis. His goal was not to found a new sect but to return to the rigorous reforming spirit of Mahavira (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.), the (re)founder of Jainism.

After a period of rejection and persecution, Bhikshu eventually became the founder and *acharya* (spiritual teacher) of a reforming sect that grew from an alleged original thirteen members (one possible origin of the name Terapanthi, “the path of the thirteen”) to become a centrally organized sect. Bhikshu considered centralization necessary to prevent dissent and division in the community. Before his death in 1803, he named his own successor, and there have been nine successive acharyas, including the famous Acharya Tulsi.

Acharya Bhikshu drew a sharp distinction between the worldly, or conventional (*laukika*), realm and the transcendent, or ultimate (*lokottara*), realm. The former is the ordinary world of transactions, including the pursuit of spiritual merit by good works of charity and devotion. The latter is attained by renunciation of all worldly merit in favor of self-purification, and according to Acharya Bhikshu is the only true goal for a Jain.

—*Jerome Bauer*

See also: Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Reform and Reaction

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Bihbihani, Muhammad Baqir

(1706–1792 C.E.)

Shi’i Muslim reformer, legislator

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Bihbihani, known as Vahid (unique or peerless) Bihbihani, is regarded by Shi’is as the *mujaddid* (renewer) of Islam for the thirteenth Islamic century. He is also called Ustad-i Akbar (the most great teacher). He swung Shi’i Islam decisively away from the Akhbari school of law and toward the Usuli school, which has predominated up to the present day.

The Akhbaris favor a more cautious approach to jurisprudence, giving legal opinions only where there is a clear precedent for doing so in the traditions (*akhbar*) from the prophet and the imams. The Usulis widen the areas in which it is possible to give religious judgment through the use of *ijtihad*, the derivation of legal opinions using rational processes as part of the principles (*usul*) of jurisprudence.

Bihbihani was born in Isfahan, the capital of the Safavid Empire of Iran, in 1706 and is a descendant of the prophet Muhammad and of Shaykh al-Mufid, a prominent tenth- and eleventh-century Shi'i scholar. His early years were, however, the dying days of that empire, and in 1722 Isfahan was taken by a Sunni Afghan army and the Safavids toppled from power. Bihbihani fled to Karbala in Iraq, where he obtained most of his religious education from the prominent Shi'i scholars in that city. At this time, the Akhbari school of law predominated at Karbala and in most parts of the Shi'i world, and Bihbihani adopted this teaching. By the 1730s, he had completed his education and moved to the small town of Bihbihan in southwest Iran, where he became a local religious leader.

He remained there for some years and at some time during this period changed over to the Usuli school of law. In 1746, he returned to Karbala and began to teach. He found it difficult at first because of the predominance of the Akhbari school; however, after the death of Shaykh Yusuf Bahrani in 1772, Bihbihani was able to secure the triumph of the Usuli school at Karbala. He then spent the next twenty years, until his death in 1792, training the next generation of scholars in the Usuli school. It was this generation that took Usuli teachings to the whole of the Shi'i world and ensured its universal triumph. Bihbihani's writings defined the Usuli school and the role of the *mujtahid* (one who exercises *ijtihad*) for succeeding generations of Shi'i religious scholars.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People

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Bimbisara

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist ruler, patron

King of Magadha, an ancient kingdom of India, in the fifth century B.C.E. and a contemporary of the Shakyamuni Buddha, Seniya Bimbisara was one of the first important kings who was a patron of Buddhism. He was five years younger than the Buddha and died eight years before him. They had been childhood friends. When the Buddha returned to Rajagriha after attaining enlightenment, Bimbisara paid him and the Buddha preached to Bimbisara on the value of generosity and morality, heavenly reward, the pitfalls associated with the depravity of sense pleasures, and the Four Noble Truths. It was on this occasion that Bimbisara attained the first level of

enlightenment (*shrotapanna*). On the following day, Bimbisara invited the Buddha along with one thousand monks to a meal and donated the Veluvana, the first dwelling used by the early Buddhist community during the rainy season, to the *samgha* (monastic community). From this time until his death, Bimbisara was a steadfast devotee of the Buddha.

Bimbisara has been connected to several incidents in the history of Buddhism. He not only showed respect and affection for the Buddha in person but was also known to have been considerate to Buddhist monks. During his lifetime, he received some hairs and nail pairings of the Buddha, and he built a *stupa* inside the royal palace enshrining these. Bimbisara often consulted with the Buddha, as he was keen to rule according to the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine). The Buddha also valued Bimbisara's opinion and at his suggestion made the *vinaya* (monastic discipline) rule that no one who was in royal service, had committed theft, or escaped from jail should be ordained as a monk. The recital of the rules of discipline (*pratimoksha*) on the eighth and the last days of each half month was also Bimbisara's idea, and it was Bimbisara who suggested beginning the observance of the retreat during the rainy season (*varshavasa*) from the second full moon. Another rule—that certain medicines should not be stored for more than seven days—was also made at his suggestion.

Bimbisara was instrumental in motivating many members of his household to take an interest in Buddhism. The story of his queen, Khema, is worth mentioning. She was so infatuated with her own beauty that she refused to see the Buddha, but Bimbisara somehow persuaded her to pay a visit. When she came face-to-face with the Buddha, he showed her the transitoriness of beauty and the vanity of lust. Thereupon she became an *arahant* (enlightened being) and with the permission of Bimbisara entered the *samgha*. Later she became one of the most famous nuns in the history of Buddhism and was ranked by the Buddha as foremost among women for her great insight.

Bimbisara suffered very badly at the hands of his son Ajatashatru. Bimbisara loved him so much that he abdicated in his favor; Ajatashatru rewarded him by imprisoning him and then causing his death. According to the *Digha Nikaya* (Collection of long discourses), he was reborn in the deva-realm of the Four Great Rulers (*cattummaharajika*) in the retinue of Lord Vessavana, having only one wish: to become a once-returner (*sakadagamin*) and then to attain the supreme deliverance of nirvana.

—*K. T. S. Sarao*

See also: Ajatashatru; Gautama; Gender and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Birech, Ezekiel Kiprop

(1910–2000 C.E.)

Christian missionary, translator

Bishop Ezekiel Kiprop Birech was born in 1910 in Nandi District, Kenya, where he lived an ordinary boyhood life of herding animals. At an early age, he was employed at a settler's farm at Eldoret to lead the oxen. At the farm he met an African cook, Wanyama, a Christian who knew how to read and write. Wanyama taught Sunday school to the children working on the farm and introduced them to the alphabet. In 1926, when there was an eclipse of the sun, many people believed that the end of the world spoken about by the Christians had come. This marked the turning point for the young Birech, who decided that he needed to read the Bible for himself and teach his own Nandi people about Jesus Christ.

Birech left his job and went to Africa Inland Mission School at Kapsabet, where he started elementary school at the age of sixteen. In 1930, he moved to Moiben and joined the catechism class. He was baptized in 1932 and given the name Ezekiel. He then went to intermediate school at Kapsabet, where he successfully completed his primary education in 1938. It was at this time that he underwent circumcision rites according to Nandi tradition.

In 1939, Birech was employed to teach at Kapsabet Mission School, where he met Milka Cheplel, and they got married in a Christian wedding in 1943. His contribution to the church henceforth was significant. Besides evangelization, he was a teacher, and later he was promoted to supervisor for all Protestant schools of the African-instituted churches (AICs) in the region.

Birech was appointed secretary to the committee that translated the Bible into Kalenjin between 1954 and 1969. He also undertook to revise the Nandi hymnal and translated *Pilgrim's Progress* into Kalenjin. He decided to go back to secondary school when he was over fifty years old. In 1975, he enrolled at Scott Theological College, and he was ordained as an AIC minister in 1977. He was posted as pastor in Nandi, became assistant bishop in 1978, and became bishop in 1980, a post he held for four terms until 1997.

Bishop Birech's vision of evangelization never left him after 1926. To further fulfill this dream, he was instrumental in establishing an AIC missionary college at Eldoret in the 1980s. This institution, which trains African missionaries to Africa, is the only one of its kind. It is on the grounds of this

college, contrary to Nandi tradition, that Bishop Birech was laid to rest on November 30, 2000.

—Adam K. arap Chepkwony

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Birgitta of Sweden (Bridget)

(c. 1302–1373 C.E.)

Christian mystic, prophet, order founder

Birgitta was a Swedish noblewoman who was also a mystic, a visionary, a prophetess, a writer, and the founder of the Brigittine (or Bridgettine) order for nuns. Unlike most female religious at the time, she lived out the early years of her adult life as wife and mother to eight children. In an equally unusual role for women in the later Middle Ages, Birgitta exercised considerable public power and influence both within the court of her cousin, King Magnus of Sweden, and beyond, to the residences of the popes in Avignon and in Rome. Both contemplative and activist, as an intellectual and as a controversial figure, Birgitta relentlessly petitioned three popes to return the papacy to Rome. She was also instrumental in instigating a failed crusade aimed at the non-Christians in the south of modern Scandinavia. Well known for her reforming zeal, and not content with ecclesiastical matters alone, she entreated with the kings of France and England in an attempt to end the Hundred Years' War.

According to the vita written by her confessors after her death, Birgitta was born on her father's family estate in the province of Uppland near Stockholm in about 1302. She experienced her first vision at the age of seven. However, she did not take up a religious vocation and instead, at thirteen years old, married a wealthy young nobleman. She engaged in the duties expected of a wife and mother as well as serving for a time as lady-in-waiting to the queen. She also ran a small local hospital for the poor. Following the death of her husband in 1344, Birgitta's visions returned. Now in her forties, she gave up most of her property and possessions, left her home and family, and sought to retire to a life of prayer and penance. Birgitta's life, however, was not to be one of private devotion. Her visions directed her otherwise.

Six hundred of Birgitta's visions survive, first translated into Latin and preserved in an eight-volume work, *Revelaciones Extrauagantes* (Extravagant revelations). In one of these revelations, she believed, Christ directed her to found a new monastic order, for which she wrote the rule herself. Swedish church officials, convinced of the authenticity of these visions and her prophecies, helped to persuade the king to give her property to carry out the directive at Vadstena. However, Birgitta did not receive papal sanction until 1370. Construction of the convent and monastery did not begin until after her death, when two of her daughters took up the project.

Birgitta's desire to gain papal confirmation for her new order and her concern for returning the papacy to Rome led her to leave Sweden for Italy in 1349. Her daughter Catherine accompanied her. During the next twenty-four years, by petition and prophecy, Birgitta continued to actively involve herself in political and ecclesiastical matters. But as she had done throughout her life, she also continued her charitable work. Birgitta never returned to Sweden; except for pilgrimages, she remained in Rome until her death. She made one last journey to the Holy Land in 1373, the year she died.

Once Birgitta's order was established, it was Catherine who managed it and undertook the first campaign seeking her mother's canonization. Birgitta was finally beatified on October 7, 1392, and canonized in 1484. Now the patron saint of Sweden, Birgitta is honored on her feast day, July 23, and her daughter Catherine is celebrated on March 22.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Intermediaries; Prophets

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Bishop-Saints

Christianity

From the fourth century, Christian bishops became significant spiritually and temporally, stepping into a power structure vacated when Roman civil regimes fell into decay. The episcopal office henceforth changed in function and sym-



Eligius of Noyon-Tournai as a goldsmith, by Petrus Christus, 1449.
(Francis G. Mayer/Corbis)

bolism, remaining so until the late Middle Ages, when papal control supplanted powers once useful for European Christianization. Burgeoning church hierarchical structure paralleled the secular administrative framework, capitalizing on skills and ambitions of aristocratic men groomed for governance roles. The mystique of bishop-saints encompassed ecclesiastical service and temporal leadership during this period.

Crucial links between episcopacy and aristocracy served both church and society, so capable administrators and leaders were most likely to be appointed bishops. Secular and spiritual ideals merged as the bishopric became a central societal institution. Civic strength earned bishops consideration as saints, especially in ineffective civil structures. Many settlements owed their founding or continued prosperity to bishops or venerated bishop-saints as patrons (for example, Maastricht, Liège, and Tournai). Bishops, valuing power and authority above holiness in living persons, emphasized the sanctity of deceased predecessors, thus minimizing challenge to their own command while reinforcing the symbolism of the office. Secular advocacy for cities and flocks fostered regional development, enhancing national awareness and pride. The concept of a bishop-saint as palladium for the populace was potent. The filial connection of bishop and faithful nourished Christian communities, binding them together, as exemplified in processions and yearly

offering customs, featuring relics of bishop-saints and homage to the current bishop.

Those credited with regional evangelization were especially honored. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, emphasis on bishops as noblemen in feudal society was reinterpreted for emergent urban communities. Increasing competition among dioceses, episcopal cities, and their patrons resulted in hierarchical struggle as more prominent bishops were further glorified. Communities capitalized on cults of bishop-saints, who helped give Christian identity to rising cities and regions. Simultaneously, a localized sacred history was reaffirmed.

The primary means of canonization throughout the early and central Middle Ages was elevation of the relics from the grave, instigated by the immediate community of veneration. From the seventh century, the bishops' role and authority increased as they emphasized the value of their acknowledgment and endorsement of a cult. This may explain frequent canonization of bishops from the seventh century on. These illustrious saints could represent the faithful in heaven, but it was current bishops who formulated the definitions. Noteworthy models chosen by their successors in office included Servatius of Maastricht (c. 300–384) in 550(?); Eleutherius of Tournai (d. 531) in 897; Eligius of Noyon-Tournai (588–660) in 661; Ouen of Rouen (c. 600–684) in 688; Lambert of Tongres-Maastricht-Liège (635–705) in 721; and Hubert of Tongres-Maastricht-Liège (d. 727) in 743. Many bishops established monastic foundations that became cult centers (ostensibly for their own burial, to ensure sufficient prayers for their souls).

There is no evidence of papal canonization before the tenth century, and controversy arose when Rome inserted itself into the process. The role of the bishops weakened as Rome claimed jurisdiction. At the 1120 synod of Beauvais, bishops demanded that the elevation of relics, under their control, remain the definitive act for recognition of sanctity, but this protest only accentuated their increasing loss of dominion.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when many lavish propagandistic reliquaries were created, episcopal office was a maelstrom—with struggles within the church hierarchy and in temporal realms as rulers sought both autonomy and ecclesiastical influence. In the twelfth century, Honorius Augustodunensis defined apostles as primary New Testament teachers, heirs to Old Testament patriarchs and prophets, passing the role to bishops and theologians. The thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea* (Golden Legend) by Jacobus de Voragine linked virtuous bishops to the apostles as wise commanders of the Church Militant, powerful members of the eternal Judge's court, and gentle shepherds of Christ's flock—implications emphasized in legendary hagiography of bishop-saints and in the associated pictorial tradition.

Confrontation between episcopacy and papacy escalated. At no other time in church history was there “such intense scrutiny and deep concern” as with the episcopacy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries over such issues as lay investiture, simony, and the dominion with rulers, especially emperors (Benson 1968, 203). Tenth- to twelfth-century *gesta episcoporum* (deeds of bishops) substantiated cults, further empowering dioceses, in a preoccupation with reinforcing lineages with apostolic origins, by supplying “history” and authority, strengthening links of provincial churches with Rome, and implying political and ecclesiastical unity in the face of heresy and heathenism. Local cult centers for veneration of bishops provided alternative pilgrimage goals to Rome—the trip to St. Servatius in Maastricht was surrogate for visiting St. Peter's grave. Peter, as gatekeeper of Paradise, had passed this role on to bishop-saints. In theological arguments about apostolic legacy, bishops maintained that the pope was not superior to them in orders, only in administrative overview. Claims of apostolic ties had begun in the first century with Clement of Rome, while the second-century *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Teaching of the apostles) made bishops legatees of apostolic mission and reflections of God—in the priestly role of Christ for liturgical celebrations, significant tenets in cult rituals when bishops' relics were carried in procession, signifying the community as Mystical Body, with Christ/bishop at its head.

This period of church reorganization gradually ended, with the center increasingly definitively placed in Rome, while communities of veneration for bishop-saints were wont to champion the office of their successors. Such cults were often fostered with the support and indulgence of a bishop, whose loss of authority could diminish the devotees' own favored status and potential for preference. Once diocesan authority over canonization was supplanted by papal control, the likelihood of the iconization of the bishop-saint was greatly diminished, as was its useful political function.

By the thirteenth century, cults for bishop-saints reflected a new emphasis on pastoral care and models for clergy; the bishop-saints themselves became exemplars for diocesan and parochial visitation, verbal communication, and preaching—in short, spiritual, moral, virtuous archetypes. This penchant for a more personal relationship between clergy and laity recalled roles of bishops in the early church and led to the development of preaching orders—to fill the void created by the distance of the bishops from their flocks, and to remedy the lack of personal connection, as had, according to the mystique, been possible when these legendary saints had held the episcopacy.

—Rita W. Tekippe

See also: Christianity and Holy People

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Bistami, Abu Yazid (Bayezid)

(d. c. 875 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

A famous ecstatic figure from the early period of Islamic sufism, Abu Yazid (or Bayezid) Bistami is said to have spent nearly his entire life in the city of Bistam (or Bestam) in what is now Iran. Although few details about him are known, he is best known for his ecstatic utterances, that is, phrases of divine self-realization expressed in a state of mystical union. Bistami has come to be associated with ascetic practices, saintly miracles, and an "intoxicated" approach to spirituality, although biographies such as that of Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman Sulami (936–1021) portray him as being less antinomian and more concerned with the balance between Islamic law and mystical ways of knowing. As with other early Muslim mystics, no original writings of Bistami have survived, and all that remains are the approximately 500 sayings attributed to him.

Bistami's ecstatic utterances, such as the oft-cited ejaculation *subhani* (glory to me), were taken by critics to imply that Bistami was claiming divinity for himself. Later sufi commentators, including the pivotal Muslim mystic Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd (d. 910), insisted that the critics misunderstood Bistami and were taking such phrases out of context. Within the mystical state of *fana'* (passing away), in which all individuated identity becomes annihilated in the presence of divine unity, ecstatic utterances are said to give voice to the experience of union. Although the concept of *fana'* may not have originated with Bistami, he certainly was one of its earliest Muslim proponents.

A number of the sayings attributed to Bistami deal with the ascetic, devotional, and supererogatory practices that

could potentially free one from everything that distracts one from God. Similar ideas appear in Bistami's dream vision of ascending to the heavens, where he ignores all distractions and temptations in order to achieve a type of passing away into union. Though he reportedly denied having ever performed miracles, later hagiographers did not hesitate to attribute a variety of miracles to Bistami.

—Frederick S. Colby

See also: Islam and Holy People; Miracles; Mysticism and Holy People; Shams-i Tabrizi; Sufism

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Bixia Yuanjun (Pi-hsia yuan-chün)

Daoist goddess

Bixia Yuanjun (Sovereign of the clouds of dawn) is a Daoist goddess connected with Mt. Tai in Shandong province. As the easternmost of the five sacred peaks of China, Mt. Tai was considered the gateway to the afterlife throughout Chinese history. Bixia and her main temple located there attained prominence in the early Ming dynasty (1368–1644). Centered in northern China, the goddess's popularity extended from the imperial family to common people. Bixia was granted elevated titles, such as *Tianxian shengmu* (Heavenly immortal, saintly mother) and *Tianxian yünu* (Heavenly immortal, jade maiden), but she is commonly known as *Taishan niangniang* (Our Lady of Mt. Tai) or *Lao nainai* (Granny) in Chinese popular religion. She was charged with setting human life spans and judging the dead, but her ability to facilitate the birth of male children made her a particularly popular goddess among women.

Several disparate versions of Bixia's hagiography outline her origins. Elite texts preserved in the Daoist canon declare her to be the daughter of the god of Mt. Tai whose history as a judge in the courts of hell extends back to the seventh century. Late Ming popular sectarian scriptures, or *baojuan* (precious volumes), assert that Bixia was the daughter of a commoner. According to these accounts, her prayers to an ancient Daoist goddess, Xiwangmu (Queen Mother of the West), along with her practice of self-cultivation, helped her to achieve immortality.

Temples throughout northern China include images of Bixia. She is most readily identified by her headdress, which features three or more phoenixes. Bixia usually appears

seated with legs pendant and sometimes holds a tablet inscribed with a representation of the Big Dipper as a symbol of her authority. Two goddesses who often attend Bixia are Zisun niangniang (goddess of children) and Yanguang niangniang (goddess of eyesight), but Bixia can also appear within a group of nine goddesses.

—Noelle Giuffrida

See also: Apotheosis; Daoism and Holy People; Intermediaries

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Black Elk

(1863–1950 C.E.)

Oglala Lakota holy man, healer, visionary

Black Elk, a Lakota Amerindian, lived a remarkable and long life that spanned prereservation days to after World War II (1863–1950). During that time, he witnessed radical changes wrought by the movement of the United States onto the Plains and the increasingly pervasive intrusions into Lakota life by American government officials, missionaries, and the military. He was present at or had firsthand knowledge of major events in Lakota history, such as the defeat of General George Armstrong Custer in 1876, the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890, and the Indian Reorganization Act implemented on his Pine Ridge Reservation after 1934. Throughout all the turmoil, Black Elk retained and refined his traditional Lakota religious beliefs while simultaneously adopting many Catholic beliefs. In 1930, he dictated his account of Lakota history, Lakota religious beliefs, and his life story to writer John G. Neihardt in the hope that his knowledge would be preserved. His effort has succeeded beyond expectations as the resulting books, especially *Black Elk Speaks*, published in 1932 and reprinted several times since then, are utilized in college courses and by the general public to this day.

The U.S. government forced Black Elk and most Lakotas of his generation and younger to attend Christian missionary schools. Although Black Elk attended Catholic schools, was christened Nicholas Black Elk, and learned English, he also was a leader in an underground effort by traditional Lakotas to preserve their native religious beliefs and practices. He did this at some danger to his person because the United States had banned traditional Lakota religious prac-

tices in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Black Elk went a step further than his peers by insisting that his teachings be preserved by non-Indian writers in order that they reach a larger audience. This desire brought him into contact with poet and writer Neihardt in 1930, and he maintained that professional relationship until he died.

Black Elk's message offered an understanding of Lakota history and a vision of hope for the future among Lakotas and humankind generally. He called on the Lakotas to preserve their traditions amid the constant assimilation pressures from the outside world. Otherwise, he warned, they might cease to exist as a unique people and culture, and the loss of Lakota knowledge would also deny all the world's people an understanding of the human role in the universe. Besides being assigned in college religion, sociology, and American Indian studies courses, Black Elk's words have enabled a cultural renaissance among contemporary Lakotas. Using his teachings and the knowledge of other elders, Lakotas are aggressively preserving their language and traditional rituals, seeking to restore their traditional relationship with the land and the natural world. Black Elk succeeded in his mission of preserving a record of the Lakota past while offering a direction for the future.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Crazy Horse;

Hagiography; Patriotism and Holy People; Sitting Bull; Wovoka

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Black Maria

See *Mary/Mama*

Blo bzang rgya mtso

See *Losang Gyatso*

Blo gros brtan pa

See *Sthiramati*

Blyden, Edward Wilmot

(1832–1912 C.E.)

Christian/syncretist theorist, nationalist

Blyden, considered by many the pioneer intellectual of the idea of "African personality," was born in St. Thomas, Virgin

Islands, in 1832. He impressed the minister John Knox, who encouraged Blyden to enter the Christian ministry. Blyden traveled to the United States with Knox in May 1850 with the goal of attending Rutgers Theological College, but he was denied admission at Rutgers and two other theological schools because of his race.

Blyden accepted a proposal from the American Colonization Society to settle in Africa, and in December 1850 he left for Liberia, where he became a Presbyterian minister. He also began a writing career in Liberia. The central theme that Blyden addressed was the issue of race and the situation of Africans in the world. He later worked for the Liberian government, eventually serving as president from 1880 to 1884.

Blyden generated controversy. He held what some consider today racist views, arguing that mulattos did not belong to his movement, Africa for the Africans. Blyden also disagreed with the Presbyterian Church and resigned from Presbyterian ministry to become what he called “Minister of Truth.” He married Sarah Yates, who was related to a well-known Liberian businessperson, in 1856, and they had three children. However, in 1877, he started a relationship with Anna Erskine and had five children with her. He argued that polygamy was part of the African tradition, but many in the Presbyterian Church felt he had betrayed his position as a minister.

Blyden was an influential social theorist, especially on the question of race and African identity. Although he championed European education and values early on, he later realized the strengths of African cultures. He argued that Africa was the cradle of civilization and science and that Islam and Christianity were nurtured in Africa. Blyden spelled out the glory of ancient Egypt and argued that some West Africans descended from the builders of the pyramids. He used philology and biblical scholarship to argue that blacks in the past were part of world civilizations and praised early African thinkers such as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine for shaping Christian theology. Blyden advocated a rigorous system of education and called for the teaching of Arabic and African languages as part of his nationalist project, ideas that were influential in starting the Pan-Africanist movement.

Credited with the notion of “African personality,” Blyden replaced Johann Herder’s views on nationality with race and argued that each race had its own “personality and mission.” The African character, he said, included softness, cheerfulness, sympathy, and a willing spirit to serve. In contrast, the European character was harsh, individualistic, competitive, and combative. Blyden argued that Africa should contribute to civilization through the spiritual realm rather than taking part in the rush toward scientific and industrial development.

Blyden’s nationalist spirituality was grounded on the belief that Africans were religious beings. He noted that Africans believed in a “common creator,” although he quali-

fied this by indicating that there was no one central organized religion on the continent. He thought Islam was superior to paganism, and that Islam had done a better job in Africa than Christianity because it had made the African a master in his own home while Christianity had taken over and ruled over the people “with oppressive rigour” (Blyden 1994 [1888], 309). Blyden did not rule out African Christianity, but he argued that Christianity could grow in Africa only if Africans themselves decided to promote it. Blyden was highly critical of Western missionaries for disparaging African customs and imposing a “thin varnish of European civilization” (ibid., 64). Ironically, despite his criticism of European ideas and practices in slave trading and colonialism, Blyden interpreted the partition of Africa in providential terms. It has been difficult for many to understand why Blyden used divine providence to justify what clearly was a terrible misadventure in Africa.

—Elias K. Bongmba

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Bobola, Andrew

(1591–1657 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, martyr

A descendant of one of the oldest and most illustrious Polish families, Andrew Bobola was a zealous preacher, confessor, missionary, educator of youth, and priest in Vilna, Bobruisk, Plock, Warsaw, Lomza, and Pinsk during the thirty-four fruitful years of his intensive apostolic work as a Jesuit missionary from 1623 to 1657.

Born in 1591, Bobola grew up in an atmosphere of ardent Catholicism. Before entering the Society of Jesus at Vilna on July 31, 1611, he was educated in a humanist spirit by Jesuit teachers, acquiring excellent rhetorical and linguistic skills as well as a direction for his religious fervor. Having concluded his two-year novitiate by taking lower vows and tonsure on July 31, 1613, he undertook philosophical study at the Academy of Vilna (1613–1616) and then continued his education, following an obligatory pedagogical practice, by studying theology (1618–1622). Andrew was ordained on March 12, 1622, and after a year of the strict “third proba-

tion,” he began his work in the Jesuit missions in Poland and Lithuania. However, his rich and difficult individuality, a field of a continual moral battle, led his superiors to postpone his four solemn vows, a confirmation of his spiritual readiness for his holy duty, until June 2, 1630.

His devotion to the poor and to the spiritually neglected people of the prisons and shelters greatly contributed to a rapprochement of the Catholics and the schismatics in a Poland torn by religious strife and ravaged by Cossacks, Russians, Swedes, and Tartars. However, this fertile labor of reconciliation and conversion enraged Orthodox authorities and the Cossacks, who, during their war with Poland, turned with hatred against the Roman and the Uniate Catholics. The Jesuits, in particular, had to endure the hostility of the dogmatic schismatics for their missionary work. In May 1657, the Cossacks attacked Janow Poleski and massacred local Jews and Catholics. Among the victims was Andrew, severely beaten and subjected to barbarous tortures before being relieved from suffering by a saber stroke.

The cult of Father Bobola began when his relics were found incorrupt forty-five years after being first interred in a common grave in the Collegiate Church of the Society at Pinsk. The complex and painstaking investigation into the life of the martyr led to his beatification by Pius IX on October 30, 1853. His canonization, which proclaimed Andrew a patron of the unity of the Eastern and Western churches, took place during the pontificate of Pius XI on April 17, 1938. He is patron of Warsaw. His feast day is May 16.

—Ewa Slojka

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Bodhidharma

(d. c. 530 C.E.?)

Buddhist Chan founder

Bodhidharma, the legendary sixth-century founder of Chan/Zen Buddhism, may be a composite figure representing several earlier monks. According to legend, he was a member of the brahmin caste or a prince from southern India. His teacher, Prajnadhara, the twenty-seventh Indian ancestor of the Chan lineage, encouraged him to travel to China, and so Bodhidharma spent several years in southern China and eventually traveled northward.

Bodhidharma's legend relates that on these travels he had an audience with Emperor Wu (502–550), who asked him how much merit he had earned through his generosity to-

ward Buddhism. Wu was not pleased when Bodhidharma replied that the emperor had not earned any merit through these actions but needed to have inner humility and respect for others. Leaving the capital, Bodhidharma crossed the Yangtze River on a reed. On the other side, he discovered a cave, where he sat facing a wall for nine years in meditation until his legs withered away from lack of use.

Bodhidharma is said to have passed the Chan tradition to a former student of Daoism named Huike. While Bodhidharma was meditating in his cave, Huike came and tried to win acceptance as a disciple, but without success. In order to prove his sincerity and determination to learn the path of Chan Buddhism, Huike cut off his own left arm at the elbow and presented it to Bodhidharma. Finally convinced of the aspirant's seriousness, Bodhidharma accepted him as a student, and Huike eventually became a patriarch of the tradition. The self-sacrificial action of Huike was to serve as a model for future generations of aspiring students. Likewise, the strict and demanding relationship between master and student can be traced to this legendary encounter.

The Chan tradition attributes to Bodhidharma an emphasis on motionless, seated meditation and transmission of the tradition outside of the scriptures by means of techniques enabling one to see into one's nature and attain awakening. The rigor of this spiritual regimen is expressed in paintings of Bodhidharma depicted with a face of fierce concentration and a menacing guise. He has become a folk, religious icon throughout eastern Asia. For individuals who achieve a goal by means of perseverance, it has become common to give them a Daruma doll to mark their successful effort.

Bodhidharma is thought to have died in about 530. According to his legend, however, a Chinese official on his way to India to collect texts a few years later met Bodhidharma in Central Asia. Bodhidharma was wearing a single sandal. After returning to China from India, the official related the story of his encounter with Bodhidharma to the followers of the master. They proceeded to open the grave of the patriarch, which they found empty, with the exception of a lone sandal. There were also legends of rival teachers attempting to poison him, although these types of narratives were likely spread for dramatic effect and to enhance the importance and stature of Bodhidharma. The Buddhist tradition attributes several treatises to Bodhidharma, but their historical authenticity is open to doubt.

—Carl Olson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Death; Meditation and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Bodhisattva

Mahayana Buddhism

The *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) represents a new paradigm of religiosity within Mahayana Buddhism by at least the second century B.C.E. From the Mahayana Buddhist perspective, the bodhisattva must be distinguished from the *arahant* (fully enlightened being or worthy one) and the *pratyekabuddha* (a person who is self-enlightened and does not teach). The Mahayana school views both arahants and pratyekabuddhas as selfish, egotistical, cloistered, placid, and inert. In contrast, the bodhisattva works not just for his or her own liberation but also for the liberation of others. He or she strives to help others gain happiness and welfare in the world. In other words, the bodhisattva goes to the brink of liberation but refuses to enter because he/she is committed to helping others attain the same enlightenment. Thus, the basic orientation of the bodhisattva is both within the world and beyond it.

The path to liberation for the bodhisattva is marked with the development of various perfections. There were originally six perfections, but another four were added at a later and undetermined date. The initial perfection is generosity (*dana*), which can take many forms. An extreme form of generosity is giving one's life or limbs for the good of others. When performing generosity, it is important that it be done in a disinterested manner without thinking about gaining any type of reward. By giving in an unselfish, disinterested, and detached manner, a person accumulates merit because it is an automatic result of a righteous act. This excess of merit can be transferred to another person.

The second, third, and fourth perfections are morality (*sila*), forbearance and endurance (*ksanti*), and energy (*virya*). Morality is grounded in self-control, examining oneself to discover faults and shortcomings, and extinguishing passions. It is conceived as an active doing rather than something passive, that is, acting out of the knowledge that what one does morally affects others. Forbearance is defined as freedom from anger and excitement. And since being a bodhisattva is a full-time commitment, it is absolutely necessary to be energetic to avoid giving in to physical and mental weaknesses and feelings of disappointment if one fails.

The fifth perfection is meditation (*dhyana*), which happens within the context of a complex social web. This perfection is connected to meditating on the divine states of mind and involves cultivating four feelings: loving-kindness (*maitri*), compassion (*karuna*), sympathetic joy (*mudita*),

and equanimity (*upeksa*). This perfection forms the support of the sixth perfection of wisdom (*prajnaparamita*), which is the supreme Mahayana Buddhist virtue. The complete possession of this perfection is equivalent to attaining nirvana and liberation. The perfection of wisdom represents a direct insight into reality, or seeing things as they really are. Wisdom is an understanding that derives from analysis, and it is also described as a meditative absorption that is directly connected to the results of analysis. Wisdom is related to a nonconceptual experience because it involves an awareness of emptiness.

The four perfections that were historically added later are skillful means (*upaya*), vow of resolution (*parindhana*), power or strength (*bala*), and knowledge (*jnana*). Skillful means refers to the ability to teach according to the needs of others. Resolution is manifested by a willingness to help others to gain salvation, whereas power refers to striving to increase one's virtues. Finally, knowledge is similar to the perfection of wisdom, although it represents a more intellectual kind of ability. In addition to these perfections, there is also a series of ten stages (*bhumis*) that are related to cultivating each of the perfections.

—Carl Olson

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Reincarnation

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Bonhoeffer, Dietrich

(1906–1945 C.E.)

Protestant spiritual writer, martyr

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born in 1906 into a large and influential family of intellectuals and professionals in Berlin, Germany, and was a successful theological student and academician. He frequently traveled as a young man, experiencing the intellectual cultures in New York, Barcelona, Rome, and elsewhere. He quickly adopted the Christ-centered theology of Karl Barth, which put him at opposition with the Lutheran Church in Germany for much of his life. He is best known today for his opposition to Adolf Hitler and Nazism during the 1930s and 1940s. He also helped to found the Confessing Church, a Protestant underground church that arose out of its members' abhorrence of Hitler's domination of the Lutheran Church in World War II Germany.

Bonhoeffer was a vibrant and active member of the Confessing Church, both before its official founding date of 1934 and afterward, until his death in 1945. Before this, however, he was active in the Lutheran Church. He was appointed in



Bodhisattva and other deities. (Corel Corp)

1931 as one of three part-time youth secretaries for the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches and the Ecumenical Council for Life and Work. From 1933 to 1935, he was pastor of one of the German congregations in London, where Bishop George Bell of Chichester influenced his thought and conviction on the ultimate evil of Nazism. Early in 1935, he was accused of running an illegal seminary of the Confessing Church in Pomerania, although the charges were later dropped. In June 1939, he was invited to escape the growing presence of Nazism in Germany by his friends in America, which he accepted. His growing unhappiness with American culture and his strong roots in Germany, however, made him return there the same year to face the growing threat.

Family members invited Bonhoeffer into the double life of a secret agent in the counterespionage service, where a plot against Hitler was being planned. During this time, he visited with many church leaders in various countries, especially Switzerland and Norway, who supported his efforts. He was arrested in April 1943 and spent the next two years fooling his interrogators and impressing his guards and fellow prisoners with his deeply Christian faith. In prison, he wrote extensively, producing poems and letters that illustrated his deep faith in Christ and provided comfort and strength to family and friends. His *Letters and Papers from Prison* is a lasting memorial to his faith and resolve and one of the many examples of survival above suffering that were a result of Nazism's oppression and domination.

Bonhoeffer was executed in the last days of World War II in a vengeful act by a declining and defeated regime. His biography, by his close friend Eberhard Bethge (1970), brought his writings and letters a worldwide audience and illustrated immense growth and maturity for a man of less than forty years in his Christian walk and life during difficult times and circumstances.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Boniface

(c. 675–754 C.E.)

Christian missionary, archbishop, martyr, apostle of Germany

Boniface served as an example to his time as well as to ours of a man who gave up everything he had in order to follow

Christ. Originally named Winfrith, he set aside the opportunity for a secular career in order to enter the religious life. He then shunned a religious and political career in England in order to devote himself to preaching the gospel to the tribes of Germany. On June 5, 754, Boniface was killed while on his final mission.

According to tradition, Winfrith was born near Exeter sometime between 672 and 680. As a child, he showed interest in piety and holy living, desiring against his father's wishes to enter a monastery. Winfrith's father, who had envisioned a secular career for his son, relented in the face of Winfrith's determination, and the boy entered the monastery at Adescanastre. He progressed as far as possible in his education there, then removed for further education to the monastery of Nursling, where he gained a reputation as a gifted teacher and served as head of the abbey school.

Winfrith was foremost a monk, however. He was self-disciplined, ascetic, and devoted to prayer throughout his life. At the age of thirty, he was ordained a priest. Shortly thereafter, he asked permission to go preach to the Germanic tribes across the Channel. Winfrith's abbot at Nursling initially denied the monk's request, but later he supported Winfrith on his first missionary journey in 716. The conditions were not favorable, however, for the local king had driven the Christians underground. Winfrith returned to England for a time but never lost sight of his goal to preach to the Germans. While in England, he refused election to an abbacy in order to pursue his mission. In 718, he left England for Rome in order to seek a commission from Pope Gregory II.

On May 15, 719, Gregory II gave Winfrith a commission as missionary and also the new name of Boniface. The new missionary spent a few years in Frisia with his fellow Anglo-Saxon who was preaching in that region, Willibrord, before moving on to the region of Hesse in Thuringia, where many responded to his preaching and instruction. In 722, Boniface traveled again to Rome, where he was consecrated bishop. Upon his return to Germany, he became involved in the most famous incident of his career: the felling of the oak at Geismar.

The ancient oak tree of Geismar long had been considered a holy tree by the native tribes. Upon the advice of converts from the area, Boniface felled the tree while a crowd of locals looked on. When they saw that their god did nothing to Boniface in retribution, many converted to Christianity. The new bishop used the wood of the tree to build a chapel on the same site.

Throughout the next thirty years, Boniface's influence was felt by the Carolingian mayors of the palace in Francia, under whose protection Boniface's mission prospered, and he established many monasteries. By 751, Boniface had become archbishop, and in that same year perhaps it was he who crowned Pepin the Short as the first king of the new Carolingian dynasty. But even the might of the new king

could not protect Boniface from the tribesmen who attacked him and his party on June 5, 754. Unarmed, the missionary archbishop faced the swords of his attackers and was killed, along with numerous companions.

Following his martyrdom, Boniface was quickly proclaimed to be a saint. He is commemorated on June 5. Boniface is still revered as patron of England and Germany.

—*Rhonda L. McDaniel*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission; Politics and Holy People

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Bonnke, Reinhard

(1940 C.E.–)

Pentecostal preacher, healer

Reinhard Bonnke is a German Pentecostal preacher and faith healer who is best known for his major crusades throughout

Africa, where open-air revival meetings attract hundreds of thousands of participants. He is also the founder and director of Christ for All Nations, now a worldwide organization with several office locations in Europe, the United States, and Africa.

Bonnke was born in Germany in 1940 as the son of a Pentecostal minister and claims to have received his personal salvation and spiritual baptism at the age of eleven. From 1959 to 1961, he studied at the Bible College of Wales, Swansea. He then served as a pastor in West Germany until 1967, when he moved to Leshoto to work as a pastor for the Apostolic Faith Mission. He began his crusade ministry in 1975, first in a giant tent and later on open-air platforms.

Bonnke's revival meetings start with performances by choirs and instrumental groups from local participating churches. Bonnke's sermon is then conducted in English with an interpreter. The preaching is simple and full of anecdotes, including stories of Bonnke's victorious encounters with atheists, mainline Christians, or witch doctors. Part of Bonnke's appeal in Africa lies in his confrontations with witchcraft and traditional spirit world traditions, which he interprets as satanic instruments that can be combatted by divine intervention. He emphasizes in his sermons that the only way of eternal redemption is to be saved by Jesus.



Reinhard Bonnke, German evangelist. (Art Directors)

After the sermon, Bonnke turns his attention to healing people. He prays for all evil spirits responsible for illness to leave afflicted people in the crowd and calls for them to be replaced by the power of the Holy Spirit. Some of those who claim to be healed are then asked to come forward to the platform and testify. Though God is, in principle, always the one who cures, the divine power of healing is sometimes conflated with Bonnke's own power as a faith healer. In Bonnke's own words: "When I step on a platform, often without any touch of mine, the blind begin to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak and the cripples to walk. . . . Miracles happen as if copied from the Gospels and the Book of Acts" (Arnold 2002).

Serious doubts about the authenticity of Bonnke's healings are frequently expressed by mainline Protestants, doctors, researchers, and the media. His most-debated miracle is the awakening of a dead pastor in Nigeria in December 2001. Ironically, Bonnke has also been sued in Nigeria for the deaths of fourteen people who were crushed in human stampedes during a revival meeting in October 2001 (none of these were ever raised from the dead).

—Martin Lindhardt

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles

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Boris and Gleb

(d. 1015 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox martyrs

Boris and Gleb, early Russian Orthodox martyrs, were sons of Great Prince Vladimir. They were deceived and brutally murdered at the secret order of their brother Sviatopolk, who usurped the rule in Kievan Rus' upon Vladimir's death in 1015. The names of Vladimir and his sons Boris and Gleb are firmly associated with the process of Christianization in Russia, while Sviatopolk's revolt may represent opposition to the new religion. The cult of the two royal martyrs spread immediately after their death in approximately 1015, when healing miracles and military victories were attributed to the intercession of the martyred princes. In 1071, the Russian Orthodox Church canonized Boris and Gleb and named May 2 as their feast day. Their relics were lost, however, during the Mongol invasion of 1240.

Especially gruesome was the murder of Boris, Vladimir's favorite son. When Vladimir fell sick, Boris was summoned to Kiev. Vladimir sent Boris off to fight the Pechenegs, a nomadic tribe that frequently raided Russian territories. On his

way back, Boris and his army stopped at the river Alta. There, the sad news of Vladimir's death reached Boris. The army tried to convince Boris, who was very popular in Kiev, to march against Sviatopolk, but Boris refused to betray his older brother. In the meantime, Sviatopolk sent emissaries to Boris, assuring him of his love and promising to enlarge Boris's fief. The secret mission of the emissaries, however, was to kill prince Boris—Sviatopolk's dangerously popular political opponent. Putsha, the head of the embassy, and his men stabbed Boris with spears, but they failed to finish him off. The murderers brought Boris to Kiev, still alive. Here, Boris was killed by two Varangians from Sviatopolk's retinue, who put a sword through his heart.

Gleb was murdered in a similarly brutal fashion. Sviatopolk summoned Gleb to Kiev under the false pretense of Vladimir's sickness. Gleb stopped in Smolensk and there received a message from his brother Jaroslav about the death of Vladimir, the murder of Boris, and the plot to murder him. While praying for his deceased father and brother, Gleb was attacked by the gang sent by Sviatopolk. Goriasser, the head of the conspiracy to kill Gleb, ordered Gleb's own cook to slaughter his master.

—Margarita D. Yanson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Orthodoxy and Saints; Politics and Holy People; Vladimir

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Boro Baba

See Radharaman Charan Das Dev

Borromeo, Charles

(1538–1584 C.E.)

Roman Catholic archbishop, theologian

Archbishop Charles Borromeo of Milan was a leading Roman Catholic theologian of the Catholic Reformation and a central figure at the Council of Trent. His feast day is November 4 (formerly November 5).

A descendant of Lombard nobility, Charles (Carlo) Borromeo was born in Arona, near Lake Maggiore in northern

Italy, in 1538. His father was Count Giberto Borromeo and his mother, Margherita, was a Medici. Charles spent time at the monastery in Arona while still a young man; however, in 1552 he left Arona for the University of Pavia. There, he received a doctorate in canon law in 1559. When his uncle, Giovanni de' Medici, was elected pope in December 1559, Charles was called to Rome, named cardinal, and entrusted with the position of papal secretary of state. In February 1560, the pope named Borromeo administrator of the see of Milan. In this position, he weathered many responsibilities, perhaps none so critical as that of negotiating the papal correspondence to reconvene the Council of Trent from 1560 to 1562. The council did indeed reconvene in 1562 and, thanks in no small measure to the efforts of Borromeo, remained in session until December 1563. Borromeo was especially committed to the reformation of the pastoral episcopate.

During the council, Borromeo experienced a personal conversion to a more devout and spiritual life. He decided to be ordained a priest, and was soon consecrated bishop. Even then, he was torn between living out his calling in a more contemplative setting or maintaining his rather familiar public profile, but he soon determined that his private calling could find some fulfillment in the continuation of his more worldly episcopacy. Borromeo worked tirelessly to institute the reforms of Trent: revising the liturgy, restoring ecclesiastical discipline, and founding hospitals and schools. Borromeo also labored for artistic excellence and spiritual sincerity in church music, and, as part of this reform, requested that the luminous Giovanni Palestrina, arguably the premier composer of liturgical music, compose new music for the mass. Borromeo was indefatigable in his support of local pious societies, which he considered a valuable resource for the daily affirmation of the Roman Catholic faith.

When Pius IV died in 1565, Borromeo sought permission to leave Rome and return to his home and his flock in Milan. There he remained until his premature death at age forty-six in 1584. In this last stage of his life, he gave away most of his personal possessions to the poor and spent many hours in prayer; his frequent fasting permanently weakened him and probably hastened his demise. He became particularly vigilant in punishing ecclesiastical corruption and recommended that his court become a model for other sees. Upon some occasions, such as during his confrontation with the Order of the Humiliati, at the time of his admonishments to various Swiss clergy, and at his censuring and excommunication of secular authorities in Milan, Borromeo found himself in mortal danger. Yet, he never relented in his insistence that the conciliar program of reform and reconciliation must be observed.

By 1584, Charles Borromeo was weak in body but still quite active in spirit. Having suffered fevers and other illnesses for years, as well as having sustained himself on very

little food and even less rest, he desired to found a convalescent hospital for his flock, understanding full well the struggles of chronic illness and the difficulties of rehabilitation, especially for the poor. He also continued his regimen of contemplative prayer and ecclesiastical direction of the clergy in Milan. He died on November 3, 1584. Almost immediately, the Milanese separately, and then the community of the church throughout Europe, both princes and paupers, regarded Borromeo as a saint and memorialized him. Very quickly, by 1604, his cause made its way to Rome, and on November 1, 1610, Pope Paul V canonized Charles Borromeo.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Bosco, John (Giovanni; Don)

(1815–1888 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, educator, founder

Founder of the Salesians of Don Bosco, John Bosco was born in Piedmont, Italy, in 1815. Ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Church in 1841, he spent his life caring for poor and neglected children. He died January 31, 1888, at Turin, Italy, and was canonized in 1934.

When John was nine years old, he began having dreams that he eventually interpreted as indicative of his vocation. In these dreams, he was in the midst of a group of unruly children, whom he tried to threaten and then beat into submission, until a figure of light in a flowing mantle recommended gentleness. He related this dream and others like it to his family, who greeted the tales with derision. Nevertheless, as a child he began teaching religion to the boys of his village, using juggling and magic tricks to catch their attention, then teaching them catechism and coaxing them to mass.

He entered the seminary at Chieri when he was sixteen, in such dire straits that money for his upkeep and wardrobe had to be provided by friends and his parish church. While he was at the theological college of Turin, he began again his apostolate of teaching religion to poor boys. Prisons and slums became the locus of his activity. He had great difficulty finding

a place in which to conduct his ministry since his flock was usually composed of rough characters and no one wanted ruffians on the premises. Funding for his projects was a constant worry, and the anxiety caused by these persistent concerns aggravated an attack of pneumonia that nearly killed him. He also needed volunteer workers; his method of gentle persuasion with young toughs at times exasperated and frustrated those working with him, as did the chronic shortage of funds. In 1850, Don Bosco decided to train young men to help him in his endeavors.

With the aid of his mother, Mamma Margaret, Don Bosco opened his home to destitute children and to apprentices in trades; he also opened lodgings in various quarters of Turin to house young workers. In 1853, he decided to open workshops to train shoemakers and tailors. He constructed a church for his growing flock under the patronage of Francis de Sales, his favorite saint, and began building a larger home for his growing “family,” in which Mamma Margaret played a vital role. By this time, his flock included boys and young men of two sorts: apprentices to the trades and those with possible vocations to Don Bosco’s ministry.

On January 26, 1854, the men who would form the nucleus of the Salesians of Don Bosco gathered in his room and the order was born. This was a particularly inauspicious time to launch a new congregation; Piedmont was in the throes of anticlericalism. Nevertheless, an Italian statesman, Urban Rattazzi, urged Don Bosco to persevere. By 1856, there were 150 resident boys with four workshops, four Latin classes with ten young priests, and oratories for 500 children. In 1874, the constitutions of the order received final approbation.

Don Bosco was in constant demand as a preacher; because of his success in the building of churches, the pope asked him to complete the construction of Sacred Heart Church in Rome. Don Bosco was convinced of the great power of the press and wrote books, a practice ended in later life by failing eyesight. In 1872, he founded an order for women, the Daughters of Our Lady, Help of Christians, to serve poor girls. A third order, the Union of Cooperator Salesians, followed in 1875. Before Don Bosco died in 1888, he wrote down his dreams upon the request of Pope Pius IX.

—Kathryn E. Wildgen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Bowman, Thea

(1937–1990 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, social activist

Sister Thea Bowman, a black Roman Catholic nun in the United States, confirmed and championed a way of being Catholic that drew upon her heritage as an African American. Drawing upon the spiritual traditions of a people who through their deep and abiding faith in God have survived the dehumanization of slavery, Sister Thea used song, dance, poetry, drama, and story to celebrate her belief that all people are gifted and beloved children of God.

Bertha Bowman was born in Yazoo City, Mississippi, in 1937 and was baptized as a Roman Catholic in 1947. In 1949, she was sent to a Catholic school run by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Wanting to be “part of the effort to help feed the hungry, find shelter for the homeless, and teach the children” (Bowman 1993, 18), in 1953 she decided to join this religious community. In 1956, she took the name Thea, “of God.” She received a doctoral degree in English language, literature, and linguistics in 1972 from the Catholic University of America. A believer in the liberating power of education, she taught classes at the elementary, high school, and college levels and helped to found the Institute of Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in Louisiana.

In her otherwise all-white community of religious sisters, Sister Thea took a stand against conforming to the spirituality of the white Euro-American Catholic Church. On being black and Catholic, she wrote: “I bring my whole history, my traditions, my experience, my culture, my African-American song and dance and gesture and movement and teaching and preaching and healing and responsibility as a gift to the Church” (Bowman 1993, 32). She emphasized a black spirituality of survival and resistance—as reflected in the traditional spirituals—and with the importance of family, community, celebration, and remembrance of ancestors as essential components. Sister Thea pointed out that the Catholic Church as an institution was contributing to the evil of racism by refusing to welcome the rich traditions and experiences of various peoples and cultures.

Sister Thea was an extraordinarily gifted singer and speaker who was invited to appear before hundreds of groups. In response to a church that does not allow women preachers, she urged women to preach the Word of God “day by day—in our homes, in our families, in our neighborhood—to bear witness, to testify, to shout it from the rooftops with our lives” (Bowman 1993, 78).

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 1984, Sister Thea created a new prayer: “Lord, let me live until I die,” explaining, “By that I mean I want to live, love, and serve fully until death comes” (Bowman 1993, 127). She continued to speak, travel, and conduct workshops on racism despite her cancer, re-

ceived ten honorary doctorates in 1988, and in 1989 addressed the annual meeting of the U.S. Catholic bishops. In 1989, she also received awards for furthering the cause of women and promoting peace and justice. Sister Thea died in 1990, and was posthumously awarded the Laetare Medal from Notre Dame University that same year.

—*Mary Ann McSweeney*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gender and Holy People

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Braide, Garrick Sokari

(c. 1882–1918 C.E.)

Christian prophet, evangelist

Garrick Sokari Braide, an evangelist and miracle worker, was born of Kalabari parentage around 1882 and grew up in the town of Bakana in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. It is not certain when he became a Christian, but by the closing years of the 1800s he had enrolled to learn the catechism in Bakana under the pastoral supervision of Moses Kemmer, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) minister stationed at Brass. Here he learned the basics of the Christian faith. Following his confirmation in 1910, his religious ingenuity unfolded swiftly, enabling him to become a prophet with a mission.

Braide was initially despised because of his lowly upbringing, but Kemmer's public acknowledgment of Braide's gift soon earned him the attention of his audience. Thereafter, he began to have tremendous influence on them, leading evangelistic crusades and healing services and enjoining the people to burn their fetishes (holy objects). His spontaneous worship in his mother tongue resonated with the aspiration of his followers and brought many into the church. The effectiveness of his prayers and ecstatic visions soon earned him the title Prophet Elijah II.

Braide's essential tool was prayer. It is said of him that he would "slip in secretly into St. Andrew's Church [Bakana] on week days and here prostrate himself in prayer to Almighty God imploring forgiveness for sin" (Tasie 1982, 104). At other times, he would "spend the whole night in prayer in the Church with his Bible and prayer book" (ibid.). His fame, patriotism, and the excesses of his followers, however, began to generate concerns and brought him on a collision course with the mission and the colonial government. Tried and

jailed for subversion in November 1916, Braide served his term, but the movement he had launched never regained its vitality, although it later assumed the name Christ Army Church. Garrick Braide died on November 18, 1918. His movement was a significant precursor of the effervescent Christian spirituality that soon swept Africa in the aftermath of the influenza epidemic of 1918–1920.

—*Kehinde Olabimtan*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Prophets

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Brébeuf, Jean de

(1593–1649 C.E.)

Roman Catholic missionary, martyr

Jean de Brébeuf, a French Roman Catholic missionary, "first apostle of the Hurons," and martyr, was born on March 25, 1593, near Lisieux, Normandy, and martyred by the Iroquois on March 16, 1649. Virtually nothing is known of Jean de Brébeuf's life, other than the fact that he was born into a noble Norman family, until he joined the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) in November 1617 at the age of twenty-four. Marked by humility, he asked to become a lay brother of the society, but his superiors convinced him to become a priest. After taking his initial vows in November 1619, he was assigned to teach at the College of Rouen, where his health eventually failed.

Ordained in February 1622, he volunteered to join the Jesuit Charles Lalemant (whose nephew Gabriel was eventually martyred alongside Brébeuf) on a mission to what was then New France, leaving Dieppe in April 1625. After the commander of Quebec, the Protestant Emery de Caen, refused them entrance, they were taken under the wing of Joseph Le Caron, a Franciscan, and accompanied the Montagnais Indians on a hunting party into the forest of New France in October 1625, returning the following March. It was on Brébeuf's second trip the following year that the Hurons nicknamed him "Echon," "the one who carries the load." Forced to leave Quebec during the English occupation, he returned to France in 1629. Returning to his mission in 1633, he was joined by his fellow Jesuit Gabriel Lalemant in 1648.

An Ursuline nun in Quebec, Marie de l'Incarnation, wrote to her son that Brébeuf had had a vision of his future

martyrdom. The vision came to pass on March 16, 1649, when a band of Iroquois attacked the missionaries' settlement. They captured Brébeuf and Lalemant, whom they tied to stakes to be burned alive. In one of the most gruesome martyrdoms of the modern era, Brébeuf suffered in silence for three hours before dying, and Lalemant died the next morning. According to the *Jesuit Relations*, "Before their death both their hearts were torn out through an opening in their chest; these barbarians feasted on them inhumanly, drinking their warm blood which they drew from its source with a sacrilegious hand. While still full of life, pieces of their thighs, calves, and arms were removed by the butchers who roasted them on coals and ate them in their sight." Their remains were collected shortly thereafter, and Brébeuf's head is preserved as a relic in the Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec. Brébeuf was beatified on June 21, 1925, and canonized on June 29, 1930. His feast day is celebrated on September 26 along with other North American martyrs.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Brendan the Navigator

(c. 486–575 C.E.)

Christian abbot, monastic founder

Brendan was an Irish monastic founder and a noted sailor. He established Clonfert monastery in about 559 and at least three other monasteries during his lifetime. Medieval sources claim that he founded monasteries in Wales, Scotland, and Brittany. His cult was certainly active in these areas. Brendan is perhaps best known for the fictional *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis* (The voyage of St. Brendan), a work composed by a ninth- or tenth-century Irish monk. The *Navigatio* turned the real Brendan's seafaring travels into an adventure tale involving a journey across the Atlantic Ocean to an undiscovered island of the saints. Little reference is made to the historical Brendan in the *Navigatio*. The popularity of this book, translated into seven languages, made the real Brendan one of the best-known Irish saints in medieval Europe.

Brendan, born in about 486, was raised by a foster mother, Íte (d. c. 570), and later by Bishop Erc. Brendan's voyages and numerous foundations fit the mold of the Irish *peregrini pro christi*, or "pilgrims for Christ." In Irish society

and law, one's legal protections ended when one left the home of his or her kin. So, venturing far afield in a small boat, as Brendan did, was considered a form of martyrdom. Great emphasis was placed on these acts of extreme hardship and on prayer, charity, and martyrdom in Brendan's hagiography, and also in the Lives of other early monastic founders. Accounts of St. Brendan were produced in both Gaelic and Latin. Particular focus was placed on his desire to avoid worldly comforts by engaging in constant travel.

The Life of Brendan goes into great detail about his boat building, and Brendan is considered a patron saint of sailors. He is sometimes confused in the hagiography with St. Brendan of Birr.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Ireland, Twelve Apostles of; Íte

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Brigid of Ireland

(c. 450–c. 525 C.E.)

Christian abbess, founder

Brigid of Ireland, or of Kildare, has been venerated since the early Middle Ages, along with Patrick and Columba, as one of the three national Christian patron saints of Ireland. Born, according to the Irish annals, between 439 and 456, she is reputed to have died between 522 and 526. At least two Latin Lives had been composed by the end of the seventh century describing her as a nobleman's daughter who chose to consecrate her virginity to God, took the veil as a Christian nun, and became the leader of a community of religious women, or perhaps of both women and men—certainly by the seventh century there was an important double monastery at Kildare that regarded her as its founder.

According to the medieval Lives, Brigid's sanctity was manifest even before she was born in apparitions of light and fire emanating from the places where she and her mother slept. Her holiness was most apparent, however, in miracles of compassion, many having to do with the provision of food for the poor and for her own community, and others with healing and the prevention of injustice. She had strong connections with the province of Leinster, home to her people, the Fothairt, and was said by one medieval text to have been seen hovering over the armies of Leinster as it marched into battle. However, her cult spread throughout Ireland and was carried abroad by Irish monks in the Carolingian era, so that there came to be churches dedicated to her as far afield as Italy and Spain. As early as the seventh century, Brigid was identified as "the Mary of

the Gael,” a powerful and compassionate female advocate like the Virgin, but one exclusively dedicated to the needs of the Irish.

Brigid’s name connects her with a shadowy figure called Brig, “the Exalted One,” who is associated with a British people of the Roman period, the Brigantes, and who appears in several medieval texts in association with legendary supernatural figures. Furthermore, a tenth-century text, Cormac’s *Glossary*, claims that “Brigit” was the name of three goddesses, one of poetry, one of healing, and one of smithcraft, “so that Brigit is a name for a goddess.” Since the beginning of the twentieth century, it has been thought by some that the cult of St. Brigid is simply a Christianized version of the cult of this goddess, and indeed that the fifth-century woman may never have existed. A twelfth-century report by Gerald of Wales that there was in her monastery at Kildare a perpetual fire tended only by women, which it was forbidden to men even to approach, has been taken as evidence of this transfer of the goddess cult to a Christian saint.

The feast of St. Brigid is observed on February 1, the date of the pre-Christian Irish festival of Imbolc. Well into the twentieth century, a wide array of customs was connected with Brigid’s day in various parts of Ireland; these invoke protection of the holy woman on cattle and the butter made from their milk, on the health and fertility of women and animals, and against ailments of all kinds, especially headache and disorders of childbirth. These customs included processions through villages with a doll called a “brideóg,” leaving pieces of cloth outside overnight to be touched and made potent against illness and spiritual harm by the saint, and the weaving of crosses made of rush to be hung on houses and byres for protection. There are a number of springs, known as holy wells, in Ireland that are associated with Brigid and whose waters have been believed to have healing and protective properties.

A contemporary cult of Brigid draws upon traditions connected with a goddess as well as those connected with a fifth-century Christian holy woman to celebrate her mercy and power within a feminist context.

—Catherine McKenna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Britto, John de

(1647–1693 C.E.)

Roman Catholic missionary

John de Britto, a Portuguese noble born in 1647 who became a Jesuit missionary of the Madura Mission in India, is a popular Catholic saint in southern Tamil Nadu. He spearheaded a mass conversion movement in a portion of southeast Tamil Nadu, known as the Marava country, that has a heavy concentration of Marava caste groups. Oral and written traditions maintain that soon after arriving at the Madura Mission, Britto—better known locally as Arul Anandar—earned a reputation as a holy man of great power and became a threat to the Hindu king of Ramnad, who had him beheaded and impaled on a stake on February 4, 1693.

After Britto was beheaded, Oriyur became the center of a Britto cult in which Hindu and Catholic pilgrims execute a wide array of vow rituals (*nerccai*), including ear piercing, hair shaving, animal sacrifices, and other fertility rites. A rich collection of legends and folk songs celebrate the sacral powers of the saint and the shrine. One legend holds that the martyr’s blood turned the soil red, transforming the saint and the site into extraordinary sources of fertility with life-giving powers. Because of his intimate association with the Marava converts and the red sand at Oriyur, the Portuguese Jesuit earned the titles “Marava saint,” “apostle of the Maravas,” and “red sand saint.”

The cult of this European saint in Tamil Nadu, and the images used to depict him, reflect a sense of liminality. Britto’s Catholic devotees dedicate to the saint a series of rituals adopted from popular Hinduism that reflect their own cultural and religious stance as neither Hindu nor Catholic, defying the normative and ritual boundaries of official Catholicism. Similarly, though Britto is represented in iconography as a European saint wearing a European cape, the powers and qualities attributed to him by his native devotees transform him into an indigenous figure resembling Hindu tutelary deities. Additionally, like his caste-conscious Catholic pilgrims, the European saint enshrined at Oriyur both supports and confounds the social status quo. As the Marava saint, he supports caste identity; he is a Catholic saint who “acts” like a Hindu tutelary deity.

Located at the juncture between European and Tamil, Catholic and Hindu, high caste and low caste, Britto is a pre-eminent liminal figure, and this is reflected in his personality and powers as they are commemorated today. As such, he

functions as a sacred metaphor reflecting the religious and cultural liminality of his Catholic pilgrims. The Tamil representation of St. John de Britto reveals a convert community's attempt to construct a local identity and cult for the European saint.

—Selva J. Raj

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Veneration of Holy People

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'Brog mi Lo tsa ba Shakya ye shes

See **Drokmi**

Brown, John

(1800–1859 C.E.)

Christian abolitionist

Abolitionist John Brown's opposition to slavery in America was fueled by his religious belief, rooted in a strict Calvinist interpretation of the punishment God would inflict on those who strayed from righteousness. Although Brown's personal life was distinguished by poverty, family deaths, and failed business ventures, he believed that as an abolitionist he carried out the will of God. Brown died convinced that he was a martyr to his faith.

Brown's militant opposition to slavery first arose while defending the free-soil settlers in Kansas and culminated in October 1859 when he led his followers on a raid of the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Convicted of treason, Brown was hanged on December 2, 1859, a day that became holy for many. The Sunday following his death, his witness to Christ was acclaimed in hundreds of churches where preachers eulogized him from their pulpits.

Perceived by many as part saint and part devil, part prophet and part madman, John Brown nonetheless drew tributes from Henry David Thoreau, William Lloyd Garrison, and others who published defenses of his actions and character. Ralph Waldo Emerson claimed that Brown had made the gallows as glorious as the cross. He was also the subject of poetry by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Dean Howells, and John Greenleaf Whittier. The song "John Brown's Body" was created and sung in tribute to him by Union soldiers, and eventually inspired Julia Ward Howe to compose "Battle Hymn of the Republic" as a national

psalm. In subsequent years, Brown's reputation as a holy figure persisted in the African American community. Leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois and Malcolm X took note of his example.

At his trial, Brown made explicit his sense of religious destiny: "The Bible . . . teaches me that all things whatsoever I would that men should do to me, I should do even so to them. It teaches me further to remember them that are in bonds as bound with them. . . . Now if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children and with the blood of millions of this Slave-country, whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I say let it be done" (Peterson 2002, 14).

Brown never joined a specific religious denomination or an antislavery movement, but his commitment to the Bible and the abolition of slavery was unwavering. His personal charisma charmed less militant supporters and extracted support from wealthy abolitionists. Although white, he was distinguished by his extraordinary identification with the blacks among whom he lived and worked.

—Kimberly Rae Connor

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Extremists as Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Violence and Nonviolence

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'Brug pa kun legs

See **Drukpa Kunley**

Bruno of Chartreuse

(c. 1030–1101 C.E.)

Christian hermit, abbot, monastic founder

Bruno of Chartreuse, founder of the Carthusian monastic order, was born in approximately 1030 in Cologne. Little is known about his early life, however, until he became a canon of Rheims cathedral, where he taught arts and theology. He became master of the school in 1056 and chancellor of the archdiocese in 1075; one of his students was the future Pope Urban II. As chancellor, he fought the simoniacal archbishop

Manasses I; although Bruno was forced to flee for his life, when Manasses was finally removed from office in 1080 Bruno was offered the see. Bruno refused, instead becoming a hermit in about 1082.

Bruno's first hermitage was near Molesme, but in 1084 he sought greater solitude, eventually settling in Chartreuse, where another former student, Bishop Hugh of Grenoble, helped establish a small hermitage for Bruno and his followers. Six years later, Pope Urban II summoned his former teacher to Rome to serve as his adviser. Bruno reluctantly left Chartreuse, to which he never returned. Forced to flee Rome for Norman-controlled southern Italy when imperial forces took the city, Bruno was offered a second archbishopric—which he refused—and soon established a small hermitage in the mountains of Calabria, where he died on October 6, 1101.

Bruno had no intention of founding a monastic order when he retired to his hermitage at La Grande Chartreuse, nor did he write a rule for his followers. The Carthusian way of life is a unique blend of the solitary and the cenobitic: Monks and nuns live as hermits in individual cells within the monastic community, leaving only to worship in the monastic church and for communal meals on Sundays and feast days. Devoted to contemplation, no monastic order is more austere: Their customs, compiled by Prior Guigo I, call for strict fasting on bread, water, and salt three days a week throughout the year and only one meal a day from September to Easter. Until 1164, Carthusian monasteries were autonomous and not subject to any mother house; a privilege granted by Alexander III transformed the Carthusian monasteries into an order subject to the prior of La Grande Chartreuse with a general chapter modeled on that of Cîteaux. By the late Middle Ages, they became famous for retaining much of their original austerity and rigor. Bruno's feast day is October 6; he was canonized in 1623.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Buddha

Buddha is a Sanskrit/Pali word that etymologically means "one who has wakened." In the context of Buddhism it is

used as an appellative term of one who has attained enlightenment. Many buddhas of different times and places are mentioned in Buddhist literature. For instance, the *Digha Nikaya* (Collection of long discourses) mentions seven buddhas before Shakyamuni, the historic Buddha, and the *Buddhavamsa* (Chronicle of buddhas) mentions twenty-four. The *Lalitavistara* (Detailed narration of the sport [of the Buddha]) mentions fifty-four buddhas, and the *Mahavastu* (Great story) mentions more than a hundred. The number of buddhas that could exist in the future became countless with the development of the idea in Mahayana that everyone has to become a buddha before attaining nirvana. The number of buddhas, in principle, is infinite in Mahayana. A number of them, such as Amitabha, Vajradhara, Vairocana, Avalokiteshvara, and Akshobhya, are mentioned by name in literature. In esoteric Buddhism, the concept of living buddhas exists; thus, Padmasambhava (eighth and ninth centuries) and Kukai (774–835) are recognized as buddhas. The Mahayana schools advocate the simultaneous existence of numerous buddhas who can provide assistance beyond their own worlds. The Theravada schools, however, admit the appearance of only one buddha in any given period. No buddha can arise until the complete disappearance of the previous buddha's teachings. Moreover, a buddha is not born at the beginning of a cosmic aeon when human beings live long and do not fear sickness, aging, and death.

The earliest texts mention two kinds of buddhas: *pratyekabuddhas* (buddhas who attain enlightenment but do not preach the way of deliverance to the world) and *samyakasambuddhas* (buddhas who are omniscient and are teachers of the way of deliverance). The Pali commentaries, however, mention four classes: *sarvajnabuddhas* (who practice ten perfections for a certain number of aeons), *pratyekabuddhas* (who practice ten perfections that lead to enlightenment for a certain number of aeons), *catusaccabuddhas* (all *arahants* who have realized the Four Truths), *bahusutabuddhas* (all learned men fall into this category). In the later stages of Mahayana Buddhism, other buddhas are mentioned, for example, *dhyanibuddhas* (transcendent buddhas) together with *adibuddhas* (primordial buddhas).

Though the buddhas are superior to all other beings in seven matters—body, living, wisdom, virtue, practice, mystery, and deliverance—they are not equal among themselves. Some, such as *pratyekabuddhas*, attain enlightenment only for themselves, while others, such as *samyakasambuddhas*, attain enlightenment for the good of others. The enlightened insight of some is less than that of others. Some achieve their goals through the creation of buddha fields in which their devotees seek rebirth, and others work through their earthly existence. They also differ from each other in terms of lifespan, body height, social rank, length of austerities, body

aura, conveyance used for renunciation, the Bodhi tree (under which the Buddha received enlightenment), and the size of the seat under it. In the case of the historic Buddha, there are four fixed spots—the site of the seat under the Bodhi tree, the Deer Park, where the first sermon is preached, the spot where the Buddha first steps onto the ground at Samkasya after descending from heaven, and the spots marked by the four posts of the bed in his perfumed chamber in Jeta Grove, the rainy season retreat.

It is also said that the Buddha's power of love is so great that no evil action can show its results in his presence. A Buddha never asks for praise and prefers to accept the invitation of poor people to a meal. According to some Pali texts, a Buddha in his last life is conscious at the time of his conception; remains cross-legged in his mother's womb, who delivers him while standing in a forest grove and dies seven days later; takes seven steps to the north after being born and roars the "lion's roar"; renounces the world after the birth of a son and upon seeing the four omens (an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse); practices austerities for at least a week after renunciation; has a meal of milk-rice on the day of enlightenment; attains omniscience seated on a grass carpet; defeats the forces of the demon Mara; attains supreme perfection in all knowledge and virtue at the foot of the Bodhi tree; preaches the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) at the request of the creator god Mahabrahma; founds an order; and spends his time traveling and preaching for the good of humanity.

A Buddha is not completely immune from disease. Every Buddha has the power to live for an aeon (*kalpa*), but no Buddha does so, his term of life being shortened by reason of climate and the food he takes. It is said that on the night on which he attains enlightenment, and on the night during which he dies, his skin becomes exceedingly bright. When a Buddha dies, his body receives the honors due to a monarch.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Akshobhya Buddha; Amitabha; Attributes of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Gautama

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Buddha, The

See **Gautama**

Buddhadasa

(1906–1993 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, a modern Thai master scholar and practitioner, was a highly regarded and controversial figure in Southeast Asia owing to his innovative interpretations of Buddhist teachings. He strove to make traditional Theravada Buddhist ideas and practices relevant to contemporary issues and problems, such as war, social inequity, and ecology, and influenced many Buddhist intellectuals and activists. Buddhadasa's publications amount to the largest corpus of thought ever produced by a single figure in the history of Theravada, and the titles of these many works, such as *A Socialism Capable of Benefitting the World* and *Till the World Is with Peace*, reflect Buddhadasa's main concerns.

Buddhadasa was ordained as a monk at age twenty but soon became disillusioned with traditional monastic life. His way of practicing Buddhism is manifest in the forest retreat center that he established, Suan Mokkh, where both monks and laity engage in a program of study and meditation while living in an atmosphere of harmonious balance with nature. In recognizing their common humanity, practitioners there act out of mutual concern and respect for the good of the whole.

In Buddhadasa's view, fundamental questions about the good of the individual lead to concerns about the world and the natural environment, of which the individual is a part. Based on the Buddhist teaching of the interrelatedness of all phenomena, Buddhadasa taught that the pursuit of enlightenment is not just for the individual good, because the good of individual parts is predicated on the good of the whole, and vice versa. Because of this, humans, as social creatures, should focus on helping others. For Buddhadasa, a just, equitable, peaceful, and happy society balances the good of the individual and the good of the whole in what he called a "fellowship of restraint" (Buddhadasa 1989, 6). By restraint, he meant subduing one's egocentricity so that selfless compassion for others' welfare may arise. Thus, in opposition to what he considered selfish capitalist and Communist systems, he called for a *dhammic* (righteous) society in which attachment to self would be transformed to selflessness, love of all, and an understanding of the equality of all beings. In such a society, people, by ethically and meditatively cultivating greater awareness, would be free from the greed, ignorance, and moral defilement that poison both individuals and human societies.

—Bradley Clough

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Nature; Scholars as Holy People

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Buddhaghosa

(5th cent. C.E.)

Theravada Buddhist monk, scholar

The works of Buddhaghosa, an Indian brahmin convert of the fifth century, have dominated Theravada Buddhist thought from his time to the present. Although most details of his life are found in legendary accounts, some events are generally accepted as historical. Interested in studying commentaries on canonical Theravada texts, Buddhaghosa traveled to Sri Lanka to study with great scholar-practitioners of the predominant monastic fraternity, the Mahavihara. Although already a learned, accomplished commentator, Buddhaghosa was tested as to his fitness to be entrusted with their books when these scholars asked him to compose a commentary on one verse of the Buddha. The result was a magnum opus, the *Visuddhimagga* (Path of purification). More of an encyclopedic treatise than a commentary, this work masterfully presents Buddhist thought and practice in systematic fashion according to the three trainings of the path: morality, meditation, and liberative insight. It has served both as a detailed manual for practitioners and a major normative source of reference for Theravadins.

Perhaps more impressive is Buddhaghosa's accomplishment of writing commentaries on most of the Theravada canonical corpus. Theravadins after Buddhaghosa typically have turned to his *Visuddhimagga* and commentaries as the sources of truly reliable interpretation of the Buddha's teachings; in some ways, Buddhaghosa, living up to the meaning of his name, "Voice of Buddha," has become more authoritative than the Buddha himself. If the treatises of Nagarjuna have made him the "second Buddha" for many Mahayana Buddhists, then one could say that Buddhaghosa occupies the same place for Theravadins.

Opinion varies on how much Buddhaghosa simply translated ideas from the then extant (now lost) commentaries in the Sinhalese language into the canonical Pali language and how much of it was original thought. Buddhaghosa presented himself mostly as a reproducer of the earlier commentaries, but other sources say that he found those commentaries so corrupt that he was compelled to write his own. Furthermore, scholars have revealed developments and changes in Buddhaghosa's thought from text to text. His work has also been shown to be markedly influenced by earlier Buddhist thinkers and schools, as well as by certain Hindu teachings.

Whatever the case, Theravadins have revered Buddhaghosa as a harmonizer who, in his voluminous body of work, best clarified what was complex, and best compiled

ideas scattered throughout the canon into systematic form. His enduring authority as a commentator-philosopher of Theravada makes his influence more than equal to that of Thomas Aquinas on Catholic Christianity.

—Bradley Clough

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Nagarjuna; Scholars as Holy People; Thomas Aquinas

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Buddhapalita

(c. 470–c. 540 C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher

Buddhapalita was one of the key figures in the history of the Indian Buddhist philosophical school known as Madhyamaka (Middle Way school), which began with Nagarjuna in the first through the third centuries. The details of Buddhapalita's life, from approximately 470 to 540, are not well known, but his commentary on Nagarjuna's primary text, *Mulamadhyamaka-karika* (The treatise on the Middle Way), which is simply entitled *Mulamadhyamaka-vrtti* (Commentary on "The treatise on the Middle Way"), sparked one of the most spirited debates in the intellectual history of Madhyamaka.

The central issue of the debate concerned the appropriate form of reasoning and argumentation to be utilized by holders of Madhyamaka tenets. This was an issue that found key Madhyamaka thinkers both in India and among Tibetan inheritors of the Indian Madhyamaka tradition fully engaged. In fact, the debate became so central to Tibetan discourse on Madhyamaka thought that by the late twelfth century, Tibetan philosophers and doxographers were retroactively dividing Indian Madhyamaka thinkers into subschools and nominally designating them in part on the basis of the form of logical reasoning they each employed.

The crux of the debate emerged out of Buddhapalita's commentary because in his explanation of Nagarjuna's text, he relied exclusively on the use of *prasanga* (consequentialist arguments) that demonstrated the absurdity of the opponent's views without necessitating commitment to a counterposition. The controversy arose when Bhavaviveka (c. 500–c. 570), a major Madhyamaka thinker in India at the time, came forth with sharp criticism of Buddhapalita's method. He argued that Madhyamikas need to do more than simply criticize the views of their opponents; they need to establish a Madhyamaka position as well. To do this, Bhavaviveka argued that Madhyamikas must use a form of logical

argumentation known as *svatantranuma* (autonomous inference), something Buddhapalita failed to do.

The debate does not end here, however. Chandrakirti (c. 600–650), a figure whom Tibetans traditionally regard as a reincarnation of Buddhapalita, came to Buddhapalita's defense. He argued that Buddhapalita was absolutely correct in the method he utilized and that Bhavaviveka's insistence on the use of autonomous inference was flawed. The reason, according to Chandrakirti, is that proper use of autonomous inference requires both the proponent and opponent of the argument to accept the inherent existence of the subject of the debate. This is a position Chandrakirti considered to be fundamentally incompatible with the Madhyamaka view, since its central tenet is that all phenomena are empty of any inherent, unchanging nature, or essence. Most major Tibetan Madhyamikas, such as Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), have claimed to be followers of Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti, and this debate remains a central topic in the various Tibetan curricula on Madhyamaka thought today.

—James Blumenthal

See also: Chandrakirti; Nagarjuna; Reincarnation; Scholars as Holy People; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa

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Buddhism and Holy People

Buddhism encompasses many different types of holy people, beginning with the historical Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) in the fifth century B.C.E. A review of this rich religious background follows the major divisions of Buddhism into the Theravada and Mahayana traditions. These are spread across a wide geographical area, including Tibet, China, and Japan, each having its own take on holiness and enlightenment.

Within the context of the formative Buddhist tradition, the figure of the Buddha is the primary paradigm of the holy person. The historical Buddha discovered the path to liberation by means of his own efforts, and he invited others to follow his discovered path to freedom and verify the truth of his teaching for themselves. The term *buddha*, “awakened one,” possesses important implications for the rest of humanity because it implies that most people are spiritually asleep. But built into this notion is the conviction that becoming a buddha does not just occur in a single lifetime. Rather, it takes many rebirths and lives of virtuous conduct to reach the point of buddhahood. It also involves the renunciation of the world in order to be able to focus one's energy

on achieving liberation. Overall, becoming a buddha is a unique experience. Being a buddha is not simply about having an experience, however, but about sharing what one has learned with others, as the historical Buddha did.

The path that leads to buddhahood involves wisdom, moral and ethical behavior, and meditation. The Buddha summarizes these in the eight steps of the Noble Eightfold Path: (1) right understanding, (2) right thought, (3) right speech, (4) right behavior, (5) right livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness, and (8) right concentration. The initial two steps represent wisdom because they embody the Four Noble Truths that all life is suffering, the cause of suffering, its extinction, and the path to achieve that extinction. Steps three through five are concerned with moral and ethical action, whereas the final three steps focus on meditation.

Besides the path to liberation, the formative tradition makes a distinction between levels of attainment. The first level is that of the “stream-enterer,” which implies someone who enters the path to liberation and gains progressive insight into the Four Noble Truths, abandons belief in the self, does not believe in the efficacy of rituals, and possesses no doubts about the three jewels, that is, Buddha, *dhamma* (teaching), and *sangha* (monastic order). This type of person is assured of no bad rebirths. The second level of attainment is the “once-returned,” who overcomes the impurities associated with the outflows, or cankers (for example, sense-pleasure, desire for becoming, false views, and ignorance) and is assured nirvana (release) within one more lifetime. The third level of attainment is the “non-returned,” who progresses further and is assured of attaining enlightenment during his or her current lifetime. The final level of attainment is the *arahant* (Sanskrit: *arhat*; worthy one), the fully enlightened being. The arahant overcomes the five remaining fetters (desire for life in the realm of form, desire for life in the formless realm, pride, restlessness, and ignorance).

As the genuine awakened figure in the Pali tradition, the arahant possesses a dual nature because he/she is fully a human being and yet distinct from other people. From one perspective, this awakened being transcends the ordinary human mode of existence by reaching a higher level of perfection, but this transcendence does not mean that he/she can act immorally and unethically. Because the awakened one destroys the roots of immoral action, his/her actions are morally wholesome. Being fully endowed with the four Buddhist virtues (loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity), the arahant is incapable of committing a violent act. The fully awakened individual's moral and ethical actions arise completely spontaneously because he/she lacks negative traits that could resist them. Due to his/her liberation from the cycle of cause and effect, the arahant's actions no longer possess positive or negative karmic results. The arahant is not merely a holy person to imitate and ven-



A giant statue of Guatama, the historic Buddha, in Japan. (Corel Corp)

erate; he/she can also be useful as a field of merit—that is, the arahant’s merit may be transferred to another individual. Venerating an arahant involves both meditation and merit making.

In addition to the arahant, the Pali tradition recognizes the *pratyekabuddha* (the self-enlightened one), a solitary figure living in remote regions meditating alone. Unlike the historical Buddha, who provided a model of selfless teaching, the *pratyekabuddha* does not teach. One literary tradition claims that this type of figure is born at a time when no buddha exists in the world. Generally speaking, someone who attains enlightenment during a buddha period becomes an arahant, but one who attains enlightenment during a non-buddha period becomes a *pratyekabuddha*.

The early holy people of the Buddhist tradition, like the yogis and ascetics of the Hindu tradition, are associated with various types of miraculous powers. In Buddhist literature, for example, various holy figures demonstrate the ability to fly, to know their former births, to see the births and deaths of other beings, to know the minds of others, to become invisible, to walk on water, to travel to distant places, to heal various forms of illness, and to hear sounds in the heavens or on earth with a divine ear. Even though the Buddha is credited with many types of powers, he is depicted as very reluctant to display them. In fact, there is a monastic regulation against displaying one’s powers to ordinary people or claiming to have powers that one does not in fact possess. The Mahayana Sanskrit tradition is more liberal than the Pali tradition in its attitude toward the display of power. It is common in the Pali tradition for a layperson to make a gift, for instance, to a monk and then witness his powers, but the display of power does not precede the gift giving and is not thought to facilitate the gift giver’s salvation. Rather, the mere sight of a monk generates devotion. The display of power in the Mahayana tradition tends to precede the act of

giving; it is understood as a way to arouse the faith of a potential donor and as capable of transforming the donor.

The primary paradigm of the holy person in Mahayana Buddhism is the *bodhisattva*, “enlightened being.” This figure is distinct from both the arahant and the *pratyekabuddha*. In Mahayana, the self-enlightened, nonteaching *pratyekabuddha* is considered selfish and narrow-minded. The arahant may teach, but he/she is not really thinking of others either, but primarily working for his/her own liberation. Like the *pratyekabuddha*, the arahant is viewed as selfish, egotistical, cloistered, placid, and inert. In contrast to both of these, the *bodhisattva* works for his/her own liberation and that of others, striving to help others gain happiness and welfare in the world. When working for his/her own salvation, the *bodhisattva* goes to the brink of nirvana but refuses to enter full liberation because he/she is committed to helping others attain the same goal. Thus, the *bodhisattva* finds him/herself in a dilemma: indicating the path to liberation, but also remaining in the world to assist. From one perspective, the *bodhisattva*’s basic orientation is both within the world and beyond it.

The theoretical background for the notion of the *bodhisattva* is the Mahayana philosophical conviction that all beings are tied together and interrelated as part of one reality, which is defined as emptiness, consciousness-only, no-mind, or buddha-nature, depending on the school. Because humans are joined together and interrelated, it is essential for them to help each other. This fundamental philosophical background also forms the context for the basic four vows of the *bodhisattva*: (1) to save all beings, (2) to destroy all evil passions, (3) to learn the truth and teach it to others, and (4) to lead all beings toward buddhahood and liberation.

After taking these vows, the *bodhisattva* sets out to develop several perfections, which are conceived in a hierarchical order in the sense that one must be cultivated before preceding to the next one. Originally, the tradition specified six perfections, with the final and most important one being the perfection of wisdom. Subsequent Mahayana historical development added four more perfections.

The initial perfection is giving, an ancient Indian cultural virtue. An aspiring *bodhisattva* can give materially, educationally, through scholarly work, or by showing sympathetic joy toward others. Giving can even involve an act of self-sacrifice to save another person. Whatever form giving assumes, it must be performed in a selfless and disinterested manner. This method of giving leads inexorably to the generation and accumulation of merit, which results automatically from righteous action. This type of result is important because excess merit can be utilized by the *bodhisattva* and transferred to another person for his/her benefit.

The next four perfections are morality, forbearance and endurance, energy, and meditation. The perfection of forbearance and endurance is the exact opposite of hatred,

repugnance, anger, and malice. To develop it, one must become free from anger and excitement and learn to endure and pardon injuries and insults committed by benighted people, practicing patient endurance in the face of pain and hardship. The bodhisattva does not retaliate against harm inflicted by others, instead absorbing pain and suffering in quiet solitude. The perfection of energy, or vigor, reflects a more proactive aspect of the path of the bodhisattva. To be energetic means to avoid succumbing to physical and mental weakness, weariness, or simple disappointment.

The sixth perfection is that of wisdom (*prajnaparamita*), which is a major Mahayana virtue. It is equivalent to the attainment of nirvana. Attaining this perfection means having a direct insight into reality, or seeing things as they really are. This mental event is a state of consciousness that involves analysis and investigation of things. It is also described as a meditative absorption that is directly connected to the results of analysis. Thus the wisdom perfected is a nonconceptual experience because it is impossible to conceptualize emptiness. Moreover, the content of the experience (that is, emptiness) is nondualistic.

The perfections that are products of later historical addition are skillful means, vow of resolution, power (or strength), and knowledge. Skillful means refers to using various methods of teaching according to the ability and need of others. The vow of resolution involves making a vow to help others achieve salvation, and power refers to strengthening virtues such as wisdom and patience. Knowledge is different from wisdom because it involves intellectual ability rather than intuitive insight.

These ten perfections represent a path that parallels the ten stages (*bhumis*) of the way of the bodhisattva. The initial stage is “the joyful,” which a person enters after the thought of enlightenment dawns, and it involves practicing charity and self-sacrifice. “The pure” and “the luminous” are the second and third stages. The pure stage suggests becoming free from the pollution of evil conduct, whereas in the luminous stage thoughts are pure, constant, unworldly, dispassionate, and resolute. The fourth through the sixth stages are, respectively, “the radiant,” “the difficult to conquer,” and “the face-to-face.” In part, the fourth stage reflects perfecting knowledge and faith, the fifth means regarding all principles of buddhahood with pure thought and equanimity, and the sixth marks an understanding of the ten aspects of the equality and sameness of all things. “The far-going” and “the immovable” are the names of the seventh and eighth stages. These signify that the bodhisattva acquires great wisdom in determining how to help others, cultivates skillful means, and progresses to an irreversible point. By the eighth stage, the bodhisattva is beyond the law of causation and false concepts. The ninth stage is marked by insight, that is, knowl-

edge of the hearts and minds of others, and “the cloud of doctrine,” the tenth stage, represents the experience of trance states and the perfection of knowledge. According to some accounts, the bodhisattva acquires at this time a glorious body, which emits rays that destroy the pain and misery of others, and can perform various types of miracles.

The notion of the bodhisattva was developed in a new way in Tibet around the thirteenth century. Originally, the bodhisattva was a person who vowed to save all beings, but he/she died before this was accomplished, and thus his/her mission was incomplete. But in the theory developed by the Tibetans, the bodhisattva could not die as long as his/her work remained incomplete. If the bodhisattva did die and leave unfinished work, he/she would be reincarnated in a new body in order to continue his/her mission. This incarnation was called a *lama*; the most famous lineage is that of the dalai lama. The term *dalai* means “great ocean”; *lama* was equivalent to guru or teacher in India. The term *la* has a pre-Buddhist Tibetan meaning of “soul,” and it also means “high.” The term *ma* was connected to the sun and signified a protector or mother.

Tibetan Buddhists believe that when a dalai lama dies, he returns to a heavenly field but will reincarnate to continue his mission on earth in a new human body. The task of Tibetan Buddhist sect leaders was to determine the identity of this lama with each new incarnation. Gathering a party to look for signs of the new incarnation, they would then test possible candidates, enthrone the chosen infant, supervise his education, and help to run the country until the child was mature enough to assume the mantle of leadership. In addition to the dalai lama, Tibetan Buddhism accepts the notion of other incarnate lamas (teachers, spiritual guides) who are enlightened beings. Because a lama is free from the cycle of time and rebirth, his/her rebirth is a completely voluntary act of compassion. A lama is believed to be able to control rebirth fully and to choose his parents, type of body, mental ability, place, and time of birth in advance. A particular lama represents both a Buddha emanation and a reincarnation of the preceding lama. Such a reincarnated lama was also called a *tulkus* (emanated body). After the death of a lama, a search is instituted to discover the new incarnation. The institution of the incarnate lama provided Tibetan Buddhism with a method by which the religious authority and charisma of a holy person could be passed to future generations.

The notion of the lama was preceded in Tibetan Buddhist history by the figure of the *siddhas* (perfected ones), who date to the early decades of the eighth century. The *siddhas* derived from Hindu Shaiva movements such as the Kapalikas and the Pasupatas. By practicing yoga, the *siddhas* were said to gain powers that they could use to provide services to kings. Their services included prophecy, spirit possession, demonic control, love potions, generation of wealth, and var-

ious types of unethical practices. Their secret language and literature used sexual and erotic imagery to convey its destabilizing message and tantric influence.

Chan/Zen Buddhism in China and Japan went in a different direction, developing the notion of the patriarch as a holy person. The patriarch, or Zen master, was highly revered. Beginning with the legendary Bodhidharma and including figures such as Linji (d. 866/867), Zhaozhou (c. 778–897), Mazu (709–788), Baizhang (720–814), and numerous others, many of these memorable and colorful figures devised new teaching methods that were sometimes harsh and violent, using, for example, shouts and beatings to achieve their goal. In a famous example, the master Nanquan (748–835) seized a cat that two monks were arguing over and challenged the monks to say the right word to save the life of the cat, hoping in this way to shock them into enlightenment. When no one answered, he ruthlessly cut the cat in half. When the monk Zhaozhou returned in the evening, the master told him about the incident. Without saying a word, Zhaozhou removed his sandals from his feet, placed them on his head, and walked out of the room. In response, Nanquan acknowledged that Zhaozhou would have saved the cat if he had been present.

In Japan, the teacher is called the *roshi* (master). The roshi gives the aspirant for enlightenment a *koan* (a puzzle phrase) on which to concentrate. He functions much like a midwife by helping the aspiring monk to give birth to his buddha-nature, which is actually already present. In other words, he allows the student to awaken. From another perspective, the roshi is like a mother hen: The crucial turning point in the relationship occurs when the roshi pecks on the shell of the egg from the outside, and the monk pecks like a baby chick on the shell of the egg from the inside. When both parties perform their picking precisely in perfect accord, the baby chick (that is, an enlightened monk) will hatch.

—Carl Olson

See also: Action in the World; Aesthetics and Holy People; Apotheosis; Ascetics as Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Authority of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Bodhisattva; Buddha; Child Prodigies; Compassion and Holy People; Death; Demons and Monsters; Disciples; Gautama; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hagiography; Hereditary Holiness; Hermits; Insanity; Laity; Lamas; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Meditation and Holy People; Miracles; Mission; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Nature; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Priests; Purity and Pollution; Recognition; Reform and Reaction; Reincarnation; Repentance and Holy People; Ritual; Rulers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Shinto and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Suffering and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Bullhe Shah

(1680–1752 C.E.)

Muslim sufi poet

Bullhe Shah is viewed as one of the greatest Panjabi sufi poets of the Indian subcontinent. He lived near the vibrant Mughal city of Lahore and, like many of his sufi contemporaries, was able to transcend to an inner world of tranquillity through poetry and music when the outer world knew only political unrest. His deep yearning for a peaceful world within which humanity would coexist and work toward eliminating suffering and poverty earned him the affectionate name of "the Rumi of Punjab."

Distinct in Bullhe Shah's mystical poetry is the longing for annihilation in the divine. Bullhe Shah's poetry centers on mystical feelings of endless yearning of the soul to be relieved of the pain of loss, and the longing to be blessed by God's encounter. Like many of his sufi colleagues—including Shah Waliullah (d. 1762), Khawaja Mir Dard (1721–1785), and Shah Abdul Latif (1689–1752)—Bullhe Shah was an adamant defender of the unity of being, seeing the presence of the divine in each and every thing manifested on earth. He believed that the primary weakness of humanity was not a lack of understanding of the self in relation to the divine; rather, it was not feeling God's disclosure in every moment and in every place. According to Bullhe Shah, a person's shortcomings are due to being consumed with one's desires and immediate needs. Since many of these desires alter with emotions and external circumstances, he focused not on eliminating them but on building upon what we already know. His poetry highlights the benefits of remembrance of the divine, the prophets, and the saints. These repetitive symbols are used over and over in order to show the advantages of real remembrance.

Bullhe Shah's poetry is not about mystical theories of practice or theology, however. Instead, it is closely linked with folktales and was used by peasants and the lower classes in dance and song. His work expresses the tension between not having material things and wanting to fulfill material desires, a tension that can be satisfied by acknowledging all the blessings

one has at every moment. It conveys Bullhe Shah's feelings of all-embracing unity with awesome audacity, where the sufi seeker does not belong to any one ethnic group, tribe, or nationality—essentially, every individual is a manifestation of one divine reality.

—*Qamar-ul Huda*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Latif, Shah Abdul; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Burujirdi, Ayatullah

(1875–1962 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim leader

Ayatullah Husayn Tabataba'i Burujirdi was the religious leader of Twelver Shi'i Islam from 1947 until his death in 1962. He is remembered principally for his political quietism and for building up Qumm as a center for Shi'i scholarship in Iran such that it overtook Najaf during his leadership.

Burujirdi was born in Burujird in western Iran in 1875 to a family of clerics who traced their ancestry back to the prophet Muhammad and his grandson Hasan b. 'Ali (624/625–669). Having completed his initial studies in Isfahan, Burujirdi went to Najaf in about 1901, where he studied under the leading religious scholars of his time. Having completed his education, he returned to his hometown, where he remained for the next thirty-five years, gradually building a widespread reputation as a scholar.

In 1944, Burujirdi accepted an invitation to move to Qumm and take up leadership of the religious establishment there. In 1922, Ayatullah Ha'iri-Yazdi had settled in Qumm and revived it as a center for religious scholarship. But this revival was in danger of petering out with the Ha'iri-Yazdi's death in 1937. A little more than two years after Burujirdi's move to Qumm, Ayatullah Sayyid Husayn Qummi died in Najaf in 1947; shortly thereafter, Burujirdi emerged as the chief *marja' al-taqlid*, an expert on Islamic law worthy of emulation, in the Shi'i world. For the next twenty-five years, Burujirdi concentrated on strengthening the teaching establishment at Qumm. The number of students increased from 2,500 in 1944 to 6,000 by the time of Burujirdi's death, and Qumm replaced Najaf as the leading center for Shi'i scholarship. Burujirdi also systematized the collection of religious taxes, thus assuring the revenue needed for the expansion of Qumm.

Burujirdi was scrupulous in avoiding involvement in political affairs, except where the interests of the clerical class or Islam were directly involved. He forced, for example, the withdrawal of a parliamentary bill for the enfranchisement of women in 1952, gave support to the anti-Baha'i campaign that had been launched by a minor cleric in 1955, and opposed land reform in 1960. He kept a tight rein on those junior clerics, such as Khomeini, who wanted to stir up opposition to the shah of Iran. Burujirdi also promoted a reconciliation between Sunni and Shi'i Islam.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Politics and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Buton Rinchenrup

(1290–1364 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar, translator

Buton Rinchenrup (bu ston rin chen grub) was born to Gyaltzen Pelzangpo (rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po) and Sonam Bum (bsod nam 'bum) in 1290 in Tibet. During her pregnancy, Sonam Bum experienced a number of auspicious dreams, and Buton was considered to be a reincarnation of the Kashmiri saint Sakyasribhadra (1140–1225). His initial ordination at age seven was officiated by Tropu Lotsawa Jampapel (khro phu lo tsa ba byams pa dpal). Tropu Lotsawa had been a close associate of Sakyasri's, responsible for his invitation to Tibet. Buton received the second level of ordination in 1307 and full ordination in 1312.

Buton is one of the most important figures in Tibetan intellectual history. He studied Buddhism with many eminent teachers, learned Sanskrit, and was abbot of Zhalu from 1320 until his retirement in 1356. A prolific scholar, he wrote on many subjects and translated a number of Sanskrit treatises into Tibetan. In particular, he is known for his interest and promotion of the Kalacakra and Guhyasamaja tantras. In contrast to Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen (dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan) (1292–1361), Buton held that budha-nature (*de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po*) is a provisional teaching and does not truly exist. He contributed significantly to editorial work on the canonical materials (*bka' gyur* and *bstan gyur*) collected at Narthang Monastery (snar thang) by Upa Losel (dbus pa blo gsal), acquiring copies, editing them, removing duplicated material, and adding a thousand titles. Buton wrote a catalog to this col-

lection that is an important source on the history of the Buddhist canon in Tibet. He also authored one of Tibet's most famous works of history, *chos-hbyung* (The history of Buddhism in Tibet).

Though primarily a scholar, Buton did become involved in the politics of his day. His clairvoyance, however, enabled him to avoid an invitation to the Yuan court. At the age of sixty-two, he mediated a dispute between the heads of the Yazang (g.ya' bzang) and Pagmodru (phag mo gru) schools. He is credited with a number of miracles and supernatural powers, including enabling a dumb man to speak, seeing the future, and reading minds.

Buton's health rapidly deteriorated in 1364, accompanied by the ominous omen of a lunar eclipse, and he died, surrounded by his disciples, in the same year. A propitious

earthquake and a canopy of rainbows accompanied his funeral rites.

—Nathan S. Y. Hill

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Miracles; Scholars as Holy People

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C

Cabrini, Frances

(1850–1917 C.E.)

Roman Catholic abbess, educator, founder

Maria Francesca Cabrini, the first U.S. citizen to be canonized as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church, was born on July 15, 1850, in Sant'Angelo Lodigiano, Italy, to Agostino and Stella Cabrini. Raised in a devout Roman Catholic family, from childhood she desired to be a missionary. She attended a teacher training school run by the Daughters of the Sacred Heart in Arluno, and in 1874 she was asked by Bishop Gelmini of Lodi to help run an orphanage mismanaged by the Sisters of Providence in Codogno. Cabrini joined this order, but despite her efforts, the orphanage had to be closed and the order disbanded. She then started the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, which was officially founded on November 14, 1880. In March 1889, however, she and six missionary sisters left Italy for New York, following the advice of bishops and Pope Leo XIII, to answer the request of Archbishop Michael Corrigan that she help the Italian immigrants in his city. Over the next twenty-eight years, Cabrini founded or was asked to run numerous schools, orphanages, or hospitals in various cities, including New York, Newark, Scranton, Philadelphia, Chicago, New Orleans, Denver, Los Angeles, and Seattle, as well as in Argentina, Brazil, and England. She became an American citizen in Seattle on October 9, 1909, and died in Chicago on December 22, 1917.

During her schooling, Cabrini learned a devotion for the Sacred Heart of Jesus that infused her work. She required her sisters to respect their students, forbidding the common practice of corporal punishment. She sought to bring people to love Jesus through the teachings of the Catholic Church, and much of her education of immigrants focused on teaching them proper Catholic doctrine, which many of them had never learned. Her fervent desire to help needy Italians and her strong resolve allowed her to persevere in the face of

hardships, including objections to the term “missionary” being applied to an order of nuns; racism against Italians; opposition from male religious orders; and the sisters being reduced to begging to support themselves and their endeavors. Her reputation elicited more requests for her to create establishments than she could meet.

Frances Xavier Cabrini was beatified on November 13, 1938, and canonized on July 7, 1946. In 1950, Pope Pius XII declared her the patron saint of immigrants, and in 1952 the American Committee on Italian Migration named her the Italian Immigrant of the Century. Her feast day is December 22, but it is celebrated on November 13 in America.

—Elizabeth Brownell

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mission; Wealth and Poverty

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Caesarius of Arles

(c. 470–542 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop

As an officeholder in the Christian church, Caesarius’s holiness was perceived through his great authority, wisdom, and power in a time of political and religious unrest. He became a monk at Lérins in Gaul in 489 and was quickly embraced by Eonus, bishop of Arles, who ordained him as priest and appointed him abbot. He presided over the monastery for



Frances Cabrini, the Catholic saint of immigrants. (Dictionary of American Portraits, edited by Hayward Circer, 1967)

three years, reforming it and compiling a rule that was an important predecessor of the Rule of St. Benedict. He also founded a nunnery in Arles (run by his sister St. Caesaria), for which he compiled a second rule focusing upon the importance of the cloistered life. When Eonus died, Caesarius was immediately chosen as his successor.

During the sixth century following the end of the Roman Empire in the West, Gaul was a region of disruption and profound change. As a devoted bishop and pastor, Caesarius did much to confirm papal authority not only in his own province, but also throughout the rest of Gaul. He was praised for his remarkable preaching, teaching, and scholarship, as well as for his role as a pastor. He regulated the liturgy and ordered it to be celebrated on a daily basis rather than simply on Sundays and feast days. He also insisted that participants in the liturgy should raise their minds and hearts to God.

Caesarius utilized his office to initiate a number of important councils. As archbishop of Arles he presided over the Council of Orange in 529, which asserted that those who denied God's inspiration to the first acts of faith and love should be condemned. He also published the famous adaptation of Roman law known as the *Breviarium Alarici*, which eventually became the civil code of Gaul.

Under the Visigoth king, Alaric II, Caesarius was accused of treason and exiled to Bordeaux without trial. He was released, but later he was recaptured by Theodoric, king of Italy, who seized Languedoc. When the king saw Caesarius, however, he recognized his sanctity and gave him 300 pieces of gold, much of which he used to liberate captives. For this act he received the papal *pallium* giving him archiepiscopal status. When the Franks took Arles in 536, Caesarius retired to the nunnery he had founded until his death in 542. He left an endowment for its upkeep in his will.

Caesarius's biographers record lifetime and posthumous miracles, including cures, the extinguishing of fires, and the extermination of devils and wicked spirits.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio)

(1469–1534 C.E.)

Roman Catholic friar, cardinal, philosopher, theologian

Cajetan, a Thomistic philosopher and theologian, the counselor of four popes, a master general of the Dominican order, and a cardinal, was an important figure in the history of Christianity, both for his academic contributions to philosophy and theology and for the role he played in central ecclesiastical affairs of his time.

As an academic, Cajetan was influential in the resurgence of the thought of Thomas Aquinas in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. As a diplomat of the Holy See, he is best known for being the first official church representative sent to Augsburg in 1518 to attempt a reconciliation with Martin Luther prior to the latter's formal break with the church of Rome. He served also as a key defender of the authority of the papacy over that of councils in the often-heated debates of conciliarism. At the request of Pope Clement VII, he investigated and then defended in a treatise the validity of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, thus making himself an important individual in the early history of the Anglican Church. As an adviser to Pope Julius II, he helped oppose the renegade cardinals of the Pseudo-Council of Pisa of 1511.

Although Cajetan was baptized with the name James de Vio after his birth in Gaeta, Italy, in 1469, at the age of sixteen he entered the Dominican order and took the name Thomas, though he is regularly referred to by his city of birth (Caieta, in Latin). By the age of twenty-five, he was a master of sacred theology at the University of Padua. In his academic career he produced more than 150 works, including commentaries on Aristotle, Aquinas, and scripture, small moral treatises, and letters. His polemical works include treatises against Lutheran teachings, refutations of views of the soul held by the Averroists, and defenses of the teachings of Thomas Aquinas against attacks by Scotists. His most influential works include an important treatise on analogy and his massive commentary on the *Summa Theologiae* of Aquinas. At the age of forty, he was appointed master general of the Dominican order, and by 1517 he was installed as a cardinal. He is said to have played a prominent role in the conclave of 1522 that elected Pope Hadrian VI.

During the sack of Rome in 1527, Cajetan was captured and ransomed for 5,000 ducats. When he fell ill and died in 1534, his burial request was honored and he was buried at the entrance of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome. For his legendary erudition and his role in important political and ecclesiastical events, Cajetan is regarded as one of the foremost scholars of his day as well as an important public figure.

—M. V. Dougherty

Caitanya

See Chaitanya, Krishna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Luther, Martin; Scholars as Holy People; Thomas Aquinas; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Calchas

Ancient Greek seer

Calchas was a type of seer in the Greek epic tradition, not blind and mysterious like Tiresias, but trained in the profession of explaining what omens mean, a family trade. His father and brother were seers, too, and his sister was a priestess of Apollo, god of prophecy. To calm the Greek assembly, the wise Nestor remembers how Calchas interpreted the omen of a snake who ate eight fledgling birds as well as the mother: Nine years to fight at Troy, and the city would fall in the tenth.

In the *Iliad* by Homer, Calchas stands forth as the power of religion against the secular power when he explains that Agamemnon must surrender his woman to relieve a plague. With greater infamy, Calchas had instructed Agamemnon to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia so that fair winds would blow. About this incident, the Roman atheist Epicurean poet Lucretius declared, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*: "Of such evil was religion capable" (Lucretius, *De rerum natura* 1.101).

Calchas thus became the type of the false prophet. In one play, Achilles declares with contempt: "Calchas the seer shall be sorry about beginning the sacrifice with barley-meal and sacred water. What is a seer? A man who gets lucky with the truth sometimes, with plenty of lies, and when he loses his luck, he goes down fast" (Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 955).

Calchas was undone by his own art when Mopsus, another Greek seer, outdivined him and Calchas fell dead.

—Barry B. Powell

See also: Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Mopsus; Prophets; Tiresias

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Caleb

(d. before 549 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Caleb, or Kaleb Ella Asbeha (in Greek sources Ellasbaan or Ellasbaas, with variants), was one of the most powerful

kings of the northeast African state of Aksum in the sixth century. He succeeded his father, King Tazena, and by the beginning of his reign Christianity had been the official religion of Aksum for about 150 years. Aksum reached the apex of its political and economic power during his reign. Besides expanding within Africa, Aksum increased its influence in Himyar in southern Arabia. This occurred in the context of the long war between the Byzantine Empire and Persia.

In the early sixth century, Aksum sent an expedition to Himyar, responding to the plea of the local Christians for protection, and established a garrison in Zafar, its capital. However, in 517/518 (or 522/523), Yusuf As'ar Yat'ar (Dhunuwas), a Himyarite king who embraced Judaism, arose against both the Aksumite presence and Christianity. The garrison of Zafar was massacred, and the Aksumite fortresses in Himyar were destroyed. Christians were persecuted everywhere, and in Nagran many of them were executed, together with their chief, Aretha. These events caused great agitation in the Christian world. Caleb took over the role of protector of south Arabian Christians, and the confrontation rose to the status of a religious war.

In his intention to reconquer southern Arabia, Caleb was supported by Justinian I of Byzantium, and this alliance put Aksum in the center of big politics for a while. In around 525, Caleb launched a large-scale campaign. Yusuf As'ar Yat'ar was killed, and Christianity and Aksumite influence in Himyar were protected. The region was put under the jurisdiction of the Alexandrian patriarchate, and a Christian tribal leader, Sumyafa' Ashwa', was installed as vassal king, but this king was soon overthrown by Caleb's rebellious general Abraha, who put an end to the effective Aksumite control over Yemen.

Caleb died sometime before 549, but Christian traditions in both the East and the West honor him as a great protector. His deeds are known from the *Martyrium of Aretha* (existing in Syriac, Greek, Arabic, Ethiopic, Georgian, and Armenian versions) and a number of other sources. He is venerated as a saint in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church (commemorated on Genbot 20—May 28), and also in the Roman Catholic Church (as St. Elesbaan, on October 27) and the Greek Orthodox Church. In the Ethiopian tradition, the remembrance of the unique joint action of the Ethiopians and Byzantium was preserved in the *Kebra Nagast* (Glory of the kings), an ancient text that formed the ideological foundation of the Ethiopian monarchy, which contains an eschatological prophecy about a pious Ethiopian and "Roman" king who would reign over the entire world.

The figure of Caleb contributed to the notion of the ideal Christian monarch. His military campaign is praised as a pious and heroic act in which he was assisted by other key Ethiopian saints (Pantalewon, Za-Mikael Aragawi). It is also related that, sometime after his campaigns, Caleb abdicated

the throne and spent the rest of his life in the hermitage of St. Pantalewon. One of the ancient monuments in the vicinity of Aksum is believed to be a tomb where he and his son Gabra Maskal are buried.

—*Denis Nossnitsin*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Calvin, John (Jean Cauvin)

(1509–1564 C.E.)

Protestant theologian, founder

A French humanist and prominent Protestant theologian, John Calvin successfully established a reformed theocracy in the Swiss city of Geneva during the sixteenth century. An extremely prolific writer, he had a profound influence on Protestant thinking on key subjects such as predestination and the nature of salvation.

Calvin was born in Noyon, Picardy, in northern France in 1509. His mother, known for her piety, died when Calvin was young; his father, Gérard Cauvin, held various notarial positions serving the local bishop and cathedral chapter. The young Calvin had a reputation for brilliance. In 1523, as Lutheran ideas were permeating French intellectual circles, he enrolled as a theology student in the Collège de la Marche at the University of Paris. He studied under the noted humanist Mathurin Cordier, who became a lifelong friend. But Calvin soon transferred to the austere Collège de Montaigu, where he was taught by Noël Beda, syndic of the Sorbonne and famed champion of Catholic orthodoxy. In 1528, Calvin received his master's degree in theology. Meanwhile, reacting to a quarrel with the Noyon cathedral canons, Gérard Cauvin had reconsidered his son's career: Calvin was to abandon theology and take up law. Though unenthusiastic, Calvin obeyed this paternal direction and studied law at Orléans and Bourges.

His father's death in May 1531 liberated Calvin from a legal career. Although he received his doctorate in law by January 1532, he soon returned to Paris to pursue his humanistic interests. He learned Greek and Hebrew, publishing

a commentary on Seneca. Increasingly disenchanted with conservative Catholic theology, Calvin experienced a “sudden conversion” to Protestantism, although he subsequently revealed little about the event that transformed his life. The exact date of his conversion is thus impossible to establish, but it probably occurred between August 1533 and May 1534.

Calvin's conversion roughly coincided with a crackdown on Protestantism by the French government, which until then had maintained a relatively lenient policy toward religious reform. Calvin was sufficiently identified with the reformers that he had to flee Paris in 1533; for the next three years, he led an itinerant life in France, Switzerland, and Italy. In 1536, the French reformer Guillaume Farel persuaded a reluctant Calvin to help him reform Geneva, where a sizable contingent of French Protestant exiles had gathered. The Genevans initially resisted the austere reforms prescribed by Farel and Calvin, expelling them from the city in 1538. Calvin went to Strasbourg, where he remained for three years, preaching and writing reformed theology. In 1541, however, he was invited back to Geneva. He remained there until his death, working with considerable success to turn that city into a model theocratic city-state.

Calvin's sermons, correspondence, and scriptural commentaries alone would have earned him a prominent place among reformed authors. His magnum opus was the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (originally published in 1536), which he revised and expanded several times throughout his life. Although initially written in Latin, a French edition soon appeared (1541) and was instrumental in spreading Calvinism in France. The *Institutes* quickly became the single most influential work by any Protestant reformer. It gave Calvinism a decided advantage, since no other Protestant sect had a comparably authoritative work to define religious doctrine and practice.

A fundamental premise of Calvinism was that from the beginning of time, God had decreed everything that was to happen until the end of the world. All human beings were predestined by God for salvation or damnation. Only a few elect were to be saved; the vast majority of people were reprobates, doomed to eternal hellfire. Although no one was worthy of salvation based on personal merit, God freely chose to save certain individuals to demonstrate the extent of his power. Calvin believed that Christian society has a duty to shape itself in a way that would be pleasing to God; all people, whether destined to be saved or not, had an obligation to lead lives worthy of the elect, or the “invisible saints.” Calvinism thus emphasized the notion of the godly community rather than individual sanctity. The foremost expression of this godly community was the visible church, where perfection was sought in the invisible “communion of saints.” The importance of the visible church to Calvin can be

seen in his repeated excommunications of Nicodemites in his native France, who veiled their reformed sympathies under a pose of Catholic orthodoxy. Threats to the godly community were to be summarily quashed. The burning of the anti-Trinitarian Michael Servetus as a heretic in 1553 exemplified Calvin's determination to protect the Genevan faithful.

Calvin's theology emphasized the absolute authority of God and the powerlessness of humans, and his organization of church and society stressed the primacy of scripture and an austere style of worship that was stripped of the ritual and decoration of Catholic practice. His notion of the godly community, however, meant that approached as a proper vocation or calling, any human action could be sanctified. This conception of the holy marked a sharp break with previous Christian ideas and doctrines.

—*Alisa Plant*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction; Ritual; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Canisius, Peter

(1521–1597 C.E.)

Roman Catholic theologian, doctor of the church

“Second Apostle to Germany,” Peter Canisius was a leading Roman Catholic theologian of the Catholic Reformation in the sixteenth century. The son of a prosperous townsman and burgomeister, he was born on May 8, 1521, in Nimwegen, the Netherlands. He studied at the University of Cologne and the University of Louvain, intending to become a canon lawyer; however, his passion for theology never left him, and in 1540, after having received a master's degree at the University of Cologne, Canisius took a vow of celibacy, much to the chagrin of his father. In 1543, while on retreat in Mainz, he became acquainted with Peter Faber, companion to and confidant of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Faber directed Canisius through the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, and in 1543, Canisius entered the Society of Jesus. He devoted himself to the poor, to preaching and religious instruction, and to the establishment in Cologne of the first Jesuit community in Germany. Ordained in 1546, he collaborated in Rome with Ignatius Loyola.

As the influence of the Protestant reformers seeped even into loyal Catholic strongholds, Canisius found himself summoned to various colleges and universities in Sicily, Bavaria, Austria, and Switzerland to defend Catholic doctrine. He became a close if contentious ally to Ferdinand I and his son, and later to Maximilian II of Austria, in their efforts to sustain the Roman Catholic faith in their state. Ignatius Loyola also took advantage of Canisius's talents by having him open Jesuit colleges in Prague and Ingolstadt, and appointed him as the first provincial general of Upper Germany in 1556.

Canisius also trekked across Europe, teaching children of the villages and towns, instructing students in universities and colleges, and delivering sermons in chapels and cathedrals. At a time when Protestantism was gaining ground rapidly, Canisius was committed to a defense of traditional Catholic liturgy and doctrine, including such contested topics as the efficacy of the sacraments, the necessity for acts of penance, and traditional scriptural exegesis. At the request of popes and Catholic princes, Canisius attended various ecclesiastical councils, such as the Council of Trent (1545–1563), the Diet of Augsburg (1555), and the Conference of Worms (1557), in various attempts both to codify Catholic teaching and practice and to articulate a program for religious unification.

Canisius's most important work was *Summa Doctrinae Christianae* (Handbook of Christian doctrine), the first definitive catechism of Roman Catholic doctrine. So popular did the catechism become that by the end of the century it had been translated into fifteen languages in more than 200 editions. Canisius was a prolific writer whose many theological writings provided the Roman Catholic Church with language and arguments that it would find helpful in its struggle against Protestantism. A staunch advocate for papal primacy, Marian devotion, and the fundamental role of prayer in religious life, Canisius was also the target of Protestant condemnation and assault, although several contemporary Protestant theologians grudgingly praised him for his virtuous life and the purity of his devotion.

By 1584, Peter Canisius had settled in the enclave of Fribourg, Switzerland, to build a college and devote himself to preaching to the Catholic population and writing texts of religious instruction. He suffered a stroke in 1591 and died in 1597. He was initially buried at the high altar in the church of St. Nicolas in Fribourg, but in 1625 the Jesuit community translated his remains to their church of St. Michael at the college. His tomb quickly became a locus for pilgrims, who declared miraculous happenings at the site or by invocations of his name. Peter Canisius was beatified on November 20, 1869. His feast day is December 21.

—*June-Ann Greeley*

See also: Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Luther, Martin; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People

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Canonization

Canonization is the procedure in the Roman Catholic Church whereby the pope declares a member of the faithful to have entered heaven and authorizes the public veneration of the new saint in the church's worship. The judgment is considered a part of the "ordinary papal magisterium" and is thus infallible, that is, free from theological error. As a consequence of this declaration, the name of the canonized is inscribed in the catalog of saints, the saint is invoked in the liturgies of the church, churches may be dedicated to God in the saint's memory, festival days are celebrated in the saint's memory, in iconography the saint's head may be surrounded by a halo, and the saint's remains are preserved in precious vessels (reliquaries) and honored. There are two basic kinds of canonized saints: martyrs and confessors. Martyrs were killed because of their Catholic faith, and confessors exercised Christian virtues to a "heroic degree."

The first papal canonization, recognized as such, was that of Ulrich of Augsburg by Pope John XV in 993. In the following centuries, bishops continued to authorize and regulate the veneration of saints within their own dioceses. Since the mid-sixteenth century, the pope has exercised the exclusive right to name saints. In 1588, an office was established, called the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints since 1969, to review petitions for canonization, which originate all over the world, and to make recommendations to the pope. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, this congregation reviewed thousands of medieval saints who had never been canonized but were venerated, approving most but also rejecting many as spurious. The procedure for canonization was most recently simplified in 1983 by the Apostolic Constitution "Divinus perfectionis Magister" (The divine teacher and model of perfection).

The process leading to canonization can be lengthy, difficult, and expensive. It starts with an individual or group, known as the "petitioner," who seeks the canonization of a deceased Catholic and, to this end, organizes financial and popular support. The first phase of the investigation involves various "inquiries" made at the local level. These local inquiries ordinarily may not begin until the candidate for can-

onization, called the "servant of God," is at least five years deceased. Supervision of the local inquiries is ordinarily the responsibility of the bishop of the place where the servant of God lived and worked. The petitioner appoints, with the approval of this bishop, a "postulator." The postulator conducts a thorough investigation into the servant of God's life, compiling all possible evidence of his or her sanctity. The postulator drafts a report (*relationes*) for the local bishop and is responsible for administering financial matters related to the petition. The postulator's report includes a thorough investigation of the candidate's life, a justification for his or her canonization (based on the heroic exercise of virtue or martyrdom), and a review of any miracles accredited to the servant of God.

On the basis of this report and in consultation with other bishops of the region, the local bishop may decide to "open the cause," that is, to support and participate in further investigations. The local bishop then compiles the "acts" (*acta*), a document that includes the postulator's report; evaluations of the evidence and justification for canonization by theological, historical, and canonical experts; and an evaluation by two theologians of the servant of God's writings. The bishop then entrusts these documents to a "promoter of justice," who is responsible for further testing their contents and interviewing any living witnesses. The Christian faithful with pertinent evidence are encouraged to give testimony to the promoter of justice, including when their evidence speaks against canonization. The bishop also sends a summary of the petition to the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints to ascertain whether there is any obstacle on the part of the Holy See to the cause. Factors such as the political or ecumenical climate at the time of the process—reasons extrinsic to the holiness of the candidate—may justify the postponement of a cause. If the bishop decides after this round of investigations that the case still has merit, a transcript (*transumptum*) of the entire case is drafted, including separate sections on the servant of God's life and on his or her miracles. The original is kept in the diocesan archives, and two notarized copies are sent to the congregation in Rome.

After reviewing the transcript, the Sacred Congregation may decide to continue investigating the cause itself. If so, the cardinal-prefect of the congregation entrusts the acts to a "relator," who tests the materials once again, relying on the advice of historical, theological, and medical experts. The cardinal-prefect also appoints a "promoter of the faith." The promoter of the faith was once charged with uncovering reasons not to canonize the saint and was popularly known as the "devil's advocate." Now, however, the promoter of the faith, also called the prelate-theologian, is responsible for further evaluating the religious significance and orthodoxy of the servant of God. The relator supervises the drafting of two reports bearing on the life (the heroic virtue or martyrdom) of

the servant of God and another on the miracles. These are called *positiones* and are submitted to the members of the congregation, who are cardinals and bishops. The congregation evaluates the *positiones* with the aid of expert advisers.

If the candidate's justification for canonization is based on virtue rather than martyrdom, a miracle must now be verified. A miracle, usually a healing of incurable illness, is verified if the medical advisers determine that there is no reasonable scientific explanation for the healing and if it is judged to inspire deeper faith in God. At this point, the Sacred Congregation may recommend to the pope that the candidate be "beatified." If the pope accepts this recommendation, there is a decree to that effect. Catholics are allowed to venerate publicly a beatified person, called a "blessed." Before a blessed may be canonized as a saint, there must be another verified miracle, or, in the case of a martyr, a first miracle. The congregation then makes a final recommendation to the pope, who alone decides whether to canonize the blessed. The ceremony of canonization is an elaborate and festive ceremony, generally held in Rome. Once canonization is complete, veneration of the saint is permitted and encouraged among all Catholics.

—David J. Collins

See also: Authority of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Recognition

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Casimir of Poland

(1458–1484 C.E.)

Christian prince

Casimir, a prince of Poland, was born in the royal palace at Kraków on October 3, 1458. As a young man he ruled the

country in his father's absence and was known for his piety. Later, he was canonized as a Roman Catholic saint, and his feast day is March 4.

The marriage of King Casimir Jagiellonian and Queen Elizabeth of Hapsburg was blessed with twelve children, of whom Casimir was the second. Casimir grew up in a tradition of unparalleled piety and devotion: His grandfather King Wladislaus II Jagiello brought Christianity to Lithuania; contemporary sources considered the prince's father the "most pious monarch of his time"; and his mother, renowned for her generosity and acts of mercy, was for her subjects a saint. Casimir acquired his humanist and religious education first in the school of the great Polish historian Jan Dlugosz, and later under the direction of Filippo Buonaccorsi, called Callimachus. As well as cultivating his extraordinary piety, the scholars prepared the young prince for a future role in public affairs, which called him as early as 1471, when, after his elder brother Wladislaus's ascension to the Bohemian throne, Casimir was put in charge of a military expedition to Hungary. This politically unprepared expedition to support the rebellion of a Hungarian faction and claim the Hapsburgs' crown ended in failure, and Casimir returned as a fugitive to Poland. In 1475, he left the school of Dlugosz in order to attend again to the demands of the state and follow his father to Vilna. The constant menace from Moscow called the king more and more often to Lithuania until in 1481, having discovered a dangerous conspiracy against his family, he entrusted the country to the charge of Casimir.

As an administrator, the prince gained renown for his prudence, mercy, justice, and a particular care for safety in Poland, troubled at that time by brigands. He reconciled this public duty with an exceptionally rich and active spiritual life marked by prayer, modesty, pilgrimage, fasting, mortification, and the pledge of chastity (bound by his vows, he refused to marry Kunegund, the daughter of the German emperor Frederick III). His two-year administration ended when, in unknown circumstances, the king called his son to Lithuania. Casimir, however, never reached his father, as he suffered a severe attack of a recurring lung illness and died at Grodno on March 4, 1484.

Casimir's body was interred in the cathedral of Vilna, where it became an object of great adoration. The cult of Prince Casimir began very early. He was venerated as a model ruler, the patron of Polish chivalry, the guardian of the Jagiellonian dynasty, and the patron of Poland and Lithuania. A petition for canonization was sent by the Polish king Sigismund I to Pope Leo X in 1515, but although the inquiry was completed before the death of the pope in 1521, it is not clear whether Leo X, or even his successor Hadrian VI, managed to acquaint themselves with the materials. King Sigismund's renewed request from 1539 is a reliable sign that the

canonization took place only later, when in 1602 Pope Clement VIII named March 4 as the feast of St. Casimir.

—Ewa Slojka

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Castor and Polydeuces (Pollux)

See **Dioskouroi**

Catarina de San Juan

(d. 1685 C.E.)

Roman Catholic laywoman, visionary

Catarina de San Juan, originally called Mirrah, was brought as a slave from the Moghul Empire in India to Puebla, Mexico. Jesuit priests baptized her in a slave camp in the Philippines and she became a devout Roman Catholic. The sisters of the Immaculate Conception convent in Puebla furthered her religious education. Catarina de San Juan desired to become a part of their order, but she was denied admission, reportedly because she was raped in the slave enclosure, but at least one of her confessors maintains that she was a virgin throughout her life. Another possible reason for the denial was that many convents required their postulantes to be of pure European blood. Her Asian origin would not have been acceptable to most colonial orders.

Despite the denial of entry into the religious order, Catarina de San Juan dressed as a Carmelite nun and devoted herself to a life of piety and good works for the less fortunate. As an adult, she became well known for her charity and piety. Several Jesuit priests wrote about her exemplary life. One Jesuit compiled a biography of her life and works that eventually drew the wrath of the Inquisition.

In this biography, the largest work composed in the colonial Americas, the priest outlined Catarina's many visions. Like Maria de Agreda, a famous Spanish religious figure, it appears that Catarina could bilocate and perform miracles. Once she reportedly turned back a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico. In a spiritual visit to Japan, she catechized the emperor of Japan. She also visited China and predicted success for the embattled Jesuits in both China and Japan. In other visions, Catarina witnessed the rebellion of the Pueblo people in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and stated that Jesus had told her that the Franciscans in charge there had made mistakes in their ministry. She also

witnessed the martyrdom of several Jesuit missionaries among the Tarahumara people, another difficult region for the Jesuit forces, and predicted eventual success. The Inquisition eventually banned this very popular three-volume text.

The devotion to Catarina de San Juan by the citizens of Mexico caused additional problems with the Inquisition for this holy figure. Because local adoration of Catarina was so strong, her followers began to place her image on altars in the local churches well before the beatification process had begun. She was also linked to the extremely popular bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, and the images of both were banned by the Inquisition. Interestingly, after the wrath of the Inquisition waned, Catarina emerged as the "True China Poblana." She is depicted as a rural Mexican girl wearing a traditional costume of a white blouse, a green skirt, and a red shawl. This image is often used to invoke traditional Mexico, especially Mexican cuisine.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Prophets; Status

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Catherine of Alexandria

(4th cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary martyr

A Christian virgin martyr of the fourth century who bested fifty Greco-Roman philosophers in public debate, Catherine of Alexandria is often depicted holding a spiked wheel, the instrument of her torture, and a book, the instrument of her power.

Her legend tells that Catherine came to the aid of Christians who were forced to observe non-Christian rituals by the tyrant Maxentius of Rome. When Maxentius and his clerics were unable to defeat Catherine in debate, Maxentius tried unsuccessfully to make her his concubine. She responded by converting the emperor's wife and the captain of his guard to Christianity. Maxentius then tried to torture

Catherine using a special wheel lined with sharp blades, but divine intervention destroyed the wheel. Catherine was then beheaded. The inspiration for the passion of St. Catherine may be the plight of an Alexandrian Christian noblewoman deprived of her wealth and exiled by Emperor Maximinus in the early fourth century during his persecution of Christians. However, this link remains speculative.

Catherine was celebrated as the patron of teachers and students throughout the Middle Ages and well into the Renaissance. Her passion is included in many medieval manuscript collections with materials used for the early education of children. Catherine enjoyed a special renown among women. Since the task of a child's earliest education often fell to the mother from antiquity through the Renaissance, Catherine was a rare, sanctioned example of a woman teaching. Since she was learned and eloquent (and perhaps because she was too wise to be coerced or coaxed into complying with a tyrant's wishes), Catherine was often an icon for queens, women regents, and other noblewomen. Her legend also appealed to women of the merchant and middle classes of medieval and early modern Europe as they gained access to devotional literature. Catherine's is reputed to have been one of the holy voices that inspired Joan of Arc. She defended the divine mysteries central to Christianity (such as Christ's incarnation) and is thus the patron of theologians. Poets and lawyers have sought her as a guide for their own forms of eloquence. Wheel and wagon makers, and other craftsman of mechanical devices, including potters' wheels, have regarded her as their guardian as well, contributing to her place as one of the fourteen "helper" saints of the Catholic Church.

In late antiquity, Christian theologians tried to define the value and limitations of Greco-Roman learning for Christianity. By uniting Greco-Roman philosophy with the Christian religion, St. Catherine represents a holiness through which the superiority of Christian theology over that of non-Christian religions is asserted. Yet, by doing so, she also represents another ideal for the European Middle Ages and Renaissance: a bride of Christ who masters a classical education in the service of Christianity.

—Donna Alfano Bussell

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fourteen Holy Helpers; Joan of Arc; Legendary Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Catherine of Genoa

(1447–1510 C.E.)

Christian mystic, caregiver

Catherine Fieschi Adorno was a lay mystic/visionary of the late Middle Ages who devoted her life to caring for the ill. She worked in a hospital in Pammatone, Genoa, for more than thirty years and was widely known for her spirituality and charitable works.

Catherine was born into an aristocratic family in Genoa in 1447. Although she wanted to join a convent when she was thirteen, she was married instead in 1463 to Giuliano Adorno. They had no children. Afflicted with depression and an unhappy marriage, in 1473 she experienced a double vision and was overwhelmed with love for God; after this point, she adopted a rigid ascetic discipline. Giuliano later turned to religion as well and became a member of the tertiary (third) order of the Franciscans. Catherine and her husband continued to live in a chaste marriage until his death in 1497.

Caring for the ill became the primary focus of Catherine's life. In 1473, the year of her conversion experience, she and her husband moved to the Pammatone Hospital, where they spent the rest of their lives caring for the very sick, including lepers and plague victims. They both worked as nurses without pay and covered their own expenses. In 1490, Catherine became the director of the female side of the hospital, supervising staff while continuing to nurse women and abandoned babies.

During the 1490s, Catherine came under the guidance of a spiritual director, Don Cattaneo Marabotto, director of the Pammatone. She related her experiences to him and to Ettore Vernazza, future cofounder of the Oratory of Divine Love. These men compiled Catherine's teachings after her death in 1510; in addition to her vita, they produced the *Trattato* (The Treatise of Purgatory) and the *Dialogo* (The spiritual dialogue). These works are made up of her sayings, but there is some controversy over how much is Catherine's own work and how much is due to the editing of the redactors and scribes.

Catherine engaged in many saintly practices. She was devoted to caring for the sick and poor, like a number of pious women in Italy during this time who wanted to follow Christ's example. She went to daily mass, received daily communion, and experienced spiritual ecstasies. She was a vegetarian, wore a hair shirt, and fasted. After her death, a number of miracles were attributed to her and are recorded in her vita. Her remains were placed in the chapel adjoining the hospital, and she was canonized in 1737.

—Christine F. Cooper

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Devotion; Laity; Mysticism and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Catherine of Siena

(1347–1380 C.E.)

Christian mystic, spiritual adviser, doctor of the church

Although Catherine of Siena—a fourteenth-century mystic, a devoted nurse to the poor and the ill, and a much-sought-after spiritual and secular adviser—had no formal education, she dictated nearly four hundred letters, twenty-six prayers, and four treatises during her life. This collection of her work is known as *Il libro della divina dottrina* (Divine dialogue). As a result of her many writings and letters, together with the example of holiness she presented by way of her severe asceticism, she had a great influence upon important religious and secular figures of her time. It is Catherine of Siena who was credited with helping to persuade the pope to leave Avignon and return the papacy to Rome in 1377. As the exercising of any real authority was unusual for women,

Catherine's interest and actions toward realizing peace within the church, the Italian city-states, and between France and England, as well as her desire to initiate a crusade against the Muslims, are all the more remarkable.

Catherine, born Catherine Benincasa in Tuscany in 1347, and her twin sister were the twenty-third and twenty-fourth children in a family of twenty-five. At the age of six, she experienced her first vision. Sworn to remain a virgin by the time she was seven, at sixteen she convinced a group of women, all widows, to allow her to join them in a tertiary Dominican order. A lay religious group, these women lived and cared for the city's poor and ill outside the walls of a convent. However, Catherine did not immediately join them in this work. Instead she withdrew to one room of her father's home, regarding the room as the cell of an anchorage, and herself a recluse; there she shunned all comfort and company while she prayed in seclusion. Eventually Catherine's contemplation led her to reenter the outside world, where she rejoined her family and took up charitable labor. The central idea that Catherine took away from her time of self-imposed confinement, and that underscored her spirituality and her writings, was the idea of the "cell" where all Christians should reside, a place she styled the "cell of self-knowledge."

Known during her lifetime as a person of great personal charm, when Catherine traveled she was often accompanied by a large entourage of men and women, many calling themselves her disciples. Her natural aptitude toward conciliation and persuasion, coupled with her own desire to act as intermediary, are largely responsible for the pope's eventual heeding of her advice to move the papacy back to Rome. Although this restoration did not cure all the ills of the church—in fact, the Great Schism followed—Catherine nevertheless continued to write and speak with authority in favor of the popes in Rome. She also persisted in



Modern statue of Catherine of Siena. Near Ponte Sant' Angelo, Rome. (Art Directors)

writing letters to secular sovereigns, including rulers of the Italian republics and continental kings, and to military leaders underscoring her dedication to facilitating an end to all war.

Although Catherine garnered respect and admiration for her work as mediator and counselor, it was her uncompromising asceticism that ultimately convinced her contemporaries of her sincerity and authority. According to her confessor and biographer Raymond of Capua (d. 1377) in his *Life of St. Catherine*, Catherine shunned most worldly nourishment and lived, for the most part, on the eucharist, the communion bread. This likely resulted in her somewhat early death in 1380 at the age of thirty-two. Anecdotal accounts also tell of her drinking the pus from the wounds of the most ill among those she attended. She also is said to have received the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, although they were not outwardly apparent.

Catherine of Siena is recognized today as the patron saint of Italy. She was canonized in 1461 and named a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church in 1970. Her principal feast day is celebrated on April 29. However, honoring Catherine on the following Sunday is popular in Siena, the city of her birth.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Guidance; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Catholic Reformation Saints

(16th cent. C.E.)

The fifty-five saints canonized by the Roman Catholic Church between 1588 and 1776 can usefully be grouped together under the heading Catholic Reformation saints. This period of relatively frequent canonizations was both preceded and followed by lengthy periods in which no candidates were elevated to sainthood. Moreover, the figures canonized during these years reflect a distinctive conception of holiness inspired by the Catholic Reformation.

Most of the Catholic Reformation saints represent the ideals and aspirations of a renewed and combative church energized by the Protestant challenge and the rapid expansion of Catholicism into the New World and Asia. The church

recognized as holy those who were active in the strengthening of the Catholic community or in missionary enterprises. The church also canonized individuals who promoted and put into effect the decrees of the Council of Trent (1543–1565). Finally, despite some apprehension among church authorities, a number of mystics from Spain and Italy were also recognized as holy by the church. In some respects, the absence of several traditional categories of holy people, such as theologians, and the relatively small numbers of others, such as martyrs, also distinguishes Catholic Reformation saints from those of other periods. To a greater extent than any earlier period, during this time holiness and sainthood were defined and controlled by the Roman hierarchy of the church, and this resulted in a group of saints who reflected the values and concerns of the church's leadership.

The Catholic Reformation church chose to canonize five main types of holy people. The largest group can be classified as heroic saints, almost exclusively drawn from the clergy, who spread, strengthened, or renewed the church. Some worked to spread the faith through missionary endeavor abroad, such as Francis Xavier in the Far East and Luis Bertrán in the New World, who worked to convert non-Christian societies to the Catholic faith. Others, such as Jean-François Régis, who focused his efforts on the Huguenots in the south of France, worked to strengthen the faith of the Christian communities of Europe. Missionary saints both reflected the priorities of the Catholic Church during this period of expansion and advertised the active defense of the faith that played an important role in the revival of the church during the decades following the Council of Trent. However, these missionary saints also drew upon a long-standing tradition, dating back to the apostles, that associated the conversion of souls to the faith with holiness. The canonization of those active in society reflected the priorities of the church leadership in this period of expansion and renewal.

The church also recognized as holy those who worked to renew older church institutions and build new ones in promotion of the church's goals as defined at the Council of Trent. This in part explains why forty-nine saints canonized during the period were clerics. The decrees of Trent placed great importance upon bishops and parish priests as shepherds of their flocks, supervisors of the clergy, and teachers of the laity. The renewed importance of the episcopacy in the church was reflected in the canonization of seven bishops during the period, including Charles Borromeo of Milan, Francis de Sales of Geneva, Turibio de Mogrobejo of Lima, and Pope Pius V. There was a long tradition of bishop-saints in the Catholic Church, but those canonized during the era of Catholic renewal were perhaps more administrators, legislators, and defenders of papal authority than the charismatic bishops of the early church and Middle Ages.

The founders and reformers of religious orders who dedicated themselves to the service of the Catholic Reformation church fall under this same heading. Thirty-eight Catholic Reformation saints were full members of religious orders, while several others were either lay brothers or in some other way closely associated with a religious order. Of these, new religious orders founded during the period of Catholic renewal produced proportionally more saints than already-established orders. Twelve saints founded or reformed religious orders, including Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) and his associate Francisco Borgia, the third general of the society. Others include Vincent de Paul, founder of both the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity; Jeanne de Chantal, founder of the Visitation nuns; and Teresa of Avila, founder of the discolored branch of the Carmelites. These figures both represented the aspirations of the Catholic Reformation church and belong to a long tradition of holy people in the Catholic tradition, including Dominic and Francis of Assisi, who had actively promoted the faith by organizing their brethren into monastic orders.

The heroic missionary and reforming saints were the largest groups, but three other distinctive categories are also present among the cohort of Catholic Reformation saints—healing saints and saints recognized for their Christian charity, most of whom were canonized in the eighteenth century, and mystics. There are six clear cases of charitable activity being rewarded by the church through sainthood: three women (Elizabeth of Portugal, Margarita of Cortona, and Catherine of Genoa) and four men (Vincent de Paul, John of Granada, Camillo de Lelis, and José de Calansanz). Their activities varied from care of the sick or galley slaves to the setting up of schools and other institutions, but they all shared a pious devotion to charitable activity in the community. The final category reflected the flowering of mysticism during the period of the Catholic Reformation.

Although many mystics were treated with suspicion by the Catholic hierarchy, several, such as Rose of Lima, Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, Caterina de Ricci, Pedro Regaldo, and Joseph of Copertino, found strong support in Rome. Mystics granted sainthood came primarily from the regions of Spain and Italy, where the mystical tradition was strong, and their canonizations were in part due to the influence within the Roman hierarchy of Spanish and Italian churchmen, who viewed the piety and devotion of their mystical compatriots in terms of the mystic saints of the early church. The importance of Spanish and Italian churchmen in Rome during this period is reflected more widely in the cohort of Catholic Reformation saints: Forty-three came from one of these two geographic regions. Nevertheless, mystics during this period were generally canonized for their heroic virtue and complete union with Christ—two orthodox endeavors that could

be accommodated by the church—not the extraordinary phenomena that often accompanied their mystical experiences. Moreover, some mystics who were canonized were also active in other endeavors, such as Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, who both renewed religious organizations.

These categories are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. Several saints, such as Vincent de Paul and Teresa of Avila, fit well under more than one heading, while others, such as Aloysius Gonzaga and Stanislas Kostka, both ascetic Jesuit novices who died young, do not fit neatly into any of the categories. Nevertheless, the ability to classify most of the saints into a relatively few categories is a distinctive feature of the period that can best be explained by the unprecedented control that the Catholic Reformation papacy established over the canonization of saints after 1588.

During the Middle Ages, saints were most often the product of local initiative. Popular devotion to a holy figure was spontaneous and occasionally formed around fraudulent miracles promoted by churchmen with a direct interest in establishing a new pilgrimage site. Aware of past excesses and the effective attacks of Protestant critics on the worst excesses of saint cults, the early modern papacy was cautious in its approach to canonization. It sought, as with other aspects of the church, to bring the canonization process under its direct supervision. It did this both by prohibiting unauthorized saint cults and by establishing stringent criteria for the proof of holiness, which included the careful examination of each candidate by special church commissions.

The development of a clear path to sainthood was officially codified by Benedict XIV in the early eighteenth century. The control exerted over the canonization process by the papacy in large part explains the dominance of certain types of holy people among the cohort of Catholic Reformation saints. These men and women reflected the values of the Catholic Reformation as defined by the Council of Trent and the influence of important Catholic regions, such as Spain, or institutions, such as the new religious orders, over the papacy during this period.

—Eric Nelson

See also: Borromeo, Charles; Catherine of Genoa; Christianity and Holy People; Francis of Sales; Ignatius of Loyola; John of the Cross; Joseph of Copertino; Margaret of Cortona; Rose of Lima; Teresa of Avila; Vincent de Paul; Xavier, Francis

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Catholicism and Saints

See **Canonization; Christianity and Holy People**

Cato the Younger

(95–46 B.C.E.)

Ancient Roman Stoic

Marcus Porcius Cato, an influential statesman in the late Roman republic of the first century B.C.E., was legendary for his honesty, righteousness, and adherence to the tenets of early Stoicism. He inherited his firm belief in the Stoic ideals from his well-respected great-grandfather, Cato the Censor. The younger Cato, born in 95 B.C.E., was reputed as one of the greatest men of his time and hailed as a martyr of the republic after his suicide in 46 B.C.E. Tirelessly pursuing those he considered corrupt or tyrannical, he was unswerving in his beliefs and morality. He never reached the same political heights as many of his ambitious contemporaries, however. In fact, he was quite unpopular among his fellow politicians, many of whom were corrupt, because of his austere morality and watchful eye.

Despite his desire for an unchanging republic, Cato is often implicated in its downfall. He was unwilling to align his family with the great general Pompey by marriage; the refusal not only virtually ended Cato's political career but also resulted in Pompey's marriage to Caesar's daughter, creating an alliance that would increasingly gain power and eventually result in the first triumvirate of Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus. Later, Cato chose to support Pompey after his break with Caesar. In command of a small remainder of troops in Utica after Pompey's death and the defeat of Scipio at Thapsus, he gave his men a choice of action. When they decided that fighting was useless, Cato helped to smuggle away as many of them as possible and told the rest to try to make peace with Caesar. Cato preferred to take his own life in the tradition of the Stoics, who found it nobler to die by one's own hand than live dishonorably. In many ways, he became a greater foe to his enemies after his death, becoming a celebrated figure of moral rectitude, Roman virtue, and resistance to tyranny.

—Shannon H. Neaves

See also: Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Purity and Pollution

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Cecilia

(d. 3rd cent. C.E.)

Christian martyr

Cecilia, a Christian martyr of the third century, is the patron saint of music and musicians and is commonly pictured with a small organ or viola. The Christian daughter of a Roman patrician family, she desired perpetual virginity. Over her protests, she was betrothed to the non-Christian Valerius. After their wedding, Cecilia informed Valerius that an angel guarded her virtue and that, unless he swore to remain chaste and converted to Christianity, he would suffer harm. Accordingly, Valerius sought out the future Pope Urban I (pope 222–230) and was baptized. Cecilia also convinced Valerius's brother, Tiburtius, to convert. Both men, along with their companion Maximus, were martyred for professing Christianity and burying the bodies of martyrs. Cecilia was soon arrested for the same crime, as she buried *their* bodies, and was dragged into court, where she was sentenced to be suffocated in her own bath. Though seven times the normal amount of fuel was piled into the furnace, Cecilia miraculously survived. The furious prefect then sentenced her to be beheaded. The executioner, struck by her youth and beauty, failed to decapitate her within the prescribed three blows and fled. Cecilia lingered for three days with her neck partially severed, during which time she converted an additional 400 people.

Upon her death, Cecilia's body was buried in the papal crypt near Pope Callistus (d. 222). Later, a church was consecrated within the confines of her home. In 822, Pope Paschal I ordered her body moved to the site of the basilica in Rome dedicated in her name. In October 1599, under the direction of Pope Clement VIII, Cecilia's body was exhumed and found to be incorrupt. Stefano Maderna (1576–1636) was then commissioned to create a sculpture based on her body. The resulting statue was installed below the high altar in her church and remains one of the most celebrated works of Italian art.

Though many of the details passed down about Cecilia's life are purely legendary, she is a popular saint and has been immortalized in literature, art, and music. Perhaps the most famous version of her hagiography is Geoffrey Chaucer's "Second Nun's Tale" (part of his *Canterbury Tales* composed in the fourteenth century). Other notable pieces include W. H. Auden's "Hymn to St. Cecilia" (c. 1940), which was set to music by Britten in 1942, and Fra Angelico's painting *Forerunners of Christ with Saints and Martyrs* (1423–1424). She has also been the subject of works by Raphael, George Frideric Handel, Alexander Pope, and John Dryden, among others. Her feast day is November 22.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Veneration of Holy People

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Celebi, Asaf Halet

(1907–1958 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, poet

One of the important figures of modern Turkish poetry, Asaf Halet Celebi is best known for his mystical poems written in simple Turkish with a modern style. He was born in Istanbul in 1907 and attended the famous Galatasaray Lyce, a French school known for its secular and modernist influences on several generations of Turkish writers, intellectuals, and leaders. He worked in various government offices and was a librarian when he died in 1958. Although he published only a few books of poetry, he gained a reputation for the simplicity of his language and his ability to express the traditional themes of classical sufism in a modern form.

Celebi saw the emergence of modern Turkey as a secular state and witnessed the historic transformation of Turkish society into a nation-state. With his background in European and particularly French culture, on the one hand, and training in Islamic-Ottoman tradition, on the other, he acted as a mediator between East and West. He was a follower of the school of poetry begun by Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), and the traces of Rumi's influence can be found in many of his poems. Even though Celebi wrote about nonreligious issues as well, he is best remembered for his poems that describe the subtleties of the mystical path, longing, love, and spiritual resurrection. Spiritual solitude is a constant theme in his poetical imagery.

The period in which Celebi produced his work makes him particularly important in recent Turkish history because the intellectual atmosphere of the new Turkish Republic was notoriously antireligious and secular. It was during this time that sufi orders in Turkey were abolished and traditional Islamic themes were suppressed in favor of importing modern Western culture. Although responding in a subtle language to the erosion of traditional Islamic culture in Turkey, Celebi's poetical work continues the mystical tradition of Rumi as well as of the folk-poet and saint Yunus Emre (c. 1241–1320/1321). His published books include *He* (1942), *Lâmelif* (1945), and *Om Mani Padme Hum* (1953).

—Ibrahim Kalin

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Yunus Emre

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Celebi, Husam al-Din

(d. 1284)

Muslim mystic

Husam al-Din Celebi, Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Akhi Turk (d. 1284), was a famous mystic affiliated with the globally celebrated sufi mystic and poet Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273). He became a disciple, or *murid*, of Rumi's at a young age and was well acquainted with Rumi's mentor Shams-i Tabrizi (c. 1180–c. 1247). When he became acquainted with Rumi he gave up his life of comfort, no longer allowing his servants to serve him, and presented his worldly possessions to Rumi and his affiliated circle. Under the guidance of Rumi he lived a simple life of prayer and devotion. Rumi entrusted to him the management and suitable distribution of the group's properties and gifts and subsequently made him the head of two subsidiary circles.

Celebi's importance in Rumi's poetic and spiritual life was significant. He could be considered the third muse and alter ego after Shams-i Tabrizi and Salah al-din Zarkub (d. 1261). At the death of Salah al-Din in 1258, Rumi proclaimed Celebi as his successor. Although other verses were the result of Rumi's association with the preceding two muses, the celebrated *Mathnavi-i Ma'navi* (The poem in rhyming couplets) was compiled by Rumi at Celebi's prompting. Celebi would grasp the master's words and commit them to writing, then read the text back to him for corrections. His active engagement as Rumi's muse cum scribe earned him high praise, as attested in the *Mathnavi*. This six-volume work, regarded by sufis as the epitome of spiritual and moral wisdom, combines folktales and lore with quasi-historical events. Rumi acknowledges Celebi's dominant role in the creation of this work in the verse: "Where are you Chelebi? Where are you? . . . I have thrown away pride and scruples, comfort my heart!"

In practical terms, Celebi also set rules and regulations for the Mawlawiyyah order. He established the etiquette, or *adab*, for the proper comportment of disciples before the master and also set the sequence of events in collective gatherings. Thus the *sama'* (a gathering for making and listening to music) was organized after the main Friday prayer at his initiative, and he also determined that in any gathering the *Mathnavi* would be read after the Qur'an had been recited. After Rumi's death, Celebi succeeded him and oversaw construction of his mausoleum. Celebi in turn passed away in 1284. He was followed by Rumi's son Sultan Walad ((1226–1312). Rumi considered Salah al-Din Zarkub and Husam-al-Din Celebi, like Shams-i Tabrizi, as paradigmatic reflections of divine grace.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Disciples; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Shams-i Tabrizi; Sufism

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Celestine V

(c. 1210–1296 C.E.)

Christian hermit, pope

Called the “hermit pope,” Peter Murrone (later Pope Celestine V) was associated with the Spiritual Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century. As a young man, he withdrew into solitude in the mountains of the Abruzzi. His austere piety attracted many followers, whom he organized into a hermit order, later called the Celestines, who were affiliated with the Benedictines. Peter became well known in Rome and southern Italy as an ascetic and monastic organizer. During the papal conclave of 1292–1294, the cardinals, split between the Orsini and Colonna families of Rome, could not agree on a pope. When the dean of the College of Cardinals announced a prophecy from Peter Murrone that God would punish the cardinals for failing to elect a pontiff, he declared he would vote for Peter himself. Thus, as a compromise candidate, the college selected the elderly Peter, who reluctantly agreed to leave his cave and become pope. The Spiritual Franciscans, some of whom wanted to separate from the Franciscan order to live in absolute poverty according to the Rule and Testament of St. Francis, hailed Celestine as the “angelic pope” who would usher in the Age of the Holy Spirit. Celestine lived up to their confidence by giving official approval to their establishment of a new order.

Charles II, king of Sicily, escorted Peter, riding on a donkey, to L’Aquila, where he took the name of Pope Celestine V. But the new pope became a virtual prisoner in Naples, where King Charles manipulated him to his political advantage. The naive Celestine, who did not know Latin and issued decrees in Italian, resigned after only six months in office (July 5–December 13, 1294) and determined to return to his cave in the mountains. When he tried to flee Italy, however, the next pope, Boniface VIII (pope 1294–1303), had him imprisoned until his death; Boniface nullified Celestine V’s privileges, including those that were granted to the new religious order. Celestine’s resignation touched off a furious debate concerning the legality of a papal resignation and the rectitude of Celestine’s behavior. Dante’s condemnation of

the Great Refusal (*Inferno* 3:59) is generally considered to refer to this event. Clement V, however, declared Celestine a saint on May 5, 1313.

His bizarre career illustrates the widespread belief of his contemporaries in apocalyptic expectations and in the depth of an ascetic spirituality founded in the poverty and detachment of Jesus Christ during his sojourn on earth.

—Thomas Renna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Hermits; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Cephalophores

Christian legendary martyrs

Head carrying might seem to be the domain of Green Knights, Anne Boleyn, or the Headless Horseman, but in fact the notion of a martyred saint bearing his head had a serious purpose in medieval Christianity. The most famous cephalophores were Denis of Paris and Miniatus of Florence (who both died c. 250) and, from the early fourth century, the three martyred soldier-saints of the Theban legion, Felix, Regula, and Exuperantius. In each case, there were two principal matters: the means and the place of execution itself. Following a tradition that the apostle Paul was taken outside the walls of the city of Rome and there decapitated with a sword, as befitting a Roman citizen condemned to death, countless martyrs in the early Christian period were dispatched by swords, often—in legend—after suffering violent tortures. But in spite of the brutality of the sentence, there were miraculous, comforting signs: Paul’s severed head was said to have spoken, just as the little clergion of Geoffrey Chaucer’s prioress sang though his throat was cut. Thus the martyrdom becomes a dual testimony to sacrifice and the ongoing vital force of spirituality.

This twin emphasis could mean that the place of martyrdom, if outside the walls of the city, might not be the place where the saint’s relics were to be venerated. Denis, a Roman citizen and according to legend a disciple of Paul, would be executed on Montmartre, but his cult had developed in a chapel north of the city. Therefore, according to the *Legenda Aurea* (Golden legend), Denis personally chose (and God approved) this new location by taking up his head and marching the two miles over to Saint-Denis. His companions Rusticus and Eleutherius, also beheaded, made their way in a similar if less spectacular fashion: Their bodies were thrown

into the Seine, but they were recovered by a pious noblewoman and eventually placed beside Denis. Miniatus, similarly, climbed to his chosen home, now one of the most precious churches in Florence. Felix, Regula, and Exuperantius all took up their heads and made their way to their current resting place in the cathedral at Zürich.

This series of legends allows for the multiplication of sacred sites, commemorating both a violent death and a new life in a positive setting made sacred by custom from the earliest eras. At Saint-Denis, the *Legenda* contends, Denis remained at peace, and the miraculous event was blessed by a “great dulcet angelic song.”

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Denis of Paris; Martyrdom and Persecution; Miracles; Veneration of Holy People

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Chad

(c. 620–672 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, missionary

Chad, Christian bishop of Mercia (now in central England), was renowned for his humility and for the posthumous healing power of the dust from his tomb. A devout ascetic with little personal ambition, he was born in about 620 and trained with his brother Cedd at Lindisfarne, an island off the coast of England, under St. Aidan. He may have worked alongside Cedd when in 653 the latter converted Mercia to Christianity. On Cedd’s death, in 664, Chad succeeded him as abbot of Lastingham, a monastery in Yorkshire.

Although Chad would have been happy to remain in Yorkshire, when the nominated bishop of York, St. Wilfrid, had gone to Gaul to be consecrated and did not return, Oswiu, the king of Northumbria, had Chad consecrated in 663/664 using an uncanonical ceremony with two British bishops. When Wilfrid returned in 666, Chad gave up claim to the episcopal see. However, in 669, Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, upon discovering two bishops of York, deposed Chad on the basis of his invalid consecration. Chad humbly replied, “If you know I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, in obedience submitted to undertake it” (Bede III, iv, 3).

Moved by Chad’s humility, Theodore correctly reconsecrated him as new bishop of the Mercians according to Roman rites. During the three years in which he was bishop, Chad laid the foundation of the see of Lichfield. He engaged

in pastoral and missionary work, traveling by foot like an apostle. Only after Theodore bodily lifted Chad onto a horse would he consent to travel in such a luxurious manner.

Later, Chad reported a visitation of singing angels who informed him that he would soon die. A monk overheard the angelic voices, but the humble Chad asked him not to tell anyone until after his imminent death. Chad died on March 2, 672. Almost immediately, he was venerated as a saint. Pilgrims were cured by taking dust from his tomb, mixing it with water, and drinking it, whereupon they were eased of their infirmity and restored to health. Sick cattle were also reportedly cured after drinking a mixture of the dust and water. Chad’s relics were moved to a shrine in Lichfield Cathedral in 1296.

Why this humble bishop became the focus of such faith is difficult to ascertain. It is possible that his life was conflated with that of his prominent brother Cedd; in any case, in the Middle Ages it was Chad who garnered the attention and devotion of thousands of pilgrims.

—Sarah Blick

See also: Aidan; Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Wilfrid

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Chaitanya, Krishna (Caitanya)

(c. 1486–1533 C.E.)

Hindu god saint

Krishna Chaitanya was born to a brahmin family in Bengal in approximately 1486 and named Vishvambhara Mishra. Legends surround his early life, but it is generally accepted by scholars that the defining moment in his young adulthood occurred on a trip to the sacred place of Gaya. There he met a holy man who turned the young man’s attention to the love and constant worship of Krishna. Returning home, Vishvambhara spoke of nothing but Krishna, fell into ecstasies at the name of the lord, and sang and enthusiastically chanted the names of Krishna. He soon decided to become a renunciant of the material world and changed his name to Krishna Chaitanya (He whose consciousness is Krishna). He was not the founder of the Bengali Vaishnava *bhakti* (devotion) movement, which had been under way for several centuries in the area, but he did become its best-known practitioner and promoter.

Chaitanya relocated to Puri, in Orissa, site of a major temple to Vishnu. His career as the devotee of Krishna continued there, but he also traveled the subcontinent, promoting the practice of emotional and visible devotion to his lord. According to the legends, during a pilgrimage to Brindavan, the fabled area of Krishna's youth, he experienced incredible ecstasies at the holy sites. Chaitanya was always a demonstrative devotee: He led processions of chanting and singing, organized dramatic presentations of the Krishna lore, and led night-long recitations of the exploits of Krishna. Chaitanya so embodied the bhakti he professed that he himself became an object of worship in his own lifetime.

The main features of the Bengali Vaishnavism promoted by Chaitanya were based in bhakti and in the history of Krishna as first related in the Mahabharata (c. 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E.) and the Bhagavata Purana (c. 900 C.E.). Later Bengali poets embellished on these teachings and stories, dwelling especially on episodes chronicling the birth and maturation of the god in the countryside of Brindavan. As a handsome youth, Krishna played his flute on a riverbank while *gopis* (female cowherders) rushed headlong to him in an ecstasy of longing. They gave up everything to join with him, but were then separated from him. During this separation from the lord Krishna, the women experienced unbearable pain and longing, and he finally returned to them. Chaitanya, like many of his contemporaries, sought to imitate such devotion to Krishna: a complete emotional, even physical surrender to the love of Krishna. Chaitanya promised his followers that such constant worship and devotion would result in permanent union with Krishna in the eternal paradise of the cosmic Brindavan.

Although Chaitanya himself wrote little, after his death in 1533 his disciples wrote biographies, detailed his theology, and spread word of his teachings. The Chaitanya movement rose and fell in popularity in Bengal, but in the nineteenth century it was revived. A twentieth-century disciple of the movement, Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta, founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in New York in 1966. This society is often referred to by the two names of the lord that group members chant over and again, "Hare Krishna." ISKCON continues to spread the Chaitanya-based practices of emotive devotion to Krishna throughout the world.

—Phyllis K. Herman

See also: Bhaktivedanta, A. C., Swami; Devotion; Gods on Earth; Scholars as Holy People

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Chajang

(590–658 C.E.)

Buddhist monk

Chajang was an eminent Buddhist monk of the Silla kingdom (57 B.C.E.–668 C.E.) in Korea. Though born into the Silla royal family in 590 C.E., Chajang renounced all worldly privileges due his status and lived the life of a highly disciplined Buddhist hermit. His meditative and ascetic powers led him to a series of ecstatic visions of the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) Manjushri, from whom he received esoteric instructions. These instructions led him to take up the life of a Buddhist preacher and wonder worker.

Like many of his contemporaries, Chajang became dissatisfied with the fact that Buddhism had only been partially transmitted to Silla. In 636, he traveled with ten disciples to China, visited Chinese holy mountains, and finally took up residence in a small hermitage outside the Tang capital of Chang-an. His reputation in China grew, and many Chinese monks sought to study with him. He was also asked to give lectures at the court of Emperor T'ai-tsung (629–649) and was presented with many gifts by the emperor and the crown prince. After seven years in China, he returned to Silla, where Queen Chindok (r. 647–654) awarded him the rank of Supreme National Cleric (*t'aeguk t'ong*) with the power to establish regulations for the governance of all Buddhist monasteries. His regulations raised the level of discipline among Silla clergy and led to the establishment of Silla's first Buddhist lineage dedicated to the study of the *vinaya* (monastic discipline). Because of his standing in both China and Silla, Chajang also advised Queen Chindok to adopt the dress and calendar of Tang China. It is recorded that by accepting Chajang's advice, Silla's standing in the Tang court rose and Silla was awarded the title of "little China" by the Tang emperors. Such favor was to prove helpful in the years ahead when Silla sought and received the aid of Tang troops in her unification of the peninsula.

Chajang's contributions to the reformation and reorganization of Silla Buddhism, as well as his advancement of Silla's cultural and diplomatic standing, was matched by his representation of the growing amalgamation of Buddhism and Silla adherence to ritualistic magic. The Manjushri visions he received, the miraculous signs and wonders that attended his lectures, and the visits to him by dragon spirits and heavenly maidens helped in the spreading of Buddhism throughout the kingdom and established the pattern of as-

simulation of local beliefs that became the hallmark of Unified Silla Buddhism.

—John I. Goulde

See also: Manjushri; Miracles; Politics and Holy People; Recognition; Scholars as Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Chandrakirti

(c. 580–660 C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher

An Indian Buddhist philosopher renowned for his use of reasoning in articulating a subtle vision of Middle Way philosophy (Madhyamaka) and an outline of the path of Mahayana Buddhism, Chandrakirti was most likely born in the latter part of the sixth century in India at a place called Samanta, according to Tibetan sources. He was ordained as a Buddhist monk (*bhikṣu*) under the Middle Way philosopher Buddhāpālita's disciple Kamalabuddhi. Chandrakirti became a great Middle Way philosopher himself, went to the famous Indian university of Nalanda in northeastern India, and eventually became abbot there.

Over the years, Chandrakirti had a famous debate with the master Sanskrit grammarian Chandragomin, who supported the mind-only position of the Vijñānavāda (doctrine of consciousness) school. Other legendary events in his life are that he walked through a stone column, milked the picture of a cow to feed the monks of Nalanda during a time of famine, and rode a stone lion to deter a Turkish army that was threatening the university. These miraculous stories depict in dramatic fashion the Middle Way philosophical position that things lack essence and have no intrinsic nature of their own. This experience of the lack of essence, emptiness (*śūnyata*), fused with compassionate, skillful activity (*upāya*), such as feeding the starving monastic community, exemplify the life of one striving for buddhahood for the sake of others—the ideal of the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being). Chandrakirti's philosophy is set forth most vividly in his two greatest works, *Madhyamakavatara* (Encountering the Middle Way) and *Prasannapada* (Clear words).

Prasannapada utilizes dialectical techniques to indicate the philosophical Middle Way (*madhyamamarga*) between the extremes of permanence and annihilation. In this text, Chandrakirti thoroughly demonstrates the doctrine of the emptiness of intrinsic existence in order to eradicate the habitual tendency of conceptual thought to fabricate reified no-

tions of existence (*bhava*) and nonexistence (*abhava*). *Madhyamakavatara* charts the progressive progress of a bodhisattva on the way to buddhahood according to ten productions of the “thought of enlightenment” (*bodhicitta*), each of which is linked with ten stages (*bhūmi*) and corresponding perfections (*paramita*). Chandrakirti's teachings became popular in Tibet after the twelfth century and have remained popular among Tibetan Buddhist philosophers up to the present day.

—James B. Apple

See also: Bodhisattva; Buddhāpālita; Buddhism and Holy People; Miracles; Reincarnation

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Chang Tao-ling

See Zhang Daoling

Chapman, Jonathon (Johnny Appleseed)

(1774–1845 C.E.)

Christian idealist

American pioneer Jonathon (or John) Chapman was a Christian who received the nickname “Johnny Appleseed” for his tireless planting of orchards for the benefit of frontier settlers. His life has become part of the American imagination, standing for visionary idealism and generosity to improve the lives of others, including future generations. Besides planting apple trees, he gave gifts to settlers and won the respect of Native Americans. He is remembered for treating all the creatures he encountered with love.

Chapman was born in Leominster, Massachusetts, in 1774. In 1801, at the age of twenty-seven, he planted a horse-load of apple seeds—his first orchard, at Licking Creek, Ohio. In 1805, in canoes lashed together, he paddled down the Ohio River, stopping at beautiful spots to plant orchards. His life was one of constant motion, impelled by the mission of planting orchards in remote places. The picture we form by considering the stories told of him is that of a wiry little bearded man wandering the frontier, traveling mostly on foot, carrying leather bags filled with Pennsylvania apple seeds. Often he followed an old Indian trail from Fort Duquesne, located at the site of present-day Pittsburgh, to Detroit.

It is said that Chapman would never eat with a family unless he was assured there was plenty for the children, and he planted the orchards to ensure the perennial harvest of food for future generations of children. He accepted promissory notes in exchange for the planting, but if the debt was not paid, he would not pursue it. He was also a vegetarian by philosophical choice.

Apples could be used to make cider, and cider vinegar could be useful for pickling fruits and vegetables. Apples could be dried or eaten in pies, sauce, butter, and other forms. Chapman planted trees in Indian villages as well as in areas settled by pioneers. During the War of 1812, he traveled fearlessly in areas where other white men could not go. In 1815, lost in the forest and suffering from typhoid or malaria, he cured himself and survived.

A settler gave Chapman shoes one November and later noticed that he was barefoot. When the donor grew angry, Chapman explained, "I met a barefoot man in greater need" (Jones 2000). Chapman salvaged cast-off homespun and buckskin, wearing them in layers. During part of his life he wore a big cloth coffee sack. Though he looked odd, he was respected. He gave spiritual books to settlers, and ribbons and calico to their children.

Once, a missionary preaching in Ohio cited the New Testament, "Take one coat, one pair of shoes, one staff," and then asked listeners, "Where now is there a man like the primitive Christians of old, traveling to heaven barefoot and clad in coarse raiment?" Chapman approached and said, "Here's your primitive Christian" (Jones 2000). Chapman was inspired by Christian mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), who taught that everything in the world exists from a divine origin, that the souls of living beings are clothed with natural forms that enable them to exist here and perform their roles, and that these forms correspond to higher realities in an ideal realm.

If Chapman saw an animal being abused, he'd buy it and give it to a kinder settler. When settlers turned out lame horses to die, Chapman fed them in the winter then found them good summer pastures. He was known for gentleness and reverence toward all forms of life, including bees, snakes, and bears. Helping a settler make a road, he once accidentally destroyed a hornets' nest; gently removing a hornet that had stung him, he asked his companions not to kill it.

Native Americans treated Chapman as a great medicine man because of his healing powers, his eccentricities, and his ability to withstand pain. Once, when chased by a war party, he submerged himself in a swamp with his mouth out of the water, becoming an unseen part of nature. "America's St. Francis" died in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1845. Anyone today who freely distributes goods in America is likely to be called a "Johnny Appleseed."

—William J. Jackson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Nature

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Charlemagne

(742–814 C.E.)

Christian king, emperor

Charlemagne, king of the Franks from 768 until his death in 814 and founder of the Carolingian Empire, was canonized in 1165 by the antipope Pascal III as a favor to the German king and emperor Frederick I ("Barbarossa," 1123–1190), who had elected him in a schism against the legitimate pope, Alexander III.

Charlemagne and his brother Carloman inherited the Frankish throne from their father, Pepin III ("the Short"), who had usurped the position from the Merovingian dynasty in 751. After Carloman's death in 771 and Charlemagne's accession as sole ruler, he consolidated and enlarged the territory of his kingdom through military victories in Italian Lombardy, the Spanish March, Bavaria, and Saxony, this last a land whose people he forcibly converted to Christianity. He subjected further territories, making them tributary states. Charlemagne was committed to learning and letters, gathered scholars and artists at his court at Aachen in present-day western Germany, and instituted moral and religious reforms throughout his kingdom. On Christmas Day in the year 800, Charlemagne was crowned emperor by Pope Leo III in Rome, making a decisive break with Byzantium and founding the Western Empire. At his death in 814, Charlemagne bequeathed his empire to his son, Louis the Pious, whose own death in 840 ultimately resulted in its dissolution. Charlemagne was often remembered as an exemplar of ideal rulership and was for centuries invoked by French and German rulers to legitimize political claims or policies.

Although memory of Charlemagne never waned and his reputation as an extraordinary ruler was overwhelming, his sainthood was more a matter of practical politics than of sincere piety. Charlemagne's canonization in 1165 occurred during the empire's struggle with the papacy when Barbarossa (the first to employ the term "Holy Empire") prevailed upon Pascal III to canonize Charlemagne as part of a program to underscore the sacral character of his imperial office. Barbarossa had Charlemagne's corpse solemnly translated on December 29, 1165. A document emanating from

Barbarossa's court the following year that recorded the event speaks of St. Charlemagne as a lawgiver and praises him for his piety, foundation of churches, conversion of Saxons and other non-Christians, and expansion of Christianity. With a total disregard for historical veracity, the *Vita Sancti Karoli* (Life of St. Charles), composed by 1179, praised him for his so-called pilgrimage to the Holy Land, establishing historical precedent for the Crusades.

The church at Aachen, which Charlemagne had built and where he was buried, became the center of his cult, though his relics were disseminated and his cult spread throughout the empire. In the fourteenth century, his feast was adopted by the Valois kings of France as they, too, sought to claim Charlemagne as forefather. However, Charlemagne's feast day (first on December 29, the day of the translation, but soon thereafter changed to January 28, the anniversary of his death) was never incorporated into the Roman calendar, and Pascal's canonization was never officially recognized by the Roman church.

—*M. Cecilia Gaposchkin*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Charles I

(1600–1649 C.E.)

Anglican king, martyr

The reputation of King Charles I of England for sanctity is entirely posthumous. Reserved and inflexible, Charles Stuart, born in 1600, came to the throne in 1625 convinced, like his father James I before him, of his divine right to rule. His reign was plagued by political conflicts, financial crises, and religious tensions. Constitutional questions about the relationship between king and Parliament caused mounting pressures, which were exacerbated by financial problems engendered by wars with Spain and France. In addition, religious issues loomed large between those, including Charles, who favored a "high church" form of Anglicanism and more radical reformers who hoped to eliminate what they saw as

residual Catholic elements in the Church of England. The most radical of these reformers, the Puritans, hoped for a complete reorganization of the church, including the elimination of bishops and the sacraments. These tensions erupted in civil war between king and Parliament in 1642. Ultimately, Charles was captured, charged with high treason, tried, and, on January 30, 1649, executed.

Royalist accounts portrayed Charles's execution as the martyrdom of a divinely appointed ruler who chose to die rather than disobey God's will by renouncing his sacred kingship. Handkerchiefs dipped in the king's blood at the scene of the execution were reported to effect miraculous cures. Charles's scaffold speech, in which he described monarchy as a trust from God that he would not betray, and the publication a month later of *Eikon Basilike: The Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings*, which claimed the king as its author, solidified the image of Charles as a martyr whose trial and imprisonment mirrored the passion of Christ.

It is likely that Charles was venerated annually in secret on January 30 even during the Commonwealth. In any case, with the restoration of the monarchy, the cult of Charles the Martyr became official, and his feast day was entered into the Book of Common Prayer in 1662. Even after the concept of sacred kingship lost favor, Charles was still regarded as a martyr, with emphasis placed on his support of the traditional Anglican Church structure, particularly his defense of the episcopacy, as the cause of his martyrdom. Although his feast was temporarily dropped in 1859, it reentered the Anglican calendar in 1980. Charles was the last saint officially canonized by the Anglican Church.

—*Mary Lynn Rampolla*

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Reform and Reaction; Rulers as Holy People

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Chengguan (Ch'eng-kuan)

(738–839 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, patriarch

Chengguan, born in 738, was a Chinese Buddhist monk of the Tang dynasty (618–907) who was later honored as the

fourth patriarch of the Huayan school (named after the Buddhist text *Huayan Jing* [The garland of Buddha]) because of his dedicated work to further Huayan teaching. He entered the monastic order at the age of eleven under the Chan master Pei at Baolin monastery. Having received his full precepts at the age of twenty, he traveled widely and studied the teachings of other schools (traditionally there are eight schools in China).

In 776, Chengguan visited Wutai, Emei, and other holy mountains on pilgrimage. It seems that he loved Mt. Wutai so much that he returned there and stayed in Huayan monastery, where he started his research on *Huayan Jing*, dedicating his long life to the exhaustive study of this particular text. He became well known as the Huayan Commentator. In 796, the emperor invited him to Changan (today Xian), the capital, to assist Prajna, a Kashmir monk, in his translation of the latter part of the *Huayan Jing*, which is known as the Huayan in Forty Fascicles. Under imperial order, Chengguan wrote a commentary on the new translation and also lectured to the emperor on *Huayan Jing*. Thus he was given the title of National Teacher Qingliang by the emperor, since Qingliang is another name for Mt. Wutai where he stayed. He died at the age of 101 in 839; according to another source he lived seventy-two years.

Chengguan had more than a hundred disciples, among whom four were eminent, and Zongmi became his successor in the transmission of *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine). Chengguan wrote more than thirty works, mostly commentaries on the *Huayan Jing*. Although his main task was to spread the teaching of Huayan school, he also showed the elements of Chan and Tiantai teachings in his thought, since he had gained a thorough understanding of them through his comprehensive study of different schools.

—Guang Xing

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Chien-chen

See Jianzhen

Chih-i

See Zhiyi

Chih-yen

See Zhiyan

Child Prodigies

The Christian gospels emphasize the closeness of children to God, a belief that is replayed in legends of holy people in many religious traditions. It is a theme common to most religions that holy people are marked out from youth (or even before) as uniquely close to God. Some are given specially by God in response to prayer, such as the Jewish prophet Samuel, the proto-Christian John the Baptist, or the sixteenth-century Hindu saint Kanakadasa. Sometimes births are miraculous, without pain to the mother, for example.

More often, a particularly great holy infant displays his or her separateness from the normal rules of human development: Shakyamuni Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama, fifth century B.C.E.), for example, is supposed to have taken seven steps immediately after his birth, declaring, "This is my final rebirth." A lotus flower bloomed under each step, after which the infant was washed by two dragons. The newborn Herakles of ancient Greek mythology strangled two snakes that had been sent to kill him. The infant Zoroaster (c. 1400 B.C.E.) laughed at birth, and in boyhood he was defended from harm by animals. In the Christian apocrypha and Muslim tradition, the infant Jesus spoke in his mother Mary's defense when she was reproached for bearing a bastard. These sources also report that as a child, he made a clay bird come to life and that he once struck a playmate dead with a curse, after which he performed his first resurrection.

Numerous Christian saints have reportedly worked miracles in childhood. The Ethiopian Takla Haymanot (d. 1313) was said to have performed miracles before he could walk, and Ciarán of Clonmacnoise (512–548), while helping his foster mother with her dyeing, succeeded in turning *everything* in her house blue. Such childhood miracles, however, are mostly limited in Christian tradition to the border areas of the religion rather than its historic core. In Buddhism, too, miraculous activity by youngsters is mostly limited to the very top rank of holy people or to the saints of border areas, such as the Tibetan Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), who was already famous for supernatural portents when he began his spiritual education at age two. Miraculous childhoods also appear in Amerindian and African religions, such as the Maasai legend of Kidongoi, the first prophet, found as a child wandering on the hills and already endowed with powers of prophecy and miracle working. In general, children are thought to be particularly open to visions and prophecy, perhaps most notably in recent Christianity. To site just three famous examples, Bernadette Soubirous was fourteen when she had her vision of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes in 1858; the Virgin's apparition at Fatima, Portugal, in 1917 was to three illiterate children; and Mary's first appearance at Medjugorje in 1981 was to six Croatians, aged ten to seventeen.

Child prodigies are a major theme in Hinduism and Buddhism. The Buddhist Atisha (982–1054), to give just one ex-

ample, mastered Sanskrit and literary skills at a young age. The Indian predilection for precocious child-saints extends also to the Sikh faith: Nanak (1469–1539), the founder of Sikhism, could write verse within days of starting school. The theme of the learned child prodigy is by no means limited to India, though. Legends report that the great Zen master Dogen Zenji (1200–1253) could read Chinese poetry by the age of four; Zhiyi (538–597), the founder of Tiantai Buddhism, as a child could repeat a sutra after hearing it a single time—he could also see events in the past; the Jewish leader Elijah ben Solomon (1720–1797), the Vilna Gaon, gave a learned sermon in the great synagogue of Vilna at the age of three and had mastered the Talmud and Kabbala by age thirteen. In such company, Jesus’ discourse in the Temple when he was twelve years old (Luke 2:47) seems modest.

More important is precocity in religious development. So many holy people have been portrayed as precocious in devotion that it is a relief to find somebody like the Christian Adalbert of Prague (c. 956–997), who led a frivolous youth until scared onto the right path by attending a particularly harrowing deathbed. Much more often, Christian hagiography emphasizes that saints, while still children, had the mind and manners “of old men,” and rejoices to tell of young children passing their lives in prayer while their contemporaries are out playing. Nanak, the first Sikh guru, took his first important religious stand at the age of eleven when he refused to don the Hindu sacred thread. Other children stated a firm preference for monastic life, even against their parents’ wishes, even before they reached adolescence. For example, the Hindu Shankara (d. 820) renounced the world when he was eight years old and began his ascetic wanderings around India. The Zen master Basui Zenji (1327–1387), when only seven, was driven on a religious quest by his father’s death.

When these children were drawn to a minority religion, they often proved as steadfast as their elders. Christianity especially, perhaps moved by Jesus’ scriptural proclamation “Suffer the children to come to me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 19:14 and parallels), has encouraged legends of patient suffering for the faith by children. A surprising number of early martyrs were children or teenagers; the theme continues today with figures such as the South African girl Manche Masemola (1912–1928), who was attracted to the Anglican mission against her parents’ wishes, abused, and finally killed for her faith. Examples can be found in other faiths as well. A particularly moving case of child martyrdom is that of the four sons of Sikh guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), aged seven to eighteen years, who were all killed by Mughal authorities in 1704. Two died defending their father. The other two escaped with their grandmother but were later betrayed. When they refused to accept Islam, they were bricked up alive behind a wall. Similarly,

several Shi’a Muslim imams are credited as models of perseverance in the faith while still children.

—Phyllis G. Jestic

See also: Adalbert of Prague; Gautama; John the Baptist; Kanakadasa; Kidongoi; Nanak; Suffering and Holy People; Takla Haymonot; Zoroaster

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Chilembwe, John

(1875–1915 C.E.)

Baptist minister, rebel, martyr

John Chilembwe, Malawi’s national hero, became the first Malawian Baptist minister in 1900 and led the only armed uprising against British rule in Africa in the 1910s. He was born in 1875 to a Mang’anya mother who had been captured by his Yao father in a slave raid. He may have received some education at the Presbyterian Blantyre Mission, but his life changed when he started to work as a cook for Joseph Booth, an evangelical missionary from Australia who was one of the first proponents of the idea of “Africa for the African.”

Chilembwe soon advanced from cook to translator, and he and Booth became friends. In 1897, Booth took him to America, where Chilembwe trained at the Virginia Theological Seminary of the (black) National Baptists. Chilembwe returned to Malawi in 1900 as a National Baptist missionary to open the first African-instituted mission in Malawi, the Providence Industrial Mission (PIM), or First African Baptist Church.

Being the first ordained black minister in southern Malawi and a black missionary presented challenges. The settlers, and even some missionaries, were not sympathetic to him. He gained some respect by establishing a good English school, and by building—with very little outside help—an impressive church. PIM expanded into several areas of southern and central Malawi, with its stronghold in the Migowi area to the east, close to the Mozambique border. By 1914, the African Baptist Church had 1,275 baptized members.

In 1914, Chilembwe and his associates from his own and other churches started to prepare an armed uprising against colonial rule to address the grievances of white racist behavior. Chilembwe wrote to the governor to protest the recruitment (and mistreatment) of Malawian soldiers for World War I. When the answer seemed to be his impending arrest, the uprising was started; on January 23, 1915, there was a failed night attack on the Blantyre armory and a successful attack on Bruce Estate at Magomero. There had been much mistreatment of Africans there, and two white men were killed (although their wives were spared). The colonial army

struck back. Chilembwe's force was able to repel the first army attack but soon had to give up the fight. The uprising never had any real chance of success. It seems that Chilembwe, with his poor eyesight, and in no way a military man, was aware of this, and that he was willing to strike a blow for justice and die.

Chilembwe fled to Migowi and was soon killed while trying to escape to Mozambique. The army dynamited PIM's impressive church building, and the church was outlawed, only to be allowed again in 1924. In 1926, Dr. Daniel Malekebu (with his wife Flora)—who had been in America during the uprising—reopened the mission, and he spent his life there working as pastor and physician.

The fact that Chilembwe's grave cannot be identified gave birth to the myth that he had escaped to America and would return one day. Democratic Malawi sees Chilembwe as its national hero: His portrait is printed on all banknotes, and January 15 is Chilembwe Day. His congregation at PIM sings: "John Chilembwe is lying in the grave, but his story marches on."

—Klaus Fiedler

See also: Brown, John; Christianity and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Chimalman

(Early 9th cent. C.E.)

Mesoamerican heroine

In Aztec mythology dating from at least the early ninth century, Chimalman was a female warrior from the region of Huitznahuac who battled the Chichimec warrior Mixcoatl before bearing his son, Quetzalcoatl. The battle between the Chichimec warrior and his consort was telling. Chimalman appeared to Mixcoatl naked and he shot four atlatl darts at her. The first went over her head and she ducked, the second went to her side and she avoided it. Chimalman caught the third dart in her hand, and she allowed the fourth one to pass between her legs. Mixcoatl fled but returned to look for her another day. He shot four more darts at her with the same result. Then he slept with her and she became pregnant.

After four days of great pain, the infant Quetzalcoatl ripped his way out of Chimalman's womb, causing Chimalman to die in childbirth. This ultimate sacrifice on the part

of the female warrior assured her an afterlife in Tamoanchan, the most revered paradise reserved for those given the highest honors in Mesoamerica—warriors who died in battle and women who died in childbirth. The story marks the infant Quetzalcoatl as the son of two warriors and also as the son of a mother who sacrificed herself so that he could be born. The Mesoamerican predilection for military power with divine sanction was thus doubly reinforced. The story also reveals the important role that women played in the war machine as childbearers.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Axayacatl; Gender and Holy People; Huitzilopochtli; Mixcoatl; Nezahualcoyotl; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Tezcatlipoca

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Chinmayananda

(1916–1993 C.E.)

Hindu teacher

Swami Chinmayananda, a modern-day guru (teacher), sought to reclaim the spirituality of Advaita Vedanta, the philosophy of nondualism set forth by the Indian poet and scholar Sankara (eighth century), to reinvigorate what he saw as the waning of Hinduism. This attempt to bring about a renaissance in Hinduism was characteristic of previous neo-Hindu social reformers such as Swami Vivekananda. A spiritual guide for *sadhakas* (seekers) and a champion of social and cultural reform, Chinmayananda also set up the Chinmaya Mission in India, which now has branches worldwide.

Chinmayananda was born Balakrishna Menon on April 11, 1916, in Ernakulam, Kerala, India, and as a young man pursued a career in journalism. An investigative article on the topic of *sadhus* (holy men) eventually led him to become a disciple of Swami Sivanand of the Divine Life Society in Haridwar, India. He also spent eight years studying with Swami Tapovanand of the Adi Sankaracarya order, where he was initiated as a *sannyasin* (renunciant) and took the name Swami Chinmayananda.

Subsequently, he toured India giving lectures and spreading the word of Vedanta. He interpreted Vedanta as a science of life, a logical and rational process through which one could come to realize the ultimate reality underlying all differences. Accepting *sadhakas* irrespective of their caste and

gender and owing allegiance to Hinduism rather than to any one of its many sectarian divisions, he was an advocate of progressive Hinduism typical of other neo-Hindu reformers. In addition, he wrote commentaries on the Upanishads such as the *Prasna*, *Aitareya*, *Isa*, *Mundaka*, *Mandukya*, *Kaivalya*, and *Taittiriya* and commented on the Bhagavad Gita and on some of Sankara's works. His seminal work, where he delineates his interpretation of Vedanta in three volumes, is *Vedanta: Science of Life* (1979–1980). He passed away on August 4, 1993.

—*Sucharita Adluri*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Status; Vivekananda

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Chinul

(1158–1210 C.E.)

Buddhist writer, reformer

A Korean Buddhist writer and philosopher-reformer of the Koryo period (918–1392), Chinul was an ordained monk in the Son or Zen tradition and held the rank of National Teacher (*kuksa*) during the period of Ch'oe military rule (1170–1258). This same military had promoted and supported Son Buddhism over the teaching sects that had been supported by the monarchy it had displaced and the aristocracy and civil bureaucracy that it had oppressed. Because of the emphasis in Son Buddhism on meditation and austere discipline, the promotion of this tradition allowed the military rulers to effectively eliminate Buddhist interference in the Koryo government and its draining of wealth from the economy.

Chinul is most noted for his incorporation of Huayen Buddhism as explicated by Li T'ung-hsüan (635–730) into Son Buddhist practice and for his attempt to unite all the sects of Korea (teaching and meditation) into a single sect (the Chogye sect). Half a century earlier, the royal monk Uich'on, with the backing of the throne of his father and three brothers, had decimated the ranks of the meditation sects by establishing a meditative Ch'ontae sect

with a primary emphasis on Ch'ontae scholasticism and ritual. Chinul's response was to reverse that synthesis by placing primary emphasis on instantaneous enlightenment achieved through meditation as the basis for understanding Buddhist doctrines.

Chinul's view of Buddhist sectarian unity rested on the notion that instantaneous enlightenment should be followed by study of the scriptures and the practice of rituals of the Pure Land cult. He based his understanding of enlightenment on the writings of the Northern Sung monk Ta Hui (1089–1163), especially Ta Hui's understanding of how to use the living phrases (*hwadu*) or *koans* of Chan teachers.

Chinul's reform of Buddhism was important for the period because it defined Buddhism primarily as a practical tradition for the enlightenment of people, eliminating reference to the state-sponsored paradigm of Buddhism as an institution for obtaining blessings and warding off disasters. The new philosophy was also important as a reform of meditative Buddhism, which previously had sponsored geomantic and prognostication services to the state. Finally, in line with his emphasis on meditation as the primary focus of Buddhism, Chinul also established lay meditation and scripture study societies. It was these societies that were to preserve Buddhism in the centuries to follow, when the new Choson kingdom replaced Buddhism with Confucian orthodoxy.

—*John I. Gould*

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Uich'on

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Chiragh-i Dihli, Nasiruddin

(1276/1277–1356 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Nasiruddin Mahmud Chiragh-i Dihli, whose name means the "lamp of Delhi," was the last in the line of the five great Indian Chishti saints. He was born in 1276 or 1277 at Ayodhya, India, and after a traditional madrasa education went through a long period of renunciation and spiritual training. During this time he is said to have lived in the wilderness by consuming leaves and lemons. After this, he went to Delhi in search of further spiritual training. He became a disciple of

Nizamuddin Auliya, and the aged shaykh soon asked him to carry on his work in Delhi.

Like his shaykh, Nasiruddin remained celibate. Now a sufi master, he continued his work of spiritual training despite difficulties with the eccentric Tughluq rulers. Sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq at one point forced most of Delhi's Muslim population south in order to populate a new capital in the Deccan region of India. The next sultan, Muhammad's cousin, Firuz Sah Tighluq, according to a famous anecdote was once left standing in the rain outside Nasiruddin's *khanqah* (hostel for sufis) while the saint was completing his prayers. The sultan is said to have remarked to a companion, "We are not kings. They [the saints] are the real kings."

K. A. Nizami (1991), who wrote a biography of Nasiruddin, sees Nasiruddin's role as mediating the conflict between the mystics and the Muslim jurists, who in that age were condemning excesses in sufi practice and heretical elements in doctrine. Nasiruddin ended such customs as the use of musical instruments in *sama'* (periods of performing and listening to music) and prostration before the shaykh. Records of Nasiruddin's spiritual sessions were recorded by his disciple, Hamid Qalandar, under the title *Khayr al-Majalis* (The best assemblies). Another disciple, Mir Khurd, recorded the history of the Chishtis in his *Siyar al-Auliya* (Lives of the saints). In it he wrote that "among the disciples of Shaykh Nizamuddin Auliya', Shaykh Nasiruddin was like the moon among the stars." Nasiruddin's most notable spiritual successor was Muhammad Bandanawaz Gisudaraz (1321–1422).

It is said that on Nasiruddin's death in 1356, the relics (*tabarrukat*) he had received from previous shaykhs in the line were buried with him, symbolizing the end of the first lineage of great Indian Chishti shaykhs.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Gisudaraz, Muhammad Bandanawaz; Hermits; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja; Recognition; Sexuality and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Chishti, Muinuddin

(1141–1236 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti is the saint credited with bringing the Chishti sufi order to India in the twelfth century. He

is known as Sultan al-Hind (the sultan of India) and as Khwaja Gharib Nawaz (helper of the poor).

Muinuddin was born in 1141 in the province of Sijistan in Iran and is said to have set out in search of spiritual training after receiving an inheritance, including a garden, in his late teens. According to legend, he was moved to pursue this path after eating a piece of cake given to him by a wandering ascetic, Ibrahim Qunduzi, in the garden. He studied in Samarkand and Bukhara. In northern Iran, he became the disciple of a sufi known as Uthman Haruni, whom he accompanied and served diligently for more than twenty years.

On pilgrimage to Mecca, he received in a vision a spiritual command from the prophet Muhammad to travel to India. On his way, he stopped at Lahore, where he undertook a forty-day *chilla*, or retreat, at the tomb of the eleventh-century Persian mystic al-Hujwiri. Today an area of that shrine commemorates this event. He then traveled to Rajasthan, India, and settled at Ajmer, which is today the site of his shrine, the most important sufi site in India. At that time, Ajmer was the capital of the Chauhan dynasty under the Rajput king Prithviraj. Hagiography stresses Muinuddin's role in converting the indigenous population through his piety, teachings, and miracles, which include the famous story of his besting the Rajput court magician, Jaipal, in a duel of magical powers.

In the Indian environment, the saint is said to have adapted Hindu practices such as the use of devotional music (*qawwali*) and yogic-type breathing and concentration exercises. He is credited with laying out the basic principles of the Chishti order, including universal love, malice toward none, simplicity, and generosity. After marrying late in life, he had three sons and one daughter, Bibi Jamal, who was later recognized as a powerful mystic who received spiritual authority (*khilafat*) from her father. A book of sayings attributed to Muinuddin is believed by scholars to be a pious forgery of a later period.

Muinuddin's shrine is famous for its huge *urs*, or annual commemoration of the death anniversary of the saint. Hindus and members of other faiths, as well as Muslims, revere it. The facilities for *langar* (food distribution) include a huge pair of cooking pots bestowed by the Mughal ruler Akbar and his son, Jehangir, in the sixteenth century. Indeed, the Mughals were great devotees of the shrine.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Miracles; Mission; Sufism

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Chisupe, Billy Goodson

(1916 C.E.–)

Protestant prophet, healer

The home of Billy Goodson Chisupe in Malawi became the object of a nationwide pilgrimage in 1995 when this elderly Malawian village farmer started handing out, free of charge, an alleged cure for AIDS/HIV that he said was obtained through spiritual intervention. A few months earlier, in the context of the terrifying AIDS pandemic in this central African country and immediately following the installation of the first democratic government, the Protestant Chisupe (born in 1916) had emerged as a prophet. Without a history in healing or herbalism, on August 22, 1994, he claimed that his long-since-deceased maternal uncle had revealed a cure for AIDS/HIV to him in a dream. Later, he touted it as multipurpose. Chisupe explained, “God speaks to me and I act on what He says. I was told to heal, so I heal” (De Gabriele 1998, 3).

The medicine consisted of a reddish drink reminiscent of the infusion that was distributed in the *mchape* witch eradication movement of the 1930s, and it was soon given this same name. Chisupe claimed the medicine would only be efficacious if people reverted to ancestral ways and abstained from further sexual promiscuity. Moreover, the cure had to be obtained in person from his homestead at Chikamana village (Mangochi district). As a result of profuse media coverage, between February and June 1995 Chisupe drew an estimated crowd of 300,000, including people from all over the country, from all walks of life, all seeking healing from AIDS and modernity’s malcontents. Chisupe’s homestead became a liminal space of national unity and morality in the face of struggle and suffering.

The Malawi government responded halfheartedly. Biomedical testing of *mchape* faltered. In the end, Chisupe refused collaboration, claiming that he doubted the objectivity of the government and, more important, that “white,” Western medicine would never accept his African achievement, which would upset the recurrent racial politic hierarchy. With time, however, Chisupe lost his general appeal. In 2004, Chisupe could still be found in his compound with a small number of patients.

—Menno Welling

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Chi-tsang

See Jizang

Chongyan

See Wang Zhe

Chosen People

The religion of ancient Israel rested on the understanding that a nation and a God had entered into a covenant, a contractual bond with one another. It was also widely understood (though alternatives were possible) that no other such covenant existed, that is, that Israel’s relationship with God was unique, that Israel had become the “special treasure” (Heb.: *segula*) of God (Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps. 135:4).

Once it was accepted that the God of all creation had chosen a single group of people and allowed them to form an unmatched intimacy with him, then a question inevitably arose: Why these people rather than others? The earliest books of the Bible already reveal anxiety over this issue and provide several quite diverse attempts to resolve it. Perhaps Abraham, the progenitor of the Jews, was somehow more worthy than others (see Gen. 18:19), perhaps other nations were somehow more corrupt (see Lev. 18:3), or perhaps the creator of the world could just do as he saw fit (see Deut. 10:14). Thus it was not clear whether the choice of Israel for intimacy with God was a sign of any superiority on their part. (The medieval poet and philosopher Judah Halevi wrote in the *Kuzari* that the Jews received the Torah on account of an inherited receptivity to the divine, but this was not typical of later Jewish thought.)

Biblical writers were similarly divided in their understanding of the consequences of divine election. The prophet Isaiah promised (see 37:35) that God would never allow his holy city to be captured by foreigners, but a century later the prophet Jeremiah denounced (7:4) his contemporaries for smugly relying on such assurances; most dramatically, the prophet Amos declared (3:2) that Israel’s very intimacy with God meant that she would be punished for her every transgression.

In later times this diversity of interpretation persisted. Certain Jewish writings from the Greco-Roman period anticipate that when the other great empires had fallen it would be the Jews’ turn to rule the world, but other authors expect only that Israel would finally be left alone to follow her own sacred heritage. Some writers expected that the other nations would finally become followers of the God of Israel, but others dismissed this possibility; the early rabbis seem generally to have belonged to the latter group. Even the very concept of election was reconceived: A well-known rabbinic narrative (see, for example, *Avoda Zara* 2b–3a) proposed

that Israel accepted the Torah only after every other nation had spurned it, and that in fact even Israel only accepted it under threat of immediate obliteration.

In the course of its emergence out of Judaism, Christianity took over the concept of Chosen People but stripped it of its ethnic component: The church was the New Israel, but chosenness was now a function of belief, not descent. In defense of this new understanding, the Jews were often accused of “particularism” and of believing in their own innate superiority. Jewish denials of these imputations often became somewhat frantic but were usually in vain. Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), the first modern Jewish philosopher, tried to historicize election: In response to events in their history, the Jews had undertaken to maintain a certain way of life. Rumors that Jews were engaged in a secret conspiracy to take over the world persisted into the twentieth century, however. More recent Jewish thinkers, such as Mordecai M. Kaplan and Richard L. Rubenstein, have sought to renounce chosenness as an obsolete, offensive, and even dangerous notion, and others, such as Gunther Plaut, Michael Wyschogrod, and David Novak, have proposed various means for preserving and rehabilitating the idea.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Abraham; Halevi, Judah; Judaism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution

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Chos-kyi-grags-pa

See **Dharmakirti**

Chou Tun-I

See **Zhou Dunyi**

Christ

See **Jesus; Jesus (‘Isa)**

Christianity and Holy People

Early Christians proclaimed that all members of their community were “saints” (from the Latin *sanctus*, “holy person”). They were self-selected both by Christian baptism and by conscious effort to live a life in alignment with God, “holy and without blame” (Eph. 1:4). These early Christians set themselves apart from important elements of the culture in which they lived and firmly believed that only people who accepted the message of Jesus Christ would eventually come to true union with God. Outside of rhetorical flourishes, however, it soon became obvious to all that some Christians lived up to their baptismal vows better than others. Some were willing to suffer persecution for their faith, others clearly gave up all the advantages of secular society for God, and yet others seemed specially inspired by God with understanding or grace. As Christianity became a legal religion (early fourth century in the Roman Empire, rather later in the Persian Empire and other regions of Asia), many people accepted Christianity but were not willing to give up “business as usual.”

This contrast between “perfect” and “ordinary” Christian gave rise to the Christian cult of saints. Christians soon came to recognize some of their fellows as especially close to God, as “saints” in the accepted modern sense of the word. Several elements combined to form this Christian image of sanctity: (1) martyrdom—a willingness to die as a witness (in Greek *martyros*) to Christian beliefs; (2) a commitment to give up the illusory pleasures of the world, the better to focus on God, especially by following ascetic practices; and (3) a life of exemplary service to God in service to the broader Christian community. All of these factors include an important element of saint as role model, as one whose example encourages others to align their lives more closely to God.

A final element of the Christian image of sainthood became a major bone of contention between the Christian sects when the Protestant Reformation erupted in the sixteenth century: the believed ability of saints to mediate between Christians and God, serving as special intercessors willing to help those who call upon them. All major branches of Protestantism, with the partial exception of the Anglican communion, rejected this intercessory role of saints, which is still upheld in modern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism.

Nevertheless, all branches of modern Christianity acknowledge that some people are closer to God and more dedicated than others. These people are marked out in some way—whether they are labeled as “saints” or just remembered as role models, founders, and exemplary witnesses. Protestantism has reverted to an early Christian model of unofficial local esteem of its holy people based on the estimation of a particular community rather than a universal seal of approval. At most, a widely acknowledged holy person

can be added to a list of those worthy of special veneration, literally “canonized,” by vote of a denomination, as is the case in the Anglican communion. This semiformal canonization is also typical of the Orthodox churches. Modern Roman Catholicism follows a process begun in the late tenth century and made mandatory in the thirteenth of testing a prospective saint’s holiness through a lengthy process that, if successful, culminates in canonization by the pope declaring that a person is indeed a saint.

Christian Martyrdom

In the early centuries of Christianity, the only people recognized as particularly holy were martyrs. The Christian ideal of the holy person was deeply shaped by the fact of persecution in the early centuries of the religion. Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of Christianity, suffered a slow death by torture because he refused to disavow his teachings, setting himself on a collision course with both Roman and Jewish authorities. This central fact of Christ’s passion was the single most important element in creating the idea of the Christian saint: a truly holy person, one whose life is centered on submission to God’s will, is, above all, a person willing to suffer or die for the faith. For its first three centuries, Christianity was an illegal religion in the Roman Empire, and Christians were also heavily persecuted in the Persian Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. Thus, the emphasis on martyrdom had ample opportunity to take deep root in Christian consciousness. Remaining steadfast in the face of persecution became the ideal. In all branches of modern Christianity, people who die for the faith—whether Russian Orthodox monks killed in Stalin’s purges, Baptist missionaries in Africa, or Roman Catholic victims of Nazi repression—are in general regarded as in at least some sense the best exemplars of the faith, in some particular way close to God, because they gave up everything for their beliefs.

The Christian martyrs of the first three centuries were victims either of outraged mob violence or of civic authorities (both Roman and Persian). Often they brought attack upon themselves by disrupting religious ceremonies or otherwise insulting the religious beliefs of the majority population. Indeed, so many Christians threw themselves headlong into martyrdom in this way that church authorities by the third century had to take a firm stand that it was incompatible with true belief to court death. What continued to mark out early martyrs, though, was a willingness to die when they could be reprieved by disavowing their faith. Already in the early second century, Christians were sharing accounts of heroic martyrdoms, such as that of Stephen (d. c. 36 C.E.), the first martyr, or Polycarp (c. 69–c. 155 C.E.), bishop of Smyrna, and going to great risk to collect the remains of those who died for proper burial, often holding Christian ceremonies at martyrs’ tombs to join the whole community

together, both living and dead. Belief that the righteous dead enjoy the immediate presence of God made the shrine a liminal space, a point of particularly efficacious contact with heaven.

After the triumph of Christianity in Europe, there were fewer opportunities to display heroic virtue by dying for the faith, but internal squabbles kept up the supply of martyrs for a time. In the fourth and fifth centuries, hundreds, if not thousands, were still able to win martyrdom as Christianity defined its doctrines in a process often deeply scarred by persecution and violence against any who disagreed. After that, however, a normative Christianity was only rarely successfully challenged until the end of the Middle Ages. A rare exception is the Iconoclast Controversy of the eighth and ninth centuries, when the image-destroying policies of the Byzantine emperors led to the death of many protesting monks and priests. But once doctrine was fixed, until the end of the Middle Ages people who challenged established belief structures were declared “heretics” rather than martyrs by the large majority of Christians. It was the winners who decided which people were saints. A few missionaries were still martyred as northern and eastern Europe converted to Christianity, but in general, martyrdom in the ancient sense became rare.

Although the number of martyrs slowed to a trickle by the ninth century, it is possible to see that Christians still regarded martyrdom as the most perfect form of sanctity; the modern Roman Catholic Church even requires fewer miracles as proof of sanctity from martyrs than from other saints. Veneration of early Christian martyrs continued. Especially English and Scandinavian authorities also were eager to hail any death at the hands of non-Christians as martyrdom, even when the victims were not killed specifically because of their beliefs. Monks killed by marauding Vikings, kings stricken down in battle against pagan foes, even simple murder victims won popular acclaim as martyrs.

The sixteenth century, with its revival of bitter doctrinal disputes between rival Christian factions, saw a recrudescence of martyrdom. Especially the Protestant sects used the fact that hundreds of their own were willing to die for the reformed faith as proof that their teaching was true. Roman Catholic propagandists were slow to give official recognition to their own new martyrs—many saints of the Catholic Reformation were only canonized in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Catholics soon regained lost ground, though, with the many missionaries who were martyred as new lands were opened to Christianity.

Martyrdom has not gone out of fashion. Since the sixteenth century, thousands of Christians of many denominations have been killed because they resisted movements ranging from the secularization of the French Revolution to

the rise of communism and fundamentalist Islam. The end is not yet in sight.

Asceticism as the Bloodless Martyrdom of Peacetime

Not every Christian holy person is fortunate enough to die for the faith, although many have longed for martyrdom. Especially because of the long periods of Christian history with few martyrs, religious authorities came to acknowledge a new category of holy person, the “confessor.” This is a person whose whole life professes the Christian religion—but who dies peacefully. The ranks of the confessors can include any exemplary Christian, but in practice most formally canonized confessors have been ascetics. Asceticism in the Christian tradition can take many forms, ranging from a general refusal to wallow in luxury at the expense of a life focused on the soul to self-inflicted disciplinary practices that could cripple or even kill the practitioner. In general, Protestantism turned from the ancient and medieval model of “contempt for the world,” but many modern Protestants considered holy people have been marked by a special life of self-abnegation in some way.

The ascetic trains his or her body, taming it so the soul is free to focus on the things of God. Ascetic practices became a mark of particularly devout Christians in the course of the third century, when a movement began of flight “to the desert”—away from the temptations of normal society, where the ascetic could be alone with God. This movement gained strength in the fourth century, when Christianity became legal and politically encouraged, and when large numbers began to make superficial conversions; just being a Christian was no longer enough to mark a person out as especially holy. Asceticism was thus surrogate martyrdom: Some great hermits of the Egyptian desert indeed mortified their flesh to the point of living death.

An especially widespread form of asceticism through much of Christian history has been rejection of sexual relations. Already by the time of Paul (d. c. 65 C.E.), Christians singled out the chaste for special reverence. By the third century, it was expected that men elected as bishops live apart from their wives. Monks and hermits, at least those with any pretensions to holiness, also rejected human sexuality, and since the eleventh century official chastity was also imposed on western European priests. A very large body of legends about young virgin martyrs such as Agnes (d. c. 300) and Agatha (d. c. 250–253) bears witness to what was especially a late medieval fascination with those who gave up ordinary human patterns of life for God. Martin Luther (1483–1546) and those he inspired rejected this emphasis on chastity along with many other Christian ascetic practices, but it continued until very recently as almost a *sine qua non* for Roman Catholic and Orthodox saints. It has only been since 1978, with the pontificate of John Paul II, that a significant

number of married people have been canonized as saints, and even so they remain a very small fraction of the whole.

Service of God and Neighbor

Large numbers of medieval Irish monastic saints adopted a predominantly Celtic form of asceticism, voluntary exile from all that was familiar to them (*peregrinatio*). They traveled to England and the continent of Europe, where the greatest of them, such as Columbanus (543–615), led very active lives as missionaries. This presents what has been a great quandary in much of the history of Christian sainthood: Should the pious person seeking God live a life of withdrawal from the world, or follow the precept to love one’s neighbor by working to help others in the world, thus risking, at best, a distraction, and, at worst, pollution? It was generally accepted in late antique and medieval Christianity that it was nearly impossible for a person in active contact with the world to be a saint. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) did his best to avoid becoming a bishop; it was said of Martin of Tours (c. 336–397) that he worked many fewer miracles after being forced into the cares of the episcopate. At the same time, however, the world has many needs, and Jesus specifically commanded the first Christians to “go forth into the world and teach” (Matt. 28:19). The official solution was paradoxical: The ideal saint should embrace wholeheartedly any service to the community that was demanded, whether it meant serving as an administrator, spiritual counselor, or missionary—but should never seek such office and should accept it only unwillingly.

In reality, the large majority of Christian saints have been extremely active in the affairs of the world. Medieval and early modern saints are most likely to have been founders or other leaders of religious communities. The simple fact is that a saint cannot win general recognition unless other people know about him or her. The faith of many saints is clearly known to God alone, but such people do not make their way into books. Most saints in the premodern, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox traditions have been professional religious, mostly playing very public roles.

When nonprofessionals have won recognition as holy people, it is because they have lived extraordinary lives of the spirit, either as theologians or as mystics. In both cases, special religious insight has typically led such people to play an active role in secular society. An extreme case is that of the Lutheran Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), driven by his convictions to join an attempt to assassinate Hitler. There are, however, hundreds of saints who have intervened in public affairs because of visionary experience of God, including the great women mystics of the late Middle Ages, such as Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), who were only allowed a public voice because of their visionary role.

As in so many cases, the sixteenth century marked an important turning point in this issue of separation from the world as a desirable quality for saints. Since that time, both Catholicism and the Protestant denominations have seen an enormous outpouring of caritative agencies. Nuns and monks made teaching and care for the underprivileged a central part of their vocation; devout men and women have founded and devoted their lives to institutions as far removed as Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity and the Salvation Army. They are among the most beloved of Christianity's holy people.

The Christian Saint as Intercessor

"The Ave Maria" (in English "The Hail Mary"), one of the most famous of all Christian prayers, invoking the Virgin Mary, includes the line "pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our deaths." The idea that saints can pray effectively for sinners, rejected by all Protestant denominations but the Anglicans as unbiblical, was central to mainstream Christianity from at least the fourth century to the sixteenth and is still very important to Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. Two basic premises lie behind the notion that saints can intercede with God: the clearly expressed New Testament belief that souls of the righteous dead are in heaven and enjoy the presence of God, and a deep sense that God is distant and rather quick to anger—so a "professional" on speaking terms with God is the best person to present a penitent's case.

The role of the saint as intercessor appears to have two roots. On the one hand, centuries of pre-Christian Greek religion emphasized that semidivine heroes continued to protect their people after death. On the other hand, by the fourth century living holy people, normally men, ascetics considered awesome in their spiritual renunciation, had become spokespeople for the common people around them. They could speak to distant powers, whether imperial officials or God. It was not a great jump to believe that such dedicated holy people would continue to look with benevolent interest on the communities they had aided in life. Saints were therefore invoked to help people with all the intractable problems of life, whether illness, poverty, or any other kind of trouble. In early centuries likely to be the patrons of specific communities, by the late Middle Ages some saints were regarded as "specialists" able to deal with particular difficulties, such as Apollonia (d. c. 249), invoked for toothache. Although sometimes lost in popular belief, it is a central theological point that saints have no power to work miracles. They can only ask God to work miracles. Thanks, however, to their lives of service to God, they are particularly likely to receive a favorable reception.

Because of the Christian belief that at the Last Judgment souls will be reunited with bodies, the cast-off shells of dead

saints retain importance. The veneration of relics is a very characteristically Christian practice. Ordinary Christians would seek burial near saints, often in the literal hope that they would be swept up to heaven along with them at the Second Coming. More common was a simple quid pro quo: Like any other possible intercessor, it was assumed that a saint would intervene to help somebody who showed them proper respect. Thus respect to the saint's tangible remains was likely to move the saint to kindness. The tombs of saints were the ultimate liminal spaces, providing a bridge to the divine. Throughout medieval Europe, churches and individuals collected relics as a way of being close to a saint, who in turn is close to God.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Action in the World; Agatha; Agnes; Ascetics as Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Augustine of Hippo; Authority of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Canonization; Catherine of Siena; Child Prodigies; Chosen People; Compassion and Holy People; Death; Demons and Monsters; Devotion; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Guidance; Hagiography; Hereditary Holiness; Hermits; Imitation of Christ; Insanity; Intermediaries; Jesus; Laity; Lawgivers as Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Luther, Martin; Martin of Tours; Martyrdom and Persecution; Meditation and Holy People; Messiahs; Miracles; Mission; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Nature; Orthodoxy and Saints; Patriotism and Holy People; Perpetua and Felicity; Politics and Holy People; Polycarp; Pope-Saints; Priests; Protestantism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Recognition; Reform and Reaction; Repentance and Holy People; Ritual; Rulers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Status; Stephen; Suffering and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Christina of Markyate

(c. 1097–c. 1161 C.E.)

Christian recluse

Christina of Markyate is only known to modern scholars through an account written by a twelfth-century monk, but here she emerges as one of the most fascinating holy women

of the Middle Ages in western Europe. Born around 1097 to a prosperous Anglo-Saxon family, she insisted on being a “bride of Christ” and so refused the marriage that her parents had arranged for her. In order to get her way, Christina had to cope with a physically abusive mother and finally fled her home. She took refuge with various male hermits, relationships that were not always happy for her. Finally, she found a champion in the powerful Anglo-Norman abbot of St. Albans, Geoffrey. The two of them forged a bond of spiritual friendship that enabled Christina to settle down into a hermitage with like-minded women in the vicinity. In providing advice and criticism for the abbot and for other male clerics, Christina can be seen as a harbinger of a new practice of spiritual friendship between men and women in the medieval Christian church, a phenomenon that in the decades after her death in about 1161 became much more evident.

Already as a teenager Christina was handed over by her parents to the violent bishop Ralph Flambard, who was allowed to try to seduce or rape her. Escaping his clutches, she was given in marriage but refused to give her consent and remained a virgin. She appealed to the church for assistance and, after being let down by the bishop of Lincoln, finally gained the support of the archbishop of York, who respected the vow of virginity she had taken. After years of controversy, she was able to make her home at Markyate north of the prosperous abbey of Saint Albans. Her hermitage eventually became a priory for nuns and was visited by people looking for spiritual advice and counsel.

The anonymous biographer describes Christina’s visions, which often brought her closer to the people who sought her out and provided her with the guidance she needed to give them. After her death there may have emerged a local cult, but she was all but forgotten until a historian published the biography on the basis of the single surviving manuscript, badly damaged in a fire and long thought to be unreadable. Thanks to a new interest in holy women and their place in the history of medieval Christianity, Christina is better known today than ever before, and her biography has contributed to dozens of studies of medieval women.

—Brian Patrick McGuire

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Sexuality and Holy People

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Christopher

(3rd century C.E.?)

Christian legendary martyr

Christopher is one of the most popular and frequently depicted Christian saints in the modern era, in Western art through the late medieval/Renaissance period, and in Byzantine icons. His cult was established in the East by the fifth century, and the colorful legends about the gigantic Canaanite Christopher were elaborated in the West through the Middle Ages and appear in especially detailed form in the thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea* (Golden Legend) by Jacobus de Voragine.

Said to have been an early Christian martyr in mid-third-century Asia Minor, Christopher (the “Christ-bearer”) had a series of adventures and disappointments in his search for the greatest king to whom he might offer his services. He served a mighty ruler, then the devil, and eventually met a Christian hermit who instructed him to serve the great king Christ by carrying people on his shoulders across a swift and treacherous river. After struggling enormously to carry a small child, who became increasingly heavy, across the river, Christopher was informed by the child (Christ) that he had successfully carried the weight of the world and the creator of the world on his shoulders. The child instructed him to plant his walking staff by the river, and the next day the staff miraculously sprouted flowers—symbolic of the truth and triumph of Christianity. Additional narratives in Christopher’s legends include many typically hagiographic motifs: tests of faith, endurance, miracles, and tortures, resulting in his eventual martyrdom by decapitation.

The patron saint of travelers and one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, St. Christopher is generally depicted carrying the infant Jesus on his shoulders while holding a pole or a flowering staff. Large mural paintings and statues of Christopher were often positioned in Western medieval churches, reflective of the belief that seeing his image would protect viewers from harm. An important variant image (especially in Byzantine art) shows Christopher with a dog’s head (*cynocephalic*) with a long snout and pointed ears. This is perhaps due to a confusion of “Canaanite” with “canine.” Similarity with the ancient Egyptian jackal-headed god Anubis may be noted, as well as with other animal-headed figures in ancient and medieval art.

In the early twentieth century, with increased air and car travel, Christopher’s role as patron of safe journeys made his image again popular in pendants, medallions, and car badges. Despite this, his feast was reduced to the status of a local cult in 1969 because of its dubious historicity. Christopher’s feast day is July 25 in the Roman Catholic Church and May 9 in Greek Orthodoxy.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People

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Chrysostom

See **John Chrysostom**

Chu Hsi

See **Zhu Xi**

Chuang Tzu

See **Zhuangzi**

Ciarán of Clonmacnoise

(512–548 C.E.)

Christian monk, educator

Ciarán of Clonmacnoise is considered one of the "Twelve Apostles of Ireland," the great monastic founders of the sixth century. After studying with Finian of Clonard and Enda of Aran, two of the most important early Celtic monks, he founded several monasteries. The most famous of these institutions was at Clonmacnoise. Soon after this foundation, while still in his early thirties, he died. The foundation at Clonmacnoise, although victimized in raids and battles for a thousand years, became second only to Iona as a center of Christian learning in the Celtic world. On the banks of the river Shannon, Clonmacnoise became a very wealthy center of monastic learning. The site was supposedly connected to a pre-Christian holy well and became a center of pilgrimage because Ciarán promised that many souls would go to heaven from this site.

Information on Ciarán is scant, mostly reliant on hagiographies compiled by the monks at Clonmacnoise long after the founder had died in 548. His notoriety seems to depend on his connection to Kevin of Glendalough, Finian, Enda, and other famous monastic leaders, along with his foundation at Clonmacnoise. Here, even more so than at other Celtic monasteries, a great deal of effort was put into learning and the production of books. The pre-Christian Celtic respect for learning allowed men such as Ciarán, from humble backgrounds, to rise to positions of great repute in the Celtic world. Ciarán had been born in 512. His father was a carpenter, and this made Ciarán the only non-

noble founder of one of the major sixth-century monasteries in Ireland.

The importance of education and the natural world occurs again and again in the stories about Ciarán. It is written that a stag wandered up to Ciarán to hold his books in his antlers and returned daily without ever getting the books wet. Many of the traditional *topoi* of Celtic hagiography hold true for Ciarán. Hagiographical accounts include the tale of a fox that carried Ciarán's books back and forth to his tutor, as well as of miracles related to hospitality and the provision of food for guests. It is in the works of Ciarán and the other Irish monastic founders of the sixth century that the centrality of education to Celtic spirituality first appears. Christian learning was considered essential to the conversion of pagans, and so Ciarán's "monastic university" stood as a tribute to its founder for centuries after his death.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Ireland, Twelve Apostles of; Kevin of Glendalough; Monasticism and Holy People; Nature; Status

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Clan Mothers of the Iroquois

Amerindian ancestors

As with all storied experiences, the Clan Mothers have many names. Clan Mothers to the Iroquois, they are also the Beloved Women of the Cherokee and the Grandmothers or Wisdom Keepers of the Kiowa and the Choctaw. Clan Mother stories tell of women's medicine and the female and male roles for humankind, which are said to stem from aspects of Grandmother Moon and Earth Mother.

Haudenosaunee means "People of the Longhouse" and refers to the united nations of the Iroquois. The original five peoples were the Mohawk, the Oneida, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, and the Seneca. According to their traditions, Sky Woman was the First Clan Mother. The Great Law of the Haudenosaunee is spiritually based and the source for the Jigonsaseh, or Head Clan Mothers of the League.

Following the oral tradition, most Haudenosaunee traditions divide history into the Sky, League, and Handsome Lake epochs. The Clan Mothers fall within the pre-European contact epoch of the League. The first precontact epoch is Sky Woman's cycle and begins in a place among the stars. Next is the League Epoch of the Great Law, the

Constitution of the Five Nations, where Jigonsaseh is the head Clan Mother.

According to Iroquois legend, Sky Woman brought seeds with her to earth from Sky World, and some of her traditional names relate to corn plants. Agricultural practice for growing maize is encoded into the Great Law. The Green Corn festival of many tribes is more than a harvest feast and celebrates the survival of these female traditions.

—Connie H. Rickenbaker

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Corn Maidens/Mothers; Intermediaries

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Clare of Assisi

(1194–1253 C.E.)

Christian nun, founder

Clare was founder of the Poor Clares, a Christian women's monastic order, in the thirteenth century. She was born on July 11, 1194, to Faverone Offreduccio and Ortolana di Fiumi, both nobles, in Assisi. At the age of twelve, she was betrothed against her will, but the contract seems to have dissolved upon the death of her father. Little more is known of her childhood and adolescence. When she was eighteen, she heard Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226) preach the Lenten sermons at the church of San Giorgio. Clare was so moved by his words that she ran away from home to follow Francis. Though he received her graciously, Francis had not yet established a house for women, so he installed her at the Benedictine convent of St. Paul near Bastia. Her family attempted to remove her by force, but Francis secretly aided her escape to the convent of Sant' Angelo di Panzo, where she was joined by her sister, Agnes, drawing renewed attacks by their family.

Perseverance paid off. In 1215, Francis placed Clare and Agnes in a small convent, a "poor house," adjoining the church of San Damiano near Assisi, and appointed Clare the superior, a position she held for forty years. Later, they were joined by their mother and their other sister, Beatrice. The convent became the motherhouse of the Poor Clares, an order that espoused rigid rules, including self-mortification, strict fasting, vows of silence, and profound poverty. The ex-

trema poverty was the first of its kind for women, as the Poor Clares subsisted solely on donations and always went barefoot. Fearing male interference, Clare persuaded Pope Innocent III to guarantee their absolute poverty. Yet, in 1228, Pope Gregory IX tried to rescind this condition, citing women's "frailty." Clare succeeded in winning him over, however, and he issued the *Privilegium paupertatis* ceding the Poor Clares freedom from possessions for eternity. After Gregory's death, Pope Innocent IV again attempted to rescind the directive, yet he, too, accepted Clare's steadfast refusal of modifications. She only convinced him to grant her wish two days before her death in 1253.

Besides founding the Poor Clares, Clare was responsible for spreading the Franciscan movement and for tenaciously establishing poverty as an acceptable choice for religious women. Many miracles have been attributed to her, including the rout of German Emperor Frederick II's army in 1244. In art, she is usually depicted carrying a monstrosity. Her feast day is August 11.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Monasticism and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Clare of Montefalco

(c. 1268–1308 C.E.)

Christian abbess, mystic

Clare of Montefalco, abbess of the Augustinian monastery of the Holy Cross, gained special renown shortly after her death in 1308 when it was discovered that an image of the cross was imprinted on her heart. She was also known for her confrontation with the Free Spirit, a heretical movement of the time.

Born in Montefalco, Italy, in 1268, Clare at the age of six began to visit her sister Giovanna at a hermitage on the edge of town. Here she adopted a life of penance and devotion to Christ's passion. Such small communities of reclusive women were common in central Italy after 1250. Clare seems to have been a Third Order Franciscan for a time, and she always retained something of a Franciscan outlook. In 1290, the community of sisters accepted the Augustinian Rule, and made Giovanna its first abbess. Upon Giovanna's death the following year, Clare was elected abbess and quickly became well known for her piety, penances, and ecstatic prayer. Such was her fame that some prominent friars attempted to win her over to their heretical beliefs. The members of this sect, called the Free Spirit, did not believe in the existence of hell and held that their superior attainments in contemplative prayer and closeness to God permitted them to ignore the usual commandments; they claimed that the elect soul can lose all desire.

Clare's role as a mystical teacher-prophet who defended Catholic doctrine and refuted dangerous errors reflects much of the influence of the marginal communities of women in central Italy during this period. Many of her attributes are found in thirteenth-century hagiography, such as the spirit of prophecy (she could see into the past, present, and future and could detect people's thoughts) and her love of the poor. More original is the focus on her gratitude for her spiritual gifts, and her prediction of the cross inside her heart. The emphasis in the sources—in particular a contemporary biography by Berengar of Saint-Affrique, and during an exceptionally long process of canonization in 1318–1319—on her “miracle of the heart,” a quasi-“stigmata,” reveals the extent of contemporary passion-centered devotion. Her Life is of exceptional interest because it was written by a non-Augustinian who had no interest in the poverty controversy related to the Franciscan order. Clare's family, her monastery, and the history of Montefalco are well documented. For unknown reasons, her canonization became stalled, and she was not declared a saint until 1881 by Pope Leo XIII.

—Thomas Renna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Claver, Peter

(1580–1654 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, caregiver, missionary

Peter Claver, a canonized saint of the Roman Catholic Church born in 1580, spent more than forty years ministering to the African people who were brought as slaves to Cartagena in

present-day Colombia. Claver, a Jesuit priest from Spain, was a missionary in one of the New World's notorious ports of entry for slaves from West Africa. Chained together, imprisoned in the dark holds of ships with little to eat, and stuck in filth, more than 10,000 Africans arrived each year in Cartagena. Claver worked to alleviate the horror of slavery by meeting each ship as it docked, giving food to the captive African people, attending to their sick and dying, and making sure that the few rights they had as slaves were upheld. He was a champion of the oppressed, calling himself the “slave of Africans.” In addition, Claver instructed the African people in the Catholic faith, and it is reported that he baptized more than 300,000 people during his years of ministry. Even in the midst of their tremendous suffering, the African people responded to the Word of God as heard through the teaching and preaching of Peter Claver and accepted the Christian faith.

The underlying motivation of Claver's ministry to the African slaves was to reaffirm their dignity as human beings by attending to their human and spiritual needs. He brought them food, took care of their physical wounds, and instilled in them a sense of their place in the world as precious people of God. He fought for the enforcement of a law that forbade the separation of slave families and allowed Christian marriages between slaves, and he maintained contact with the African people after they had been sold by holding yearly missions around the country.

Claver's active spirituality was to look for the image of God in each and every person and to treat each person as a living icon of God. His apostolic ministry was based in sincere loving-kindness and compassion, and the people recognized that he was trustworthy and committed to them and their needs.

Claver fell sick during an outbreak of the plague in 1650. He spent the last four years of his life ill and neglected, yet when he was at the point of death, people flocked to his room to grab a memento of this man who had proved to be one of God's holy witnesses among them.

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Mission

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Clement

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Clement (Clemens Romanus), third bishop of Rome in the first century, may have been appointed by Peter as his successor. Little is known of Clement's early life or death, though fourth-century legends recount his martyrdom by drowning at the order of Trajan, Roman emperor from 98 to 117. Origen and Eusebius connected Clement with the companion mentioned by Paul in Philippians 4:3: "And I ask you . . . together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."

Clement's most notable contribution to Christian history is his *Letter to the Corinthians*, written in around 96, demanding a return to obedience. Using military hierarchy as his model, Clement explains the inviolable nature of the chain of command, making one of the first declarations of the supremacy of the Roman church. This letter was so popular that it was being read publicly in Corinth in the sixth century.

The twelfth-century church of San Clemente in Rome was built above a fourth-century Christian basilica, which was built above a first-century temple of Mithras, indicating the reuse of traditional Roman holy sites by early Christians. The church and temple briefly coexisted until the cult was outlawed in 395. The fourth-century building was referred to by St. Jerome, who wrote that "a church in Rome preserves the memory of St. Clement to this day" (Boyle 1989, 8).

—Asa Simon Mittman

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Pope-Saints

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Cleopatra VII

(69–30 B.C.E.)

Egyptian queen, goddess

Cleopatra VII, a ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty (r. 51–30 B.C.E.), was the last pharaoh to rule over the ancient Egyptian state before it fell to the Roman Empire. During her reign, she was promulgated as the Egyptian goddess Isis. Although she is perhaps best remembered for her love affairs with both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony (she had a son with Caesar, two children with Antony, and is alleged to have killed herself upon learning of Antony's death), she was unique in her own right and was renowned as a highly motivated and educated woman.

Cleopatra set herself apart from the rest of the Ptolemaic dynasty through her knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language—Egyptian administration at that time was conducted in Greek, but she was said to be proficient in several languages, including Egyptian. Her identification with the goddess Isis was commemorated during her lifetime in coinage. According to legend, she made a practice of appearing in public dressed as Isis.

In Egyptian tradition, the goddess Isis was the wife of Osiris. Their union produced the god Horus. All three deities have a strong association with kingship, and the anthropomorphic embodiment of Isis was a woman with a throne on her head. Isis's association with the asp has also led some to conclude that by dying at the hands of an asp in 30 B.C.E., Cleopatra was furthering her association with Isis and ensuring her divinity. The cult of Isis was embraced outside of Egypt and spread rampantly through the classical world, with Roman-period cults as far distant as Britain.

—Theresa Musacchio

See also: Gods on Earth; Pharaohs of Egypt; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Rulers as Holy People

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Clotilde

(c. 474–548 C.E.)

Christian queen

Clotilde (Clotilda; Chrotechildis), the wife and queen of Clovis I, king of the Franks from 481 to 511, persuaded her husband to convert to Catholic (Athanasian) Christianity.

Clotilde, the daughter of the Burgundian king Chilperic, was a Catholic Christian at a time when most of the Germanic peoples occupying the Roman Empire adhered to the Arian creed. According to the legend recorded by Gregory of Tours later in the sixth century, Clotilde's uncle Gundobad murdered both her parents and drove the young girl and her sister into exile. The sister eventually entered a convent; but Clotilde attracted the interest of the neighboring Frankish king, Clovis, who married her with Gundobad's reluctant consent. Clovis was not a Christian, and Clotilde tried to convert him, but her efforts met with little initial success.

She persevered, however, and when she gave birth to a son, she had the baby baptized as a Christian. Unfortunately, the child died, leaving Clovis understandably skeptical of the merits of the new religion. Undaunted, Clotilde argued that the child had achieved eternal bliss, and when a second son was born to them, she had him baptized, too. This time, the



Clotilde, watching over the baptism of her husband King Clovis. Nineteenth-century romantic view of the event. (Art Directors)

baby, though sickly, lived—clear proof, claimed Clotilde, of the power of her religion. Clovis still hesitated to become Christian himself, and it was not until he prepared to face a formidable army of enemies in battle that he decided to cast his lot in with his wife's god, promising to accept the new religion if the battle fell his way. His victory brought him to the baptismal font and the Frankish people with him.

Gregory of Tours portrays Clotilde as a proud and aggressive figure who remained influential in Frankish affairs even after Clovis's death in 511. When her sons assumed power, she incited them to avenge her parents' murder by waging war on her kinsmen, the Burgundians. Gregory also relates that when Clotilde's young grandsons were caught in a power struggle, she was told to choose their fate: scissors (representing the tonsure and their seclusion in a monastery) or a sword (the children's death). Anguished, she chose the sword, unwilling to see them survive the loss of their birthright.

Modern scholars have challenged much in Gregory's account. Some evidence suggests that Clovis may actually have been Christian but inclined toward Arianism before his bap-

tism. It also seems doubtful that Gundobad committed fratricide; therefore, Clotilde's pursuit of vengeance—a vengeance supposedly postponed for decades—could not have prompted her sons' war on the Burgundians. Yet there seems no reason to doubt that Clotilde influenced her husband's conversion, which was an important step in breaking down the religious barriers between the Catholic Romans of Gaul and the Germanic tribes. Nor is it improbable that Clotilde played a role in political affairs after Clovis's death. The death of her grandsons ended her public life. She retired to Tours, devoting herself to good works until her death in 548.

—Nancy M. Thompson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Coemgen

See Kevin of Glendalough

Cohen and Levite

Judaic priests

In ancient Judaism, the priest was the chosen intercessor between God and humankind. Although the first-born son of every Israelite family was originally consecrated to God, at Sinai the tribe of Levi was selected to fulfill the priestly function. Most Levites (Heb.: *Levi*, pl. *Levi'im*) had offices connected with the Tabernacle; the Levite family of Aaron (Moses' brother) became the actual priests (Heb.: *Cohen*, pl. *Cohenim*), responsible for sacrifice and the instruction of the people in Mosaic law. Because their services were required throughout Israel, Levites did not have their own tracts of land; consequently, their support came from tithes. After the Temple was built and the Tabernacle installed, the descendants of Aaron were concentrated in Jerusalem.

From the time of Hezekiah, all worship was centralized in the Temple, strengthening the priesthood. In the absence of secular authority, the high priest was regarded as the leader of the community; during occupation, the high priest often worked in consort with the provincial government. Such contact with gentile rulers led to assimilation; however, some Jews maintained their religious zeal. The Hasmoneans, for example, fought against the Greek occupiers, and the Essenes left Temple service and founded ascetic communities.

Many wealthy and powerful priestly families joined the aristocratic, Hellenized Sadducees. With the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., most duties and privileges of the priests and Levites were lost.

However, Cohenim and Levi'im retain specific functions in modern Orthodox and Conservative Judaism despite the destruction of the Temple. The paternal line determines inclusion, in contrast to identification as a Jew, which is matrilineal. A significant right of the Cohenim is to be the first invited to read the Torah on the Sabbath or during a weekday service; the second reader is to be a Levite; the third an Israel (a Jew who is neither a Cohen nor a Levite). Further, it is customary to select a Cohen or Levite to lead the prayer after meals.

During certain seasons, the Cohenim of a synagogue act as priests and bless the congregation after ritual hand washing, assisted by the Levi'im present. Cohenim are still subject to a number of restrictions: They may not marry a divorcee or a convert, they are prohibited from any contact with the dead, and they are forbidden to enter a cemetery.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Aaron; Judaism and Holy People; Priests; Purity and Pollution

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Cokhamela (Cokha)

(1293–1338 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Cokhamela, a fourteenth-century native of Mangalvedha, Maharashtra, India, is remembered as an early poet-saint (*sant*) of the Varkari religious and literary community of western India. Numerous devotional songs in Marathi are attributed to him. Most of these sing the praises of a Hindu deity of the region, Vitthal or Vithoba, or recount related stories from the lives of Cokhamela's contemporary sants, such as Namdev. Cokhamela is perhaps most famous for his very low social status. He was a Mahar by caste (*jati*), a socioreligious designation that conferred upon him "untouchability" within the brahminical social order.

The songs attributed to Cokhamela that deal with social and religious inequality tend to fluctuate between a lamentation of his lowly status, cries of abandonment by Vitthal, and a passive acceptance of his fate prescribed by the caste system. For example, following a popular understanding of the effects of karma, Cokhamela ascribes his low status to retribution for bad deeds in earlier lives and asserts that by faithfully fulfilling his *dharma* (duty) as an untouchable in this life, he will proceed to better lives in the future. How-

ever, in popular etymology, Cokhamela's very name (*cokha*, meaning "pure," and *mela*, for "collection"; thus, a pure collection of attributes) presents a contradiction, because Cokhamela's low caste implies an "impure" religiosocial status.

A famous biographical story recalls that Cokhamela was born miraculously from a half-eaten mango. Vitthal, disguised as a brahmin, is said to have taken a bite of the mango and then given it to Cokhamela's future mother, and from this fruit came a baby boy. Another story recalls that a coterie of Hindu deities entreated Cokhamela to purify the "nectar of heaven." Understandably, some later interpreters have felt that such stories and songs were composed in Cokhamela's name by interlopers into the tradition.

But others have taken Cokhamela at his word, so to speak. B. R. Ambedkar, the twentieth-century social reformer, nationalist, and architect of the Indian constitution, was of the same *jati* (sub-caste) as Cokhamela. In his writings, Ambedkar rejected Cokhamela's pronouncements on religious and social justice as not useful to the upliftment of members of downtrodden communities in south Asia. Yet the biographical and literary materials preserved in his name unequivocally assert Cokhamela's utter devotion to his deity, Vitthal, so much so that the songs he composed for his God are said to have emanated from his very bones.

—Christian Lee Novetzke

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Status

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Coltrane, John

(1926–1967 C.E.)

Syncretic musician, composer

Jazz saxophonist and composer John William Coltrane was one of the most influential figures in jazz not only because of his virtuosity and creativity but also because of his spirituality. His pious manner and passionate intensity while playing was legendary. Coltrane brought together disparate musical and cultural elements that combined with his spiritual consciousness to distinguish him among jazz performers.

The African Methodist Episcopal faith of his clergy grandfathers influenced him, as did the music of the black church, including gospels and spirituals. The Muslim faith of first wife, Naima, furthered his religious growth. Inspired by

the music of Africa, India, and Asia, Coltrane's musical explorations coincided with an increasing interest in world religious and spiritual consciousness.

In the liner notes to *A Love Supreme*, a 1964 album, Coltrane wrote that in 1957 he had experienced, "by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which led me to a richer, fuller, more productive life." He subsequently dedicated his life to offering up his music as praise to God. Described by his peers as an angel on earth, a spiritual genius, and one who spoke to people's souls, Coltrane believed that his ultimate creative purpose was to make the world a better place and to point people to the divine in a musical language that transcends words. Religion, to Coltrane, was not a creed, a dogma, or an institution but a perception of all life as sacred. He sought a spiritual level of communication with his audience.

Coltrane achieved his aspirations most explicitly when a religious society in his name was founded after his death. Established by Bishop Franzo King (who, upon hearing Coltrane, had a Pentecostal-like experience), the organization in 1982 affiliated with the African Orthodox Church. The Saint John Coltrane African Orthodox Church in San Francisco derives its liturgy from Coltrane compositions and takes its inspiration from Coltrane's triumph over many obstacles, including addiction, and his conversion to righteousness and a global consciousness. Adherents of this faith see Coltrane as their "messenger of Sound Praise" and have canonized him as their patron saint: St. John Will-I-Am Coltrane. The church displays painted icons of a haloed Coltrane holding in one hand a saxophone, its bell spouting flames, and in the other hand a scroll with lines from *A Love Supreme*.

—Kimberly Rae Connor

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People

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Colum Cille (Columba)

(521–597 C.E.)

Christian abbot, missionary

Colum Cille ("dove of the church" in Irish), one of the three patron saints of Ireland, was a sixth-century abbot and a missionary who brought Christianity to Scotland and northern England. His hagiographer, Adomnán, portrays his hero as a Christlike figure who multiplies fishes, in size if not in number, and changes water into wine.

Born in 521, Colum Cille was an offspring of the Cenél Conall branch of the royal Uí Néill dynasty. His sacrifice of the trappings of his royal background to embrace his monastic profession with saintly humility represents a strong claim to sanctity. He was a monk, a priest, and a founder of monasteries, the most famous being Iona on the coast of Scotland. Derry and Kells in Ireland were very influential as well. He comes down to us above all, however, as a saint of prophecies, visions, and miracles tempered with a healthy dose of political savvy. As a prince of the most powerful dynasty in Ireland, Colum Cille would have been aware from an early age of what it took to build a strong and influential hegemony even in the ecclesiastical sphere. He drew on that knowledge to create a strong federation of affiliated monasteries that achieved international prominence. His foundations were successful on both sides of the north Irish Sea, which may go a long way toward explaining the continued significance of Colum Cille as a national patron saint.

Another important dimension of his sanctity was his relationships with kings. Adomnán consistently shows him traveling to the courts of kings in Scotland, northern England, and Ireland. Colum Cille makes prediction after prediction regarding the fate of these kings and their lineages. Not only can the saint see the future, but he can also affect the future in powerful ways that are beneficial to the church, to his own community, and to international relations between the Irish, Scots, and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. In one scene he is shown as conferring, against his own will, the office of king on a local ruler at the behest of God. Being forced to follow the will of God places Colum Cille above suspicion of political favoritism. It also puts him in a liminal position between God and the king, between heaven and earth. The saint is established both as a key figure in the legitimation of secular power and as a transcendent figure serving as a mere conduit of divine power and grace. This presents a memorable image of power and humility, the quintessence of Christian sainthood. His feast day is June 9.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Ireland, Twelve Apostles of; Monasticism and Holy People; Prophets

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Columba

See **Colum Cille**

Columbanus

(543–615 C.E.)

Christian abbot, missionary

Columbanus was the most famous of the Irish missionaries to travel to continental Europe in the early Middle Ages. Born in 543 and from a noble background, he was well educated before entering the monastic life. Primarily a disciple of Comgall of Bangor, with whom he trained for about thirty years, he left in about 590 for voluntary exile in Gaul. During his time at Bangor he had become the principal lecturer in the monastic school. Columbanus is the most famous exemplar of the Celtic tradition of *peregrinatio* (voluntary exile), and also a fine example of the Latin learning that was taking place in Celtic monasteries. Owing to his correspondence with continental church leaders and his travels across Europe, he is often cited when comparisons are made between Celtic and Roman Christianity.

Voluntary exile consisted in leaving behind family and comforts as a form of martyrdom; while it was not essential to the practice, many of these wanderers became missionaries. The purpose of the journey was not to find a particular destination, but to avoid becoming too comfortable in this world. Columbanus left Bangor with twelve followers, including Bishop Aid and St. Gall. They founded monasteries at Annegray and Luxueil in Gaul. The Celtic practice of private confession was far easier for the warrior aristocracy to accept than the strict confessional discipline of the continental church, and so Columbanus developed important friendships with Germanic nobles. The strict ascetical discipline that drew so many also led him to be highly critical of anyone whom he found in conflict with his vision of Christianity. His travels continued and included monastic foundations at what is now St. Gall (Switzerland) and Bobbio (Italy). These were the most famous Celtic centers of learning and spirituality on the continent.

Ironically, while Columbanus was attempting to flee this earthly world, his form of Celtic Christianity attracted followers wherever he established new monasteries. For Columbanus and other Celtic Christians, there was no conflict between the life of a missionary and the life of a monk.

Columbanus was the earliest Irish saint to leave a prodigious body of literature. His writings include a monastic rule, a penitential, poetry, letters to popes, and other writings, all of which exhibit excellent skills in Latin. A later Life of the saint by Jonas of Bobbio (written in 640–643) also helped to establish his reputation. The correspondence with Popes Gregory the Great and Boniface IV make clear that his allegiance was to Rome, although he was sure that the Irish

dating of Easter, along with other matters, showed the Celtic church to be more faithful to the early church than was Rome.

His use of classical allusions in his poetry and other works show that he was not afraid to use non-Christian knowledge and images to praise the world that God had created around him. The penitential called for a harsh system of ascetical practices and corporal punishment, coupled with frequent private confession. This work showed the influence of Cassian (c. 360–c. 433), Basil the Great (c. 330–379), and the monks of the Egyptian desert. The establishment of so many Irish monasteries on the continent spread the ideas in this penitential far and wide. Columbanus's penitential played a significant role in the acceptance of private and regular confession by the rest of the Christian world. More than thirty writings are attributed to Columbanus. The authorship of many of these remains in doubt, which is to be expected for such a large body of work from this period. The penitential, the rule, many of the letters, and most of the sermons, however, are firmly ascribed to him.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Basil the Great; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; Gall; John Cassian; Monasticism and Holy People

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Compassion and Holy People

Compassion, a deep emotional sympathy with others who are in distress and a desire to alleviate their suffering, is an essential element in world attitudes toward holy people. For the major religions, compassion, more often than any other characteristic, provides the clearest evidence of holiness, and those people who have tried to care for their fellow human beings and other living things have earned special recognition and veneration. The stronger the communal element of the religion, the stronger this emphasis, to the point that even cruelty is often justified in religious terms as “tough love” that is for the good of the person being injured. A rather rarefied compassion is a leading premise of Confucianism: the need to teach others to help them realize the essential goodness of their human nature. More concretely, the Jewish prophets made compassion a central teaching: Since all Jews have a covenant with God, an offense against a fellow human

being is an offense against God. Christianity and Islam have gone still further, making compassion the most defining characteristic of God himself. Essential to Christianity is the principle that “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son” (John 3:16). The lesson that God’s love should be imitated by his creation is also explicit in Islam, in which “God the all-merciful, the all-compassionate” is invoked at every hand, while the pillars of the prophet Muhammad’s message are belief in God and compassion for fellow human beings. Many of Muhammad’s revelations dealt with the great problem of social injustice, endemic in the Arabian Peninsula in his time.

The association between holy people and compassion has been perhaps most developed in Buddhism among the world religions. In the beliefs of all branches of Buddhism, Gautama the Buddha made his great renunciation of the world because of his deep empathy with human suffering. Original Buddhism put more emphasis on individual enlightenment than on compassion toward those still trapped in the cycle of rebirth. This led to the great reaction of Mahayana Buddhism, the most widespread form of Buddhism today. Central to Mahayana is the idea of the holy person who consciously decides to become a buddha. He or she does so by taking the vow of the *bodhisattva*, or enlightened being, a resolution to become a buddha for the sake of all sentient beings, giving up nirvana and enduring rebirth after rebirth until all have reached enlightenment. This belief reached its fullest extent in the branches of Pure Land Buddhism, which hold that Amitabha Buddha is just such a bodhisattva, who will help anyone, and invocation of whom will lead to rebirth in the Pure Land in the west. In China, the bodhisattva of compassion, known as Guanyin, increasingly took on feminine characteristics, perhaps in the belief that female nurturing is more expressive of compassion. Notions similar to the Buddhist concept appear in other religions. For example, the Neoplatonist philosopher Iamblichus (d. 325) taught that humans can be purified and raised to the divine, but that pure souls will still reincarnate to lead others to the truth. The West African god/hero Babalú Ayé also provides an interesting example: According to legend, he died of smallpox and came back as an orisha, generous and able to understand the suffering of others because of his own pain.

While legends of Buddhist holy people tend to emphasize characteristics other than compassion, care for others forms a backdrop even in the lives of those mostly defined as scholars and teachers. A marked case is that of the Tibetan Buddhist Yeshe Tsogyal (757–817), a rare example of a female teacher in that tradition. Yeshe Tsogyal is credited with many students but even more with a compassionate nature that would lead her to help anyone. Legend tells that she even helped her worst enemies: When a gang of men raped her, they all instantly attained realization of *dharma* (Buddhist

doctrine) thanks to their contact with the holy woman. In the modern world, all branches of Buddhism provide notable examples of holy people above all noted for compassion. An interesting case is the Thai Theravada monk Buddhadasa (1906–1993), who emphasized how essential it is to work for the good of the whole community and world, rather than just for individual religious advancement. Buddhist political activism has also centered on compassion, as with the Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh (1926–), who helped found the Engaged Buddhism Movement, leading antiwar agitation and nonviolent protests while also founding a large organization to aid war victims.

The religions of Asia have also stressed compassion to other living creatures besides humans, a path that the religions of the West have been very slow to follow, on the whole. Compassion toward animals is particularly important to Jainism. The twenty-second Jain *tirthankara* (ford-maker), Nemi, is said to have been on his way to his marriage when he passed a pen full of wailing animals awaiting slaughter for his own wedding feast. This sight effected Nemi’s awakening: Moved by compassion, he released the animals and renounced his marriage plans, becoming a mendicant. Stories abound in all religions, though, of holy people who show deep compassion toward animals, including even such extremes as the Buddhist Asanga in the fourth century, who wanted to help a maggot-infested dog but was unwilling to harm either maggots or canine, so he set out to remove the maggots one by one with his tongue. And there is a tale of Muhammad (570–632) climbing down a well and drawing water with his boot to bring relief to a dog dying of thirst.

Holy people usually, in the world’s legends, have exercised compassion at least one-on-one in their daily lives. A surprising number have also engaged in acts of “mass compassion,” dedicating their lives to care, improvement, nursing, and the like for large numbers of the needy in efforts that range from serving a single community to outreach to people around the world. A notable early Christian example is that of the Roman deacon Lawrence (d. 258): Ordered by a magistrate to turn over the riches of the Roman church, he presented to the official (who was not amused) all the diseased and poor who depended on church support. Lawrence was martyred very soon afterward. Medieval Christian saints repeatedly sold altar equipment to ransom captives or feed the poor in famines. Muslim sufis during the same period pressured rulers to care for the indigent. An important Christian movement in the thirteenth century inspired large numbers to stay in the world to help the poor rather than retiring to a monastery—thus the orders of friars inspired by Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226) and Dominic (1170–1223) came into existence.

The deep needs of the modern world have called into being much more large-scale, organized programs of care for

others, a movement toward compassion that has been spearheaded in every part of the world by people recognized as particularly close to the divine. Fifteenth-century Christianity witnessed a great upsurge of care for the poor, exemplified by Catherine of Genoa (1447–1510), who devoted her life to care of the sick. Similarly, the members of the Company of St. Ursula, founded by the laywoman Angela Merici (1474–1540), are dedicated to charitable activities. Martin de Porres (1579–1639), widely regarded in his time as a living saint, dedicated his life to a remarkably effective care of widows, orphans, the sick, and especially the deeply ravaged native and African populations of his city of Lima, Peru. Vincent de Paul (1576–1660), working in France at about the same time, was a great social reformer whose goal was to redirect France’s churches to care for the needy. Such “saints of compassion,” by their acts and their model, played a massive role in changing European perceptions of care for others.

Complete devotion to the needy as a centerpiece of the life dedicated to God was, by the nineteenth century, common to many religions. Roman Catholics such as John Bosco (1815–1888) or Frances Cabrini (1850–1917) continued to found caritative religious orders in large numbers. Protestants also got in on the act. Already in the 1750s, John Woolman inspired the Quakers of America to denounce slavery, and continuing a long heritage of Quaker care for the poor, Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) became a great prison reformer. Individuals such as Jonathon Chapman (“Johnny Appleseed”) (1774–1845) planted apple orchards and gave everything he received to the poor, and the evangelical William Booth (1829–1912) institutionalized and internationalized his assault on urban poverty by creating the Salvation Army. Jalarum (1799–1878) and other Hindus followed similar paths, laboring and giving their proceeds to the poor, or collecting from others for distribution. Bunjiro Kawate (1814–1883) founded an important branch of the Shinto religion that emphasized social concerns. And a central message of the Baha’i faith, established in the latter nineteenth century, was the need for global social and religious reform in which service to others is a devotional act. In the early twentieth century, the Egyptian schoolteacher Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) founded the Society of Muslim Brothers, which developed into a mass movement in the Middle East. The society’s goal was to reform political and social institutions as a means to spiritual reform, and al-Banna to that end advocated social justice and education, built clinics, and did much to raise the standard of living.

An important element of compassion in the modern world has been to provide a voice for the lowly, those who would not otherwise be heard by indifferent and massive governments. A harbinger of this development was the Spaniard Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566) in the sixteenth century, who launched a personal crusade to halt

Spanish abuse of the native peoples of the Americas. Since then, hundreds of holy men and women have spoken for those without a voice. An important twentieth-century example is Oscar Romero (1917–1980), martyred archbishop of El Salvador, who stood up for the concerns of the “little people” against an indifferent and corrupt government and died for it.

People recognized by their societies as “holy” have provided a voice of conscience with the moral force to effect change in traditional practices deeply prejudiced against parts of the population. It was religious leaders who most effectively marshaled public support behind the twentieth-century world’s fight for the dignity of all human beings, and who continue to do so today. Hindu holy men, of whom Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948) is only the most famous, fought not only for independence from British rule but for women’s rights and an end to at least the most oppressive elements of the caste system. A large number of American religious leaders, both black and white, Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim, have fought and still continue the struggle against racism and sexism. They have often defined the struggle in religious terms, as did the leaders of South Africa’s antiapartheid movement. Desmond Tutu (1931–) of South Africa defined the religious basis of the struggle for equality clearly as *ubuntu*, a concept of human dignity in which *all* human beings are defined as created in God’s image. The list of religious leaders taking this direction is long and varied, ranging from Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) to Cherokee chief Wilma Mankiller (1945–).

The most moving stories, though, tell not of the creators of institutions but of individuals who have shown compassion at enormous personal cost because of their love of God. In popular devotion, a high order of sanctity is attributed to individuals such as the sufi Ahmad Radwan (1895–1967) of Egypt, who nursed the sick in an epidemic, or Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941), who as a prisoner in Auschwitz volunteered to take the place of a fellow prisoner condemned to be starved to death. Such saints are widely regarded as a “proof” of their faith, practicing what the religion preaches and dedicating their lives to an image of a loving God.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Amitabha; Asanga; Babalú Ayé; Baha’i Faith and Holy People; Bodhisattva; Bosco, John; Buddhadasa; Buddhism and Holy People; Cabrini, Frances; Catherine of Genoa; Chapman, Jonathon; Dominic; Francis of Assisi; Fry, Elizabeth; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gautama; Iamblichus; Jalarum; Kolbe, Maximilian; Mankiller, Wilma; Martin de Porres; Merici, Angela; Muhammad; Muhammad, Elijah; Radwan, Ahmad; Romero, Oscar; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo; Yeshe Tsogyal

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Cone, James H.

(1938 C.E.–)

Christian theologian

James H. Cone is one of the most respected interpreters of African American Christianity. He has published extensively in the area of black theology. Cone was born on August 5, 1938, in Arkansas in the United States. Like many black religious thinkers before him, Cone credits his parents and church for instilling in him vibrant faith and self-esteem in a context of racism. Such lessons were further reinforced at the Macedonia African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Cone's commitment to justice and academic excellence was influenced by the ideas of earlier black thinkers such as Benjamin Mays, Howard Thurman, and Martin Luther King, Jr. He graduated with the doctoral degree in theology in 1965 having mastered the theology of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, and Paul Tillich. However, when he returned to teach at his alma mater, Smith College in Arkansas, he had difficulties relating European theology to his students. Furthermore, the emergence of the black power movement and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968 intensified his identity crisis as a theologian. In fact, he credits the Nation of Islam and not the church with having demonstrated the need to make faith relevant to black suffering.

In 1969, Cone published *Black Theology and Black Power*, in which he related Christianity to the more radical elements of the black liberation struggle and expressed the rage and grief felt by many young people. He took the themes of blackness and liberation and made them essential ingredients of Christian theology, accentuating liberation as the basic essence of the Christian message. Indeed, his theological interpretation of these concepts distinguishes him from his predecessors. In 1970, Cone joined the prestigious faculty of the Union Theological Seminary in New York, where he relishes the opportunity to articulate his scathing critique of Euro-American theology before some of the most respected theological minds. In many respects, Cone's prophetic theology critiques the Euro-American theological traditions and the black church for failing to make suffering and liberation of the black oppressed an integral part of its understanding of the gospel. When his second book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, appeared in 1970, Cone's status as a black theologian had been recognized.

In his writings, Cone draws fully on the resources of African American religion and culture to address the importance of sociohistorical contexts in framing the questions that have to do with theology.

—Samuel K. Efolia

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Confucian Culture Heroes

(3rd millennium B.C.E.)

The culture heroes of Confucianism are the six sage-kings: Fu Xi (Fu-hsi), Shen Nong (Shen-nung, also known as the Divine Farmer), the Yellow Emperor Huangdi (Huang-ti), Yao, Shun, and Yu (Yü). Their dates are the matter of much conjecture but may be approximated as ranging from the twenty-ninth to twenty-second centuries B.C.E. The kings are upheld as clan ancestors, bringers of order to the world, exemplars of virtuous character and rule, and inventors of core aspects of civilization.

Each of the Chinese clans posited one or more of these kings as the founder of their line. Huangdi was claimed as an ancestor by all clans. Additionally, Fu Xi was claimed as an ancestor by the Feng clan, Yao by the Du (Tu) and Fang clans, and Shun by the Gui (Kuei) clan. Patriarchs of the clans, and the families within these clans, would derive their *te* (t'ê), virtue, from that of their earliest ancestor.

One feature common to the legends of these kings is that they were establishers of order. Fu Xi, with the help of his sister Nu Gua (Nü-kua), used the legs of a giant sea turtle to prop up the sky, ordering the cosmos. Shen Nong (who is described as being ox-headed) developed farming, ordering the land. Huangdi defeated the earth-monster Chi Yu (Ch'ih-yu), bringing order to the countryside. Yao's virtue was so great that it transformed all those around him, ordering society. Shun matched his actions to the cues of the world, serving as an example of ordered conduct. Yu (who is described as being able to transform into a bear) tamed the Yellow River, bringing order to the surrounding territory.

These early kings were valorized for their enlightened rule. Yao and Shun, in particular, were described as exemplars of a familial mode of rule, winning the allegiance of the people instead of conquering them. What is more, they were viewed as sages because they were noble of their own nature, having cultivated their conducts in the absence of formalized philosophies. The sage-kings transferred power to each other, recognizing in each other the necessary virtue. Yu ended this meritocratic system, however, transferring power

to his son, Qi (Ch'i), and beginning the practice of hereditary rule.

The six kings are credited with originating various cultural practices. Fu Xi's chief contributions were the Eight Trigrams and hunting; Shen Nong, the plough, animal husbandry, and pharmacology; Huangdi, ritual and music; Yao, the palace; Shun, pottery; Yu, the start of hereditary rule. Whether they invented these things or not is less important than that these things are legitimated and given cachet through their association with these figures. The sage-kings were also used competitively to legitimate philosophical schools. Although Confucius referred to Zhou-era figures for authority, Mengzi (Mencius) referred to Yao and Shun, and Daoists (Taoists) to Fu Xi and Shen Nong, suggesting that, for all of these traditions, perfection was held to reside in the past.

—Dan Wright

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Huangdi; Rulers as Holy People; Sages; Yu the Great

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Confucianism and Holy People

The debate about whether Confucianism is even a religion, and thus whether the great teachers of the tradition may be considered “holy people,” can be traced at least as far back as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At that time, writings originating with the Jesuit missions in Japan and China (including extensive studies of Confucianism) exerted great influence on ideas in Europe, even helping pave the way for the Enlightenment. The word *Rujiao* (Jap.: *Jukyô*)—“the Confucian religion” (or “teaching”)—only came into common use in the modern period, particularly in Japan, probably under the influence of the Western concept of “religion,” which did not exist per se in traditional East Asian thought. Even then, though, the term tended to mean “Confucian moral teachings” rather than “religion” in the Western sense. What is now called “Confucianism” was traditionally referred to in East Asia by the word *Rujia*, meaning the Confucian school of philosophy, or *Ruxue*, “Confucian learning” or “the learning of the scholars.”

All the other great religions of the world, even when they were centered in cloistered communities of learned monks,

gradually developed a widespread following among the masses. This was achieved both through missionary efforts and through their mobilization in the cause of the spiritual-political unification of large and diverse human communities by astute administrative and military leaders, such as Moses in Sinai and Canaan; Constantine in Rome; Ashoka in India; Muhammad in Mecca and Yathrib/Medina; Umar in Syria, Jerusalem, Egypt, and North Africa; Liang Wudi, Sui Yangdi, and Tang Gaozu in China; and Soga no Umako and Emperors Shōmu and Kanmu in Japan. These unifiers, institution builders, and founders of state religions, with the aid of their successors, created the “universal communities” wherein the holy men and women of the cloth could carry out their missions of proselytization, scriptural translation and explication, spiritual and educational ministry, and social welfare work, eventually reaching right down to the grassroots level of society.

Confucianism, as well, became institutionalized in China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and the Ryukyu kingdom (present-day Okinawa) in the service of political unification, but the bulk of its practitioners have always remained an elite community centered in the higher social strata, while the masses below them with whose administration and moral edification the educated elite were entrusted usually followed various popular religious teachings of non-Confucian origin. As Martina Deuchler wrote in describing the antishamanist, anti-Buddhist Confucianization of Korean society undertaken from the beginning of the Choson dynasty (1392–1910), “Models for perfect ritual behavior and a sound sociopolitical order are contained in ancient China’s canonical works that constituted the inexhaustible source of inspiration for generations of Confucians. . . . The sheer weight of its canonical literature makes Neo-Confucianism an elitist enterprise. . . . A group apart and above general society, the *ju* [Confucian-educated scholars] adduced their special moral qualities as justification for taking on a leadership role within and without the government. In the widest sense of the word, they were professionals who with their moral endowment, learning, and skills were indispensable functionaries of state and society” (Deuchler 1992, 25, 26).

True, there were attempts in Han dynasty China (209 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) to make Confucianism into a state religion with mass appeal, with Confucius as the divine mediator between heaven and humanity, and since the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 there have been attempts in China, Taiwan, and other countries with Chinese populations to make Confucianism into a religion of collective worship on the model of Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam. But these attempts were repeatedly thwarted by the this-worldly, rationalistic nature of the original Confucian teachings, the skepticism and pragmatism of the scholar-official class that transmitted the

classical tradition, and, in the modern period, by the inexorable spread of modernism and scientific thought, which, especially in China and Korea, found themselves in an antagonistic relationship with the reactionary weight of Confucian patriarchy. It appears that the only country where an active “Confucian Church” exists today is Indonesia, but it exists in a somewhat tense relationship with the surrounding Islamic society and has strong competition from Buddhism and Christianity among the ethnically Chinese community (only about 3 percent of the population).

Nevertheless, there is no question that the Confucian tradition contains many elements that can legitimately be called religious in nature, including its emphasis on ritual and sacrificial rites; its concept of heaven (or the “commands of heaven,” *tianming*) as the author and guarantor of human morality; and its path for achieving wisdom, strength of character, and sageliness through a lifelong discipline of socially committed spiritual self-cultivation. Confucius may have rejected many of the religious practices of his age by de-emphasizing the importance of spiritual beings and focusing attention on people’s inner moral intentionality, valuing traditional rituals more for their efficacy in cultivating reverence and uprightness within and social order and decorum without than for their traditional role in appeasing spiritual beings believed to hold sway over the welfare of the human community.

But another way to describe his humanistic sublimation of the ancient tradition of shamanistic or mantic religion is as the creation of a new type of “ethico-political religion” based on the cultivation of an inwardly directed subjectivity appropriate to a more sophisticated and fluid type of society than that known by his aristocratic forebears, a society in which educated people had to depend much more on their own wits and their own good judgment to achieve social status and success. Believing that the people of his own age had lost the sincerity, straightforwardness, and single-mindedness of the ancients, however, Confucius looked resolutely to the ancient books for the ideal models of how people should think and behave and for the foundational principles of the way of learning. This approach led him to conclusions that both drew on and rejected tradition. This is why *Analects*, for example, includes such seemingly contradictory statements as: “Those who studied in ancient times did it for themselves; people who study today do it for others” (*Analects* 14:28); “In conducting ceremonies, it is better to be economical than extravagant. In performing funerals, one should pay more attention to the inner feelings of grief than to the external details of ritual propriety” (3:4); and “Fan Chi asked about wisdom. Confucius said, ‘devote yourself wholeheartedly to what is proper for people to do. Respect ancestral spirits and spiritual beings but keep them at a distance. That can be called wisdom’” (6:20).

Since the wise know the commands of heaven (like Confucius at age fifty) and are able to follow them (like Confucius at age sixty), they know that many things are beyond the control of man, and yet they also know that heaven has its own purpose and laws in determining the way the world unfolds. Thus they gain an ability to accept whatever occurs with equanimity, neither “begrudging Heaven nor blaming other people” for their misfortunes or difficulties. Able to put themselves subjectively in the position of others and empathize with their sufferings, avoiding doing to others what they would not have others do unto them, they are able to let go of egoism and stubbornness and manage those under their charge with a proper balance between benevolent concern and insistence on matters of principle. Remaining free from resentments and blame, they are able to sustain an unwavering commitment to the Dao (Way) while enjoying recreation and relaxation in the arts. Even the Daoists, with all their yogic and alchemical disciplines, could ultimately come up with no better formula for health and long life, but Confucians were able to pursue the Dao without abandoning their commitments to family, kin, and society at large—except for periods of deliberate retreat from society to restore, through quietness, study, contemplation, and artistic creation, their inner wholeness, balance, and communion with the rhythms of nature.

This concept of the Confucian path of learning as a total program of self-cultivation combining intellectual training, ethical introspection, quiet sitting, experience in practical affairs, and aesthetic cultivation in the polite arts reached its highest degree of development in the Neo-Confucian movement of the Song dynasty (960–1279), under the deep influence of some seven centuries of the dominance of Chinese spiritual culture by Buddhism and Daoism. Particularly in the Song and Ming dynasties, there existed a long line of great Confucian teachers with great concern for the moral welfare and enlightenment of society. In spite of the importance of their intellectual as well as their spiritual accomplishments, many of them were highly revered by their disciples and certainly deserve to be regarded as Confucian “holy men.”

The thinkers who initiated this line of great teachers and laid down the basic conceptual parameters of the Neo-Confucian Way are known as the five masters of eleventh-century Chinese philosophy: the ethicist-metaphysician Zhou Dunyi (1017–1073); the mathematician-numerologist Shao Yong (1011–1077); the monistic philosopher of *qi* (material force) Zhang Zai (1020–1077); the idealist philosopher of principle (*li*) Cheng Hao (1032–1085); and his brother, the rationalist philosopher of principle Cheng Yi (1033–1107). The Cheng brothers were students of Zhou Dunyi, friends of Shao Yong, and nephews of Zhang Zai. All of the five masters based a large part of their philosophy on the *Yijing* (Book of

changes); all spent part of their early years avidly studying Buddhism and Daoism; all shared a strong concern with ethics, the moral health of society, and self-cultivation; and all were immortalized as the “founders” of Neo-Confucianism, or Daoxue (the learning of the Way), singled out as such by Zhu Xi in his great synthesis of Neo-Confucian ideas in the Southern Song period (1127–1279).

There were also many great masters in Ming dynasty Confucianism. Wang Yangming (1472–1529) and his disciples, for example, led a movement against the elitism of Confucian learning that made the pursuit of sagehood open to ordinary man and women, and Luo Qinshun (1465–1547) rejected the Cheng-Zhu school’s dualism of *li* and *qi* in favor of a monism of *qi* (often translated as “material force”). In Japan in the Edo period (1603–1867), quite a few Confucian teachers combined a Shintoist or Confucianist religiosity with the pursuit of wisdom through scholarship. Of course, there were many great teachers in Korea as well, but most of them have more the character of great scholars than “holy men.” All of the Confucian masters of China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, however, studied the same core Confucian texts, which for Neo-Confucians meant first and foremost the Four Books—the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Mean*, the latter two of which are chapters extracted from the *Book of Ritual*.

Next in importance was a collection of the writings of the five masters of the Northern Song put together by Zhu Xi under the title *Jinsilu* (Reflections on things at hand), as well as other compendia of Neo-Confucian writings and commentaries, plus the ancient Five Classics themselves—the *Book of Songs*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Book of Ritual*—the “Old Testament” of the Confucian tradition. The *Classic of Filial Piety* was also widely revered and studied, so it must be considered another of the core classics of the tradition. The core ideas found in these seminal texts, especially those ideas with clearly religious overtones, shed light on concepts of holiness in Confucian thought.

The *Great Learning*, which laid out the basic methodology and progression of Confucian learning, emphasized “clarifying illustrious virtue, cherishing the people, and abiding in the highest good,” through which the mind will become settled and tranquil. Tranquillity itself was not defined as the final goal, however, but the ability of the mind when it is tranquil to reflect clearly and thus to achieve the aims of one’s deliberations. The *Mean* (also called *The Doctrine of the Mean*) expounds the truth of the oneness of heaven and man, the mean between excessive effort and insufficient effort, the practice of remaining watchful over oneself in solitude when no one is observing one’s behavior, and “sincerity” as both the Way of heaven and the practice by which one fully develops one’s own heaven-endowed virtu-

ous nature, thus impelling others to do the same. This process of moral self-realization leads, in turn, beyond the merely human realm to the development of the nature of things, so that people become able to “assist in the transforming and nourishing process of heaven and earth, thus forming a trinity with heaven and earth” (ch. 22).

This is essentially a religious quest, and ritual plays a very important part in its achievement: “The sacrifices at the altars of heaven and earth are the means whereby we serve the Lord on High (Shangdi). The rituals performed in the ancestral temple are the means whereby we offer sacrifice to one’s ancestors. For one who clearly understands the rituals for making sacrifices to Heaven and Earth as well as the meaning of the grand sacrifice every fifth year and the annual autumn sacrifice, ruling the state is as easy as looking at the lines on the palm of one’s hand” (*Mean*, ch. 19).

The *Mencius* was especially important for its teaching of the original goodness of human nature: “If people do evil, it is not the fault of their original nature. The sense of commiseration is found in all men; the sense of shame and disgust is found in all men; the sense of respectfulness and reverence is found in all men; and the sense of right and wrong is found in all men. The sense of commiseration is *humaneness (ren)*; the sense of shame and disgust is *rightness (yi)*; the sense of respectfulness and reverence is *ritual propriety (li)*; and the sense of right and wrong is *wisdom (zhi)*. Humanity, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom are not branded into us from the outside. We originally have them within us. We just fail to direct our thought to them. Therefore it is said, ‘Seek it and you will find it, neglect it and you will lose it’” (*Mencius* 6A:6).

The *Mencius* also emphasized that people should stand up for their principles even at the risk of their life, and that an uncompromising commitment to the Way, sustained over a long period of time, would lead to the growth of an irresistible power of character called the “great, flood-like *qi*”: “The will is the leader of the vital force [*qi*], and the vital force fills the body. Where the will leads, the vital force will follow. Therefore I say, ‘Hold your will firm and never do violence to your vital force.’ . . . If the will is single, it will move the vital force. If the vital force is concentrated, it will move the will” (*Mencius* 2A:2).

Neo-Confucians built on ideas from the Four Books and the *Book of Changes* to develop the concept that man’s original nature transcends the distinction between self and other and extends to encompass the entire universe. Zhou Dunyi taught that “the state of absolute quiet and inactivity” referred to in the *Changes* is itself sincerity, which is infinitely pure, and that the state of “subtle incipient activation” spoken of in the same classic is “the undifferentiated state between existence and nonexistence when activity has started but has not manifested itself in physical form.” Zhang Zai, in

his *Western Inscription*, wrote, “Heaven is my father and earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I regard as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions.” Cheng Yi echoed the *Mencius* in teaching that “the way to make the self sincere lies in having firm faith in the Way. As there is firm faith in the Way, one will put it into practice with determination. When one puts it into practice with determination, he will keep it securely. Then humanity, righteousness, loyalty, and faithfulness will never depart from his heart. In moments of haste, he acts according to them. In times of difficulty or confusion, he acts according to them.”

It should be clear that underlying all of these core Confucian ideas was a religious quest for the full realization of the human capacities for goodness, self-transcendence, tranquillity, wisdom, and holiness—a quest that was capable of inspiring large numbers of people in East Asia to live lives ennobled by self-discipline, meditation, and sacrifice of self-interest for the welfare of the wider human community.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Action in the World; Compassion and Holy People; Confucian Culture Heroes; Confucius; Hermits; Mengzi; Morality and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Sages; Scholars as Holy People; Shinto and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Wang Yangming; Wealth and Poverty; Zhang Zai; Zhou Dunyi

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Confucius (Kongzi)

(551–479 B.C.E.)

Founder of Confucianism

“Confucius” is a Latinized name for the “founder” of Confucianism devised by the Jesuits in China in the sixteenth century. In Chinese he is known as Kongzi or Kong Fuzi (Master Kong). The influence of his thought is so great in traditional East Asian civilization that that civilization is often described as “Confucian” in nature.

Kongzi was born in the state of Lu, in modern Shandong province, in 551 B.C.E. At the beginning of the Zhou dynasty (1066–256 B.C.E.), Lu had been the fief of Bo Qin, eldest son of the duke of Zhou. The duke of Zhou—Confucius’s greatest culture hero—had assisted his older brother, King Wu (son of King Wen), in overthrowing the Shang and founding the Zhou dynasty, and when Wu became sick, and during the minority of Wu’s son and successor, he took over the reins of government. The *Book of Documents* contains records of the duke’s words and deeds and gives him the chief credit for establishing the rituals, music, and political institutions of the Zhou dynasty. For Confucius, he was the last in a series of sage-rulers (after Yao, Shun, Yu, King Wen, and King Wu) who had laid down the basic patterns and norms of true civilization. Although Lu was not a powerful state, its historical connection with the Zhou ruling house had assured that the Zhou ritual traditions and the texts that recorded them were well preserved, and as a child Confucius liked to practice these rituals as a kind of game.

Although Confucius’s father died when he was young and he grew up in rather straitened circumstances, he was descended from a noble family of the state of Song, where the ritual traditions of the Shang or Yin dynasty (1711–1066 B.C.E.) had been preserved among the descendants of the Shang aristocracy. In ancient times in China, worship and government were tightly intertwined, and the sacrificial rites performed seasonally by the ruler were believed indispensable to preserving the harmony between heaven and the human community that is particularly essential in an agriculture-based society. Confucius retained the ancient belief in the importance of sacrificial rites, but he was much more concerned with their influence on the human heart and the community than with their supposed efficacy in appeasing and winning the blessings of spiritual beings.

Although deeply aware of his ancestral connectedness to the ritual traditions of the Zhou and the Shang royal houses, Confucius was compelled until age thirty-six to serve as a low-ranking official with mundane responsibilities. This contradiction gave him both the motivation and the opportunity to immerse himself in the writings and rituals that had been passed down in Lu, and, though he was unsuccessful in obtaining a position that would allow him to put his beliefs into practice in the political realm, his knowledge of this heritage (and his personal charisma) eventually attracted disciples with similar hopes of obtaining official positions with real responsibility for the welfare of society. In spite of his view of himself as a transmitter, not an innovator, by extending education beyond the aristocracy, accepting students no matter what their economic means, and becoming the first itinerant professional teacher, Confucius initiated a veritable intellectual revolution, becoming the model for the type of “unattached intellectual” in search of employment who in the following two and a half centuries



Confucius with goddess. Confucian Temple (Kungzi Miao), Taipei, Taiwan. (Art Directors)

would give birth to the “Hundred Schools” of ancient Chinese thought.

Yet Confucius can also be seen as a “holy person” because his entire teaching and sense of mission were rooted in his own personal relationship with *tian* (heaven), a word that referred originally in China to the infinite expanse of the sky and the gods and ancestral spirits believed to reside there, particularly the anthropomorphic supreme god, called Shang Di in the Yin dynasty but usually Tian in the Zhou. In the Shang and early Zhou, this supreme heavenly god was believed to reward good and punish evil, issue commands directing human actions, determine the length of people’s lives, receive offerings, and hear prayers. By Confucius’s time, many of the old religious beliefs associated with Tian (such as the belief that it was possible to find out the will of Tian through divination) were fading, and while clear traces of the old beliefs remain in Confucius’s teachings, his emphasis is on Tian as the source and protector of human morality and of the “chosen” individual’s civilizing mission. For instance, “When the Master was surrounded in Kuang [when mistaken for a rebel], he said, ‘Since King Wen is no longer with us, does not the Culture [*wen*] now reside with me? If Heaven were going to allow this Culture to perish, it would not have allowed a latecomer like me to participate in it.

Since Heaven has not allowed this Culture to perish, what can the people of Kuang do to me?’” (*Analec*s 9.5). And again, “The man of noble character [*junzi*] holds three things in awe: the commands of Heaven, persons of great virtue, and the words of the sages” (16.8).

The culture that Confucius believed heaven had chosen him to preserve centered on the observance of ritual propriety (*li*)—the behavioral norms, rituals, and etiquette laid down by the founders of the Zhou dynasty to bring about civility, order, peace, and harmony in the community from the top of society on down. To rectify society through ritual, however, required the rectification of names—the clarification of the meanings of words and the responsibilities incumbent upon each social role as defined by its title. This meant restoring the original hierarchical order of society, where the ultimate authority in ritual, governmental, and military affairs rested with *one* ruler at the top of the hierarchy, the “Son of Heaven” descended from the original Zhou rulers, not with the rulers of the separate states who had originally been merely his vassals. Accordingly, Confucianism has always had great appeal to authoritarian rulers endeavoring to unify and pacify their states with the aid of an obedient, literate, and conscientious official bureaucracy.

Yet Confucianism was adopted as the state ideology by Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty (141–87 B.C.E.) as a *middle path* between the hard authoritarianism of legalism and the more laissez-faire policies inspired by early Han Huang-Lao Daoism, both of which had been tried and found wanting. What distinguished Confucius’s path was the teaching that sociopolitical order ultimately rested neither on the external coercion of law nor on a mystical Daoistic “return to nature,” but on the inward moral cultivation and moral commitment of the ruler, and eventually of all of his officials as well. The aim of this inward cultivation, also used to characterize the “benevolent government” it would bring about, is the achievement of *ren*, usually translated as “humaneness” or “humanity.” As Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont have emphasized, however, in suggesting an alternate translation as “authoritative personhood,” “*ren* is one’s entire person: one’s cultivated cognitive, aesthetic, moral, and religious sensibilities as they are expressed in one’s ritualized roles and relationships. . . . [*Ren*] is foremost the process of ‘growing’ (*sheng*) these relationships into vital, robust, and healthy participation in the human community” (Confucius 1998, 49).

It was this understanding of the way of the sages as a path of inward- and outward-directed self-cultivation aimed at the full realization of the heaven-endowed moral capacities of the individual that was picked up by Menzi (372–289 B.C.E.), and later by the Neo-Confucians of the Song (960–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties, and developed into a methodology of intellectual and spiritual discipline as sophisticated (and as plagued by sectarian argu-

mentation regarding the definition of orthodoxy and heterodoxy) as that developed in any other religious tradition.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucian Culture Heroes; Confucianism and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Sages; Scholars as Holy People

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Conselheiro, Antonio

(1842–1897 C.E.)

Christian millenarian, rebel

Born Antonio Vicente Mendes Maciel in 1842, Antonio Conselheiro (Antonio the Counselor) founded a millenarian community that withstood three Brazilian government expeditions to destroy it. He began his religious career as a wanderer in the high desert (*sertão*) of northeastern Brazil. The Conselheiro attracted a large following by preaching asceticism, condemning the Brazilian republican government, and prophesying the end of the world and the return of Rei Dom Sebastião, a sixteenth-century Portuguese prince who had died in North Africa. His army of backland cowboys (*jagunços*) defeated thousands of soldiers, succumbing only in 1897. The story of Antonio Conselheiro and his *jagunços* became a parable of Brazilian nationality when he was immortalized in Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões* (translated into English as *Rebellion in the Backlands* in 1944).

Antonio Conselheiro's asceticism and outlandish appearance won him a following among disenfranchised denizens of the *sertão*. He wore a blue cotton robe and a wide-brimmed hat, grew his hair and beard long, and always carried a pilgrim's staff. He first came to the attention of the authorities in 1866, when he was arrested for the murder of his wife and mother, but he was released when both were found alive. His return to the *sertão* in 1867 seemed miraculous to his followers, and his fame increased. He traveled through the desert with his increasing following, repairing churches and cemeteries. In 1882, he was condemned by the archbishop of Bahia for his rigid moral tone.

In 1889, the Brazilian republic was established by the abdication of Emperor Dom Pedro II. The republicans instituted a separation of church and state and denied legal recognition to church marriages. This led Antonio Conselheiro to believe that the republican government and the Catholic Church were, or were in league with, the Antichrist.

He prophesied that in 1896 the *sertão* would become the beach and the beach would become the *sertão*; that in 1898 there would be many hats and few heads; and that in 1899 water would turn to blood and falling stars would destroy the world. The shade of a tree where he rested became a panacea for the residents of Chorrobó, and a statue of the Virgin cried blood tears for his followers at Monte Santo.

In 1893, the Conselheiro burned a bulletin board announcing taxes and began his flight to Canudos, his desert redoubt. On the way, he had his first confrontation with government forces. His *jagunços* (armed cowboys, mercenaries, and bandits) defeated the few hundred ill-trained police. Upon arriving in Canudos, he and his followers began construction of a stone church and many miles of trenches. Believing that Canudos would be spared in the imminent eschaton, they prepared to defend it with their lives.

The government sent four military expeditions against Canudos in 1896–1897. All were plagued by the harsh terrain, the difficulty of maintaining supply lines, and the hubris of their commanders. The *jagunços* captured rifles, artillery, and ammunition from their enemies and lined the road to Canudos with their heads. Each victory brought Antonio Conselheiro more fame and followers. The city fell after the fourth expedition, in which the Brazilian army fielded more than 12,000 troops. Antonio Conselheiro died of dysentery and voluntary starvation in 1897 during the final siege.

The commander brought the Conselheiro's head to the anthropological museum in the Bahian capital. It was to serve as a warning to fanatics and as a specimen for phrenological research. However, it was removed from display after it became an object of popular veneration.

—Brian Brazeal

See also: Prophets; Violence and Nonviolence

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Constantine

(c. 272–337 C.E.)

Christian emperor

Constantine, the Roman emperor who legalized, promoted, and patronized Christianity, is often considered the first Christian emperor, though he was only baptized on his deathbed. Born in about 272, he came to power in the western empire upon the death of his father, Constantius

Chlorus, in 306. Constantine was the only child from Chlorus's union with Helena, a lowborn concubine. He was very close to his mother, and when his father died he summoned her to live with him in Trier. The religious turning point in Constantine's life occurred in 312 while he was preparing for a battle against Maxentius, a usurper and the brother of Constantine's wife Fausta. Constantine had a vision, called a dream in some accounts, that he would be victorious if he displayed the Christian chi-rho symbol, the first two letters of *Christos* (Christ) in Greek. Constantine had the symbol painted on his soldiers' shields and banners and went into battle the next morning at the Milvian Bridge, just to the north of the city of Rome. Maxentius's forces, which had prepared for battle in the traditional Roman way of blood sacrifice at the temples, outnumbered those of Constantine, and yet the young emperor was victorious.

Constantine, now the undisputed leader of the Roman west, issued the Edict of Milan, both promoting religious toleration, thus legalizing Christianity, and proclaiming that the Christian god was favored by the emperor. He also convened the first ecumenical church council at Nicaea in 325 in the hopes of clarification of church doctrine, particularly concerning Arianism. He built many impressive basilicas, including St. Peter's and St. John Lateran in Rome, the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, and Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

By 324, Constantine was the sole ruler of Rome and proclaimed both his mother, Helena, and his wife, Fausta, empresses (*Augustae*). In 326, after accusations of an affair between his son Crispus, child of his first marriage, and his wife, Fausta, Constantine ordered them both executed. Shortly after these events, Helena was dispatched on a journey of imperial patronage and pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She is now venerated as a saint.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Helena; Rulers as Holy People
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Contemporary Holy People

It is perhaps premature to designate anybody who has lived within the past two generations as “holy.” Those still living or recently dead have not yet withstood the test of time. Is their

revelation a passing fad, which will make later generations yawn in boredom or recoil in horror? Worse, will ruthless biographers reveal that recent religious heroes in reality had feet of clay? It is with good cause that the modern Roman Catholic process of canonization cannot begin until three years after a purported holy person's death and that there is such a rigorous investigation into the prospective saint's life and faith. Any attempt to lay out some of the most recent trends in world beliefs about holy people must therefore be speculative.

That said, in general, it is fair to say that there is currently more diversity in belief about what constitutes “holiness” than at any time in human history. People who have been recognized as particularly close to the divine in the period since approximately 1960 are strongly divided between ecumenicists and fundamentalists of a particular faith tradition, proponents of violence and nonviolence, affirmers of tradition and progressives—with countless variants on each theme. Add to that a particular interest of some holy people in the environment and a strong belief of more holy people than ever before that the world has reached such a depth of depravity that it will soon end, and one begins to get a sense of the diversity of modern constructs of holiness. If there is a common theme, it is probably the general sense of acknowledged holy people that the world today is in a state of crisis greater than in any earlier age: Their solutions to the problem, however, differ.

Many modern holy people strike a common societal chord that leads to their veneration by advocating a return to either a pure early form of a particular religion or to a primal, earth-centered spirituality. Especially interesting in the latter regard is the rise of modern witchcraft. Gerald Gardner (1884–1964), founder of the Wicca movement, proclaimed that he was bringing to light a living spiritual tradition (while actually inventing the rituals and many of the beliefs himself). While his position as uniquely holy soon faded in the popular consciousness, other “nature lovers” seem to have a more enduring appeal. A particularly common trend in the 1960s was a turn to healing plants or psychedelic drugs, which were thought by some to be able to “reconnect” people of this modern materialistic age to the divine. The prophets and popularizers of this movement, such as Timothy Leary (1920–1996) and Terence McKenna (1946–2000), won wide regard as restorers of the holy. A woman named Jeanette MacDonald (1934–1984), who preempted the rather grandiose name “Mother Earth,” founded the Earth People movement of Trinidad. She advocated a return to the worship of a primordial Mother, proclaiming that the way of the Mother is a return to the simplicity of nature. Her movement was one of many such, and she was one of many people acclaimed by followers as an extraordinary channel to the divine. More moderate in their aims, there are holy peo-

ple in several established religions who have taught an ecological message. An interesting example is the Greek monk Amphilochios (1888–1970), widely revered as a saint, who said, “Whoever does not love trees does not love Christ.” Even more recently, the Jain *acharya* (spiritual teacher) Tulsi (1914–1997) led a major revival of his sect of Jainism with a message that was pro-environmental, antinuclear, and especially stressed animal rights as a return to traditional Jain values.

Return to historically attested religious forms can take many shapes. At times it has been peaceful and even ecumenical, as, for example, in the modern revival of meditation practices spearheaded by men such as the Christian Thomas Merton (1915–1968) and the Theravada Buddhist Mahasi Sayadaw (1904–1982). More often, however, the theme of return to “pure” religion has been linked with nationalist movements, many of which are still active in the twenty-first century. Several African holy people have won devoted followings with their vigorous denunciations of imperialist powers, often coupled with impassioned efforts to restore native religion. A good example of this is the Kenyan Elijah Masinde (1908–1987). Revivals of ancestral religion led by charismatic holy people can also be found among the African-descended population of the Americas and in Native American communities. Often the message to restore true religion has been coupled with loud acclaim of a particular group as God’s “true” chosen people. A variant of this movement that has been wildly popular in Africa is the spread of Pentecostal Christianity, proclaimed as a return to the original, spirit-led faith of the first century. A wave of Pentecostal leaders, such as the German Reinhard Bonnke (1940–) and Ezekiel Guti (1923–) of Zimbabwe, have won enormous personal followings in Africa and elsewhere in the world. These leaders have been credited with the ability to work miracles and the ability to change the lives of multitudes.

The fundamentalist movements, advocating return to the original purity of given religions, have spread around the world thanks to charismatic preachers widely accepted as being in some way the messengers of God. Fundamentalist holy people, ranging from the Christian Jerry Falwell (1933–) to the Shi’a Muslim revolutionary Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989), have often preached intolerance of all faiths but their own, blaming the ills of the world on a falling away from the “old time religion.” Fundamentalist holy people also exist in Judaism and Buddhism. For instance, the Thai Buddhist monk Buddhadasa (1906–1993) proposed stripping Buddhism of all later accretions—including most popular religious practices. Such leaders have often been persecuted by governments (Sayyid Qutb [1906–1966], founder of Sunni Muslim fundamentalism, was executed in Egypt) for the simple reason that they tend to oppose the secular state, adding the luster of martyrdom in the eyes of their followers.

Recent generations have also seen a number of ecumenical holy people unprecedented in world history. Some saints have always been open toward those of other faiths, and some religions have been more accepting of diverse traditions than others. Some of the most intransigent have recently begun to embrace a universalist worldview, however. Roman Catholicism has produced a number of great ecumenicists, surprising many by leading the way toward greater understanding of other religions. While many traditional Catholics still denounce Pope John XXIII (1881–1963), pope from 1958 to 1963, and his “updating” of the church during Vatican II (which included a strong element of rapprochement with other religions), their coreligionists have led a vigorous movement to declare John a saint. Catholic ecumenism dates from before John XXIII’s pontificate, though, receiving a major forward momentum from the trials of World War II. Thus, in 1943, the Italian Chiara Lubich (1920–), while huddled in an air-raid shelter, founded the Focolare (hearth) movement, which grew into a worldwide ecumenical cause devoted to love and unity. Similarly, Brother Roger (Roger Schutz, 1915–) founded the Protestant/Catholic religious order of Taizé in 1940, which has expanded into a massive religious revival movement especially directed toward the world’s youth. A series of associated ecumenical movements have welcomed Muslims, Buddhists, and Jews besides all varieties of Christians. One of the most powerful voices in this Catholic ecumenical drive was the Trappist monk Thomas Merton, a major spiritual writer and speaker who encouraged interreligious exchange, especially in the monastic life.

More and more religious leaders have won large popular followings to their universalist messages that contain elements of several religions. Interesting modern cases are the jazz musician and spiritual leader John Coltrane (1926–1967), who blended Christian, Muslim, Asian, and African religion, or the Hindu eclectic holy man Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986), who turned against all religious tradition as useless. Certainly high on any list of great modern holy figures is Tenzin Gyatso (1933–), the fourteenth dalai lama, who has brought the spiritual insights of Buddhism to a worldwide audience, become a major proponent of interreligious dialogue, and lived a life of personal integrity in the face of hardship impressive in any age.

One of the most attractive paths that modern holy people have taken is the quest for social justice, employing spiritual prestige and charisma to question traditional inequities. Many people, whether coreligionists or not, have recognized the greatest twentieth-century warriors for the dignity of all human beings as inspired by God; often it has been the sense of religious mission they radiated that won general recognition for their causes. Among the civil rights leaders of the United States, Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), has won

something as close as Protestants come to a cult of a saint, as has Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948) in India among Hindus. The Christian motivation of antiapartheid leaders such as Nelson Mandela (1918–) and Desmond Tutu (1931–) has also been widely recognized. Roman Catholicism has produced martyrs for social justice, most notably the archbishops Janani Luwum (1922–1977) of Uganda and Oscar Romero (1917–1980) of El Salvador. On a less spectacular level, religious figures around the world have focused their spiritual lives on assistance for the poor and dispossessed of the world; Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910–1997) is perhaps the most famous of these.

As in many other ages, the modern world seems to have more than a reasonable share of charismatic holy people who decry the evil of the age and proclaim an imminent dissolution and recreation of a more godly society. Many such prophets of doom are ephemeral, building up large cult followings that soon dissolve in disillusionment or disaster. It seems likely that figures such as Jim Jones (1931–1978) and David Koresh (1959–1993) will be remembered, if at all, as curiosities rather than as holy people, and thousands of similar cult leaders have won and lost devoted followers by means of their unrealized millennial messages. Some recent figures, however, have inspired mass movements that may withstand the test of time and validate their prophets—men such as Simeo Ondeto (c. 1910/1917–1991) the cofounder of Legio Maria in Africa; Sun Myung Moon (1920–), who has won millions to the Unification Church; and Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977), who established the Hare Krishna movement.

It is impossible to guess who, a hundred years from now, will be regarded as the great holy people of the late twentieth century. Some have won official recognition, in the form of canonization or even public holidays declared in their honor, making it unlikely they will be forgotten. Perhaps some of the greatest names, however, will be people who lived and died in obscurity, only to have their contribution discovered by the people of a later age.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bonnke, Reinhard; Guti, Ezekiel “Handinawangu”; Mandela, Nelson Rolihlahla; Masinde, Elijah; McKenna, Terence; Merton, Thomas; Ondeto, Simeo; Sayadaw, Mahasi; Suffering and Holy People; Tenzin Gyatso; Teresa of Calcutta; Tulsii; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo

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Conversion

See **Awakening and Conversion**

Cordoba, Martyrs of

Christian martyrs, 851–858 C.E.

“Martyrs of Cordoba” is a collective term referring to the Christians who were executed by Muslim authorities for blasphemy or apostasy in Cordoba, Spain, between the years 851 and 858. Despite the fact that the Christian population of al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) had, by the mid-ninth century, achieved a viable *modus vivendi* with the dominant Muslim regime, some Christians found the idea of living under Muslim rule so intolerable that they sought their own deaths by publicly blaspheming Muhammad.

The first of these was a man named Isaac, a former minister in the Umayyad government, who had since retired to a monastery outside of the city. One day Isaac approached a Muslim *qadi* (judge), as if wanting to convert to Islam. But no sooner had the *qadi* begun to expound on his faith than Isaac launched into a verbal assault on the religion. He was arrested and, on June 3, 851, executed for blasphemy. Over the course of the next week, seven more Christians followed Isaac's example. By the end of July, the number of executions for blasphemy had grown to eleven. The next two victims—Flora and Maria, who died in November 851—were products of mixed marriages. In fact, Flora was ultimately decapitated not for blasphemy but for apostasy, because although her widowed mother had raised her as a Christian, her father had been a Muslim. Over the course of the next six and a half years, Cordoba witnessed the execution of thirty-two more Christians who died either as blasphemers or apostates or both. These events were a source of great concern for the Umayyad emirs, who, already facing resistance to their rule in the provinces, were especially leery of displays of dissent within their own capital.

But the executions also divided the Christian community. By and large, the Christians who were punished for violating Muslim law saw themselves as martyrs. By voluntarily sacrificing their lives in witness to Christianity, they imagined that they were acting in accordance with martyrrial traditions dating back to the times of Roman persecution (up to the year 313, when Constantine issued the Edict of Milan).

But many of the Christians living in Cordoba at the time, especially those who had adjusted to Muslim rule and assimilated to the dominant Arab secular culture, regarded the sacrifices of Isaac and the rest as inappropriate. From their perspective, the “radical” actions of the executed Christians threatened to undermine the niche that the Christian community as a whole had carved out within Andalusian society. They took issue with the notion that the executed Christians were martyrs of the ancient Roman type, pointing not only to the lack of miracles associated with their deaths, but to the fact that the Muslims were (in marked contrast to the Romans of a bygone era) neither pagans nor persecutors.

A Cordoban priest named Eulogius and his lay friend Paulus Alvarus took it upon themselves to defend the “martyrs” from their Christian detractors by writing a martyrology and two apologetic treatises on their behalf. Their works provide a fascinating window into the world of a Christian community living under Muslim rule, revealing information about everyday interaction between Christians and Muslims as well as providing evidence for some of the very earliest Latin Christian views of Islam as a religion. Though there is some question as to the precise role that Eulogius and Alvarus played in promoting the martyrdoms, it is clear that their writings—the only real evidence that has survived—were instrumental in constructing the idea of a “martyrs’ movement.” Eulogius himself suffered decapitation on March 11, 859, for harboring a fugitive apostate named Leocritia.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Corn Maidens/Mothers

Native American holy women/goddesses

In all of the agricultural Native American tribes of the United States, corn plays a key role in rituals, cosmologies, and religion. Mythologically, corn is usually personified as a woman. For the Cherokee, she is Selu; for the Seneca, Kanenahagenat. There were also Corn Maidens celebrated among the Zuni, and among the Pawnee, Corn Woman is revered. The corn maidens and mothers were focal points for Green Corn Dances and other festivals.

The Great Law of the Haudenosaunee, the Iroquois law code, is spiritually based, and the Green Corn Festival, a celebration of the survival of women’s maize agriculture, was

encoded into the Great Law. The Haudenosaunee naming practice is a very complex process, with multiple names running between and through both precontact epochs. Sky Woman is also called the Corn Mother, Otsitsa. During the first epoch, according to legend, she brought seeds to the earth along with her younger sisters Beans and Squash.

Zuni tradition tells of six Corn Maidens who stay in the plaza in a shelter of boughs during the Corn Dance. A priest, desiring the eldest sister, attempts to touch her; offended, all of the Corn Maidens depart and go to the ocean. Since they take all of the corn with them, famine occurs for seven years, with the priests holding council every night. Newekwe Youth decides to search for the Corn Maidens, demanding that the priests go into a retreat and make prayer sticks in his absence. He gains power when the priests retreat and returns with the Corn Maidens, and all enter the Zuni Village. Among the Zuni, in early December the Corn Maidens arrive in the Molawai ceremony, “a ritual dramatization of the loss and recovery of the Corn Maidens” (Gill and Sullivan 1992, 362).

Corn Woman is depicted in many stories. The Pawnee tell that, when she was murdered (sometimes decapitated), and her body was dragged around in a field, her blood became the origin for the first corn plants. In other stories, she is a beautiful female who appears as a single green stalk of corn. Before she disappears, she teaches about the importance of being generous as well as revealing hunting secrets.

—Connie H. Rickenbaker

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Clan Mothers of the Iroquois; Intermediaries

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Cosmas and Damian

(d. c. 303 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

There were three sets of martyred brothers named Cosmas and Damian, all of whom died in the early fourth century. The first pair was decapitated in Arabia, either in Syria or in Cilicia, under Diocletian along with three other brothers. The second pair was stoned to death in Rome. The third pair, sons of Theodotus from Asia, died after being tortured.

In the first case, the consul Lysias had five Arab brothers (Cosmas, Damian, Leonce, Euprepius, and Antheme)

whipped because they refused to sacrifice to the gods of the state. Tied up in chains, they uttered pious words. Then, thrown into the sea, they sang songs honoring Jesus, and an angel saved them from drowning. When Lysias accused them of being magicians, Cosmas replied with an hour-long speech on Christian virtues, during which time two men socked him in the jaw, but this failed to break his resolve. Enraged, Lysias incarcerated them, and the brothers spent the night praying and singing hymns. The following day, Lysias ordered them burned. In the fire, they raised their eyes to God; there was an earthquake, and the fire spread to burn the crowd, while the brothers were unscathed. Next, they were tied up and taken before the consul, but their faces radiated joy. They were crucified, whipped, and stoned by the crowd, but the stones reversed their course and struck those who threw them. Four soldiers shot arrows, which flew back and killed the soldiers. Decapitated, the brothers still sang songs of thanksgiving to God. With hands raised, they chanted "Amen," rendered their souls to God, and acquired the crowns of victory. A camel then miraculously spoke, ordering that the five brothers be buried in the same sepulcher.

Before their arrest, the Arab brothers were famous for treating the infirm in Nicomedia (in modern Turkey) in the name of Jesus Christ: They asked their patients to denounce other gods and to believe in Jesus, and they refused payment for their work. Patron saints of physicians and surgeons, as well as pharmacists, their feast day is celebrated on September 26.

The portraits of Cosmas and Damian were already engraved on coins and seals and painted on sanctuaries in the fourth century, and as their cult spread throughout Asia Minor and westward, churches were built in their honor. The Roman church used a Latin translation of their original Greek legend, and their names were inscribed in the Roman liturgy. An oratory was built as early as 498, and Pope Felix IV (pope 525–530) had a basilica built in their honor at the Forum.

During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Cosmas and Damian were painted as physicians with the dress and instruments of the area and the period (a box of ointment, a lancet or some other surgical instrument, and a mortar and pestle). Cosimo de Medici adopted Cosmas and Damian as his patrons, and he commissioned Fra Angelico to paint scenes of their lives in about 1440.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Fra Angelico; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Cranmer, Thomas

(1489–1556 C.E.)

Protestant archbishop, martyr

English churchman under Henry VIII, Thomas Cranmer was born in Aslacton, Nottinghamshire, on July 2, 1489. He was ordained before 1520 and received his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1526 from the University of Cambridge, where he was a lecturer and public examiner in divinity. He came to the attention of Henry in 1529 during the time of the king's fight with Rome over his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Henry, who desperately wanted an heir to the throne, had prevailed upon Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage to Catherine, who had yet to produce a male child. Not wishing to offend Catherine's nephew, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who exerted powerful control over the papacy, Clement delayed responding to Henry's request. Cranmer suggested that Henry need not rely upon Rome to dissolve the marriage but should turn the matter over to the university scholars. Realizing the power of this suggestion, Henry had a treatise prepared on the issue and sent Cranmer along with an embassy that would present it to the pope and emperor.

Although nothing was resolved concerning the divorce until Henry had himself declared "supreme head" of the newly formulated Church of England, the king rewarded Cranmer by appointing him archdeacon of Taunton and in 1532 made him ambassador to the emperor. When the archbishopric of Canterbury became vacant, Henry appointed Cranmer to the position. He was consecrated on March 30, 1533. In April, Cranmer asked the king's leave to proceed with the case of Catherine. He convened his court in May, and by the twenty-third of the month pronounced sentence, declaring that the marriage between Henry and Catherine had never been valid. By the end of May, Cranmer declared the marriage of Henry and Anne Bolyn valid, crowning her queen on June 1, 1533.

Because Henry's remaking of the Church of England into a Protestant entity had been politically motivated instead of religiously based, Cranmer and other churchmen found it difficult to effect the theological and liturgical reforms in the church that they sought until after the king's death in 1547. Although Cranmer, along with his friend and colleague Thomas Cromwell, endorsed the translation of the Bible into English in 1538, something that the Catholic Church had always vehemently resisted, it was not until Henry's son, Edward VI, came to power that Cranmer and others found a more receptive atmosphere for their ideas. Believing that lay people should be able to participate more fully in the experience of worship, Cranmer worked almost nonstop during the

reign of Edward to define a new religious order for the Church of England. Toward this end, he produced, mainly by himself, two editions of the Book of Common Prayer, in which he adapted the medieval mass into English and altered its character to reflect Protestant concern with the centrality of scripture and the importance of the liturgical structure of the early church. He also revised the canon law known as *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* and produced the Forty-Two Articles (afterward reduced to thirty-nine), which defined the doctrines of the Anglican Church.

Upon Edward's death, his half sister, Mary I, came to power and attempted to restore England to Catholicism. This had dire consequences for churchmen, many of whom were arrested and tried for heresy or treason. Cranmer's own difficulties began with his refusal to reject the second edition of the Book of Common Prayer, which represented his clearest articulation of the correctness of Protestantism. Based on a manifesto he had written to defend his position and his support of Lady Jane Grey for queen, he was arrested in September 1553 and tried for treason two months later. He was condemned to death but languished in prison for months before he was taken to Oxford in 1555.

There, he was subjected to an examination by a court holding papal jurisdiction. Excommunicated by the pope, and knowing that his position was truly precarious, he signed a series of "recantations," some of which were probably "submissions to authority" that Cranmer's own political integrity impelled him to make. The last of these, though, was a humiliating confession of his own wrongdoings, which ironically had no effect on his death sentence. Realizing that his fate had been decided, he publicly recanted his previous recantations and died a martyr's death in 1556.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Sexuality and Holy People

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Crazy Horse

(1840–1877 C.E.)

Oglala and Miniconjou Lakota warrior, political leader, mystic

Few Lakota warriors of the nineteenth century are better known in popular consciousness than Crazy Horse. He led

warriors in several major battles against the U.S. Army, including the defeat of General George Armstrong Custer in 1876, and he enjoyed a reputation as an invincible warrior who never suffered injury. His war powers derived from an intimate relationship with the spiritual world.

Like all Lakota men of his time, Crazy Horse trained from an early age to become a warrior. This preparation included seeking a vision in order to communicate with a spiritual protector. Crazy Horse accomplished this feat as a boy when he saw a warrior mounted on a horse that changed colors and rode through hail and lightning. The enemy's bullets and arrows did not affect the warrior in the vision, even as the warrior's people tried to hold him back. Crazy Horse had found his life's mission: to fight against his people's enemies with no fear. In the mid-1850s, Crazy Horse witnessed the U.S. Army's destruction of a Lakota village of men, women, and children with little cause, and from that moment on he militantly opposed American expansion onto the plains.

Because of his ability to taunt and confront the enemy without risk of harm, Crazy Horse rose quickly in status and became one of the youngest war leaders in the history of his people. Nevertheless, he remained a shy, introspective man who rarely talked in councils or bragged about his numerous war exploits. Frequently, he entered battle alone, as when he single-handedly killed scores of white miners and prospectors in the early 1870s who had invaded the Lakota's sacred Black Hills looking for gold. These solitary actions contributed to his reputation as a mystical and invincible warrior. His place in American memory was secured by his leading role in the Battle of the Rosebud and in crushing Custer in 1876. Hounded by the U.S. Army after Custer's defeat, Crazy Horse and his people surrendered at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, in early 1877. In September, he was killed by a guard as the commanding general tried to arrest him. His followers secreted his body and buried it in an unmarked grave, known only to few people, if any, living today.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Crowther, Samuel Ajayi

(c. 1808–1891 C.E.)

Anglican bishop, missionary, scholar

Samuel Ajayi Crowther was the first African to become bishop of the Anglican Church. This pioneering missionary

and revered scholar transcribed Yoruba from an oral to a written language. According to Crowther, a Yoruba religion priest told his parents that he was destined to worship only the “god of heaven” (McKenzie 1976, 14). Although Islam had been practiced for centuries in West Africa, Christianity was virtually unknown. Crowther was captured and sold into slavery as a teenager. He was released in 1822 when a British abolitionist squadron seized the Brazil-bound ship he was on (slave ownership was outlawed in 1807). At his new home in Freetown, Sierra Leone, Crowther attended missionaries’ schools, and by 1827 he was the first student of Fourah Bay College.

Crowther began his career as a schoolteacher in 1830. He went on to help establish the British missionary movement in the Niger River region. He paved the way for numerous African and European missionaries to operate in West Africa. After travels and further studies in both Europe and Africa, Crowther became a deacon, then priest, and finally a bishop in 1864. Although his published chronicles inspired his contemporaries, his writings had an even wider impact because he was the first to inscribe the grammar of the Yoruba and Nupe languages, thereby establishing them as written languages. Crowther’s translation of the Bible into the Yoruba language helped spread Christianity in the twentieth century. Furthermore, Crowther helped to establish numerous churches in West Africa. Although he was forced to retire in 1890 because of racial conflicts and died the next year, today Crowther is well known to many English and African people. He retains an honorable position among millions as a pioneer for Western education and Christianity in West Africa.

—Natalie A. Washington

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Scholars as Holy People

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Crummell, Alexander

(1819–1898 C.E.)

Episcopalian missionary, social activist

Alexander Crummell was born in 1819 in New York City to free blacks who insured that he received a good education.

His vision of a better future for Africa and its people eventually led him to engage in missionary work and other activities designed to promote Africa’s development and Christianization.

Crummell attended high school with Henry Highland Garnet, who would become a lifelong friend. After obtaining an ordination in the Episcopal Church, Crummell began missionary work in New York. In 1848, he traveled to England in an effort to raise funds for his mission work. There, he was accepted at Cambridge University and earned his final degree. During Crummell’s Cambridge years he matured as a scholar and began to formulate his ideas for the advancement of the African American people.

In 1853, Crummell left England after graduation from Cambridge and traveled to Liberia, where he labored for twenty years as a missionary. Crummell’s father claimed descent from the Temne chiefs of West Africa, and Crummell had grown up hearing stories about Africa and his father’s burning love for “home.” So it is not surprising that Crummell’s royal African blood, sense of dignity, and intellect drove him to champion the call for African Americans to return to Africa and to bring with them the best of what they had learned of white Western civilization, Christianity, and commerce. Crummell believed that Christianity had produced within the Western world the most advanced and developed civilization that had ever existed. For that reason, he advocated an elite leadership to deliver Jesus Christ and Western civilization to the “heathen” tribes of Africa. For Crummell this was how African Americans would achieve racial uplift. Only as the world could see the black race making a contribution to the development of all people could blacks expect to receive the world’s respect.

Crummell served for two decades as an educator and missionary in Africa. During this period, he traveled on several occasions to America with Edward Blyden, a missionary in Liberia and later a government official and president of Liberia (1880–1884). The purpose of their trips was to encourage African American participation in the Christianization and development of Africa. Many blacks, discouraged by their status in America, received the message of emigration for racial uplift.

In 1873, Crummell abandoned his efforts in Africa and permanently returned to the United States. Upon his return, he was appointed by the Episcopal Church to serve as missionary to Washington, D.C. In 1897, a year before his death, Crummell founded and served as first president of the American Negro Academy. This academy was established for the purpose of promoting black intellectual excellence and combating racist propaganda against blacks by the dominant society.

—Rick Gray

See also: Blyden, Edward Wilmot; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People

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Cunigunde

See **Kunigunde**

Cuniraya Huiracocha

Peruvian hero-god

A pre-Hispanic god related to agriculture on the Peruvian central coast, Cuniraya Huiracocha appears in myths collected by Father Francisco de Avila in 1598, which were written in sixteenth-century Quechua to support the Christian struggle against Indian idolatries found in Peru. Therefore, they offer a unique account of the pre-Hispanic world vision in the Americas.

The myths explain human attitudes toward several wild animals of the Huarochiri region (condor, fox, parrot, puma, and falcon), natural features of the Peruvian coast, and the development of agriculture. The country's god, Cuniraya, took the shape of a beggar and walked among human beings with his dirty clothes. He fell in love with Cahuillaca, a beautiful goddess, but she always rejected him. One day, Cahuillaca was weaving below a tree of Lucumo, and Cuniraya, who was watching her from afar, tried to approach the goddess. He changed into a bird and flew to the top of the Lucumo, where he found a mature fruit and introduced his semen. Cahuillaca ate the fruit and got pregnant.

After nine months, Cahuillaca had a child, but she did not know who his father was. So she called all the gods (*huacas* and *huillcas*) to answer her question. When they arrived, Cahuillaca showed her son and asked who was his father. But nobody recognized the boy. Cuniraya Huiracocha was there, too, but he was not asked since he looked like a beggar. Then the goddess put the boy on the ground, hoping that he would recognize his father, which he did. When Cahuillaca realized that she had had a son with a beggar, she was ashamed. She

took her child and ran to the ocean. Cuniraya put on a gold cloth and followed her. When Cahuillaca reached the shoreline, she and her son went into the ocean, where they became two islands that can be seen today.

While Cuniraya was running after Cahuillaca, he found several animals in his way and asked them for help. Each animal that gave the wrong answer was cursed by Cuniraya. Only the falcon assured Cuniraya that he would reach Cahuillaca, and the bird was blessed. But Cuniraya came too late and, angry, he threw all the fishes of Urpayhuachac, a goddess who did not help him, into the ocean. And because of this, now the ocean has many fishes.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Gods on Earth

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Cuthbert

(c. 634–687 C.E.)

Christian bishop, ascetic

Cuthbert has become one of the most beloved Christian saints by reason of his humility and simplicity. His tomb in Durham Cathedral, England, has been an object of pilgrimage since the tenth century. The main source for the life of Cuthbert is Bede; in 716 and 720, not many years after Cuthbert's death in 687, Bede wrote two separate Lives, and he also devoted a number of chapters in his *History of the English Church and People* to the saint (Book 4, 26–32).

Although Cuthbert's name is English, a number of sources suggest he was Celtic. Born around 634, he was trained entirely in Celtic monasteries, and his practice of spirituality was more nearly Celtic than English. The distinction is immaterial, however, since a good number of English monks followed Celtic practice, and many even fled to Ireland with their Celtic brothers when the balance of custom tipped in favor of English (Roman) practice. Cuthbert accepted these changes gracefully, and throughout his career he managed to gain everyone's admiration.

Like many of his Celtic contemporaries, Cuthbert wished for the life of a hermit, but in fact his life began and ended in public service: preaching, healing, and extensive communal prayer. Even when he prayed alone, there was a sense of community. There is a charming story that, leaving the monastery at night, he would often enter the North Sea up to his arms and neck to pray. When he left the sea at dawn,

otters would warm his feet with their breath and dry him with their fur. After receiving his blessing, they would return to the sea.

In time, Cuthbert was able to abandon his church position to become a solitary on the island of Inner Farne on the east coast of Northumbria. There, following his spiritual forebears from among the desert and Irish saints, he lived a life in which God provided for him. His need for fresh water was met by a miraculous spring; like Antony (which Bede was quick to point out), he planted cereals, and, again like Antony, he had to remonstrate with animals—in his case, birds—for harvesting what they did not sow. Like Antony, too, his hermitage attracted a number of visitors, who were able to report on his sanctity.

These reports convinced King Egfrith of Northumbria in 685 to appoint Cuthbert, against his will, as bishop. According to Bede, he was a model bishop, living frugally, visiting the remote regions of his diocese, and performing healing and other miracles. Some of the latter were pleasant: Visiting a convent, he chose water over the proffered wine or beer, but a priest, later tasting the cup, exclaimed that it had the flavor of the best wine he had ever had. Bede's *Life* gives a very emotional and stirring account of Cuthbert's death in 687. His feast day is March 20.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ascetics as Holy People; Bede; Christianity and Holy People; Models; Nature

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Cyprian of Carthage

(c. 200–258 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Christian bishop of Carthage from about 248 until his martyrdom in 258, Cyprian was already approximately forty-five years old and an orator in Carthage when he converted to Christianity in approximately 246. As was often the case when someone of such high social standing converted, Cyprian found himself rising quickly through the local ecclesiastical ranks, being named bishop within only two years of his conversion. When the Roman emperor Decius launched his systematic persecution of Christians in late 249, Cyprian left the city and tried to direct the afflicted Christian community in absentia. As a result, a large collection of letters have survived that, among other things, reveal the strains of a church under imperial pressure.

In particular, Cyprian had to deal with the large number of "lapsed" Christians who, fearing for their lives, had partic-

ipated in mandatory acts of sacrifice to the Roman state gods to prove their allegiance to Rome. In their search for spiritual consolation, the lapsed sought the intercession of those Christians who had refused to sacrifice and were awaiting execution. As far as the lapsed were concerned, these "confessors," who would soon be martyrs, were in an optimal position to intercede for them in the presence of Christ. From Cyprian's episcopal perspective, however, such recourse to the confessors was a breach of church policy with regard to sinners, who, he contended, must go through the proper channels (which involved a long period of penance) if they were ever to be allowed entry back into the community of the faithful.

Part of the difficulties that Cyprian experienced during his exile and after his return to Carthage were a direct result of the fact that, while many Christians were being forced to make difficult choices about the relative importance of their religious and political affiliations, Cyprian avoided the problem altogether by going into exile. Indeed, the contemporary *Life of Cyprian* by Pontus is dedicated, in part, to an apologia explaining why Cyprian did not offer himself up when the opportunity first presented itself. Pontus's task was greatly facilitated by the fact that Cyprian did ultimately die as a martyr, thanks to the emperor Valerian's decision to issue his own persecution edict in 258. Though Cyprian's initial impulse was, once again, to go into hiding, he ultimately gave himself up and was executed on September 14, 258.

Cyprian's letters and treatises (in particular his *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* and *On the Lapsed*) were very influential within the Latin church, though his corpus lacks the sophistication of the work of either Tertullian (c. 155–c. 225) or Augustine (354–430), two other products of the Roman African church. Interestingly enough, given Cyprian's initial hesitation to become a martyr, he was revered by Christians involved in the Donatist movement and, indeed, by the Carthaginian church as a whole until it was suppressed by the Arian Vandals, who took over the city in 439.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Status

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Cyril and Methodius

(826–869, 815–885 C.E.)

Christian missionaries, linguists, apostles to the Slavs

Cyril was born in 826 in Thessalonica and died on February 14, 869, in Rome; Methodius was born in 815 in Thessa-

lonica and died on April 6, 885, in Velehrad, Moravia. The feast day for both is February 14 in the Western calendar and 24 May or 11 May by the Eastern calendar.

The brothers Constantine (who adopted the name Cyril toward the end of his life) and Methodius (also an adopted name, but the original one is unknown) lived in the century that witnessed the breakdown of Slavonic cultural and linguistic unity. They probably learned the language that they called Slavonic, and that after the tenth century was no longer common to the Slavs, while still in Thessalonica, an archaic Slavonic territory. Though belonging to a politically prominent family, first Methodius and then Cyril renounced their worldly careers of civil official and scholar, respectively, and they retired to a monastery. After their successful mission to the Khazars of the Caucasian tribe northeast of the Black Sea, they were dispatched to Moravia in 863 in response to the request by Prince Rotislav to Emperor Michael III and Patriarch Photius for Christian missionaries familiar with Slavonic.

In preparation for their apostolic work, Cyril constructed an original script for the previously unwritten Slavonic vernacular—in an alphabet known as *glagolitic*, which, based on Greek and Hebrew letters, in a genial way reflected even the most subtle phonemes of the language. The mission to preach and perform the service in the native tongue of the people became possible with Cyril's translation of liturgy and much of the scriptures from Greek into Slavonic. His prelude to the gospels in Old Church Slavonic is also the oldest poetic composition in the Slavic tradition. The circulation of this material in the vernacular provided a counter to the German mission that, representing Western political interests and committed to religious, linguistic and cultural uniformity, attempted to quell schismatic tendencies in this region.

When the hostility of the German secular and ecclesiastical leaders toward their apostolic work compelled Cyril and Methodius to defend themselves in Rome in 868, Pope Hadrian II, hoping for conciliation of the churches, established its orthodoxy and approved the use of Slavonic in liturgy. Cyril's wish to return to Moravia was thwarted by his death only a few weeks after his arrival in Rome. Methodius, however, having received from the hands of the pope the title of archbishop of Sirmium, a historic see near Belgrade, together with jurisdiction over the newly formed archdiocese of Moravia and Pannonia, continued the mission for fifteen more years despite both internal and foreign opposition. The papal sanction did not prevent his deposition and subsequent imprisonment by the Frankish king, Louis, and his bishops at the synod in Regensburg in 870. Through the intervention of Pope John VIII, the saint was released almost three years later; nevertheless, after his release the use of Slavonic in liturgy was restricted.

Methodius spent his last years completing his translations of biblical and ecclesiastical writing, adapting Byzantine canon law, the Nomocanon, to the needs of the Slavonic church, and probably composing the literary masterpiece *Life of Saint Constantine-Cyril*. Within twenty years after Methodius's death, it seemed that the Magyar invasions of Moravia and the ban on the celebration of the liturgy in the vernacular had destroyed the accomplishment of Cyril and Methodius. However, their disciples and followers spread the revolutionary mission into other Slavic countries (Bulgaria, Serbia, and Russia), greatly contributing to the religious, cultural, and social advancement of this region. The message of the work of St. Cyril and St. Methodius continues to be an ecumenical call for a unity of the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches.

—Ewa Slojka

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Cyril of Beloozero (Kirill)

(1337–1427 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox abbot, founder

Founder of the Kirillov Monastery on the White Lake in northern Russia and one of the most important monastic founders to colonize Russia's far north, Cyril of Beloozero was locally recognized as a saint by the last quarter of the fifteenth century. His vita was written by Pachomius the Serb (Logofet) in the 1460s, largely based on conversations with monks who had known the saint. Cyril has been venerated for his asceticism and humility, for his miraculous powers, as the creator of a monastic rule for daily life, and as an adherent of the cult of the Theotokos (Mother of God).

Cyril (born Cosmo in 1337) began his spiritual life secretly, living in a monastic fashion while in the house of his kinsman Timothy. At first angered, Timothy eventually supported Cosmo's aspirations. Cosmo received tonsure as Cyril at the Simonov Monastery, where he met and conversed with Sergius of Radonezh, engaged in lengthy fasts, worked in the kitchen, and, desiring the silence of his cell, prayed to the Theotokos. When the superior of Simonov instructed Cyril to remain in his cell and copy manuscripts, Cyril's faith in

the Theotokos was confirmed. Cyril eventually became superior of Simonov, but he soon gave up that position and returned to the silence of his cell. One night, while praying to the Theotokos, he heard a voice commanding him to go to the White Lake.

Cyril settled by the lake, attracted followers, struggled against demons, and was rewarded for his faith in the Theotokos: Though he was beset by hostile neighbors, according to his written Life, the intercession of the Theotokos repeatedly saved the monastery from an arsonist. Miraculous activity also preserved the cloister from brigands.

Cyril's administrative legacy was preserved in the code for monastic life that he created and that is briefly outlined in his vita. His rule maintains the ascetic values of obedience, reverence in church, humility, and long periods of silence. According to the narrative of Pachomius, Cyril's per-

sonal piety revolved around the disciplines of fasting, silence, the gift of tears, and adherence to the cult of the Theotokos. After Cyril's death in 1427, the Kirillov Monastery became a center of culture and economic activity in the far north, growing into one of Russia's largest and most important monasteries. The cloister remained active until the twentieth century. Cyril's feast day is June 9.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mary, Virgin; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Sergius of Radonezh

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D

Dalai Lama I

See **Gendun drubpa**

Dalai Lama III

See **Sonam Gyatso**

Dalai Lama V

See **Losang Gyatso**

Dalai Lama XIV

See **Tenzin Gyatso**

Daniel the Stylite

(c. 409–493 C.E.)

Christian ascetic

Daniel the Stylite was a fifth-century Christian holy man who spent much of his life standing on a high column outside of Constantinople. Information about him comes from a work of hagiography written by one of his disciples. Born in about 409, Daniel was from Syria and at age twelve went to live in a local monastery. In 452, he set out on a journey with the intention of visiting Simeon the Stylite near Aleppo and then proceeding to Jerusalem. Simeon, a Syrian holy man, lived on a column for thirty years as part of his asceticism and thus became the center of a vast and popular pilgrimage complex.

Daniel visited Simeon on his pillar and received his blessing. He then attempted to continue his journey to Jerusalem but was stopped by an apparition of a man resembling Simeon who commanded him to go to Constantinople, “the second Jerusalem,” instead of Jerusalem. He turned around and traveled toward Constantinople. Near the city, he found

a Greco-Roman temple full of dangerous demons, “who often sank ships and had injured . . . many of the passers-by” (Dawes and Baynes 1977, 14). He shut himself up in the temple and did battle in the manner of Antony, and soon was victorious. The author of the *vita* blames these same demons for setting local priests against Daniel, causing the bishop to have him brought to his palace in the city and questioned. Daniel passed this examination, with the help of an interpreter (he spoke Syriac rather than Greek), miraculously cured the bishop of an illness, and was eventually permitted to return to his cell in the temple.

After nine years, Daniel had another vision of Simeon, this time standing on a high column between two angels. Simeon ordered the angels to bring Daniel up to the small platform on top of the column, and as they did so, Simeon kissed him before being taken up into heaven, leaving Daniel in his place on the column. Daniel’s supporters interpreted the vision as a call for him to mount a column. A few days later, a disciple of Simeon came to deliver news of the holy man’s death and offered Daniel the leather tunic worn by Simeon. After more visions, Daniel decided to ascend a tall column, taking the place of the now dead holy man, but outside Constantinople. The new bishop of Constantinople ordered Daniel to descend, since the monk had not sought his permission, but after the bishop witnessed Daniel’s miracle-working abilities he offered the holy man an even taller column. Daniel soon became a popular healer, political adviser, and miracle worker. He came off of his column only once, in 475–476, in order to march into Constantinople and confront the imperial usurper, Basiliscus.

—*Maribel Dietz*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Models; Simeon the Stylite

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Daoan (Tao-an)

(312–385 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, teacher, commentator

A Chinese Buddhist monk of the Eastern Jin dynasty who was greatly responsible for the spread of Buddhism in China in its early stages, Daoan was born in 312 and entered the monastic order at the age of twelve, but his teacher did not appreciate him because of his dark complexion. However, his good memory won his teacher's recognition, and he was sent out to study, initially under Fo Tucheng, an Indian monk who came to China in about 310. Fo Tucheng assisted Daoan for around thirteen years, and Daoan became well known for his ability to explain difficult passages in Buddhist scriptures.

After the death of Fo Tucheng, northern China fell into chaos. Daoan left Changan, the capital, and traveled south with his disciples to Xiangyang (today in Hubei province), where he spent fifteen years studying Buddhist scriptures and writing commentaries. On the invitation of Fujian, the emperor of Qianqin, Daoan returned to Changan in 379. He stayed there until his death in 385 organizing the translation of Buddhist scripture and other works.

Daoan made numerous contributions to the development of early Chinese Buddhism: (1) He was an early developer of precepts in China in the absence of Indian *vinaya*. (2) He was the first commentator on Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist works in China and a prolific author. (3) He was one of the first to acknowledge the need to break dependence on the translation method of matching the meanings of Buddhist philosophical concepts with preexisting Daoist terms, desiring instead the establishment of an independent Buddhist system of terminology. (4) He established three rules for the standards of quality for Chinese translations of Indian works. (5) He created one of the earliest catalogs of Chinese Buddhist scriptures, entitled the *Zongli zhongjing mulu* (Comprehensive catalog of sutras). (6) He started a tradition that all Chinese Buddhist monks should have Shi (from the first syllable of Sakyamuni) as a surname.

—Guang Xing

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Daoism and Holy People

The lives of sages, immortals, and perfected people take center stage in the religion and literature of Daoism, the higher indigenous religion of China. As Daoism spreads throughout the world, the slight and superficial knowledge of these figures in the West has begun to be replaced by sustained historical and theoretical analysis. This work has concentrated chiefly on translating and analyzing the numerous hagiographies of Daoist sages and immortals, many of which are located in Chinese-language compilations dating from the fourth century onward. The secondary, but equally necessary, task of understanding the role played by these figures and their lore in Daoist religion from the theoretical perspective of comparative religions has only recently begun to be undertaken in any serious way. This article first outlines the history of the wide variety of figures who might fall under the general category of "Daoist holy people" and then offers a tentative theoretical analysis of this data. One must, however, begin by noting that our knowledge of Daoist holy figures is limited by our access to written historical records. In Daoism this is a significant problem as many of these records indicate the existence of recluses and hermits who dwell in mountain caverns and generally avoid contact with ordinary mortals. The records thus bear the imprint of religious phenomena that are ultimately incapable of being recorded in any systematic or scientific way, but they do reveal a great deal about the types of figures whom ordinary Daoists revered and whose stories were preserved and handed down throughout the ages.

Historical Development

The earliest discussion of Daoist sages is located in the *Daode jing* (Classic of the way and its power), attributed to the legendary Daoist immortal Laozi in approximately the sixth century B.C.E. According to this classic text, a Daoist sage (*sheng*) is one who has obtained the Dao, the wellspring of creative power that impels the constant transformation and evolution of the universe. Such a person is thus imbued with *de*, a charismatic power that brings harmony to society. This earliest Daoist sage is thus a political leader who achieves success in the world through a type of action, *wuwei*, translated literally as "nonaction," but which means action that seems as though it does not take place.

Another early Daoist text, the *Zhuangzi*, composed by Zhuangzi and his disciples in approximately the third century B.C.E., offers a quite different perspective on Daoist sagehood. In this classic text, sages are those who generally eschew the conventional Confucian world of bureaucracy, morality, and government and instead attain a mystical transcendence of the world characterized as "free and easy wandering." Such sages are frequently depicted as unconventional figures, such as the deformed, the crippled, and the

lunatic. The *Zhuangzi* also introduces the category of the perfected person (*zhen*), which plays a significant role in later Daoist religion.

During the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–210 C.E.), stories of sages and perfected people were supplemented by an increased interest in immortality, and there developed a class of people known as *fangshi* (“magico-technicians”; see De Woskin 1983) who claimed to be versed in the arts of immortality and who circulated stories of immortals and the methods they found to attain immortality. It was even suggested that a kind of “postmortem” immortality could be arranged for those whose bodies were sufficiently prepared to attain this transcendent state. Such people were said to be “liberated from their corpses”; though dead in a conventional sense, they were regarded as immortal beings who attained vast powers in a celestial paradise presided over by supreme deities including the legendary Laozi, the Yellow Emperor, or the Queen Mother of the West.

Daoism, as a formalized, institutional religion, was established in Sichuan province by the first celestial master, Zhang Daoling, in 142 C.E. Zhang claimed to offer a systematic approach to these various methods of attaining transcendence, immortality, or sagehood. By virtue of a covenant with Laozi himself, Zhang offered to his followers healing from sickness, a stable communal life, and initiation into the ranks of heaven while still in human form. Although Zhang’s theocratic movement lasted only until 215 C.E., the principles and powers of his priestly covenant remain to this day in the hands of Daoist priests, who function as celestial bureaucrats, regulating the interaction of heaven and earth.

Alongside this communal, bureaucratic religious institution, Daoists continued to deal in the currency of sagehood, perfection, and immortality, and a tradition of laboratory alchemy emerged in which alchemists, most notably Ge Hong (283–343/363 C.E.), sought to formulate an elixir of immortality decocted from cinnabar, the mineral form of mercury sulfide. Ge was also responsible for compiling the massive compendium of hagiographies known as the *Shenxian zhuan* (Traditions of divine transcendents). This volume details the lives and methods of over one hundred figures who attained various states of transcendence. These figures, known as *xian* (conventionally translated “immortals,” or, in earlier works, “fairies,” sometimes “wizards”), attain supernatural powers such as the ability to multilocate and transform their appearance at will, and, ideally, are summoned to heaven in broad daylight by Laozi himself, riding a chariot pulled by dragons and tigers. The stories of such figures are preserved and circulated widely among Daoists to this day.

In 364 C.E., one such transcendent figure, Lady Wei, initiated a series of revelations through the medium Yang Xi, who was a retainer in a noble family surnamed Xu who lived near present-day Nanjing. These revelations, subsequently col-

lected and recorded in the *Zhen’gao* (Declarations of the perfected), contain hagiographic accounts of those who attained perfection and the methods that they used to attain this status. Methods include visualizing deities associated with the stars of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major) descending from the sky and entering the various organs of the body. Each organ (which in traditional Chinese medicine is a system for processing qi energy) is associated with a particular deity. Through this visualization, the energy of the body is transformed and the person attains a more and more diaphanous form in which the distinctions between self and world become increasingly transparent. In some cases, the bodies are literally as well as figuratively transparent, and the viscera of such immortal bodies are said to show through the flesh.

Lady Wei’s revelations led to the formation of the Shangqing dao (Way of Highest Clarity), a Daoist movement that no longer exists in a separate institutional form, but that was historically important in the development of Daoist sages and holy figures. The hagiographies preserved by this movement display a preoccupation with the various ranks and classes of immortality that one can attain. Highest among these were the ranks of the perfected themselves (*zhenren*), followed by celestial immortals (*tianxian*), and earthly immortals (*dixian*), each divided into higher, middle, and lower ranks. Each class of perfected person had its own heavenly realm, one of thirty-six in total, the highest being the heaven of Highest Clarity. Immortals and perfected function in the literature as mediums of communication between the heavens and the earth. They are those who have attained the methods for ascending to heaven and who descend to earth or are manifest in human form from time to time to give instruction on Daoist methods of immortality to those few individuals who truly deserve it.

The fifth to sixth centuries saw the increasing spread and influence of Buddhism in China and the development of complex layers of heavens and hells and processes of judgment to regulate the karmic destiny of living beings. Daoist immortals and Buddhist *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings) increasingly take on a common set of characteristics as cosmic beings with supernatural powers whose mission is to bring enlightenment and salvation to the world. Daoism and Buddhism also propose a series of levels of perfection that the individual practitioner can gradually attain.

The increasingly common goals of Buddhist and Daoist spiritual practice converge in the establishment of the Way of Complete Perfection founded by Wang Zhe (1130–1200). Wang received a visit from two Daoist immortals, Lü Dongbin and Zhongli Quan, whereupon he left his family and built himself a “living grave” in which he lived and meditated. Upon his emergence from this “tomb,” or “womb,” he gathered seven disciples and began teaching his techniques of internal alchemy. Unlike the laboratory alchemy of Ge

Hong and his immortals, internal alchemy takes the energies of the body as its ingredients, and the body itself as a cauldron. Instead of decocting an elixir of immortality, the energies are manipulated and transformed through exercise and meditation into an immortal embryo that is nurtured in the body, finally exiting through the crown of the skull in an inversion of the physical birth process. This tradition thus reveres those holy people who have left their families, entered into Daoist monasteries, and dedicated themselves to this cultivation process.

Daoist literature is replete with examples of such figures. Chief among them are the Eight Immortals: Lü Dongbin, Zhongli Quan (a.k.a. Han Zhongli), Li Tieguai, Cao Guoqiu (a woman), He Xiangu, Han Xiangzi, Zhang Guolao, and Lan Caihe (who appears in either male or female form), all of whom figure prominently in Daoist temples. Second are the seven perfected ones, the disciples of Wang Zhe who initially formed and received the Way of Complete Perfection: Ma Yu, Tan Chuduan, Qiu Chuji, Liu Chuxuan, Wang Chuyi, Hao Datong, and Sun Bu'er, the wife of Ma Yu and the only woman disciple. Of the Eight Immortals, the most important is Lü Dongbin (b. c. 798?), who, combining motifs found in Buddhism and also in the *Zhuangzi*, famously experienced his life as a dream and then woke up to his transcendent status. Lü is venerated in many temples throughout China, including especially the Palace of Eternal Joy (Yongle Gong) in Shanxi province, founded as a popular shrine in the tenth century, and now an important Complete Perfection monastery.

Lü, like many figures in Chinese mythology, plays a variety of religious roles, depending upon the historical and social circumstance, and was subject to a variety of interpretations before becoming a "Daoist patriarch" with the spread of Complete Perfection teachings. He is also the focus of Patriarch Lü (Lüzü) cults that exist today in southeast China. Through the use of mediums, Patriarch Lü makes himself available for consultation on a wide variety of matters, but especially to traditional Chinese herbalists who seek his secret recipes for health and longevity.

Of the seven disciples who formed the nucleus of the original Complete Perfection tradition, two figures stand out: Qiu Chuji (1148–1227) founded the Dragon Gate (Longmen) branch whose headquarters today is the White Cloud Monastery (Baiyun guan) in Beijing. Sun Bu'er (1119–1182), the only woman of the group, is widely revered as a role model for Daoist women.

Complete Perfection monastics, like Daoists before them, devoted much time to compiling hagiographies of those who attained the Dao. Such stories also circulated in popular fictional form, including, especially, stories of the seven original followers of Wang Zhe. The lives of Daoist immortals thus entered a wider Chinese cultural imagination and be-

came the subjects of plays, poems, and paintings. Given the process of diffusion and syncretism that has taken place in Chinese religious history over the past millennium, it is not surprising that Daoists today venerate a wide variety of figures whose origins are shadowy to say the least. One example is the widely revered figure Zhang Sanfeng (c. thirteenth-fourteenth centuries?), who is credited with the development of Taiji quan (T'ai Chi). Zhang is said to have lived on Mount Wudang, the center for Daoist martial arts fictionalized in the popular film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000). Others include universal figures such as the Buddhist bodhisattva Guanyin, or figures who are specific to particular localities. In all cases their statues are venerated in temples and they receive the people's prayers for good fortune, health, and prosperity.

In addition to this class of widespread and widely known sages, there are also stories of recluses who live alone in mountains, feeding off wild herbs and fungi or even living on breath alone. Such wandering ascetics devote their time to the energy practices and "biospiritual" cultivation techniques at a more advanced level than is taught in monasteries, living in damp mountain grottoes where the stones themselves seem to breathe a liquid vitality through their pores. Such figures may seem to ordinary people to have adopted an extreme ascetic lifestyle, but their aim is not to be cut off from society, but rather to nourish themselves on the essence of life itself that floods around them.

Theoretical Analysis

In what sense are these Daoist figures "holy people"? Clearly the Jewish category of holiness (and its Christian and Muslim interpretations) does not apply straightforwardly to the Daoist case. The Chinese terms *sheng* (saint), *xian* (immortal), and *zhen* (perfected) indicate human beings who, through their own efforts, have attained a remarkable status and are venerated by the common people for their influence over the continuing evolution of the Dao. Such powers are in principle available to all human beings: Daoist saints are not supernatural, transcendent figures, though they may attain seemingly supernatural powers, for they never transcend the continuing evolution of the Dao. Instead, like worthy ancestors, they are venerated as examples of the possibility of human perfection. Although such people are set apart by the quantity and quality of their religious efforts, they are not completely removed from the human world, and the literature records that they continue to be manifest in human form long after they attain their immortal status.

The question of how to translate these Chinese terms is clearly vexing. "Immortals" are not really immortal, either because they have died already and have attained some transcendent state, or because they are simply mortal humans who have extended their life and their powers beyond nor-

mal. However, the concept that lies at the heart of the quest for “immortality” remains constant: Life is a continuous process of transformation, and when transformation ceases, so does life. “Immortals” are thus not those who have attained some final perfect state, but those who have learned to embody the continuous transformation of the universe within themselves. In this sense, the metaphor of transparency or porosity is key to understanding the Daoist saint. Such transfigured beings are those who are ever continuous with their environment, not being bound by the conventional distinctions between self and world, but rather embodying the macrocosm within the cosmic landscape of the body.

From the perspective of the human religious appropriation of these figures, the role of women practitioners and women saints deserves mention. Although the study of women Daoists is in its infancy, it is clear that Daoism was open to women in a far more positive way than seems to have been the case in Confucian or Buddhist society. Absent in Daoism are the tales of women as hated objects of male lust: The problem of (male) desire is tempered by Daoist notions of sexual harmony, and the denomination of the Dao itself is in largely female imagery. Though Daoist hagiographic collections do not contain as many stories of women as they do of men, they certainly do figure in such collections as the *Daoxue zhuan* (Biographies of students of the Dao) and attain equal status to that of male immortals.

In addition to serving as role models for those dedicated to the pursuit of self-cultivation, Daoist immortals are also communicators, facilitating the flow of energy and knowledge between the human and the celestial realms. In this regard, the figure of Lady Wei, the revealer of the corpus of Highest Clarity texts, is particularly important. Such figures and their tales of spirit journeys and vision quests clearly bear the influence of shamanism, though the extent to which shamanism influences Daoism is still being debated. No matter the origin of such religious phenomena, the fact remains that Daoists thought fit to record the lives and teachings of those whose self-identity extended beyond the confines of their ordinary physical bodies while not dissolving completely into mystical abstraction. Daoist holy people are not those who have been liberated from sin or sense-desire or from the prison of the flesh, but those who have learned to cultivate the creative vitality of the Dao itself within their human bodies. They remain highly influential in the continuing evolution of the Daoist spirit today.

—James Miller

See also: Apotheosis; Authority and Holy People; Death; Eight Immortals; Ge Hong; Hermits; Huangdi; Intermediaries; Laozi; Lü Dongbin; Martyrdom and Persecution; Miracles; Models; Morality and Holy People; Recognition; Reform and Reaction; Repentance and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Sages;

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Dard, Khawaja Mir

(1721–1785 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

An Indian sufi poet from Delhi born in 1721, Khawaja Mir Dard was descended from a prestigious lineage. His father, Muhammad Nasir 'Andalib, was a *sayyid* (descendant of Muhammad) of Turkish ancestry and from the ancestry of Baha'uddin Naqshband (1317–1390), a prominent sufi. His mother was descended from 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166), another celebrated sufi. As an adult, Muhammad Nasir had a spiritual awakening, sought a master, Sa'dullah Gulshan, and became a dervish. He also took on the sobriquet of 'Andalib, “nightingale.” He became convinced of the truth of the Muhammadan path when he experienced a vision of the prophet's grandson, Hasan b. 'Ali (624/625–669). Dard was deeply influenced by his father and became his disciple; he later propagated his father's theological views when he succeeded him in 1758.

Dard's house became a focal center for mystical discussions and for poetry assemblies called *musha'iras*. By 1770, Dard had completed his magnum opus, the voluminous *Ilm al-kitab* (Knowledge of the book), which contains the sum of his religious views. In this text, theological and spiritual opinions are presented together with personal devotional and mystical experiences. The book has 111 chapters, each beginning with the words *Ya Nasir* (Oh Helper). Nasir here is God the Helper, but also a pun on his father's name, who had

almost become an alter ego for Dard. His other major book with a spiritual message, composed between 1775 and his death in 1785, is titled *Chahar Risala*. It has four parts, each with 341 sections, in accordance with the numerical value of “Nasir” (his father’s name).

Indeed, Dard’s identification with his father was so strong that his attachment to him only increased after his father’s death. Dard venerated Nasir and believed that he was to resemble his father in every way, including the duration of life. Muhammad Nasir died when he was sixty-six lunar years old, and Dard was correct in his supposition that he would pass away at the same age. Both are buried in a cemetery near the Turkomam Gate, which is now converted into a park. The tombs, attached to a mosque, are still visited by local Muslims.

Dard led an austere existence. He fasted for prolonged periods of time and even persuaded his family to join him in these fasts. He rarely, if ever, left his ancestral compound in Delhi, which had been granted to him and his father by a daughter of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. He lived during a time of great distress in Delhi. The citizens underwent much hardship as their civic and physical structures were destroyed by successive waves of invading armies. He believed that people could only get respite and inner peace if they sincerely followed the Muslim path.

Though he was serious in his piety and concerned about the elevation of his soul, Dard also loved poetry and music. His poetry is soulful and tender. He believed lucid, coherent speech to be the special gift of God. He enjoyed writing and wrote frequently and well. He believed that “a gnostic without a book is like a man without children, and a work that is absurdly unconnected is like a child of bad character.” For his love of music he was chastened by both the scholars of religion and by the other sufis. Nevertheless, his meetings, arranged approximately every two weeks, were very popular and were sometimes even attended by the Mughal emperor in Delhi, Shah ‘Alam II. Dard referred to his penchant for music and the mystical *sama’*, musical assembly, as an “affliction” for which he had no remedy. Several of his treatises deal with the necessity of devotional music. His verses are collected in his *Divan* (Assembly).

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Baha’uddin Naqshband; Jilani, ‘Abdul al-Qadir; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Darerca (Moninne/Monenna)

(d. 517/519)

Christian nun, founder

Darerca was a pioneer for the rights of women to pursue the religious life in early Christian Ireland (fifth and sixth centuries), and the accounts of her life reveal the wide range of possibilities she helped to create. She is said to have been baptized and consecrated by Patrick himself, whose first words of advice to her included an exhortation to enter into community with other virgins whom he had previously taught, so that they might mutually inspire and support one another with their friendship.

Patrick arranged for Darerca to train with a priest who lived nearby, and she quickly proved herself an outstanding student. A community sprang up around her that soon outgrew her parents’ home, but there were no monasteries for women in her homeland (northern County Louth and southern County Armagh) and she feared that living in the world would jeopardize their devotion. So, according to her hagiography, she and her disciples traveled throughout Ireland, studying alternative approaches to the religious life under various teachers, most prominently Brigid at Kildare and Bishop Ibar in the western isles and also in Wexford, before returning to her homeland. Here she founded her main monastic community, Killeevy, one of the most enduring Irish religious communities; it became an Augustinian convent, possibly in the twelfth century, and lasted until the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century.

Throughout Darerca’s travels, women of all backgrounds flocked to join her, including wives and mothers as well as widows and virgins. Men are also counted among her disciples, including bandits whom she converted to Christianity, training them so well that they went on to become bishops. Hailed as another Mary of Bethany as well as the daughter of John the Baptist and the prophet Elijah, she integrated solitude with community, both in her own spiritual life and in that of others, although her constant contemplation brought her community to the brink of starvation several times. She is particularly celebrated for her arduous manual labor; her community preserved her hoe and spade as relics. Her Lives emphasize her intellectual abilities and portray the women of her group as students, teachers, and scribes. Like her Irish sisters with extant medieval Lives (Brigid, Íte, and Samthann), she offered protection in war, released hostages, performed great miracles, acted as a foster mother, and was a powerful and capable abbess. She has been conflated with other holy women of Ireland, Scotland, and England, most famously Modwenna, though one of her Lives evinces little of this conflation and seems the more faithful to her original now-lost Life, which may have been written in the first quarter of the seventh century.

—Maeve B. Callan

See also: Brigid of Ireland; Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Íte; Mary, Sister of Martha; Patrick; Samthann; Scholars as Holy People

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Dasuqi, Ibrahim al-

(c. 1235–1296/1297 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Ibrahim al-Dasuqi is the second-greatest holy person of the Egyptian Delta after Ahmad al-Badawi (1199/1200–1276). For Egyptian Muslims, he is one of the four "poles" or "axes" who reign over Egypt; the other three are Ahmad al-Badawi, Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Rifa'i (1106–1182), and 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166). The "pole" is also called the *gawth* (aid). According to sufi tradition it is the axis around which the world turns. Ibrahim al-Dasuqi is called Abul'-Aynan, "the man with two eyes"—the eye of divine law (*shari'a*) and the eye of spiritual realization (*haqiqqa*).

Dasuqi was born at Marqus, a village in the province of Gharbiyya on the Egyptian Delta, in about 1235, but he passed his life in the neighboring village of Dasuq. Since his death in 1296 or 1297, villagers have believed that Dasuq has prospered thanks to the *baraka* (blessing) of its saint, who is enshrined in a large mosque in the center of the village. Ibrahim's father was a local holy man; his maternal grandfather was none other than Abu'l-Fath al-Wasiti, a close disciple of the great Iraqi holy man Ahmad b. 'Ali al-Rifa'i, who introduced the Rifa'iyya sufi order to Egypt.

Ibrahim had mystical experiences his whole life. He left several writings: *Al-Jawahir* (Necklace of gems) includes his instructions for novices; *Al-Jawhara* tells of his miracles; and *Al-Haqa'iq* (Divine realities) presents his intimate conversations with God. He was also the author of poems, a prayer (*salat*), and a litany (*hizb*). The litany has become very popular because it is reported to have magical properties: Reciting it is said to be effective in chasing away evil spirits

(*djinns*) or in providing protection and healing. It is also used as an accompaniment for votive prayers.

The key points of Dasuqi's teaching are interior purity, the application of shari'a, and absolute obedience to the holy person because of his intimacy with God. Dasuqi himself affirmed that he had reached the highest degree in the hierarchy of saints, surpassing even 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani, the greatest saint of the Muslim world (entombed in Baghdad), and his rival in Egypt, Ahmad al-Badawi. Dasuqi was also the founder of the Burhaniyya (or Burhamiyya) sufi order, widespread especially in the Delta. The adepts of this order are recognizable by their processions with their green banner. They can be seen especially at the anniversary festival of their saint, which takes place in November, two weeks after that of Ahmad al-Badawi.

—*Rachida Chih (translated by Phyllis G. Jestice)*

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir; Mysticism and Holy People; Rifa'i, Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-

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Day, Dorothy

(1897–1980 C.E.)

Roman Catholic activist

Dorothy Day was a Roman Catholic convert from Marxism, writer, founder of the Catholic Worker hospitality and nonviolent resistance movement, social critic, mother, grandmother, and nominee for official sainthood in the Catholic Church. In the autobiographical *From Union Square to Rome* (1938) and *The Long Loneliness* (1952), Day attributes discovery of the divine to several personal experiences: reading the Bible, love for her common-law husband, giving birth to her daughter, Tamar, prison solitude, and living among the poor.

Day found that her employment as a journalist left her discontent with the state of the world around her, and from her first arrest—for joining a women's suffrage protest in 1917—she actively sought religious solutions to the problems of American society. What became her life's work began in 1933, when she founded a newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*. In this work, she advocated the peaceful transformation of society and care of the poor. This hit a responsive chord in the Great Depression, and by 1936 the Catholic Workers were a national movement, with shelters and food kitchens open across much of the country. This movement became the platform for Day's social concerns, especially pacifism and the dignity of all human beings. She mobilized her organization against popular opinion by

publicly avowing pacifism during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, a stand that led to the arrest and imprisonment of Day and many of her followers. She also helped mobilize Catholic support behind the Civil Rights Movement.

Solitude in prison, following actions of civil disobedience, also deepened Day's awareness of God, as did working with the poor in New York City. She wrote, "Always the glimpses of God came most when I was alone. . . . Yet how can I say that either? Better let it be said that I found Him through His poor, and in a moment of joy I turned to Him" (Day 1978 [1938], 10). When told that she would be declared a saint some day, Day reportedly said, "I don't want to be dismissed so easily," and "I'd rather they spend that money on the poor."

The canonization process was initiated for Day in 2000; however, there are numerous hurdles to clear before she can be declared a saint and the success of the case is not yet assured.

—June O'Connor

See also: Canonization; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; Wealth and Poverty

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Dayal, Baba

(1783–1855 C.E.)

Sikh leader

Active in Rawalpindi, a town now located in northwestern Pakistan but at the time clearly within the greater Punjab, Baba Dayal, born in 1783, founded the Nirankari sect of the Sikhs. The name of the group derives from the words *nir-akar* or *nir-ankar*, meaning "without form," or "the Formless One," and indicates Baba Dayal's belief that God should only be worshipped as formless. Founded during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who ruled the Punjab as a Sikh state from 1799 until his death in 1839, Baba Dayal's Nirankaris believed that brahminical influences had corrupted Guru Nanak's true intentions. For Baba Dayal, Guru Nanak's focus was solely on *nam simran*, or meditation on the Name, and that was his true religious message. Baba Dayal rejected all external aids to meditation, and even saw most Sikh external symbols as not only superfluous, but actually obstructing

the path to liberation. At his death in 1855, his son Baba Darbara Singh took over the leadership of the community that continues to this day.

The core Sikh community rejected the Nirankari movement not for its interpretation of Guru Nanak's mission, nor for its emphasis on a formless God, but rather because Baba Dayal reestablished the line of gurus, starting with himself, and then revived the tradition of nomination by appointing his son as the next guru. Thus, it is the belief in a living guru, a doctrine that the core Sikh community believes ended when Guru Gobind Singh declared the Khalsa and the Guru Granth Sahib rather than a living person as the only guru, which creates so much tension between the Nirankaris and other Sikhs.

After the partition of India and Pakistan, there was a schism in the Nirankari community, and as they left Rawalpindi two centers were established, at Chandigarh and Delhi. At the center in Chandigarh, the line of gurus continues, the current one being Dr. Mann Singh.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Gobind Singh; Gurus; Hereditary Holiness; Nanak; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Death

Around the world, the rules of death work differently for holy people than for the common run of mortals. They do not fear death, and a mark of holiness is that saints accept the coming of death with fortitude or joy. Martyrs die stoically, no matter what the religion or how great their suffering. Indeed, a holy person who does not face death calmly seems a contradiction in terms: When the Chan master Yen-t'ou Ch'uan-ho (828–887) was stabbed by robbers in 887 and he cried out (a miraculous cry that could be heard for ten leagues), he created a problem for Zen students because his death did not fit the notion of how a Zen master should perish. Beyond that basic common ground, however, there is a great deal of variety in the relationship that holy people of various religions have with death.

Christian saints are often given advance notice of their demise, such as Chad (620–672), whose death was foretold by singing angels. This is less common in other religions, but often holy people are depicted making special gestures to welcome death. Although most religions condemn the ideal pious passing of a Jaina, such as Hemacandra (1089–1172), by voluntary starvation, other cases of pious self-destruction, such as the Greek Herakles or the Toltec Quetzalcoatl,

do occur. The Christian hagiographical tradition is full of cases of saints who had themselves laid on the ground on ashes as their end approached, or who had their tombs made and lay in them regularly to remind themselves of the transience of life. Ida of Herzfeld (c. 775–825) chose the latter, but the Muslim Sayyida Nafisa (762–824) did the same. The Zen master Shuho Myocho (1282–1338) had an even more pronounced view of proper behavior in the face of death: When the end was near, he forced himself into the lotus position, although his leg was so brittle from his austerities that it broke and blood soaked his robe; he then composed a farewell poem while seated in this perfect position.

In traditional Jewish belief, the gentlest death, likened to a hair being removed from milk, is reserved for the righteous. This theme appears in early Christian hagiography, as saints are subjected to more and more horrendous torment without suffering. Similarly hard to kill are holy figures such as the Bab (1819–1850), who was executed in 1850—twice—because the first time the firing squad shot, the Bab vanished, to be discovered nearby talking to a disciple; he was only successfully killed the next day. When a holy person *was* successfully killed, his or her final breath was often accompanied by miraculous signs, although this has become less common in recent centuries. Thus when the Korean Buddhist official Ich’adon (503–529) was martyred by decapitation in 529, his blood flowed white as milk, while the head flew through the air and settled on a mountain peak. Several Christian saints also bled milk, and some, the “cephalophore” saints, even carried their own severed heads to the places they had selected for burial.

Some holy people are believed to have lived an astonishingly long time, sometimes millennia. For example, the Jewish miracle worker Honi ha-Me’aggel (first century B.C.E.) is supposed to have slept seventy years before his death; the Buddhist master Padmasambhava wandered around India for many centuries before coming to Tibet (eighth and ninth centuries C.E.), and a surprising number of holy people have lived to the age of 120. Even more surprising is the large number of holy people in a wide array of religions who have never died at all. Several Hindu saints have left an earthly existence by merging with the divine, such as Basavanna in the twelfth century, who merged with Shiva in the confluence of rivers where he lived, or Andal in the ninth, who merged with a statue of the god she adored; the great Buddhist scholar Vairotsana of the eighth century dissolved into a rainbow of light, leaving no remains. Other Eastern holy people have simply wandered away and never been seen again, such as the Hindu saint Sanka (eighth and ninth centuries C.E.) and the Daoist sage Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.). The theme is not limited to the east or to ancient times, though; W. D. Fard, founder of the Nation of Islam (born in 1891), disappeared in 1934, and some believe he never died.



An anthropomorphic reliquary, created in 1374 by the artist Donadino da Brugnone to contain the skull of St. Donatus. (Elio Ciol/Corbis)

Some holy people have been hidden away for a special purpose, especially to herald a coming messiah. The Japanese Buddhist Kukai (774–835), despite a legend that he chose to be burned alive while in a meditational trance in 835, is popularly believed to have never died and to be meditating still, from which state he will arise at the coming of the future buddha Maitreya. Similarly, Hebrew scriptures tell that Elijah was taken living to heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by a fiery chariot (2 Kings 2:11) and that he will return to usher in the messianic age. And most important to date in shaping world history, the twelfth Shi’a imam is believed to have gone into hiding, *occultation*, to save his life, and will return to bring an era of justice.

Another important symbol of liberation from the power of death is the number of holy people who have died, only to be resurrected with a special message for their followers, a miracle by no means limited to Jesus of Nazareth (although in Muslim belief, Jesus never died, so could not be resurrected). It should be noted that this is not an important theme in Buddhism, Jainism, or Hinduism, where the ultimate goal of holiness is to break the cycle of rebirths, although the Hindu mystic Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950) is said to have experienced death at the age of fourteen as a step in his personal enlightenment. Much more commonly, a taste of death gives a person prophetic powers, a phenomenon especially significant in the recent history of African and Amerindian religions. The Shawnee prophet Tenskawatawa (1775–1836) “came back” from a death experience

with a series of revelations that he preached to his people. Similarly, the Amerindian John Slocum (d. c. 1897), the founder of the Indian Shaker movement in Washington State, fell ill, apparently died, and awakened just before his funeral reporting that he had indeed died but had been sent back to make amends for his sins. In Africa, the prophetesses Alice Lenshina (1919–1978) and Marie Awa both began preaching in the 1950s after apparently rising from the dead. Fear of followers' claims that a resurrection has taken place is attested as early as the synoptic gospels, when guards were placed at Jesus' tomb. For a truly devoted follower, though, even the clearest evidence of their leader's death can be ignored, as in the case of the prophet Mani (216–274/277); the Persian king had the prophet's corpse flayed, the skin stuffed with straw, and set it on a pole by the city gate—to show to everyone that Mani had really died. But his followers refused to believe it, and their rallying cry became “Mani Lives!”

Other saints have been taken up to heaven, living or dead. This is a common theme in Daoism, where a mark of a great holy person is to ascend living to heaven in daylight; lesser figures have to make do with mysterious disappearances. Sunni Muslims believe that the prophet Jesus was rescued from the cross and entered heaven still living. Similarly, the Greek Apollonius of Tyana (d. c. 120 C.E.) ascended bodily into heaven. The legendary Diola prophet Atta-Essou took matters into his own hands by making himself wings and flying to heaven. The most famous case of a holy body taken up to heaven is the doctrine accepted by several branches of Christianity that the Virgin Mary was bodily taken up, which is the subject of the Roman Catholic papacy's only statement that claims infallibility. Other bodies have vanished under mysterious circumstances. For example, the Indian poet-saint Kabir's (c. 1450–1518) body became a subject of argument among his followers after his death. But when they pulled off the cloth covering the body, nothing was there but flowers—half of which were cremated, half buried. A legend tells that after Chan patriarch Bodhidharma had died (c. 530?), a monk met him on the road, but he was wearing only one sandal. When the monk returned home and told the story, his fellows opened the patriarch's grave and found nothing in it but a single sandal. Legend also reports that, although Zimbabwean prophetess Mai Chaza died in 1960, by the time the coffin was put in the grave her body had vanished.

When a holy person dies and the body remains, it still does not behave like the remains of ordinary mortals. This is an especially important identifier of holy Christians, although there are cases in other religions, such as the Buddhist reformer Taixu (1890–1947) of China, whose heart remained intact after cremation. In Christianity, a very common theme is that the bodies of holy people give off a sweet scent, “the odor of sanctity,” instead of the smell of corruption. And the bodies themselves are very often incorrupt,

even after centuries (although in modern Roman Catholicism an incorrupt body is no longer taken as proof of sanctity). From the early persecutions to the present, there have been tales of the bodies of Christian martyrs left for the vultures (such as Cholomann [d. 1013] and the martyrs of Nagasaki [d. 1597] only to be left untouched and unrotted for months.

A final important element of popular belief in Islam and Christianity, which believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, is that the saints will be resurrected first at the end of time. Therefore, from an early age cemeteries developed around holy tombs in both religions, so that lesser mortals could rise on the “coattails” of the saints.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Andaj; Apollonius of Tyana; Bab, The; Cephalophores; Chad; Hemacandra; Ida of Herzfeld; Lenshina, Alice; Mai Chaza; Mani; Nafisa, Sayyida; Nagasaki Martyrs; Taixu; Vairotsana

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Deer Dancers

Amerindian intermediaries

The people of the Yaqui (or Yoeme) culture of northwestern Mexico and Arizona ritually reunite themselves with the “natural world,” or “wilderness world” (*huya ania*), through the figure of the Deer Dancer and his assistants, the *pahkolam* (sometimes *pascolas*), or “old men,” at Easter. The *huya ania* is performed to reaffirm the Yaqui principles and moral codes. It is an exhausting ceremony involving long periods of arduous dancing, poetry recitation, and music. Those who participate do so as an offering to God for favors granted, such as recovery from serious illness. Participation is also a way to ensure personal salvation.

Prior to the influence of Christianity, the *huya ania* was manipulated with this visit to the supernatural world, where through imitative magic (acting out of the deer hunt) the Yaqui could commune with the supernatural to ensure a successful hunt. The altered states induced by sleep deprivation and temperature extremes were thought to facilitate access to the supernatural—be it in the natural world, the enchanted world (*yo ania*), the flower world (*sea ania*), or one of the many other worlds that the Yaqui could visit to receive power from the supernatural. In the modern world, the Deer Dancer successfully crosses through three cultures—the Native American, the American, and the Mexican—to participate in many traditional religious dance celebrations, or *matachines*.

The Deer Dancer character is found in many Native American groups. Members of the Central Uto-Azteca culture, including the Yaqui, share some common features in

their deer-dance traditions. These include night-long dancing, singing, and playing of music on percussion instruments, a ritual deer hunt, and east-facing altars. The events are male dominated. The Deer Dancer is a common figure in numerous ritual contexts but must unite with the pahkolam if the huya ania is sought for the ceremony. This is done during Easter Holy Week.

The Yaqui Deer Dancer wears a deer headdress, a deer-hoof rattle belt, and cocoon rattles on his ankles. He carries gourds to shake and is accompanied by three singers. The pahkolam are his assistants, who ultimately convince the deer to give himself over to the humans so they might eat. The pahkolam have masks decorated with long, coarse hairs for eyebrows and beards. They tend to be generalized helpers during the ceremony, passing out drinks, telling stories, and being generally inappropriate to make everyone laugh. The pahkolam have three musicians that accompany them. One of the instruments played is a water drum, representing the water the deer drinks, and at the end of the ceremony it becomes sanctified. Another is a rasp made from deer antlers. Beating the drum represents the deer heartbeat, and the rasp reproduces the sound of the deer breathing. Deer songs are sung that guide the viewer through the story. Since the ceremony became conflated with Holy Week, these songs have also been used to defeat the Pharisees so that Christ can rise on Easter morning.

The Deer Dancer is first observed on Palm Sunday. As the Easter Passion is acted out, the Deer Dancer becomes an intricate part of the story. Holy Saturday and Easter morning are when he is most needed. On Holy Saturday, beginning at noon, he and the pahkolam are to dance all night until the next morning, about eighteen hours later. Many of the Deer Dancer's steps are imitations of deer movements, but such dances can get quite complex, with more than 340 steps per minute occurring at various times throughout the night.

—*Juana Ibáñez*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Ritual

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Deganawida

(c. 1550–c. 1600 C.E.)

Huron prophet, statesman

Deganawida was a Huron prophet, statesman, lawgiver, and cultural hero of the Iroquois people in the sixteenth century.

He was the leader who, with Hiawatha, founded the League of the Iroquois that included the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, and Seneca. The story of Deganawida's life is based mostly on legend, but accounts of the league's formation credit Deganawida for his efforts.

The period before Deganawida's birth was one of constant warfare between the Iroquois tribes. According to legend, the Creator sent Deganawida to resolve these conflicts and to deliver a message of peace and unity. He is believed to have been born to Huron parents around the 1550s in Ontario, Canada. Before his birth, his mother had a vision that her son would have miraculous powers, undertake a divine mission, and be indirectly responsible for the destruction of the Huron people. When Deganawida reached adulthood, he traveled east to bring his message of peace to the Iroquois. He met Hiawatha, a Mohawk, who joined him in his efforts to create an alliance of friendship among the Iroquois. Deganawida relied on Hiawatha to be his spokesperson owing to his own speech impediment. His message to the Iroquois was that all men are brothers and they should stop their infighting. Deganawida and Hiawatha convinced the five tribes to make peace and join in an alliance instead of trying to destroy each other. The last holdout was the powerful Onondaga chief Atotarho, who had been strongly opposed to the alliance. Deganawida offered him the role of confederacy spokesperson and established the central fire of the league at Onondaga, and Atotarho accepted and joined the alliance. After convincing Atotarho of his message, Deganawida founded the Iroquois League.

The League of the Iroquois, or the Iroquois Five Nation Confederacy, as it was also called, sought to bring peace, to build strength, and to protect the five nations from external attack and internal divisions. A Grand Council of all the chiefs of the five tribes gathered at Onondaga, where they established the laws and customs of the league. Over time, the council became involved in diplomacy, including war and peace, established associations with other tribes, and made treaties with European settlers. Deganawida is credited with development of the league's political system, including its principles, laws, and regulations. Although the focus of the league has changed over time, its organization and rituals as set forth by Deganawida still exist in Canada and the United States.

—*Timothy E. Williamson*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Lawgivers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Delany, Martin

(1812–1885 C.E.)

Christian theologian, social activist

Martin Delany was born the son of free blacks in Charles Town, West Virginia, in 1812. He received a good education in medicine and in 1851 finished his training at the Harvard Medical School. In addition to his medical career, Delany worked with Frederick Douglass, helping him publish the *North Star* newsletter. Delany's experiences with Douglass helped shape his thoughts about slavery and the providence of God in permitting African Americans to suffer under its abuses. Delany conceived God as the liberator of the oppressed and within that construction developed a theology of racial destiny that continues to impact the religious development of black America.

Delany had a deep love for black people and often expressed praise for “unmixed” blackness. This should not be surprising: Delany's father claimed descent from a Golah chieftain and his mother from a Mandingo prince. Delany saw black people as a religious people given to artistry and kindness. But he was also critical of the black masses for being too passive. In fact, Delany developed the often-cited principle, “God helps those who help themselves.” He sought through his teaching to encourage the slaves to begin a process that would result in their own freedom, rather than waiting for God to providentially deliver them.

In theological terms, Delany also sought to instruct African Americans to properly understand how God works. Delany reasoned that God had constructed the universe to function according to three basic laws—moral law, spiritual law, and physical law. Delany observed that justice could be accessed only through the application of the moral law. A spiritual end could be obtained only through the application of prayer, and a physical end obtained only through the application of muscle and might. For Delany, it was only by the proper exercise of those laws that one could hope to accomplish a desired end.

As one of the leading voices among elitist black leadership of his day, Delany encouraged blacks to leave the United States, return to their native continent, roll up their shirt-sleeves, and help to redeem “mother” Africa. Working with Henry Highland Garnet to establish the African Civilization Society, in 1858 Delany traveled to Africa and met with various African dignitaries who were willing to entertain the notion of providing land for African Americans who wished to return to Africa as missionaries and emigrants.

Though Martin Delany died in January 1885, leaving no money, papers, or fashionable ideas, he has inspired genera-

tions of blacks as the symbol of elevation and black Christian nationalism.

—Rick Gray

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People

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Delphine of Provence (Puimichel, Glandenes, Sabran)

(1284–1360 C.E.)

Christian laywoman, recluse

Delphine of Provence was a Third Order Franciscan renowned for her poverty and chastity. Born in Provence, France, in 1284, she was raised by nuns after the death of her parents in 1291. At sixteen, she married Elzear (1286–1323), count of Sabran, who later agreed to live with her in celibacy.

In 1310, Elzear went to Naples, where he fought on behalf of King Charles II of Anjou. Delphine joined him seven years later and became a lady-in-waiting and confidante of Queen Sanchia. From 1326 to 1343, Delphine stayed at the court of Naples, where she was exposed to the influence of some Franciscans who were in conflict with Pope John XXII (the court of Naples after 1323 was a place of refuge for Spiritual Franciscans and beguines from Provence). After the death of Elzear she sold her vast possessions and became a Poor Clare with Queen Sanchia in Naples. Returning to Provence, Delphine lived as a recluse at Cambrieres and then at Apt (Vaucluse), where she died in 1360. She was buried next to her husband. Her canonization process was started in 1363, but she never attained sainthood, perhaps because of her alleged relationship with the Spiritual Franciscans. Elzear, however, was canonized in 1369.

People in Naples and Apt were amazed to see this high-born, illustrious noblewoman beg in the streets. The canonization proceedings and the Life composed shortly thereafter testify to her service to the poor, her commitment to chastity (living in virginal marriage), and her voluntary poverty. These sources reveal a great deal about the political circumstances in Provence, Avignon, and Naples, not to mention the church's struggles with the radical Franciscans. The careers of Delphine and Elzear reflect something of the then-current ideals of chaste marriage and absolute poverty. Delphine's

biography was written, in part, to promote some Franciscan views of Christlike poverty.

—Thomas Renna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Demetrius

(d. c. 300 C.E.)

Christian saint

Demetrius (Demetrios) is one of the most powerful and renowned of Byzantine soldier-saints. His cult appears to have originated in Thessalonika, where a large church was established in his honor in the middle of the fifth century. Early collections of miracle stories associated with the saint date from the seventh century, and texts from the ninth century and later describe his life and martyrdom in the late third or early fourth century.

A Roman soldier who refused to kill Christians, he was imprisoned in the Baths at Thessalonika by order of the emperor Maximian, who later had him stabbed to death with lances after his favorite gladiator, Lyaeus, was defeated by Demetrius's friend Nestor. Variations to the legend include the subsequent decapitation of Nestor as well as Demetrius's destruction of the poisonous scorpion that attacked him in prison. Further legends attribute the protection of the city of Thessalonika during the seventh-century invasions of the Slavs and Bulgars to the miraculous intervention of St. Demetrius. Byzantine imperial and aristocratic devotion throughout the medieval period expanded the cult of Demetrius beyond the Balkan regions—where eventually more than 200 churches were dedicated to the saint. He was also adopted as a patron of the army in Russia.

The shrine of Demetrius at Thessalonika was a significant pilgrimage site throughout the Middle Ages. It contained a hexagonal, domed silver ciborium (altar canopy) in the central area of the church that included a representation of the recumbent saint on a silver bier. This structure was destroyed during the Arab occupation of the city in the early tenth century and was eventually replaced by one of marble (also no longer extant). The saint's powers to effect healings and ward off demons were said to be especially facilitated by the sweet-smelling oil (or *myron*) that was collected in basins in the lower area of the church. (The relics of several other Eastern and Western saints are also credited with exuding miraculous myron; these saints are known as *myroblytoi*.) Pilgrims collected the myron in little vials (or ampullae) and small containers that were worn like necklaces or amulets. This practice is mentioned in texts from the thir-

teenth century. A fifteenth-century text describes how even the walls and columns of the church dripped with myron on the saint's feast day.

In spite of much remodeling and a disastrous fire in 1917, important early mosaics survive in the church at Thessalonika. St. Demetrius is frequently depicted in Byzantine and Russian icons, sometimes on horseback, wearing armor and carrying a shield, sword, or lance. His feast day is October 8 in the Roman Catholic Church and October 26 in Greek Orthodoxy.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Miracles; Orthodoxy and Saints; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Demetrius of Rostov (Dimitrius)

(1651–1709 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox monk, bishop, writer

Demetrius was born in the Ukraine region of the Russian Empire in 1651 and educated first in Kiev. In 1668, he took the habit at the Kirillov Monastery on the White Lake, and in 1669 he was sent to Chernigov to begin his work as a sermonizer at the Dormition Cathedral. His reputation for sermons spread and he traveled widely throughout Russia and Ukraine. Though from the Ukraine region, Demetrius sided with Moscow in political and religious disputes.

In 1681, Demetrius became superior of the Maksanov Monastery, and in 1682 of the Baturin Monastery. While at the Kievan Cave Monastery in 1684, he began work on a comprehensive menology of Orthodox saints' Lives, for which he is best known, and which became an important guide for Orthodox monastic and lay readings in the modern period. Demetrius's work was interrupted while he provided leadership as the superior of several monasteries. He eventually was appointed archimandrite of the Elets Monastery in Chernigov and was later consecrated as metropolitan of Rostov in 1700, in which position he continued his literary activity. As metropolitan, Demetrius became an advocate of education for priests and their sons.

In 1752, four decades after his death, his remains were discovered uncorrupted, and he was recognized as a saint by the Orthodox Church after an investigation carried out in 1757. He is known for other works, such as his "Cell Chronicle," a diary, an "Inquiry" into the Old Believer faith (considered

schismatic by the official church), and various texts on Orthodox Church history. Demetrius remains best known for his work on the menology, which became a standard for Orthodox saints' Lives, largely replacing the previous Great Menology of Metropolitan Makarii of Moscow. Demetrius is remembered on September 21 and October 28.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Orthodoxy and Saints; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Demons and Monsters

An important part of the definition of holiness is the ability to fight evil, whether perceived as concrete or abstract. Almost all religions include rituals for exorcism—driving out demons—although different religions have emphasized this at different times. In many African and Amerindian religions, and in the first millennium of Christianity, this ability to drive away evil has been highly prized in holy people and is taken as a sign of their special closeness to God. Especially noteworthy in this regard is Jesus of Nazareth, to whose career the exorcism of demons was central.

The faithful of most religions believe that demons get in the way of proper spiritual practice and must be confronted. This is an important element of the foundation myth of both Buddhism and Christianity. Gautama (c. fifth century B.C.E.), in his quest for enlightenment, was bitterly tempted by his archenemy Mara, who tried to distract the soon-to-be Buddha while he was sitting under the bodhi tree. (Mara saw Gautama as a threat to his own dominion over the afterworld.) When temptation did not work, Mara sent an army to try to destroy Gautama, then natural forces, and finally sent his own daughters to attempt seduction of the holy man. The purpose here was to distract Gautama rather than causing him to “sin.” A similar need to fight distracting evil spirits appears in Hindu literature, where demons are portrayed threatening the early sages in their forest retreats.

Religions with a strong moral element often depict their holy people valiantly resisting the blandishments of demons who want to lead them away from their godly resolve. Christian legend tells of Jesus resisting and finally defeating Satan, first in the forty days Jesus spent in the desert, being tempted with dreams of power, pride, and simple satisfaction of his needs, and after his death in the “harrowing of hell,” when Jesus descended to hell, defeated and bound Satan, and freed the souls of the righteous dead from his control. In imitation of Christ, and to emphasize the ethical imperatives of Christianity, the first eight centuries of Christian hagiographers

repeatedly emphasized their heroes' and heroines' abilities to resist demonic temptation and even physical attack.

Especially in ancient legends and in the folkloric elements of more recent accounts, the holy person (usually a man) comes into greater prominence as a fighter of actual, concrete evil forces that trouble a region—monsters. This is an important theme in early Hinduism, where Rama's defeat of the evil demon Ravana is central to the *Ramayana* (third century). Battles against monsters are also prominent in Irish Christian hagiography. Early Buddhism similarly tells stories about demonic forces, such as a battle of one of the Buddha's disciples against a snake king whose hood had covered the world in darkness, or the eighth-century Buddhist Padmasambhava, who was invited to Tibet to pacify the demons who were preventing the spread of Buddhism.

Over time more learned religious practitioners in most cultures have come to reject tales of struggles with demons and monsters as objective reality. Not so with popular belief, which has continued all over the world to credit holy heroes with the ability to fight demons and monsters. For example, the Hindu guru Gorakhnath (c. 1200) battled demons, according to popular stories. Similarly, in the more popular cult of Antony of Padua that developed in India, Antony (1195–1231) became especially known for his abilities over demons and spirits. Within Europe, later folklore credited the Icelandic bishop Guthmundr Arason (1161–1237) with the ability to defeat trolls and other monsters. Indeed, in Christianity new tales of the potency of saints against demonic forces spread even as intellectual culture rejected them, as with the cult of St. George (third century), who only came to be credited with slaying a dragon in the twelfth century.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Antony of Uvari; George; Gorakhnath; Padmasambhava

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Dengyō Daishi

See Saichō

Denis of Paris (Denys, Dionysius)

(d. 251 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Denis, an early bishop of Paris, became a widely revered saint by dint of his patronage of the Abbey of St.-Denis, the important Benedictine monastery north of Paris, and because of the devotion of the kings of France to him. First mentioned by Gregory of Tours in the sixth century (*History*

of the Franks, 1.30), Denis was probably one of the early evangelizing bishops who brought Christianity to Gaul in the third century and perhaps the first bishop of Paris. Gregory relates his martyrdom by decapitation during the persecution of Decius or Gratus in 251.

The best-known features of his legend, however, date to the late fifth-century *Passio sanctorum martyrum Dionysii episcopi, Rustici et Eleutherii* (Passion of the holy martyrs Bishop Denis, Rusticus, and Eleutherius), which pushed Denis's mission back to the first century as part of the evangelizing program of Pope Clement I, thus making it apostolic. This *Passio* also gave Denis two companions, Rusticus and Eleutherius, and told the tale of how, after his decapitation, Denis carried his own head down from Montmartre to the site of the Benedictine abbey, St.-Denis, which was subsequently erected on his burial site. Consequently, in art he is usually depicted as a bishop carrying his own severed head.

In the ninth century, Abbot Hilduin of St.-Denis intentionally conflated the patron of his monastery with two other "Denis" figures of Christian history. The first, Dionysius the Aeropagite, mentioned in Acts 17:34 as one of St. Paul's early followers, gave Hilduin's patron saint scriptural origin. The second, the so-called Pseudo-Dionysius, was the fifth- or early sixth-century author of the influential treatise of Neoplatonic theology, *The Celestial Hierarchies*. In the twelfth century, Abelard raised doubts about the conflation of these three figures, although the monks continued to claim their unity.

The monastery was often favored by royalty, starting with the Merovingian king Dagobert (r. 622–638), and ultimately became the burial site for the kings of France. Starting in the twelfth century, the monks of St.-Denis, and Abbot Suger (1081–1155) in particular, fostered the notion that Denis was the patron and protector of the French monarchy, and ultimately of the entire kingdom. New versions of the legend, the *Vita et Actus beati Dionysii* (Life and acts of the blessed Denis), written in 1223, and the *Vita et passio* (Life and passion), written in 1317 by Yves of St.-Denis, further underscored the close relationship between the saint and the monarchy and marked the increasing importance of Denis's cult in the later Middle Ages. Denis consequently emerged as the "national saint of France" (Spiegel 1975, 52). His feast day is October 9.

—*M. Cecilia Gaposchkin*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Cephalophores; Disciples

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Desert Saints

(3rd–7th cent. C.E.)

Christian hermits, monks

The Christian desert saint phenomenon began in the third century and gathered momentum in the fourth in the desert regions of Syria, Judea, and Egypt and was characterized by the influx of thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of men (and, in smaller numbers, women) seeking a more spiritually pure life. They practiced a form of asceticism that, at that time, was balanced by a creative regimen of prayer and good works. Only later did the disciplined exercises of asceticism come to have the negative, self-denying connotations common today.

Early on, these individuals were called "monks," implying a kind of separation from secular society, though not a divorce from it. The first surviving reference to a monk, in fact, describes him, accompanied by a deacon, as happening on an assault and rendering aid.

A few monks did remove themselves to the far desert (hence they were called "hermits"—from the Greek word for desert, *eremia*, or "anchorites"—from the word to withdraw); but for the most part even they lived in communities of several hundred, because of the requirements of a liturgy in common and the pragmatic need for water. In general, the desert saints lived close to, and frequently interacted with, rural society throughout the Middle East. This was determined in part by geography: For example, the Nile Valley cuts a narrow (40 km wide) swath through the desert, so monasteries could be considered isolated and still remain within a day's journey of secular society. The custom of monks volunteering to participate in the harvest, moreover, in order to feed the poor and themselves, meant further interaction; and there is evidence, early on, of the pious donating fertile land to monasteries.

Nevertheless, the most common explanation for this phenomenon is that monks desired to escape a corrupt and sinful Roman culture; further elaborations mention the need for some new form of martyrdom, once the persecutions ceased. In other words, some argue that the church, denied the possibility of more martyrs, created a new sort of martyrdom, that of denial in the harsh conditions of the desert; there is even the theory that men fled to the monasteries to avoid military conscription. Although there is naturally some evidence for all of these approaches, a careful examination of the lives of the desert saints shows an appreciation for the serenity and natural holiness found in the wilderness. Antony, when asked by visiting Greek philosophers where his library was, threw open his window to show the

out-of-doors. There are dozens of legends of the close and friendly relationship between saints and the wild beasts of the desert—notably lions. There is, in general, a positive awareness of the environment in this culture that cannot be otherwise identified in the entire Roman Empire.

There was the matter, too, of pilgrims. It might not be an exaggeration to say that the desert saints encouraged visitors. This is most true of monks in the eastern parts of Syria, who were famous for the practice of “austerities”—the subjecting of flesh to extreme conditions. Notable is Simeon the Stylite (c. 390–459) and his successors starting with Daniel (c. 409–493), who over the course of six centuries gathered crowds by placing themselves atop pillars for years at a time. The showy theatricality of such practice is not to the modern taste, but it did have a profound influence on popular morals. And there were practical benefits; Procopius reported in the sixth century that a village suffering under a burden of taxation sent a local hermit to intercede to the emperor on their behalf.

Paradoxically, the literature concerning the desert saints, though in general balanced and rational in regard to excesses such as fasting, contained enough examples of extraordinary acts to convey a sense of perfection about them. This literature, presented in the form of short Lives, edifying stories, or gnomic wisdom, flourished from late antiquity into early modern times. There is direct evidence that early Celtic hermits and monks based their spirituality on that of the desert fathers. Later in the Middle Ages, religious reformers such as Romuald of Ravenna (c. 951–1027), founder of the Camaldolese Order, and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) sought to reinvigorate monasticism through the example of the desert saints; both Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226) and Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) almost certainly ruined their health in emulating extreme ascetic practice. In a further paradox, the *Lives of the Fathers* was one of the most popular books of the early period of printing, apparently in demand by the newly literate middle class. Unfortunately, the reputation of the desert saints suffered at the hands of the eighteenth-century historian Edward Gibbon, who popularized the theory that the spiritual experiences of the fathers can be attributed to near-insanity resulting from their lifestyle.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ascetics as Holy People; Bernard of Clairvaux; Catherine of Siena; Christianity and Holy People; Daniel the Stylite; Francis of Assisi; Hermits; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Romuald of Ravenna; Simeon the Stylite

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Devadatta

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist monk

Devadatta, cousin of the Shakyamuni Buddha in around the fifth century B.C.E., is portrayed in Buddhist texts as having two contradictory sides to his personality: saintly and devilish. After having personally been ordained by the Buddha, he obtained supernatural power (*ridhhi*) within one year. Thereafter, he received recognition as an impeccable saint whose achievements were not only acknowledged by Shariputra and Ananda but also by the Buddha, who included his name in the list of saints. In the *Saddharmapundrika Sutra*, the Buddha acknowledges Devadatta as his teacher in a previous life, under whom he was able to perfect the qualities by which he eventually became a buddha.

According to the Theravada tradition, however, after initially engaging in good behavior Devadatta began to entertain ambitions to assume leadership of the *samgha* (order of monks). When he failed, he became very hostile toward the Buddha. He even unsuccessfully tried to kill him, especially with the help of Ajatashatru. Thereafter, he requested from the Buddha the imposition of five austerities on the *samgha*: that monks should dwell in the forest, not accept invitations for meals, not accept robes from the laity, not dwell under a roof, and abstain from meat. When the Buddha refused and left the decision on these matters open to monks, Devadatta accused him of being prone to luxury and departed with 500 supporting monks. Later, Shariputra and Maudgalyayana went to Devadatta's camp and appeared to sympathize with him, but in his absence they successfully convinced the dissident monks to return to the Buddha. When Devadatta found out what had happened, he died, having declared that he still was the Buddha's disciple.

The Buddha subsequently remarked that Devadatta would go to Niraya Hell for an aeon and thereafter would be born as a *pratyekabuddha* (solitary buddha) by the name of Atthissara. Scholars have suggested two issues underlying the conflicts between the Buddha and Devadatta: the issue of succession to leadership of the *samgha*, and the issue of forest-austerities versus settled monasticism.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Ajatashatru; Ascetics as Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Monasticism and Holy People

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Devotion

The Turkish sufi Yunus Emre (c. 1241–1320/1321) argued that the core of all spirituality is ardent and humble love for God, with an emphasis on deep and reciprocal love between God and the devotee. Devotion in the sense of being marked by religious fervor and set aside for the special function of serving a god or gods is an underlying precondition of holiness for most world religions, the only real exception being some Daoist and Confucian sects, which do not fit neatly into deity-centered descriptions. But although devotion can be assumed, it is only occasionally that intense personal attachment to a god has been central to the definition of a holy person, characterized often in terms of a divine "madness" that is demonstrated with intense emotion and even ecstatic states. It is especially marked as an aspect of mystical movements, in "baroque" Christianity of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, and above all in much of the later history of Hinduism. In most cases, such focus on devotion as a key element of personal holiness has at least begun with a reaction against excessive formalism or intellectualism in a religion. This is especially marked in Jewish devotional offshoots, such as the Hasidic movement launched by the Ba'al Shem Tov (1698/1700–1760).

Absolute devotion to God is a very important thread in Hinduism, whether that god is identified as Krishna, Shiva, or another of the pantheon. The greatest models of loving service are the Gopis, legendary female cowherders who were devotees of Krishna. In legend, these women abandon everything, even their physical bodies, to run off and be with Krishna in an ecstatic and joyful dance with God. Several great Hindu movements have produced devotional saints on this model. The alvars, twelve great poet-saints of southern India active from the sixth to the ninth centuries, are models of devotion. They wandered, singing the praises of Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi. Their title literally means "one who is immersed," in the sense of being completely intoxicated with God. The *bhakti* (devotional) movement was similarly devotional, producing holy people celebrated for their love of God, rather than for wisdom or virtue. Many of these saints, for example, Hit Hari-

vansh (c. 1502–c. 1552), are described as so absorbed in their devotion that they failed to observe the rules of conventional religion—clearly less important than focus on loving union with God. Krishna Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533), the great god-saint, exemplifies the Hindu bhakti movement especially well: Accounts tell of his emotional outpourings, visible devotion, ecstasies, and spontaneous outbursts of song, suggesting that he was so filled with the divine that it erupted from him.

These holy people emphasized the infinite love of the god for his or her devotees, repaying the followers for their loyalty. Thus, legend tells that Ramadas of Bhadrachalam (1620–1680), a devotee of Rama, was a revenue collector who got in trouble because he gave away his collections to repair Rama's shrine. He was imprisoned for several years, and many of the songs he wrote while imprisoned tell of the consolation he received from Rama during this period. Legend makes divine care even more explicit—Rama and Lakshmana are supposed to have come in person to the ruler from whom Ramadas had stolen, paid over the missing money, and then vanished. When the ruler ran to free Ramadas, he is said to have been jealous because it was the ruler, not himself, who saw the incarnate gods. Other Hindu devotional saints were granted visions of their gods, and the legend of one, Andal (ninth century), even reports that she eventually merged with an image of Vishnu—or in an alternative version, he came and married her. This Hindu devotional emphasis spread to Jainism, such as the Jaina Banarsidas (1586–1643), who turned his followers from ritualism toward mystical devotionalism, even writing some very erotic poetry of union with God that was reminiscent of some Hindu devotional poetry.

Devotionalism and mysticism walk hand in hand, since the focus of mysticism is to seek union with the divine. Thus, while Islam has always acknowledged special devotion to God as a characteristic of holy people (for example, in legend, the Virgin Mary's devotion to God was so pure that God provided her dates and a fresh stream to help her through her labor pains), devotion really became dominant in the mystical sufi movement. The emphasis on emotional ecstasy among some sufis has caused serious concern to mainstream Muslims. A notorious case is the early sufi Abu Yazid Bistami, active in the ninth century. He was famous for his ecstatic utterances while in a state of mystical union with God and became known for his "intoxicated" approach to spirituality. Most famous was his cry, "Glory to me," taken by some to mean that he was claiming divinity; more likely, he was claiming a complete union between himself and the divine. Most sufis, though, were not so controversial, and the large body of devotional poetry they created, to both God and Muhammad, spread widely.

Although early Christianity had saints who experienced visions, or who could be so lost in contemplation of God that



A Buddhist monk practicing his devotions in a temple in northern Nepal. (Corel Corp)

they became unaware of their surroundings—Kevin of Glendalough (d. c. 618), for example, didn't notice a bird building a nest in his hands—the great era of Christian devotionism can be said to begin with the spread of mysticism in the second half of the Middle Ages. A wide body of literature describes the yearning of these mystical saints to attain union with God, including mystical marriages with God (for example, Catherine of Siena in the fourteenth century), the favor of holding the infant Jesus (Íte in the sixth century), and experiences of crawling into the wound in Christ's side, to name just a few of the emotional outpourings of the mystics.

Identification with God, however, was nowhere so pronounced as in the several hundred cases in which Christian holy people have claimed (or their followers have claimed for them) to have received the stigmata, the impression of Christ's wounds on their own bodies. Perhaps the earliest of these stigmatists was Marie d'Oignies (c. 1177–1213), although her case has been overshadowed by the fame of Francis of Assisi's (c. 1180–1226) stigmata. The phenomenon continues to the present, most recently acknowledged in the case of Padre Pio (1887–1968), canonized in 2002. The spirituality of the later Middle Ages in Christian Europe is marked by saints whose emotional devotion to God bears striking similarities to the bhakti movement among the Hindus. Many of these saints were famous for their penances, for their devotion to the suffering Christ (including, especially, the development of a cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus), and for the paranormal experiences they had while in rapture. There were seventy attested cases, for example, of the “flying saint,” Joseph of Copertino (1603–1663), floating in the air while in ecstasy. This devotional emphasis continued until the Enlightenment. It is important to note that, while much devotionism began as “elite” religion, accessible to holy people, the very nature of their devotion caused Christian and Hindu saints to try to spread their teachings to as wide an audience as possible. This is also true in Islam, where sufi movements such as that of Ahmad Bamba of Senegal (1850–1927) reached a wide popular audience.

Although devotionism is often seen as an alternative to intellectual or ritual emphases in religion, examples of the two coexisting can be found in several religions. Thus, for example, the Byzantine theologian Simeon the New Theologian (949–1022) was both learned and ecstatic, although in his case this brought him to grief with the authorities. More successful were the Hindu theologians Ramanuja (1017–1137) and Jiva Gosvamin (fl. 1555–1592), who combined philosophy with devotionism, the latter especially articulating the bhakti movement. Similarly, sufi scholars made their devotion acceptable to the learned communities of their time.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Andal; Ba'al Shem Tov; Bamba, Ahmad; Banarsidas; Bhakti Saints; Bistami, Abu Yazid; Catherine of Siena; Chaitanya, Krishna; Francis of Assisi; Gopi/The Gopis; Harivansh, Hit; Íte; Jiva Gosvamin; Joseph of Copertino; Kevin of Glendalough; Marie d'Oignies; Ramadas of Bhadrachalam; Ramanuja; Simeon the New Theologian; Sufism; Yunus Emre

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Dge-'dun-grub-pa

See *Gendun drubpa*

Dharmakirti (Tibetan: Chos-kyi-grags-pa)

(c. 600–c. 680 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Born to a brahmin family in the Cola country of southern India in about 600, Dharmakirti was a successor of Dignaga (c. 480–c. 540). Part of the Yogacara school of Indian Buddhism, he became a logician of unsurpassed genius. As a young man he studied brahminic scriptures for eighteen years, but later he converted to Buddhism as a lay disciple. In Kalinga, he became a monk under Dignaga's disciple Dharmapala; before long he followed another disciple, Isvarasena, to delve into Dignaga's *Pramanasamuccaya* (Compendium of the means of true knowledge), copiously annotating it. This is Dharmakirti's famous *Pramanavarttika* (Explanation of evidence).

Dharmakirti modified Dignaga's definition of perception to embrace the condition “infallible” and in his *Nyayabindu* (The drop of logic) distinguished between four sorts of perception: that by the mind, that by the five senses, self-consciousness, and perception of the yogis. He argued that the sole valid types of knowledge are direct perception and inference and that, in the progresses of the mind, the cognized and cognition belong to distinct moments.

According to Dharmakirti, the object of perception—which may be perceived by the mind, by the five senses, by self-consciousness, and by the practice of yoga—is the pure particular, and the object of inference, either synthetic or analytical, is the universal. Dharmakirti persistently asserted that each and every single person is an ephemeral being and, in his turn, assumes the perpetual existence of an individual, and the individual as a succession of moments, gathered by discriminative and imaginative thinking. He also ushered in the threefold dissimilitude of valid middle terms: The middle must be related to the major either by identity or as cause and effect, or the cause is a nonperception out of which the absence of the major could be inferred.

Composed as comprehensive commentaries on the earlier work by Dignaga, Dharmakirti's seven treatises in turn

inspired a great number of commentaries and have developed into the standard works in their field, particularly in Tibet.

When Buddhism itself was losing ground in India, Dharmakirti seemed to have foretold that it would happen; however, none of his pupils could fully comprehend his unique teachings so as to widely spread the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine). Dharmapala and Isvarasena were not able to grasp Dharmakirti's doctrines, just as they had not been able to grasp Dignaga's. After Dharmakirti's death in about 680, it was to Dharmottara, rather than to Dharmakirti's direct disciple Devendrabuddhi, that his teachings were passed down. In their metaphysical positions, Dharmakirti and Dignaga embody a moderate form of idealism.

—Der-huey Lee

See also: Dignaga; Scholars as Holy People

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Dido (Elissa)

Phoenician heroine-goddess

Dido (also known as Elissa) was the legendary founder of the Phoenician city of Carthage and according to some sources was worshipped as a deity by the citizens of that city after her death. The accounts of her death (which appear in the writings of Justin and Virgil) agree that it was a suicide, but they differ on Dido's motivations and character. Since Phoenician texts about Dido do not survive to the present, our understanding of her is based on Roman perceptions. Elissa is a derivation of a real, Semitic name; Dido (which is likely an epithet) is of unknown derivation and meaning.

Dido appears in Virgil's *Aeneid* (first century B.C.E.). His retelling of Dido's story is arguably the best known, but it is fundamentally influenced by Augustan sensibilities. Justin's account from the second or third century C.E. reflects earlier traditions, possibly Phoenician, and is more important in understanding Dido's perceived relationship with the divine. Dido fled from her brother Pygmalion and eventually ended up at Carthage leading a large population. After founding the city, she was pressured to marry a local king. She refused, killed herself, and let her body fall on a funeral pyre. After her death, the citizens deified her (on account of her noble behavior), and she was presumably worshipped at Carthage.

The story reflects the sensibility that proper or outstanding behavior can create a bridge to the divine.

It is unclear whether there is any historicity to these traditions. Justin's description of Dido's death is similar to descriptions of Phoenician child sacrifice. Although scholars are divided on the issue of whether the Phoenicians actually engaged in child sacrifice, it is suggested in Roman writings and there is archaeological evidence to support it. It is quite possible that the ancient Roman writers saw a connection between the Dido cult and child sacrifice.

—Kevin McGeough

See also: Heroes; Rulers as Holy People

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Dignaga (Pali: Dinnaga; Tibetan: Phyogs-kyi glan-po)

(c. 480–c. 540 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Born into a brahmin family near Kanci in southern India in approximately 480, Dignaga became known as the father of medieval Nyaya (one of the six sects of Indian philosophy). He was first a Theravadan Buddhist and later devoted himself to the teachings of Mahayanist Buddhism in the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) lineage of Vasubandhu (one of the main founders of the Indian Yogacara school in the fourth and fifth centuries).

Dignaga is believed to have practiced meditation inside a cave of Orissa for quite a few years. He reportedly defeated heretical dialecticians, for example, a brahmin logician named Sudurjaya, at the Nalanda monastery, where he also composed some of his many treatises. Among these, the *Pramanasamuccaya* (Compendium of the means of true knowledge)—a work that reexplains causation and logic through the consciousness-only theory—is the most popular.

As the founder of the school of Hetu-vidya (logic), Dignaga wrote eight treatises. Among these, the *Nyayadvarataka-sastra* (Treatise on entering the true principle of causal logic) is the fundamental one. He also changed Buddhist logic from the analogical method to the deductive one by establishing the three characteristics of cause in the nine possible combinations of like and unlike and converting the old five-part syllogism into a three-part one, giving it a totally different logical basis. Also, in the field of epistemology, he developed the the-

ory of the three aspects of consciousness: subjective, objective, and self-witnessing, as compared with Sthiramati's one aspect, Nanda's two aspects, and Dharmapala's four aspects. In effect, he not merely regarded only the pure sensation as perception but laid down a whole new definition of "perception": a knowledge that is free from all conceptual constructions.

Dignaga is credited with the authorship of roughly one hundred treatises on logic, most of them still preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations. I-tsing (seventh century) once spoke of them as his textbooks at the time of his pilgrimage to India. Kuiji's *Commentary on Nyayapravesa* of the same century claims that there are up to forty treatises written by him, while *A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea* puts forward only seven treatises. Dignaga went beyond being simply a salient logician; according to the fourth chapter of the latter work, he also excelled at literary creation by adding a *gatha* (verse) to Matrceta's first-century C.E. *Satapancasataka*. The drama *Kundamala* was also allegedly produced by Dignaga.

—*Der-huey Lee*

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Vasubandhu

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Dikshitar, Muthuswami

(1775–1835 C.E.)

Hindu composer

Muthuswami Dikshitar was a saintly composer contemporary to Tyagaraja; he was born in 1775 in Tiruvarur, India, the son of a prominent musician and composer, Ramaswamy Dikshitar. When his father-to-be prayed for a son, the goddess Devi Balambika gave him a pearl necklace in a dream. Within a year a son was born to his wife. The child learned music from his father, both vocal and vina (an Indian stringed instrument), and also studied Sanskrit. His father was invited to work as a musician in Manali, and the family moved there.

Visiting Fort St. George while still a youth, Muthuswami Dikshitar heard English band music. (Later he included some of these melodic patterns in fifty of his compositions, though

most of his music was traditional.) A *sannyasin* (renunciant) about to set out for the ancient holy city Banaras on the Ganges heard young Muthuswami play and asked if the boy might accompany him as his pupil; in this way the boy learned worship of the goddess Shri, yoga, and wisdom literature (Upanishads). He also listened to northern Indian music. For six years he studied in the north. According to legends, his teacher told him to stand in the Ganges; there he mysteriously received a vina with the name "Rama" on it, and the teacher vanished.

Dikshitar then returned south, visiting shrines and repeating mantras. He had a vision of Subramanyam, the deity of beauty and eternal youthful vigor, who gave him wisdom. He sang in Tiruttani, and in Tirupati, Kalahasti, Kanchipuram, and Chidambaram he composed songs to the deities in temples. After these travels, he lived with his father until 1817 in Tiruvarur, where the great Shiva temple stood. He then married and spent years as a householder, immersed in devotion, doing yoga and *puja* (veneration), singing in temples, and teaching students. He composed about 400 songs, all in Sanskrit. He embraced poverty, and when his wife asked him if he would sing the king's praises, he said he would sing to worship the goddess Lakshmi, but would not praise mere mortals. One legend said he brought down rain with music during a drought. His songs are known for their dignified solemnity and erudition.

—*William J. Jackson*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Tyagaraja; Wealth and Poverty

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Dimitrius

See Demetrius

Dinnaga

See Dignaga

Diola Prophets

Indigenous African holy people

The Diola of southwestern Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau have a long-standing prophetic tradition stretching

back to the foundation myths of many Diola communities and continuing to the present day. Before the French occupation of Senegal, there were eleven male prophets, but since the beginning of the twentieth century there have been forty-three, most of whom are women. The term translated as “prophet,” *Emitai dabognol*, is an epithet that literally means “who was sent by the Supreme Being, Emitai.” This is a prophetic tradition within the indigenous Diola religious path (*awasena*) and is not primarily a product of contact with Islam or Christianity. The prophets are associated with rain rituals in which Emitai, the Supreme Being, is invoked as the source of rainfall. The harshness of colonial rule and the difficult political and ecological changes of the postcolonial era have led to both an intensification and a feminization of this tradition. The Diola number more than 500,000 people and include the largest number of practitioners of an indigenous religion in Senegal.

Prophets can be grouped into three categories: precolonial prophets, before 1850; colonial prophets, who were active in the early twentieth century; and postcolonial prophets, active since the 1960s. Like Atta-Essou, the founder of Eloudia, the early prophets were often said to have originated with Emitai and to have flown or been carried up to Emitai in the heavens when their earthly existences came to an end. They are associated with the introduction of a series of rain shrines and the institution of the priest-king (*oeyi*). In the eighteenth century, a new type of prophet emerged in the Diola-Esulalu communities. These men emphasized the experience of the soul leaving the body in a deep sleep and traveling to the heavens to receive revelation from Emitai. Kooliny Djabune of Kadjinol introduced a powerful new war shrine known as Cabai as a result of such revelations.

As Europeans occupied Diola territories in the late nineteenth century, women prophets became active for the first time. Detailed oral traditions focus on three women in the Huluf area of southwestern Senegal before World War I. Shortly after the military occupation of Huluf and the exile (and death) of the Huluf priest-king, three women claimed that Emitai spoke to them and commanded them to create a new spirit shrine, Emit or Emitai, which was to be used to pray directly to the Supreme Being, both for healing and for rain. These women were Weyah of Nyambalang, Djitabeh of Karouate, and Ayimpene of Siganar.

Although there were other prophets after the three women of Huluf, the most famous was Alinesitoué Diatta (1920–1944), who introduced a series of spirit shrines (*ukine*) associated with the procurement of rain, beginning in 1941. Her first revelations came to her as she walked through the crowded Sandaga market in the capital city of Dakar. Early in 1942, she summoned the elders of her community and taught them about a new ritual known as *Kasila*.

This involved the sacrifice of a black bull and other livestock at a shrine created in each neighborhood of a Diola township. For a week, the community came together and feasted as a way of reaffirming the importance of their community. She earned the hostility of French authorities by opposing their efforts to spread peanut cultivation, which disrupted a family mode of farming by luring men into the sale of peanuts and relegating the arduous task of rice cultivation exclusively to women. In 1943, she was arrested, tried for obstructing French colonial initiatives, and exiled to Timbuktu, where she died a year later. Immediately after her arrest, other women came forward and proclaimed themselves to be prophets of Emitai.

In the 1980s, Todjai Diatta of Djivent gained a following comparable to Alinesitoué's. Todjai had been diagnosed and unsuccessfully treated as an epileptic, until a Muslim healer claimed that her problem came from her refusal to fulfill her obligations to Diola religion. When she began teaching about her revelations from Emitai, the seizures stopped. She introduced a new form of *Kasila* that required the exclusion of items of European manufacture from her rituals. Although initially successful, the drought quickly returned, and her following diminished.

—Robert M. Baum

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Alinesitoué Diatta; Atta-Essou; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Dioskouroi

Greek heroes, demigods

Castor and Polydeuces (Pollux), the twin sons of Zeus and Leda, or Nemesis, are referred to as the Dioskouroi, “children of Zeus.” The twins, also called “children of the sky,” are connected with the evening and morning star and the constellation Gemini. Known in Greek legend as the most loving of all brothers, they gained distinction through their sense of duty, and neither argued about the kingship or engaged in any act without first consulting the other.

According to legend, Zeus, in the form of a swan, had intercourse with Leda, and Leda gave birth to two eggs. Each contained a brother and a sister (Polydeuces and Helen, and Castor and Clytemnestra). In the Homeric version, Castor and Polydeuces are sons of Leda and King Tyndareus of Sparta. Polydeuces is the immortal twin and Castor is mortal. Polydeuces became a well-known boxer, and Castor was a famous horse trainer. They sailed with Jason and the Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece and took part in the Calydonian Boar Hunt and many other adventures. Poseidon rewarded them with horses and the power to save the shipwrecked and assist sailors. St. Elmo's fire was associated with the twins and interpreted as a favorable omen when it appeared with two flames.

Castor was slain in battle, killed in the town of Aphidnae when the Spartans were waging war against the Athenians. Others point to his death in the war waged by Lynceus and Ida against Sparta. Upon Castor's death, Polydeuces conceded half of his immortality to his brother so that they both shared life and death. A variation in Homer says that Polydeuces granted his brother half of his own life, giving them each the ability to shine in the heavens on alternate days. In Livy's *History of Rome* (2.19), the Dioskouroi came to the aid of the Roman legions at the Battle of Lake Regillus in 496 B.C.E. They are depicted on Roman and Hellenic coinage, and their cult existed in Magna Graecia, Delphi, and throughout Greece. The heroes were connected with commerce as well as with weights and measures. The Babylonians recognized the Great Twins as a constellation and represented them in art as situated head to head or feet together.

—Phillip Meade

See also: Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes

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Disciples

The followers of great holy people are often regarded as holy people in their own right. They are often seen as people who, having the authentic teaching straight from its source, can convey that teaching to the rest of the world. The charisma of the leader often seems to rub off onto such disciples so that they shine with a reflected luster. One must also recognize that a truly great holy person seems able to inspire followers to a very high degree of spiritual perfection. Thus, in religions that emphasize the passing down of “true teaching,” the disciple is often regarded as a holy person, as in Islamic

sufism, where sometimes a person's claim to holiness in popular estimation is based on the fact that he or she has passed on accurately the teachings of a master. For example, the West African Cheikh Ibra Fall (1860–1930) is above all known as a very devoted follower of the great sufi master Ahmad Bamba (1850–1927). But the holiness of disciples is most central when the master they followed was the founder of a religion. Thus they appear most centrally in the religions that claim historic founders with special divine authority, such as Christianity and Buddhism.

The ten great disciples of the Buddha from the fifth century B.C.E.—Kassapa, Ananda, Shariputra, Subhuti, Purna, Maudgalyayana, Katyayana, Aniruddha, Upali, and Rahula—play a central role in the scriptural canon of Buddhism that developed in the centuries after the death of Shakyamuni Buddha. They are used in hagiography to model the teachings of the Buddha, and each is credited with a special wisdom or skill. Thus Shariputra has a great reputation for wisdom, while Maudgalyayana is the disciple with the most power in defeating demons. Kassapa took charge of the *samgha* (monastic community) after the Buddha's death, summoned the first Buddhist council to establish the true teachings, and continued to head the Buddhist community for the next twenty years. They are also spiritual patrons (for example, Rahula is the “patron saint” of monastic novices). They did not pass on their authority to their own disciples, however. Similarly, in Jainism, *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) are believed to have had chief disciples, *ganadharas* (leaders of the assembly), who continued teaching after a tirthankara's death. Thus Jain tradition names the eleven chief disciples of Mahavira (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.) who are supposed to have had great yogic powers. And the *sahaba*, the companions of Muhammad (570–632), have high status in Muslim belief because it was they who established the traditions (*hadith*).

The position of Jesus' followers, especially the inner circle of twelve apostles, developed rather differently because of the different organization of early Christianity. The Buddhist *samgha* did not for some time establish fixed centers, while the apostles were sent out specifically to form Christian communities in different regions. Thus, not only were they the transmitters of “true teaching” (an importance exploited by Christian writers for centuries, who fathered a wide array of gospel narratives on various apostles), they were intended (at least by the time the gospels were written down) to be the leaders of communities and propagators of the Christian faith. By the second century at the latest, it was believed that the apostles passed on not just true teaching but special authority from God; they were the “rocks” upon which the Christian church was built. Their successors, the bishops, were believed to receive Jesus' own authority, passed on through the laying-on of hands, forming an

“apostolic succession” that remains unbroken in the Orthodox Church, Roman Catholicism, and the Anglican communion to the present. Apostolic authority extended even to sitting in judgment over the twelve tribes of Israel at the Second Coming, according to the synoptic gospels. The bishops of churches founded by apostles—Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome—were believed to have access to the most complete and most authentic teachings. It is little wonder that Europe is dotted with bishoprics that in the Middle Ages claimed that they, too, had been founded by an apostle, one of the larger group of seventy-two disciples, or at least a disciple of an apostle. The church founded by Peter, Rome, especially claimed authority because of the New Testament accounts that single Peter out as the head of the apostles.

Other religious leaders have named chief disciples authorized to transmit the “true teaching,” or legend has given such disciples authority afterward. For example, the first six disciples of the Hindu god-saint Chaitanya were given the title *gosvami* (lord of cows), marking their authority as teachers. The Jewish Hasidic leader Dov Baer of Mezhirech (d. 1772) gathered a group of elite disciples whom he taught and then sent out to spread Hasidism. The first eighteen disciples of the Bab (1819–1850), as the first believers and first teachers of the religion that became Bah’ai, have the title “Letters of the Living.” Similarly, nineteen prominent early Baha’is were officially designated “apostles of Baha’u’llah” and “pillars of the faith” to emphasize their role in conveying the true religion to others.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Apostles; Bab, The; Baha’u’llah; Bamba, Ahmad; Christianity and Holy People; Dov Baer of Mezhirech; Fall, Cheikh Ibra; Gautama; Jesus; Kassapa; Mahavira; Maudgalyayana; Muhammad; Peter; Rahula; Shariputra

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Dismas

(d. c. 30 C.E.)

Christian penitent

Also known as the “Good/Penitent Thief,” Dismas (or Desmas) was one of two thieves crucified with Christ on Calvary in about 30 C.E. Dismas rebuked the other thief, Gestas (or Gesmas), for ridiculing Christ and asked for Christ’s blessing. Christ responded, “Today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:39–43). That declaration has been interpreted as guaranteeing Dismas’s salvation and authorizing

his sainthood. The date of his feast day, March 25, is derived from an old tradition that this was the date of Christ’s crucifixion. Dismas’s name means “dying” in Greek (*dysme*), and he is the patron saint of prisoners (particularly those condemned to death), reformed thieves, funeral directors, and undertakers. He is usually represented with a tall cross.

An apocryphal text, the Arabic Infancy Gospel, describes an encounter between the Holy Family and a band of thieves during the Flight into Egypt. The leaders of this band were Titus and Dumachus. Titus wanted to leave the trio alone and paid Dumachus forty drachmae to comply with his wishes. Mary blessed Titus, and Jesus predicted that the two men would be crucified with him and that Titus would go with him to Paradise. Christ’s prophecy draws a distinct connection between Titus and Dismas. This story was particularly popular in the Middle Ages.

—Kelly A. O’Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Repentance and Holy People

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Dogen

(1200–1253 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist school founder, philosopher

Dogen is historically the most significant figure of the thirteenth century in Japanese Buddhism. Born in 1200, he established the Soto school of Japanese Zen Buddhism after a successful trip to China. He composed important works on Zen monastic discipline and philosophy, especially the seventy-five volumes of the *Shobogenzo* (The eye and treasury of the true law), before his death in 1253.

Dogen advocated a pure Zen that was devoid of elements of esoteric Buddhism common in the Tendai and especially the Shingon schools. He was deeply concerned about monastic rules and regulations, and he opened the monastic community to everyone regardless of intelligence, social status, sex, or profession. He also abolished the separation between laity and monks and adopted only the Mahayana religious precepts as necessary.

Unlike Zen Buddhists of some schools, Dogen accepted scriptures, reasoning that they were not the source of deception, which he traced to the individual. He argued that an enlightened mind was free to elucidate and appropriate the scriptures. He accorded a secondary importance to *koans*



A Zen monk, follower of the Japanese Buddhist school established by Dogen, with alms bowl and prayer beads. (Art Directors)

(enigmatic statements made by past masters that were used in meditation), although he did not reject them. For Dogen, the primary mode of practice was *zazen* (seated meditation), which he interpreted in a nondualistic way. His writings on seated meditation contained a spirit of urgency because he believed that, since human beings have had the luck to be born with a human body necessary to achieve liberation, it was foolish to waste one's life.

According to Dogen's nondualistic philosophical position, buddha-nature is equivalent to all existence, which in turn is equated with sentient beings, including plant and animal life along with the inanimate world. This position represented something radical with respect to the notion of the buddha-nature because of its absolutely inclusive meaning. Dogen further defined this central notion in terms of beings and being itself, nonexistence, and emptiness. Moreover, buddha-nature was impermanent, which reflected its dynamic and creative aspects. For the Japanese Zen tradition, Dogen's holy personage was tied to his role as a founder, as a reformer of monastic discipline, and as a creative thinker.

—Carl Olson

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Hagiography; Meditation and Holy People

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Dolce of Worms

(c. 1165–1196 C.E.)

Jewish holy woman

Known for her piety, this daughter of a cantor and wife of Rabbi Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (1165–1230) came from the learned elite class of medieval German Jewry and was born in 1165. Among her husband's surviving writings are two accounts of Dolce's life and death, and those of her daughters Bellette and Hannah, all of whom were murdered by intruders in 1196. In both the prose narrative, which delineates the attack and its aftermath, and the poetic elegy, which recounts Dolce's daily routines, Rabbi Eleazar consistently describes his wife as "pious" or "saintly" (*hasidah*). These Hebrew documents reveal that Dolce supported her family economically as a moneylender and managed a large household while also attending synagogue frequently. As the rabbi's wife, she used her unusually extensive Jewish education to teach and lead prayers for other women and took on communal religious responsibilities, including preparing holy books and objects, distributing alms, adorning brides, and preparing the dead for burial. Described as knowledgeable in Jewish law and eager to learn from her husband's words, Dolce was teaching her daughters Hebrew prayers and melodies as well as domestic skills at the time they were killed.

Rabbi Eleazar's final words of praise for his wife, that she rejoiced to perform her husband's will, express his fundamental agreement with the rabbinic view that a woman earns divine merit by facilitating the study and prayer of male relatives. In the last phrase of his poetic lament, Rabbi Eleazar envisions his beloved wife wrapped in the eternal life of paradise, a worthy reward for her deeds upon which so many were dependent. Although this memorialization of Dolce is framed by male assumptions about what constitutes female sanctity, it also provides important insights about Jewish women's lives in an era from which independent Jewish female voices do not survive.

—Judith R. Baskin

See also: Gender and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Domingo

See **Dominic of Silos**

Dominic

(1170–1223 C.E.)

Christian friar, founder

Founder of the Dominican order of priests, also known as the Order of Friars Preachers or the Black Friars, Dominic was born in Castile, Spain, in 1170 and became an Augustinian canon and priest. While traveling from Denmark in 1204 he encountered the Albigensian heresy. A central element of his order would be to reconcile those involved in this and other heresies. The Dominican order began with Dominic's attempts to found houses of learning to train priests to study and preach in order to combat heretical movements. The order was officially confirmed by Pope Honorius III in 1216.

Often in the shadow of Francis of Assisi, a contemporary but more dramatic figure, Dominic structured his order carefully to maintain focus on this preaching mission. The Dominicans, like the Franciscans, were friars, mobile preachers who maintained a devotion to poverty. This apostolic life was meant to provide an example for the laity and to win back heretics who criticized the wealth and majesty of the church. For Dominic, preaching was the highest charitable calling for a priest, even more important than prayer. Teaching people how to attain salvation was considered the greatest charitable gift one could give to another. For himself, Dominic maintained many elements of traditional monasticism, such as long prayer vigils and fasting. When traveling, he went by foot and maintained a great humility in all of his actions. Wherever his journeys took him, Dominic was a zealous preacher and missionary.

The Dominicans called for great discipline in the mission to confront heresy. Still, the poverty of the order was never as extreme as that demanded by Francis. The Dominican order, as created by Dominic, kept a central focus on education. Each house was to have a lector who instructed all members of the house, no matter how advanced their training. Students were given exemptions from attending prayer services

and the mass if their studies required it. Years were spent in training before a friar was allowed to preach, and especially before he was allowed to preach outside of his own friary.

Although Dominic had to accept the Rule of St. Augustine to get papal approval for the order, the Dominican Constitution was revolutionary in Christian history. It called for elections of all officials and regular general chapter meetings. These annual chapter meetings drew the leaders of each province together to vote on policy for the entire order. Each and every Dominican novice pledged direct obedience to the master general of the order.

Although Dominic and his followers were highly educated, the spirituality that they promoted was traditional. Great emphasis was placed on using existing prayers and simple devotions, and perhaps it is for this reason that the invention of the rosary is often wrongly attributed to Dominic. The spirituality of Dominic and his followers was focused on preaching and teaching others, rather than the development of an elaborate interior prayer life. If there was a special focus of devotion for Dominic, it was Mary, the mother of Jesus. In prayers he composed for the order, Dominic gave Mary a special place as an intercessor for their mission.

The hagiographical literature on Dominic is far smaller than that produced for his contemporary, Francis. Those around him wrote of his humility and simplicity in all things. *The Nine Ways of Prayer*, an anonymous work purporting to be based on Dominic's prayer life, is a guide to prayer using different bodily motions such as kneeling and outstretched arms.

The works of Dominican scholars such as Albert the Great (c. 1200–1280), Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274), and Raymund of Peñafort (1180–1275) brought Dominic's ideals to fruition. Dominic created the means by which his friars could receive a thorough education and devote themselves to teaching others.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Albertus Magnus; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Raymund of Peñafort; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People; Thomas Aquinas; Wealth and Poverty

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Dominic of Silos (Domingo)

(c. 1000–1073 C.E.)

Christian monk, dissident, reformer

As a political dissident, Dominic of Silos exhibited the courage of his convictions; as a refugee, he embodied grace

under pressure. The monastery he reformed at Silos in Burgos, Spain, which now bears his name, is still a vibrant community. Parts of his monastic complex stand as a lasting monument to the religious values that inspired him. The church he built there is now destroyed, although intriguing pieces of it have emerged from excavations.

In his early career, Dominic was prior of San Millán de la Cogolla in the kingdom of Navarre. He was exiled in about 1040 for refusing to surrender monastic property to King Sancho Garcia III (r. 1035–1054). Sancho Garcia's brother Ferdinand (Fernando) I, king of Castile-León (r. 1037–1065), gave Dominic refuge. Dominic played a key role in Ferdinand's program to bring Christianity in his kingdom into line with that practiced throughout the rest of Western Europe. Dominic helped to institute the Benedictine form of monasticism in Castile, and through it, to introduce Roman forms of worship that would eventually replace the old Mozarabic liturgy.

Ferdinand granted Dominic the dilapidated and lax monastery of St. Sebastian at Silos. Reform and rebuilding assumed equal importance for Dominic, as is clear from a vision recorded by his contemporary and biographer, Grimaldus. Angels appeared to Dominic carrying three crowns, two small and the other larger and more magnificent. The smaller two, he was told, he had already earned through his defense of Christian doctrine and through his devotion to the Virgin Mary, in whose honor he had rebuilt the church of Santa Maria de Cañas. The third would be his only after he restored the monastery of St. Sebastian both physically and spiritually. Dominic earned that third crown. The monastic buildings and the church were among the grandest in medieval Spain; the lives of the monks who lived there were exemplary.

The current monks of Santo Domingo de Silos Monastery still follow the example of their patron saint, but with a modern twist. A compact disc of their chants, recorded to raise money for repairs to the monastic complex, met with astounding worldwide success in 1994. The resulting wealth not only has allowed them to repair the buildings at Silos but also to renovate a number of Spanish convents. Their music is so inspiring that they draw flocks of pilgrims to the monastery, many of whom seek to undertake the monastic life Dominic established there so many centuries before. Dominic's feast day is December 20.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Dorado, El

Amerindian intermediary ritual

"El Dorado" is literally the Spanish term for the "The Golden Man" or "The Gilded Man," a person who links the spiritual and secular world in a renewal ceremony. It is also the term used to identify the fantasized city of gold that sparked the conquest of Latin America by Spanish conquistadors beginning in the 1500s. The myth of the city of El Dorado is probably based on the gilded man ritual enacted by one of the Chibcha language peoples, the Muisca, in the Andes of Colombia around Lake Guatavita, or "Laguna de Guatavita." The ritual associated with El Dorado was enacted to spiritually legitimize the ruler's authority as leader and possibly as a purification ceremony to ensure the blessings of the deities. In Muisca culture, religion focuses on nature and celestial deities. No city of El Dorado with paved streets and walls of gold has yet been found.

The details of the religious ritual suggest that astonishing riches lie at the bottom of Lake Guatavita. Once a year, the chief of the village would coat his body with sticky clay, resin, or honey and have gold dust applied to him. He would then stand, or sit depending on which version of the legend is being told, in the center of a raft, naked and coated in gold, as the raft was floated into the middle of the lake by four of the elite of the village. These elite would bear head-dresses of elaborate plumes and wear gold breastplates decorated in emeralds. The raft would carry gold and emerald necklaces and bracelets, flowers and food, ceramic vessels, and spindle whorls—the riches of the society. Along the edges of the lake, the townsfolk would be singing and playing music. As the full moon rose (or the sun rose, depending on the version of the legend) with the light reflecting off the chief's glistening, golden body, a banner would be raised from the raft. The voices and music would silence and he would jump into the lake. The oarsmen who guided the raft would then cast the offerings into the lake. When the chief emerged cleansed of the gold dust, music from flutes, trumpets, drums, and whistles would loudly announce the offerings. Those standing along the edge of the crater lake

bed would throw in their offerings at this point. Incense burners on the boat and shore and bonfires on the shore would be burning all around, providing clouds of aromatic fog to alert the deity of the lake to the sacrifice. Having thus proved his generosity to the god of the lake and the village, the chief was reaffirmed as leader of the people.

The ceremony's origins are attributed to the drowning of Queen Guatavita and her daughter in this same lake. The ruby-eyed serpent deity of the lake who claimed the queen and her daughter spoke to the mourning king through the priest. If the king ruled his people wisely, he would be allowed to join his family one day. The king returned to the lake yearly bearing elaborate gifts to remind the serpent of his promise. The entire village would participate through fasting, preparing wonderful food and drink to feast upon, cleaning their musical instruments in preparation for the event, and preparing their outfits and offerings for presentation to the god. After years of wise rule, one year, when the king dove into the water, the serpent god was waiting for him and brought him to his family.

The ceremony was publicly reenacted by subsequent kings until the Spanish conquest interrupted the traditions of the high Andes peoples. Drainage has been attempted various times since 1500 through the use of bucket lines, notches cut into the edge of the crater, and tunnels under the lake. The attempts have failed because of the stickiness of the mud or the hardness of the clay that formed at the surface within hours of exposure. A few items have been recovered along the lake shore with each attempt, but the interior has never been penetrated. Currently the lake is protected by the Colombian government from further attempts to extract its treasures. The majority of the treasures of El Dorado are thus still locked in the heart of the Andes.

—Juana Ibáñez

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Rulers as Holy People

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Dōshun

See Hayashi Razan

Dov Baer of Mezhirech

(d. 1772 C.E.)

Jewish rabbi, Hasidic leader

Dov Baer, known in Hasidic tradition as the *Maggid* (preacher) of Mezhirech, succeeded Israel Ba'al Shem Tov (the Besht) as leader of Hasidism after the Besht's death in

1760. Before assuming the mantle of Hasidic leadership, Dov Baer served as *maggid* in Korets, Rovno, and Mezhirech in the Ukraine. He became a follower of the Besht relatively late in life when he approached him for a cure for the illness that had confined him to his bed. According to Hasidic tradition, he only spent a total of six months under the Besht's tutelage.

Dov Baer was very different from the Besht in temperament and personality and moved Hasidism in a different direction socially and theologically. Rather than traveling and meeting ordinary people to disseminate the teachings of Hasidism, Dov Baer gathered a group of elite disciples around him who were then sent out to all parts of Eastern Europe to spread Hasidic teachings. After the Maggid's death in 1772, these disciples became the leaders of many Hasidic groups (*zaddiqim*), which meant that Hasidism no longer had one universally recognized leader.

Dov Baer's mystical teachings emphasized the doctrine of *devekut* (communion with God) from a perspective of pantheism and acosmism. They are monistic and depart from the classical kabbalistic dualistic worldview. The human being's role is to recognize that God exists everywhere in the universe. Dov Baer's mystical contemplative experience is not of a personal God but of a divine life force that pervades all existence. As a result, one can worship God with every human act. Once having recognized this basic truth, man's mystic task is to return the material world (*yesh*) back to the mystical "nothingness" (*ayin*) that preceded God's creation of the world. One result of these teachings was to de-emphasize the centrality of the *tzaddiq*, the Hasidic master, in the spiritual life of the *hasid* (disciple). Dov Baer's teachings, like those of most Hasidic masters, are not systematic treatises but homiletical observations on biblical verses or rabbinic texts. Dov Baer's theology was most fully developed by his disciple Shneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1813), founder of the Habad school of Hasidism.

—Morris M. Faierstein

See also: Ba'al Shem Tov; Devotion; Hagiography; Hasidism; Judaism and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Tzaddiq

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Drexel, Katharine (Catherine Marie)

(1858–1955 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, founder, educator

Roman Catholic founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Katharine Drexel was born in 1858 in Philadelphia. She spent her life and the vast fortune she inherited caring

for Native Americans and African Americans. She died in 1955 at Cornwell Heights (now Bensalem), Pennsylvania, and was canonized in October 2000.

Katharine and her sister, Elizabeth, were the daughters of Francis and Hannah Drexel. Her father was a wealthy banker; her mother died one month after Katharine's birth. Two years later, Francis married Emma Bouvier, and together they had another daughter, Louise. In 1870, Francis bought a summer home in Torresdale, Pennsylvania, called Saint Michel. Emma opened a Sunday school for neighbors and employees, and Katharine was one of the teachers there. Father James O'Connor, later bishop of Omaha, Nebraska, was their pastor, a family friend, and a valued adviser to Katharine. During her extensive travels in the United States and Europe, Katharine was touched by the plight of the poor, particularly blacks and Native Americans, and she resolved to spend her life and inherited wealth improving their living conditions. Her father and stepmother had instilled in all three daughters a sense that good fortune was to be shared, not hoarded, and all three were devoted to care of the needy. In 1885, Katharine established a school for Native Americans in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Around this time, she began to discern a vocation to the religious life.

Pope Leo XIII suggested that Katharine herself become a missionary, and in 1889 she entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh with that in mind. In 1891, she left the novitiate to found her own order, called, at the time, Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and concern for victims of discrimination and poverty were the driving forces in her life. During her lifetime, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament opened approximately sixty schools, Xavier University in New Orleans being the most famous. It is the only predominantly black Catholic institution of higher learning in the United States.

In 1935, Katharine suffered a severe heart attack and thus was able to indulge her preference for a cloistered, contemplative life. For twenty years, until her death in 1955, she devoted her life to prayerful meditation and adoration of Christ in the eucharist. She is buried in the crypt of the Motherhouse Chapel, known as the Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel, in Bensalem, Pennsylvania. John Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia championed the cause of her canonization in 1964. In 1993, a child born with nerve deafness was cured after the family prayed to Katharine; the pope determined that the cure could not be attributed to natural causes and announced that Katharine would be canonized in October 2000.

—Kathryn E. Wildgen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Mission; Wealth and Poverty

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Drokmi (Tibetan: 'Brog mi Lo tsa ba Shakya ye shes)

(c. 992–c. 1072 C.E.)

Buddhist translator

Born c. 992, Drokmi was a translator during the early *phyi dar* (second diffusion) period of Buddhism into Tibet. He was a member of the Ban subclan of the 'Brog mi clan. He traveled to India and Nepal, learned Sanskrit, and then studied grammar, epistemology, writing, astrology, and tantra. In Tibet and Nepal, he translated nearly seventy tantric texts with south Asian Buddhist masters such as Gayadhara, Prajnendraruci (also known as Viravajra), the Ceylonese yogini Candramala, Ratnavajra, Ratnashrimitra, and possibly Prajnagupta. When he returned to Tibet, he stayed at the Mu gu lung cave complex with his students and his consort Lha lcam gcig, also known as Mdzes ldan 'od chags, a princess of Lha rtse.

Drokmi's two most important teachers were Gayadhara and Prajnendraruci, under whom he studied the Lam 'bras (Path and result) teachings and the *Kye rdor rgyud gsum* (The Hevajra trilogy), which includes the *Hevajra Tantra* and its explanatory tantras, the *Vajrapanjara* and the *Samputa*. For the Lam 'bras lineage, Drokmi's most important disciple was the shepherd Se ston kun rig (1029–1116), through whom both the Zha ma and Sa skya lineages of the Lam 'bras were transmitted. One of Se ston kun rig's students was Zhang ston Chos 'bar (1053–1135), who later taught the Lam 'bras to Sa chen Kun dga' snying po (1092–1158). After a long career of study and teaching, Drokmi spent the last twenty years of his life in solitary meditation. He passed away in around 1072. Little work has been done on this important figure.

—Cameron David Warner

See also: Action in the World; Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Drom Tonpa

(1005–1064 C.E.)

Buddhist master, Kadampa order founder

Drom Tonpa, born in 1005, became an important Tibetan Buddhist master and founder of the Kadampa order, which, with its emphasis on direct, practical application of the Buddha's teachings, has remained an inspiration for all schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Drom Tonpa is depicted as the foremost Tibetan disciple of the Indian saint Atisha (982–1054) and is said to have been instrumental in persuading Atisha to remain in Tibet and continue his extensive teaching activity.

Drom Tonpa is traditionally considered an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, the buddha of compassion. Before meeting Atisha, he had studied Buddhist doctrine with the Tibetan master Setsün, but eager to receive teachings directly from Indian masters he began to study Sanskrit. When, at the age of thirty-eight, he heard about Atisha's arrival in western Tibet, Drom Tonpa immediately felt the urge to meet him and received permission from Setsün to do so. Atisha accepted him as a disciple, having already received word of his arrival through a prophesy from the goddess Tara. When Atisha wanted to return to India, Drom Tonpa persuaded him to continue his spiritual work in Tibet.

After Atisha's death, Drom Tonpa retreated to Reting, where in 1056 he founded the Reting Monastery, which was to remain the center of the Kadampa order until the fifteenth century. The Kadampa order—often depicted as a reformist tradition—emphasized compassionate conduct based on monastic discipline. Although during the fifteenth century it was absorbed into the emerging Gelug order, its influence on the Tibetan monastic tradition can hardly be overestimated. It is said that all major Tibetan traditions emulated the monastic model provided by the Kadampa school. The Kadampa tradition is, moreover, well known for its use of stories and analogies to make complex religious issues accessible to a wider audience. This direct and experiential approach found classical expression in the teachings of Mind Training, which were to become a cherished element of all Tibetan traditions.

Drom Tonpa's most outstanding students—who, because of their close spiritual kinship, were known as “the three brothers”—were Puchunga (1031–1106), Jen Ngawa (1033–1103), and Potowa (1027–1105).

—Heidrun Koppf

See also: Atisha; Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Monasticism and Holy People

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Drukpa Kunley

(1455–1529 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, holy fool

The Tibetan Buddhist Drukpa Kunley (‘brug pa kun legs) was born in 1455 and trained as a monk while still a child. He quickly attained such high spiritual achievement, however, that he was able to abandon the niceties of conventional ethics. He became an itinerant mendicant and devoted the rest of his days to wine, women, and song. He is reported to have had 5,000 paramours, particularly favoring the young and beautiful. Often, he barely introduced himself to the young lady in question before he had her in bed. Drukpa Kunley is not remembered as a drunkard or a womanizer, however, but for his belief that his eccentric behavior drew attention to the fallacies of conventional reality and pointed toward the ultimate truth. Drukpa Kunley himself routinely stressed his sanctity and spiritual achievement. Anyone who saw Drukpa Kunley's behavior as reprehensible showed how he himself was ignorant of ultimate truth. Drukpa Kunley was said to be able to magically transport himself from place to place. He also pacified a number of demons, frightening them with his penis.

Drukpa Kunley was extremely critical of the religious establishment of his day. According to his “secret” biography, he is supposed to have met, and made fun of, the leaders of all the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. In a meeting with Tsongkapa (tsong kha pa) (1357–1419), the founder of the Gelug (dge lugs) school currently headed by the Dalai Lama, Drukpa Kunley was given a blessing cord, which he tied around his penis and showed to passersby in the marketplace. He also met with Tibet's preeminent scholar Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsan (sa skya pandi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan) (1182–1251), and the two of them played word games together. These meetings testify to Drukpa Kunley's importance to later Tibetans, but an examination of dates shows they could not possibly have happened.

In addition to mocking established religious authorities, Drukpa Kunley criticized folk traditions. In the Terma (gter ma) tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, figures “rediscover” teachings hidden by the legendary eighth-century saint Padmasambhava. Drukpa Kunley said of these practices: “The doctrines of those people are a great pretense” (Aris 1989, 86).

In Bhutan, Drukpa Kunley is an extremely popular saint, and images of his phallus decorate Bhutanese houses in order to ward off demons.

—Nathan S. Y. Hill

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Insanity; Morality and Holy People; Padmasambhava; Sakya Pandita; Sexuality and Holy People; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa

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Drummer of Niklashausen

See Behem, Hans

Duchesne, Rose Philippine

(1769–1852 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun

“The woman who prays always,” as she was called by the American Indians she educated, Rose Philippine Duchesne was born in Grenoble, France, in 1769 to a wealthy family. Against the wishes of her parents, she became a nun of the Visitation; however, her community was dispersed during the Terror. She and a few of her fellow religious tried unsuccessfully to revive their convent but eventually joined the Society of the Sacred Heart. Mother Madeleine Sophie Barat evidently recognized Philippine’s organizational skills. She sent her to Paris and then to America to establish foundations. Philippine died in 1852 at the age of eighty-three in Saint Charles, Missouri. She was canonized by John Paul II in 1988.

Philippine’s father was a prosperous attorney and merchant; her mother, Rose Périer, came from a prominent family that would eventually produce a president of France. Primarily because of the political situation, Philippine’s family was adamantly opposed to her desire for the life of a religious and had marriage in mind for her. But in 1788, Philippine joined the Visitation community where she had been educated. Like all other religious congregations, hers was dissolved in the political turmoil of the times, and the conventual buildings were expropriated by the state in 1792. Philippine returned to live with her family. She attempted to retain her life as a nun, devoting herself to charitable works; the family sheltered priests when the need arose. At the end of the Terror, Philippine acquired the conventual buildings and attempted to reorganize her community of Sainte-Marie-d’en-Haut. But with only four fellow nuns, she was unsuccessful, and the group made final vows in 1805 as members of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Sainte-Marie-d’en-Haut thus became the second house of the society.

In 1815, Mother Barat sent Philippine to Paris to found a house there, and then in 1818 Philippine and four sisters were sent to the Louisiana Territory to establish the Society of the Sacred Heart in the New World. The voyage to America left Philippine very ill, but after recuperating in New Orleans she undertook the arduous journey up the Mississippi River, landing in Saint Louis, Missouri. Her group established four foundations by 1826, the first of which, at Saint Charles, was the first free school west of the Mississippi.

At age seventy-one, Philippine set up a school for Indians at Sugar Creek, Kansas; however, her age and her inability to communicate adequately in either English or the Indian languages forced her to return to Saint Charles, where she lived out her remaining ten years in extreme personal poverty. Her devotion to the Indians and her love for the American West were unflagging, as is evidenced by her words offered by the Patron Saints Index: “I live now in solitude and am able to use my time reflecting on the past and preparing for death. I cannot put away the thought of the Indians and in my ambition I fly to the Rockies.” She died on November 18, 1852.

—Kathryn E. Wildgen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Mission

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Dunstan

(909–988 C.E.)

Christian abbot, archbishop, reformer

Abbot, confessor, and archbishop, Dunstan was a great Anglo-Saxon saint and an important influence in tenth-century England. His maintenance of an ascetic way of life while surrounded by the temptations of a royal court was a major component of his sanctity. He also had the puissant authority necessary for an effective bishop that both derived from and contributed to his holiness.

Dunstan was often depicted rebuking kings and warning them to modify their behavior to conform to Christian values. He built churches, acted as a judge, took care of the weak and vulnerable, established schools, and wrote a monastic rule. When he was made abbot of Glastonbury, he began to institute religious reforms that increased his reputation for sanctity and reflected his lifelong love of learning and dedication to living a godly life. He spent his youth with Irish scholars at Glastonbury, where he fell ill and nearly died. Here he began having visions that also contributed to his reputation for sanctity.

He was also revered as a music maker and maker of bells and organs. In an attempt to give him the dimension of sanctity that noble parentage conferred, his hagiographer claimed that Dunstan came from the highest nobility; however, most scholars believe this to be untrue. Nevertheless he had influential friends who sponsored his ecclesiastical career.

Eventually Dunstan came to the attention of King Eadmund (r. 939–946), who brought him into the royal household where his piety earned him both admiration and resentment. This pattern would recur throughout his life: He would live among the powerful of the world but reject worldly values and the lifestyle of the court to live piously; by doing so, he would make enemies who would have him turned out and then at some point thereafter he would be miraculously reinstated. On one such occasion, he was exiled from England by King Eadwig (r. 946–959) and spent time at a monastery in Ghent, where he led an exemplary life. Here he experienced the strict monastic reforms sweeping the continent. A new king, Edgar (r. 959–975), brought Dunstan home, where he eventually became archbishop and gained the sees of Worcester, London, and Canterbury.

Dunstan continued to initiate reforms that reflected his dedication to learning, celibacy, and consistent religious observance. These monastic values marked him out as holy, and his holiness brought donations of land and other resources to the church. He spent the last years before his death in 988 in retreat at Canterbury. His relics were preserved, and his cult lasted into the fifteenth century.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Dushun (Tu-shun)

(557–640 C.E.)

Buddhist patriarch

Dushun, also known as Fashun, was the putative first patriarch of the Huayan school of Chinese Buddhism. According to his earliest biography, Dushun's contemporaries admired him as a holy monk with thaumaturgic prowess and meditative expertise. Passing references in other sources suggest that he was a charismatic leader of a local cultic movement in northern China that centered on the Huayan Scripture (Avatamsaka Sutra; also known as the Flower Garland Scrip-

ture). He was recognized as a Huayan patriarch some two centuries after his death, at the time of Zongmi (780–841), the fifth and last Huayan patriarch. Such retroactive recognition had less to do with Dushun's actual role in the establishment of Huayan as a distinct tradition than with the fact that he was a teacher of Zhiyan (602–668), the second patriarch, and the reputed author of *Fajie guanmen* (Discernment of the realm of reality), a seminal text that formulates some of the basic principles of the Huayan doctrinal system.

Dushun was ordained as a Buddhist monk at the age of eighteen, after which he dedicated himself to the practice of meditation. As a result of his practice, he was able to perform miracles and cure the sick, which made him a popular religious figure. He was invited to lecture at the court of Taizong (r. 627–645), the second emperor of the Tang dynasty (618–907), who gave him the honorific appellation Royal Heart (Dixin). Following Dushun's death, popular lore identified him as an incarnation of Manjushri, the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) of wisdom.

Dushun's historical position in the evolution of Huayan philosophy is based on his reputed authorship of *Fajie guanmen*. The text explicates the modes of causal relationship between principle (*li*) and phenomena (*shi*), which are analyzed under the threefold general rubric of: (1) true emptiness, (2) mutual unobstruction of principle and phenomena, and (3) total pervasion and accommodation. Recent scholarship has raised serious reservations about Dushun's authorship of this text, but there is no categorical evidence for ascertaining its provenance. Later sources identify Dushun as the author of a dozen or so other texts, but virtually all of those attributions are spurious.

—Mario Poceski

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Manjushri; Miracles; Recognition; Zongmi

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Dymphna

(d. c. 600 C.E.)

Christian legendary martyr

The cult of the martyred seventh-century Irish princess Dymphna originated in the 1200s at her shrine, which became a pilgrimage site. She is considered an intercessor for people with psychological problems.

The vita of Dymphna, which Pierre de Cambrai composed before her canonization in 1233, incorporates popular narrative motifs and is a source for medieval literary texts on

the unjustly accused virtuous woman. According to this account, Dymphna was the daughter of an old king and his beautiful queen in the sixth century. With the guidance of the priest Gerebernus, mother and daughter practiced Christianity in secret. The queen died, and the girl's beauty awakened her non-Christian father's passions. When his counselors advised him to marry in order to have a son, he agreed, but he stipulated that the woman must resemble the dead queen.

Only Dymphna was suitable, and he proposed marriage to her. Horrified, she gained a delay but left Ireland with Gerebernus. They sailed to Antwerp and traveled inland, finding lodging near Geel, Belgium, where the king, later following in pursuit, then spent the night. As Dymphna's party had made payment with Irish coins, the innkeeper could direct the king to the fugitives' retreat. The king repeated his marriage proposal, but Dymphna rejected incest, pleading the law of Jesus. Enraged, he ordered his men to kill both the priest and the girl. One of them slew the priest, but only the insane father could behold Dymphna. The two were buried

with stones bearing their names, which permitted the identification of their remains six centuries later.

Dymphna's death is thought to have occurred in about 600. The relics of Dymphna and Gerebernus are venerated at St. Dymphna Church, built at the site of her execution. Geel is renowned for its psychiatric services for the mentally ill. Dymphna's feast day is May 15.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Morality and Holy People

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E

Ecstatic Cults

For the ancient Greeks, someone experiencing *ekstasis*, being “displaced from” his or her normal senses, could see or hear things invisible to others through a heightened perception of the divine. Such a person was said to be suffering from a form of *mania*, or madness, imposed upon human beings by divine forces; the ecstatic was *entheos*, that is, experiencing “a god within.” Possessed by a god, the person could perceive a reality beyond the normal limits of human senses.

Under special circumstances, someone susceptible to divine perception could serve as a conduit of divine vision to the human community. Usually it was a priestess who acted as a prophet in this way, such as the Pythia at Apollo’s shrine at Delphi, or the priestesses called “Doves” at Zeus’s sanctuary at Dodona in northwestern Greece. Recent examinations of the rocks underlying the temple at Delphi support the ancient tradition that the Pythia, at least, was assisted in her ecstasy by vapors rising from the earth at this spot. Usually there is no such influence, however. Another related kind of ecstasy was the madness that enabled ordinary people to become poets, an effect of being possessed by the nymphs.

To reach such a heightened level of divine contact usually required leaving the ordered space of the city for the wild. Mountains, in particular, were thought to be conducive to ecstasy. There the best-known examples of ecstatic worship took place, the group experiences of worshippers of Dionysos (Bacchos), powerfully exhibited in Euripides’ tragedy *Bacchae*. The other god often connected to ecstatic cult, called by the Greeks “Mother” (Meter), was also associated with mountains. The cults of these gods shared a heavily rhythmic music at home in the world of nature amid the “baying of wolves and spirited lions and the echoing hills and the wooded haunts” (*Homeric Hymn* 14). Among its powerful effects were the capacity to heal; the Mother’s cymbals roared out a “wise and healing singing” in a fragment of

the tragedian Diogenes. These cymbals and drums appear in paradisiacal scenes on Greek vases.

In the Greek view, however, divine influence was not necessarily for human good, and ecstatic worship was never fully at home in Greece. Dionysos and the Mother both came to Greece from outside, according to Greek accounts. Euripides’ play shows the potential for violence in this kind of cult. The *Bacchae*, female followers of Bacchos, their name reflecting identification with the god, tear apart living animals. One group cursed with extreme madness goes even further, wreaking destruction on a divine scale; a mother participates in destroying her own son. This is mythic exaggeration; to what extent the ecstasy in Euripides had a counterpart in reality is unknown. Scattered references attest that *Bacchae*, or “Maenads,” the “maddened” female followers of Dionysos, were sent out by some cities as part of their regular schedule of worship, but there is no evidence as to what these officially delegated Maenads experienced.

Ecstatic experience was more likely outside of civic rituals. Dionysos, the Mother, and other deities were also worshipped by individuals who elected to participate in mystery cults, which furnished men and women with opportunities for intense contact with the divine. Proclus, the head of Plato’s Academy in the fifth century, described the effects of such cults on some initiates: “They share the experience of the sacred symbols and step out of themselves (in *ekstasis*) and are completely at one with the gods and become *entheoi*, “divinely possessed” (*Commentary on Plato’s Republic* ii:108.22–24). This description is consistent with brief allusions to the experience of the mysteries in earlier authors. Nothing is said of revelation or gaining special insight; the experience itself suffices to effect the initiate’s profound transformation.

—Rebecca H. Sinos

See also: Gods on Earth; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Pythia

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Eddy, Mary Baker

(1821–1910 C.E.)

Christian healer, founder

The founder of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Mary Baker Eddy, was born in 1821 in Bow, New Hampshire. She had severe health problems all of her childhood, the exact cause of which remains undetermined. Owing to her health problems, she had to receive most of her education at home from her brother, but she did eventually go on to study at two different academies. She reported having many unique spiritual encounters throughout her childhood.

Mary Baker (her maiden name) married George Glover from Charleston, South Carolina, in 1843. At his home she first encountered slavery and was morally outraged by it. During a trip to Wilmington, North Carolina, her husband contracted yellow fever, dying less than a year after their marriage. Mary promptly set his slaves free, then returned to her father's home to give birth to a son, naming him after his father.

In 1849, Mary's mother died. Because of her own health problems, she had to leave her son in the care of a nurse. In 1853, she married Dr. Daniel Patterson, primarily in hopes of bringing her son back into her home. However, Dr. Patterson was not willing to allow it.

In 1862, her husband advised her to see Phineas Quimby, whom she considered to be a spiritual healer. She did receive relief from Quimby, and she was able to move in 1864 with her husband to Lynn, Massachusetts, where she led an active social life. Then, in 1866, she received serious internal injuries by falling on ice. While reading a scripture account of one of the healings of Christ, she experienced healing. Her reflection on this event led her to believe that disease is an illusion and that healing is offered through the science of Christianity, or, as she would name it, Christian Science. In the same year, her husband, whom she would finally divorce in 1873, deserted her.

From 1866 on, Mary began developing the doctrine of her new religion, even in opposition to her family. Family members refused to allow her to live with them unless she renounced her newfound beliefs. So she lived in poverty, teach-



Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the First Church of Christ, Scientist. (Library of Congress)

ing and healing people. Slowly she began to develop a following. In 1870, she finished a manuscript of the "Science of Man," which would be used as a chapter in the 1875 publication *Science and Health: With a Key to Scriptures*. She made constant revisions to the book until her death.

It was in 1877 that she married for the third and final time. Asa Gilbert Eddy had been sent to her for healing and embraced her doctrine. The two worked together to build up the new religion until he died in 1882. The state of Massachusetts allowed the first incorporation of the Church of Christ, Scientist, prior to his death, in 1879.

In 1892, Mary reorganized the church and renamed it the First Church of Christ, Scientist. She published many books and founded the *Christian Science Journal*, the *Christian Science Quarterly*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Throughout her career, she received a lot of criticism about her views on Jesus and her business acumen, but she managed to gain a large following and to accumulate a \$3 million fortune. Mary Baker Eddy died in 1910.

—Melissa L. Smeltzer

See also: Miracles; Suffering and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Edmund of East Anglia

(c. 841–c. 870 C.E.)

Christian king, martyr

Edmund of East Anglia, born around 841, represents an important group of saints: those kings venerated as Christian martyrs in medieval England. Royalty figured very prominently in early English spirituality, in part because the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons under the guidance of Pope Gregory the Great began with Aethelbert (r. 560–616), king of the ancient realm of Kent in southeastern England, and spread northward through the royal houses of the various kingdoms. Aethelbert himself seems never to have been regarded as a saint, but many members of his immediate family were, as were members of most of the royal houses of early England. The group of royal English saints was very large, but the number of saints designated “king and martyr” remained much smaller, and of this smaller group, only Edmund of East Anglia (r. 855–870), Oswald of Northumbria (r. 634–642), and Edwin of Deira (r. c. 616–c. 633) died in connection with a martial struggle against non-Christian or “pagan” enemies, the others having been murdered in internecine or dynastic struggles with fellow Christians.

Edmund stands out, however, even within this narrowly defined group of martyred warrior-kings. The most influential account of his death in about 870 portrays him as a willing martyr who died after renouncing violent resistance to his enemies. According to Abbo of Fleury, writing some seventy years after Edmund’s death, a band of Vikings ravaged East Anglia and slaughtered many of Edmund’s followers, but they offered to spare the king himself if he would accept their leader Hinguar’s overlordship. Edmund rejected the offer, choosing to imitate Christ and die as an unresisting martyr. Hinguar had the king beaten, tied to a tree, and then riddled with arrows. Edmund did not immediately succumb, so eventually Hinguar had him decapitated. In contrast to this account of Edmund’s willing death, Oswald and Edwin both died while resisting their enemies in battle.

The historicity of Edmund’s pacifistic martyrdom does stand open to question. The earliest extant accounts of his death indicate that he may have actually fallen in battle. Nonetheless, Edmund’s elevation to sainthood was virtually immediate, and unlike many other Anglo-Saxon saints, his veneration has persisted into the present era. Edmund remained an important figure of royal sainthood for successive generations, and his sanctity found reinforcement in the image of a king who imitated Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

—John Edward Damon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Edward the Confessor

(c. 1005–1066 C.E.)

Christian king

Edward the Confessor was the last Anglo-Saxon king from the legitimate royal line before the Norman Conquest in 1066. Born in about 1005, he was the son of King Aethelred II and Emma, the daughter of Richard, duke of Normandy. Emma was later married to the Danish conqueror and Aethelred’s successor, King Cnut. Upon his father’s death and Cnut’s ascendancy in 1016, Edward went into exile in Normandy. In 1041, he was invited back to England by his half brother Harthacnut (son of Emma and Cnut), by then on the throne, and recognized as his heir. Edward became king upon Harthacnut’s death in 1042.

Edward was a competent though unspectacular king. His reign from 1042 to 1066 was largely characterized by his fluctuating relationship with the powerful family of Earl Godwin, whose daughter Edith Edward married in 1045. The lack of issue from this marriage led others to seek the succession, and it is alleged that in this diplomatic maneuvering Edward first promised the throne to his cousin Duke William of Normandy, and then, on his deathbed, to his brother-in-law Harold Godwinson. According to his earliest (anonymous) biography, the *Vita Aedwardi Regis* (The life of King Edward), Edward’s later years were dominated by a passion for hunting. He was conventionally pious throughout his life, and in his final years he founded Westminster Abbey. Edward’s death in 1066 paved the way for William of Normandy to claim his putative right to the throne through conquest.

The move to have Edward canonized came in the 1130s when Osbert of Clare, a monk of Westminster Abbey, sought to promote a cult of the church’s founder and wrote the *Vita beati Eadwardi regis Anglorum* (Life of the blessed Edward,

king of the English). Edward's childlessness provided the opportunity to laud Edward as committed to a chaste life of virginity. He was also praised for the gift of prophecy, based on an obscure line in the first *vita*, and for putative miracles that occurred at his tomb. Pope Innocent II did not respond to Osbert's entreaty, but in 1161 Pope Alexander III canonized Edward in return for Henry II's support during a papal schism. Edward was solemnly translated on October 13, 1163, in a ceremony attended by Henry II and Thomas Becket. Aelred of Rievaulx composed the *Vita sancti Edwardi* (Life of St. Edward) for the occasion. Edward was a favorite of later English kings, in particular Henry III, who in the 1240s had Westminster rebuilt in Edward's honor, and Richard II, who had himself portrayed with the Confessor on the Wilton Diptych. Edward's feast day is January 5; translation October 13.

—*M. Cecilia Gaposchkin*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Edwards, Jonathan

(1703–1758 C.E.)

Protestant Christian theologian

Jonathan Edwards is perhaps the most important Christian religious figure in American history. Born in East Windsor, Connecticut, in 1703, he was the only son among eleven children of a pastor and a pastor's daughter. He grew up in a rigorously Puritan but happy environment, after which he attended Yale and studied divinity following a personal conversion experience. Edwards then became the colleague of his pastor grandfather in the ministry of Northampton, Massachusetts, at the same time beginning a highly fruitful life of theological writing. His writing and preaching made him the most important figure in the development of Chris-

tianity at this time and, in truth, the instigator of the "Great Awakening," the great revival of religion that swept the northern colonies of America in the years 1734–1742.

Edwards's first published sermon, preached in 1731, laid out the basic teaching of the Great Awakening: that the churches of New England had fallen into moral degeneracy because of their emphasis on self-sufficiency and the ability of individuals to work toward their own salvation. This teaching reached a new level in 1734 with a series of sermons on the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which sparked a major revival in Northampton, spreading to nearby colonies. Edwards taught that a great new age of God's work was beginning in America and became the pre-eminent evangelist of the movement. At least in part, his views were influenced by belief that the millennium was approaching; certainly he saw much in the revival to encourage belief that a major turning point in religious history was at hand. In 1737, Edwards published an account of the revival, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*, that had a very deep impact on both American and European religious thought. Especially important in long-term significance was Edwards's emphasis on a personal, "born again" experience of God as the mark of the only true Christian.

Despite Jonathan Edwards's international reputation, he had growing difficulties with his own congregation. This culminated in 1749 when he tried to exclude the "unsaved" (those without a born-again experience) from participation in the eucharist in his church. His pronouncement was greeted with outrage, and soon Edwards found himself dismissed from his position. Edwards then went on to serve as pastor of a church on the frontier, where he worked as a missionary among the Indians. It was during this period that, despite Indian wars and illness, he wrote his major treatise, *Freedom of Will*, and went on to engage in a theological debate on the doctrine of original sin (which he strongly defended). In 1758, Edwards was named president of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton), but he died of the side effects of a smallpox inoculation almost immediately after taking office.

The teaching of Jonathan Edwards shaped American Protestantism for more than a century, spreading a "Puritan" ethic widely beyond New England and paving the way for the great Protestant missionary spread of the next century.

—*Phyllis G. Jestice*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction

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Eight Immortals

Daoist holy people

The Eight Immortals (*Baxian*) have long been the most famous group of Daoist adepts in China. They are Zhongli Quan, Lü Dongbin, Li Tieguai, Zhang Guolao, Cao Guoqiu, Lan Caihe, Han Xiangzi, and He Xian'gu, all of whom are reputed to have lived during the Tang dynasty (618–906). Each of these revered individuals is said to have begun life as a human being and subsequently undergone a spiritual and physical transformation. Known for their characteristic eccentric behavior, unconventional appearance, and rejection of norms, they are thought to demonstrate a transcendent state of being, serving as role models for humanity in their cultivation of spiritual, moral, and physical perfection. They have long been considered divine saints and are looked to for intercession on behalf of mortals with the gods and the Dao.

Each of the Eight Immortals carries or wears a unique attribute and each has a unique story associated with his or her ascent to immortal sainthood. Zhongli Quan, who carries a fan, is generally considered the leader of the group. Some sources say he lived during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), making him the earliest of the group. Lü Dongbin is his most famous student. Lü is usually depicted as a handsome scholar who wears a sword or carries a fly whisk. In the story known as the *Huangliang meng* (Yellow-millet dream), Lü falls asleep at an inn while Zhongli prepares some millet for a meal. While asleep, Lü has a dream in which he experiences his entire official career, which ends in failure and disgrace. Upon awakening, Lü realizes that Zhongli is an enlightened teacher and becomes his student. Lü is also worshipped as the patron saint of merchants, pharmacists, ink-makers, and scholars.

Li Tieguai (Iron-crutch Li), who sometimes carries a gourd, was a promising Daoist adept whose body was cremated by his disciple while Li's ethereal body was visiting the deified Laozi. The story goes that Li said to his disciple, "My physical body will remain here; if my ethereal soul does not return in seven days, you may cremate my body." On the sixth day, the disciple's mother fell ill and he had to rush home, so he cremated the body. On the seventh day, Li's spirit returned, but his body was gone. He then possessed the corpse of a crippled man who had starved to death. As a result, Li is always depicted with his crutch.

Zhang Guolao, who carries a bamboo tube with two rods, was a talented magician already several hundred years old when Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) summoned him to the imperial court in the eighth century. Zhang was often accompanied by his magic mule, which could be folded up like a piece of paper and kept in a small bag when not being ridden by his master. Cao Guoqiu lived in the tenth century as an aristocrat, possibly the younger brother of the empress Cao, and became the patron saint of actors. He is often seen

holding castanets. Lan Caihe is depicted as a young man or woman holding percussive clappers or carrying a basket of flowers. Han Xiangzi, the nephew of the famous poet Han Yu, is usually depicted as a young boy holding a flute or "fish-drum." He Xian'gu, the only female of the group, is often depicted holding a basket of magic fungus called *lingzhi*, peaches, or a lotus flower.

The Eight Immortals appear to have emerged as a distinctive group during the Jin dynasty (1115–1234). Their stories all appear in the *Liexian zhuan* (Biographies of immortals) compiled during the Song dynasty (960–1279). Of the seventy immortals listed, these eight are considered representative, as they are old and young, male and female, and rich and honored as well as poor and humble. Today the Eight Immortals also appear in popular religion and folklore, viewed as symbols of good luck.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Lü Dongbin

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Eisai

(1141–1215 C.E.)

Buddhist monk

Eisai has been given credit for establishing Chan/Zen Buddhism in Japan in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, even though Zen was likely present in Japan during the seventh century and his efforts did not lay the foundation for the sect. He was born in 1141 into a family that practiced Shinto. His father entrusted his education to a Buddhist priest, and at age fourteen, Eisai began his career as a member of the Tendai sect at Mount Hiei.

Eisai traveled to China in 1168, where he studied Chan Buddhism according to the Linji lineage, and brought back texts from the Tiantai school. He went on a second trip to China in 1187, with intentions of traveling to India and its holy sites connected to Buddhist history, but ended up staying in China. There, he studied Chan and gained a seal of recognition for spiritual attainment and approval to teach it. In 1191, he returned to Japan and constructed the first Zen temple in the Rinzai lineage. In spite of vigorous opposition from the entrenched Tendai sect on Mount Hiei and its complex, ritually based tradition, he was able to establish a monastery called Kenninji in Kyoto and another in the city of

Kamakura. Due to the initial strong opposition to Zen, Eisai was forced to present it within a context that included Tendai and esoteric practices. To those that opposed its introduction to Japan, Eisai argued that Zen was not something new and innovative because it had been taught by the founder of the Tendai sect. To other objections to his identification of Zen with the true teaching of Buddhism, Eisai argued that Zen agreed with Tendai, it corresponded to its spirit, and it could contribute to its renewal. In addition to his adherence to Tendai throughout his life, Eisai also practiced Tantric forms of Buddhism for twenty years.

Ironically, Eisai called for a purified, independent Zen devoid of such extraneous and esoteric elements but, in seeming contradiction, taught a synthesis of Tendai thought, esotericism, and Zen. In his work entitled *Kozen gokoku ron* (Treatise on the spread of Zen for the protection of the nation), he argued that a sound moral life was necessary to assure the continuation of Buddhist doctrine.

Eisai has been given credit for the introduction of tea cultivation into Japan. When he returned from China, he brought seeds with him and began to cultivate tea gardens on temple grounds. He has also been credited with composing the first book advocating the health benefits of tea drinking. He praised it as a stimulant that was helpful for the practice of meditation and claimed that it had healing properties. Later in his career, his interest and practice of Zen meditation declined and his activities became more devoted to the practice of esoteric rites.

—Carl Olson

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Ethnopharmacology; Reform and Reaction

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Eligius (Eloi, Loy)

(c. 588–660 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Bishop Eligius of Noyon is best known as patron of goldsmiths and metalworkers. Born in Châtelet, Francia, in about 588, he trained in nearby Limoges under mintmaster Abbo, then worked as a goldsmith in Paris. Ordained a priest by Deodatus of LeMans, he was consecrated bishop of Noyon in 640 or 641. Eligius was highly esteemed throughout the Middle Ages. His sanctity is attested even by Geoffrey Chaucer, who makes his prioress's strongest oath "by St. Eloi" in the fourteenth-century *Canterbury Tales* (Farmer 1987, 140).

Commissioned to create a throne for King Clothar II of France, his skill and honesty led to the fabrication of two

royal chairs out of material allotted for one. The favor he earned from this led to his appointment as court goldsmith and mintmaster. At court, when asked to swear allegiance, he balked, reluctant to abuse a sacred practice for insufficient cause, and his conscience in the matter impressed the king. Known for simplicity and humility, Eligius was reported to have worn sackcloth under his fine, courtly garb. Palace duties required skillful diplomacy, and he was an intimate of others destined for sainthood in those days—Ouen, Sulpicius, Desiderius, Rusticius, and others credited with Christianizing Europe. Known as a powerful preacher, he railed against pre-Christian practices and superstitions, recommending they be replaced by prayer, the eucharist, and the sign of the cross. He was active in Tournai, Antwerp, Ghent, and Courtrai, and his many conversions won him a reputation as the "pioneer apostle" to Flanders.

Royal favors to Eligius continued under Dagobert, who granted his request for land at Solignac, where he founded a monastery that quickly attracted 150 monks. The monastery became known for its good discipline. Several other monastery and church foundations were also credited to him. Known for piety, prayer, wisdom, honesty, alms, and charity, Eligius showed a particular interest in freeing slaves and securing better treatment for them, especially in cooperation with Queen Bathildis—who had been abducted as a child in England herself. Those liberated became his disciples and contributed to his evangelization campaign.

Eligius's penchant for seeking martyrs' relics helped to promote local saints' cults and resulted in the dispersal of relics to numerous churches. He is credited with creating numerous lavish shrines (usually spuriously), precious liturgical items, and royal goods (though only some coins are extant bearing his signature). He is generally depicted at work as a goldsmith, as a farrier, or performing some other type of metalwork. The horseshoe and tongs are his emblems. His cult was widespread in continental Europe and England.

—Rita W. Tekippe

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Elijah (Christianity)

(9th cent. B.C.E.)

Hebrew prophet, ascetic, dissident recognized in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Elijah was a militantly monotheistic prophet of the ninth century B.C.E. who defended the exclusive worship of the Hebrew God against the syncretistic practices of King Ahab and



Elisha sees Elijah whirled to heaven in a fiery chariot. Painting by Henry Coller, 1953. (Art Directors)

his wife Jezebel. Elijah's earthly career is recounted toward the end of 1 Kings (chapters 17 ff.) and at the beginning of 2 Kings (chapters 1 and 2) of the Hebrew Bible.

Elijah withdrew from society to achieve a purer experience of the divine, a vantage point from which he saw clearly, and critiqued, the evils of his time. He is greatly venerated in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, where he serves as a model for a wide variety of spiritual virtues and obligations. Elijah's political dissent justified later Jewish political insurgency, especially against the Romans. It also inspired Christian churchmen, such as Athanasius (c. 300–373), Thomas Becket (c. 1120–1170), and Thomas Müntzer (c. 1490–1525), to resist tyranny. Elijah's vehement defense of monotheism, which protects the central plank of God's covenant with Israel, also made Elijah the paradigm of the devout Muslim (Qur'an, Surah 36:125). Elijah's massacre of Baal's prophets justifies in all three traditions the extermination of heretics and infidels. Moreover, Elijah's vision of God as a "still small voice" shaped later monastic practices, particularly the Christian order of the Carmelites. In Jewish and Islamic folklore, Elijah guides scholars and mystics. Elijah's asceticism, that is, his control over himself, also gave him control over nature. He was fed miraculously by ravens in the desert; he predicted drought and could also call for rain.

Elijah's bodily ascension into heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by a fiery chariot (2 Kings 2:11) gives him a central place in eschatological speculation. The belief that he would return to announce the Day of the Lord was inspired by Malachi 3:1 and 4:5–6 (also Eccles. 48:6–12). The Christian gospels explicitly identify John the Baptist with Elijah (Matt. 11:10, 14 and 17:10–13; Mark 1:2 and 9:10–12; Luke 1:16–17, 76 and 7:27). Elijah also appeared with Moses at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:3, Mark 9:4). Elijah's despair in the desert, his resurrection of a widow's son, and his ascension are also thought to prefigure the career of Jesus. Elijah is often identified by Christians as one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11.

The cup of Elijah, placed in the center of the Seder table at Passover, instantiates the prophet's central significance, equivalent to that of Moses, in Judaism. The cup retains many of the political overtones of Elijah's career and celebrates his guardianship of the covenant. At the same time, and as all-powerful symbols, the cup blends past, present, and future, linking the historical accomplishments of the prophet with the present faith of those awaiting the messiah and with belief in Elijah's role in the coming deliverance.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Athanasius; Elijah (Judaism); Extremists as Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Prophets; Thomas Becket

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Elijah (Judaism)

(9th cent. B.C.E.)

Hebrew prophet

Elijah was a biblical prophet active during the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah in the ninth century B.C.E. The highlight of his prophetic activity was his struggle against the worship of Baal, culminating in the confrontation on Mt. Carmel with the prophets of Baal where a heavenly fire came down to signify acceptance of his sacrifice and the rejection of theirs (1 Kings 18). He was also concerned with the poor, bringing back to life the son of the widow who had offered him water (1 Kings 17) and redressing social injustice (1 Kings 21). Elijah did not die but ascended to heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by a fiery chariot drawn by fiery horses. His mantle fell to the ground and his disciple, Elisha, put it on and performed miracles with it (2 Kings 2).

Elijah is a popular figure in rabbinic (Talmudic and Midrashic) literature. His immortality is presupposed, and there are many reports of Talmudic rabbis who met Elijah in a wide variety of places and circumstances. Elijah is also concerned with the study of Torah. He explains difficulties to scholars, and a number of rabbinic discussions end with the term *teku*, an acronym for "The Tishbyite (Elijah) will resolve the questions and difficulties" (when he returns along with the messiah). In the rabbinic period and throughout Jewish history, a visit from Elijah was seen as a sign of grace and spiritual attainment. This was known as *giluy Eliyahu*, "the revelation of Elijah." There are also traditions that Elijah will come to announce the advent of the messianic age. Recent scholarship has shown that this belief originated in the New Testament traditions about John the Baptist.

Elijah plays a central role in the Jewish mystical tradition. He is the source of mystical teachings and the imprimatur for Jewish mystics. Virtually all major figures in the medieval kabbalistic schools claimed visitations from Elijah as the source of validation for their mystical teachings. The *Zohar* (Book of splendor), the central text of medieval Jewish mysticism, attributed to the second-century Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai, claimed that the source of its mystical teachings was

Elijah, who reportedly taught Rabbi Simeon while he was in hiding from the Romans for twelve years. (Modern scholarship attributes the authorship of the *Zohar* to Rabbi Moses de Leon in late thirteenth-century Spain.) In sixteenth-century Safed in Palestine (now northern Israel), the revolutionary teachings of Rabbi Isaac ben Solomon Luria (1534–1572) were validated by the claim of his disciples that they had been transmitted to Luria by Elijah himself. Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna (1720–1797), rejected the validity of Luria's teachings on the basis that he did not accept the truth of Elijah's visitation to him.

In Jewish folklore, Elijah is the protector of the Jewish people and the guarantor of the covenant between God and Israel. At the Passover Seder, a fifth cup of wine, called the cup of Elijah, is set aside for Elijah and the door is opened to invite him to join the meal. At every circumcision, a special chair is designated for Elijah and he is invited to attend the ceremony.

—*Morris M. Faierstein*

See also: Elijah (Christianity); Extremists as Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Simeon ben Yohai

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Elissa
See **Dido**

Elizabeth of Hungary (Elizabeth of Thuringia)
(1207–1231 C.E.)

Christian ruler, ascetic

Elizabeth of Hungary is one of the more intriguing and significant saints of the thirteenth century. Born in 1207 as the daughter of King Andreas II of Hungary and his consort Gertrude of Andachs, Elizabeth spent most of her life in Thuringia (now in Germany), where she arrived at the age of seven as the bride of Ludwig, the son and heir of the Landgrave of Thuringia. Both of her vitae (by Caesarius of Heisterbach and Dietrich von Apolda) present Elizabeth as a pious child with a special gift of converting childhood games into acts of Christian devotion. As an adult, Elizabeth successfully balanced her devotional practices with the obligations imposed on her, practicing Franciscan piety at the opulent and refined Thuringian court.

Elizabeth's marriage to Landgrave Ludwig in 1221 and the tender relationship between husband and wife, acknowledged by both hagiographers, is perhaps the most unorthodox feature of this saint's life. Caesarius and Dietrich relate a



Elizabeth of Hungary, carrying bread behind her back to depict her secret almsgiving, and with cloak full of roses. (Art Directors)

touching episode that illustrates Ludwig's acceptance of his wife's exceptional piety. Elizabeth had a habit of flagellating herself and praying at night. In order that her husband might rest while she prayed, Elizabeth ordered her maidservant to wake her up by tickling her feet. Once, in the dark of the night, the servant mistakenly tickled Ludwig's feet. Without a word of reproach, he got up and joined his wife in prayer. In turn, Elizabeth showed great concern for her husband. She had a custom of wearing a widow's dress as a sign of humility whenever her husband went away from the court. However, when the news of his return reached her, she would change into her best attire, so that her husband would not fall into the sin of desiring any other woman outside of the marriage bond through her fault.

When Ludwig died on a crusade in 1227, Elizabeth was banished from her land. She went to Marburg with her three children, where she started to build a hospital for the poor. During this period, she also became subject to extremely harsh discipline imposed on her by her confessor, Conrad of Marburg, who was assigned to her by Pope Gregory IX. Elizabeth spent her last years taking care of the sick

at the hospital and leading a life of extreme poverty. She died in Marburg in 1231.

At her death, Elizabeth's cult became so popular that her reputation as a saint quickly matched the renown of Sts. Margaret, Nicholas, and Martin. The swiftness of the process for her canonization is second only to that of St. Francis. Elizabeth was canonized in 1235, only four years after her death. A great testament to her popularity is the number of posthumous miracles recognized as authentic by the committee of her canonization. They included 129 miracles validated in the process documents. A third-order Franciscan herself, Elizabeth had a Dominican confessor and was later claimed as a patron saint by the Cistercian order (1236), the Dominicans (1244), and the Teutonic Knights.

A favorite of Pope Gregory IX even during her lifetime, Elizabeth was also extremely important for the imperial cause of Frederick II, who was personally present at her exhumation in 1236 and who later donated a reliquary for her head. A rich tradition of vernacular texts dedicated to St. Elizabeth speaks to the wide popularity of the saint throughout the Middle Ages. A large number of popular vernacular songs were composed about St. Elizabeth, and thirteenth-century French poet Rutebeuf wrote a verse account of her life.

—Margarita D. Yanson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Laity; Rulers as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Elizabeth of Schönau

(1129–1164 C.E.)

Christian nun, mystic

Little is known of Elizabeth of Schönau's early life. Born in 1129, she had at least one sister and two brothers—Ruotgar, prior of the Praemonstratensian house in Pöhlde, and Ekbert, who became abbot of Schönau (a double monastery) in 1167. Elizabeth joined the monastery at Schönau, Germany, at age twelve and tendered her vows at eighteen. When she was twenty-three, she suffered from a serious illness, after

which she began receiving visions. First, an angel appeared to her and warned of an impending disaster. Though Elizabeth initially kept the vision to herself, the angel reappeared and demanded that she reveal his words. Suitably chastised, Elizabeth told the abbot, Hildelin, about the visions. Hildelin suggested that she pray for a sign; meanwhile, he embarked on a penitential campaign. At first, people were moved by his sermons.

Unfortunately, when her predictions failed, Elizabeth's reputation and Hildelin's life were jeopardized. However, Hildelin remained closely involved with her mystical experiences, saying masses for her requests and administering sacraments during her ecstasies. Ekbert, too, influenced her greatly. It was he who insisted that Elizabeth record her experiences in detail. Four major works were the result: *Liber Visionum Primus, Secundus, and Tertius* (Book of visions 1, 2, and 3), a chronological account of her visions, with a preface by Ekbert; *Revelatio de Sacro Exercitu Virginum Coloniensium* (Revelation concerning the sacred band of virgins of Cologne), a group of visions about St. Ursula and the 11,000 virgins; *Liber Viarum Dei* (Book of the ways of God), meditations written in the style of *Scivias* by her contemporary Hildegard of Bingen; and *Visio de Resurrectione Beate Virginis* (Vision regarding the resurrection of the blessed Virgin), a collection of revelations about the Virgin Mary's assumption into heaven. Elizabeth asserted that when she was enraptured, her body fell away while her soul journeyed to heaven. After body and soul reunited, she always experienced great pain.

At Ekbert's urging, Elizabeth began to see herself as a prophet. Though some people, including Hildegard, grew suspicious of Elizabeth's veracity, she was appointed superior of the Schönau convent in 1157. She was also a zealous enemy of heretics, a vigorous proponent of the antipope Victor IV (pope 1159–1164), and a stern voice against ecclesiastical abuses. Many of her contemporaries believed her to be a sincerely pious woman, and her *Revelatio* was extremely popular. After her death in 1164, Ekbert wrote a small commentary on her life, *De obitu Elisabeth*. Though she was never formally canonized, Pope Gregory XIII added her to the Roman Martyrology in 1584. Her feast is celebrated June 18.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Hildegard of Bingen; Mysticism and Holy People; Ursula

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Eloi

See **Eligius**

Emeric (Imre)

(c. 1000–1031 C.E.)

Christian prince

The only son of King Stephen I of Hungary to reach adulthood, Emeric was regarded as a paragon of youthful virtue and chastity. He died in a hunting accident in 1031, however, and thus never ascended the throne (King Stephen died in 1038). Emeric was canonized, along with his father, in 1083; his feast days are September 2 (death) and November 5 (elevation).

Emeric was born in either 1000 or 1007 as the son of Hungary's first Christian king, Stephen, and his Bavarian wife, Gisela. He got his name from his maternal grandfather, Emperor Henry II (Henricus-Emericus-Imre). What little we know of his life we can infer from his legend, written by an unknown Benedictine monk in the early twelfth century. As a prince and heir to the throne, he received a good education, from, among others, the Venetian Benedictine monk Gerard of Csanád. It is widely believed that King Stephen wrote his *Libellus de institutione morum* (Institutions) for Emeric. Although Emeric was married, according to his legend he led a chaste life, and later he became a model of virginity and chastity.

Emeric was buried at the royal basilica of Székesfehérvár, where numerous miracles were recorded at his tomb. He was often depicted in Hungarian medieval art, usually as one of the three holy kings, with Stephen and Ladislas, and occasionally in a narrative cycle (Hungarian Angevin Legendary). During the eighteenth-century Catholic revival in Hungary, his cult was revived, but very few popular beliefs are associated with his person or feast day.

—Zsombor Jékely

See also: Child Prodigies; Christianity and Holy People; Gerard of Csanád; Ladislas; Rulers as Holy People; Stephen of Hungary

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Emmeram of Regensburg

(d. c. 700 C.E.)

Christian monk, missionary

Emmeram of Regensburg was an itinerant monk and member of the second wave of Frankish missionaries who traveled eastward in the seventh century. A native of Poitiers, he stopped in Bavaria while traveling to Pannonia, where the Avars continued to resist conversion to Christianity. The monk Arbeo of Freising wrote the saint's vita two generations after his death. According to this work, Emmeram decided to remain in Regensburg when offered the position of bishop by the Bavarian duke Theodo IV. Emmeram's office in Regensburg and years of service cannot be verified through contemporary historical records. The community tradition of St. Emmeram's monastery in Regensburg holds 649 as the year of his arrival in Regensburg and 651 as the year of his death. More recent research places the duration and time of Emmeram's activity in Bavaria to a ten-year span between the years 660 and 700.

Emmeram became a martyr through the actions of Lantpert, the son of Duke Theodo. When Theodo's daughter Ota was discovered to be pregnant, Emmeram shielded the true father, a nobleman in Theodo's court, by claiming to have fathered the child himself. He then left Regensburg to travel on to Rome. Lantpert followed Emmeram, and in Kleinhelfendorf he captured him, tied him to a ladder, and cut off every bodily appendage. According to legend, through a miracle the site of Emmeram's death remained springlike and free of snow in winter. After forty days, Emmeram's body was returned to Regensburg via the Danube—a passage against the current that was made effortless by miraculous intervention—and he was buried in the cemetery of St. George's Church. Emmeram is often represented in art with his attribute, the ladder. He was venerated both as a local Regensburg saint and in the diocese of Freising, and he became the patron saint of the important monastic foundation St. Emmeram's of Regensburg.

—Kristen M. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Empedocles

(5th cent. B.C.E.)

Greek philosopher

Empedocles was a Greek philosopher and native of Sicily best known for his contributions to natural philosophy, but he is also significant in the history of healing and in the development of Pythagorean religious philosophy. Fragments of his writings, including “On Nature” and a religious and magical book called “Purifications,” survive.

Empedocles was born in Acragas, a Greek colony, early in the fifth century B.C.E. Sicily was then dotted with Greek colonies. Greek cities were also common in southern Italy. These included Croton, where a generation earlier Pythagoras had founded his school, and Elea, where Parmenides had written at about the same time. Empedocles was attentive to both. He followed Parmenides on many philosophical points, and in writing hexameter verse. With Pythagoras he shared interests spanning the theoretical, practical, and spiritual. Reportedly brilliant in rhetoric, he perhaps played political roles. But his self-announced roles as healer and teacher of esoteric religious doctrines, including reincarnation and the identification of human beings as fallen divinities seeking restoration, pose the hardest problems for understanding him.

There is no doubt that he introduced into Greek philosophy the doctrine of what Aristotle called the “four elements”: earth, air, fire, and water. His cosmology also incorporated two dynamic principles, love and strife. The problem is that Aristotle, and conventional scholarly opinion ever since, regarded him as a scientific physicist in Aristotle’s sense, indeed a materialist. This has made it difficult to grasp the unity of his work “On Nature” with the religious themes of “Purifications.”

Peter Kingsley (1995) has made major contributions to resolving this problem, pointing out that Empedocles introduced “roots” in mythical, not scientific, terms: the names of four gods—Zeus, Hera, Aidoneus, and Nestis. Since antiquity it has been unclear which god goes with fire. By showing how the volcanic geology of Sicily led Empedocles to associate fire with Aidoneus (Hades) and the underworld, Kingsley resolved this ancient uncertainty and went on to restore Empedocles to the alchemical, astrological, magical, and hermetic traditions to which his teachings contributed.

—Peter Manchester

See also: Greek Philosophers; Greek Prophets; Miracles; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Scholars as Holy People

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En no Ozunu

(late 7th–early 8th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist/syncretic cult founder

En no Ozunu is revered in Japan as the founder of Shugendō, a cult of mountain worship dating from the seventh and eighth centuries that continues to flourish. His life is shrouded in legend to the extent that some even question his historicity. Popularly known as En no Gyōja (En the Ascetic) or En no Ubasoku (En the Buddhist lay believer), according to tradition he was born in the province of Yamato, then the site of Japan’s capital, and as a young man engaged in religious austerities at various holy mountains. At the age of thirty-two, he entered a cave on Mt. Katsuragi, a sacred mountain near his birthplace. There he remained for thirty years, mastering magical practices associated with Chinese Yin-Yang teachings and Tantric Buddhism. He was particularly noted for his ability to make demons do his will. His name appears only once in a reliable source, which states that in 699 he was exiled when one of his disciples, jealous of his skills, falsely accused him of casting evil spells to create havoc in the world. He is said to have been pardoned in 701 at the age of sixty-eight. Sources offer various accounts of his death, including that he ascended to heaven from a holy mountain or that he crossed the sea to China.

Although facts concerning En are few, stories are numerous. They began appearing in collections of tales at the beginning of the ninth century. Despite the fantastic nature of these stories, Japanese treated him as a historical figure. In 1322, when a Zen monk compiled the first comprehensive history of Japanese Buddhism, he included a biography of En along with those of other key Buddhists. An imperial edict of 1799 named him “The Great Bodhisattva Shinpen” (lit. “Divine Transformation”). Modern scholars are more critical and see him, or at least stories about him, as representing an early stage in Japan’s assimilation of religious traditions from continental Asia. Indigenous Japanese religion, the ancestor of modern Shinto, probably included shamanism and reverence for holy mountains. To this were added magical practices from Chinese and Indian religions. The result was Shugendō, a cult practiced by *yamabushi*, meaning something like “men who dwell in the mountains,” mendicants known for practicing extreme austerities on holy mountains and thereby acquiring magical powers in the manner of En.

—Robert Borgen

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Nature

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Engelbert of Cologne

(c. 1185–1225 C.E.)

Christian bishop, political leader

Engelbert, archbishop of Cologne, was a powerful civic leader, second only to the emperor, and the victim of a grisly murder in 1225. Though preoccupied by secular pursuits during his life, his violent end redeemed all his previous failings and enabled him to be considered a martyr by many, though he was never officially canonized.

Engelbert, born around 1185, had a rambunctious youth and was even briefly excommunicated. Caesarius of Heisterbach, his biographer, describes Engelbert as a young man absorbed in “the glories of worldly things.” Yet at age thirty, Engelbert was anointed archbishop of Cologne, and in this position he discovered his natural ability for civic reform. He orchestrated peace both on a large scale, holding synods to pacify feuding clerical orders, and on an individual scale, aiding paupers in the street. Emperor Frederick II (r. 1215–1250) made him regent of the empire and guardian to his son Henry in 1220 during the Sicilian campaign.

Engelbert’s zeal, however, also earned him enemies. Among these was Count Frederick of Isenberg, whom Engelbert rebuked for stealing from the nuns of Essen. Frederick together with other robber knights chastised by Engelbert’s reforms organized a plot to kill the archbishop. Feigning reconciliation, Frederick accompanied Engelbert on a trip on November 7, 1225, and ambushed him with a posse near the town of Gevelsberg. Engelbert was repeatedly stabbed so that “not a single part of his body remained free of wounds” (Caesarius of Heisterbach 1955).

It was the savageness of this attack and the following miracles that inspired recognition of Engelbert’s holiness, since he lacked the customary piety or asceticism of a saint. Engelbert was not even particularly devout. Caesarius admits this and asserts that his murder made him holy. He argues that Engelbert attained a second baptism of blood that washed clean any sins he accrued after his initial baptism of water. Since Engelbert made a full confession prior to his death, he was a pure, Christlike sacrifice. Furthermore, Caesarius points to prolific miraculous visions and cures that happened after the murder. He calls these “signals of sanctity,” claiming that it was precisely because Engelbert’s mortal life was flawed that the miracles after his death were so numerous. Caesarius’s struggle in his biography, written a year after Engelbert’s death, suggests that many at the time doubted Engelbert’s saintly status.

Engelbert’s cult peaked four centuries later during the Catholic Reformation, when he was presented as a defender of the church. During this time, his feast was publicly celebrated and a new shrine was built for his relics, which remains in the treasury of Cologne.

—Annika Elisabeth Fisher

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People

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England and Wales, Forty Martyrs of

(16th–17th cent. C.E.)

Roman Catholic martyrs

The Forty Martyrs were chosen and canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1970 to represent perhaps as many as 300 men and women executed in England and Wales from 1535 to 1679 for their refusal to recognize the English ruler as supreme head of the church. Ten Jesuits, three Benedictines, three Carthusians, two Franciscans, one Augustinian, one Brigittine, and thirteen secular priests, together with four men and three women of the laity, make up the group pursued, prosecuted, and executed for allegiance to their faith.

Faith, and therefore religion, became a matter of politics when Henry VIII, in a failed attempt to obtain papal dispensation to divorce his first wife, declared himself supreme head of the Anglican Church (1532) in place of the pope in Rome. Those who refused to acknowledge Henry and the Protestant rulers who followed him to the English throne paid with their lives for the next nearly 150 years. This was further complicated by that fact that England’s official faith changed from Protestant to Catholic and back again with each successive ruler. The forty Catholic martyrs represent all of those who died during this time for matters of conscience. In this, the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges and reflects the practice common among these martyrs who, at the time of their execution, prayed for all faithful men and women, even their executioners.

These forty, some of whom were canonized earlier in their own right, are the best known among those who died, and while their stories are varied, most met their death by

hanging. Nearly all of the priests were also drawn and quartered, most before they were dead. The majority were tortured before their execution in an attempt to force them to reveal the names of others who practiced as they did as well as of those who assisted in hiding priests from the authorities. Arrests often followed betrayal as to the location of the priests' hiding places. One of the martyrs, Nicholas Owen, a Jesuit lay brother killed in 1606, is credited with devising "priests' holes," the spaces behind walls or under staircases and floors where the priests secreted themselves and their mass kits whenever the houses were searched.

Robert Southwell, born in Horsham St. Faith in Norfolk and educated as a Jesuit in Rome, is one such priest who, betrayed by a woman under torture, was discovered in a priest hole. Southwell, distantly related to the nineteenth-century poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, is remembered for conducting his priestly duties during this dangerous time, for his martyrdom, and for his poetry. Upon returning to England at his own request to tend to the Catholic faithful, the Arundel family offered the young priest a place in their London home and he became the confessor to Anne, countess of Arundel, whose husband was imprisoned in the Tower of London for practicing Catholicism. Southwell traveled from London to other area Catholic homes for secret meetings and masses whenever he was called to do so. There were numerous close calls when he escaped the sovereign's agents, but when they did finally arrest him, he spent three years in prison. It was during these years that he wrote his poetry, which reflects his ardent piety. Southwell endured torture many times during his imprisonment and when called before the court defended himself eloquently, though not successfully. He was condemned as a traitor. Nevertheless, he retained the respect of many Catholics and Protestants alike and so the government hoped to keep the date of execution secret. However, a large crowd gathered at Tyburn on March 5, 1595, and, in an unusual turn of events, Southwell was not beheaded, drawn, and quartered until after he was dead. A gentleman in the crowd is said to have dissuaded the executioners from cutting the priest down before he died. Robert Southwell was canonized in 1929 and then again with the Forty Martyrs. His feast day was formerly February 21.

Margaret Clitherow (1556–1586), daughter of the mayor of York, was one of the three laywomen executed for crimes against the crown. Clitherow, a wife and mother, helped her husband to run a butcher shop in the area known even today as the York Shambles. Like so many other practicing Catholics, Clitherow employed deceit in order to attend religious meetings secretly, attend mass, and take part in communion. In her case, she claimed to be a midwife often called to attend patients during the night. She was arrested, fined, and released several times before her final imprisonment for housing Catholic gatherings and for harboring a priest. Fear-

ing that they would call her children to testify against her, she refused to plead. The punishment for this refusal was especially cruel. On March 25, 1586, the court sentenced Clitherow to be pressed to death under the weight of a large stone.

When Pope Paul VI recognized the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales as saints, those formerly canonized retained their previous feast days but are also remembered along with the others on October 25.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Reform and Reaction

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Enlightenment

See **Awakening and Conversion**

E'no

See **Huineng**

Enoch

See **Idris**

Eon

See **Huiyuan**

Ephrem the Syrian (Ephraim)

(c. 306–373 C.E.)

Christian scholar, hymn writer, doctor of the church

Ephrem the Syrian was born in approximately 306 in Nisibis (modern northeastern Iraq), a prosperous city and a significant political center for the Middle Eastern holdings of the Roman Empire. The Christians of Nisibis had suffered sorely from persecution at the hands of the Roman emperor Diocletian (r. 284–305), but during Ephrem's childhood the Christian community began slowly to recover. There is

ample suggestion that Ephrem became a youthful catechumen as Christianity assumed a more secure footing after Diocletian's death. The installation in 309 of Jacob as bishop of Nisibis (d. c. 338) implied a more proximate link to Rome, and thus to the more prominent centers of church governance, than had existed before; Jacob was a signatory among the "318" at the Council of Nicea in 325. Upon his return from the council, Bishop Jacob appointed Ephrem as the official exegete of Nisibis, a position that required a sure understanding of ecclesiastical and theological matters.

It was at that time, in his appointed position, that Ephrem began his prolific composition of hymns and theological works. Both his verse and prose works were grounded in a stern Christian orthodoxy, a robust disdain for Christian heresies, and an unfortunately scathing rejection of Judaism. He wrote also on the benefits of the ascetical life and of Christian virginity. However, it was not only religious concerns that absorbed his attention, but social and political troubles as well: Ephrem's *Carmina Nisibena* (CN, Songs of Nisibis) took frequent notice of the seemingly endless conflict between the Roman and Persian empires. The Persian army besieged Nisibis in 338, 346, and 350: The siege of 350 was of particular fascination to Ephrem. Shapur II (r. 309–379) had dammed the local river, Mygdonius, with the help of a platoon of elephants, in order to flood the city and thereby seize control of it. Nisibis did not fall, and Ephrem was inspired to compose a hymn (CN 11) in which Nisibis speaks, comparing herself to Noah's ark. Over the next decade, Ephrem retained his position as hymnodist and leading teacher of Christian orthodoxy in Nisibis. He also founded choirs of women, to whom he gave personal instruction.

Emperor Jovian (r. 363–364) yielded Nisibis, without its inhabitants, to the Persian Empire, and Shapur allowed the Christian population to leave the city. Ephrem then made his way about 100 miles west to Edessa. Edessa was the ostensible site of the relics of Thomas the Apostle, yet heterodoxy was prominent. Ephrem determined to counter heresy in Edessa, as he had in Nisibis, in verse. He was especially keen to refute the teachings of Arianism, which enjoyed a particularly vigorous following. Moreover, Ephrem most likely put into final version the significant portion of the corpus of his hymns at Edessa. It is possible that Ephrem was ordained as a deacon there as well. He died in June 373, tending to victims of the plague in the city. Although he was buried without ceremony, the monastery of St. Sergius (Armenian) in Edessa claims possession of his remains.

Although Ephrem wrote exclusively in Syriac, his works were translated widely, including into Greek, Armenian, Arabic, Ethiopian, Old Church Slavonic, and Latin. Although many of his exegetical works have been lost, his readings of Genesis and part of Exodus survive. His poetical works may

be divided between homiletic writings (*memre*) and religious hymns (*madrashé*), composed expressly to be chanted, not read. Later editors of St. Ephrem's corpus arranged most of the hymns into functional sets, or "cycles," according to common themes. Included among the more popularized cycles are *Hymns on the Nativity*, *Hymns on Paradise*, and *Hymns on Virginity and on the Symbols of the Lord*.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Eric IX Jedvardsson of Sweden

(c. 1120–1160 C.E.)

Christian king

Verifiable historical facts about the career of Eric IX Jedvardsson of Sweden are scarce. Born in about 1120, he was elected king of Sweden in the late 1150s. In 1160, however, the Danish prince Magnus Henriksson, a rival for the Swedish throne, killed Eric in battle, or possibly assassinated him.

The facts about Eric are perhaps less important than the idealized picture of his character and policies that the church promoted as a model for later kings. His biography, written in the late thirteenth century, defined Eric as the perfect Christian king. Within his kingdom, Eric gave just judgments and protected the poor. He supported the mission of the church, listening to clerical advice, building sanctuaries, and outlawing the lingering traces of pre-Christian religion. King and churchmen, in this way, allied to counter strongly centripetal tendencies among the Swedish nobles, whose resistance often took the form of vehement reaction against Christianity. Eric defended the borders of his kingdom by launching an expedition against the Finns, whose ships were harrying Sweden's coastline. He then sponsored a mission to convert the Finns to Christianity.

Kings of this period were often considered saints, especially those like Eric who cooperated with the church to promote internal peace and to spread Christianity. In legend, Eric's centralizing policies became spiritual virtue, his expedition to Finland a crusade, and his violent death a martyrdom.

Eric's son Cnut actively promoted his father's cult, largely as a hedge against rivals for the throne. Kings of Eric's dynasty, especially in the thirteenth century, used his sanctity to claim a "holy bloodline" and to advocate on that basis a hereditary, rather than elective, accession to the throne. As a consequence, and throughout the Middle Ages, holding the sites of Eric's cult (especially Uppsala) became a prerequisite for acquiring the Swedish throne. Eric is the patron saint of Sweden.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Esschen, Johannes van

See *Voes, Hendrik, and Johannes van Esschen*

Ethnopharmacology

Ethnopharmacology is the study of the culturally embedded uses of the various drugs available to a particular society. In many societies, a variety of drugs serve as catalysts for holy people to contact with or entry into the supernatural world. Although the sociocultural implications for drug-induced states in modern Western culture generally fall within the categories of healing, secular entertainment, or escapism, many societies interpret such experiences as contact with the divine. Such contact serves a variety of purposes, including foretelling the future, locating lost objects, diagnosing and healing illness, and assisting the individual in making a shift from one social status to another during rites of passage. It is the meanings and uses of such drugs as understood by local practitioners that is of interest to the ethnopharmacologist.

The archaeological record and ensuing ethnohistoric reconstructions suggest that such drug use is by no means a new human behavior. Pottery of the classic Maya phase, dating between the third and early seventh centuries, depicts people administering enemas of what is believed to be *balche*, a fermented beverage generally limited to sacred occasions. In the East, ancient Vedic hymns memorialize the

use of *soma*, a plant whose identity is still debated, but which was esteemed as a divinity.

The induction of trance, whether through chemicals, trauma, drumbeats, or any other form of self-hypnosis, is commonly associated with divine revelations. The physiological effects of psychotropic drugs are a subjective experience and are interpreted within the context of an individual's expectations and belief system. Many societies, particularly though not limited to the New World, suggest that the altered perceptions and sensations produced through drug ingestion are indicative of contact with divine beings. In some cases, it is only shamans, or spiritually gifted individuals, who make contact with the divine through these sacred drugs. In other cases, these chemical gateways to the supernatural are available to all members of the group, reflecting the egalitarian belief systems of such societies.

Amanita muscaria, or fly agaric, are mushrooms traditionally used by native Siberian peoples to induce supernatural trance states. During these ecstatic states, shamans are able to contact supernatural powers. The Koryak of Siberia, for example, used fly agaric to communicate with and control harmful spirits called *nimvits*. The Chukchee, also of Siberia, believed the mushrooms themselves to be a type of supernatural being, a tribe unto themselves who were personified through the visions induced by their ingestion. These "mushroom men" would take their consumers on a spiritual voyage while in trance. The word "shaman" is in fact of Siberian origin, taken from the Evenki language.

The sun-dried peyote cactus, *Lophophora williamsii*, is eaten by the Huichol of western Mexico at the end of a strenuous pilgrimage in order to induce visions of deities and ancestors. During their peyote hunt, the Huichol Indians "become" these divine beings. This religious practice gives an example of a group that experiences *communitas*, or the ritual transcendence of normal social boundaries between group members of differing status, with the assistance of drugs.

According to the Jivaro (also called the Untsuri Shuar), the altered consciousness achieved by shamans through the consumption of *natema* (called *ayahuasca*, *yage*, or *caapi* by other, nearby tribes) reveals the supernatural causes of daily events. The quotidian world is mere illusion. Indeed, throughout the Amazon and Orinoco river basins, the beverage is consumed to induce supernatural visions. It would be a mistake to assume that the ethnopharmacological systems of such groups are simplistic—this mixture can contain any of more than twenty identified psychoactive botanicals in addition to the main ingredients, alkaloids from the vine *Banisteriopsis caapi*. While under the influence of this powerful drug, shamans can perceive *tsentsak*, spirits that can penetrate the bodies of enemies and cause illness. Shamans control their own *tsentsak*, who shield them from supernat-

ural harm, and cure illness by looking into the bodies of patients with the aid of natema and sucking out invading tsentsak spirits. Drinking tobacco juice during the process is necessary to “feed” the tsentsak. Indeed, tobacco juice is the first hallucinogen consumed by apprentice shaman, as well as by young boys who hope for *arutam*, or spirit visions. A milder hallucinogen is given to newborn babies and young girls to achieve *arutam*.

Ritual drug use is a cornerstone of religion and healing for the Yanomamo of Venezuela and Brazil. Yanomamo men become shamans through extensive training, which includes over a year of fasting and celibacy. During this time, they attempt to entice one or more of the fickle *hekura* to take up residence inside their chests. It is only through the painful use of the hallucinogenic powder *ebene* as a snuff that one can contact these *hekura* spirits. The production and consumption of *ebene* is part of daily life for the Yanomamo. During intoxication, *hekura* become visible. The thousands of beautiful *hekura*, the spirits of the first humans, are believed to consume their own drug, *braki aiama uku*, in order to facilitate such encounters. It is the *hekura* of one’s enemies that cause illness, and the *hekura* of the shaman in one’s own village that provides cure and counterattack.

Modern Western classification systems tend to separate one’s physical and spiritual health into two relatively unrelated categories, with drug use appropriate and even necessary to our belief in the healing efficacy of physical illness. Cross-culturally, it is the case that medicine and religion are generally closely related categories. Western belief in naturalistic, impersonal causes of disease is not universally accepted by any means. Instead, in many societies people believe that some forms of physical illness have supernatural causes. Such a belief renders the modern Western system, which encourages drug use for physical ills but not ritual use, as incoherent—the two processes are inseparable, as are the cures.

—Angela R. Demovic

See also: Intermediaries; Shamans

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Eugenius of Carthage

(d. 505 C.E.)

Christian bishop

As a bishop, Eugenius of Carthage was hailed as a man of wisdom among his followers. Yet his holiness was largely manifested in his defense of the Christian faith in the face of persecution and exile. Eugenius was unanimously elected bishop of Carthage, North Africa, in 480 when the Arian king Huneric (r. 477–484) decided to allow Catholics to fill the position. The election was deferred because of the growing opposition of the Arian Vandal kings to Catholicism, but it was eventually allowed by Huneric at the insistence of Zeno and Placidia, into whose family the Vandals had married.

At first, the bishop’s wise government and charisma, coupled with an austere life, charity to the poor, and courage under persecution, won the admiration of the Arians. But the differences between the Arians and the Catholics (both sides claiming this latter label) steadily grew and culminated in the Council of Carthage in 484. The withdrawal of the Arian bishop on the plea that he could not speak Latin enraged Huneric. Eugenius had already contravened a royal edict and admitted Vandals into the Catholic Church. He was exiled, churches were closed, and the followers of Eugenius, including bishops, priests, laymen, and even nuns, were cruelly tortured and exterminated. Under the custody of a ruffian named Antonius, Eugenius was sent to live in the desert of Tripoli.

Gunthamund (r. 484–496) succeeded Huneric as king and allowed Eugenius to return to Carthage and to reopen Catholic churches. But the persecution was revived after eight years, when Thrasamund (r. 496–523) came to the throne. Eugenius was arrested and condemned to death, although his sentence was finally commuted into exile at Vienne in Languedoc. Eugenius built a monastery there (over the tomb of St. Amaranthus the martyr) and led a penitential life till his death.

Eugenius wrote a number of texts, including *Expositio Fidei Catholicae* (Exposition of the catholic faith), demonstrating the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and *Apologeticus pro Fide* (Defense of the faith). He also compiled *Altercatio cum Arianis* (An altercation with the Arians), fragments of which are quoted by Bishop Victor of Vita in his *History of the Vandal Persecution* (1992, 489).

The holiness of Eugenius was also presented through his miraculous works. During his lifetime, he is said to have cured blind men and women; similarly, Gregory of Tours (538–594) tells of numerous posthumous miracles associated with him. On his own feast day, for example, the saint

reportedly punished a young girl who stole an ornament from a merchant by temporarily paralyzing her. Many more miracles, mainly cures, were performed at his tomb.

—*Eleanor Pridgeon*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Eulalia of Mérida

(d. 303 C.E.)

Christian martyr

A Spanish Christian virgin martyr, Eulalia of Mérida died on January 10, 303, in the persecution of Emperor Diocletian (r. 284–305). The earliest account of her martyrdom was provided by the Spanish poet Prudentius in about 400 (*Peristephanon* 3). Eulalia, a strong-willed thirteen-year-old girl devoted to Christ, ran away from home and her concerned parents to castigate the persecuting magistrate, who had her tortured and killed. Upon her death, according to Prudentius, her soul exited through her mouth in the form of a white dove, and her body was protected by a covering of snow. Eulalia became the patron saint of Mérida (called Emerita by the Romans); the seventh-century chronicle *Lives of the Holy Fathers of Emerita* records several instances of Eulalia's patronage and protection.

Literary and epigraphical evidence indicate that the cult of Eulalia of Mérida spread throughout Spain into northern Africa, France, Italy, and Britain. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) preached a sermon for Eulalia's feast day; Gregory of Tours (538–594), Venantius Fortunatus (c. 530–610), and the Venerable Bede (673–735) all cited her as an exemplar of virginity. Eulalia's martyrdom is the subject of the ninth-century *Cantilène de Sainte-Eulalie* (Song of St. Eulalia), the oldest extant French vernacular poem. Two medieval prose Lives, most likely written in Spain, embellish considerably upon the details presented by Prudentius and later authors.

From around the seventh century onward, the cult of Eulalia of Mérida existed simultaneously with the cult of Eulalia of Barcelona (feast day February 12), a saint first mentioned in a seventh-century hymn by Quiricus, bishop of Barcelona, and later in prose acts. The details of Eulalia of Barcelona are virtually identical to those of Mérida's saint. Despite the existence of an independent cult for Eulalia of Barcelona, the historicity of this saint is doubtful, and it is likely that she came to exist through appropriation of Eulalia of Mérida's legend.

—*Jessamyn Lewis*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Eustace

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Christian legendary martyr

Eustace was popular during the Middle Ages both among the knightly classes, since he had been a soldier himself, and more generally, as a rare example of a married saint. According to legend, Eustace, originally called Placidus, became a general in the Roman army under Emperor Trajan (r. 98–117). Although wealthy non-Christians, he and his wife were pious and charitable. One day while hunting, Placidus chased down a stag, which stopped and turned to reveal a miraculous apparition of the crucified Christ between its antlers. Placidus was immediately converted to the Christian faith, and he and his family were subsequently baptized. He took the name Eustace, his wife Theospis (Theopista), and their two sons Agapetus (Agapius) and Theospitus (Theopistus).

Christ had told Eustace that he would have to undergo many trials and would become another Job in this life, before finding beatitude in the next. His troubles soon began. After being ruined through plague and robbery, Eustace decided to go to Egypt, and the family embarked without enough money for passage. The ship's lustful captain took Theospis in payment and left Eustace and his young sons on the shore. As Eustace was ferrying his sons, one by one, across a river, they were carried off by a lion and a wolf, respectively. Believing that his family had perished, Eustace humbly served as an agricultural laborer for the next fifteen years. Theospis had never been ravished by the captain, however, and their sons, too, had been rescued by local villagers. Eventually, Eustace was reinstated to his post in the army and reunited with his wife and children. But the emperor, now Hadrian (r. 117–138), then demanded that they all sacrifice to Apollo. As Christians, they adamantly refused, and after being thrown to lions that became miraculously meek, they were martyred by being roasted in a large bronze cauldron in the shape of a bull. After three days, their bodies were removed, miraculously intact, and given honorable burial.

The earliest certain evidence of Eustace dates only from the sixth or seventh century. He became popular in the East—first in Georgia, in Cappadocia during the tenth and eleventh centuries, in Greece and the Balkans—and in West-

ern Europe. In Rome, where a church dedicated to St. Eustachio existed at least as early as the eighth century and claimed to possess the relics of the whole family, the location of Eustace's conversion was thought to be on Monte Vulturella near Tivoli. The high point of his popularity in the West coincided with the Crusades during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and was particularly focused on northern France. The abbey of St.-Denis held important relics, and a parish church in Paris was dedicated to him in 1223.

Eustace, however, was more popular as an object of private devotion than of pilgrimage. Knights invoked him for aid and protection in battle, and he was also popular among the working classes. He was mentioned in homilies, sermons, and the liturgy, and his life inspired a considerable number of medieval romances and poems. Eustace's wife and sons were also sometimes regarded as martyred saints. His conversion through the stag hunt and vision—an archetypal image of great antiquity—was widely represented, often in combination with prayers to the saint, and in the East, images of it were considered to have apotropaic powers.

Eustace has been regarded as a patron by hunters and gamekeepers, because of the circumstances of his conversion, and was also considered one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. Devotion to Eustace has dwindled since the early modern period. His feast is celebrated by the Orthodox Church on November 2 and was celebrated by the Catholic Church on September 20 until 1969 when it was suppressed for lack of historicity.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Expeditus

Mythical Christian saint

Saint Expeditus is an interesting example of how early modern Roman Catholicism increasingly focused on specific pa-

tronage by saints, each saint serving a specific purpose. In this case, Expeditus's popularity seems to be based entirely on his name. There was an obscure saint, of unknown date, who shares a feast day, April 19, with five other saints—Hermogenes, Caius, Aristonique, Rufus, and Galatas—who were martyred in Metilene, Armenia, on the same day sometime during the fourth century. The Parisian Benedictines note in their *Lives of the Saints* that a copyist might have incorrectly written “Elpidius,” a name found in several manuscripts.

Nothing more is known of this historical Expeditus/Elpidius. Because his name suggests “expedite,” however, at some point it was decided that he *must* be the patron saint of procrastinators and people who need work done quickly. Therefore, this saint is invoked for the prompt conclusion of business or legal affairs. In seventeenth-century Germany, artists drew him as a lawyer crushing a crow with his foot. The crow symbolizes interminable adjournments, for its cry “Cra! Cra!” is the Latin for “tomorrow.”

The cult of Expeditus made its way to the southern United States, most notably New Orleans, where he entered vodun as a “saint” who can bring about quick resolutions. A major cult of a hybrid saint Expeditus is also important on the island of Réunion in the Indian Ocean.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People

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Extremists as Holy People

An important issue in contemporary religious debate is whether a radical, especially a person willing to kill others in service of his or her religion, can legitimately be considered as a holy person. Indeed, the answer to this question depends on how one defines holiness. Until God starts publishing an authorized list of “true” holy people, one method might be to deem someone holy if a significant population has believed this to be the case. Under these broad parameters, selected extremists would be included in the list, including Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989), Jim Jones (1931–1978), and the sixteenth-century Anabaptist leader Jan of Leyden (1509–1536).

The closer one looks at the issue of extremists as potential holy people, the more commonly accepted notions of holiness become blurred. In general, for example, Jews and Christians pride themselves on their rationality and tout compassion and love as the cornerstone of their faiths. But it is truer to say that the modern fashion of holiness in these religions emphasizes these characteristics, rather than that

holy men of the past (it should be noted that the vast majority of religious extremists have been male) have never been venerated for behaviors that would be considered radical today. One need only consider the biblical account of Elijah gleefully ordering the slaughter of priests of Ba'al, or medieval Christian saints who were warriors in holy causes such as the Crusades, for it to be plain that no simple definition is possible. And there are, of course, branches of modern Judaism and Christianity with similarly extremist views. To cite a single example, a Jewish settler named Baruch Goldstein launched a sniper attack on a mosque in Hebron in 1994, killing 29 people and wounding another 125 before being killed himself. He is buried nearby, and the grave has become a shrine for militant Jewish settlers.

In general, extremists—people who defended their faith not only by dying but by killing—have been venerated in many religions as holy people. But this is one of the least consistent categories of holiness, varying widely according to belief structures of very particular times and places. Thus the monk who assassinated King Henry IV of France in 1610 was never regarded as a saint by most of the population of his time, even though some felt that Henry's toleration of Protestants amounted to a betrayal of the faith. Nor was the Hindu fundamentalist who assassinated Gandhi in 1948. In both cases, the dominant view of their societies was that assassination was not an appropriate religious tool (although war was). Even worse was the backlash in 1984 when a Sikh extremist assassinated Indira Gandhi, an action that led to rioting and large-scale massacres of his fellow Sikhs—even though the assassination was not condoned by most of the Sikh community.

Key to understanding this phenomenon seems to be the level of dislocation or crisis being experienced by a particular faith community. Historically, it has been societies under particularly great stress that have most often venerated warriors who fought for their religious values, and have occasionally established cults of individuals who, without the sanction of a state, have taken the cause of religious justice into their own hands. Modern Americans are not free of this tendency: The most famous extremist holy man in the United States, John Brown, is still lauded in history textbooks for his bold stand against slavery at Harper's Ferry in 1859. Clearly the cause of freeing the slaves was more important than the soldiers Brown and his men killed, or the local civilians who were taken as hostages.

Apocalyptic groups seem especially likely to produce extremist holy people, a phenomenon by no means limited to modern "cults." Two great examples from early modern Europe are Hans Behem (d. 1476), who provoked a large-scale apocalyptic rebellion that included killing all the priests his followers could lay hands on, and the Anabaptist takeover of Münster, Germany, in 1534–1535 led by Jan of Leyden, who intended to start the kingdom of God on earth. Nor is this

phenomenon limited to Christianity: The apocalyptic purge of China inaugurated by Hong Xiuquan (1814–1864) killed more people than any war in history except World War II—although many people today regard Hong's effort to establish the heavenly kingdom on earth as terrorism on a massive scale. The modern Japanese Shoko Asahara (1955–), founder of the apocalyptic AUM Shinrikyo, was responsible for an infamous poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March 1995. Such examples could easily be multiplied.

In the early twenty-first century, it is impossible to avoid the linkage of "Islam" and "extremism." The Islamic radical movements that plague the world today hail those who die in the cause, including especially suicide bombers, as martyrs of the faith. Such figures have won widespread veneration, as have Islamic fundamentalists such as Ruhollah Khomeini who have restored (or attempted to restore) states to Islamic purity, killing thousands in the process. Perhaps the case of Islam is the strongest evidence that the veneration of extremists as holy people depends very much on a sense of deep crisis in the society that produces such deadly martyrs. In the centuries of Islamic ascendancy, such attacks on civilian populations would have been soundly condemned at nearly every level of Muslim society, as indeed they are condemned in the Qur'an. It is only when other means to defend their religion have appeared to be cut off that small minorities of Muslims have turned to extremists as models of a pure faith, willing to kill as well as to die.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Behem, Hans; Brown, John; Elijah (Christianity); Elijah (Judaism); Hong Xiuquan; Jan of Leyden; Jones, Jim; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Tolerance and Intolerance; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Ezana (Abreha)

(c. 303–c. 350 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Ezana, an Aksumite emperor of the fourth century, is most famous for being the monarch who made Ethiopia Christian. The state of Aksum, acknowledged as the precursor to Ethiopia, was one of ancient Africa's most important states.

By the time Ezana came to the throne, the empire, with Aksum as its capital, was already flourishing, perhaps for as long as six centuries. It is not known when exactly the state came into being or its precise boundaries through its history. There are reports of important trade activities in the region from the first century C.E. Writing in the third century C.E., the prophet Mani noted: "There are four great kingdoms on earth: the first is the Kingdom of Babylon and Persia; the second is the Kingdom of Rome; the third is the Kingdom of the Aksumites; the fourth is the kingdom of the Chinese" (Henze 2000, 22). Thus it was a significant event when Ezana converted to Christianity in the fourth century. Following his conversion, he put the Christian cross on Aksumite coinage, the first head of state in the world to do so. Much of our knowledge of Ezana comes from the coinage minted during his reign as well as the stone inscriptions he had made to serve for posterity as a testament to his exploits.

When Ezana defeated the kingdom of Meroe in about 325, it left Ethiopia the uncontested dominant force in that part of Africa for many centuries. The wealth of Aksum derived in large part from international trade, an activity for which its location ideally suited it. Ethiopia's geographical location has made it a crossroads for influences to and from Asia as well as to and from other parts of Africa. The histories of the Ethiopian regions and southern Arabia were for centuries inextricably intertwined, with invasions occurring in both directions.

Ezana was the son of the Aksumite king Ella Amida. When the king died, Ezana's mother ruled as regent until Ezana (or he and his brother, Saizana/Asbeha) could assume

the throne. According to some traditions, Ezana and his brother jointly ruled over the kingdom. Both are saints in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Ezana was born in approximately 303, and he and his brother were educated by two Syrians who had been shipwrecked off the coast of the Red Sea and subsequently served King Ella Amida at the royal court. These Syrians enjoyed the favor of the king and were appointed tutors to his sons. It was one of these Syrians who later converted Ezana to Christianity.

Ezana was not the first Aksumite to convert to Christianity; there were Christians, Aksumites as well as foreign merchants, living in Aksum, as in nearby Nubia. But Ezana was the first Aksumite emperor to proclaim himself a Christian and declare the state Christian.

—Anene Ejikeme

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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F

Fabiola

(d. c. 400 C.E.)

Christian pilgrim, patron

Fabiola, a Roman holy woman, pilgrim, traveler, and patroness, like her friends Paula, Eustochium, and Jerome, undertook a life of travel and monastic practices in the fourth century. Fabiola had divorced her first husband and married another, events that greatly upset Jerome, who disapproved of her remarriage. After her second husband died, Fabiola made a public profession of her religious transformation in the Lateran basilica in Rome and embarked on a life of charity, kindness, and asceticism. She supported the poor, the sick, clergy, and, of course, monks, both male and female, with generous donations. Eventually Fabiola began a life of travel and monastic pursuits. Jerome wrote, "Rome was not large enough for her compassionate kindness" (Jerome, Letter 77).

Fabiola sailed to Jerusalem and spent some time with Paula and Jerome in Bethlehem. While Jerome looked for a suitable place for her to stay, she decided to return to Rome. Jerome explained that she had wished to continue traveling, saying she had lived out of her "traveling baggage and was a stranger (*peregrina*) in every land" (Jerome, Letter 77). Fabiola appears to have traveled as a form of religious and ascetic expression, voluntarily living a religious life of homelessness and exile. Jerome advised her to stay in Bethlehem, but she insisted on continuing her travels, resuming them again in 394, and eventually she returned several years later to Rome, where she remained until her death in about 400 a few years later.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Repentance and Holy People

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Fa-hsien

See Faxian

Faith

(3rd or early 4th cent. C.E.)

Christian martyr

Little is known about the historical person variously called "Faith," "Fides," "Foy," and "Foi." Indeed, although "there is some scholarly agreement that there was a historical person named Fides who was martyred in Agen," even the century of her martyrdom cannot be firmly established. It was, however, "probably in the third century, rather than the early fourth, as the texts generated by her cult insist" (Sheingorn 1995, 287). The earliest textual reference to her is a late sixth-century addition to a list of martyrs placing her death on October 6 in the city of Agen in what is now France; the earliest extant account of her *passio*, or passion, dates from the tenth century. Nevertheless, the Benedictine abbey at Conques, located on one of the major pilgrimage roads to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and home to her relics, was one of the most important pilgrimage sites in medieval Europe.

According to her legend, Faith was a Christian girl (perhaps as young as twelve) from a noble family; a Roman prefect martyred her for refusing to renounce Christianity and worship the goddess Diana. She was first tortured by being stretched on a grill and burned, and then beheaded. Her remains, initially hidden away, were later installed in a church built in Agen especially to house them. There they remained until the ninth century, when the monks of Conques stole

her relics, enshrining them in an elaborate gold- and jewel-encrusted statue-reliquary known as the “Golden Majesty,” which still exists.

Spectacular miracles, including the complete restoration of the eyeballs of an unjustly mutilated man, attracted a significant cult following to Conques, among them Bernard of Angers, who began a collection of her miracles between 1013 and 1020. In addition to healing the sick and punishing evildoers and doubters, Faith was particularly famous for miraculously freeing prisoners and reviving dead animals. She was also known for her fondness for jewelry and for her miraculous jokes or pranks, which earned her a reputation as a trickster. By the middle of the eleventh century, wealthy and powerful secular and ecclesiastical figures throughout Christendom were attracted to her shrine.

—Mary Lynn Rampolla

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Joy; Martyrdom and Persecution; Miracles; Veneration of Holy People

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Fall, Cheikh Ibra

(1860–1930 C.E.)

Muslim holy man

Cheikh Ibra Fall was born a noble in the village of Ndiambay Fall in present-day Senegal in 1860. He spent much of his adult life in search of a spiritual leader in response to a vision he had instructing him to find a master named Bamba and submit himself to him. He searched high and low. His searches took him to a village named Bamba and then to a religious leader named Bamba Sylla, under whom he studied for a while. Eventually, however, he met Cheikh Ahmad Bamba Mbacké (1850–1927), leader of the Mourides, and bowed in submission, vowing to dedicate his life to spiritual renewal. It is because of his remarkable commitment to Islam and his *marabout* that Cheikh Ibra is considered a holy man. His passionate devotion led to the creation of a branch of the Mouride Brotherhood called Baye Fall.

Western scholars have not given Cheikh Ibra justice in their scholarship, but this remarkable man and his life are noted among the Islamic leaders of West Africa. His fame is compounded not only because of his devotion to the teachings of Cheikh Ahmad Bamba but also because of the miracles attributed to him. The oral tradition reports one man

being healed of a terminal condition simply because Cheikh Ibra told the sickness “be gone.” Another oral tradition notes him as being so devoted to Ramadan that even his animals were forced to observe the month of fasting.

Cheikh Ibra’s devotion to his faith and his spiritual master led him to follow one of the central tenets of Mouridism, which is that work is a form of worship. Because of his work and that of his *talibes* (students), Cheikh Ibra became a successful peanut farmer. His influence with the French colonial government was helpful to Cheikh Ahmad Bamba, whom the French exiled twice. Cheikh Ibra died in 1930 and was succeeded as leader of his talibes by his son Serigne Modou Moustapha Fall. Today, the Baye Fall is a significant branch of Mouridism and its members still consider themselves Mourides.

—Douglas Thomas

See also: Bamba, Ahmad; Islam and Holy People; Marabout; Miracles

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Fard, W. D.

(c. 1891–? C.E.)

Muslim founder of the Nation of Islam

The followers of W. D. Fard, founder of the Nation of Islam (NOI), believe that he was God in person. Fard’s teaching helped a segment of the black population in the United States to cope with the debilitating effects of poverty, discrimination, and racism at a time when the world had plunged into the Great Depression. His version of Islam, radically different from orthodox Islam, has continued to influence black culture and black protest to the present day.

Fard’s origins are uncertain at best. Some claim he was Pakistani. Others insist he was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Others claim he was born in New Zealand; Portland, Oregon; or India. In any case, it is thought that 1891 was the year of his birth. Making his living as a salesman peddling silks and other artifacts that he claimed had been made in the Holy Land, Fard began introducing his clients to the religion of Islam, saying that Islam had been blacks’ original religion and that blacks had been the original race. He taught that white slave masters had used Christianity as a tool to control blacks’ minds and that whites were devils, and he urged blacks to recognize that their only hope was to separate to-

tally from the white race, regain knowledge of their own heritage, and become totally self-reliant. Fard provided a curious explanation of how the white race came about. He explained that thousands of years ago a mad scientist named Yacub had created whites through genetic manipulation of recessive genes found in black people. After generations of this activity, and after he had created brown, red, and yellow peoples, Yacub had finally created whites. Their purpose was to wreak havoc on earth for 6,000 years. Then, the *mahdi* (messiah) would come and save the blacks, bring them home to Saudi Arabia, and restore them to their rightful place as rulers and leaders of humanity.

Fard claimed he was the mahdi and that he was God in person. Because he looked both black and white (mulatto), and because his teachings coincided with qur'anic and biblical scripture and prophecy, he succeeded in attracting hundreds of black Detroiters. From 1930 to 1933, Fard amassed some 8,000 converts. He established his first mosque in 1930 in Detroit. He also organized the Fruit of Islam (FOI), a paramilitary organization that maintained order and protected the organization. Because blacks were some of the hardest hit by the Great Depression, and because lynching, segregation, and racial discrimination flourished, blacks found it easy to believe that whites were devils.

After organizing the Nation of Islam in 1930 in Detroit and setting up a second chapter in Chicago, Fard appointed the Georgia-born Elijah Muhammad to be NOI's chief spokesperson and organizer. Fard then told Elijah that the time had come for him to leave. In 1934, Fard disappeared. He left behind an organization that eventually became one of the largest black religious sects in the United States. Fard's whereabouts during the last stage of his life are still unknown, at least publicly.

—Curtis Austin

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Gods on Earth; Messiahs; Muhammad, Elijah

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Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar

(1175–1265 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Ganj-i Shakar Fariduddin was a major saint of the Indian Chishti sufi order in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries whose shrine is located at Pakpattan (Ferry of the Pure), Pakistan. He is popularly known as Baba Farid. His ancestors

were said to be from Kabul, Afghanistan, but they later migrated to a place called Khotwal, near Multan, Pakistan, where Fariduddin was born in 1175. His youth was influenced by his pious and saintly mother, Qarsum Bibi.

Legend has it that a visiting saint, Jalal al-Din Tabrizi, presented the young Fariduddin with a pomegranate seed. Eating this gave him powerful enlightenment. After receiving a traditional Islamic education in Multan, in 1235 Fariduddin became a disciple of the Chishti saint Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, who passed through Multan on his way from Farghana, Afghanistan, to Delhi, where he would settle. Qutbuddin is said to have died in ecstasy provoked by poetry sung during a session of religious music at his *khanqah* (hostel for sufis), now the location of his shrine in Mehrawli, Delhi, near the Qutb Minar.

Baba Farid visited his master in Delhi but decided to settle in the Punjab, first at Hansi and later at Ajodhan on the Sutlej River. He is known for his austerities and disregard for worldly matters, in particular for performing a special spiritual practice of spending a forty-day retreat (*chilla*) suspended upside down in a well. It was said in the hagiographic tradition that his continuous fasting was rewarded by pebbles turning into sugar, hence his title, Ganj-i Shakar (treasure of sugar). His practice involved teaching his pupils the Qur'an and the sufi regimen of the *Awarif al-Ma'arif* (The benefits of the spiritually learned) of Shihab al-Din Abu Hafis Umar al-Suhrawardi. One legend about his life involves a boatload of pilgrims who were rescued after calling upon his name, hence he is sometimes depicted in popular iconography with a boat and a river in the background.

Fariduddin is credited with strengthening the Chishti order in the Indian subcontinent. His most prominent disciples were Nizamuddin Auliya (1239–1325) and Ala al-Din Sabir (d. 1291), founders of the Nizami and Sabiri branches of the order. He is also credited with attracting Punjabi Hindu tribes to Islam. Some of his mystical sayings were incorporated into the Sikh holy book, the Granth Sahib.

Fariduddin died in 1265. His *urs* (death anniversary) attracts great throngs. It became especially popular after the partition of the Indian subcontinent because since then most Pakistanis have not been able to get permission to travel to Ajmer, India, for the *urs* of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti. A famous feature of Fariduddin's shrine is the heavenly door (*bihisti darwaza*) that is only opened for a certain period during the *urs*. Legend has it that passing through it at that time guarantees removal of sin.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Chishti, Muinuddin; Miracles; Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja; Sufism; Veneration of Holy People

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Farrakhan, Louis

(1933 C.E.–)

Nation of Islam leader

Louis Farrakhan follows in the footsteps of Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI) from 1934 to 1975, to whom he refers as the “man who taught me what I know” (Haskins 1996). Born Louis Eugene Walcott on May 11, 1933, in Roxbury, Massachusetts, Minister Farrakhan and his late brother, Alvin, were raised by his mother, a native of Saint Kitts. He never knew his father, a Jamaican native.

To his followers, Farrakhan is God’s instrument for a “New World Order of Peace and Righteousness on the foundation of Truth and Justice; to put down tyrants and to change the world into a Heaven on Earth” (ibid.). Elijah Muhammad is the Moses, while Farrakhan is the Aaron who will lead black America to the Promised Land. His ministers often introduce him as “our divine leader and guide.” In 1997, Muslim scholars and spiritual leaders from Africa, Asia, Australia, the Middle East, and the Americas, converging in Chicago, turbaned and acknowledged him as an imam of the Muslim world.

Farrakhan’s mission is expressed by the title of the Nation of Islam’s official newspaper, *The Final Call*. The paper’s logo is a trumpet, which signifies the end of time and the beginning of God’s judgment. This mission is best articulated in *Farrakhan, The Traveler*, one of the longest-running columns since the paper’s inception in 1979. The columnist, Jabril Muhammad, describes Farrakhan as the fulfillment of Jesus’ predictions of the signs of the end of this world and of his return, hailing him as the long-awaited *mahdi* (messiah) of Islam.

In 1993, Minister Farrakhan published his first book, *A Torchlight for America*, to provide a guide to the nation’s spiritual abyss.

—Misbahudeen Ahmed-Rufai

See also: Imams; Messiahs; Muhammad, Elijah

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Fashun

See **Dushun**

Fatima bint Muhammad

(c. 605–632 C.E.)

Muslim holy woman

Fatima bint Muhammad, born in about 605, was the sole child of the prophet Muhammad to bear offspring. She was the wife of ‘Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661), the mother of Husayn b. ‘Ali (626–680) and Hasan b. ‘Ali (624/625–669), and the link between the prophet and the imamate for Shi’i Muslims. Though accounts of Fatima’s life vary, Sunnis and Shi’is acknowledge her importance in the role of Islam. She shared a unique relationship with her father that defied pre-Islamic standards. According to hadith literature, Muhammad is understood to have said, “Fatima is a part of my body. Whosoever hurts her, has hurt me, and whosoever hurts me has hurt God” (Shariati 1996, 161–162).

Fatima’s importance to Islam increased after her marriage to her second cousin, ‘Ali, the fourth rightly guided caliph of Sunni Islam as well as the first imam of Shi’i Islam. During her lifetime, Fatima reportedly lived in extreme poverty, struggling like the rest of the Muslim community for survival. In addition to the two boys, Hasan and Husayn, who eventually became the second and third Shi’i imams, respectively, she bore two girls, Sayyida Zaynab and Umm Khulthum. Shi’i discourse attributes another son to her as well. On his deathbed in 632, Muhammad purportedly told Fatima that she would be the first of his family to join him in paradise; ninety-five days later, in the same year, Fatima died.

Although there is limited historical information on Fatima, the pious, who remember her as “the shining” and *al-batul* (the virgin) do so in accordance with later hagiographic accounts. In 1056–1057, al-Wahhab wrote that Fatima bore Hasan and Husayn from her left thigh. Thus, *al-batul* was an honorific title referring to Fatima’s purity from menses, signifying that she was above the natural, biological limitations of other women. Today, both Shi’i and Sunni Muslims remember Fatima for her compassion, suffering, and fight against oppression. The prophet Muhammad is said to have affirmed that Fatima was one of the four highest women in Islam, along with Mary (the mother of Jesus), ‘Asiyah (Pharaoh’s wife), and Khadijiah (the wife of the prophet). Thus, Fatima is held as the paradigm for all Islamic women, particularly by Shi’i Muslims.

—Melanie Trexler

See also: Gender and Holy People; Hasan b. ‘Ali; Hereditary Holiness; Husayn b. ‘Ali; Islam and Holy People; Models; Muhammad; Sexuality and Holy People

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Fatima Ma'suma

(c. 790–816 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim scholar, holy woman

Fatima Ma'suma was the daughter of the seventh Shi'i imam, Musa al-Kazim (c. 745–799), and the sister of the eighth imam, 'Ali b. Musa ar-Reza (765–818). She was born in the Arabian city of Medina on the first day of the Islamic month of Dhu-l-Qa'dah around the year 790. Fatima Ma'suma is best known for the shrine built at her tomb in the Shi'i holy city of Qum in Iran.

Fatima Ma'suma, whose epithet means “the immaculate” or “the infallible,” is revered as a scholar of the religious arts and for her piety. In the biographical traditions, she is frequently compared to Fatima bint Muhammad (c. 605–632), the daughter of the prophet Muhammad and the wife of the first Shi'i imam, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, because she always performed prayers and kept the fast (*sawm*) in remembrance of God (Allah). For the Shi'a, Fatima Ma'suma is revered as a saint possessing both intercessory powers and the ability to perform miracles, such as granting wishes and healing those with incurable illnesses.

In 816, Fatima Ma'suma set off from Medina to visit her brother, Imam Reza, in Marv (located in the province of Khorasan). She never saw her brother, however, as she fell ill at the Sunni town of Sawa, where she asked to be taken to the nearby town of Qum, which had been settled as a Shi'i outpost in 712. Shortly after arriving in Qum, Fatima Ma'suma died. In 1519, Shah Bigum, the daughter of the Safavid leader Shah Isma'il I, built a shrine around her grave. In the seventeenth century, Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588–1629) further expanded the shrine complex, adding a school and facilities for pilgrims. Since then, Qum and the shrine of Fatima Ma'suma have been important sites of pilgrimage for Shi'i Muslims.

—Karen G. Ruffle

See also: Fatima bint Muhammad; Imams; Veneration of Holy People

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Fatima of Ourika

(c. 1000/1200 C.E.)

Muslim healer, miracle worker

Morocco is the Muslim country known as the land of a thousand saints, many of whom are women. One of these is Setti

(Ar.: *sitt*, “lady”) Fatima of Ourika, a saint revered for her piety and extraordinary healing capabilities. She is said to have arrived from Egypt in the Moroccan valley of Ourika, southeast of Marrakesh, sometime between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Legend says that she came to Morocco at age seven and stayed with a local family until she married a man named L'Oussaine at age twelve. Setti Fatima had two daughters, Fatima Zahara and Aisha, who predeceased her. They are buried with her in her tomb.

It is said that when gathering wood in the mountains, Fatima pushed a stick into the ground to get water, creating a spring. This is known as the origin of the seven waterfalls in the Ourika Valley. At another place in the mountains where she hit the ground with a stick, five liters of water flowed out. The water is said to have had medicinal qualities; drinking it is also purported to have helped people solve their marital and fertility problems. After Fatima died, people would take water from the waterfall named for her and bathe in it, then spend the night at her grave, praying for a remedy for their marital or fertility problems.

Setti Fatima is buried high up on the mountainside overlooking the village. A three-room building of orange stucco with a green tile roof protects her tomb. Her elevated grave is in the middle of the largest room, with those of her daughters on each side. The graves are covered with green cloths, in keeping with the traditional covering for the grave of a sufi saint. Woven mats cover the floors, and daily offerings of couscous are placed at the head and foot of each grave by one of the women overseeing the tomb. Two other rooms allow for overnight vigils by supplicants who seek intercession through Setti Fatima. The local graveyard has developed around the tomb area.

The village houses a *zawiya* (religious hostel) complex that bears Fatima's name. Its date of origin is unconfirmed: Some say it was established 400–500 years ago, while others insist it was built 800 years ago, right after Setti Fatima's time. Three times a week, the *zawiya* provides food for the poor, who are welcome to stay there overnight. Other visitors to the *zawiya* are also welcomed. A simple traditional meal of corn and potato chowder is served, and visitors may leave a small donation.

—Beverly B. Mack

See also: Islam and Holy People; Miracles; Veneration of Holy People

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Fa-tsang

See Fazang



Tomb of Fatima of Ourika (Beverly B. Mack)

Faxian (Fa-hsien)

(c. 337–c. 422 C.E.)

Buddhist pilgrim, writer

Faxian was born in Wuyang (Pingyang) in the present-day Shanxi region of China in about 337. From the fourth century to the beginning of the fifth century, northern China was divided into many small states that were ruled by Asian nomadic peoples. Southern China, however, was united under the eastern Jin dynasty (317–419). Faxian originated from this southern state when Chinese Buddhism was still in a preliminary stage of development both institutionally and philosophically. Faxian is his ordination name; his family name is Gong. He entered a Buddhist temple when he was three years old and was fully ordained at twenty.

According to the *Bibliographies of the Eminent Monks* and other similar records in Chinese, Faxian's main contribution to Buddhism resulted from his trip to India. Although the trip took fourteen years altogether, starting in 399, he successfully returned with many Buddhist texts that had a significant influence on the development of Chinese

Buddhism. During the trip, he lost ten companion monks who had joined him at various places in China. These monks died or abandoned the initial mission because of the severe traveling conditions. They encountered snowstorms in the Karakorum mountains and contracted diseases in India. Faxian was about sixty years old when he began the expedition with a burning desire to acquire *vinaya* (monastic rules) and *sila* (precepts) texts, which were lacking in China at that time. He stayed for three years in Pataliputra in central India studying Indic languages (presumably Sanskrit but maybe also Prakrit languages). Among the many places he went, he stayed in Tamluk (Tamalipiti) near present-day Calcutta for two years and in Sri Lanka for two years in order to visit Buddhist sanctuaries and acquire Buddhist scriptures.

Faxian came back to China in 412 by a sea route in a merchant ship. At one point, when the ship became lost in a heavy storm, Faxian meditated and prayed to Avalokitesvara and the ship managed to reach the shore of Shandong province in China. Among the Buddhist scriptures he

brought back, the following are well known: Dirghagama Sutra, Samyuktagama Sutra, Mahasanghika vinaya, Mahaparinirvana Sutra, and Samyuktabhidharmahrdaya. Faxian was already seventy-four years old when he came back to China, but he translated the last four texts mentioned above with Buddhahadra, a monk from India, in the Daochang temple in Jiankang (present-day Nanjing), before he died about ten years later.

Faxian's travel journal, *Fu-kuo chi* (Record of the Buddhist kingdoms), a rare record of Central Asia, India, and Sri Lanka in the fourth century, covers the geography, history, and customs of more than thirty countries. It was included in the Chinese *Taisho Tripitaka*, a collection of authoritative Buddhist texts, and translated into French and English in the nineteenth century.

—Mariko Namba Walter

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Fazang (Fa-tsang)

(643–712 C.E.)

Buddhist patriarch

According to the tradition of the Huayan school of Buddhism in China, Fazang was the third patriarch, following the second patriarch, Zhiyan (602–668). In fact, many scholars give Fazang credit for founding the school, which has referred to itself as the “one vehicle” to signify the belief that there is only one path leading to liberation, not many incomplete and separate paths. Fazang's most famous essay was entitled the “Essay on the Golden Lion.” The gold of the lion symbolized the noumenon or principle of *li*, whereas the figure of the lion itself symbolized phenomenon. The former principle was by nature clear, pure, all-perfect, and brilliant. It was the primary cause of the lion, while the latter represented the realm of things (*shih*).

According to Fazang, the doctrine of emptiness signified the interdependent and interpenetrative nature of things. This position stressed that the identical nature of things signified their static nature, whereas their interpenetration indicated their dynamic nature. What made interpenetration possible without obstruction was the nonsubstantiality of things. For Fazang, what he called the “jewel net” of the

Hindu deity Indra illustrated this theory. If one could imagine the heavenly abode of the god, in which there was a net that stretched out infinitely in all directions, there was hanging in each eye of the net a glittering jewel. By examining a single jewel, one noticed that it reflected all the other jewels in the net, and each of the jewels reflected in that single jewel reflected all the other jewels. This infinitely reflecting process symbolized a universe in which there was an infinitely repeated interrelationship among all the aspects of it.

Fazang theorized that things were both alike and different. Fire and ice, for example, were alike because of their emptiness, but also different. Thus his philosophical position embraced identity, or sameness, in difference. Since things shared an identical essence by virtue of being empty, one cause was identical with other causes and yet also different. In summary, Fazang argued that all things were coexistent, interwoven, interrelated, interpenetrating, mutually inclusive, and reflective of each other.

—Carl Olson

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Felix of Nola

(d. 260 C.E.)

Christian priest

Like many other saints of the early Christian period, Felix's holiness was expressed through his simple monastic way of life, his conversion of nonbelievers to Christianity, and his distribution of wealth among the poor. Born at Nola near Naples, he was tortured during the Decian persecution in the mid-third century and cast into prison. One night an angel appeared to him and bade him go to the aid of Maximus, bishop of Nola. His chains fell off, the doors opened, and the saint was enabled to bring relief to the bishop, who was speechless from cold and hunger. When the persecutors made a second attempt to secure Felix, his escape was miraculously disguised by a spider weaving her web over the opening of a hole into which he had just crept. After Maximus's death, Felix was chosen for the bishopric of Nola, but he declined, favoring Quintus, a priest with slightly more experience. This rejection of office was common among holy Christians in this period.

Felix performed numerous miracles and conversions to Christianity during his lifetime. After his death in about 260, crowds of people came from all over Europe to visit his tomb. Five churches were built in his honor outside Nola, and

some relics were deposited at Rome and Benevento. St. Paulinus (c. 354–431), who resided near one of these churches, testifies to numerous pilgrimages made in honor of Felix. The poems and letters of Paulinus on Felix are the source from which Gregory of Tours (538–594) and the Venerable Bede (673–735) drew their biographies.

There are sixty-six saints named Felix listed in the Roman Martyrology, and there was another bishop of Nola known as Felix. Thus the hagiographers have tended to confuse the exact identification of Felix of Nola. His feast day is January 14.

—*Eleanor Pridgeon*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Miracles; Paulinus of Nola

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Ferdinand III of Castile (Fernando)

(c. 1198–1252 C.E.)

Christian king, lawgiver, crusader

King Ferdinand (Fernando) III of Castile-León (modern Spain) was, above all, a crusader. He conquered more Muslim-held territory than any other medieval king, and his military successes drove the Muslims to the fringes of the Spanish peninsula. Ferdinand's victories at the same time united most of the once-independent provinces of Spain under the control of one king. His rule was a just one, dedicated to promoting law, education, and religious piety.

Ferdinand, born in about 1198, was the son of Alfonso IX, king of León, and of Berenguela, daughter of Alfonso III, king of Castile. Berenguela was the sister of Blanche, mother of St. Louis IX of France, whose career and virtues closely paralleled those of his cousin Ferdinand. At his accessions to his thrones (Castile in 1217; León in 1230), Ferdinand faced many challenges to his authority, both from the Christian nobility within the kingdoms and from Muslim leaders who held the surrounding territories.

Ferdinand allied with the church to counter both threats. Casting his campaigns against the Muslims as crusades, he encouraged his nobles to join him. The Franciscans and the Dominicans, new monastic orders in the church, served as Ferdinand's military chaplains and taught his troops to value virtue over brute force. Ferdinand himself acted as a role model, spending the night before battle in prayer. Most glorious among Ferdinand's many impressive victories was the

capture in 1248 of Seville, the city he chose as his place of burial.

Ferdinand was not simply interested in conquering territories and controlling his nobility. He sought to rule them in peace and cooperation. He had the law code translated from Latin into the vernacular language to provide a common law for his territories, sought mediation over warfare whenever possible, and encouraged the growth of parliamentary institutions. He also founded the University of Salamanca to produce administrators learned in law, and he encouraged Christians to study Islam in order to better understand their Muslim neighbors. He founded bishoprics, established mendicant convents, endowed hospitals, and built churches throughout his realms. Even his former enemies, the Muslims in his conquered territories, revered him as a kind man who had good political sense.

Ferdinand learned much from his association with the Mendicants, whose values he admired so much that he joined a lay branch of the Franciscans. After his death in 1252, a popular cult grew up around this kindly crusader. He was formally canonized in 1671, and his feast day is May 30.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Louis IX; Rulers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Fernando

See Ferdinand III of Castile

Fisher, John

(1469–1535 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

John Fisher, an English priest born in 1469 who was educated at Cambridge, served as confessor to Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII of England. In 1504, he was elevated to the post of bishop of Rochester and chancellor of Cambridge University. However, during the reign of Henry VIII, when he refused to swear to Henry's Act of Succession, an oath that denied the supremacy of the Roman

Catholic pope in England, he was found guilty of treason and executed. Because Fisher chose to die rather than recognize Henry as head of the church in England, Catholics consider his death in 1535 an act of martyrdom.

John Fisher was considered a model bishop, even during his own lifetime, and he worked for more than thirty years in that office. He focused on improving preparation for priesthood and the service of parochial clergy. He was also recognized as a scholar and is thought to have had the foremost library in England at the time. In his appreciation and concern for education, he persuaded Lady Margaret to found Christ's College in 1505 and St. John's College at Cambridge in 1511. When Lutheranism and similar new doctrines threatened the Catholic Church's hegemony, Fisher spoke and wrote against them. In this, he and King Henry agreed. However, in Henry's pursuit of a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Fisher defended the queen and the Catholic Church, incurring the king's wrath. When the bishop refused the oath of succession, he was arrested and jailed on a charge of high treason. While Fisher was in prison, the pope made him a cardinal, further angering the king. Fisher was also accused of unlawfully exchanging letters with Sir Thomas More, a fellow prisoner in the Tower of London. After a year in prison, Fisher was tricked into denying the king's supremacy, was tried, found guilty, and beheaded.

Catholics in England and the European continent mourned the execution of Fisher and, within days, the execution of More as well. The two men were venerated for what was seen as their martyred deaths. Fisher was canonized in 1935. His feast day is celebrated on June 22, the same as that of Thomas More.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; More, Thomas; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Foi
See Faith

Fokuda Toshiyasu
See Kodōjin

Forgione, Francesco
See Pio of Pietrelcina

Fotucheng (Fo-t'ü-ch'eng)

(232–348 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, wonder worker

A Buddhist monk well known for his supernatural power, Fotucheng was born at Kucha in central Asia in 232. After tonsure at the age of nine, he visited Kashmir and arrived in Luoyang in 310 in the hope of spreading Buddhism. Fotucheng was highly respected by contemporary Confucian scholars even though he had not been schooled in Chinese philosophy and religion. Unfortunately, his arrival coincided with warfare raging in the north and he had to enter into seclusion when Luoyang was savaged by the troops of General Liu Yao of the Former Zhao dynasty in 311.

In the following year, Fotucheng was introduced to Shi Le, who became the emperor of the Later Zhao dynasty in 319, and served as his imperial adviser. Shi Le was one of the most tyrannical rulers in Chinese history, yet he showed Fotucheng great respect by conferring on him the title Dahe-shang (Great Master). Fotucheng, having realized that Shi Le could not be transformed through ordinary ways, demonstrated supernatural power on numerous occasions to gradually convince him of the Buddhist teaching of *ahimsa* (non-harming). He produced a lotus from a bowl of water and cured the incurable malady of Shi Le's grandson with magic. His exceptional occult power in reading omens and predicting the outcome of warfare helped Shi Le in battle. As emperor, Shi Le continued to show reverence to Fotucheng and regarded him as the "treasure of the country."

As a military adviser, Fotucheng was able to "tame" Shi Le and to inculcate him with Buddhist teachings. He tried by skillful means to minimize the suffering of people and saved countless lives. Meanwhile, generously supported by the imperial court, Fotucheng was able to spread Buddhism in society and had 893 temples built around Luoyang. He also trained numerous capable disciples, including Daoan and Senglan, and laid down a sound foundation for future Buddhist development in the north. Fotucheng died in 348 at the age of 116.

—Xue Yu

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Guidance; Miracles; Mission

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Founders of Religions as Holy People

The founders of religions have traditionally been the recipients of special veneration by loyal disciples, a veneration based on the belief that these individuals enjoyed a special and often unique connection with the divine. Thus a religious founder is a channel of the holy par excellence, but especially because of his or her role as a teacher, passing on a special insight to disciples over many generations. Founders are also usually hailed as particularly valiant witnesses to a faith. Because authority figures the world over have rarely enjoyed radical religious innovation, founders of new religions have more often than not faced persecution, accusations of insanity, and even martyrdom for their faith.

Seven figures, all men, are usually listed as the “great” religion founders: Moses, Zoroaster, Gautama the Buddha, Confucius, Laozi, Jesus, and Muhammad. Some interesting patterns can be discerned among the members of this list. Only one of the great founders, Zoroaster, was a priest of the religion from which he parted ways. The others were all in some ways outsiders from traditional wisdom—most notably Gautama, who was not even a member of the brahmin caste, and Jesus, a member of the working class rather than of the educated elite. All were in some way religious “seekers,” whether retreating to a cave to meditate (as in the case of Muhammad) or sampling in turn every known means of access to the divine (Gautama before his enlightenment).

All the great founders, with the possible exception of Laozi, found that their religious quest culminated in an experience of enlightenment, whether perceived as a fundamental insight into the nature of the universe (Gautama and Laozi) or as a revelation granted by a divine figure. Thus both Moses and Jesus received a progressive enlightenment as God became manifest to them and instructed them. Zoroaster had his first revelation at the age of thirty while at a ritual when he saw an angel who led him to the god Ahura Mazda; the god then told Zoroaster to preach the *true* religion. Similarly, the angel Gabriel visited Muhammad, ordering him to recite the words of God to the populace.

Despite the boldness of the message, though, the great religion founders did not regard themselves as innovators, at least according to the later accounts by their followers. Confucius, in particular, saw his teaching as a restoration of past wisdom rather than anything new. Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad were all given a prophetic role to correct religious abuse, rather than to produce novelties. Perhaps the most novel departure made by one of the founders was the path of the Buddha, although even he existed within a larger ascetic movement in Hinduism.

Perhaps the most striking similarity between the major founders of religions is the tendency of followers to deify these revered figures. In many religions, the founder is either acknowledged to be a god or is the closest admissible figure

to a god on earth. The process was least advanced in Islam and Judaism, in which belief that the founder was unique came into conflict with an emphasis on absolute monotheism. Even in the cases of Moses and Muhammad, though, popular religion has sometimes balanced precariously on a narrow path between veneration and worship. Going a step further, Confucianism gradually elevated the stature of its founder from simple humanity to the fitting recipient of shrines and prayer. In a similar tradition, the founder of Daoism, Laozi, was raised to the ranks of the immortals—although he may not even have existed as a human being on earth. Certainly his veneration as founder of Daoism only developed in the sixth century B.C.E., and he was credited with producing a great religious text that in reality had more than one author. Popular Zoroastrianism raised that religion’s founder from the ranks of mortals to a status somewhere between that of gods and humans. The process, of course, was most fully developed in Christianity and Mahayana Buddhism, to the point that all mainstream Christians and the large majority of Buddhists now believe their founder to be a god.

The general patterns that can be discerned among the great founders are also visible in the ranks of later religious founders and those founders whose religions have been limited to a particular region or have not gained general acceptance. Even when a new religion develops out of a series of wide-reaching social and cultural changes, historically it has been channeled through an *individual* who has taken on a special role as bridge to the divine. This is quite literally true in the case of Jainism, whose *tirthankaras* are literally “ford-makers” to the holy. Westerners accept the tirthankara Mahavira as the founder of that religion, although the Jains themselves believe that he was only the twenty-fourth in a series of holy leaders that stretches back to the dawn of this age of the world. In the case of Jainism, a new tirthankara appears when the needs of society become particularly great. Other religious founders have won widespread support for the same reason; thus, religious founders (as opposed to religious cranks, who can live at any time but fail either to gain a wide following or withstand the test of time) have usually lived at crisis times in their society. A particularly striking case is that of W. D. Fard, founder of the Nation of Islam, whose message was so powerful because of the deep needs of America’s black communities in the early twentieth century. The ongoing crisis of modernity has called a plethora of religious founders into being; only time will tell if their religions will survive the test of time by surviving past a particular societal crisis.

Founders of religions historically have had most, if not all, of the following characteristics: (1) They are not part of the religious “establishment”; (2) they suffer through a period of spiritual quest; (3) they have a special revelation that

includes specific orders to preach a reform of old religion rather than a new religion; (4) they manifest their closeness to the divine, especially through miracles; (5) they suffer persecution; (6) they do not die in an ordinary way; and, most important, (7) their message resonates with the needs of the particular society in such a way that they win acceptance from a significant part of the populace.

The case of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, is a particularly clear example of how a founder's life usually unfolds. He was the son of an accountant who started life as a perfectly ordinary Hindu. But then he experienced a religious crisis that led him to renounce his family and wander around India looking for truth. This search culminated in a divine call—a three-day mystical experience, after which he devoted his life to preaching. Although Nanak suffered some persecution, this is more visible in the life story of Baha'u'llah, the codifier of the Baha'i faith, who spent forty years either imprisoned or in exile, a process that seems to have enriched his mystical experiences. His forerunner, the Bab, had a similar life course, culminating in a death with mystical overtones: The first time a firing squad attempted to execute him, the Bab vanished, to be found nearby calmly talking to several disciples. In all of these cases, followers regard the founder as unique in important ways; the Baha'is have defined their founders as perfect manifestations of God, occupying a middle place between human and divine.

Founders of religions are also notable for the extent to which they “hear God,” whether in the form of angelic messengers, dreams, or visions. During these experiences they are often given specific instructions or a unique position. Thus the Persian prophet Mani was told in a vision that he was the Paraclete and the seal of the prophets. Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was given directions that led him to discover an ancient hidden text. Especially flamboyant and moving are the messages from God granted to founders of new religions and new branches of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa.

The religious founders of the past two centuries have been particularly notable for two factors that raise fundamental questions about the nature of this most wide-reaching form of contact with the divine: They are not normally very well educated, and they have experienced some sort of “dark night of the soul” process, whether attributable to depression, alcoholism, imprisonment, or illness, during which revelation has come to them. To give only one example, the Iroquois Handsome Lake was an alcoholic suffering from severe depression who went into a coma in 1799—during which he had a series of visions. After that he revived and founded a new religion.

What could be the significance of this pattern? Cynics might argue that modern religions (or indeed all religions) were founded by and for anti-intellectuals, reflecting the ba-

sically ecstatic and emotional quality of religion in contrast to the rule of reason. This, however, seems to be too simple an answer. Perhaps the two phenomena—lack of education and “black night” experience—are related. At the most fundamental level, religious founders have succeeded in letting go of a crucial part of their own human self-will (or at least their followers have claimed this for them), becoming in a special way servants of the divine. Nothing can lessen belief in one's own powers as effectively as a deep crisis of helplessness, and perhaps nothing can enhance a feeling of self-sufficiency and tendency to critique, rather than to just experience, traces of the divine in the world as much as a good education.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bab, The; Baha'u'llah; Confucius; Fard, W. D.; Gautama; Handsome Lake; Insanity; Jesus; Laozi; Mahavira; Mani; Martyrdom and Persecution; Moses; Muhammad; Nanak; Smith, Joseph; Zoroaster

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Four Captives

(12th cent. C.E.?)

Jewish legendary scholars

The twelfth-century Jewish historian Abraham ibn Daud attributed a shift in power in medieval Jewish society to the capture by pirates of four Jewish scholars. His story recounts how they were sold into slavery in Egypt, Kairawan (North Africa), and Cordoba, focusing on Moses ibn Hanokh, who was sold in Cordoba. According to this account, Moses ibn Hanokh was redeemed by the Jewish community in Cordoba and revealed as a scholar whose legal knowledge surpassed that of all the local scholars. Under his leadership, claims ibn Daud, Spain not only became independent of the academies in Baghdad but came to replace them as the preeminent center of Jewish scholarship.

Scholars have long recognized this story as a carefully constructed fiction. In particular, attributing the establishment of the Spanish communities as independent centers of scholarly authority to the hand of God justified their independence. Ibn Daud also sought to glorify his own Spanish community in a variety of ways. For example, he modeled Moses ibn Hanokh on the Talmudic sage Hillel (first century B.C.E.).

The story's historical kernel is that Moses ibn Hanokh did come to Spain, probably at the invitation of the Jewish courtier Hasdai ibn Shaprut, and did help to establish the intellectual independence of Spanish Jewry, although not its complete dissociation from the Geonic academies, as ibn Daud would claim. The simultaneous rise of independent

centers in Spain and North Africa reflects not the providential arrival of three scholars but a gradual process of decentralization that paralleled the decline of the authority of the Abbasid caliphate in the ninth and tenth centuries. More generally, this story shows that by the turn of the millennium, Talmudic scholarship—knowledge of the law—had become a key to power and authority within medieval Jewish society.

—Elka Klein

See also: Hillel; Legendary Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Fourteen Holy Helpers

(13th cent.)

Christian saints

Veneration of the Fourteen Holy Helpers (Fourteen Auxiliary Saints, *Vierzehn Nothelfer*, *Vierzehnheiligen*) developed in Germany in the late thirteenth century and was especially prevalent during the fourteenth-century period of the bubonic plague (Black Death). The cult, which may have originated in Regensburg, was supported and promoted by the Dominicans, the Cistercians, and the Benedictines and spread widely in Germany, Hungary, and Sweden in the fifteenth century. It was eventually chiefly centered on the Bavarian pilgrimage chapel originally constructed in the mid-fifteenth century to mark the site where a shepherd received a vision of the infant Jesus surrounded by fourteen children (the Holy Helpers). The present chapel of *Vierzehnheiligen*, on the site of this miraculous apparition, is a masterpiece of late eighteenth-century German rococo architecture by the prominent architect Balthasar Neumann. The chapel was dedicated in 1772.

The fourteen “Helpers in Need,” invoked as a group for their assistance against illness and disease and for their intercession for salvation upon death, represent a powerful and efficacious collaboration of saints who were individually venerated as well. As a collective group of protectors, their strength was believed to be magnified by their alliance. Although the names vary somewhat and local substitutions can be found, the core group generally consists of both male

and female saints, including bishops, virgins, martyrs, soldiers, and monks. These saints are mostly from the early Christian period and hence had well-developed cults already before their grouping in the thirteenth century.

The three female saints are Barbara, Margaret, and Catherine of Alexandria, often invoked against lightning, fires, sudden death, and demonic possession. Margaret is also the patron of pregnant women and Catherine the patron of students and philosophers. The bishop-saints include Denis, Erasmus (or Elmo), and Blaise, all of whose legends also involve particularly gruesome tortures and impressive miracles. The soldier-saints George, Achatius (or Acacius), and Eustace, as well as the physician Pantaleon and the hermit/monk Giles, are also included. These saints were variously invoked against headaches, rabies, colic, sore throats, tuberculosis, and epilepsy. The deacon saint Cyriac (or Cyriacus) was invoked against eye diseases and demonic possession. St. Vitus (invoked against nervous disorders, for example “Saint Vitus’s Dance”) and St. Christopher (the patron of safe journeys) complete the list, although sometimes Nicholas, Sebastian, Sixtus, Oswald, and Wolfgang are substituted for others above.

The Fourteen Holy Helpers are a frequent subject in German devotional art of the late Middle Ages. They are generally depicted as a group of figures, identifiable individually by their symbolic attributes. For example, Giles is accompanied by the doe that fed him in the forest; Denis carries his severed head; George is shown with the dragon he conquered; Barbara holds a chalice and eucharistic wafer and stands by the tower in which she was imprisoned; Catherine stands atop the broken wheel on which she was tortured and holds the sword with which she was decapitated; and Erasmus carries the crank on which his entrails were wound. All of these traditional pictorial details derive from salient episodes in the individual saints’ legends and serve to identify them in single as well as collective presentation.

The Fourteen Holy Helpers are often illustrated surrounding an image of the Virgin Mary or the scene of the crucifixion of Jesus. Sometimes Christopher bearing the infant Jesus appears leading them or is placed in the center of the group. They are also shown seated or standing on the branches of a tree. They appear in sculpture, fresco, panel painting, and prints, primarily of German origin, especially during the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. Their feast day is August 8.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Barbara; Catherine of Alexandria; Christianity and Holy People; Christopher; Denis of Paris; Eustace; George; Giles; Intermediaries; Margaret of Antioch; Pantaleon

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Fox, George

(1624–1691 C.E.)

Christian mystic, founder of Society of Friends (Quakers)

George Fox was born in 1624 in Leicestershire, England, and grew up in a strict Puritan household. He embraced the life of Puritan austerity so sincerely that when his cousin and a friend invited him, nineteen years old at the time, to join them in their rather inebriated festivity, Fox walked away and spent a sleepless night, aggrieved at the “vanity of youth” (Fox 1998). He thereupon decided to leave his familiar surroundings and commence a personal quest for spiritual enlightenment and salvation.

It was during this time, from about 1643 to 1646, that Fox became increasingly convinced of the superfluity of ordained clergy and the archaic structures of institutionalized religion. During the years 1646–1647, he was frequently affected by divine visions or spiritual “openings” that made him begin to articulate a fresh Christian theology, a reflection on the more traditional teachings of the Christian faith in England at the time. Fox spoke about the brilliant light of God that, unbidden as an act of grace, had suffused his very soul, compelling him to pull away the veil of earthly understanding in order to discriminate authentically between falsehood and truth. Moreover, the “truth” of Christianity is the individual experience of that inner light, he said, insisting that all those who believe in Christ are indeed “the children of light.”

Fox began to preach actively in Nottinghamshire and other districts and inspired many disaffected Christians to join with him, even though Puritan as well as Anglican and Presbyterian leaders all rejected and condemned his teachings. Over the next few years, Fox was imprisoned several times, particularly as his itinerant preaching turned more and more to themes of social justice and ecclesiastical accountability. He was also accused and tried for blasphemy: His persecutors were under the mistaken impression that Fox regarded himself as Christ when he spoke of experiencing the inner light of God. Nevertheless, by 1652, the Religious Society of Friends was officially organized in North Yorkshire. The term “Quaker” began to enter the common parlance, at first pejoratively, yet Fox himself spoke of the necessity to quake and tremble before God, and so he also adopted the name.

As the Society of Friends gained converts, Fox endured increasing persecution at the hands of clerical and civil authorities. The death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 left England in disarray, and with the return of Charles II to the throne in

1660, fear of political intrigue held the government in its grip. Dissenters such as the Quakers were immediately and obviously under suspicion, and despite their petitioning for freedom from religious persecution and for general tolerance, the “Quaker Act” of 1662 forbade their meeting for worship. In 1664, Parliament passed the Conventicle Act, which made illegal any gathering of more than five people; as most Quakers refused not to meet, many, including women and children, were imprisoned in harsh conditions. Fox and his followers were released and jailed several other times as well for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy, as oath taking had been rejected by Christ and the apostles. As soon as Fox was released from his prison, he would begin his travels again, preaching throughout the English countryside. From May until August 1669, Fox traveled about and preached in Ireland, and in October that same year he married his follower Margaret Fell. In 1670, the Second Conventicle Act was passed; Fox was arrested and jailed in London, as Margaret was in Lancaster.

Thereafter, in 1671–1673, Fox evangelized in the Americas, with some success. He returned to England in May 1673 and was again imprisoned by the end of the year, with other Friends, for gathering and refusing to take the oath. When he was released in 1674, Fox retired to Swarthmoor Hall with Margaret until 1677, when he and his companions went to preach in Holland and Germany. Political and social unrest continued to plague Britain, and all such conflicts only served to make the situation of the Friends more difficult. However, with the accession to the throne of James II in 1685, greater tolerance in forms of worship was encouraged, first by the first Declaration of Indulgence in 1687, and again with the Second Declaration in 1688.

Fox, though in failing health, was then able, along with his company of Friends, to bear witness and to move about more openly and less fearfully, and a Quaker meetinghouse was built that year at Swarthmoor Hall. In 1689, along with the accession to the throne of William and Mary, the Society of Friends welcomed the establishment of the Toleration Act, which set free all prisoners of conscience and religious conviction and permitted complete tolerance for all religious practices, Christian and non-Christian. Happily, George Fox lived to see his movement not merely established, but vindicated. He died in London on January 13, 1691, breathing his last with the words, “All is well; the Seed of God reigns over all, and over death itself.”

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Fra Angelico (Guido di Piero)

(c. 1387–1455 C.E.)

Christian friar, artist

One of the greatest Christian artists of the Italian Renaissance, Fra Angelico was born Guido di Piero in about 1387. In 1407, at the age of nineteen, he entered the Dominican order at Fiesole. Other evidence, however, points to a birth date between 1395 and 1400, and entrance to the order between 1418 and 1421. The name Angelico is not documented until fourteen years after the artist's death on February 18, 1455. Although many of Angelico's greatest pieces follow the iconographic rules of the Middle Ages, he most certainly established a new school in religious painting, choosing alternate styles over the traditional polyptych altarpieces.

Perhaps Angelico's most important works are the frescoes for San Marco in Florence and for St. Peter's and the Vatican Palace in Rome. The fifty frescoes assembled for the convent at San Marco are the largest group of related works that survive for any single Renaissance painter. The church's altarpiece, possibly begun in 1440–1441, melds iconography and aesthetics from both the Dominicans and the Medici. Fra Angelico placed the Medicean patron saints Francis, Peter Martyr, Lawrence, and John the Evangelist cloaked in Dominican conventions. The infant Christ holds the orb that symbolizes the world, a motif common in Dominican art. Some scholars have suggested that Angelico was offered an archbishopric in 1446, but exact evidence is lacking.

Angelico stands as a great example of the genius of quattrocento Florence. His influence is felt in his pioneering work with linear and geometric perspective. Perhaps one of his most important innovations was the *sacra conversazione* (sacred conversation) in which the Virgin, the Infant Christ, and the saints are posed in natural positions and gestures. Angelico's beatification was not made official by the Vatican until 1984.

—David A. Salomon

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People

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Frances of Rome

(1384–1440 C.E.)

Christian laywoman, caregiver, mystic

Francesca Busa dei Ponziani, a lay wife and mother, founded a religious congregation called the Oblates of Tor de'

Specchi in Rome. Also called Santa Francesca Romana or Francesca da Roma, she was well known for her visions, private devotions, and charitable work in hospitals.

Francesca, who was born into a wealthy Roman family in 1384, wanted to devote herself to the religious life at an early age. At the age of eleven or twelve, however, she was married to a wealthy noble, Lorenzo Ponziani. They had at least three children. In addition to caring for her family, Francesca lived a life full of prayer and ascetic practices. According to her vita, she experienced a great number of miraculous visions, including visions of Christ, Mary, many saints, and even demons. Francesca is best known for her acts of charity. She begged for alms on behalf of the poor and devoted herself to nursing patients in several Roman hospitals and hospices. Through her dedicated nursing, she gained a reputation for miraculous healing. She is credited through her intercession with healing victims of plague, fever, damaged limbs, leprosy, and many other afflictions.

After receiving a vision that she was to organize a congregation for laywomen, in 1425 Francesca and eight or nine other noble Roman women (including her sister-in-law Vannozza, with whom she was very close) founded a religious congregation of female oblates attached to the Benedictine monks of Monte Oliveto at Santa Maria Nova. The oblates remained in their own homes until 1433, when they moved to a house at Tor de' Specchi in Campitelli. Francesca nursed her husband in their family home until his death in 1436, at which time she became an oblate at Tor de' Specchi and was made the superior. Francesca died on March 9, 1440. Her body is preserved in the church of Santa Francesca Romana (formerly Santa Maria Nova) in the Forum. The congregation continued to grow after her death, and the order is still housed at Tor de' Specchi.

Francesca's life and visions were compiled soon after her death by her confessor. The papal curia began her canonization process immediately, and the accounts of three separate inquests are extant (1440, 1443, and 1451). She was finally canonized in 1608. Several paintings and frescoes illustrating her visions also survive from the mid-fifteenth century at Tor de' Specchi.

—Christine F. Cooper

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Laity; Mysticism and Holy People

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Francis of Assisi

(c. 1180–1226 C.E.)

Christian friar, founder, mystic

Celebrated by a vast cross section of medieval society for living a life based on the gospels, Francis of Assisi still ranks among the most revered saints in the history of the Christian church. At first given the name Giovanni, which was later changed to Francesco owing to his father's fondness for France, he was born around 1180 in Assisi, Italy, to Pietro

Bernardone, a wealthy cloth merchant, and his wife, Pica. Although Francis enjoyed a privileged childhood and adolescence, his life took a dramatic turn around 1205 when, while on a military campaign, he had a vision urging him to head back to Assisi. Francis returned home a changed man; he renounced the socializing and materialism of his former life and declared his intention to marry "Lady Poverty."

Soon after this he made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he exchanged clothes with a mendicant and begged for alms. Later, while praying at San Damiano in Assisi, Francis heard a voice speak to him from a crucifix, urging him to restore the decrepit church. A conflict developed when his father discovered that Francis was selling his cloth to finance the project. The denouement remains one of the most famous scenes of Francis's life. In a public act witnessed by the bishop of Assisi, Francis severed ties with his father and gave up all claims to his inheritance. He punctuated the act of renunciation by stripping himself of his clothes, returning them to his father.

In about 1208, Francis received new direction in life. While attending church, he was struck by a reading from the tenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew in which Jesus asks



A statue of Francis of Assisi standing above a wishing well in the garden at Mission San Diego de Alcala, San Diego, California. (Richard Cummins/Corbis)

his disciples to renounce all their possessions, exhort people to repent of their sins, and announce to the world the kingdom of God. The experience compelled him to embrace a life of extreme poverty, living in a hut and begging for his food. Before long, Francis began to attract disciples, for whom he wrote the nonextant Primitive Rule, which was probably a simple gloss of gospel passages. He traveled to Rome in 1209 to receive oral approval for the rule from Pope Innocent III, and in this year the Franciscan order was established. Francis's disciples called themselves the Friars Minor (Little Brothers), emphasizing their humility. Their daily lives revolved around preaching to the concerns of everyday people, engaging in liturgical and private prayer, performing manual labor, and begging. Inspired by the model of Francis and his brothers, Clare of Assisi petitioned Francis to establish a similar society for women, and together they cofounded the Order of the Poor Clares.

Francis's desire to preach to a wider audience encouraged him to set his sights across the Mediterranean Sea. He reached Egypt in 1219 and was present at the sack of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade. While there, Francis managed to arrange a meeting with al-Kamil, the Egyptian vizier. Francis's preaching impressed al-Kamil, but the vizier did not convert. Francis then traveled as a pilgrim to the Holy Land and remained there until affairs at home forced him to return; the expanding order had become a victim of mismanagement and of its own success. In response, in 1221 Francis drew up the *Regula prima* (First rule), a more distinct rule. After some modification, Pope Honorius III approved a second rule, known as the *Regula secunda* (Second rule) or *Regula bullata* (Approved rule), in 1223. During these years, a Third Order developed among the Franciscans. This order incorporated laypeople who lived by Franciscan ideals but remained with their families, pledging obedience but not continence. Francis drew up instructions for these Tertiaries, as they came to be known, around 1221.

Francis is well known for having received the stigmata, the wounds of the passion of Christ, which were given to him in 1224 during an ecstatic trance on Mount La Verna. His health began to decline after this experience, and by 1225 Francis had lost his vision. He died on October 3, 1226. In a final act of humility, he had asked to be buried on the Colle d'Inferno, a notorious hill outside of Assisi where criminals were executed, but instead he was laid to rest at the church of St. George in Assisi. There Pope Gregory IX canonized him on July 16, 1228; on May 25, 1230, his relics were translated to the great double church of St. Francis, which had been erected in his honor in the city.

Francis has continued to appeal to people of all faiths throughout the centuries, especially thanks to legends that express his deep affinity with animals, most famously his sermon to the birds. Yet, in spite of many twentieth-century

writers' anachronistic attempts to fashion him into a hippie, nature-lover, and proto-environmentalist, it should be kept in mind that Francis was, above all, a disciple of Christ and an obedient son of the Roman church, which celebrates his feast on October 4.

—Dawn Marie Hayes

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Clare of Assisi; Compassion and Holy People; Devotion; Imitation of Christ; Nature; Suffering and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Francis of Sales

(1567–1622 C.E.)

Roman Catholic bishop, founder, missionary, reformer

Francis of Sales, bishop of Geneva and founder (with Jane Frances de Chantal) of the Order of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin (Visitandines), was instrumental in the revival of Catholicism in seventeenth-century France. He was beatified in 1661 and canonized in 1665 by Pope Alexander VII; in 1877, he was proclaimed a doctor of the church by Pope Pius IX. His feast day is January 24.

Born in Savoy of noble lineage in 1567, Francis was groomed for a legal career. After studying philosophy under the Jesuits at the University of Paris, he received his law degree from Padua in 1591. Against his father's wishes, Francis aspired to the priesthood. Through family connections he was nominated provost of Geneva by the pope, a prestigious position that led his father to relent. Francis was ordained a priest in 1593. He soon became active in missionary efforts in the heavily Calvinist Savoyard region of Chablais. He persevered in this dangerous work and won many converts to Catholicism through his eloquent preaching.

In 1599, Francis was named coadjutor bishop of Geneva, succeeding to the bishopric in 1602. Since he could not reside in Calvinist-controlled Geneva, he took up residence in nearby Annecy. While striving to restore Catholicism throughout his diocese, he began to implement the reforms of

the Council of Trent (1545–1563), holding clerics and monastic establishments to rigorous standards of morality and behavior. An able administrator, he also dedicated himself to pastoral care; he preached regularly, emphasizing the need for all Catholics, whatever their station, to embrace a life of devotion to Jesus Christ. Francis was a voluminous correspondent and also wrote many influential spiritual treatises, including *Introduction à la vie devote* (Introduction to the devout life, 1609) and *Traite de l'amour de Dieu* (Treatise on the love of God, 1616). In his lifetime he was celebrated for his devotional writings and vigorous reforming efforts.

His friendship with Jane Frances de Chantal (1572–1641), a widowed French noblewoman whom he met in 1604, led to the foundation in 1610 of the Visitandines, envisioned as an order for women who could not bear the austerities of the cloister yet wanted to embrace a religious life through charitable works. The Visitandines grew rapidly throughout France. Contemporary opposition moderated the founding vision, however, and the Visitandines became primarily a contemplative order.

Francis's influence proved long-lasting. In the mid-nineteenth century, future saint John Bosco founded the Society of St. Francis de Sales (Salesians), dedicated to the Christian education of poor boys. The Salesians now educate needy children of both sexes.

—Alisa Plant

See also: Bosco, John; Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Reform and Reaction

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Fry, Elizabeth

(1780–1845 C.E.)

Quaker social reformer

Elizabeth Gurney Fry was a Quaker social reformer. Her organized efforts to improve the lives of the poor and imprisoned set new standards and inspired others in England to engage in charitable activities of social uplift, helping the ill, the institutionalized, the homeless, and others in need. She influenced the treatment of the disadvantaged in her own era, and groups associated with her name and ideals are still active today.



Elizabeth Fry, Quaker philanthropist and prison reformer. (Perry Castaneda library)

Born May 21, 1780, in Norwich, England, she grew up in a pious family. Her father, John Gurney, a businessman, and her mother, Catherine, were devout Quakers. Her mother devoted a part of each day to improving the lives of the poor, and she raised her children to worship silently two hours each day. Elizabeth, the eldest of twelve children, helped raise her brothers and sisters. At eighteen, she heard American Quaker William Savery preach in Norwich. This experience changed her life. From then on she involved herself more in social service. She gathered clothes for the poor, taught Sunday school in her home, helped children learn to read, and visited the sick.

Elizabeth married Joseph Fry in 1800, and they eventually had eleven children. Balancing mothering and ministering to others, she started her preaching ministry in the Society of Friends (Quakers) in 1811. At thirty-two, she heard about the deplorable conditions in Newgate Prison. Visiting Newgate, she found 300 women and their children crowded together in cramped quarters. Women already sentenced for crimes and others awaiting trial were all mixed together, sane and insane, ill and well, innocent and hardened offenders. Many slept without bedding or clothes for sleeping. She

saw two women prisoners taking clothes from a dead child to clothe their own children. The indignities of such chaotic conditions moved Fry to work for change.

Despite officials' initial resistance, Fry furnished clothing for needy prisoners and set up a school and a chapel in the jail. In 1817, she and other Quakers organized the Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners in Newgate and involved other concerned Friends. Fry's idea of giving prisoners uniforms and numbers was meant to ensure warmth and to make it easier to identify and reward good behavior. Fry was also outspoken on capital punishment, calling it an evil generating evil results. She campaigned for lesser sentences for women condemned to death for offenses such as forgery.

Fry also began small libraries for men stationed in the 500 Coast Guard posts in England in the 1820s. Encountering many beggars in Brighton, she responded to their plight, forming the Brighton District Visiting Society, a service organization to help the poor. She also devoted time to help the homeless of London, patients in mental institutions, and those in workhouses and hospitals. She organized a school for nurses, training the women to comfort patients both spiritually and physically. This work influenced Florence Nightingale (1820–1910).

Tirelessly active on behalf of the disadvantaged, Fry left a legacy inspiring to service workers. She wrote that she rejoiced to see the day when so many women of every rank, instead of spending their time in trifling and unprofitable pursuits, were engaged in works of usefulness and charity. In England and Canada there are still Elizabeth Fry Societies dedicated to serving prisoners and others. She died in 1845.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gender and Holy People

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Fu-gen

See **Samantabhadra**

Fujiwara no Kamatari

(614–669 C.E.)

Shinto leader, reformer

Fujiwara no Kamatari was a leading proponent of the Taika reforms in seventh-century Japan and founder of the Fujiwara family, which dominated the imperial court during much of the Heian period (794–1192). He was posthu-

mously deified as a *daimyōjin* (great god) and enshrined in Danzan Jinja.

Kamatari was born in 614 into the Nakatomi family, which served the court by performing Shinto rituals, an assignment that was deprived of its former status since the introduction of Buddhism (traditionally dated 552). By the early seventh century, the Soga family, which had been the main advocate of the introduction of Buddhism and therefore a long-standing opponent of the Nakatomi family, had established itself as the dominant clan. In the 640s, Kamatari associated himself with Prince Naka no Ōe (626–671), who feared that the growing ambitions of the Soga family could usurp the imperial sovereignty. With Kamatari as one of the leading figures, a coup d'état was successfully carried out in 645. The Soga family was defeated, Naka no Ōe was designated heir to the throne, and Kamatari was appointed to the highest administrative office. Subsequently, Kamatari and Naka no Ōe initiated a program of social, political, and economic reforms known as the Taika reforms, taking Tang China for their model. Naka no Ōe bestowed the new family name of Fujiwara upon Kamatari shortly before the latter's demise in 669.

Kamatari's remains were initially entombed in the province of Settsu (part of present-day prefectures Osaka and Hyōgo). They were reburied on Mt. Danzan (located in the present-day city of Sakurai, Nara prefecture) by Kamatari's eldest son, Jōe (645–714), a Buddhist monk. Jōe built a thirteen-story pagoda in 678, and later, in 701, a sanctuary in which a statue of Kamatari was erected. It was not until the separation of Shinto and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*) during the Meiji period (1868–1912) that the complex was declared to be a *jinja* (Shinto shrine), although the syncretistic amalgamation of Shinto and Buddhist elements had hitherto characterized the history of the veneration of Kamatari's spirit.

The statue of Kamatari allegedly started to crack and the mountain began to rumble whenever the spirit of Kamatari wanted to warn the political leaders against potential threat, whereupon the court would dispatch messengers, whose prayers and offerings restored the statue and averted the threat. In the fourteenth century, the title *danzan gongen* (Mt. Danzan avatar, or manifestation) was bestowed by Emperor Godaigo, and in the fifteenth century, Emperor Go-hanazono conferred upon Kamatari the title *danzan daimyōjin* (Mt. Danzan great godhead).

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Politics and Holy People; Shinto and Holy People

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Fujiwara Seika

(1561–1619 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

As the first Zen monk to abandon Buddhist orders and become a professional Neo-Confucian scholar, Fujiwara Seika marks an important turning point in the history of Japanese spirituality. Born in 1561, he first entered a monastery at the age of seven. After his father and elder brother were killed and the family estate destroyed in a military conflict in 1578, he entered Sōkokuji, one of the Gozan Zen temples in Kyoto. Distinguishing himself in both Zen practice and Confucian studies, he soon rose to the position of chief seat, second in rank only to the abbot. In 1590, Hideyoshi (1538–1598), the country's military overlord, ordered him to meet with envoys from Korea, and in 1593 he was granted an audience with the Ming ambassadors. In 1591, at Hideyoshi's base in Kyushu, he met Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), the future founder of the Tokugawa shogunate (1600–1868), and Ieyasu invited him to Edo to lecture on the great Tang dynasty work *Zhen-guan zhengyao* (The essentials of government of the Zhen-guan period [627–649]). The task of unifying and pacifying Japan after more than a century of warfare had created a great need for Chinese works on military strategy and the art of government.

It was probably in 1598 that Seika withdrew from the monastic order, inspired in part by his meetings with visiting Korean Confucian scholars in 1590. From 1598 to 1600, he enjoyed a close relationship with another Korean Confucian, Kang Hang (1568–1618), brought back as a captive by Hideyoshi, and the two worked on preparing Neo-Confucian editions of the Confucian classics. In 1600, Ieyasu summoned Seika to an audience in Kyoto, where, clad in the robe of a Confucian scholar, Seika engaged in a vehement debate with some representatives of the Buddhist establishment. Seika declined Ieyasu's subsequent invitation to enter government service, but in 1604 he met Hayashi Razan (1583–1657) and accepted him as a disciple. In 1607, Razan entered Ieyasu's service as an expert on Chinese books and the composition of legal and diplomatic documents. He continued to serve the next two shoguns for another fifty years, gradually establishing a position for himself and his descendants as the leading Confucian teacher and historian in di-

rect shogunal service. Seika remained inclined toward a reclusive life, but he was avidly sought out as a teacher by a number of powerful men.

Seika refused to condemn the Lu-Wang intuitional school in the name of the rationalist Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy, emphasizing in his early correspondence with Razan the extent of the agreement between the original teachings of Lu Xiangshan (1139–1193) and Zhu Xi (1130–1200) against Razan's insistence on the need to reject the former for its affinities with Buddhism and Daoism. He counseled Razan, "Once the student breaks through to the fundamental unitive insight, he will know for himself without doubt whether they are the same or different, and not by a knowledge based on seeing and hearing" (SGT 1975, 13: 523). This emphasis on unity over difference was influenced by the Zen idea that different doors lead ultimately to the same truth, by the Lu-Wang school's tolerant attitude toward other teachings, and by Lin Zhaoen's (1517–1598) insistence on "the unity of the three teachings."

In his late work, *Daigaku yōryaku* (Epitome of the great learning), Seika, under Lin's influence, explains the key Neo-Confucian practice of *gewu* (the method by which knowledge is extended) as meaning to "eliminate" the "things" (or desires) from the mind so that the luminous awareness innate to the mind will naturally shine forth. This luminous awareness is an awareness of "perfect goodness," an undifferentiated state that exists primordially before the splitting of reality into yin and yang, so its "extension" can only be something achieved without effort. Seika laid a broad and solid foundation for Japan's Edo-period turn to Confucian learning, presenting Confucianism as something fully capable of competing with Zen in the realm of spirituality but also as something much more capable than Zen of development in the direction of political philosophy and practical learning.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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G

Galgani, Gemma

(1878–1903 C.E.)

Roman Catholic visionary, mystic

Born to a middle-class family in Camigliano near Lucca, Tuscany, in 1878, at a very early age Gemma Galgani exhibited an unusually heightened spirituality. She was said to enter deeply into prayer as young as age five. When she was eight years old, her mother died, and Gemma thereupon attended a local convent school run by the sisters of St. Zita, where she was a diligent student. However, chronic illness and a dwindling family fortune caused her to leave the school after seven years. In 1896, Gemma's father died, leaving Gemma and her six remaining siblings in poverty. By 1899, Gemma had gone to live with the Giannini, a prominent family in Lucca who knew her family and were also benefactors of the Passionist order. However, chronic illness continued to haunt Gemma, and she died of tuberculosis on April 11, 1903. Best known for exhibiting stigmata over the course of four years from 1899 to 1903, Gemma Galgani was beatified in 1933 and canonized as the "Daughter of the Passion" in 1940. She is buried in the chapel of the Passionist convent in Lucca, Italy, and her feast day is April 11.

From an early age, Gemma Galgani had manifested an unusual sensitivity to the passion of Christ. At her first eucharist when she was nine years old, she is said to have experienced a mystical vision of the crucified Christ. Throughout her short life, she had numerous other visions of Jesus, transforming her spiritual consciousness into a mystical apprehension of Christ as the suffering servant, as well as visions of angels, of the Trinity, and of the Virgin Mary. Gemma also experienced what, in her words, were apparitions and torments of a demonic nature. However, Gemma's devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and her oft-stated desire to imitate Christ completely in suffering in order to expiate the sins of the world, caused her to receive the grace of

the stigmata during Holy Week in June 1899, and thereafter on different occasions over the next three years.

The claim of stigmata, even if witnessed, has always stirred loud controversy as well as deep devotion, and none more so than the case of Gemma Galgani. Nevertheless, official and nonclerically verified documentation records that on the backs and palms of Gemma's hands, as well as on the tops and soles of her feet, there appeared deep lacerations, partly flowing with blood; additionally, the wounds of the hands seemed to be accompanied by a fleshy swelling in the shape and size of large nails. There was a laceration as if made by a sword or a lance on her side, and there were instances of her experiencing, along with the wounds, the bloodshed of the crown of thorns, the scars of the scourges, and severe pains in her left shoulder (on which Jesus bore the cross). At all times, Gemma demanded that her experiences not become publicly exposed, and it was only after her death that her extraordinary life became known outside the walls of her Italian town.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Imitation of Christ; Mysticism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People

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Gall

(c. 560–c. 650 C.E.)

Christian monk, missionary

A companion of the Irish missionary Columbanus (543–615), Gall settled as a hermit with a group of disciples in what is now Switzerland, where his cult gave rise to the

monastic center bearing his name. Gall was born around 560 and given to the monastery of Bangor as a youth. Instructed by Comgall and Columbanus, he excelled in his studies and was most likely ordained a priest before leaving for the continent with Columbanus in 590. Gall assisted Columbanus in the monastic foundations of Annegray, Luxeuil, and Fontaine and traveled with him in exile as far as Arbon.

Gall refused to accompany Columbanus to Italy, however, most likely on account of illness. As punishment for his disobedience, his superior forbade him to celebrate mass. Settling in the wilderness near the Stienbach River in 612, Gall attracted a small number of disciples. The community maintained Irish monastic tradition, living in separate cells with a common house of prayer, following the strict Rule of Columbanus and occupying their time with prayer, work, fasting, and reading. Gall's gifts of counsel and conversion increased his spiritual authority in the region. He preferred the contemplative life of a hermit and preacher and obeyed Columbanus's prohibition, refusing the bishopric of Constance and turning down the abbacy of the monastery of Luxeuil. He died in about 650 while visiting Arbon. His body was returned to the hermitage, where it was buried behind the altar.

Shortly after his death, Gall's settlement disbanded. Considered an exceptionally sacred spot because of his relics, the site attracted pilgrims, was used as a secure deposit for treasure, and served as a place of refuge. Although he received no formal canonization, Gall was referred to as *sanc-tus* within a few years of his death, and his name is included in ninth-century martyrologies. The establishment of a formal monastic community named for the saint on the site in 720 by Otmar further promoted his cult. The monastery grew into a center of monastic spirituality and literary production, and over time, St. Gall's cult spread to 231 places of veneration, primarily in Switzerland, Germany, and northern Italy. Many miracles are associated with the saint, including the exorcism of Duke Gunzo's daughter and the prescience of Columbanus's death in 615. St. Gall is most often depicted with a bear, which, according to legend, brought a log for his fire at his command. His feast is celebrated on October 16.

—Amy Michelle Stout

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Columbanus; Hermits

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Gampopa

(1079–1153 C.E.)

Buddhist master

Gampopa, born in 1079, was a Tibetan Buddhist master famed for his great literary knowledge, his accomplishment in meditation, and his unification of monasticism and the esoteric teachings of Buddhist tantra. Originally trained in the monastic environment of the Kadampa order, Gampopa met with the tantric master Milarepa (1052–1135) and became his principal student. He established a monastic community at the Gampo Mountain and gained fame for his spiritual insights and ability to guide his students in the practice of meditation.

Gampopa's tradition hails him as an emanation of the bodhisattva Candrakumara prophesied by the Buddha. As a youth he studied medicine, became a doctor, and led a married life. When his wife and children died prematurely, Gampopa was ordained into the monastic Kadampa tradition, where he quickly became learned and skilled in meditation. He heard of the master Milarepa and set out to request guidance from this accomplished yogi of the mountains. Although Gampopa already was a master in his own right, his meeting with Milarepa led to a profound awakening that exposed Gampopa's previous realization as flawed. Gampopa did not stay long with Milarepa but nevertheless became Milarepa's foremost student and lineage holder. On Milarepa's advice, he went to the Gampo Mountain and established a center for the ordained Buddhist community—the first of its kind for the Kagyu School to which Milarepa belonged.

Gampopa was known for his great accomplishment in meditation, which he often demonstrated with his clairvoyant powers and supernatural abilities, as well as his great erudition in the classic Indian Mahayana scriptures. He successfully combined the Kadampa and Kagyu schools into a single stream of spiritual practice. This tradition was later to become known as Sutramahamudra, indicating Gampopa's synthesis of the Kadampa (*sutra*) and Kagyu (*mahamudra*) traditions. Gampopa's greatest legacy for the future was perhaps his classic treatise *Thar pa rin po che'i rgyan* (The jewel ornament of liberation). This text, which beautifully exemplifies his ability to unify two great Buddhist traditions, was the first indigenous Tibetan treatise in the later-popular genre of scriptures elucidating a graded path to enlightenment.

In *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, Gampopa lays out the entire Mahayana path and explains in great detail about the potential for enlightenment, the value of a religious life, the benefits of following a spiritual guide, the way to apply the Buddha's message, the ultimate achievement of buddhahood, and, finally, the ability of enlightened beings to benefit anyone caught up in the trouble of cyclic existence. The treatise is a most influential scripture and continues to be

studied in great detail at all Kagyu institutions of higher learning.

—Andreas Doctor

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Milarepa; Scholars as Holy People

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Gandhi, Mohandas K.

(1869–1948 C.E.)

Hindu political leader, holy man

Mohandas K. Gandhi was a prolific author, a political leader for the independence of India from British colonial domination, a major international figure, and a religious inspiration to many. This type of status seemed unlikely for a young man who was admittedly shy, bookish, diminutive, and self-conscious. He was held by his contemporaries, however, in high esteem, as is evident by his title Mahatma (great soul) and the affectionate name of Bapu (father). Gandhi's political prestige was enhanced by the meager dress and humble lifestyle that accompanied his transformation into a Hindu holy man later in his life.

Gandhi was born in 1869 into a caste of grocers in an area heavily influenced by the Jain religion and its philosophy of nonviolence. Although married at an early age, he would later condemn the practice of child marriage. While a student, he read the Bible, but he was more influenced by the Bhagavad Gita of his own culture. The works of Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) and John Ruskin (1819–1900) also influenced him.

After completing his education in England, Gandhi returned to India to discover that his mother had died. His legal career began awkwardly, but in 1893 he secured a position in South Africa, where he became aware of legal restrictions on Indian immigrants. He experienced discrimination personally when he was thrown off a train. In South Africa, Gandhi became a champion of indentured laborers, led a protest that resulted in a small victory against a poll tax, and played an instrumental role in establishing the Natal Indian Congress, which aimed to promote goodwill among European and Indian communities. He exposed the problems of Indians in South Africa with his “Green Pamphlet,” composed on a visit to India. Upon his return to South Africa, he was falsely accused of smuggling workers into the country and condemning political authorities in the press.

In South Africa, Gandhi established the Phoenix Settlement, a self-supporting community intended to produce a



Mohandas K. Gandhi, the “mahatma” (great soul). (Library of Congress)

new kind of human being, along with a weekly journal called *Indian Opinion*, in 1904. He also started another experiment in communal living called the Tolstoy Farm. During 1906, Gandhi led a struggle to oppose the Black Act, which required all Indians wishing to reside or trade in the colony to register. In 1909, he published a work of political theory entitled *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home Rule) about the detrimental effects of modern civilization in India.

In Europe, Gandhi volunteered his services for ambulance work during World War I. After returning to India, he established the Satyagraha Ashram in Ahmadabad. During 1916, he worked to abolish the system of indentured labor in India, and the following year he was elected president of the Gujarat Sabha. He later became involved politically in the Khilafat Incident, which involved the internment of two Muslim brothers for their journalistic opinions, and called for a work stoppage to protest the Rowlatt Bills, laws giving the government greater leeway in fighting terrorism.

Gandhi's arrest for opposition to the government precipitated communal violence that led to many casualties. Although Gandhi was devastated by the violence and the lack of success of the work stoppage, he had become an all-India

public figure through the publicity surrounding this event. In 1919, he began to advocate widespread noncooperation with the British; the following year, he became president of the Home Rule League. Gandhi was forced to abandon his campaign of civil disobedience when it resulted in violence. Soon, he was arrested and pleaded guilty to inciting disaffection toward the government, but he was released from prison early for an emergency appendectomy.

By 1925, Gandhi began to devote his attention to the cause of *khadi*, the spinning and weaving of clothing to help India become more self-sufficient. As part of a program of civil disobedience, he made his famous march to the sea to make salt in protest of the salt tax. Further incarceration awaited Gandhi. After 1937, he withdrew from politics and administration to pursue his utopian vision of nonviolence and home rule through work centered in the village of Sevagram in central India. He also wrote for a paper called *Harijan* (Children of God), which was named after the untouchables of India. In the 1940s, Gandhi was involved in the “Quit India” movement. But although India won independence in 1947, he lamented the division of India and the communal carnage that resulted during 1946 and 1947. Finally, in 1948 a Hindu fundamentalist assassinated Gandhi, whose last uttered word was the name of Rama, his personal deity. Gandhi was a charismatic figure and an ascetic who had an aura of saintliness as well as an active and worldly persona.

—Carl Olson

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Status; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Gangamata Goswamini

(18th cent. C.E.)

Hindu Vaishnava ruler, renunciant

A renounced female Vaishnava saint from the eastern province of Bengal, India, Gangamata Goswamini is celebrated by

Hindu Vaishnavas of the Chaitanya school even to the present. Born to King Naresh Narayana in the state of Bengal in the eighteenth century, she was given the name Saci (pronounced shu [“u” as in “sun”] -chee). It is said that from early childhood, she constantly absorbed herself in literature and the sacred texts of Vaishnavism. Although her royal parents desired a marriage for their exceptional daughter, Saci refused. Shortly after the rule of the kingdom fell to her following the death of her parents, she delegated her royal responsibilities to others and went on pilgrimage to the holy places.

Saci's travels took her to the Jagannatha (Krishna) temple of Puri in the neighboring southern state of Orissa. From there, she was further inspired to travel to Vrindaban, the holiest land for worshippers of the deity Krishna, found within the rural sacred area known as Vraja, about 80 miles south of Delhi. In the holy village, she found her spiritual preceptor, Haridasa Pundit, a teacher in the Vaishnava lineage beginning with Krishna Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533), the devotional revivalist. Haridasa's spiritual master was Ananta Acharya, whose master was Gadadhara Pundit, a close associate of Chaitanya's.

Saci proved her intense desire to become absorbed in spiritual life by renouncing her fine dress and jewelry, along with her identity as a princess, and adopting the simple dress of a beggar. She became immersed in a humble life of service and devotion under the tutelage of her spiritual guide, who initiated her with the Krishna mantra, formally establishing her as his disciple. Because of Saci's great strides in renunciation and dedicated practices with other saintly female Vaishnavas, Haridasa Pundit charged her with a mission—returning to Puri in Orissa in order to further the teachings of Chaitanya and his immediate disciples, the six goswamis of Vrindaban. She quickly established herself as a spiritual authority in Puri, so much so that the presiding king, Mukunda Deva, became her disciple and even insisted that others accept her as a spiritual preceptor. It was in Puri that Saci became known as Gangamata Goswamini. Her succession of disciples continues to this day, with the disciples of her lineage residing primarily in the eastern province of Orissa.

—Graham M. Schweig

See also: Chaitanya, Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna; Devotion; Wealth and Poverty

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Gangasati (Gangabai)

(dates unknown)

Hindu poet

Gangasati, a medieval Hindu Gujarati saint-poet of the *nijiyā* tradition, composed about fifty-one *bhajans* (hymns) on

various themes, such as the importance of a guru, the foundation of spiritual practice, the everyday life of a devotee, the nature of *bhakti* (devotion), words and their mystic nature, yoga, spiritual training, and the grace of the guru. Her bhajans are very popular, particularly among the *bhajaniks* (hymn singers) of the Saurashtra region of India.

Not much is authentically known about this woman poet. However, traditional accounts say that she was born in a Vaghela Rajput (warrior) community and that she married a man named Kahalbha, or Kahalsang, who was also a follower of the *nijiyi* path. The couple had a son, Ajobha, who was married to one Paanbai. According to legend, Gangasati decided to take *samadhi* (the final stage of yogic renunciation) after her husband decided to do so, following an event in which he resurrected a cow to prove his spiritual power (though he felt guilty at reversing the wishes of the gods). He asked Gangasati to delay taking *samadhi* in order to give spiritual knowledge to their daughter-in-law first. Gangasati agreed. She composed one bhajan a day on a spiritual theme to sing to Paanbai. After fifty-one days of this, she took *samadhi*.

In one bhajan, Gangasati contrasts *abhayaas* (practice) with imagination and argues that a devotee should perceive a higher level of reality only through *abhayasa*. Once that level is actualized, he or she must live in total solitude, which she defines as being devoid of everything, even spiritual practice. In another bhajan, she says that *vacan*, “a word,” “a promise,” or “a vow,” has created fourteen *lokas* (worlds), the sun, the moon, and *maya* (illusion), and therefore one must try to know the *vacan*.

Gangasati was one of the few medieval poets who recognized the spiritual importance of language and the need to practice spirituality through language. Yet in another bhajan, she reflects on the relationship between *vacan* and time and says that time cannot devour things that are in *vacana*, as it is in the later entity that things acquire their perfection. Time, in other words, can devour only imperfect things. The idea of the guru as a perfected teacher is central in the *nijiyi* tradition, and therefore it is not surprising that many of Gangasati's bhajans deal with various aspects of guru.

—*Babu Suthar*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People

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Ganjin
See **Jianzhen**

Gargi

(8th century B.C.E.?)

Hindu sage

Gargi is one of only two women who engage the great sage, Yajñavalkya (eighth century B.C.E.?), in philosophical debate in the *Brihadara Ayaka Upanishad* (c. 600 B.C.E.). She herself thus appears as a sage, a rare example of such a type in Hinduism.

Gargi Vacaknavi appears in this work as the only female member of a group of brahmins present at the sacrifice sponsored by a king named Janaka. At this *brahmodya* (theological discussion), each of the brahmins questions Yajñavalkya on some aspect of ritual in an attempt to defeat him and obtains the sacrificial gift of one thousand cows. Very little is said about Gargi's personality or her marital status, and it is not directly said that she is a brahmin.

Gargi's qualifications to be a participant in the *brahmodya* are indicated by two facts. First, her name, Gargi, labels her as a member of the Garga clan, which is mentioned along with other ancient ritualistic authorities already in *Kathaka Samhita* 13.12. Second, Yajñavalkya's warning, “Don't ask too many questions, Gargi, or your head will shatter apart!” parallels warnings found in several Vedic texts in the context of debates about the meaning of ritual. The case of Vidagdha Shakalya losing his head in a *brahmodya* suggests the fate that may fall upon someone who is not aware of correct debating procedures. This seemingly real threat survives in the Upanishads as a threat in ritual and theological debates. The fact that Gargi's head remains intact when the debate continues confirms her status as a person knowledgeable about the Veda and about the procedures. In addition, the style of her questions, systematically interrogating Yajñavalkya as to “what the world is woven back and forth upon,” also suggests that she is qualified to engage the great sage in debates about cosmological and metaphysical issues.

Gargi continues to press Yajñavalkya for the answer to her question. Yajñavalkya finally answers and reveals that the world is woven back and forth on *brahman*, the imperishable. Upon realizing Yajñavalkya's superior knowledge, Gargi, as a qualified colleague, judges that, indeed, Yajñavalkya is the wisest of the brahmins present.

Gargi's active participation in the Upanishadic dialogues suggests that women in the Vedic period must have had access to the study of the sacred texts, the Vedas. They may have been more active in the religious sphere during this period than they were in the later Hindu tradition, when, along with the *shudras* (members of the lowest caste), they were barred from studying the sacred texts.

—*Carlos Lopez*

See also: Gender and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Yajñavalkya

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Garvey, Marcus Moziah

(1887–1940 C.E.)

Christian social activist

Marcus Moziah Garvey was a black Jamaican born to parents of unmixed African ancestry in 1887. His early years were spent in England, where he developed a sense of duty for the plight of blacks throughout the world. He returned to Jamaica in 1914, establishing the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association (UNIA).

In 1916, Garvey traveled to the United States to raise funds to establish an industrial school in Jamaica. However, after finding in the American black a hunger for his message of self-determination and racial pride, he established a base for UNIA in Harlem and stayed. Using the slogans "Africa for the Africans at home and abroad," and "Up you mighty race, you can accomplish what you will," Garvey stirred the black masses as no one before him had ever done. Garvey's UNIA staged elaborate parades and gatherings while dressing its followers in colorful uniforms and encouraging them to announce that they were members of a new republic. Garvey preached a new gospel of black racial pride and a united Africa under the rule of black men. He even negotiated with the United Nations and Liberia for a way to resettle blacks of the diaspora back to their native Africa. In this way, Garvey pointed the black masses toward Africa as the land of their hope and future.

By also preaching that God was black and had created the black man to be the equal of all humanity, and by encouraging comparisons between himself and the suffering Christ, Garvey was embraced as a messianic figure—his followers often referring to him as the "Black Moses." Blacks of the diaspora recognized that God had gifted Garvey to lead the black masses into deeper levels of self-acceptance, economic self-sufficiency, and racial revitalization. Through Garvey, "mother Africa" became the focal point of black hope, and blacks throughout the world enjoyed a season of renewal. Thus, although he had nothing to do with the movement directly, Garvey deeply influenced the nascent Rastafarian movement.

The UNIA reached its zenith in 1921, boasting a membership of more than 6 million blacks from throughout the United States, the West Indies, and Africa. In 1927, Garvey was deported from the United States and sent back to his native Jamaica as an undesirable alien. In 1935, he relocated



Marcus Garvey, leader of the first mass movement of African Americans in the United States. (Library of Congress)

permanently to London, where he died a pauper and in silent isolation in 1940.

—Rick Gray

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People

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Gautama (Pali: Gotama)

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Founder of Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama was the Shakyamuni Buddha of the present cosmic era. His given name was Siddhartha; Gautama was

the name of the *kshatriya* clan to which his community of Shakyas belonged. To the Buddhists, he is known as a *tathagata* (thus gone), *mahasamana* (great ascetic), and *jina* (conqueror). Most Buddhists honor him as the fifth century B.C.E. founder of the existing Buddhist community. He was generally addressed by his disciples as Bhagava (Lord). Various epithets used for him define him as having attained perfection in all domains. His wisdom is considered perfect, as are his physical form and manner. As a perfectly enlightened being, Gautama is understood to have perfected various virtues (*paramitas*) over the course of numerous lifetimes. These prodigious efforts prepared him to awake fully to the true nature of reality just as other buddhas had awakened before him.

Siddhartha was born in the Lumbini Grove near Kapilavastu (now identified variously with Piprahwa in Uttar Pradesh, India; and Tilaurakot, Nepal). His father, Shuddhodana, was the chief ruler of Kapilavastu. His mother, Mahamaya, died seven days after giving birth to him. He was brought up by his aunt and stepmother, Gautami Prajapati. On the basis of his bodily marks, it was predicted by brahmins gathered at the naming ceremony that he would either become a universal king or a buddha. The young Gautama enjoyed a life of great ease and luxury and got married at age sixteen to Yashodhara (also known as Rahulamata), the daughter of Suppabuddha.

When Gautama was twenty-nine, he saw the four omens (an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse), was blessed with a son (named Rahula), and left home on the same day in search of higher truth, as he found the birth of a child another form of worldly attachment. Away from the palace of his father, he cut off his own hair and put on the garments of a forest-dweller. He wandered around in the forests for six years, meeting different renunciants and practicing severe austerities that no human being had previously undertaken. But after realizing the folly of extreme asceticism, he decided to abandon these practices. Finally, he attained enlightenment (buddhahood) under the bodhi tree near Gaya in India. He became an embodiment of human nature perfected and came to possess supernatural powers. Following his enlightenment, Gautama became a teacher and delivered his first sermon, known as *Turning the Wheel of Dharma*, in the Deer Park at Sarnath near Varanasi. He started his own monastic order and preached in the Gangetic basin of northern India for forty-five years.

The ultimate goal of the Buddha's teachings was to lead people to *nirvana*, freedom from the cycle of birth and death. Through his Four Noble Truths, he taught that the world is full of suffering; that suffering is caused by desire, ignorance, and attachment; that this suffering can be removed by destroying its cause; and that in order to end suffering, one must follow the Eightfold Path (right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort,

right mindfulness, and right concentration). Through his doctrine of karma, he taught that every individual is the maker of his or her own destiny. The theme of universal compassion "for the good of the world" appears recurrently in his teachings. Many fascinating stories in Buddhist literature talk about the Buddha's love for animals, children, and the downtrodden. He also believed that an individual should avoid the extremes of both severe asceticism and luxury. Because he felt that everything is impermanent, he did not believe in the existence of any immortal soul or god. Meditation formed the basis both of his teachings and of his spiritual quest for the attainment of enlightenment. He also opened the doors of his order to women, though after some initial reluctance. He refused to acknowledge the sanctity of the Indian caste system and accepted disciples from the lowest untouchable communities.

Very little information as to the personality of Gautama is available. In the legends, he is described as a golden-hued man whose voice had eight qualities (fluency, intelligibility, sweetness, audibility, continuity, distinctness, depth, and resonance). He was endowed with the thirty-two marks of a Great Man. He had a fascinating quality and was described as seductive by his opponents. Texts describe him as handsome, perfect in complexion and stature. He loved solitude and often spent long periods of time away from human haunts, allowing only one monk to bring him his meals. According to one account, it was his practice to spend part of the day in seclusion, but he was always ready to see anyone who urgently desired his spiritual counsel. He often declared that he was among the happy ones of this earth, and he remained unmoved by opposition or abuse.

The Buddha was extremely devoted to his disciples. Sometimes he attended to the sick himself, thus setting an example to his followers. In return for his devotion, his disciples adored him. Many stories in Buddhist literature point toward his keen interest in the spiritual growth and development of his disciples. He readily encouraged them to achieve their goals. He was never overanxious to get converts: Whenever a visitor declared himself his follower, he would urge him to take time to consider. It was his regular habit to greet with a smile anyone who visited him, inquiring after his well-being and thus putting him at his ease, and when anyone sought permission to question him, he made no conditions as to the topic of discussion.

Gautama was an innovator and a charismatic personality. He had a unique reputation among his contemporaries as a teacher and trainer of the human heart and an accomplished human being. Within his own lifetime, people attributed to him the status of a saint, and a large proportion of the population of northern India converted to Buddhism because of him. He predicted his own death, which took place at Kushinagara after he ate at the house of Cunda the

Smith, apparently of food poisoning. He died (or attained nirvana) at the age of eighty. He admonished his monks for the last time with these words: “Decay is inherent in all component things; work out your salvation with diligence.” His mortal remains were divided into eight equal parts and *stupas* (shrines) were built over them.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Child Prodigies; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Hagiography; Kassapa; Mara; Rahula; Reincarnation; Sexuality and Holy People; Shakra; Veneration of Holy People

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Ge Hong (Ke Hung)

(283–343/363 C.E.)

Daoist alchemist

Ge Hong was the first Daoist practitioner to proclaim the search for immortality a serious endeavor and thus became China's first great alchemist. Born in 283, Ge was originally from Tanyang in Jiangsu province. During his lifetime he held several high military and civil positions in Canton in southern China. He is also remembered as a prominent physician. A strong proponent of Confucian sociopolitical thinking, he was considered an expert in Confucian thought. Ge saw himself as a Daoist in his inner being and a Confucian in his social life. His doctrine combines Daoism with Confucian virtues. He was opposed to the Neo-Daoist “pure talk” (*pingdan*) techniques of the School of Mystery (Xu-anxue) of some of his contemporaries, a practice he considered devoid of religious value. He felt that physical exercises and sexual practices were merely methods for prolonging life, and one needed to find and imbibe the true elixir for immortality.

The compendium entitled *Shenxian zhuan* (Biographies of the divine immortals), dated 320, is traditionally attributed to Ge. Ge's most famous work, *Baopuzi* (Master who embraces simplicity), was written in about 310 or 317. This second work contains seventy chapters dealing with Daoism, immortals, medical prescriptions, self-cultivation practices,

Confucianism, and Ge's social and political views. Written like an encyclopedia, it focuses on external alchemy and self-cultivation practices to achieve immortality. There are formulas, lists of ingredients, and alchemical procedures as well as advice on calming the mind, breath control techniques, and various calisthenics. Many of the visualization exercises are focused on Laozi, whom Ge credited with originating techniques for guiding energy through the body as well as with techniques of alchemy and dietetics.

Unlike European alchemists, who sought to produce gold, Chinese alchemists sought immortality. Chinese alchemists attempted to create an elixir, or pill, that could be imbibed that would re-create the cosmic processes of change from *yin* to *yang* and thus cause one to live forever. It was hoped that through the manipulation of specific minerals such as cinnabar and mercury, clues to immortality would be revealed.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Laozi

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Gebre Mikael

(1791–1855 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk

Gebre Mikael (or Gäbrä Mika'el, lit. “the servant of [archangel] Michael”) was a nineteenth-century Christian Orthodox monk in Ethiopia who broke with his church's century-old condemnation of Roman Catholicism. After the first, almost successful trial of the Portuguese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to attach the Ethiopian Church to Rome, which ended in bloodshed, Catholics were banned from the country. The arrival, however, of Catholic missionary Giustino de Jacobis (1800–1860) in Ethiopia in 1839, and the interest of Ethiopian leaders in allying with European powers, changed the situation. Gebre Mikael was converted in 1844 and became one of de Jacobis's most devoted collaborators when he built up missionary stations throughout Ethiopia and the northern borderlands at the coast.

By 1841, Gebre Mikael, a renowned traditional theologian of Gonder, a center of learning because of its theological high school, had been a member of a delegation to the Coptic patriarch of Egypt. The delegation had been sent by the governor of the quasi-independent northern Ethiopian kingdom of Tigray to get a new metropolitan for Ethiopia. Invited by de Jacobis, who had, oddly, also been appointed as a member

of this delegation, Gebre Mikael continued his journey to Rome. In 1843, devoting months to reflections over the faith in Gonder, he decided to convert to Catholicism. Together with de Jacobis, he visited several monastic libraries. Their journey ended with de Jacobis receiving Gebre Mikael into the Catholic Church in February 1844. He was followed by a number of monks of the ancient monastery of Gunde Gundé. Gebre Mikael on his journeys through Ethiopia continued Catholic evangelization; he even made his former student, the former puppet emperor Yohannes III, embrace his faith.

Fearing arrest, he was secretly ordained in Aliténa, at the border of Tigray, in early 1851 by de Jacobis. A raid by Tigray against Aliténa a few months later led to Gebre Mikael's imprisonment. Subsequently he suffered from detention, even torture, and was tried several times by the Ethiopian emperor and the metropolitan. He finally died in Wollo of his sufferings on August 29, 1855. Gebre Mikael's conversion was crucial for the further success of Catholic mission especially in Akkele-Guzay (Eritrea) and Agamé (Tigray); he was later regarded in local Catholic tradition as a holy man, and was beatified by the Catholic Church in 1926.

—*Wolbert Smidt*

See also: Jacobis, Giustino de; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission; Orthodoxy and Saints

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Gender and Holy People

In most of the world's religions for most of history, men have been much more likely than women to be regarded as holy. To a great extent, this can be attributed to the distinction, nearly worldwide, that makes the "proper" sphere of women the family and home, while the work of men takes them into the broader world. Female leadership, especially over men, has been rare and suspect throughout the world, a serious handicap for sanctity in religions that are dominated by a professional priesthood, such as Christianity. Women also rarely had access to formal education before the twentieth century, a nearly insuperable barrier to holy status in religions such as Judaism and Confucianism that express scholarship as a central "holy" value. Women have very often been banned even from an active role as worshippers, viewed as a distraction to male worshippers, or regarded as ritually unclean especially thanks to menses.

Nevertheless, a number of extraordinary holy women have had a significant impact on the world and received acknowledgment from the practitioners of their religion. Some, such as Shaker founder Ann Lee (1736–1784), have



This wooden statue of Mary Magdalene, carved by Donatello in 1453, presents an "un-sexed" image of female sanctity. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

made special claims to divine appointment as leaders of a new revelation—in Lee's case, a revelation that included the shocking suggestion that women and men are equals. Sometimes religious leaders have de-emphasized gender as a significant aspect of spirituality, most notably the Daoists, who recognize that women can reach equal spiritual status to men. Other groups qualify this, notably by allowing holy status to women past the age of menopause, as in the case of the Comanche medicine woman Sanapia (1895–1984), or by propagating legends that certain women have been freed of this "taint." For example, both Muhammad's daughter Fatima and the Virgin Mary were, it is believed, free of menses,

and free of normal intercourse (in legend, Hasan and Husayn were born of Fatima's left thigh, while a common medieval belief proclaimed that the Virgin Mary was impregnated through her ear).

Other women have won a place for themselves in the established, institutionalized world of the holy through their powers of persuasion or even dissimulation. Thus Christianity boasts a number of "transvestite saints," women who, disguised as men, joined and excelled in monastic communities. Women have sometimes had spiritual paths laid out as appropriate for them to follow, often with restrictions unheard-of for male monasticism. For example, legend tells that the order of Buddhist nuns was founded in about the fifth century B.C.E. after the Buddha's aunt Mahaprajapati and 500 other women asked to join the renunciant life—only to be refused three times. But then the Buddha's follower Ananda argued that since women could indeed attain enlightenment (no mean concession in itself), they would benefit from the life of renunciation. So the order of nuns was founded, with eight special rules emphasizing the subordination of these women to their male counterparts. And the Buddha is said to have predicted that the creation of this order would shorten the survival of his teaching by at least 500, and perhaps even 1,000, years.

Women have best been able to win holy status when a religion values as essentially holy a characteristic that traditionally falls in the women's sphere. Of these, probably the most important is devotion. Women are supposed to be good at this. This is a trait women should display toward their husbands and families, emphasizing emotional attachment rather than intellectualizing—in short, loving. An important reason for the number of female martyrs in early Christianity is that little was demanded of a Christian but stubborn love of God, a trait of which women were believed to be fully capable. From an early age, Christian theologians often portrayed the soul's love for God as that of a woman for her lover, encouraging a belief that devout women could be spiritually adept.

An important spiritual trend in Hinduism similarly emphasized the ungendered quality of devotion. For example, the male Hindu devotional poet Narsi Mehta (c. 1414–1480) sang of a state of mind in which the devotee thinks of him- or herself as a woman and Krishna as the only man in the world. Similarly, the great mystic Krishna Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533) often dressed as a woman, acting the part of Radha, the wife of Krishna. The Hindu *bhakti* (devotional) movement did not only speak in similes; women were indeed able to take a full part in passionate devotional worship, transferring to a deity their expected devotion to husband. The female sixteenth-century *bhakti* saint Mirabai even declared, when she was widowed, that she was now the wife of Krishna. The path of such women devotees was

sometimes harder than that of men; for example, the holy poet Bahinabai (c. 1628–c. 1700) tells in her songs how difficult it was to reconcile duty to her god and to her husband, since her often-violent husband disapproved of her allegiance to a guru. But the framework of the movement supported Bahinabai rather than her annoyed husband; legend even tells that the cows of the village would refuse to eat when he had abused her.

Mothering a great saint has also been a good way for a female to attain saintly status. Greek heroines were often simply the mothers of heroes, with no particular independent role. Indigenous Mesoamerican belief stressed the special liminal status of giving birth—the only people to reach the highest paradise are warriors who die in battle or women who die in childbirth. In this environment, the woman warrior Chimalman dating from the early ninth century won a double status, dying giving birth to Quetzalcoatl. Other female saints are credited with raising their children to holiness—or, in the Christian Monica's (331–387) case, nagging her son Augustine of Hippo until he finally converted. And much of the reverence paid to Fatima bint Muhammad (c. 605–632) by Shi'i Muslims rests on her special role as the mother of the line of imams.

Holy women also often win to their position because of their traditional role as supporting cast to a holy husband, brother, or father, or as deputies who act in the name of a man. The Baha'i holy woman Bahiyyih Khanum (1846–1932), daughter of Baha'u'llah, is remembered mostly for her service as she cared for the constant flow of visitors to the family home, the poor, and so on. Similarly, the Jewish holy woman Dolce of Worms (c. 1165–1196) won her position especially because of her solicitude in enabling her husband's life of prayer and study. Muhammad's wife Khadija (d. 619) encouraged the prophet when he had his first visions. This is a recognition and elevation of women's traditional role as caregivers within the family.

More likely to confer holy status, though, is virginity. The Virgin Mary won a very special status in Christianity and Islam as mother of Jesus—while a virgin. Christianity, with its strong ascetic impulse, stressed chastity as a central virtue. Thus, almost all early female saints are declared to be virgins, and very often hagiography emphasizes that they met their end because they refused to marry, preferring instead to have Christ as a bridegroom. A particularly potent saint in Christian tradition is the virgin martyr. The early account of the deaths of Sts. Perpetua and Felicity (d. 203) demonstrates how female martyrs could cross the gender divide, including even visionary accounts of the heroine of the tale changing sex in the arena. Only truly unusual saints can combine all roles. A notable case is that of the Tibetan female master Machig Labdrön (1031–1126), who succeeded in becoming a monk instead of marrying. She became a great

philosopher—and later married an Indian yogi, bearing at least three children who became important religious figures in their own right.

For some Muslims, the Virgin Mary has special status as a prophet. It is with the gift of prophecy that gender distinctions fade to insignificance in many religions, even those that are normally very repressive toward women. God, unlike men, quite simply seems to be blind to distinctions of gender, or sometimes even prefers women for a prophetic role—in the ancient Mediterranean world, the Pythia and sibyls were women. Religions that have a prophetic tradition enjoy prophets of both genders and have often elaborated a theology that specifically gives to female prophets an authority as “spokesperson for God” that transcends gender, making them honorary men, even including a public role. Sometimes this gender reidentification is quite literal, as with the East African *kubandwa* spiritual mediums: Until recently, while the women were possessed by the spirits, they were often dressed in men’s clothes and had a freedom of action that was normally a male prerogative.

The spirit of God can fall on anyone, since it is impossible to earn it by special behaviors or characteristics. For example, Sioux legend tells of Tailfeather Woman, to whom the Spirit came, revealing to her how to save her people with a special dancing ritual; the legend tells that the Sioux heeded her and flourished as a result. The Kenyan Moraa was a woman in a highly patriarchal society, but her visions gave her the authority to lead resistance to the British colonialists in the early twentieth century. Ellen White (1827–1915), cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was able to shape her church into a stable international body because of her status as prophetess. The list could easily be expanded. One should note, though, that female prophets have sometimes found it harder to gain credence than men, or have been criticized when they stepped out of their proper gender roles. For example, the single Jewish female prophet, Miriam, was stricken with leprosy when she chided Moses—although Aaron joined her in the rebuke and was unharmed. Nakayama Miki (1798–1887) proclaimed a new religion in Japan but suffered from much persecution and even imprisonment, to a considerable extent because she was acting very improperly for a woman in the culture of her times. In many cases, though, it is hard to tell whether a prophet failed because she was a woman or because the prophecy was false, as in the case of the prophetesses Priscilla and Maximilla in the early Christian variant of Montanism (second century), which was condemned as heresy and hounded out of existence.

Combining elements of devotionism and prophecy, women can be holy people by right of mystical experience. Hannah Verbermacher (c. 1815–1895), one of the very few Jewish women to attain a religious leadership role before the

twentieth century, held authority by right of being a mystic. Again, direct contact with the divine ignores gender divides. This was the case with Rabi’a al-Adawiyyah of Basra (d. 801), one of the few great female saints of Islam. A former slave who added low social status to the disabilities imposed by her gender, she was nonetheless a central mystic of the early sufi tradition, some biographers holding her in such esteem that they even proclaim that she was a prominent scholar. A later commentator specifically says that Rabi’a’s spiritual status allowed her to transcend the limitations of her sex. Especially the later Middle Ages produced a bumper crop of female Christian mystics who were able to take on important public roles as teachers and advisers. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) even served as the voice of conscience to a pope, thanks to her transcendent status as a mystic. Such figures sometimes had to work carefully around the church’s prohibition against either laypeople or women teaching and preaching, but some mystics, such as Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1419), still inspire people today with accounts of their visions. Indeed, the first female doctors of the Roman Catholic Church were the mystics Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) and Catherine of Siena, proclaimed in 1970.

Except for prophets and to a lesser extent mystics, it was very hard for women to win holy status by right of a leadership role before the twentieth century. In some cases, women have played an active social and political role, only to have that position de-emphasized in accounts of their lives as inappropriate for a woman. Thus the Anglo-Saxon nun-missionary Lioba (d. 780) was very active in administration and politics, but her hagiographer was uncomfortable with this and so focused on her passive, cloistered life while young—much to the regret of later historians. More entertaining is when hagiographers came up with supernatural explanations for otherwise unfeminine behavior, as in the tale that Brigid of Ireland (c. 450–c. 525), thanks to the intervention of the Holy Spirit, enjoyed status as a bishop because the consecrator read the wrong liturgy over her when she was being veiled as a nun. Even the United States still has many people who object strongly to women in leadership roles in religion, despite the pioneering efforts of, for example, the Episcopal Church of America. This is not, however, just an issue in America. A Hindu splinter group founded by Dada Lekhraj (1876–1969) gives women a pre-eminent leadership role. Similarly, the modern Hindu female guru Ammachi (1953–) has broken Hindu tradition by giving women public ritual roles, even as temple priestesses. And sometimes women of exceptional religious status have attempted to take a leadership role only to suffer frequent setbacks. For example, the Kenyan Gaudencia Aoko (c. 1940–) was an important leader of the Legio Maria, only to have the church she helped found decide to bar women from the priesthood. Aoko went on to found a

new church in which women can be leaders, although, oddly, still with a ritual purity taboo that forbids female priests from celebrating mass during their menses.

Women religious teachers have been rare and often viewed with repugnance. In part, this is because of female lack of access to education; often it is because throughout the world women who have trespassed into men's public domain have suffered mockery, if not worse. Thus Beruriah, a female Jewish scholar of the second century, according to tradition upset her husband because she argued with him on a rabbinic interpretation. In duddgeon, the unspeakable husband got a disciple of his to seduce Beruriah; although she gave in to his wiles, Beruriah later killed herself in shame. Clearly, the lesson is that women should not argue with men, even if they are right. In Christianity, while the fourth-century legend of the almost certainly fictional Catherine of Alexandria defeating fifty philosophers in public debate was popular, in real life women were ordered not to preach or teach. Sometimes the position of women worsened over time, as in Hinduism: The Upanishads include two female Hindu sages, Gargi and Maitreyi, as worthy of philosophical debate, suggesting that women could study sacred texts in the Vedic period. But in later Hinduism, they no longer had access to this learning. Still, female devotional saints could sometimes teach in Hinduism, such as Mahadeviyakka in the twelfth century, who abandoned her husband because he wouldn't let her worship Shiva, then, after undergoing testing by religious authorities, began to teach, becoming a leading spiritual figure of her time. In her case, like that of the Muslim Rabi'a, it was extreme asceticism and exceptional love of God that won for her a very exceptional status as a teacher.

Nearly the only female saints who have managed to play a leadership role in their religion have been those of royal status. For example, the few female Buddhist saints include Queen Khema of Bimbisara (fifth century B.C.E.), enlightened by the Buddha's teachings to the point that she became a great teacher herself. More spectacularly, Yeshe Tsogyal (757–817) of Tibet was of royal birth but so fought over by suitors that her father expelled her from his palace. She was rescued by the king of Tibet and married him; he allowed her to play an active religious role that would otherwise have been unthinkable. Even then, her public activities, combined with her gender, put her in a position of extreme danger. A gang of thieves once caught her on the road and raped her—although in this case it is pleasant to know that Yeshe Tsogyal was so spiritually enlightened that all of her rapists were instantly converted by the experience. More generally, royal women had a liminal status granted them by their wealth and influence. Like male rulers, they enjoyed considerable patronage over religious life, and they often won holy status as protectors and encouragers of a religion. Sometimes, too,

a whole ruling family, both male and female, has been given an important ritual role that confers status as intermediaries to ancestors or divine forces. The Zulu ruling family of southern Africa is an example.

In the past two centuries, an increasing number of strong-willed women have forced the gates of heaven, founding religious orders and even new religions in face of strong opposition from male hierarchies and playing an increasing role in the extreme elite of religions that produces saints. This has sometimes caused outrage and has also provoked in many cases a rethinking of religious traditions. A fine example of this is the case of Tahiri (1817–1852), an early disciple of the Bab. She argued that the time of constraints was over, took off her veil, and appeared in the streets of Iran in men's clothing, mounted and with a sword in her hand, in 1848. This caused such shock that one Babi even tried to commit suicide at the sight of her unveiled. She was divorced by her husband, and after imprisonment was strangled in 1852. But, although she almost caused a schism in the nascent Baha'i faith, Tahiri is probably more responsible than any other individual for the emphasis this religion places on equality of women and men in the sight of God.

Finally, it should be noted that the veneration of holy people is often dominated by female devotees. In Islam, especially, women are often not allowed access to mosques and have turned instead to the shrines of holy people. Throughout India, studies show that especially women—Hindus, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, and Muslims—frequent the tombs of the saints. In general, the cult of saints sidesteps much of the formal ritual of organized religion, ritual that is often inaccessible to women.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Ammachi; Ananda; Aoko, Gaudencia; Bahiyiyh Khanum; Brigid of Ireland; Catherine of Alexander; Catherine of Siena; Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Dolce of Worms; Fatima bint Muhammad; Gargi; Julian of Norwich; Lee, Ann; Lekhraj, Dada; Lioba; Machig Labdron; Mirabai; Miriam; Monica; Moraa; Narsi Mehta; Perpetua and Felicity; Prophets; Rebbetzin; Sanapia; Tahiri; Tailfeather Woman; Teresa of Avila; Verbermacher, Hannah Rachel; White, Ellen Gould Harmon; Yeshe Tsogyal

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Gendun drubpa (Tibetan: dge-'dun-grub-pa; Dalai Lama I)

(1391–1474 C.E.)

Buddhist spiritual leader

Gendun drubpa was a major scholar-saint in the Gelukpa (Tib.: dge-lugs-pa) school of Tibetan Buddhism who was a close disciple of Tsong kha pa, founder of Tashilhunpo (bkra-shis lhun-po) monastery. He was posthumously designated as the first dalai lama.

Gendun drubpa was born Pema Dorje (pad-ma rdo-rje) to tenant farmers during the Iron Sheep Year, 1391, in the Tsang region of central Tibet. Legend states that a huge black raven protected him on the night of his birth from a group of bandits who raided his family's tent. The raven was an emanation of Mahakala, a wrathful form of Avalokiteshvara, the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) of compassion, and it is this protective divinity that was to act as spiritual guardian to Gendun drubpa and subsequent dalai lamas.

Pema Dorje became a novice monk at age fifteen and was given the name by which he was later to be known to history, Gendun drubpa. His initial monastic studies included a vast array of Buddhist scriptures, together with the great classical commentaries of Indian and Tibetan Buddhist masters. Gendun drubpa took the vows of a fully ordained monk, or *bhikṣu*, at the age of twenty. In 1415, when Gendun drubpa was in his twenty-fifth year, he met Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), the founder of the Gelukpa school of Tibetan Buddhism. Gendun drubpa spent only four years with the great master, as Tsong kha pa would pass away in 1419. Nevertheless, this was precious time indeed, for although Tsong kha pa had hundreds of students, Gendun drubpa was to be recognized as one of his five chief disciples.

Legend relates that Gendun drubpa received a prophetic sign in his first meeting with Tsong kha pa that indicated he would become instrumental in preserving Buddhist monastic discipline (Skt.: *vinaya*; Tib.: *'dul ba*) in Tibet. Indeed, in the middle part of his life Gendun drubpa composed three extensive commentaries on monastic discipline that have influenced the Tibetans' enthusiastic pursuit of monastic life to this day. Gendun drubpa also wrote several commentaries on epistemology (Tib.: *tshad ma*) that are also utilized in the curricula of most present-day Gelukpa monasteries.

Gendun drubpa was a great scholar, writer, and meditator, but it was his creation of Tashi Lhunpo (bkra-shis lhun-po) monastery in Shigatse during his fifty-sixth year that has had the greatest impact on Tibetan Buddhist religion and culture. The monastery became one of the most important spiritual institutions of Central Asia, insured the preservation of Gendun drubpa's teachings, and contributed to the

solidification of Gelukpa monastic power in Tibet. In 1474, Gendun drubpa died at the age of eighty-four while in meditation at Tashi Lhunpo.

—James B. Apple

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Lamas; Monasticism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa

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Geneviève

(c. 422–500 C.E.)

Christian nun

Geneviève, patroness of Paris, was born in Nanterre, near Paris, in about 422 to a Gallo-Roman aristocratic family. At an early age she decided to lead a religious life. She was consecrated around 437 and moved to Paris. In 451, she reportedly diverted, through the power of her prayers, Attila the Hun's attack on Paris, saving the city. A few years later, she supplied grain to the besieged city during an attack by the Franks. In her activism and protection, Geneviève was fulfilling the role, usually associated with early medieval bishops, of protector and defender of her city.

Geneviève performed many other miracles. Accounts of her life say she exorcised demons, released prisoners, restored sight to the blind, and resuscitated the dead. She also initiated the construction of the first chapel in honor of St. Denis, the first bishop of Paris, and in 496 collaborated in the conversion of the Frankish king Clovis (r. 481–511) to Christianity. Geneviève then convinced the king to build a basilica dedicated to Sts. Peter and Paul. This basilica evoked the mausoleum that Constantine had built in honor of the two saints in Constantinople, and as such associated the new king with the first Christian emperor. Geneviève died in 500, before the basilica was completed, and was buried in its crypt. Members of the royal family were later buried there, too, and the saint acquired a role as a protector of the royal family.

By the ninth century, the basilica honoring the apostles was renamed after Geneviève, a new Life of the saint was composed, and she was invoked against Norman attacks and successfully defended the city. The kings of the Capetian dynasty (987–1328) established patronage and protection relations with St. Geneviève and her abbey. They enlarged the abbatial privileges, enriched it with lands and properties, and in return affiliated themselves with a powerful patron who was already a popular Parisian saint. The

close ties between the royal family and the abbey meant that the abbots of Sainte-Geneviève became virtually second bishops of Paris, which led to bitter struggles between them and the Parisian bishops throughout the Middle Ages.

The abbey of Sainte-Geneviève was a popular pilgrimage site, and many miracles were recorded there. But the saint's public role was first established in 1129/1130, when she was invoked successfully in a large public procession in Paris against an epidemic. This procession established a tradition of dramatic public invocations of Geneviève whenever the city was in danger. Between the twelfth and eighteenth centuries, more than seventy processions with the saint's reliquary marched through the city, and each time the saint's intervention rescued Paris. Geneviève was especially renowned for saving the city from droughts and floods, and she was identified as a nurturing patroness who rescued the Parisians from numerous famines. Public invocations of the saint's reliquary were huge events. Reliquaries from all the churches in Paris would arrive at Geneviève's shrine and there implore the patroness of the city to intercede on behalf of Paris. Then the abbot of Sainte-Geneviève and the bishop of Paris would lead a procession with the two most prestigious sets of relics in the city—Geneviève's and St. Marcel's—back to the cathedral of Notre Dame for an expiatory mass. These processions grew in length, prestige, and pomp during the early modern era, increasing Geneviève's role as the most efficient protector of Paris.

The Bourbon dynasty (1589–1830) renewed the saint's affiliation with the royal family, and hundreds of invocations took place at her shrine for the health of the family members. But by the eighteenth century, this close connection with the Bourbons also led to growing tensions between Parisians and the royal usages of their patron saint. Doubts and skepticism toward the public cult increased, and in 1793 Geneviève's reliquary was dismantled and her bones burned by the revolutionary authorities of Paris.

—Moshe Sluhovsky

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Denis of Paris; Intermediaries; Miracles; Veneration of Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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George

(early 3rd cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary martyr

George is perhaps the most important soldier-saint in the Christian tradition and has become the patron saint of widely diverse cities, provinces, and countries (including England, Georgia, and Russia). Accounts of his martyrdom are very old, but his well-known fight with the dragon is a much more recent addition to his vita.

Veneration of St. George was well established by 494, when Pope Gelasius condemned far-fetched versions of his legend. George is variously claimed as a native of Cappadocia and of Lydda (Diospolis), near Jaffa in Palestine. He died probably in the early third century, according to early accounts of his passios, during the reign of the non-Christian emperor Decius, who began a persecution of Christians. When George refused to sacrifice to Apollo, he was tortured horribly. God appeared to him in prison, telling him that he would suffer for seven years and would be killed and resurrected three times before his final death and salvation. When poison would not affect him, George was cut to pieces on a wheel and thrown down a well. The archangel Michael gathered the pieces together, and George was resurrected. Even more fantastic tortures, and miracles, commenced. George was sawn in half and placed in a cauldron of pitch, which was buried. Michael once again assembled the pieces. George was then tortured to death again and eaten by birds of prey before being resuscitated. George pretended that he was ready to worship Apollo, but when brought to the temple, he smashed all the idols, whereupon he was finally decapitated. Later written versions are more temperate—the wheel breaks, and George is killed only once—but images of the fantastic early passion continued to be produced centuries after they had disappeared from canonical accounts. This points to a thriving popular cult.

George's body was buried at Lydda. By the fifth or sixth century, a pilgrimage had developed and churches dedicated to St. George had been built throughout Christendom. During the eleventh century, George's military character, both protective and assuring victory, resulted in heightened interest both in Russia and in the Europe of the Crusades. At the sieges of Antioch and Jerusalem in 1098, St. George was seen leading an angelic army, assuring crusader victories, and interest soon spread among the knightly classes, particularly in France and England.

In the ninth or tenth century, accounts of George's battle with the dragon began to circulate, first in the East, later in the West. According to this legend, when a dragon threatened the city of Silene in Libya, the citizens pacified it first with sheep and finally with children, selected by lot. George happened by when the turn had fallen to the only daughter of the king, and he rendered the dragon so harmless that the

princess could lead it back to town using her girdle as a leash. George slew it after the citizenry had agreed to convert to Christianity, baptizing 15,000 inhabitants. Numerous variants of the tale appeared.

St. George's particular connection with England is often traced back to Richard the Lion-Hearted's (r. 1189–1199) participation in the Third Crusade. More than 190 medieval churches in England were dedicated to St. George. He became the patron saint of the chivalric Order of the Garter, founded by King Edward III in 1347–1348 (also of the Teutonic order and many others, including the Boy Scouts). St. George's arms, a red cross on a white background, became England's flag. As late as World War I, St. George reputedly appeared to English troops in battle.

George was not solely a protector of soldiers and knights. "Giorgios," meaning "tiller of the soil," had close associations with agriculture and was also numbered among the Fourteen Holy Helpers. George was invoked for the protection of livestock against a number of diseases, including plague, leprosy, and syphilis, and against witches. His cult reached its high point during the late Middle Ages. In the Orthodox Church, George is regarded as a megalomartyr. His feast day, April 23, was reduced to a local celebration by the Roman Catholic Church in 1969 on the ground of its dubious historicity.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fourteen Holy Helpers; Legendary Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Ger Tzedeq

The Hebrew word *ger* originally meant "stranger" or "sojourner," but it came to indicate one who accepts Judaism; it is translated in the Septuagint as *proselytos*, or "proselyte" in

English. In ancient times, two types of converts were recognized: *ger toshav* (the settler; sometimes called *ger ha-shaar*, the proselyte of the gate), and *ger tzedeq* (the righteous proselyte). Proselytes of the first type accepted monotheism but did not accept the ritual obligations of Judaism. This entitled them to economic and social equality with Jews and gave them equal rights before the courts. This type of proselytism was expedient for people living in regions under Jewish political control or for those who were forcibly converted during biblical times.

Proselytes of the second type, which is the only type recognized today, sincerely desire to become members of the Jewish community, without ulterior motives of expediency or advantage. After a sufficient period of preparation involving extensive study and instruction, men are circumcised (if the male convert has previously been circumcised, he undergoes the ritual drawing of a drop of penile blood to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant); both men and women undergo immersion in a ritual bath (*mikve*) and pledge themselves to observe Jewish law. Once accepted by the community, converts are considered full Jews and may not be discriminated against on the basis of their non-Jewish past. To the contrary, converts are singled out for special blessing in the Amidah prayer.

Reform Judaism differs from Orthodox and Conservative practice with regard to converts because it does not require circumcision, immersion, or the pledge to observe Jewish law. These omissions have resulted in disagreement within Judaism as to who is a Jew, for many Orthodox and Conservative congregations do not recognize Reform converts as true Jews.

Perhaps the most famous convert is Ruth, the Moabite woman who adopted her mother-in-law Naomi's religion and because of her faithfulness was deemed worthy to become an ancestor of King David (Ruth 4:17–22). However, while conversion is deemed of great value to the individual because it marks that person's inclusion into the community of the chosen, the Talmud specifically states that the righteous of all nations shall have a share in the world to come, whether officially affiliated with Judaism or not.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Tzaddiq

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Gerald of Aurillac

(c. 855–909 C.E.)

Christian layman

Gerald was a Frankish Christian nobleman admired for his virtues of justice and piety and the founder of the abbey of

Aurillac in France. His biographer, Odo, abbot of Cluny (879–942), is the sole source for Gerald's life. Indeed, Gerald is historically important as a literary character, a hagiographic model of lay virtue, whose pursuit of worldly good is tempered by piety, justice, compassion, and—a novel suggestion in Odo's day—learning.

Principally a landholder and warrior—thus avaricious by contemporary definition—Gerald was the last person a monastic biographer would think saintly. Yet as monastic founder, he was a good candidate for hagiographic treatment. Among the miracles that punctuate his biography is the cure of a creeping blindness that affected him as a young man, when as a warrior he ought to have been at the height of his powers. Such a cure clearly signifying divine favor, other saintly (read “monastic”) virtues must follow: peace-making, chastity and celibacy, piety and prayer, love of learning, justice and generosity toward the poor, courageous resistance against the rich, and vigorous defense of the interests of the church.

Gerald might well have tried to temper the brutality of a landholder and warrior with the ascetic virtues of a monk, but these might just as well be the product of hagiographic massaging. Odo depicts Gerald's political and military successes as miraculous and his shrewd genius for negotiation in an age of chaos as divinely inspired wisdom. On several occasions, Gerald reportedly released vanquished enemies without killing them, or even, at times, without extracting fines or hostages. Odo reads these tactics, humiliating to his enemies, as acts of mercy.

In the latter decades of his life, Gerald took an interest in ecclesiastical institutions. Odo tells us he cultivated a relationship with the papacy and handed over his lands while reserving the right to administer and defend them. Having no heir, he founded a monastery that could administer the lands after his demise, a pioneering strategy frequently imitated in later years. It is unclear, however, whether this act reflected the self-interested attention of a man approaching death, unselfish piety, or shrewd political gamesmanship.

It is nearly impossible to discern how much of Odo's narrative is literary embellishment. In just this respect, Gerald exemplifies medieval Christian sanctity as a cultural production: the virtues of a *narrated* life, the intersection of life and literary convention drawn from a deeply rooted theology.

—Patrick J. Nugent

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Laity; Odo of Cluny; Violence and Nonviolence

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Gerard of Csanád

(c. 980–1046 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary, martyr

Gerard of Csanád (Hung.: Gellért) was the first bishop of Csanád in southeastern Hungary (today Cenad, Romania). Born in Venice, he played a crucial role in the Christianization of Hungary and died a martyr in 1046. He was canonized in 1083, and his feast day is September 24.

The main sources regarding the life of Gerard are two legends written after his canonization. The relationship and dating of the *Legenda minor* (Minor legend) and the *Legenda maior* (Major legend) are much debated in historiography, but both seem to rely on a lost text from the early twelfth century. There is general consensus that Gerard was born in Venice around 980 to an aristocratic family. As a young boy, he became a Benedictine monk at the monastery of San Giorgio and received his education there. After further studies abroad, he became abbot of the Venetian monastery but then decided to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The route took him through Hungary, and after meeting the Maurus, bishop of Pécs, as well as King Stephen I, probably in 1015, he decided to stay in Hungary and participate in the conversion of the country. Gerard would spend the rest of his life as a missionary there.

Stephen I made Gerard the teacher of his son, Prince Emeric. Gerard later became a hermit in the forest near Bakonybél. After the defeat of Prince Ajtony in 1030, he became the first bishop of the newly founded bishopric of Marosvár (later called Csanád). Gerard erected a cathedral dedicated to St. George there, organized the baptism and education of the people, and propagated the cult of the Virgin Mary. His sermons were highly regarded, and he was greatly respected as a scholar. Of his works, only the *Deliberatio* (Deliberation), a work on the subject of the Hymn of the Three Young Men in the Old Testament book of Daniel (ch. 3), survived.

When the country suffered an anti-Christian reaction, Gerard suffered martyrdom at the hands of non-Christian rebels when his carriage was pushed off a hill on August 29, 1046. The hill in Budapest where he was killed now bears his name. Gerard was buried at Csanád, which became the center of his cult. He was canonized in 1083 during the reign of King Ladislas I. The church at Csanád and most of his relics were destroyed over the centuries, but he is still venerated as an apostle of Hungary. The center of his cult today is at the southern Hungarian town of Szeged, the successor to the Csanád bishopric.

—Zsombor Jékely

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Emeric; Ladislav; Mission; Stephen of Hungary

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Germanus of Auxerre

(c. 378–448 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Germanus, one of the late Roman Empire's most illustrious Christian saints, is perhaps best known for his successful combat against the Pelagian heresy (a heresy that denied the concept of original sin and held, among other ideas, that a person's will can, if properly trained, achieve salvation without divine grace). His *Life*, by Constantius of Lyon, was written in about 480. Germanus was born in about 378 to a noble Gallo-Roman family in Auxerre in what is now France. Like any young man of good birth, he was very well educated and prepared for a career in the Roman civil service, chiefly in law. He practiced law with considerable success for a number of years in Rome. Having made a favorable impression with the Roman court, Germanus married a high-ranking noblewoman and returned to Gaul as governor of Armorica, the northwestern portion of the province of Gaul.

According to one legend, Germanus's habit of hanging his hunting trophies on a tree associated with non-Christian rites upset Amator, bishop of Auxerre. The bishop had the tree cut down but made sure to gain the protection of a prefect to safeguard himself against Germanus. Amator also obtained permission to give Germanus the tonsure (a style of haircut that denoted clergy and carried with it obedience to the church). When Germanus returned, the bishop held him captive and gave him the tonsure. Miraculously, Germanus, once tonsured, changed his ways and became a model Christian. When Amator died, Germanus was made bishop of Auxerre. Germanus governed his flock exceptionally well, his education and legal training providing him the necessary tools to negotiate successfully on behalf of his see with the imperial government. He also founded the monastery of Yonne just across from the cathedral.

At the request of the British, the episcopacy of Gaul sent Germanus and Lupus of Troyes to Britain in about 430 to combat the Pelagian heresy. Their efforts to fight Pelagianism were successful, but Germanus made a second trip

about seventeen years later (in 447) when the heresy returned. On his second visit, Germanus handed the Britons a great victory over an army of allied Saxons and Picts, known as the "Alleluia Victory." A year later, he went to Ravenna and successfully pleaded for the Armoricans, who had rebelled against the emperor. Germanus died in 448 while at Ravenna, but his body was transferred to Auxerre, where it remained until the Huguenots sacked the church and his relics were lost.

—James B. Tschen Emmons

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Germanus of Paris

(c. 496–576 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Germanus (Germain), bishop of Paris, was born in Autun in what is now France in c. 496 and died in Paris on May 28, 576. An anchorite early in life, Germanus was ordained in 530 and became bishop of Paris in 555 or 556. Like other Merovingian saints, Germanus established his reputation performing miracles, among them a healing of King Childebert (r. 511–558). This miracle cemented Germanus's relations with the royal family and strengthened the alliance of bishops and kings that characterized the consolidation of royal power in sixth-century Francia. With the king's patronage, Germanus then (in 543) established what is now the oldest monastery in Paris. It reportedly housed a relic of the Holy Cross and relics of St. Vincent (d. 304), the martyr of Saragossa. The king had appropriated these relics the previous year, following his victory over the Visigoths in Spain. As such, the new monastery commemorated the king's victory.

During Germanus's funeral, while the procession was passing near a prison the saint's coffin became so heavy that the carriers could not proceed until the prisoners were released. This event established Germanus as a patron saint of prisoners. Germanus was first buried in a small chapel in the church, but in 754 or 755 his relics were transferred to the main body of the church. At the same time, Venantius Fortunatus composed a *Life* of the saint, and the monastery became known as St. Germain-des-Prés (St. Germain in the Fields). In Carolingian times, the monastery of St. Germain prospered. It housed about 200 Benedictine monks and as many servants and was among the wealthiest monasteries in

the city, owning vast properties on the left bank of the Seine. Members of the Carolingian royal family served as secular abbots of the monastery, further increasing its wealth and privileges, among them the right to hold an annual commercial fair that was the largest in Paris, and a complete exemption from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Paris.

In the seventeenth century, the monastery became a center of learning. Its monks tried to propagate an image of Germanus as a leading patron saint of France, “the Moses of France.” They organized processions with his relics to compete with the municipal processions dedicated to St. Geneviève, the patroness of the city, and claimed that Germanus, rather than Geneviève, was the one whose interventions had saved the city numerous times in the past. Their attempts, which had a lot to do with their struggles with the bishop of Paris over exemptions and liberties, failed. Germanus never became a leading French patron saint, nor did he replace Geneviève as a patron of Paris. His renown and patronage remained restricted to the monastery and its near surroundings.

—Moshe Sluhovsky

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries

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Geronimo

(1829–1909 C.E.)

Apache mystic, warrior, chief

Geronimo, whose real name was Goyathlay, was born in 1829 in the North American southwest. Until 1858, he lived as a typical Apache man with his wife and three children. In that year, Mexican military forces attacked the Apache villages where he lived and slaughtered women and children, including Geronimo's wife, mother, and children. Out of this tragedy arose Geronimo's fame as a warrior and mystic. Geronimo organized the Apache resistance to the Mexican troops and avenged the deaths of his loved ones. Numerous times he engaged in battle without being wounded while killing several enemy warriors. His Apache kinsmen attributed Geronimo's good fortune in battle to his adept manipulation of spiritual forces; this spiritual power protected Geronimo in battle for the rest of his life as no guns or bullets ever killed him.

Later in the nineteenth century, American settlers, miners, and the U.S. Army moved into the southwest and began dis-

rupting Apache life. After some initial violence between Apaches and the United States in the 1860s, many of the Apache bands agreed to live on reservations, though they detested the conditions and confinement. Geronimo lived on the Chiricahua Reservation, and he became a well-respected chief by resisting American attempts to Christianize the Apaches and change their culture. This situation lasted until 1876, when Geronimo fled with his family and others rather than move to the desolate San Carlos Reservation. American forces captured him and placed him under guard until 1878, when Geronimo again escaped and joined other Apaches in Mexico fighting against the United States. In 1880, Geronimo and these Apaches returned voluntarily to San Carlos until the next year, when he again fled after the U.S. Army violently suppressed a traditional religious ceremony. The army was unable to control Geronimo and his kinsmen completely until Geronimo surrendered to General Nelson A. Miles in 1886.

The United States sent more than 400 Apaches, including Geronimo, into exile in Florida and forced them to work at hard labor, cut their hair, wear American-style clothing, and send their children to Christian boarding schools. In 1887, the surviving Apache prisoners went to Alabama, and then, in 1892, to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Geronimo became a celebrity, even participating in President Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade, but he died in 1909 still a prisoner of war, never having returned to his homeland.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People

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Gertrude of Nivelles

(626–659 C.E.)

Christian abbess

Born in 626, Gertrude of Nivelles was the younger daughter of Pepin I of Landen, Frankish mayor of the palace of Austrasia, and his wife Itta. Both parents, as well as her sister Begga, are also regarded as saints. After Pepin's death in about 639, and on the advice of Amand of Maastricht, Itta built a Benedictine double monastery at Nivelles in modern-day Belgium. Itta became a nun there herself, and Gertrude, fourteen at the time, was its first abbess. Gertrude became known for her hospitality to pilgrims and generosity to Irish monks—in particular to St. Foillan, brother of St. Fursey, to

whom she gave land to found the monastery of Fosses. She assisted St. Ultan as well.

In 656, at the age of thirty, Gertrude resigned her office in favor of her niece, St. Wilfetrudis, because she was weakened by asceticism and wished to devote herself to prayer and study. Like other medieval mystics, Gertrude experienced visions. She died a few years later, in 659, at the age of thirty-three. Her feast day is March 17, the same as St. Patrick, who supposedly guarded her on the day of her death.

Gertrude’s cult was strongest in the Low Countries, but it spread to England and other areas as well. In art she is most often depicted with mice running up her staff. She may also be depicted holding a mouse, spinning or with a distaff, or with a cat. It is unclear why she is associated with mice. She may have absorbed the characteristics of a pre-Christian figure as legendary accounts of her life spread, or it could be because mice represented souls in Purgatory, to whom she was particularly devoted. Whatever the reason, Gertrude is invoked against rats and mice. As late as 1822, offerings at her shrine in Cologne took the form of gold and silver mice. The water from the well at Nivelles is supposed to repel rodents. Perhaps as an offshoot of this, Gertrude is also the patron of cats.

Because of her reputation for hospitality, Gertrude is invoked by travelers and pilgrims. Before setting out on their journey, pilgrims would have a drink in her honor. Connected with this is her patronage of the recently dead, who are travelers of a sort as well. In popular folklore, the dead would make a three-day journey to the afterlife, and the first night was spent in the care of Gertrude. Fair weather on the day of her feast is supposed to signal the start of the planting season, and thus she is also connected with gardeners.

—Kelly A. O’Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries

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Gertrude “the Great” of Helfta

(1256–1302 C.E.)

Christian nun, mystic

Gertrude was born on January 6, 1256, but nothing else of her early life is known other than that she entered the convent at Helfta at the age of five. Helfta, located in Rodarsdorf, Saxony (Germany), was the home of several famous mystics. Though technically a Benedictine convent, it was greatly in-

fluenced by the Cistercian movement, and the nuns’ spiritual directors were Dominicans. The first recognition of Gertrude’s talents came at age twenty-six with her “conversion” experience. “Conversion” did not mean that Gertrude became Christian; rather, it signified her entrance into the mystical world.

As was typical of the spirituality at Helfta, Gertrude enjoyed a spousal relationship with Christ, and her writings reflected this special connection. Her interactions with Jesus happened through visions, dialogue, prayer, and contemplation, and the experiences were collected in her writings. The communal life of Helfta was reflected in Gertrude’s works, too. She cowrote the *Liber specialae gratiae* (Book of special grace) with Mechtild of Hackeborn, and her first major work, *Legatus divinae pietatis* (The herald of divine love), or *Revelations*, included collaborative efforts of other anonymous Helfta nuns. The significance of this text lies in Gertrude’s conversion experience, which is supported by witness testimonials, thus providing an example of a call to a life of the spirit. Her second work was *Exercitia spiritualis* (Spiritual exercises), a group of scriptural meditations written for her fellow nuns. The affective nature of these pieces owes much to the Cistercian influence on the abbey. Finally, she is associated with the *Preces Gertrudianae* (Prayers of Gertrude), though the work was composed in the seventeenth century. It is a collection of lyrics based on Gertrude’s style. Gertrude’s works stand out for several reasons, including her close ties to the liturgy and the Bible, and her reliance on the theme of light versus darkness, but may be best remembered for the careful recording of one soul’s relationship with God.

Despite her mystical obligations, Gertrude participated in the ordinary life of the monastery. She was purported to be an excellent spinner and served as assistant chantress (choral leader) for many years. During her later years, Gertrude grew sickly and was barely able to receive visitors. She died on November 17, 1302, and though never formally canonized, was added to the Roman Martyrology in 1677 by Pope Innocent XI. Her feast day is celebrated November 16.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mechtild of Hackeborn; Mysticism and Holy People

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Gervasius and Protasius

(2nd cent. C.E.?)

Christian martyrs

The cult of Gervasius and Protasius, two Christian martyrs, emerged in Milan, Italy, beginning in the late fourth century, thanks to the efforts of the famous bishop Ambrose (c. 339–397). Little information about their lives or even the circumstances of their deaths has survived. In a letter to his sister, Ambrose recounts how, in 385, the remains of these two martyrs had been discovered in a shrine dedicated to Sts. Felix and Nabor. Within days, Ambrose had arranged for the remains to be translated to the new basilica that had just been completed, where they were buried beneath the new altar.

Ambrose's timely discovery has become the locus classicus for those, such as the historian Peter Brown, who see the bishops of late antiquity playing a decisive role in channeling the "power" of relics through cathedral altars for the sake of reinforcing the authority of the institutional church. In any case, the cult took root. Reports of miracles were recorded not only by Ambrose's biographer, Paulinus, but also by his friend and protégé Augustine, both of whom were present at the dedication of the new cathedral.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Ambrose; Augustine of Hippo; Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-

(1058–1111 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, philosopher

One of the leading Islamic religious scholars of all time, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali contributed in many areas and did much to determine the place that philosophy and sufism would have among Sunni Muslims.

Al-Ghazali was born in Tus, in northeastern Iran, in 1058. As a youth, he studied there and then in Nishapur. In 1085, he joined the camp of the Seljuk vizier, and in 1091 he was appointed professor of the prestigious Nizamiyyah College in Baghdad. During this period, he wrote several works on the philosophy of ibn Sina and others, a major work of Islamic theology (*kalam*), and a defense of the Abbasid caliphate against its Isma'ili opponents. In 1095, he suffered an emotional breakdown, gave up his teaching position, and left Baghdad to devote himself to sufi exercises. Eventually he established a sufi *khanaqah* (convent) in Tus. During this time, he wrote *Ihya'Ulum al-Din* (The revival of the religious sciences), his most comprehensive work, and other books on sufism, especially *Mishkat al-Anwar* (The niche for lights). In



Modern depiction of sufi philosopher Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. (Art Directors)

1106, he returned to teaching in Nishapur, and soon afterward he penned an autobiographical work entitled *Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (That which delivers from error). He also wrote on *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and other topics. He retired to Tus shortly before his death in 1111.

Al-Ghazali saw himself as a spiritual physician tailoring his treatment to different needs. For most people, it is sufficient to follow the basics of traditional belief and practice. Those with questions might benefit from *kalam*, but this is not sufficient for those, like himself, with profound doubts. Philosophy promises help and is successful in many areas, such as logic. Al-Ghazali was in fact instrumental in introducing logic into *kalam*. In metaphysics, however, philosophy fails to prove its points and even leads one to unbelief. He believed it was the sufis who offered the best way, because even intermittent experiences of ecstasy, such as those he claimed to have had, could convince one of the prophets' authority. Sufi knowledge, he taught, comes by direct experience ("taste") rather than through reason, but its expression must stay within the bounds set by logic and religious doctrine. For example, according to al-Ghazali, ecstatic expres-

sions, such as al-Hallaj's (858–922) "I am the Truth" (that is, God), which appear to violate these bounds, instead describe the mystic's subjective experience, not objective reality. Nevertheless, al-Ghazali has been criticized for inconsistency because in his sufi works he appears to use philosophical concepts he rejected elsewhere. He also states explicitly that the highest teachings are not to be put in books. His main concern, however, was practical moral and spiritual guidance, not theoretical accuracy or consistency.

—William Shepard

See also: Ghazali, Ahmad al-; Guidance; Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Mysticism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People; Sufism

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Ghazali, Ahmad al-

(c. 1060–1126 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, writer

Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, the brother of the better-known Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, is an important figure of classical sufism and renowned for his expositions of mystical love in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. He was born in the Persian city of Tus in about 1060 and, like his brother, went to Baghdad, where he succeeded him as an instructor at the celebrated Nizamiyyah madrasa. Although Ghazali has been overshadowed by his brother, he is nevertheless an important figure of sufism and made substantial contributions to sufism in Persia and to the development of a distinct mystical vocabulary in the Persian language. He was a member of the Nimatullahi order of sufism founded by the famous sufi master Shah Nimatullah Wali, whose followers are to be found in many parts of the world today.

Ghazali's works address a number of metaphysical issues as well as practical matters. His most celebrated work, *Sawanih* (Inspirations from the world of spirits), written in Persian, is a masterly analysis of love, a central theme of all sufism, its various degrees and effects on the soul, and the subtle relationship between human and divine love. Many authors both within and outside sufism followed this work and composed treatises on love as the most important mode of relationship between humankind and God. As in other mystical traditions, in sufism poetry plays a key role in expressing God's boundless love and man's quest for the divine. Ghazali contributed to this body of poetic work with clarity of thought, eloquence, and depth. His spiritual psy-

chology contained in the *Sawanih* is also an important source of love poetry in Islam.

In addition to writing about metaphysical issues, Ghazali also addressed practical aspects of sufism. He authored, for instance, a short treatise in defense of the permissibility of listening to and participating in *sama'*, the spiritual concerts of the sufis combining prayers and invocation with music and rhythmic movements of the body, as performed, for instance, by the whirling dervishes of the Mawlawiyyah order. The aim of *sama'* is the unity of the soul, the heart, and the body. Many exoterist scholars of the law have rejected it as innovation (*bid'ah*) and nontraditional. Ghazali's defense is not only indicative of the impact of such criticisms but also shows his attentiveness to defending sufism within the context of the *shari'a*, the Islamic law.

—Ibrahim Kalin

See also: Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-; Mysticism and Holy People

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Ghazi, Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-

(c. 1506–1543 C.E.)

Muslim ruler, revolutionary

Ahmad b. Ibrahim al-Ghazi, also called Muhammad Gagne, Ahmad Guray, and Ahmed Gran, "the left-handed," is of obscure origins. Some scholars have variously referred to him as an Arab, a Somali of the Darod clan, and an Ethiopian. Whatever his family antecedents, he is thought to have been born in about 1506, and in early 1525, he defeated Sultan Abu Bakr Ibn Mohammed and rose to the leadership of the Muslims of Adal, which had recently shifted its capital from Djibouti on the Red Sea inland to Harar. Ahmad found the rule of secular Muslims and Christian kings repulsive. He retired to the countryside, where he preached about the virtues of an Islamic state. He called himself the imam, raised the banner of *jihad*, or Muslim religious war, and with an army that included Turkish, Albanian, Egyptian, and Somali contingents began to raid the Christian kingdom of central Ethiopia in 1527.

Two years later, Ahmad inflicted a major defeat on the Ethiopian emperor Lebna Dengel (r. 1508–1540) at the battle of Shembra Kure. Between 1531 and 1535, he returned to central Ethiopia with the apparent intention of permanently conquering the Ethiopian kingdom. He inflicted another major defeat on Dengel, whom he never caught, and his armies ravaged the highlands. Churches were burned, cities were sacked, and most of the kingdom's Christians were forced to at least nominally accept Islam.

Though Ahmad's motivation was largely religious, his supporters were unable to follow up on these military successes

because they were more interested in looting and slave raiding than in gaining territorial or political control. With continuous raids, however, Ahmad's supremacy in Ethiopia was unchallenged, and his army controlled two-thirds of the empire. Despite these achievements, Ahmad failed to consolidate his victories or establish a permanent headquarters, while his enemies solicited external aid. The tide turned against him in 1541, when Dengel's successor, Galawdewos, combined with a Portuguese expeditionary army under Christopher da Gama to defeat the Muslims. Ahmad scored some further successes but was finally killed in February 1543 in a decisive battle near Lake Tana. Although Ahmad's death spelled the end of serious Muslim threats to Christian Ethiopia, his followers continued to instigate military skirmishes until a peace treaty was signed in 1589. The multiethnic composition of his followers provided the basis for later Turkish and Egyptian claims to the area he ruled and for the migration of some Somali groups from the Gulf of Aden hinterland toward the south.

—Olatunji Ojo

See also: Islam and Holy People; Messiahs; War, Peace, and Holy People
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Gilbert of Sempringham

(c. 1085–1189 C.E.)

Christian monk, founder

Gilbert of Sempringham was the founder of the only medieval English monastic order. The son of a Norman knight and an Englishwoman, Gilbert was born in about 1085 and educated in Lincolnshire and then in France. He became a clerk in the household of Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, sometime before 1123. By 1131, he had declined an archdeaconry and returned to his native Sempringham, where he established a small monastic community for women. In time, this small community expanded to include nuns, canons, lay sisters, and lay brothers; the lay members were not merely servants but integral members of the community. In 1147, Gilbert attended the Cistercian general chapter in hopes of placing his two monasteries under Cistercian control. The Cistercian refusal has traditionally been ascribed to the order's reluctance to undertake the spiritual direction of women, although it is equally likely that the Cistercians saw little gain in acquiring two poor, small, isolated monasteries.

After Gilbert's return from Cîteaux, his two monasteries rapidly became the nucleus of a thriving monastic order.

Nine priories were established between 1148 and 1155. The Gilbertine Rule was approved by Pope Eugenius III in 1148, creating a double monastery with nuns governed by the Rule of St. Benedict and canons by the Rule of St. Augustine; lay brothers were to follow a modified version of the rule for Cistercian lay brothers. Accused of aiding the exiled Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, Gilbert was summoned before Henry II's justices at Westminster, but Henry intervened. In 1170, the lay brothers at Sempringham took advantage of Gilbert's difficulties at the royal court and revolted. Although serving as the order's master, Gilbert himself did not make a religious profession as a Gilbertine canon until he was on his deathbed. Gilbert died in 1189, and he was canonized by Innocent III in 1202. The *Book of St Gilbert* is one of the first extant canonization dossiers. His feast day is February 16.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Thomas Becket

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Giles

(d. c. 710 C.E.)

Christian hermit

The colorful legends of the early eighth-century Giles (or Aegidius) contributed to his great popularity throughout the Middle Ages. He first appears in writings of the tenth century that describe him as an Athenian who relocated to France to escape the fame he had attracted in his homeland by his generosity and miracles of healing. He became a hermit, lived in the forest near Nîmes, and later founded a monastery near Arles. While a hermit in the forest, he was nourished by the milk of a deer who visited him daily; later he sheltered the deer and was himself wounded by the arrows of the Visigothic king Wamba (or Flavius, king of the Goths) who was hunting in the forest. This event is often depicted in art.

Another frequently illustrated scene from his life allegedly occurred while Giles was officiating at mass when Charlemagne (or his father, Charles Martel) was present. According to this legend, an odious sin of incest, unconfessed by the ruler, was revealed to the saint by an angel who appeared bearing a scroll or tablet; the writing slowly disappeared while the saint was praying, and the king was absolved of his sin. Giles's legend appears to be an especially

rich blend of previous hagiographic motifs (he divides his cloak with a beggar, is assisted by and shelters a miraculous animal, has prophetic powers and is able to forgive unconfessed sins), which also explains the chronological improbability of Giles being a student of the sixth-century Caesarius of Arles and also an acquaintance of the late eighth- and early ninth-century Carolingian rulers, as various accounts claim. He most likely died around 710. The Benedictine abbey of St. Giles, containing his relics, was an important center of pilgrimage during the medieval period. One of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, he is identifiable also in art by his Benedictine garments and is often shown holding an arrow and accompanied by or holding a deer in his arms. His feast day is September 1.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fourteen Holy Helpers; Legendary Holy People

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Gisudaraz, Muhammad Bandanawaz

(1321–1422 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Muhammad Bandanawaz Gisudaraz was a sufi of the Chishti order in the Deccan area of India, not far from the city of Hyderabad, in a town called Gulbarga. The name Gisudaraz (He of the long tresses) is said to have been passed down in his family. He is also known as Khwaja Banda Nawaz (Good to humanity). Gisudaraz originally migrated to southern India as a child from Delhi, where he was born in 1321. He was the son of a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya, Sayyid Yusuf al-Husayni (Raju Qattal) of Khorasan, a descendant of the prophet Muhammad.

As a young man, Gisudaraz returned to Delhi, becoming a disciple of Nasiruddin Chiragh-i Dihli in 1336. He became a *khalifa* (deputy) of the shaykh at the age of thirty-six and was said to be the most favored among his disciples. At the age of eighty, Gisudaraz left Delhi for Dawlatabad in the Deccan. He was invited to the Bahmani dynasty capital, Gulbarga, in 1400 and given a land grant there by the sultan. His shrine is located in Gulbarga, which is a prominent pilgrimage site for Muslims in the Deccan area of India.

Gisudaraz was a religious scholar and literary figure as well as a saint. He was acquainted with the religious sciences and wrote poetry and prose in both Arabic and Persian. He commented on many works in the classical tradition of sufism, including the writings of Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165–1240), whose thought he criticized in favor of a more dualistic position known as *wahdat al-shuhud*, the unity of experience. One part of his *malfuzat* (audiences), the

Jawami al-Kalam (Compilations of words), is extant. *Sama’*, or listening to mystical poetry, was an important practice in his *khanaqah* (hostel for sufis). In fact, Gisudaraz developed his own theory of musical audition, limiting the musical instrumentation to a small tambourine and instituting a unique practice known as *band sama’*, “closed audition,” that still is held only once a year during his *urs* (anniversary of his death).

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Chiragh-i Dihli, Nasiruddin; Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja; Scholars as Holy People

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Giuliani, Veronica (Ursula)

(1660–1727 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, mystic

Veronica (Ursula) Giuliani, a Capuchin nun, reputedly one of the most extraordinary stigmatics of the Roman Catholic Church, was born at Mercatello, Urbino, in Italy, on December 27, 1660. She entered the Capuchin convent at Città di Castello, Umbria, in 1677 and made her vows in 1678. A mystic, she began experiencing the pains of Christ’s passion and received the stigmata in 1694. These experiences continued until her death on July 9, 1727. She was beatified in 1804 and canonized in 1839. She is usually represented wearing a crown of thorns and holding a cross, or holding a heart marked with a cross.

As a child, Ursula Giuliani was already feeding and clothing the destitute. When she was four, her dying mother, Benedetta Mancini, dedicated each of her children to one of Christ’s wounds; Ursula received the wound in Jesus’ side. By age eleven, her devotion to the passion was intense. When her father, Francesco, was given a lucrative position of prestige and power in Piacenza, however, she was greatly pleased, a fault for which she reproached herself in later years. She chided those who did not share her religious sentiments and practice, but a vision in which she saw her own heart as made of hard metal cured her of this judgmental attitude.

Francesco Giuliani was determined that his daughter marry and presented her with suitors. Ursula fell ill as a result, and Francesco finally relented and permitted her to enter religious life. In 1677, Ursula entered the Capuchin order and, in accordance with her great devotion to Christ’s passion, took the name Veronica in religion.

Veronica's novitiate was difficult and she was frequently tempted to leave religious life. Her extraordinary piety overcame her doubts, and the bishop who clothed her predicted her eventual sainthood. Her devotion to the passion grew ever more intense and she began to experience intense pain in the area over her heart. In 1693, she had a vision in which Christ's chalice was offered to her and, after much hesitation, she drank from it. In 1694, the first of her visible stigmata made its appearance: the wounds of Christ's crown of thorns. On Good Friday 1697, Christ's five wounds were impressed on her hands, feet, and left side. As a result of this, the bishop had her watched closely and constantly; even the eucharist and community life in her convent were denied her. After the bishop was satisfied that no fraud was involved, he permitted her to return to normal community life.

Veronica suffered physically and emotionally for fifty years but continued to participate fully and vigorously in conventual activity. She was novice mistress for thirty-four years and abbess from 1716 until her death in 1727. Before she died, she told her confessor that the instruments of Christ's passion were imprinted on her heart, an assertion reputedly proven accurate in a postmortem examination and discussed at length in the process of her beatification.

—Kathryn E. Wildgen

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Imitation of Christ; Mysticism and Holy People; Veronica

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Gleb

See **Boris and Gleb**

Gobind Singh

(1666–1708 C.E.)

Sikh guru

Before his capture and execution in 1675, Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur nominated his son Gobind Das as guru. Although the first years of his guruship were spent in relative peace at Anandpur, India, soon pressure from surrounding hill chiefs forced him to move to Paunta, a town on the banks of the Yamuna River. At Paunta, the now mature Guru Gobind Singh established a religious and political center, building a *gurdwara* (house of the guru) that was surrounded by a fortress and protected by a fairly large armed force.

The success of the Sikh community and its growing presence began to threaten the control of the local hill chiefs, however, and Paunta was targeted for battle. Guru Gobind Singh met his enemies at Bhangani, defeated them, and then, with his newfound power, moved back to Anandpur. While there, like many of the other Sikh gurus he faced external threats, mostly from the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707), who had taken notice of the rising power of the Sikh community, and from internal dissension, most notably from the followers of Guru Arjan's brother Prithi Chand and his rival claims to the leadership of the community.

In Anandpur, during the Baisakhi festival in 1699 Guru Gobind Singh declared all Sikhs to be the *Khalsa*, or the Pure. This declaration was an attempt to unite the core Sikh community in opposition to rival claims of true lineage from the followers of Prithi Chand, Dhir Mal, and Ram Rai and to check the growing control of local Sikh leaders, called *masands*. The success of this declaration can be measured by the response of other groups vying for power, as two years later the Mughal Empire joined forces with local hill chiefs in an attempt to wrest power from Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa. The alliance was successful, and Guru Gobind Singh was forced to leave Punjab. After years of moving around northern India, he finally made peace with the new Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah, and hoped to return to Anandpur. However, he was stabbed in the Deccan town of Nander, by an Afghan enemy of the Mughal emperor, and died a few days later, on October 7, 1708.

Before his death, Guru Gobind Singh ended the practice of personal nomination to the guruship and instead declared the *Adi Granth*, the holy scripture of the community, to be the living guru. The sacred scripture became known as the *Guru Granth Sahib* (Revered book). Thus, the authority of a personal Sikh guru was replaced by the dual authority of the Khalsa and scripture.

Although it is accepted that Guru Gobind Singh did not include any of his hymns or writings in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, there is much controversy over another book that does contain some of his writings, the *Dasam Granth* (variously translated as the "The Book of the Tenth Guru" or "The Tenth Book"). Some believe he wrote almost all the compositions in it, others believe he wrote very few of them and that it represents the collected court poetry read out during the Anandpur days, and still other opinions fall between these two extremes. The actual contents of the *Dasam Granth* are very diverse as it contains retellings of Puranic mythology, many folktales, a section on the "Wiles of Women" (*Chitro Pakhyani*), and even a letter in Persian written to Aurangzeb, the Mughal emperor responsible for Guru Tegh Bahadur's death and Gobind Singh's own removal from Anandpur, called the *Zafarnama*. The debate over authorship has yet to reach any satisfactory conclusion.

Guru Gobind Singh is still powerfully alive in the Sikh imagination. He stands second only to Guru Nanak (1469–1539) as the most important model for Sikhs to follow. For example, the daily Sikh liturgy, the morning and evening recitations specifically, includes Guru Nanak's *Japji* (Meditation of the soul) as well as Guru Gobind Singh's *Jap* (Meditation) and ten *Savayyas*. Furthermore, Guru Gobind Singh's emphasis on divine justice and on the rule of the Khalsa has withstood the test of time. His life has been, and still is, a source of inspiration to Sikhs in times of persecution and hardship.

—*Daniel Michon*

See also: Hereditary Holiness; Nanak; Scholars as Holy People; Tegh Bahadur

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Godeliva

(c. 1052–1070 C.E.)

Christian laywoman, martyr

The Christian saint Godeliva was first and foremost an obedient wife, who, following her murder in 1070, became the only married woman martyr recognized by the medieval papacy. She inspired enthusiastic devotion from a great popular cult.

Godeliva, born in about 1052, grew into a beautiful girl in the Belgian town of Londefort and accrued many suitors. Her parents selected the wealthiest of these, Lord Bertulf of Ghisteltes. Bertulf's mother, however, was furious that the marriage was made without consulting her. Her scorn so changed Bertulf's feelings toward Godeliva that he deserted his bride. Godeliva was kept in a cell and given only scraps of bread and water. When her rations were cut further, Godeliva fled to her parents. They complained first to the count of Flanders and then to the bishop of Tournai, who decreed that Godeliva should return to Bertulf and that he should treat her well. Although Bertulf agreed, he soon became violent, treating Godeliva worse than before. One day, feigning reconciliation, he asked her to see a woman who could help make theirs a loving marriage. Soon thereafter, two of his servants woke Godeliva and told her to come to this woman immediately. Once outside, they choked her and drowned her in a pond. They then returned Godeliva's body to her bed to make it appear a natural death.

Signs that this domestic abuse was really martyrdom soon appeared. The earth around the pond where Godeliva

was strangled turned into marble, and the water cured all who drank it. Pilgrims began to visit, taking chips of the marble. The water even cured Bertulf's daughter (from his second marriage) of blindness, causing Bertulf to repent. In 1084, Godeliva's body was enshrined in a church, which established her among the ranks of the saints. Godeliva is not a traditional martyr, since she was not particularly pious and did not die for her faith—she was an ordinary married woman and an innocent murder victim. Her biographer, Drogo of Winoksbergen, praises her for her humility and submissiveness, both to her husband and to the aristocratic and ecclesiastical leaders whose judgment proved so fatal. It was perhaps this combination of normalcy and victimhood at the hands of those in power—traits that many must have identified with—that inspired her devoted following.

Pilgrims continue to visit Godeliva's shrine today, purchasing rings that have touched her relics and drinking the water. Fittingly, she is the patron saint of throat diseases, in-law problems, and difficult marriages.

—*Annika Elisabeth Fisher*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Laity

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Godric

(c. 1065–1170 C.E.)

Christian hermit

Godric, who died as a hermit at Finchale, England, in 1170, was never formally canonized; nevertheless, he was recognized as a holy man during his lifetime and venerated as a saint by the local community of Durham from the time of his death until the fifteenth century.

Godric was born in about 1065 into a peasant family in Walpole, Norfolk. From modest beginnings as a local peddler, he expanded his role as a merchant, acquiring partners, buying part interests in several ships, and ultimately achieving success as a merchant-seaman. His commercial interests took him from England to Scotland, Flanders, Denmark, and the Mediterranean; he also visited the most important pilgrimage sites of his time, including Santiago de Compostela, Jerusalem, and Rome. While on pilgrimage to Lindisfarne, Godric was inspired by the example of St. Cuthbert (c.

634–687) to renounce his worldly possessions and live a life of solitude. His adoption of the eremitical life proceeded gradually; he lived for two years with a hermit in Wolsingham, cared for the sick in the Hospital of St. John in Jerusalem, and was a sacristan in a village church, where he learned to read with the local schoolboys, before establishing his hermitage on the river Wear, vowing obedience to the prior of Durham.

During his lifetime, Godric was known for his gift of prophecy, his friendships with wild animals, and his visions of saints, angels, and demons. His posthumous miracles center more extensively on miraculous cures. He is also credited with writing the first lyric poems in English, including a song to St. Nicholas, the patron of merchants and mariners who live in the mid-fourth century. Godric's cult was never widespread; in fact, one scholar has noted that "the majority of his pilgrims were local, female, and lower-class" (Finucane 1977, 127). Nevertheless, Godric was held in great esteem by the monks of Durham cathedral priory, who provided him with land, cared for him in his final illness, and recorded his life and miracles.

—Mary Lynn Rampolla

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Miracles; Nature; Prophets

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Gods on Earth

Some religions have envisaged their holy people not just as individuals with a special connection to the divine, but as divine themselves, especially in the form of divine incarnations, emanations, or manifestations on earth. To Western audiences, this presence of gods on earth is best known in the form of Christian belief that Jesus of Nazareth was God incarnate, and in the ancient Egyptian conviction that their rulers were both gods and sons of a god. That gods sometimes walk the earth in human form is also a common theme in folklore. Many of the ancient Greek heroes fit into this category, as does the Peruvian god Cuniraya Huiracocha, who was said to come to earth in the form of a beggar. The oldest, clearest, and most consistent belief in divine appearances

among humans, though, comes from India, where theology focuses on the role of the *avatara*, the god in human form.

Only in the case of Islam is the manifestation of God on earth regarded as impossible—God being completely transcendent in Muslim theology. Even so, Islamic thought has been influenced by the Persian mystic Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), who argued that every age has had a "manifestation" (rather than "incarnation") of God, including Adam, Noah, Jesus, and Muhammad. And the Nation of Islam in the United States, an offshoot of traditional Islam, includes the claim that its founder, W. D. Fard (c. 1891–?), was "Allah" (and therefore it is a matter of faith that God is black). Perhaps this belief influenced the African American Christian preacher Father Divine (d. 1965), who proclaimed himself to be God—a theme otherwise limited in Christianity to the figure of Jesus alone. The Baha'i faith, which also grew out of Islam, recognizes numerous founders of religions as manifestations of God, including Jesus, Muhammad, the Buddha, Krishna, Abraham, and Moses as well as the Bab and Baha'u'llah. For Baha'is, the validity of a manifestation of God is proven by six elements: (1) that they transform the lives of people who recognize them, (2) that they reveal divine verses, (3) that they have certain characteristics, including integrity and willingness to suffer for the truth, (4) that they fit into the chain of prophecy, (5) that they are appropriate to the era in which they are born, and (6) that divine judgment will come to their opponents.

Rather different is the Hindu concept of the avatar, a "down-coming" of the divine in human form. It is not clear if this is a physical incarnation. On one hand, at least in some accounts of avatars the holy-person-god can be embraced and takes part in the physical side of human life (for example, Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, when Arjuna apologizes for holding the god disrespectfully). On the other hand, it is commonly believed that avatars only have *apparent* bodies and are not really born or subject to death. Still, avatars do take the form of a full human life, from conception to death. The term "avatar" is applied especially to appearances of Vishnu, although sometimes it is used for other gods. Vishnu is believed to have ten avatars—a fish, a tortoise, a boar, a lion, a dwarf, Parasurama, Rama, Krishna, the Buddha, and Kalkin (who has not yet appeared).

The idea of the avatar seems to be a late development in Hinduism, first appearing in the later Upanishads—before that, divine appearances were in the form of "manifestations," which suggests a definition more like that of the Baha'is, rather than a one-on-one equation of a god "in disguise" on earth. That is, the god merely sends out some of his or her essence while remaining, in effect, separate from the manifestation. In both cases, the god, whether manifestation or avatar, has clearly come to earth as a great teacher, to protect the righteous and to blaze a path for people to follow of



Sixteenth-century Indian sculpture of the Child Krishna dancing. (Burstein Collection/Corbis)

virtuous behavior and connection to the divine. Thus, both Krishna (the most famous avatar of Vishnu, believed to have lived in about 3000 B.C.E.) and Jesus were born of human parents (although, because of the doctrine of the virgin birth, Christians believe that Jesus had only one human parent) but retained full divinity, appearing on earth for the sake of the world.

The concept of the avatar has been expanded beyond the ten avatars of Vishnu, and several Hindu holy people have been regarded by their followers (or have proclaimed themselves) to be an avatar. Thus, many Hindus think that the ninth-century poet-saint Andal was an avatar of the earth goddess; Krishna Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533) has been regarded by millions as an incarnation of both Krishna and his consort Radha; Sahajananda Swami, who founded a religious movement in India in the early nineteenth century, was regarded as an avatar of Vishnu who took earthly form to bring salvation to his followers; and many Hindus worship Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886) as an avatar. Some great saints of India have even been regarded as avatars of holy objects: Vedanta Deshika (1268–1370) is believed to be an avatar of the temple bell at Tirupati, while the Hindu devotional saint Hit Harivansh (c. 1502–c. 1552) is regarded as an incarnation of Krishna's flute.

Belief that particularly holy people are avatars seems to have increased in recent times, perhaps because of a conviction that the troubles of the world are demanding a divine response in the form of a new avatar who will restore balance to the world. The followers of Sathya Sai Baba (1926–) recognize their guru as an incarnation of several gods and goddesses, especially Shiva and Shakti, believing that he showed signs of divinity from the age of thirteen. The Bengali female guru Anandamayi Ma (1896–1982) was told by an inner voice that she was divine—her disciples saw her as a manifestation of the goddess Kali. Meher Baba (1894–1969), creator of a syncretism movement in modern India, claimed to be the final avatar of God. And today the guru Ammachi (1953–), who achieved personal identification first with Krishna and then with Kali in 1975, reveals her true identity weekly to her followers.

It has been argued by scholars such as Geoffrey Parrinder (1997) that the developed concept of the Hindu avatar was influenced by Jaina and Buddhist beliefs in recurrent jinas and buddhas, great holy people with many divine attributes (although gods play a secondary role in both religions). An important difference between an avatar and a buddha, however, is that, for most Buddhists, Shakyamuni Buddha is the only historic buddha, while Hindu avatars, as we have seen, continue to appear to the present. *Bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings, in Buddhism), however, have been regarded as manifesting or incarnating themselves on earth at times.

This belief appears for the most part in two regions in which Buddhism has adapted considerably to indigenous

belief, Tibet and Japan. Thus, in Japan, the Buddhist monk Gyogi Bosatsu (668–749) was popularly believed to be an incarnation of the bodhisattva Manjushri. In Japan, the *daigon* (great incarnation), the deity appearing in human form, is a significant theme in Shinto. It also appears in the new religions of Japan—Kotama Okada (1901–1974) was the incarnation of a Shinto god, as was Nakayama Miki (1798–1887), who, in a variant, was regarded as the bodily shrine of “God the Parent.” The idea of the manifest god is particularly central to Tibetan Buddhist belief and governance. Not only have certain holy figures, such as Drom Tonpa (1005–1064) or Gampopa (1079–1153), been regarded as *emanations* of various bodhisattvas, this belief has been important in establishing lineages of religious leaders. Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), founder of the Gelukpa school, was regarded as an emanation of three bodhisattvas in one body. Even more important, the reincarnating lamas are regarded as emanations of bodhisattvas; for example, since the fifth, the dalai lamas have been held to be incarnations of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion.

This belief also appears in China, in Buddhism as well as in other religions. Thus, the Chinese Buddhist Dushun (557–640) was later believed to be an incarnation of Manjushri (bodhisattva of wisdom). Several Daoist deities have also manifested themselves in human form, some of them many times. For example, the early Daoist deity Huang-lo-chün has reportedly descended to earth to assist humankind many times in the form of various Daoist masters, including Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.). Even the imported holy figure, the Middle Eastern prophet Mani (216–274/277 C.E.), became known in China as the buddha of light and an incarnation of Laozi.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Andal; Bab, The; Baha'ullah; Bodhisattva; Chaitanya, Krishna; Drom Tonpa; Dushun; Fard, W. D.; Gyogi Bosatsu; Harivansh, Hit; Jesus; Krishna; Laozi; Pharaohs of Egypt; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Rulers as Holy People; Sathya Sai Baba; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa; Vedanta Deshika

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Gopi/The Gopis

Legendary Hindu devotees

The Sanskrit word *gopi* means “a female cowherder” or “cowherd maiden.” The word in its plural form, Gopis, names the group of married and unmarried cowherd women and girls who were passionately devoted to the god Krishna, an intimate form of the divinity for the majority of Hindus. The word in its singular form, “the Gopi,” can refer to the favored Gopi of Krishna, known as Radha. The Gopis are said to ex-

emphify the highest devotion to Krishna and serve as a model of loving service for Vaishnava devotees.

The Gopis appear in the ancient literature of India known as the *puranas*. It is in the tenth book of the popular Bhagavata Purana (BhP), famed for its stories of Krishna as an infant, child, and youth in the region of Vraja in northern India, that the Gopis receive the greatest attention as passionate lovers of the flute-playing Lord Krishna.

The Gopis make their most prominent appearance in the famous story of the dance known as the Rasa Lila (BhP 10.29–33). One enchanting autumn evening, as the full moon is rising, Krishna produces irresistible flute music that lures the Gopis. They suddenly abandon everything—their household duties, families, homes, even their physical bodies, to run off to the forest to be with Krishna. Several chapters earlier (BhP 10.22), the Gopis had performed special worship practices to gain the favor of the supreme goddess in order to attain Krishna as their husband. It is in the Rasa Lila that the Gopis are said to have had this desire fulfilled. The climactic scene occurs when the Gopis form a great circle around Krishna, who miraculously duplicates himself in order to dance with each and every Gopi at once, though each Gopi feels that Krishna is with her alone.

The Gopis are known for their songs of love and separation. In the “song of the flute” (BhP 10.21), the Gopis yearn to be with Krishna after being mesmerized by his flute music, which captivates all living beings. The middle chapter of the Rasa Lila (BhP 10.31) presents the “song of the Gopis,” in which the Gopis pray for Krishna’s return after he disappears from them. In a later story of the Bhagavata, as Krishna reaches youthful maturity and departs from the rural Vraja area, the Gopis again yearn for his return (BhP 10.47). Within the same chapter, the famed “song of the black bee” is a short soliloquy of a single Gopi who, out of madness caused by her loving passion, speaks to a black bee as if it were a messenger sent by Krishna himself.

—Graham M. Schweig

See also: Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna; Vaishnava Sahajiyas

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Gorakhnath

(late 12th–early 13th cent. C.E.?)

Hindu guru

Gorakhnath (Sanskrit, “Master of the Cowherds”) was a renowned Hindu guru who is said to have originated the

confederation of Shaiva yogins known as the Nath Siddhas (Perfected ones who are masters) and to have developed the practices of hatha yoga (forceful yoga). Although recent research has shown that a man named Gorakh probably lived in western India during the late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries, he has been connected to earlier quasi-historical mystics, to semidivine beings called *siddhas* (perfected beings), and even to a Buddhist deity.

It is probable that the historical Gorakhnath institutionalized earlier Shaivite orders, such as the Kapalikas (Users of the skull), Pasupatas (Followers of the Lord of Beasts), and Kanphatas (Split-eared ones), merging them with others practicing variations of hatha yoga, Indian alchemy, and Tantric yoga. Thus emerged the orders (*sampradaya*) of Nath Siddhas. After the thirteenth century, there was a virtual “Gorakhization” (White 1996) as many myths and legends, yogic orders, and monasteries were claimed to descend from him. He is frequently claimed as one of the Nine Naths, a shifting list of great masters in which he is usually placed second or third. Stories are told of his magical powers, his miraculous birth, how he battled demons, and how he saved his own master from sexual bondage in a kingdom of women in Assam.

Beyond this trove of myths and legends, Gorakh (also known as Goraksa) is claimed as the author of many vernacular mystical poems and numerous Sanskrit texts on hatha yoga. Foremost among the later are the thirteenth-century *Goraksa Sataka* (Hundred stanzas of Goraksa) and the *Goraksa Samhita* (Compendium of Goraksa). The three extant versions of the latter encompass the major teachings of the medieval Nath Siddha traditions: alchemy, hatha yoga, and tantric worship involving the use of sexual fluids.

As one of the most famous holy figures of south Asia, Gorakhnath and his many manifestations provide glimpses into the historical development of yogic practices, monastic orders, and popular devotions and attitudes.

—Glen Alexander Hayes

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Naths; Sexuality and Holy People

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Goretti, Maria

(1890–1902 C.E.)

Roman Catholic laywoman, martyr

In 1902, Maria Goretti, a twelve-year-old, resisted an attempted rape by the son of her dead father’s partner; she

subsequently died from wounds inflicted by her assailant, Alessandro Serenelli. The Roman Catholic Church canonized her in 1950 with the official appellation of martyr. During her cause for beatification, Serenelli reported that as she fought him off, she said, “It’s a sin! God does not want it!” These words were interpreted by the church as a willingness to die for the faith, and a willingness to die so that Serenelli would not commit the sin of rape. Shortly before she died, Maria freely forgave Serenelli and expressed a wish that he might someday join her in heaven. Serenelli stated that in the eighth year of his jail sentence he had a conversion experience upon seeing a vision of Maria. Public support of Maria’s courage and sanctity was so vigorously outspoken that her cause for sainthood moved quickly through official channels. Her mother and siblings were present for the canonization ceremony, a first in Catholic history.

Maria, born in 1890, was one of seven children of Luigi and Assunta Goretti, poor and illiterate farming people in Ferriere, Italy. When Luigi died from malaria, Maria took over many domestic chores to free her mother to help in the fields. She was attacked while caring for the baby of the family. Maria has been held up as a model of chastity for young people and a model of courage for poor, illiterate women. She has been presented as a reminder to the church to safeguard children against the dangers and violence of the world. It has been suggested that Maria’s lack of education was a means to holiness and deeper faith in God. Maria’s faith led her to embrace her death in protest against physical violence.

Maria Goretti was a pioneer in the cause against violence toward women. She had a true sense of herself as a precious daughter of God, and she took a stand in defense of her person by choosing not to be victimized by another person’s aggression. In refusing to acquiesce to the demands of her assailant, Maria reaffirmed her right to human respect at every level. In the face of oppression and adversity, she upheld her fundamental right to human dignity. Maria stands out as a woman empowered to speak out on her own behalf and, by extension, on behalf of all women, and men, who are victims of violence.

—*Mary Ann McSweeney*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Sexuality and Holy People

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Gotama

See *Gautama*

Graham, Billy

(1918 C.E.–)

Christian evangelist

William Franklin Graham, universally known as Billy Graham, has been the leading revivalist preacher in the United States since he began his ministry in 1949. He has preached to more people than anyone else in history, adding the modern media of radio and television to a ceaseless series of evangelical “crusades” that took him to 185 countries, during which he preached live to an estimated 210 million people. Graham’s influence, especially in American culture, has been enormous, earning him the nickname “pope of Protestant America,” although he has sometimes also been criticized for his active stance on various political issues, most notably Watergate and the Vietnam War.

Graham, born in 1918, was the son of dairy farmers in Charlotte, North Carolina. At the age of sixteen he made a personal religious conversion during the course of a revival meeting. His experience led him to choose a career in the ministry. He was ordained in the Southern Baptist Church in 1939 and studied at both Florida Bible Institute and Wheaton College in Illinois. At the latter institute, he met his wife Ruth, to whom he has been married for nearly six decades. After college, Graham joined the Youth for Christ ministry, an organization dedicated to serving the youth and servicemen of America.

Graham’s position as a religious leader took an extraordinary turn in 1949, when he was sent to conduct a revival mission in Los Angeles. A three-week revival had been scheduled, but Graham ended up preaching to overflow crowds for eight weeks—and suddenly found himself propelled to international fame. This was the beginning of his mission crusades, which have proved of enduring value to people throughout the world for two generations. Graham does not have a new message. He is not a founder of a church, instead preaching a nondenominational message of the basic teachings of Christianity in a way that appeals to a broad cross-section of the population. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), founded by Graham in 1950, has avoided radicalism and continues to support the causes especially dear to Billy Graham: understanding between religions, children’s welfare, and the improvement of race relations.

Graham, suffering from Parkinson’s disease, retired at age eighty-two from active leadership of the BGEA. He lives with Ruth in North Carolina and still occasionally makes public appearances. He has received many awards, including the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1982 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996. In 2001, he was named an honorary knight commander of the Order of the British Empire. Perhaps a better sense of his true importance in twentieth-century religion can be gained, though, from two

facts: Graham's 1977 book, *How to Be Born Again*, had the largest first printing of any publication in history, 800,000 copies, and Graham has appeared an astonishing forty-four times on the Gallup Poll's annual listing of the ten most admired men in the world.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Mission; Protestantism and Holy People

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Greek Philosophers

Greek philosophy encompasses vastly different figures and groups, mostly men but including some women, starting approximately from the pre-Socratics (seventh to fifth centuries B.C.E.) and Thales (fl. 585 B.C.E.), continuing with Seneca (4–65 C.E.), and then moving into the subsequent developments of Platonism, both non-Christian and Christian,

from the third to the sixth centuries C.E. Philosophical (*philo-sophia*, “lover of wisdom”), religious, and scientific thinking and practice during these eras of Greek history were for the most part inseparable aspects of a profound questioning that generally recognized its own limitations in the context of a growing criticism of conventional views of divinity. This questioning was concerned, among many other things, with what we might call the holy, the divine, the transforming presence that human beings may invoke for aid, and by which human beings, too, may become holy, pure, blessed, and god-beloved. It explored these issues in terms both of “the holy things,” or what is owing to the gods, and “the just things,” what is owed to one’s fellow beings, including piety to parents and family. No single technical vocabulary for the holy was developed over this period.

An important element of Greek philosophy was a search for the divine ground of reality in the nature of physical things (including the soul and the self). This view is supported by any cursory glance at early pre-Socratic thought, with various philosophers declaring various elements to be the beginning principle of the cosmos. At the same time, there is more at issue than natural theology; what was at issue was a recognition that overcoming the limitations of human knowing (in accordance with the Delphic maxim,



The Death of Socrates by Jacques-Louis David, 1787. (Bettman/Corbis)

“Know yourself”) requires a new way of seeing, and being in, the world, divine aid to bring this about, and a transformation of one’s way of life. Religious, magical, or mystery elements in Greek thought cannot be artificially separated from philosophy, if philosophy is the path uncovered by the spiritual guide or the group that accompanies or follows this guide (as in the case of Orpheus and Pythagoras, above all), a *practical* spiritual exercise as an education for the happy life and a token of the freedom of soul.

The spiritual guide, the true philosopher, is thus a holy person, whose training, as Plutarch (c. 50–120 C.E.) puts it, is “a *work* more holy than any holy observance or temple service” (*De Iside et Osiride* 351e). Such work then involves an approach or journey to the source of the holy. Parmenides (fl. 470 B.C.E.) might have been the first philosopher to use arguments, but his poem actually describes a journey, by virtue of divine help, to a goddess of no name (in a completely feminine universe) who gives him her teaching. Empedocles (fl. 450 B.C.E.) appears as a divinized, prophetic mediator to mortals (fragment [fr.] 112). He prays to the gods “from holy lips to pour a pure stream,” and to the Muse, that a mortal should only hear what is right by virtue of the chariot that comes “from Piety,” and to say no more than is “holy” (fr. 3).

These are not empty forms, but “the heights of wisdom,” in which controlling the winds, healing, prophecy, overcoming death, having a care for good deeds and strangers (fr. 112), and reasoning, or proportion, emerge together. Proportion is the essence of the holy for human lips. But if this is a path of closeness to the divine, it is not the usual path “traveled by wagons” of perceptual persuasion into the human mind (fr. 133). The later itinerant sophists were also practical guides in this sense, even if the test of their wisdom can sometimes, as in Plato’s (c. 429–347 B.C.E.) *Gorgias*, reveal their feet of clay. And the fragments of the great founder of atomism, Democritus (fl. 420 B.C.E.), reveal penetrating spiritual insight into the nature of morality and of human relation to divinity.

But if what is holy depends on divinity, and divinity only reflects conventional morality or human forms of mind control (according to some of the sophists in the latter half of the fifth century B.C.E.), then the holy is a question of preference—if not human preference, then the preference of willful or self-willed gods. So in Plato’s *Euthyphro* the problem of a criterion beyond human convention or divine preference is broached but not solved, since a definition of the holy is not apparently reached in that dialogue. But the question of a definition of the holy is left open: Is it a “commercial art,” that is, we give to the gods so that they give us good things back (effectively criticized at *Euthyphro* 14c–15a), or do the gods get anything in return?

We get a sense of what it *means* to be holy in Socrates’ (469–399 B.C.E.) lived experience as described by Plato. For

example, the *Apology* conveys a sense of Socrates’ personal vocation from “the god” at Delphi, the god’s equally personal care for the people of Athens (cf. 31a), and in the context of the therapy of the soul (“I go around doing nothing but persuading you not to care for body or wealth, but as for the best possible state of your soul”). Another important element is the moral balance Socrates exhibits between human ignorance and good faith in the face of death (39e *ff.*: cf. *Crito*). The Symposium also expresses a sense of how the constant pursuit of the divinely beautiful has transformed Socrates into the unique and “god-beloved” person he is. In this context, the Platonic ideals of life as a process of “likeness to god” or as the practice of dying, of liberating the soul from the body, is not saintly remoteness from lived experience in favor of abstract universals, but the proper ordering of the body for the sake of the soul and for the divine light beyond the soul itself. And so in the *Phaedrus* (273e–274a) Socrates calls philosophy “talk with gods.”

In Aristotle’s thought, holiness appears as a component of just living, and becoming a morally and intellectually good person is the essence of realizing human potential in the midst of weakness of will. The process leads to a life beyond the merely human and, in terms of Aristotle’s theology, is a life of love and one in which we experience, if only intermittently, the blessed pleasure of the divine “way of life” (*Metaphysics* 12, 7). Aristotle’s sage or good person, together with the figure of Socrates, establishes a practical ideal of the spiritual guide for the rest of antiquity (including Christian ascetical thought), that is, a path of piety and holiness to one’s fellow beings, to the cosmos, and to the divine, a path of purgation, purification, and illumination that can be communicated and tested, is open to all, different for each, and yet the exclusive property of no one.

For the Stoics, holiness is “justice in relation to the gods” (Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 1, 116) or “thinking rightly about the gods” (Seneca, *Epistle* 31, 8). For the Epicureans, “Every wise man holds pure and holy beliefs about the gods,” and for Epicurus (341–270 B.C.E.), it is natural for us to pray not because the gods would be angry if we didn’t, but so that we might realize perfection and companionship with the laws in accordance with the understanding of beings surpassing in power and excellence (Philodemus, *On Piety* 26–27).

Greek philosophy was never a question of academic disciplines, but of spiritual exercises. So for Plotinus (204–270 C.E.), the deepest longing of the human soul is for that which is greater than the soul (*Ennead* I, 4, 10); his dying words, according to Porphyry (232/233–305 C.E.), were: “Try to bring back the divine in us to the divine in the all.” And so prayer is a proper form of address in such thinking, since the philosophical ascent to the holy does not depend entirely or even primarily upon our own efforts. Neoplatonic texts are, in fact, full of thought experience, prayers,

meditational practices, and other forms of concentrating or destroying the mind as methods of getting beyond, or of being taken beyond, the texts themselves. Iamblichus (c. 240–325 C.E.) and Proclus (411–485 C.E.) emphasize a way of salvation not by theology but by ritual, comparing the material universe to a mirror so saturated with the holy presence of invisible powers that each part responds in sympathy, and with correspondence to, every other part because of its dependence and return to that holy majesty upon which its being depends.

—Kevin Corrigan

See also: Greek Prophets; Greek Ruler Cult; Iamblichus; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Plato; Plotinus; Scholars as Holy People; Socrates

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Greek Prophets

Greek prophets are a diverse group but fit into four main categories: (1) priests and priestesses at the greater and lesser shrines, such as Dodona in Epirus (an oracle of Zeus), Delphi (the oracle of Apollo), or Asklepios at the healing sanctuary of Epidaurus; (2) legendary seers, prophets, and diviners, such as Melampus (who could understand the speech of animals), Cassandra (doomed by Apollo to prophesy, but not to be believed), Calchas, and Tiresias, and equally legendary musicians, poets, and spiritual guides, such as Orpheus and Pythagoras; (3) those nameless persons circulating prophecies attached to the name of some inspired individual, such as the Sibyl or Orpheus; and (4) others engaging in all the various forms of divination, such as necromancy, iatromancy, augury, weather divination, even rhapsodomancy (the random consultation of divinely inspired books, such as opening Homer randomly for prophetic inspiration).

In general, “prophet” (*prophētēs*, *mantis*) is the title of a holy mortal who speaks in the name of a god or interprets divine will, someone who can cross borders between the human and animal realms, and between the divine and the

human, life and death, as in the case of many legendary Greek figures. In Empedocles’ case, the prophet claims to be an immortal god already. Prophecy is directly related to poetic inspiration, when it is known as *enthousiasmos*. This can include ecstatic or frenzied behavior. As Socrates holds, “The greatest blessings come by way of heaven-sent madness” (*Phaedrus*, 244a).

Blindness, too, traditionally linked with both poetry and prophecy (for example, Homer and Tiresias), connotes superhuman vision, or waking up to a different way of seeing—as, perhaps, in the mysteries, or in the “Orphic” notion, first mentioned in Pindar (c. 518–c. 446 B.C.E.), that what survives death is an image of life that sleeps during normal bodily consciousness but wakes up while the body sleeps and foresees future events in prophetic dreams. This image survived because it alone was from the gods. This notion became the foundation for the Stoic philosophy of divination (and the view that the soul of the prophet is in open contact with different dimensions of the world) and was also a regulating force in normal temple procedure (as at the temple of Asklepios). When in need of healing or initiation, the pilgrim slept within the temple precincts (incubation) and waited for the confirmation of a god-inspired dream. But the practice of incubation and iatromancy (medicine prophecy) was also connected with the mastery of different states of consciousness, of descent into the underworld, and of an animal-like closeness to the divine. At the Oracle of Trophonius at Lebadea, for instance, the pilgrim descended into the bowels of the earth, where he or she experienced a rapid spinning movement, powerful vibrations, and a more powerful form of consciousness. Epimenides (late seventh century B.C.E.) spent decades asleep in the Cave of Zeus on Crete, and Pythagoras (c. 570–497 B.C.E.) returned from long periods in an underground room as a messenger from the gods.

At the major sites where prophetic power took up fixed abode and people came for millennia to pose their questions, different forms of prophecy prevailed. At Dodona, the prophets, the Selli, were early described as “of unwashed feet and sleeping on the ground” (*Iliad* 16, 233), and later three priestesses, “doves,” interpreted the oracle either through the murmuring of sacred oaks, a spring, or a brazen gong. At Delphi, the Pythia gave responses in a state of divine trance induced by the chewing of bay leaves or by the inhalation of vapors from a chasm (the latter theory is back in favor at this time). Heraclitus (fl. c. 500 B.C.E.) catches the simple, enigmatic, but comprehensive force of prophecy: “The Sibyl with raving mouth uttering unlaughing, unbeautified, uncensored things reaches out over a thousand years with her voice through the god” (fragment [fr.] 92). And again: “The Lord, whose oracle is that at Delphi, neither speaks nor hides, but indicates” (fr. 93).

Plutarch (c. 50–120 C.E.) emphasizes the connection between the inquiry, wonder, and uncertainty of philosophy and the concealment of prophetic riddles that in their turn prompt creative, inquiring response. This connection between philosophy, prophecy, and magic was more pervasive than has generally been supposed, for many early Greek philosophers were also regarded as prophets and saviors who descended from heaven as a help for souls. Such was the case of Empedocles (fl. 450 B.C.E.), who has so often been made into a rationalist after the nineteenth century, but was still regarded in Persian thought of the ninth century as a *ghiyath* or “help” of souls, and later still was painted in the colors of a sufi by the twelfth-century Persian mystic Shihabuddin Suhrawardi.

—Kevin Corrigan

See also: Calchas; Ecstatic Cults; Empedocles; Greek Philosophers; Greek Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Melampus; Orpheus and Orphism; Prophets; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Pythia; Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin; Tiresias

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Greek Ruler Cult

The idea of contact between rulers, both male and female, and the gods is long-standing in the Greek mythological tradition. The king appears as the principal agent in transmitting the favor of the gods to the subjects of his realm. Thus, Jason on his way to regain his father’s kingdom stopped to help an old woman across the river, losing a sandal in the process. The crone was Hera in disguise. She never forgot his kindness and remained his lifelong ally. Athena acted as protector of Odysseus in the Trojan War and on his long journey home. Lycurgus, king of Sparta, visited Apollo’s temple in Delphi after having penned his code for the regulation of the affairs of Lacedaemon. Apollo addressed him and weighed

and examined the reputation Lycurgus enjoyed. At the commencement of his oracle, the god declared that he was puzzled whether to call Lycurgus a god or a man, but as he advanced Apollo decided in favor of the former appellation and assigned it to him as a good man.

The tenth-century Byzantine encyclopedia called the *Suda* describes kingship in the Hellenistic period as reflecting a combination of military achievement and personal merit. The connection was established between an individual’s ability to perform great services, such as founding cities, removing famine, and winning battles, and the perception of that person as being worthy of the kinds of tributes that humans pay to the gods. Both Philip of Macedon (r. 359–336 B.C.E.) and Alexander (r. 336–323 B.C.E.) took pride in being descendants of Herakles. With the rise of Alexander the Great and the conquest of Egypt and the Persian Empire, new ideas concerning kingship and divine rulership entered the Hellenistic mind. Alexander was deified shortly after his death. His followers and most ambitious generals carved up his empire and connected themselves in some way with him. His general, Ptolemy (367/366–282 B.C.E.), used his successful defense of Egypt against invasion in 306 B.C.E. to support the usurpation of the royal title for Egypt. Coin types of Ptolemy with the eagle and thunderbolt link the dynasty with Zeus. Ptolemy set up his dynasty using much of the previous model the pharaohs had established with some Greek innovations.

Ruler worship was firmly established by Ptolemy II’s (308–246 B.C.E.) inauguration of a festival to honor his father, aiming to encourage loyalty and make the succession official. Hecataeus of Abdera (c. 360–290 B.C.E.), court historian to the Ptolemies, wrote, “The Egyptians perform proskynesis [bowing to the ground] to their kings and honor them as gods, in the belief that they have not obtained supreme power without the help of divine providence and that such as have the will and ability to confer the greatest benefits share in the divine nature” (*Aegyptica*). Seleucus (c. 358–281 B.C.E.) assumed power in the eastern part of Alexander’s empire centered in Babylon. In return for Apollo’s prophecy of Seleucus’s kingship, perhaps as early as 312 B.C.E., the Seleucids built Apollo a sanctuary at Daphne and commissioned the magnificent Didyma temple. Coins from the reign of Antiochus I (c. 324–261 B.C.E.) show Apollo, in prophet guise, on the reverse side. Later Seleucid inscriptions regularly describe Apollo as the founder of their house. The Seleucid kings set up civic cults to their deceased ancestors and honored them with feasts and festivals during the next hundred years.

As Antiochus III (c. 242–187 B.C.E.) and his wife, Laodice (daughter of king Mithradates of Pontus), assumed the helm of the Seleucid Empire, new institutions were created. At the town of Iasos, Laodice was worshipped with the goddess

Aphrodite. In 193 B.C.E., King Antiochus III instituted a centralized “royal state cult” of himself and his former ruling ancestors as well as a state cult of Queen Laodice. Antiochus did not include his offspring in the royal cult but instead made space for them to act as chief priests and priestesses. Chief priests and priestesses were also assigned to the cult centers throughout the empire, chosen from the friends of the king and queen. Crowns and statues, altars, sacrifices, and annual festivals held on the ruler’s birthday or on the anniversary of his benefaction were connected with the cult. Evidence suggests that the ruler cults were patterned after the Greek city hero cults with some borrowing from neighboring countries.

—Phillip Meade

See also: Alexander the Great; Heroes; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Pharaohs of Egypt; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Rulers as Holy People

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Gregory, Louis

(1874–1951 C.E.)

Baha’i Hand of God

Louis George Gregory was a prominent American Baha’i. He worked for race unity and was the first black person to be appointed a “Hand of the Cause of God.” Born the son of slaves in Charleston, South Carolina, shortly after the American Civil War, in 1874, he grew up with the disappointment of seeing the dream of freedom turn into the reality of segregation and the “Jim Crow” laws. His father died when Louis was a child, and the family experienced severe poverty. The turning point came when his mother married George Gregory, a Union Army veteran. This enabled Louis to attend school, and eventually to graduate from Avery Institute in Charleston (1891), from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee (1896), and from Howard University in Washington, D.C. (1902), where he studied law. He was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court in March 1907.

Gregory first came across the Baha’i faith in 1907 and finally became a Baha’i in 1909. As a Baha’i, he opposed all signs of racial segregation or prejudice in the Baha’i com-

munity. This mission was reinforced by ‘Abdu’l-Baha (1844–1921 C.E.) both in letters and later in person during his visit to North America. During this trip, ‘Abdu’l-Baha also introduced Gregory to Louise Mathew, a white British Baha’i, and later encouraged them to marry, which they did. Such a mixed marriage faced severe stresses, but it was the first between a white and a black Baha’i, and the knowledge that ‘Abdu’l-Baha had promoted it was a strong reinforcement of the Baha’i commitment to racial equality and fellowship.

In 1912, Gregory was elected to the Baha’i Temple Unity, the first regional Baha’i council in North America, and he remained on this body when it evolved into the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the United States and Canada, the first black to serve in this capacity. In 1916, Gregory decided to close his law practice and commit himself full-time to traveling and teaching the Baha’i faith, particularly among the black population in America’s South. He had a deep commitment to racial equality and fellowship, writing on this subject and helping to organize conferences to promote it.

Gregory continued his travels for the Baha’i faith until 1946, when increasing infirmity forced him to retire to the couple’s home in Eliot, Maine, where he died on July 30, 1951. Gregory was greatly loved both by ‘Abdu’l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi. The latter stated that the “rising Baha’i generation in [the] African continent will glory in his memory and emulate his example” (Morrison 1982, 310). Shoghi Effendi also promoted Gregory posthumously to the rank of Hand of the Cause, the highest distinction in the Baha’i faith.

—Moojan Momen

See also: ‘Abdu’l-Baha; Baha’i Faith and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Shoghi Effendi

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Gregory I (Gregory the Great)

(540–604 C.E.)

Christian pope, theologian

Gregory I, pope from 590 to 604, worked to invigorate the Christian church and asserted the authority of the Roman see as the church’s representative throughout the territories of the old Roman Empire. He emphasized a program of pastoral and missionary work done by the church’s secular clergy, especially its bishops, as vital to these efforts.

As the son of a patrician family (born in 540), Gregory had a classical Roman education in preparation for an administrative or ecclesiastical career. Instead he sought the

contemplative life. He was a monk at St. Andrew's in his family palace in Rome from 574 to 579. In 579, Pelagius II sent him to Constantinople as a papal legate. Six years later, Gregory returned to St. Andrew's and became its abbot. Pelagius II died unexpectedly in 590, and Gregory was immediately elected pope, much to Gregory's dismay.

When Gregory was first deprived of the contemplative life as a papal legate to Constantinople, he maintained his spiritual equilibrium by meditating and teaching on the figure of the long-suffering Job from the Hebrew Bible. His election to the papacy forced Gregory to consider again the work of the Christian church in the temporal world. In the *Regula Pastoralis* (A rule for pastoral care), c. 591, probably the most influential work of his papacy, Gregory outlines the principles by which spiritual directors among the secular clergy should meet the demands of their office and assure their own spiritual well-being. Here Gregory examines the variations of the human psyche central to pastoral concerns, with the premise that the differences in human personality—in temperament or tendencies to behave habitually in particular ways—can impede one's receptivity to God. He gives detailed examples of differences (presented as a loose taxonomy of oppositional pairs) and suggests pedagogical approaches for exhortation and preaching that clergy could use to make those in their care amenable to spiritual correction.

There is a sense of urgency in Gregory's efforts. He saw the Christian church facing an apocalypse that he felt was imminent. His ascetic life and sometimes stubborn positions on doctrinal issues and matters of papal policy did not always make him a popular pope during his lifetime. Soon after his death, however, he was regarded as a pope who clearly understood the spiritual urgency of the church's work on earth, particularly the need to inspire the human soul to penitence. To do this work in an afflicted world, Gregory became convinced that one could perceive spiritual perfection in the imperfections of the temporal world. This became a guiding principle of pastoral care for those who would occupy the office of bishop.

Finding that the perfect could be visible in the imperfect gave Gregory the flexibility to persuade by gentle means whenever he could. He was willing to trade expediency for accommodation if accommodating human habits and temperaments meant achieving the greater spiritual good. One of the best-known examples of this can be found in one of Gregory's letters recorded in Bede's eighth-century *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Gregory allowed that the sites of pre-Christian temples did not need to be destroyed, revising an earlier position. Christian practices could be introduced there, replacing the original rites. This would avoid escalating the tensions between English Christians and non-Christians. In many of his works, Gregory likewise made virtue fit a human rather than a heroic scale. As a "mediator"

of the holy, Gregory taught that one moves toward holiness by building on the faulty foundations of the human soul living in an imperfect world.

—Donna Alfano Bussell

See also: Action in the World; Bede; Christianity and Holy People; Pope-Saints; Prophets

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Gregory VII

(c. 1020–1085 C.E.)

Christian pope, reformer

One of the leaders of the eleventh-century movement known as the Gregorian reform, Gregory (originally named Hildebrand), a controversial pope, was an implacable opponent of simony (the buying and selling of ecclesiastical offices), clerical marriage, and lay investiture (the practice of a newly consecrated bishop paying homage to a secular lord in exchange for the lands of the bishopric and the symbols of office). His feast day is May 25.

Hildebrand was born in Tuscany in about 1020 but came to Rome as a child and was educated there. He was chaplain to Gregory VI, and when that pope was forced into exile in 1046, Hildebrand accompanied him. Sometime after Gregory VI's death in 1047, Hildebrand entered a Cluniac monastery, perhaps even Cluny itself. In 1049, Pope Leo IX called Hildebrand back to Rome, where he was ordained as a subdeacon and started to make a name for himself in reforming circles. In 1059, he was elevated to the rank of archdeacon and became an important adviser to Pope Nicholas II and then to Pope Alexander III. He was elected pope in April 1073 and took the name Gregory in honor of Gregory the Great.

As pope, Gregory sought to extend and enforce his authority over the entire Western church. Some insight into his understanding of the papacy can be gained from a document called the *Dictatus papae* (Sayings of the pope), which was inserted into the register of Gregory's letters in March 1075. The *Dictatus papae* consists of twenty-seven short statements about the papacy and appears to be the outline for an unfinished canon law collection. The statements include assertions that the pope is the supreme authority over all Christians, that the pope can depose kings

or emperors, and that the pope cannot be judged by anyone except God.

Gregory soon established himself as a reforming pope. At synods held in Rome in 1074 and 1075, he reissued his predecessor's decrees against clerical marriage and simony. At the 1075 synod, he also issued a general condemnation of lay investiture. This position brought Gregory into conflict with the German king, Henry IV, who regarded investiture not only as his right, but as a way of insuring that the German bishops would remain loyal to the crown. In December 1075, Gregory issued a strong rebuke to Henry, who responded by convening a synod of German bishops that met in Worms in January 1076 to depose the pope. Gregory in turn excommunicated Henry a few months later. Facing a rebellion in Germany, Henry was forced to submit to the pope, who lifted the excommunication in 1077. In 1080, however, Gregory once again excommunicated Henry. Henry called another synod, which deposed Gregory and elected Guibert of Ravenna to the papacy. Guibert, who took the name Clement III, was able to rally considerable support, and thirteen of Gregory's cardinals defected to his side. In March 1084, Henry seized Rome, and Gregory was forced into exile. He died in Salerno in 1085.

Although the conflict with Henry ultimately proved disastrous for Gregory, his papacy did see a number of notable accomplishments. Gregory's legates spread the notion of reform throughout Western Europe, often holding local councils to address matters of clerical discipline. In Spain, Gregory convinced King Alfonso VI of Castile to replace the native Mozarabic liturgy with the Roman rite in his realms. Gregory's letters reveal an interest in events as far afield as Norway, Poland, and Hungary. Gregory's personal rigor and insistence on the sanctity of the clergy helped elevate the moral standing of the papacy, and he is considered one of the most important popes of the Middle Ages.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Pope-Saints; Reform and Reaction

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Gregory of Nazianzus

(c. 329–c. 389/390 C.E.)

Christian bishop, doctor of the church

Born in approximately 329 in central Turkey (Cappadocia), Gregory was the second of three children of Bishop Gregory the Elder of Nazianzus and his wife Nonna. He received an excellent education at Caesarea (Cappadocia), Caesarea (Palestine), Alexandria, and Athens. Gregory dedicated himself completely to God after surviving a fierce storm while en route by ship from Alexandria to Athens. In Athens, he renewed his friendship with Basil, a fellow student. Gregory remained in Athens until about 358, whereupon he returned home to Nazianzus to be baptized by his father and determine the course of his life.

Meanwhile, Basil had started a monastic community in Pontus, and Gregory soon joined him. In 361, however, Gregory was ordained a priest in Nazianzus despite his protests. In 372, again over his objections, Gregory was consecrated bishop of Sasima by Basil, now archbishop of Caesarea. Sasima was a new see founded by Basil in an attempt to consolidate his position as archbishop against the Arians. Gregory, however, never occupied his seat at Sasima, preferring to remain at Nazianzus as adjunct bishop for his father; with that rejection, the close bond of friendship that had connected Basil and Gregory was irrevocably broken. In 374, both Gregory the Elder and his wife Nonna died, whereupon Gregory gave most of his family wealth to the poor. He then retired for three years to the convent of St. Thecla at Seleucia to be spiritual director of the nuns and devote himself to prayer and writing.

In 379, Gregory was called to Constantinople as part of Emperor Theodosius's campaign in favor of Orthodox Christianity. Gregory regarded his move to Constantinople as a missionary act. Very soon the power and eloquence of his preaching attracted large crowds. In his sermons from that time, known as the *Five Theological Orations*, Gregory confirmed the Orthodox doctrine of the unity of the Trinity based upon the inherent equality among its three persons.

While in Constantinople, Gregory was persecuted by the Arian Christians and even endured dissension among his own flock. By 380, Theodosius had been baptized, and he insisted that the faithful in Constantinople (and all his empire) adhere to the Catholic tradition of Rome; he thereupon cast out from Constantinople the Arian bishop Demophilus and installed Gregory as bishop of Constantinople at St. Sophia. However, the Council of Constantinople in 381 rejected the appointment. Arguments and dissension followed, and Gregory, in ill health and wishing to avoid any more disagreements, returned to Nazianzus, only to be confronted by a diocese awash in heresy and disarray. For the next two years, Gregory worked to reform and restore the church at Nazianzus, and by 383, with his cousin Eulalius installed as

bishop, he was able to retire from public life to monastic seclusion.

For the next six or seven years, although in ill health, Gregory worked on his literary corpus, editing his sermons and panegyrics, writing letters, and composing thousands of lines of verse, both religious and personal, of exceedingly high quality (some refer to him as “the poet of Eastern Christendom”). Gregory died in 389 or 390 and was buried in Arianus, but his remains were later removed to Constantinople, and finally, during the Middle Ages, to Rome. Gregory’s feast days in the West are January 2 (with Basil the Great) and January 25 (alone); in the East, his feast day is January 30 (with Basil and John Chrysostom).

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Basil the Great; Christianity and Holy People; John Chrysostom

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Gregory of Nyssa

(c. 330–394 C.E.)

Christian bishop, monk, theologian

Gregory of Nyssa, born in about 330, was the younger brother of Basil the Great. Consecrated bishop of Nyssa c. 371, Gregory was at first trained as a rhetorician but later entered a monastery founded by Basil in Pontus. He is grouped with the “Cappadocian Fathers” due to his birthplace in Asia Minor and his intellectual affiliation with his brother Basil. A Platonist by nature, Gregory is important both as a Christian philosopher and as a theologian. Perhaps his most important exegetical work, *The Life of Moses*, continues the mystical and allegorical interpretations set forth by Philo of Alexandria (d. after 40 C.E.) in his extensive writing on Moses. Gregory preached virginity, believing that it would bring the individual closer to Christ. In fact, his earliest written work is the *Treatise on Virginity*. A strong defender of the dogma of the Trinity as set forth at the Council of Nicaea in 325, Gregory is also noted for his important mystical writing, especially his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*.

Philosophically, Gregory’s most important contribution is his theory of the expansion (or the Greek *epektasis*—literally “stretching forward”) of the soul. Used to describe the eternal progress and growth of the soul, the theory is most clearly outlined in *The Life of Moses*, where the ascension of Mt. Sinai by Moses is linked allegorically to the soul’s growth and union with the divine. Gregory’s sister Macrina also be-

came a model of piety for him; his *Life of Macrina* is one of the most important works devoted to the spiritual practices of a woman.

Gregory’s life apparently involved a great deal of moving around. After being accused of corruption, he was deposed by a synod at Nyssa in 376. He remained in exile until the death of Emperor Valens in 378, when he regained his position. Gregory died soon after his attendance at the council of Constantinople in 394. His spiritual personality is difficult to appraise given the scant detail about his life. However, his works reflect a quick and complex mind, one strongly devoted to the Trinity and the ascetical life. His feast day is March 9.

—David A. Salomon

See also: Basil the Great; Christianity and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Plato; Scholars as Holy People

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Gregory of Sinai

(c. 1265–1340 C.E.)

Greek Orthodox monk, theologian, mystic

Gregory of Sinai was born in about 1265 near Klazomenai on the western shores of Asia Minor. As a young man he became a prisoner of the Turks. Soon after being ransomed, he went to Cyprus, where he started his monastic life, making his full monastic profession at Mt. Sinai. After Sinai he went to Crete, where he was initiated into the tradition of inner (Jesus) prayer by a monk called Arsenius. He then went to Mt. Athos, where he stayed for the next twenty-five years. There he practiced a solitary eremitical life. A Turkish invasion in approximately 1325–1328 forced him to leave Athos, although he returned there once more for a very short time during 1330.

Gregory of Sinai was at Athos at the time of a great theological dispute about the status of the Hesychast prayer (a practice of the Greek church which involved physical aids to improve concentration), the Light of Tabor (divine illumination, another Greek concept), and the highly speculative problems concerning the relationship between God’s essence and energy. Gregory (and even his disciples) did not have any real role in this controversy—he was a man who avoided all polemics and controversies—but his own (mostly implicit) theological doctrine and beliefs were in fundamental agreement with the Hesychast doctrine. Gregory of Sinai’s theology

was very similar to that of another Gregory—Gregory Palamas (c. 1296–1359). These doctrines played a very important role in the cultural and religious history of the Slavs.

Gregory's written works are: *On Commandments and Doctrines, Warnings and Promises, On Thoughts, Passions and Virtues, On Stillness and Prayer: One Hundred and Thirty-Seven Chapters, On the Signs of Grace and Delusion, On Stillness, On Prayer, Alia Capita*, and *Discourse on the Transformation*.

—Peter Jevremovic

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Scholars as Holy People

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Gregory the Thaumaturge

(c. 213–c. 270/275 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Gregory the Thaumaturge, bishop of Neocaesarea (modern Niksar, in Turkey), led his flock for thirty years and helped establish Christianity in Cappadocia. Indeed, it was said that there were only seventeen Christians in Neocaesarea when he became bishop, but when he died there were only seventeen non-Christians. He also gained a reputation as a performer of miracles, hence the name “Thaumaturge” (Wonder Worker).

Gregory was born in about 213 to a non-Christian family in Neocaesarea and converted to Christianity at the age of fourteen. He studied Latin, rhetoric, and law as a young man. He planned to enter the law school at Beirut with his brother Athenodorus, but instead they both became students of Origen, a Christian philosopher at Caesarea in Palestine, from approximately 233 to 238. After this, the brothers returned to Neocaesarea, where Gregory intended to practice law. Within a few years, however, both brothers were ordained as bishops, Gregory of Neocaesarea and Athenodorus of an unknown city.

Gregory's time as bishop was a difficult one for Christians in Cappadocia. During the Decian persecutions, Gregory and his flock hid in the mountains outside of Neocaesarea. He also had to face invasions by the Goths and Borades between 254 and 258. In response to the latter, Gregory wrote his *Canonical Epistle*, in which he sought to maintain church discipline and deal with Christians who had apostatized or engaged in looting. Despite these difficulties, Gregory actively worked to convert the local population to Christianity.

To counter traditional festivals, he established feasts in honor of the martyrs. He attended the first synod of Antioch in 264 but did not attend the second and probably died between 270 and 275.

Gregory left behind several important writings. His *Panegyric to Origen* details his studies in Caesarea and gives an outline of some of Origen's teachings. The *Metaphrasis on Ecclesiastes* is a paraphrase of that book of the Bible in classical Greek. A text preserved only in Syriac, the *Dialogue with Theopompus* addresses the question of whether God can suffer change. In his biography of Gregory the Thaumaturge, Gregory of Nyssa preserves a brief trinitarian creed, the *Exposition of the Faith*. Gregory's authorship of a *Letter to Philagrius on Consubstantiality* is disputed. His feast day is November 17.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gregory of Nyssa; Mission; Origen

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Griffiths, Bede

(1907–1993 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, ecumenical worker

Bede Griffiths, born in 1907, was an English Benedictine monk and a leading figure in interfaith dialogue and the Christian ashram movement in India during the twentieth century. He received a classical education at Oxford, studying poetry and philosophy under the author and professor C. S. Lewis. Griffiths's intellectual growth was always a penetrating personal search, and he drew upon all available intellectual, poetic, and spiritual resources to cultivate it. This deeply personal process characterized Griffiths's entire life, leading to his conversion to Christianity, his experimentation in lay Christian communities, his conversion to Roman Catholicism, and his decision to join the Benedictine community in 1933.

Learning of monastic developments in India, Griffiths applied to join new Benedictine foundations in Kerala and arrived in India in 1955. He later described his motivation to go to India as an attempt to find the “other half” of his soul, that is, to somehow integrate the intuitive and the rational, the East and the West, the internal and the external. Although his teachings perhaps tend to oversimplify such abstractions as “East,” “West,” and “India,” the mystical import of Griffiths’s life and thought is compelling and undeniable. Operating from the conviction that the surface manifestations of religions belie their profound convergence at heart, he sought to affirm the common aspects of all religions, the most basic of which was an inexpressible divine mystery at the heart of reality.

Donning the saffron robes of a *sannyasi* (renunciant) in 1958 and assuming the leadership of Shantivanam ashram in the state of Tamil Nadu, Griffiths increasingly adopted Eastern religious forms in the practice, teachings, and ritual of the ashram. The architecture of the ashram is patterned after Hindu temple structures; the ornate gateway, adorned with Christian imagery, recalls the entrance towers of temple complexes. The liturgy included Sanskrit chants and hymns from the south Indian Hindu saints as well as readings from Buddhist, Daoist, and Hindu scriptures. Griffiths’s many books continued his efforts to bear witness to the marriage of East and West (a concept he used for the title of one of his most important books), and later in his life he was intrigued by new developments in physics that seemed to affirm the presence of a unified, inexpressible mystery at the heart of reality, a conviction that fueled his own mystical convictions.

Even as a frail, elderly monk, Griffiths continued his spiritual search. In 1991, he suffered a devastating stroke, and yet this event seemed to permit another breakthrough to the divine, in this case understood and expressed as the feminine. Feeling profound waves of love during his recuperation, he returned to health with a new awareness: the need to surrender to the divine mother. So, after his many years of searching, often showing a kind of inveterate British rationalism, he encountered the divine through a profound health crisis, which in a real sense “short-circuited” his tendency to intellectualism and allowed new depths of feeling and will to emerge. This was a culminating event and in effect became a preparation for his death, which occurred in 1993. Early in his life, Griffiths was moved by the poetry of John of the Cross, who wrote, “I will lead you by a way you did not know to the secret chamber of love”; at the end of Griffiths’s life, he discovered that chamber perhaps more intimately than ever.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; John of the Cross

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Guandi (Kuan-ti)

(3rd cent. C.E.)

Daoist general, god

Guanyu, a Chinese general during the third century, was deified as a Daoist marshal in the twelfth century and ultimately as Guandi, the god of war, in the late sixteenth century.

As a historical personage, Guanyu was a military hero from Guangdong province, in southern China, during China’s turbulent Three Kingdoms period (221–265). After he was killed, he began to be worshipped as a popular god. During the twelfth century, because of his popular and historical importance, Guanyu was appointed to the Daoist pantheon as a Daoist marshal, a *yuanshuai*, a celestial guardian who protected the Daoist faith. During the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644), the Wanli emperor (r. 1573–1620) changed his title from Marshal Guan to Emperor Guan, or Guandi, the god of war. Guandi was elevated again during the Qing dynasty (1644–1910), becoming the patron saint and protector for the military. In southern China, he is also referred to as Duke Guan (Guangong).

Guandi is considered an important protective deity. Civil officials have worshipped him as a protector, merchants as a god of wealth and fidelity in business contracts, common people as a curer of disease, soldiers as their patron god, and many communities as the chief protector against calamities and destruction. He was and continues to be associated with civic virtues, especially loyalty and courage. His image has been displayed to ward off evil spirits as well as to protect against the ghosts of those killed in battle. Because of his military expertise, he is also considered one of the patron saints of the martial arts.

Guandi is usually depicted with a red face and a long, beautiful beard. He often carries his special weapon, named after him, called a *guandao*. It is a long-handled halberd with a spear or spike head at one end and a battle-ax on the other. He was made famous in one of China’s best-loved novels, *Sanguo zhi yanyi* (The romance of the Three Kingdoms), written in the fourteenth century.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Apotheosis; Spiritual Guardians; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Guidance

When holy people interact with other human beings at all, one of their most essential roles throughout the world's religions is to serve as a guide to others. Even in Islam or Protestant Christianity, which emphasize each person's direct access to God, such adamant independence breaks down in practice—people want an expert, somebody with insight into the divine, who can explain and guide. This attitude is exemplified in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch converted by the apostle Philip in Acts 8:30–31: Although clearly a man of education, he proclaims that he cannot understand the scriptures without someone to guide him. The prophet-founder of the Babi religion, Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad Shirazi, (1819–1850), took the title "Bab" ("gate" in Arabic) to emphasize his role as gateway to the core teachings of Islam. Similarly, the Jain *tirthankaras*, "ford-makers," are by definition guides, people who have created a "ford" that allows other people to make their way across the ocean of existence to liberation, a concept similar to that of Jesus as "the Way." The sufis believe that each generation has a "perfect man" who channels divine guidance to the Muslim community (although there is little agreement about who these holy guides are). Holy people, besides being teachers, often have served as spiritual advisers, giving guidance to individuals who come to profit from their contact with the holy. At times, this role has extended to the political realm as people have accepted the insight of holy people to deal with governmental issues, too.

Guidance has been a dominant thread in the history of Christian, Buddhist, Daoist, and Muslim holy people. A common image is that of the holy guide as the healer of sick souls; the Christian Athanasius (c. 299–373) called Antony of the Desert (fl. 300–340) a physician of all Egypt because he was spiritual adviser to so many. The great sufi Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058–1111) also saw himself as a spiritual physician, filling the needs of those not content with traditional belief and practice, helping them to find a deeper spiritual meaning. In general, though, tales of sufi guidance tend to focus on the aid they give to their professed disciples, while Christian holy people who are primarily spiritual guides are usually depicted as open to all comers. This category includes many of the Christian mystics of the later Middle Ages, whose visionary lives were seen to render them channels of divine guidance. It is interesting to note that

gender distinctions were leveled in the case of these mystics; some of the most famous spiritual counselors were women, such as Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) or Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1419). Moving into the early modern period, personal counsel became a hallmark of the Catholic Reformation, with saints such as Philip Neri (1515–1595) winning fame for giving individual guidance to everyone in Rome, regardless of rank.

In general, in Christianity the importance of personal guidance has tended to suggest that the rituals of the church are by themselves not enough. A longing for a more "personal" contact with the divine, through a saint's mediation, also helps explain the importance of the sacrament of confession and reconciliation from the eighth century until recent times. When the confessor is also a holy person as an individual, the combination has proven immensely popular, ranging from the early Irish monks and nuns who popularized the practice of auricular confession to the humble "curé of Ars" Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney (1786–1859), who by the end of his life attracted 20,000 penitents a year. This attraction is by no means limited to Christianity; to cite one recent example, the Hindu Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950) attracted visitors from all over India who were seeking answers to their troubles and hope for the future.

Because of the respect in which they are held as channels to the divine, holy people have also been called upon (or have volunteered) to advise whole communities, advising rulers, organizations, representative bodies, and so on. Several great lawgivers have reputations as holy people, including the Hebrew prophet Moses (thirteenth century B.C.E.), the legendary Lycurgus of Sparta, and Deganawida (c. 1550–c. 1600), founder of the Iroquo League. Innumerable times, men and women of reputed holiness have swayed the conduct of states, settling quarrels, ending wars (and occasionally starting them), and creating codes of conduct. Thus the Christian hermit Nicholas of Flüe (1417–1487) held no formal position of authority but was so famous for his counsel that he was called on to settle a major dispute between the Swiss cantons. This is a particularly strong theme in traditional China, where Daoists, Confucianists, and Buddhists vied for the ear of the emperor. A famous case is that of the Daoist master Tao Hongjing (456–536), a high-ranking minister who retired from court to live in the mountains. But the court, including the emperor, still went to get advice from him, so much so that he became known as the "prime minister from the mountains." Often such advice could encourage patronage of the holy person's own religion. For example, the Buddhist monk Fotucheng (232–348) became adviser to the Chinese general Shi Le and helped him take control of China and found a new dynasty. His good advice (and a propensity to miracles) won imperial support for Buddhism.

A final important point is the widespread belief that holy people do not stop giving good advice just because they die. Much worship of ancestors in many religions involves requests for guidance, on the principle that the spirits of the powerful dead have a greater understanding of the world than is possible for the living. This also appears as a theme in any religion that holds that contact with holy people is possible after their corporeal death. The traditional Christian cult of saints, continued in modern Roman Catholicism, acknowledges the guiding role of saints—indeed, regarding it as more important, at times, after their death than in life. Similarly, as sufism became a popular movement, people gathered around holy people as guides to God. This guidance did not end with death; instead, the dead holy person became a focus of sacredness who could continue to guide from the tomb.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-; Maharshi, Ramana; Tao Hongjing; Teachers as Holy People; Vianney, Jean-Baptiste Marie

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Guido di Piero

See **Fra Angelico**

Gumtivate Mata

(1937 C.E.–)

Hindu manifestation

Gumtivate Mata is a female Hindu cult figure of rural northwestern India. She is regarded by her devotees as an earthly manifestation of the all-pervasive female energy of the universe, *shakti*. Both human and divine embodiments of *shakti* are referred to as Sheranvali (“Lion Rider,” after a popular female martial goddess) or *mata* (mother).

Gumtivate Mata’s renown as a holy figure came to light outside of India only recently, through the scholarly works of Kathleen Erndl (1993, 1996). Born into a well-to-do upper-caste brahmin family in Pakistan in 1937, Gumtivate Mata had little formal education but held the ancient Sanskrit language and Vedic rituals in high regard. From her childhood, she was said to will herself into trances, during which *shakti*, the feminine principle equated with the Great Goddess and ultimate reality itself, is said to have “played” within her body. Such possessions are not understood as malevolent in Hinduism but instead are recognized as a show of divine grace. They permit spiritual aspirants to receive *darshana* (a view of the divine) and receive boons and blessings of the Great Goddess through the vehicle of Gumtivate Mata’s physical form. In order to facilitate her possessions and to be a pure vehicle of the goddess, Gumtivate

Mata has remained celibate. This metaphysical inclination was apparently transferred to her from her mother, also considered a *mata* and as such a vehicle of divine grace; unfortunately, in 1947 Gumtivate Mata’s mother died a premature death.

The Great Goddess in Hindu theology is the sum of all reality, having both wrathful and peaceful manifestations. Gumtivate Mata is regarded as the peaceful manifestation of Sheranvali. Her relatives initially disapproved of her spiritual activities. However, these familial obstacles seem not to have been a great hindrance, as Gumtivate Mata and her niece Choti Mata (Little Mother), also a revered though less experienced *mata*, were eventually established in an impressive temple complex in Gumti, a rural outpost in northwestern India. Here, on a daily basis, they continue to perform their possessions and rituals in praise of the Great Goddess. Large numbers of devotees visit Gumtivate Mata to commune with the divine, to heal themselves and their families, to hear her foretell their future, and to attain material prosperity. Gumtivate Mata does not discriminate among the various classes and castes of devotees who visit her, accepting all who walk through the gates of her temple.

—Sujata Ghosh

See also: Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Intermediaries; Status

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Gurumayi Swami Chidvilasananda

(1955 C.E.–)

Hindu, syncretic guru

Gurumayi Swami Chidvilasananda is a contemporary global religious figure whose spiritual origins are rooted in a pan-Indian mix of Hindu *tantra* (Asian esoteric beliefs and practice). Gurumayi, as she is simply known, is regarded by her devotees as the embodiment of self-realization. Her distinctiveness lies in the *shaktipat* (transformative experience of initiation) that she gives to all those who approach her. *Shaktipat* takes place through the guru’s mere presence, touch, glance, or word; consequently, it is said to immerse the recipient in a continuous state of spiritual awakening.



Siddha yoga group listening to Sanskrit mantras with Gurumayi Chidvilasananda. (Art Directors)

Gurumayi, initially known as Malti Shetty, was born in 1955 and lived an uneventful childhood in Bombay, India, until, at the age of eighteen, she was sent by her deeply religious parents to live with Swami Muktananda (1908–1982), a renunciant who is said to have accomplished spiritual perfection through subtle, esoteric practices known as *siddha yoga*. As Swami Muktananda's renown among Western disciples increased, Malti, who was by then appreciated for her spiritual maturity, discipline, and experience, worked as his personal translator. Then, in 1982, under the instruction of Swami Muktananda, Malti Shetty took the renunciatory vows of a Hindu monastic and was given the name Chidvilasananda (blissful play of consciousness). That same year, both she and her brother Swami Nityananda, also a renunciant under the tutelage of Swami Muktananda, were catapulted from their protected and privileged upbringing to become, by solemn decree and ceremony, spiritual cosuccessors to Muktananda's *siddha yoga* lineage. Subsequently, the spiritual *siddhis* (accomplishments) that Swami Muktananda possessed were transferred to both Gurumayi and Nityananda.

Gurumayi's life is not without controversy. Many of Swami Muktananda's students accused him of sexual improprieties, all of which Gurumayi has steadfastly denied.

As well, compounded by a growing power struggle between Gurumayi and her brother, in 1985 Nityananda abruptly separated from the SYDA Foundation, Gurumayi's New York headquarters. The complexity of such controversies in Gurumayi's life may stem from the incommensurability of the antinomian yet supposedly enlightening sexual practices characteristic of elite tantric practitioners such as Swami Muktananda within the moral strictures of Western society. Nonetheless, countless practitioners claim to benefit from Gurumayi's shaktipat and thrive on a regime of sacred chanting, yoga, meditation, and service led by Gurumayi and her coteachers. In recent years, however, Gurumayi has been absent from public life, spending much of her time in seclusion at SYDA and only appearing to her disciples sporadically.

—Sujata Ghosh

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Miracles; Teachers as Holy People

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Gurus

In Indian traditions generally, a guru is a transmitter of authoritative knowledge. In its widest sense, then, the term “guru” may be used honorifically for any respected teacher. In teaching lineages—artisanal, musical, or spiritual—it has the more specific sense of a preceptor standing in a relationship to a disciple that is personalized, significant, and possibly lifelong. In Indic religions, the guru thus becomes a teacher of esoteric wisdom, a spiritual master—someone who in Hindu, Sikh, and tantric Buddhist traditions can be extremely important in both theory and practice. As a Sanskrit adjective, “guru” literally means “heavy” and is etymologically related to the Latin *gravis*: The guru’s word is weighty and his person manifests grave authority.

In Hindu tradition, seers, sages, and teachers are understood to have revealed the eternal wisdom found in the Vedic texts, and by the last sections of the extended Vedic corpus, the Upanishads, these sages and teachers are often depicted in ways characteristic of the guru of later Hindu traditions. Thus, in the Chhandogya Upanishad (c. 700 B.C.E. or earlier), a teacher (*acarya*) guards his secrets from the unworthy (3.11.5) and tests his disciple (8.7.3). Most important, the knowledge he gives is seen as essential for salvation: “Only knowledge learned from a teacher leads to real good” (4.1.9). This crucial salvific role of the teacher (by now commonly known as guru) becomes particularly emphasized in tantric traditions (beginning c. 500 C.E.), both Hindu and Buddhist.

Since in tantra, practitioners work with the psychic energies latent in the physical body, a physically embodied guru is normally said to be absolutely necessary for spiritual awakening and healthy psychic growth. Tantric traditions thus commonly put the guru on par with the highest religious object. In the ritual formulas of tantric Buddhism in Tibet, the guru (*lama* in Tibetan) is regularly taken as a fourth refuge alongside the three traditional ones of the Buddha, *dharma* (doctrine), and *samgha* (monastic community). A common Hindu Shaiva saying is even more extreme: “If Shiva is angry, the guru can save; if the guru is angry, there’s no one at all.” In Hindu devotional traditions, the guru—now as an embodiment of a personalized deity such as Krishna—can become the object of a disciple’s affections and be given a similar elevated status.

The role of the guru as an embodiment of divinity may take its most straightforward form in the *sant* traditions of northern India (c. 1450 on), which contain elements of



Meditating Indian guru, New Delhi. (Corel Corp)

tantra and devotion but are also aniconic, exalting no traditional deity of Hindu myth. In *sant* texts, such as those of Kabir (c. 1450–1518), the term “guru” sometimes seems to refer to the living teacher, sometimes to the highest divine principle, and sometimes, mysteriously, to both. The Sikh religion, which developed out of *sant* tradition, has woven the idea of the guru firmly into its central institutional forms. It began with Guru Nanak (1469–1539) and continued with a chain of his successors (“the ten gurus”); its scriptures are known as the Guru Granth (book). Today’s globalized world gives the charismatic guru an extended field of operation. With authority deriving from their own weighty personages, not from specific cultural institutions, Indian and Tibetan gurus have been able to be influential far beyond their homelands.

—Daniel Gold

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Lamas; Nanak; Sadhus; Teachers as Holy People

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Guthlac

(c. 674–714 C.E.)

Christian hermit

One of the first widely venerated native Anglo-Saxon saints, Guthlac represents the growth of Latin Christian eremitism in early England. Following the path of the early desert saints, he lived for many years in an isolated hermitage at Croyland, Lincolnshire, within the fenlands of the ancient kingdom of East Anglia. He attracted influential patrons, including Aethelbald, initially an exiled prince of the royal house and later king of the powerful realm of Mercia. Guthlac himself was of royal Mercian blood, a member of the same Icling clan as his patron. Purportedly having been marked as a future saint by miraculous signs at his birth in about 674, Guthlac nonetheless spent his youth as a warrior, leading a violent band of raiders; however, according to his early eighth-century biographer Felix of Croyland, Guthlac retained sufficient spiritual sense that he always returned one-third of the plunder to its original owners. Following a sudden spiritual revelation, the young warrior abandoned this warlike way of life, becoming first a monk at the Mercian monastery of Repton and later an isolated hermit.

Guthlac's experiences as a solitary religious included battles against demons bent on turning him aside from his religious vocation, sometimes through temptations but also frequently in the guise of fearsome enemies, both monstrous and human. These struggles, whether to be understood allegorically or literally, reveal the integration of early Anglo-Saxon sainthood with the Old English heroic tradition, although Guthlac's abandonment of physical struggle in favor of spiritual strife against incorporeal enemies also reflects the pacifist strain within Latin Christianity. Guthlac's own patron saint, the apostle Bartholomew, intervened when demons carried the saint to the door of hell, threatening him with the fear of eternal damnation. Guthlac died at his hermitage, having profoundly affected the direction of English spirituality.

In addition to Felix's Latin *Life of St. Guthlac*, many texts honoring the saint appeared during the years between his death in 714 and the Norman Conquest in 1066; these included two vernacular poems, an Old English version of the *Life*, and at least one English homily. These works attest to the popular nature of Guthlac's cult before the Norman Conquest. After his death, he continued to receive patronage

from the powerful, both secular and religious, but the diffuse vernacular literature devoted to him indicates that his veneration spread into popular culture as well. Despite a brief resurgence during the twelfth century, Guthlac's cult steadily faded during the post-Conquest era.

—John Edward Damon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Hermits

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Guthmundr Arason

(1161–1237 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Guthmundr Arason is the only one of three Icelandic holy men who maintained his reputation among the Icelandic populace after the Reformation. He was born in 1161 of a relationship that by the standards of the thirteenth-century church would have been considered irregular, although it may have been perfectly acceptable in the twelfth. When his father died, Guthmundr was left impoverished. One of his uncles provided an ecclesiastical education for him, and he became a popular and charismatic priest. He made a practice of blessing springs and offering relics for veneration. Although the authenticity of the relics he used was questioned by skeptics, water from the springs he blessed was thought to have healing qualities. Guthmundr himself was soon known as "Guthmundr the Good." This designation appears to indicate recognition of his sanctity within his lifetime.

Perhaps for this reason, but certainly also because he wanted to control the diocese of Hólar in northern Iceland, Guthmundr's influential relative, Kolbeinn Tumason, saw to it that Guthmundr became bishop of Hólar in 1203. His plan backfired; Guthmundr wanted to be an active bishop, not a puppet. He was unsuccessful at running the diocese, however, and clashed with secular powers; as a result, he spent several years of his episcopacy in exile.

Guthmundr had helped promote the cult of the Icelandic saint Jón Ögmundarson (d. 1121) c. 1200, but his own cult had to wait until his reputation as a troublemaker could be transformed into that of a martyr for church rights. The fourteenth century saw the composition of a number of vernacular lives (sagas) and poems about Guthmundr, probably related to attempts to canonize him. In these works, he is portrayed not only as one who loved and cared for the poor, but also as a fighter for church rights, an Icelandic Thomas Becket. A Latin vita may also have been composed for the purpose of obtaining his canonization, but it has not survived. Various plans to obtain canonization from Rome during the ensuing centuries also came to nothing.

Springs blessed by Guthmundr, known as *Gvendarbrunnar*, are still part of the Icelandic landscape. Both medieval sources and later folklore reflect his reputation for dispatching trolls and other monsters believed to haunt the countryside.

—Margaret Cormack

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Demons and Monsters

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Guti, Ezekiel “Handinawangu”

(1923 C.E.–)

Christian visionary, church founder

Ezekiel “Handinawangu” Gutí was born in 1923 among the Ndau tribe in Chipinge, Zimbabwe. The name he was given at birth, Handinawangu, translates to “one who loves everybody and is not discriminatory.” Gutí means “a cloud, producing light rain.” After seeing a vision of himself as a shepherd, he chose the name Ezekiel. A Christian, he is credited with numerous miracles and has reported other visions throughout his life.

Gutí worked near Mutare as a youth and claims that his conversion to Christianity was not through direct preaching of the missionaries. When his mother told him of a missionary who taught that in order to go to heaven they had to repent from sin, or they would go to a burning fire called hell after death, Gutí found himself troubled and went frequently to pray in the bush. There, he encountered angels and acquired a new faith. This turning point caused him to desire an education, and he attended Ngaone School. While praying for forty days and nights in the Vumba mountains, he again encountered angels. Miracles of healing were later reported. When he preached, for example, in Bindura, it is said that people reported seeing angels standing behind him.

Gutí lived in Highfields Harare and married in 1946, but that marriage ended in divorce. As much as Gutí is revered as a man of God, as both prophet and apostle, his life story is that of a mortal, filled with several occasions of deep bouts of depression. He describes his life as filled with visions and encounters with angels, and being led by the Spirit. Still, there are times when he wished God would end his life and let him die.

Gutí studied at the Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas, in 1971. Upon returning home, he married his second wife, Eunor, and helped to found Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA), a Pentecostal church that broke from the Assemblies of God Africa. The cofounders of ZAOGA, including Abel Sande, Caleb Ngorima, Joseph Choto, Gutí, and others, had been expelled from the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1959. Gutí also partnered with the evangelist Nicholas Benghu from South Africa, but that relationship did not last.

Gutí says he is a messenger of Jesus and instructs his followers to pray to the God of Gutí, as the children of Israel pray to the God of Abraham. There are claims that two people were raised from the dead through his prayers, including his son Ezekiel, Jr., who after his birth reportedly did not breathe for several hours.

—Tapiwa Mucherera

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles; Prophets

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Gyeltsap Darma Rinchen (Tibetan: rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen)

(1364–1432 C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher

Gyeltsap Darma Rinchen was an important philosopher-saint in the Gelukpa (Tib.: dge lugs pa) school of Tibetan Buddhism who was the immediate successor to Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) as throne holder of Ganden Monastery (dga’ ldan khri pa). According to traditional biographical sources, he was born in 1364 and at the age of ten took the vows of a novice monk, receiving the name Darma Rinchen. He studied primary texts on Mahayana Buddhist epistemology (*tshad ma*), soteriology, and higher knowledge with different masters but particularly with the great Sakyapa (sa skya pa) master Rendawa (red mda’ ba).

Traditional stories stress Gyeltsap’s pride and arrogance in meeting Tsong kha pa for the first time. On one occasion when Tsong kha pa was teaching, Gyeltsap entered the as-

sembly while the discourse was in progress without removing his pandit's hat in the customary way. Tsong kha pa noticed him but continued to teach. Gyeltsap strode up to the throne on which Tsong kha pa was seated and began to mount it. Tsong kha pa, without halting his teaching, simply moved over to make room for him and continued. As he listened, Gyeltsap began to realize that he was in the presence of an enlightened master, and his arrogance began to subside. First, he removed his hat, then he got down from the throne and seated himself among the listeners. Rather than challenge Tsong kha pa, he now aspired to become his student.

When Tsong kha pa was establishing Ganden Monastery, Gyeltsap assumed responsibility for its construction and participated personally in the administrative work. When Tsong kha pa was near death, he gave Gyeltsap his pandit's hat, yellow robes, and cape as a sign that he was to succeed him. Gyeltsap took on this responsibility at the age of fifty-six when Tsong kha pa died. In retrospect, it was said that Gyeltsap's first encounter with Tsong kha pa had been an auspicious indication that he would be the successor as holder of the Ganden throne. Gyeltsap held the position for thirteen years. At the age of sixty-eight, shortly before his death in 1432, he installed Kaydrub Gelek belsangbo (mkhas sgrub dge legs dpal bzang po), Tsong kha pa's other closest disciple, as the next holder of the throne. Gyeltsap was also a great scholar and wrote a number of important commentaries to Buddhist philosophical works that are utilized by scholars in the present-day Gelukpa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

—James B. Apple

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa

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Gyogi Bosatsu

(668–749 C.E.)

Buddhist preacher, social activist

Gyogi (or Gyoki), a wandering Buddhist preacher, magician, social welfare activist, and overseer of the construction of Todaiji temple, became one of the great popular figures of early Japanese Buddhism. Born in Osaka of Korean immi-

grants in 668, at age fifteen Gyogi went to study under Master Dosho at Yakushiji temple in Nara. Nara Buddhism at this time was largely a religion of the elite, generally treated as a means for establishing state protection. Gyogi was the first prominent voice of dissent against such a vision of Buddhism. He chose to focus on the universal, compassionate ideals of Buddhism, which he believed were relevant to all sectors of Japanese society. After completing his vows, Gyogi retreated to the mountain forests to meditate, during which time it is said he received divine power and blessings. In 704, he quit his position as a court priest and began to travel widely, preaching his message of compassion, attending to the sick, establishing numerous temples, and engaging in various projects of social welfare, such as building roads, ponds, canals, dikes, bridges, and charity houses. He is said to have attracted more than 1,000 followers, both laity and clergy.

In 717, Gyogi was banished from the capital region for disobeying the imperial decree by which monks were prohibited from preaching to the common people. Yet his popularity was such that the government was eventually forced to repeal the ban. Upon his return to the capital, Gyogi was named overseer of Emperor Shomu's great construction project, Todaiji temple, whose main hall remains to this day the largest wooden building in the world, housing the world's largest bronze statue—the *Daibutsu* (Great Buddha). Gyogi took up the task in earnest, rallying funds and popular support for the project, which, somewhat ironically, given Gyogi's earlier populist tendencies, became the symbol of state-sponsored Buddhism. In 745, a fully rehabilitated Gyogi was given the title of Great Priest (Daisojo), the first to achieve that honor. Todaiji was finally completed in 749, the year of Gyogi's death.

Not long after his death, Gyogi began to be revered as a Buddhist "saint" or *bodhisattva* (enlightened being; Jap.: *bosatsu*), either a manifestation of Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom, or an avatar of the cosmic healing buddha, Yakushi Nyorai. Popular legends of his works and miracles abound. Gyogi is frequently pictured as a wanderer with a chestnut walking stick in his hand. Since the Sino-Japanese characters for "chestnut" literally mean "west" and "tree," this symbol indicates the western paradise of Amitabha.

—James Mark Shields

See also: Amitabha; Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Laity; Manjushri; Mission; Recognition

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H

Hachiman

See *Ojin*

Hafiz, Muhammad Shamsuddin

(c. 1320–c. 1388 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, poet

Like his poetry, the life of Shamsuddin Muhammad, known as “Hafiz,” is shrouded in mystery. He was born sometime around 1320 in the city of Shiraz in central Iran. His father died early, and Hafiz had to work at menial jobs to support his family. He married when he was in his twenties, but inwardly he may have remained in love with a girl by the name of Shakh-i Nabat (Sugar candy), who later came to symbolize divine beauty on earth for him. To Persian speakers, he is acclaimed as the “supreme mystical poet.”

Hafiz had an amazing memory and memorized the entire Qur’an as well as some of the classical works of Persian literature by listening to his father’s recitations of them. He had a strong ascetic impulse and a longing for mystical love. As a young man, he once kept a long vigil at the tomb of the sufi master Baba Kuhi, fasting for forty days and nights. It was following this period that he became the disciple of Shaykh Mahmud Attar.

Hafiz moved in and out of favor with a number of the rulers of his time. He became a prominent poet of the court of Abu Ishak, but when Mubariz Muzaffar captured Shiraz, he ousted Hafiz from his position. Hafiz’s fate was changed once again when Shah Shuja’ overthrew his tyrant father and restored Hafiz to a high position. His fortune did not last, however, and he fell out of favor with Shah Shuja’ and fled Shiraz for Isfahan. Shah Shuja’ eventually invited him to return. Hafiz ended his exile and returned to Shiraz, where he spent the rest of his life. He died in late 1388 or early 1389 at the age of sixty-nine.

Hafiz expresses his mystical yearning for divine love in a number of flawlessly beautiful poems, including at least 500

ghazals (love poems), 42 *ruba’iyyat* (quatrains), and a few *ghasidah* (love poems with a tripartite structure). These poems invariably discuss the subject of divine and spiritual love, the sufi spiritual quest, and the mystical unity that lies at the end of this journey. Several people compiled his poems into a collection known as the *Diwan-i Hafiz* (Assembly of Hafiz). The first compiler was Hafiz’s young disciple, Sayyid Qasim-i Anvar, who collected 569 ghazals attributed to Hafiz, followed by Muhammad Golandam, who wrote an introduction to his edited work in 1410, only twenty-two years after Hafiz’s death.

The Orthodox clergy found Hafiz’s poetry, which is rich with the symbolism of wine, women, and lovemaking, offensive to Islam and declared him a heretic, thus refusing to allow a proper Islamic burial. The people of Shiraz, however, demanded to bury him with honor. It was decided to use Hafiz’s own poetry to settle the controversy. A young boy was asked to draw a couplet randomly; the message would be accepted as a verdict on the funeral. The poem read: “Neither Hafiz’s corps’ nor his life negate,/With all his misdeeds, heavens for him wait.” Hafiz was given a full Islamic burial, and his tomb, known as Hafiziyyah, is in the Musalla gardens along the banks of the Ruknabad River in Shiraz. To this day, Hafiz’s poems are utilized as oracles.

Hafiz has come to be revered as the supreme saint of Persian mystical poetry not only by his native Iranians, who see him as a grand sufi master and gnostic, but also by figures such as the German poet Goethe (1749–1832), who said, “In his poetry, Hafiz has inscribed undeniable truth indelibly. . . . Hafiz has no peer!” and the American poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), who defined Hafiz as a poet who “defies you to show him or put him in a condition inopportune or ignoble. . . . He fears nothing. He sees too far; he sees through out; such is the only man I wish to see or be.”

—Mehdi Aminrazavi

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Prophets; Sufism

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Hagiography

The term *hagiography* literally means “writing about saints.” Tales about most of the world’s holy people circulated at first in oral form, developing rich elements of sometimes implausible legends in folk traditions. Eventually, however, these tales must either be given permanence in writing or the holy person sinks into oblivion. A tragic example of this process in action is the fate of holy people of Africa who represent indigenous religions: Most of their tales were never committed to writing, and the scant remainder preserved in the face of aggressive Christianization and Islamization can only hint at the richness that has been lost. Routine use of writing has given the “civilized,” universalizing religions a serious edge over their regional, nonliterate predecessors in this regard. Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, and to a lesser extent Hinduism and Judaism, have all been blessed with a long hagiographical tradition based on the premise that the lives of earlier holy people can inspire and teach others. Clearly, that tradition is still alive and well today.

Tales about some holy people existed in oral form for generations before being written down. When oral tradition is embodied in a fixed and venerated “teaching,” especially in poetic form, there is a greater likelihood of accurate transmission. A good example of this is provided by the Gathas, the seventeen short hymns by Zoroaster—the only source for his life—which were composed in a very ancient form of Persian that suggests conscious preservation. Simple stories about holy people can be a different matter because disciples and imitators may often be tempted to make heroes more impressive or reflective of their own values. A matter of crucial concern for many modern Christians is how to understand the gospel accounts of Jesus of Nazareth’s life and death, since the earliest gospel was written at least thirty years after the events it describes. How much is legendary accretion, and how much reflects the development of the

early Christian community? How much might be spiritual truth without being literal historical fact?

A similar problem occurs in Buddhism. The Theravadan Mahaparinibbana sutra deals with the last years of the historical Buddha’s life. But in fact it was composed over a long period, parts apparently dating back nearly to his lifetime in perhaps the fifth century B.C.E. but supplemented and altered over subsequent centuries. Legend tells that when the Buddha died, his chief disciple, Kassapa, feared the loss of his teachings, so convened the first Buddhist Council, at which all of the Buddha’s teachings were recited. The sutras as a whole are sermons attributed to the Buddha or his immediate disciples. But a very large number of Mahayana sutras were written down only in the first century B.C.E. or later. Mahayanas claim that before that time they were passed down secretly; Theravadan Buddhists assert that they are forgeries plain and simple. In a parallel situation, Shi’a and Sunni Muslims fight over which of the *hadith* are actual sayings of Muhammad (570–632) and his followers and which were later invented to give greater authority to theological innovations.

The stakes are not so great for the great majority of holy people, but often legendary accretions can cast the entire life of a saint into doubt. Thus in a great purge in 1969, the Roman Catholic Church deleted a number of early saints from the calendar of holy people to be venerated, doubting, perhaps rightly, that, for example, Margaret of Antioch had been swallowed and disgorged by a dragon in the fourth century. In the process of legend-building and legend-debunking, the historical saint was lost.

Often, disciples have collected the sayings and instructions of revered teachers, or have gone on from transmitting the teaching to write an account of the person’s life for posterity. But, as in the case of Plato (427–347 B.C.E.) commemorating his mentor Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.), there is often some doubt about where the teacher ends and the student begins. Despite such difficulties, such sources are much more likely to be the literal truth about a holy person than accounts written later by people who did not know him or her. In Buddhism, it has been particularly common for students to collect the instructions of great masters. For example, disciples of the Zen master Dogen (1200–1253 C.E.) compiled a major collection that perpetuates his ideas. Similarly, the followers of the Sikh gurus collected especially the hymns of their spiritual leaders, disciples compiled the teachings of the Jewish Hasidic leader Dov Baer (d. 1772), and loyal followers have preserved the songs of some Hindu devotional saints for centuries.

Christianity has left a particularly vigorous paper trail about its saints, perhaps because of the early model of the gospels, which put an emphasis on style of life as well as teaching. Letters of early martyrs, such as Ignatius of Antioch (d. c. 107), were gathered and venerated (and spurious

letters were added to the collection); soon Christians also wrote and circulated stories of the deaths of martyrs as inspiration for others. The biographical element flourished by the fourth century and continues to the present. In the Middle Ages, the “Lives” (*vitae*) of saints were a perennially popular form of devotional literature, read especially on the anniversary of the saint’s death. Such works often presented a highly stylized image of ideal sanctity, however, and can only be used as factual biography with caution. In modern times, the Belgian Society of Bollandists has taken on the task of preserving and studying all of the hagiographical works of Christianity, a task nearing completion after several centuries.

Islam was rather slower to write down stories of holy people, because early Islam for the most part rejected the idea that some human beings can be elevated to a special relationship with God. The thin edge of the wedge was the prophet Muhammad, whom all Muslims acknowledge to be God’s messenger. Biographies of Muhammad developed as a distinct genre in the eighth century. Writing about other holy people became common in the eleventh century, when the sufi tradition reached its first bloom, and at least three Muslim hagiographers wrote biographies of important sufis during that period. One of them, Sulami (936–1021), composed an entire biographical dictionary with accounts of about 100 Muslim holy men, including the great mystical sayings of each.

Compilations of at least partially biographical accounts of saints have been popular in Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity since the latter part of the Middle Ages. One of the most popular European works of that era was *The Golden Legend*, a massive compilation of saints’ Lives by Jacobus de Voragine (c. 1230–1298). Similarly, an anonymous Korean monk-scholar collected a large number of accounts of great Korean monks in the hope that it would encourage the prosperity of both Buddhism and his native land. Perhaps the greatest feat is that of the Japanese Zen monk Shiban Mangan (d. 1710), whose *Empo Dento-roku* includes the biographies of thousands of important Zen monks. At the same time, in far-off Russia Demetrius of Rostov (1651–1709) was collecting accounts of the Orthodox saints.

A phenomenon mostly of the modern world is the autobiography of the saint. The Christian Augustine of Hippo (354–430) blazed the way with his *Confessions*, but the model did not become common until the sixteenth century, when Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) told of her spiritual journey in writing. One can expect to see many more autobiographies of saints and would-be saints in the future, but only time will allow us to separate the two categories.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Demetrius of Rostov; Dogen; Dov Baer of Mezhirech; Gautama; Ignatius of Antioch; Jesus; Kassapa;

Margaret of Antioch; Muhammad; Plato; Socrates; Sulami, Abu ‘Abd ar-Rahman; Teresa of Avila; Zoroaster

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Haile Selassie

(1892–1975 C.E.)

Christian ruler, Rastafarian messiah

Emperor Haile Selassie, the grandnephew of Emperor Menelik II, was born in Ethiopia near Harar in 1892. At birth, he was named Lij Ras (prince or duke) Tafari; Makonnen was his family name. The Selassie dynasty is said to be traceable to the marriage between the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. Emperor Menelik’s daughter Zauditu succeeded Lij Iyasu, and when she died in 1930, Lij Ras Tafari came to power, assuming the throne under his baptismal name, Haile Selassie, which translates as “Might of the Trinity.” He was also known by other titles, such as “Emperor of Ethiopia,” “King of Kings,” “Lord of Lords,” “Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah,” and “Elect of God.”

Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, and in 1936 Selassie was forced to flee the country. He took refuge in London and appealed to the League of Nations for help, but to no avail. With the help of the British, he returned home in 1941 and returned to power. A very influential political leader even beyond Ethiopia, his reforms included the establishment of a constitution, a parliament, and a court system. In addition, he is known for the emancipation of slaves and the 1942 land reforms. Ethiopia was a founding member of both the Organization of African Unity (OAU), established in 1963, and the United Nations. The African Hall, the OAU center, and the United Nations Economic Commission of Africa are located in Ethiopia.

The coronation of Lij Ras Tafari Makonnen in 1930 is seen as the birth of the Rastafarian movement, which started in Kingston, Jamaica. In the year before Selassie’s crowning as emperor, black social activist Marcus Garvey had prophesied the crowning of an emperor in Africa and had said that this emperor would be “Christ returned or God.” Emperor Haile Selassie was then hailed as “God Incarnate.” It is said that not everyone in the movement believes that Selassie is God, but most agree that he was at least a messenger from God. In 1961, Selassie met with a group of Rastafarians to arrange repatriation of black Americans to Africa, to which Selassie was very open, but this never materialized. In 1966, Haile Selassie visited Trinidad-Tobago, Jamaica, and Haiti. He was welcomed by about 2,000 Rastafarians. They asked to be sent back to Ethiopia with Selassie, but the Jamaican prime minister, Sir



Haile Selassie, last emperor of Ethiopia, hailed as a messiah by the Rastafarian movement. (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

Alexander Bustamante, denied the request. The Rastafarian movement is well known to Americans through the music of such singers as Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer, all of whom have been involved in the movement. Selassie never accepted that he was a messiah or God, though he ardently studied the scriptures. He died a Christian and encouraged the Rastafarians to study the Bible.

Selassie was overthrown in 1974 and died in Addis Ababa in 1975. There are questions as to whether he was killed or died a natural death. His body is said to have been exhumed near a toilet close to his former palace. He was reburied in the family royal vault in Holy Trinity Cathedral on November 5, 2000.

—Tapiwa Mucherera

See also: Garvey, Marcus Moziyah; Marley, Bob; Messiahs

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Hakham

Early Jewish rabbis

Hakham, a Hebrew word meaning “sage,” was the standard title for a rabbi in the first several centuries C.E. “Wisdom” (*hokhma*) was a very old Near Eastern concept, far older than the oldest biblical texts. Several biblical books (chiefly Proverbs and Ecclesiastes) reflect this tradition by emphasizing the importance of obtaining wisdom and guiding one’s life by its teachings. During the centuries following the Babylonian exile, Jewish thought increasingly linked this already ancient concept with the teachings (*torah*) of Moses. In a key passage, Joshua ben Sira (c. 200 B.C.E.), author of the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus, flatly equated the two (24:23). This linkage clearly implied that the true sage, the bearer of wisdom, was one who had mastered the Torah and knew how to live by its teachings.

When rabbinic leadership began to emerge after the destruction of the Jewish Temple (70 C.E.), the rabbis presented themselves as embodiments of this model. The earliest surviving rabbinic text, the Mishnah from about 200 C.E., designates the rabbis collectively as “sages,” while the eventually predominant term “rabbi” seems to have come into use only at a later time. In general, a hakham was someone learned in scripture and in the unwritten traditions of the nation, a man (always!) distinguished by his easygoing temperament, his skill at instruction, and his piety. Many stories about early rabbinic masters or their forerunners (for example, Hillel from the first century B.C.E. and Akiba ben Joseph from the second century C.E.) seem designed to portray them as exemplars of this ideal. The Mishnaic tractate *Avot*, often known in English as “Ethics of the Fathers,” is essentially a compendium of guidance to disciples and others striving to absorb this discipline.

Over the remaining centuries of antiquity, the concept of the sage broadened beyond its original prudential and intellectual foundation. At first, acquiring the “secrets of Torah” only equipped one with the skills for ethical living or the information needed to fulfill God’s will in one’s daily life; now the sage was also seen as endowed with some measure of the divine powers encoded in the sacred teachings. The Babylonian Talmud (BT) reports (Sanhedrin 67b) that two rabbis were able to create a calf each week and eat it for their Sabbath dinner. Another rabbi (R. Hisda [d. 309]; see BT, Mo’ed Qatan 28a), on account of his dedication to Torah study, was immune to the power of the angel of death; he died only after he was distracted from his studies for a fatal instant. By this point, the concepts hakham (sage) and *tzaddiq* (saint) had become almost indistinguishable.

Following his own rationalist bent, the great medieval rabbi Moses Maimonides (1135/1138–1204) compiled a long list of desirable habits and patterns of behavior that are to be found in a true sage (*Laws of the Temperament*, chap-

ter 5). These include rules for a healthy diet, regular bathing, sound sleep, proper sexual activity, suitable apparel, and the like. Maimonides thus returned the tradition of wisdom, already thousands of years old, to its prudential roots.

In more recent times, certain Sephardic communities (for example, in London) developed the custom of calling the local rabbi by the title Hakham.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Akiba ben Joseph; Hillel; Judaism and Holy People; Moses ben Maimon; Sages; Scholars as Holy People; Tzaddiq

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Hakim, Abu ‘Ali al-Mansur al-

(d. 1021)

Shi’a Muslim imam

Abu ‘Ali al-Mansur al-Hakim bi-amrallah was the sixteenth Isma‘ili Shi’a imam and the sixth Fatimid ruler of Egypt. He was declared heir apparent by his father, al-Aziz, when he was eight years old. When al-Aziz died in 996, al-Hakim became the ruler of a vast empire. He assumed personal rule at age fifteen and appointed Husayn, son of the celebrated general Jawhar, as the new vizier.

Al-Hakim was a liberal patron of learning and culture. He started the Dar al-‘ilm (or Dar al-Hikma), the House of Wisdom, in 1005. This institution contained a major library and taught both religious and secular subjects, ranging from the Qur’an, hadith, and jurisprudence to the secular topics of logic, grammar, philology, astronomy, and mathematics. Al-Hakim encouraged scholars by setting a system of stipends. He also created a *waqf* (a religious endowment or foundation) to ensure adequate funds. During his reign, a variety of learning sessions were conducted to suit various people, such as the staff of the Fatimid palace, the ordinary people of Cairo, the courtiers, and the special initiates to the Isma‘ili doctrines. There were also special instruction sessions for women at al-Azhar and at the palace. Al-Hakim was involved in the spread of the Fatimid ideas to Iraq and Persia. Much success was gained in these areas, and several prominent administrators, in addition to many in the general population, accepted the Shi’a tradition.

Al-Hakim faced several challenges during his reign. There was a serious insurrection in Alexandria led by Abu Raqwa, an Umayyad prince from Spain aligned with the Zanata tribe of North Africa. This uprising was defeated. However, at the same time as this revolt the Nile waters remained very low, adversely affecting agriculture and leading to food shortages. To add to the difficulties, the Abbasid

caliph of Baghdad decided to humiliate the Fatimids and offensively provoked them by publishing a false genealogy. More favorable to al-Hakim is that his reign was also associated with the development of a new group, called the Druze, started by Isma‘il Darazi. This group regarded al-Hakim as divine and eventually formulated sacred texts and rituals.

Al-Hakim was very spartan in his lifestyle and sought to ensure the well-being of his populace. He used to dress plainly and go by himself to observe the common people on the streets. When the realm faced adverse socioeconomic conditions, he required that shops and trading be conducted at night to ensure that the night hours would not be used by unsavory elements to disturb public and private property. Very humble, he did not allow his subjects to prostrate themselves before him, a usual practice with traditional kingship. He shunned the rich robes of royalty and dressed simply, preferring to ride on a donkey rather than the more prestigious horse.

Al-Hakim regularly went to the Muqattam hills for solitude and reflection. On one such occasion, in 1021, he never returned, and it was believed that he had been assassinated. However, the Druze believe that he was raised to heaven and is in concealment until such time as he returns. Al-Hakim was brave, fair, and generous, a strong ruler with blue eyes who was sincerely interested in the welfare of his people.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Messiahs; Rulers as Holy People

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Hakuin

(c. 1685–1768 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist monk, artist, reformer

Hakuin was given credit for revitalizing the Rinzai Zen Buddhist movement in Japan during the eighteenth century. He was a philosopher, an author, a painter, and a poet. Born in about 1685, he was an intellectually gifted child, but he was physically frail and mischievous, torturing and destroying insects and birds. An early exposure to preaching about hell at a Buddhist temple motivated him to become a monk at age fifteen, despite objections from his parents. After a period during which he doubted the validity of Buddhism, he finally gained enlightenment when he heard the sound of a bell while meditating on the *mu* (nothingness) *koan* (enigmatic statement). This only increased his pride, however, so his teacher subjected him to even more rigorous training.

Hakuin became famous for a koan that he devised: We all know what the sound of two hands clapping sounds like. But what is the sound of one hand clapping? It was just such a koan that gave rise to the great ball of doubt. He thought that if a person could doubt fully, such a person could become completely enlightened. Hakuin defined the essentials of Buddhism as the precepts, meditation, and wisdom. He often wrote personally of his quest for enlightenment and his identification of what he called Zen sickness, which was akin to a nervous breakdown. He reported that when he experienced this sickness his head became heated and his lower body became cool. He recovered by heating his lower body with deep breathing exercises.

Hakuin lived during a historical period that witnessed the widespread popularity of the devotional emphasis of Pure Land Buddhism. In response to those within devotional Buddhism who believed that it was impossible to achieve enlightenment during this final degenerate age, Hakuin's response was a resounding affirmation of the possibility of achieving liberation. He argued that all Buddhist sects were ultimately one. But this did not mean that a person could practice both Zen and Pure Land at the same time. According to Hakuin, the Pure Land was located within oneself. It was, however, possible to recite the name of the Buddha with enough success to lead a person to salvation, in the sense that it helped a person to concentrate, which is a feature that it possessed in common with the koan.

—Carl Olson

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Meditation and Holy People; Repentance and Holy People

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Halevi, Judah

(c. 1075–1141 C.E.)

Jewish physician, poet, apologist

Judah Halevi was a physician, a serious religious thinker, and the last of the four luminaries of the Andalus school of Hebrew poetry in the twelfth century. Born around 1075, he was a native of Tudela, but he immigrated to al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) from Christian Spain as a young man. He also spent a considerable time in Toledo and in other towns along the fluctuating border between Islam and Christendom. Halevi's unsurpassed brilliance as a lyric Hebrew poet won him the acclaim and envy of Jewish literary intellectuals. By midlife, he came to be regarded as a highly respected Jewish communal leader. But after a glorious career as the darling of Jewish courtly society, Halevi spent the last fifteen years of

his life in a pious attempt to abandon Iberia for a life of religious devotion in Palestine. After years of hesitation and against the apparent counsel of his circle of friends, Halevi finally set sail for Egypt in 1140 en route to Palestine. He arrived in Palestine in 1141 but died shortly thereafter.

Halevi's contribution to medieval Jewish religious thought is known as *Seferha-Kuzari* (Book of the Kuzari). The book's subtitle, *Kitab al-Hujja wa-al-Dalil fi Nasr al-Din al-Dhalil* (The book of refutation and proof on behalf of the despised religion), identifies it as a work of religious apologetics. *The Kuzari* underwent several revisions before its completion on the eve of Halevi's departure for the East. Written for Jewish doubters (in Arabic and later translated into Hebrew), *The Kuzari* became the classic medieval defense of rabbinic Judaism against Christianity, Islam, Karaite Judaism, and, in particular, the Aristotelian philosophy that came into vogue in twelfth-century Muslim Spain. Constructed as a series of dialogues between a polytheistic king turned generic monotheist and representatives of philosophy, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, *The Kuzari* endeavors to explain the apparent contradiction between the sociopolitical reality of the twelfth century and the claim of Judaism to be the supreme faith.

Early in his career Halevi seemingly perfected the art of translating the worldly values of Andalus society into words of Hebrew poetry. Later on, Hebrew verse became a vehicle for expression of the poet's devotional longings and his religious disdain for the material trappings of Andalus Jewish culture. In particular, Halevi created new genres of Hebrew poetry with his cycles of "sea poems" and "Zion poems." Halevi's turn toward a stricter Jewish piety, *The Kuzari's* spirited defense of rabbinic Judaism and its unqualified affirmation of the Jews' unique metaphysical status, and the poet's unmistakable voice and unique lyric sensibility endeared him to generations of Jewish pietists.

—Ross Brann

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-

(858–922 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, scholar, poet, martyr

Ninth- and tenth-century audiences throughout the Middle East claimed that Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj could read

their hearts. He was known as the “perfect lover of God” and earned fame for proclaiming “I am the Truth.” The public misunderstood the ecstatic utterance as al-Hallaj’s claim to divinity, though others interpreted it as an expression of complete annihilation in God. Al-Hallaj believed in the worship of one God and in humankind’s recognition of God in the heart—attainable by performing ascetic works in addition to standard Islamic practices. He claimed to have achieved perfect union with God, and “drunk” sufis, those intoxicated on the love of God, sought to follow his lessons. Sober sufis, however, who thought remaining in God was the ultimate goal, were critical of al-Hallaj, rejecting his public claims that he had reached complete annihilation. Fearful that his message might cause unrest, the government imprisoned al-Hallaj in 913 until his execution on March 28, 922.

Born in 858 in Tur, Iran, al-Hallaj moved with his family to Wasit and then Tustar as a student of mystic al-Tustari. In 876, al-Hallaj professed to be a sufi. After marrying the daughter of a sufi, al-Hallaj made three separate pilgrimages to Mecca and preached as he traveled. Upon his return to Baghdad, he urged that mystics should be so entirely attuned with God that there was no distinction between the human and the divine. He proclaimed to all Muslims the necessity of embodying the commands of God with the heart, as the rituals were useless unless the Muslims enacted them in their day-to-day lives. Al-Hallaj is also reported to have performed public miracles, claiming to perform the “immediate acts of God” (Massignon 1982, 1:291).

Subsequently, many sufis rejected al-Hallaj’s attempt to explain the mystical experience to vast audiences. Many sufis did not endorse taking the sufi secrets of love into the public realm because the public often misunderstood teachings on divine love and reacted negatively. Sober sufis continuously criticized al-Hallaj, further alienating him from society. Seen as a threat to governmental stability, al-Hallaj was arrested and put on trial, then sentenced to death by removal of the extremities, hanging on the gibbet, decapitation, and finally the burning of his body. His ashes were sprinkled into the Tigris River.

Al-Hallaj was more famous after his death than during his lifetime. Upon his execution, followers dispersed from Baghdad, but slowly al-Hallaj emerged as a martyr and a saint in Islam. His book *Kitab al-tawasin* (Tasin of the lamp) is still read today, and other fragments of his work have survived. Al-Hallaj himself is the subject and inspiration of many stories of folklore, poems, and litanies throughout the Arabic world. He is often seen as the archetypal Muslim, for he submitted, suffered, and died for the love of God with no personal gain. Pious Muslims venerate him today because of his sufferings and proclamations of love for God, even if they have not heard or read the teachings of al-Hallaj for themselves.

—Melanie Trexler

See also: Insanity; Islam and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Handsome Lake

(1735–1815 C.E.)

Iroquois prophet, visionary, founder

A Seneca Iroquois religious leader born in 1735, Handsome Lake lived through some of the most tumultuous times in Iroquois history, and his health and will to live suffered as a result. Though on his deathbed in 1799, Handsome Lake regained consciousness and began preaching a new religion of spiritual revitalization. Known as the Code of Handsome Lake, or the Longhouse Religion, his guidelines for a good life remain important among Iroquois people to this day. He went on to live for another sixteen years and died in 1815.

Handsome Lake was an accomplished warrior and related to important chiefs, such as his brother, Cornplanter. The disruptions of the American Revolution in the 1770s and 1780s signaled the end of an old world. As American armies invaded and destroyed Iroquois villages, the venerable Iroquois Confederacy of six nations splintered as tribes divided their allegiances between Britain and the United States. Handsome Lake’s Seneca people resettled in the Allegheny Valley after the war, and Cornplanter became very active in counseling peace between the Senecas and the United States. Meanwhile, like many other Iroquois people who became consumed by alcohol and depression, Handsome Lake gradually fell into despair and constant drunkenness. The Iroquois had lost most of their land base during and after the American Revolution, the traditional male activities of war and hunting were in decline, alcohol flowed freely in the villages, and the Iroquois abandoned many traditional customs and rituals. Nevertheless, a few Iroquois people had begun calling for a return to traditional practices and morality when Handsome Lake passed out and went into a coma in June 1799.

When he awoke, Handsome Lake reported that he had conversed with strangers who instructed him in religion and urged him to atone for his wicked ways. Following subsequent visions, Handsome Lake said he had been led to a fork in a road. One path led to the creator and happiness, the other to eternal damnation, where all drunkards ended up. The creator had chosen him to share this new knowledge with other Indians and show them the way to spiritual rejuvenation. These instructions for righteous living became

known as the Code of Handsome Lake. The code stipulated, among other guidelines, that alcohol must be avoided, witchcraft should only be used for healing the sick, and families should stay together to raise children in the proper way.

As was common among American Indian prophets of his time, Handsome Lake adapted certain ideas from Christianity and Euro-American life to form his new syncretic religion. As he called for the reestablishment of certain traditional rituals of thanksgiving, he also urged the Iroquois to send some of their children to American schools to enable them to participate fully in the new post-American Revolution world. He preached against sin and warned against the Evil One who tried to lead Indians astray, condemned vanity, and saw nothing wrong with living in American-style housing or farming as Americans did (agriculture had traditionally been the responsibility of Iroquois women). He also prescribed the confession of sin.

Handsome Lake differed from some other Indian prophets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in that he did not call for armed resistance to Euro-Americans, but rather, placed all responsibility for the spiritual and cultural well-being of Iroquois people on themselves. Although his preaching emphasized peace with Americans and partial accommodation to their ways, he empowered the Iroquois to seize the initiative and repair their world on their own by reforming their sense of morality. This promotion of spiritual revitalization has a long and rich tradition among Indian peoples and became increasingly important as the Euro-American presence intensified over the next two centuries.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Hanina ben Dosa

(1st cent. C.E.?)

Jewish miracle worker

Ancient rabbinic texts describe Hanina ben Dosa as a miracle worker and healer who flourished around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. One surviving report describes his ability to know whether his prayer for the sick had been accepted by his ability to speak the prayer fluently (Mishnah Berakhot 5:5). Another recounts that a poisonous reptile once bit him and promptly died (“Woe to the man who encounters such a reptile, but woe to the reptile that en-

counters R. Hanina b. Dosa,” Babylonian Talmud [BT], Berakhot 33a). Once Hanina prayed for the sick son of Rabbi Gamaliel II, the rabbinic leader of his generation; observers noted that the boy’s fever left him at the very moment that Hanina had assured the onlookers that the child would recover (BT, Berakhot 34b; cf. John 4:46–53).

Hanina’s prayers could also stop or bring rain (BT, Ta’anit 24b) or change vinegar into oil (BT, Ta’anit 25a). When his family would otherwise have starved, Hanina’s prayer transformed a bit of his heavenly reward into worldly sustenance; however, when his wife saw that his ultimate reward had thus been reduced, she convinced him to pray again and ask that the gift be withdrawn, and “the second miracle was greater than the first” (BT, Ta’anit 25a). One text reports, “When R. Hanina b. Dosa died, people of deed [wonder workers] disappeared” (Mishnah Sotah 9:15).

In other sayings reported in his name (Mishnah Avot 3:9–10), Hanina emphasizes that the fear of sin must precede wisdom and that deeds must outweigh learning. He also said that God cannot be pleased with people when their fellow humans are not pleased with them. The vaguely anti-intellectual tone of such sayings caused ambivalence among some rabbinic masters, and eventually the worker of miracles was displaced by the sage as the ideal of rabbinic piety. Hanina himself was remembered with admiration and reverence, but later rabbis were not entirely unhappy that people like him had “disappeared.”

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Miracles

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Hannah and Her Seven Sons

(c. 165 B.C.E.)

Jewish martyrs

Hannah and her seven sons were members of a celebrated family of Jewish martyrs at the time of the persecutions under Antiochus IV (r. 175–163 B.C.E.) of Syria. The oldest version of their story is found in the second book of Maccabees, chapter 7, where a mother and her seven sons, all unnamed, are brought before the king and ordered to eat pork, a forbidden food in Judaism. Each in turn refuses, and each in turn is killed after suffering horrible torture. Before dying, each of the martyrs expresses complete faith in God’s justice and challenges the torturers to do their worst; the king becomes angrier and angrier in the face of their stubborn calm but can do nothing. The dramatic scene of a whole family, including young children, defiantly accepting death rather

than abandon the Torah became a model for Jews and Christians of later ages facing oppressors of their own. The event is thought to have taken place in about 165 B.C.E.

The story itself continued to develop. In the fourth book of Maccabees (chapters 8–17), each of the seven sons, and then the mother herself, gives a long speech before dying. These speeches clarify and expand the lessons of the incident for later generations. In the best-known rabbinic version (Babylonian Talmud, Gittin 57b), the time has been moved forward from Hellenistic to Roman times, and the incident is now associated with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The protagonists, however, are still anonymous, or, in certain early versions, the mother is named Miriam.

Among Christians, the “Seven Maccabean Brothers” and their mother were venerated as the prototypes of Christian martyrs, and their relics were later to be found in a church (previously a synagogue) in Antioch. The story of Hannah and her sons continued to attract the attention of Jewish writers, and poetic renderings of the story appeared throughout the Middle Ages.

The name Hannah seems to have entered the story through connection with the prayer spoken by the biblical character Hannah after the birth of her son Samuel (1 Sam. 2:5). Here the earlier Hannah speaks of God’s power to give children to the barren while the mother of many is left to mourn; the later story provided a forceful example of this power, and eventually it provided the protagonist’s name as well. This connection, however, seems no earlier than late medieval times.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Har Rai

(1630–1661 C.E.)

Sikh guru

Guru Hargobind nominated his grandson Har Rai as guru at his death in 1644. Guru Har Rai, born in 1630, was only fourteen at the time of nomination, and he was the head of the Sikh community in India for seventeen years. Like his grandfather, he did not compose any hymns or add to Sikh sacred literature, but unlike him, he avoided conflict with the Mughal authorities and retreated to the town of Thapal in the Shivalik hills. This is not to say that he accepted Mughal authority, however. Rather, he continued to recognize only

the authority of God and his “just rule,” thus rejecting any Mughal claims to power over the Sikh community.

Har Rai’s elder brother, Dhir Mal, was actively patronized by Shah Jahan (r. 1628–1658), and he was given revenue-free land at Kartarpur, the former center of the Sikh community under Guru Arjan. Once again, however, a change in Mughal rule saw the disruption of Sikh-Mughal relations. During the struggle for power between Aurangzeb and his brother Dara Shikoh, there were rumors that the Sikh Guru Har Rai supported Dara Shikoh. With his accession to the throne, Aurangzeb called Har Rai to Delhi to secure his loyalty. Har Rai sent his eldest son, Ram Rai, instead. Ram Rai seized the opportunity, and subsequently the Mughal emperor patronized him by giving him revenue-free land as well. Guru Har Rai died in 1661 after nominating his younger son, Har Krishan, to the guruship.

During Guru Har Rai’s control of the Sikh community, he was faced with challenges from outside, including the Mughal Empire in the plains and various Hindu rajas in the hills, as well as from within, including both his brother Dhir Mal’s control of Kartarpur and his cousin Ram Rai’s close relationship with the Mughal authorities. These challenges threatened to fragment the Sikh community, but Har Rai was able to keep the center strong enough to maintain the majority of the community’s loyalty.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Hargobind; Politics and Holy People; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Hargobind

(1595–1644 C.E.)

Sikh guru

Guru Arjan nominated his son Hargobind as guru in 1606. Guru Hargobind, who had been born in 1595, grew up in the court of his father in Ramdaspur, India, and his father’s death at the hands of the Mughal emperor, Jahangir (r. 1605–1627), prompted him to emphasize the military dimension of the Sikh community. He symbolically wore two swords, which represented *miri* and *piri* (temporal power and spiritual authority), built a fort to defend Ramdaspur, and created a formal court, the Akhal Takht (Immortal Throne).

These aggressive moves prompted Jahangir to jail Hargobind at a fort in Gwalior, but he was soon released as Jahangir was content that he had adequately asserted his authority over the Sikh community. Thus, Jahangir left Hargobind free to lead the Sikh community for a number of years. However, with Jahangir’s death in 1627, the new

Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan (r. 1628–1658), took offense at Guru Hargobind's power and authority and attacked the Sikh center of Ramdaspur. Unable to withstand the Mughal attack, Guru Hargobind moved away from Amritsar for greater safety. This safety was short-lived, as Shah Jahan attacked again, and this time Guru Hargobind fled to the Shivalik hills and established Kiratpur there. He died at Kiratpur in March 1644 after eight years of relative peace in the hills.

Unlike his five predecessors, Guru Hargobind did not compose any hymns, nor did he add to the book created by his father, Guru Arjan. Instead, Guru Hargobind focused on developing the concept of "divine justice." Drawing on the writings of Guru Nanak (1469–1539), Hargobind argued that since the reign of Jahangir was not just in the eyes of God, the Sikh community had no obligation to recognize his authority. Indeed, the only justice the Sikh community would recognize was that which was given by God to the guru. Along with this idea of divine justice went the claim to territory. Thus, Guru Hargobind moved away from the areas that the Mughal Empire controlled and laid claim to a piece of land, declaring that the revenue would go only to the guru acting as God's representative on earth.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Arjan; Hereditary Holiness; Nanak; Politics and Holy People; Sikh Religion and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Haribhadra

(8th cent. C.E.)

Jain monk, scholar

A medieval Jain scholar and monk, Haribhadra was a pivotal figure in the advancement of the religious and literary culture of the Shvetambara (white-clad) sect in eighth-century India. He was a versatile and erudite thinker, and numerous texts are attributed to him—as many as 1,450. Historically, however, Haribhadra remains an elusive figure. Some scholars have argued that, indeed, there may have been more than one scholar of that name.

Religious biographies of Haribhadra that were written starting around the twelfth century narrate two important events in his life. The first is his conversion from Hindu Brahminism to Jainism due to the influence of the Jain nun Yakini. This account presents Haribhadra as an arrogant Hindu Brahmin who loses when he is challenged to refute Yakini's teachings. He agrees to become her pupil, she directs him to her teacher, and eventually Haribhadra converts to Jainism. The second account narrates Haribhadra's retaliation for the mur-

der of his nephews while they were in clandestine study at a Buddhist monastery. To avenge their deaths, he challenges the Buddhist scholars to a debate, with the defeated party to jump into a vat of boiling oil. Haribhadra, with his erudition, defeats the Buddhists, and this results in the death of many monks. The portrait of an intolerant religious teacher that emerges from these biographies is in contrast to the ecumenical temperament that is characteristic of his writings.

Hagiographies depict Haribhadra as an ascetic monk and an authority on Jain scriptures who served as a spiritual guide for the lay community. In this sense, his interaction with the material world was measured in that he acted only as a teacher and guardian of the Jain faith, typical of a monk. The Jain ascetics were seen as intermediaries in the hierarchy of holiness, with the *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) and the lay community at either end of the spectrum. Haribhadra's most important contributions are an expanded biography of Mahavira (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.), the twenty-fourth and last ford-maker, and his commentaries on the Avasyaka Sutra, which addresses the obligations of a Jain ascetic and the layman.

—Sucharita Adhuri

See also: Gender and Holy People; Hagiography; Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Haridas

(early 16th cent. C.E.)

Hindu singer-saint

Svami Haridas was a charismatic Hindu singer-saint of the early sixteenth century. He was devoted to the divine pair Radha and Krishna and founder of a Vaishnava sect called the Haridasi-Sampradaya. Haridas's theological affiliation is hotly disputed between two rival branches of that sect, the Gosvamis (Householders) and the Sadhus (Renunciants). The former claims that he was Vishnusvami, the latter that he was Nimbarki. In any case, Haridas had a predilection for the aesthetic relish (*rasa*) of the love play of Radha and Krishna. It was an interest that he shared with his two closest companions, Hit Harivansh and Hariram Vyas. The three

of them are known as the Hari-trayi (Triumvirate of God) or the Rasika-trayi (Three Connoisseurs).

What all sources agree on is that in his mid-twenties, Haridas renounced the world and moved to Vrindaban in the Braj area of India, the newly discovered center of Krishna devotion, and stayed there until his death. His tomb (*samadhi*) is still tended there by the Sadhu branch of his disciples in a bowerlike setting called Nidhivana. The image he venerated, Bihari (Banke), is in the custody of the Gosvamis. It is now housed in one of the richest and most popular temples of Vrindaban, where it is worshipped with much pomp according to an elaborate yearly cycle of festivals.

Haridas's devotional songs in the vernacular of Braj have been collected in two anthologies: *Kelimala* (Garland of play), which contains 108 songs exclusively about the love of Radha and Krishna, and *Ashtadas Siddhanta Pada* (Eighteen songs of instruction), which is about conversion and devotion to God. These songs are quite difficult; for Haridas, the words seem to have been secondary to the music.

All songs ascribed to Haridas consist of four rhyming lines of unequal length, which is typical for the classical musical genre of *dhrupada*. One of the most popular legends about Haridas portrays him as a master in that genre, the guru of the famous court singer of Akbar, Tansen. The story goes that Tansen brought his patron to Braj so that he could meet Haridas. The emperor witnessed Haridas's musical talent, which was such that when he sang the tune (*raga*) characteristic of the monsoon season, in full spring, dark clouds would gather and peacocks would dance. Notwithstanding its popularity, this story is relatively late. It is first found in the mid-eighteenth century in a hagiography by a retired king, Nagridas, and in contemporary miniatures in the style of that king's principality in Rajasthan, Kishangarh.

—Heidi Pauwels

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Devotion; Harivansh, Hit; Hinduism and Holy People; Vyas, Hariram

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Haritsu

See **Kodōjin**

Harivansh, Hit

(c. 1502–c. 1552 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Hit Harivansh was a charismatic Hindu poet-saint born in 1502 who devoted his life and work to the divine pair Radha

and Krishna. He belongs to the devotional movement (*bhakti*), in which saints are celebrated for their love for God rather than for their wisdom or virtuous life. Thus, in the hagiographies, Harivansh is portrayed as totally absorbed in his devotion, even at the cost of observing the rules of conventional religion (*dharma*). He is understood to be an incarnation of the flute of Krishna.

Harivansh was one of the pioneers who moved to Vrindaban in the Braj area of northern India in the early sixteenth century. At that time, this bucolic area near the Yamuna River had been newly discovered as the place where Krishna and Radha dwelled on earth. Harivansh came to be regarded as the founder of a separate Vaishnava sect, the Radhavallabha-Sampradaya. His theological affiliation has become the source of vehement debates, partly because he did not compose systematic theological treatises. However, it is clear from his ecstatic poetry that he had a predilection for the aesthetic relish (*rasa*) of the love play of the divine pair. This he shared with his two closest companions, Svami Haridas and Hariram Vyas, with whom he is often classified as the Rasika-trayi (“Three Connoisseurs” or the Hari-trayi (Triumvirate of God)).

In contrast to the ascetic Haridas, Harivansh was married three times and fathered several children. His descendants still tend his tomb (*samadhi*) in Vrindaban and maintain the enclosed garden, called Sevakunj, where he meditated on the divine pair. In the late sixteenth century, a gorgeous red sandstone temple was built for the image Harivansh venerated, Radhavallabha. At present, the image is housed in a new temple nearby, where it is worshipped according to an elaborate yearly cycle of festivals.

Two Sanskrit works are attributed to Harivansh: *Yamunashtaka* (Eight verses for Yamuna) and *Radhasudhanidhi* (Treasure of Radha's nectar). However, Harivansh is best known for his devotional songs in the vernacular of Braj, collected in two anthologies. The most famous one, called *Caurasi Pad* (Eighty-four songs), is a collection of powerful poetry nearly exclusively about the erotic love of Radha and Krishna, of which he claimed to be an eyewitness. A second anthology, called *Sphut Vani* (Miscellaneous inspired sayings), contains songs that urge conversion and devotion to God. Harivansh's songs are performed in daily communal singing sessions (*samaja*) in Radhavallabhan temples and households throughout northern India.

—Heidi Pauwels

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Gods on Earth; Haridas; Hinduism and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Harris, William Wade

(c. 1850–1929 C.E.)

Christian independent church founder

William Wade Harris, born in Liberia around 1850, claimed to be a prophet and inspired the establishment of several independent churches in the Ivory Coast and Ghana. Following his spiritual anointing, he adorned himself with a white robe, grew a gray beard, and carried a staff topped with a cross, giving the appearance of a biblical prophet. This image, and his persuasive command of the gospel, together contributed to Harris's dynamic ministry. Indeed, according to one historian, "All observers testified to Harris' striking appearance, and personality: 'God made the soul of Harris a soul of fire'" (Isichei 1995, 284). Harris, according to his followers, received his gift of eloquence from God.

As a radical political activist fighting the colonial authorities, Harris was jailed in 1910, accused of leading an attempted coup against Liberian president Arthur Barclay. Upon his release from prison in 1912, Harris was inspired to organize a series of crusades. These events drew thousands, many of whom became baptized believers. The Harris movement, as it was called, started in 1914 and eventually superseded Catholicism in fame in the region. Though a stranger in the Ivory Coast, his performance was unique and he became known as a spirit-filled African missionary in West Africa, establishing churches throughout the region.

Harris preached strict morality, temperance, a good work ethic, and emphasis on select traditional values deemed consistent with the gospel. He denounced such dehumanizing practices as witchcraft, adultery, and lies but allowed polygamous families based on his Old Testament understanding. His mushrooming membership posed a threat to the French colonial powers, who soon destroyed Harris's churches in the Ivory Coast, jailed the prophet, and later deported him to Liberia, his homeland.

By the time of his death in 1929, Harris had paved the way for many other missionary groups to proselytize in the region, leaving a large membership in the independent churches that followed his teachings. In Harris's absence, expatriate missionaries took advantage of the situation and recruited the already evangelized population. Many scholars concur that Harris was a major prophetic African spiritual leader of the twentieth century. According to historian Gwinyai Muzorewa, Harris "started a mass movement on the French Ivory Coast. 'The Church of the Twelve Apostles' and the present Methodist Church in Ivory Coast trace their origins to this Grebo (KRU) prophet William Wade Harris" (1985, 115).

—Gwinyai Muzorewa

See also: Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Hasan II

(d. 1166 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Hasan II was imam in the Isma'ili mountain state of Alamut in northern Iran in the twelfth century. He was the twenty-third imam following 'Ali b. Abi Talib for the Shi'a Nizari Isma'ili Muslims. His designation was *'ala dhikrihis-salam*, "May there be peace on his mention."

With Hasan's succession as imam at age thirty-two, spiritual leaders who were earlier in hiding were now openly identified. He initiated a new era in the practices of the Isma'ilis, transforming the rituals of prayers and other religious ceremonies. He also propounded a new doctrine, using the notion of the Last Day (*qiyama*) as a spiritual metaphor for the manifestation of spiritual truth, specifically, the identification of the imam of the time. Thus the idea of the *qiyama* indicated the manifestation of spiritual truth in the person of the Nizari imam. Instead of physical resurrection at the end of time, it was a spiritual resurrection experienced by the adept who accepts and recognizes the true esoteric merits of the imams. This spiritual *qiyama* as experienced by the adept led from the *zahir*, or outward, to the *batin*, or inward, dimension of faith. The spiritual awakening was also declared in terms of the movement from the *shari'a*, or legal regulations, to the *haqiqa*, or real truth.

Since the time of Imam Nizar, with the assistance of *dai'is* (agents) the Isma'ilis had controlled fortresses in Syria as well as in northern Iran. Alamut was the most prominent of these. Hasan II sent the trusted envoy Rashid-al-din Sinan to consolidate and strengthen the community in Syria. Among other reforms, Sinan encouraged the women of the community to work unveiled alongside the men. He also established special volunteers, called *fidawi* or *fidawiyya*, corresponding to the Alamut *fi da'is*, who were assigned special tasks.

In about 1166, five years after he became imam, and approximately a year and a half after his proclamation of the *qiyama*, Hasan was apparently poisoned by a group of his followers, headed by his brother-in-law Husayni Namawar, in the fortress of Lamasar. This group was opposed to the idea of the *qiyama* and the intense focus on the inward or *batin* dimensions of faith. However, the *qiyama* and the esoteric idiom of the community was continued under the aegis of Hasan II's son and successor 'Ala Muhammad (also called Nur al-din Muhammad). The following successor (Hasan's grandson, Jalal al-din Hasan) altered once again the prac-

tices within the context of the idea of qiyama and reverted to the association of various practices with shari'a policy.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Imams; Jalal al-din Hasan III; Rulers as Holy People

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Hasan III

(1211–1255 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Ala al-Din Muhammad b. Hasan, or Hasan III, was an imam of the Nizari Isma'ili branch of Shi'ite Islam and the penultimate ruler of the Nizari Isma'ili state centered at the fortress of Alamut in northern Iran. Born in 1211, he succeeded his father, Jalal al-Din Hasan, at the age of nine in 1221. Under his leadership, the general policy of rapprochement with the Abbasid caliphs and Sunni Muslims was retained, though his community increasingly came to regard itself openly as Isma'ili Shi'ite.

Hasan III's long reign was a turbulent period for the entire Iranian world, which now experienced a foretaste of the Mongol catastrophe. But the Nizari Isma'ili leadership seems to have reached an understanding with the Mongols, who did not attack their strongholds in Iran for some time. Under the circumstances, these strongholds provided safe havens for an increasing number of Sunni Muslim scholars of central Asia, who fled from the invaders. It was also in his time that the Nizari Isma'ili *da'wa* (religious missionary activity) was introduced to the Indian subcontinent. In the aftermath of Hasan III's failure to reach a peaceful agreement with the Mongol great khan Güyük in 1246, however, Isma'ili-Mongol relations deteriorated rapidly. By 1253, Güyük's successor, Möngke, had destroyed numerous Nizari Isma'ili towns and fortresses in several regions of Iran.

Hasan III's rule was also a period of intense intellectual and religious activity in the Nizari Isma'ili community. In particular, the Nizari imam and other communal leaders now made a sustained effort to explain to ordinary members of their community the various religious policies of the leaders of the Nizari Isma'ilis at Alamut from the time of Hasan-i Sabbah (c.1050–1124) within a coherent theological framework. The intellectual life of the Nizari Isma'ilis was now particularly invigorated by the influx of outside scholars, who availed themselves of the Nizari libraries and patronage of learning. Foremost among these scholars was Nasir al-Din

al-Tusi (1201–1274), the most learned Muslim theologian of the time, who spent three decades in the Nizari Isma'ili fortress communities of Iran until their destruction by Mongols in 1256. Indeed, it is mainly through al-Tusi's Isma'ili writings that scholars have in recent decades studied the Nizari Isma'ili teachings of Hasan III's time.

Mongol campaigns intensified, and Hasan III was found murdered in December 1255. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Rukn al-Din Khurshah, who was to rule for exactly one year as the last lord of Alamut.

—Farhad Daftary

See also: Jalal al-Din Hasan III; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Hasan al-'Askari, al-

(c. 846–c. 874 C.E.)

Shi'i imam

Al-Hasan al-'Askari was the eleventh imam, or divinely appointed religious leader, of the Twelver Shi'a, the second-largest denomination in Islam. He was born in about 846 in Medina of a slave woman called Hadith (or Hudayth). When he was about two years of age, his father, the tenth imam 'Ali al-Hadi, was summoned to Samarra by the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861). Samarra, north of Baghdad, had just been built as the new capital of the Abbasids, and the caliph wanted to keep a close eye on the Shi'i imam. The quarter of the city where al-Hadi was detained was known as al-'Askar (the army) because the Abbasid army was garrisoned there. As a consequence, both the tenth and the eleventh imams acquired the epithet al-'Askari.

The period of al-Hasan's imamate was only about six years long. Like his father before him, he remained under the close supervision of the Abbasid caliph and his spies, who restricted his access to the outside world. He is said to have used special emissaries to communicate with his followers. A slave girl of his, called either Narjis or Saqil, is reported to have given birth to his son Muhammad b. al-Hasan, known as al-Mahdi (the Rightly Guided).

Al-Hasan al-'Askari died in about 874. Shi'i sources claim that like other imams before him, he fell martyr to the Shi'i

cause, poisoned by the caliph Mu'tamid. His death was followed by a period of considerable turmoil and confusion for the Shi'a. It was not immediately clear whether he had left behind an heir. Several Shi'i factions emerged at this time; some of the sources mention that there may have been as many as twenty sects. One of them was called the Waqfiyya, some members of which believed that the imamate had ceased with the death of al-Hasan and that he was the *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse). Other adherents of this sect thought he had not died but had gone into hiding or occultation; yet others thought he had died, but it was not clear who was the successor. Al-Hasan's brother Ja'far is said to have intrigued against him during his lifetime; after al-Hasan's death, Ja'far reportedly claimed that his brother had died without issue and therefore he was the legitimate heir to the imamate. This faction was known as the Ja'fariyya. The majority of the Shi'a eventually went on to accept the existence of al-'Askari's son Muhammad and recognized him as the twelfth and final imam.

—*Asma Afsaruddin*

See also: Imams; Messiahs; Mahdi, al-; Politics and Holy People

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Hasan 'Ali Shah

See **Aga Khan I**

Hasan b. 'Ali

(624/625–669 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim imam

Grandson of the prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima, Hasan b. 'Ali is regarded by the Shi'is as the second divinely appointed imam or leader, having been designated by his father, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, to succeed him. Many anecdotes and traditions that attest to Muhammad's love for his grandsons, Hasan and Husayn, have been preserved. Among these is the statement that "al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the masters of the youth of Paradise." The prophet is also reported to have shown his special affection for Hasan by interrupting one of his sermons and descending from the pulpit in order to pick up Hasan, who had fallen down.

Hasan was born in 624 or 625. Due to his close relationship to Muhammad, he was highly respected by many in the community. He is also reported to have resembled his grandfather very closely. With his father, mother, and brother, Hasan is said to have joined the prophet under a

"mantle." According to Shi'i exegetes, these five were declared in the Qur'an to be the "people of the house" and free from all impurity (33:33). The Shi'is have used such sayings to justify the right of the prophet's descendants to the leadership (imamate) of the community. Hasan is also said to have been a pious man with a mild disposition who never lost his composure.

When a Khariji killed 'Ali in Kufa in 661, many of his followers pledged allegiance to Hasan and proclaimed him as the next caliph. Mu'awiya b. Abu Sufyan (r. 661–680), the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, refused to recognize Hasan's leadership and prepared for war instead. Hasan responded by mobilizing his forces, but owing to lack of support and the perceived need to preserve the unity of the community, he contemplated signing a peace treaty with his foe. Many in Hasan's army were unhappy at this. Some of his followers attacked him, and he was wounded in the thigh. Mass desertions from Hasan's army meant that he had to abdicate the leadership of the community in favor of Mu'awiya. Mu'awiya's caliphate did not last for more than eight months.

Sources present conflicting details on Hasan's agreement with Mu'awiya. Most agree that Hasan stipulated that Mu'awiya should compensate him, that his followers were not to be harassed, and that, after Mu'awiya's death, the leadership should be restored to Hasan, or, if he was not alive, to his younger brother, Husayn. Hasan's abdication provoked negative reactions among his followers. Many Shi'is felt humiliated by the peace treaty.

Hasan retreated to Medina, where he lived quietly, avoiding political activity. Hostile sources claim that he married and divorced many times, even suggesting that he had more than sixty different wives. He was pejoratively called *mitlak* (divorcer). Shi'i sources indicate that at Mu'awiya's instigation, one of Hasan's wives, Ja'da, poisoned him. At any rate, he died in 669. Although Hasan wanted to be buried next to his grandfather's grave in Medina, some members of the community (sources suggest Muhammad's wife 'Aisha was one of them) refused to honor his wishes. To avoid an armed conflict, Husayn decided to have him buried in the common cemetery at al-Baqi.

To affirm his "holy" status, Hasan is credited with many legendary stories and miracles in Shi'i hagiographic literature. For example, when he was born, he reportedly praised God and recited passages from the Qur'an. Gabriel is alleged to have rocked his cradle, showing the divine blessings and favors bestowed on the family of the prophet.

—*Liyakat Takim*

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Attributes of Holy People; Fatima bint Muhammad; Husayn b. 'Ali; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Hasan-i Sabbah

(c. 1050–1124 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim ruler

Hasan-i Sabbah was an important link in the preservation and development of the Nizari Isma'ili Muslim community. Born to an Ithna'-Ash'ari Shi'a family in Isfahan, Iran, in about 1050, he accepted the Isma'ili imam (ruler) al-Mustansir in Cairo as spiritual guide around 1071. He set out to meet the imam in 1076 and arrived in Cairo in 1078. He remained there for approximately eighteen months, during which time hostility developed between him and the vizier Badr al-Jamali. According to some accounts, he was even imprisoned but managed to escape. He returned to Isfahan in 1081. By about 1091, he had managed to gain control of the fortress of Alamut south of the Caspian Sea in the area of Rudbar in Daylam, northern Iran.

This small independent state, which subsequently expanded, lasted for 166 years until the Mongols destroyed it in 1256. The narrative of how Hasan procured Alamut by peaceful means, not a military campaign, is surrounded by hagiographical anecdotes. According to one version, he purchased it for 3,000 dinars, in another version he won a wager, and in the third he went there as a teacher and managed to gain strategic control. In order to regain possession of the castle, the Seljuq king Malik Shah, with Nizam al-Mulk as vizier, sent an army that besieged Alamut for four months, but to no avail. The vizier was dismissed from office and was apparently slain shortly afterward, and the king himself soon died. For the next ten years, owing to a succession dispute, the central authority was weak and Hasan-i Sabbah had the opportunity to consolidate his authority in the surrounding regions. At this fortress he also recruited staunch volunteers, called *fiida'is*, who were willing to protect the incipient state, even at the sacrifice of their own lives.

At his demise in 1124, Hasan was succeeded by Kiya Buzrugh Umid as the next administrator. Hasan had killed both of his own sons, one for drinking wine and the other for an unfounded charge of complicity in the murder of a fellow *da'i* (missionary). Kiya Buzrugh Umid had been in charge of the fortress of Lamasar that was conquered in about 1096. Under his capable direction, the Isma'ilis continued to acquire strength, and eventually they controlled more than seventy castles.

Meanwhile, in Cairo, at the conclusion of the reign of the Fatimid ruler al-Mustansir there was a succession crisis in

1094. Although the chief minister preferred the designation of the young prince, Musta'li, the ruler himself had earlier nominated his oldest son, Nizar. The hostilities at Cairo forced Nizar to leave. According to Isma'ili tradition, the mountain state of Alamut provided a safe haven to Nizar and his descendants. (According to some sources, Nizar was assassinated in Cairo and it was his son who reached Alamut.) Henceforth the Isma'ili imams were divided into two lines, the Nizari and the Musta'li.

In Alamut, Hasan made Persian rather than Arabic the main language of his small independent mountain state. He also reformulated the central Isma'ili teaching about the need for the imam as the authoritative spiritual teacher. Unassisted human wisdom was considered inadequate for knowing God and understanding spiritual truth, and the imam was the necessary authoritative teacher required for the spiritual guidance of all humanity. The teachings (*ta'lim*) of the imam were essential for the identification and recognition of true wisdom. The members of the community were to eliminate all hierarchy and were to address each other as *rafiq* (comrade or friend). As the imam was not available to the public (perhaps for security reasons), Hasan and his two successors came to be regarded as the *hujja* (evident proof) of the imam and were designated the imam's chief representatives.

Hasan himself lived a spartan life and constantly sought to improve the material situation of the populace under his dominion. Like some of the other men in Alamut, Hasan sent his wife and daughters to the region of Girdkuh (which was considered safer), where they earned a simple living by spinning yarn. Hasan was buried near the fortress of Alamut, but the mausoleum was destroyed by the Mongols in 1256. Isma'ilis have called him Sayyidna (our master), a title expressing respect and admiration.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Mustansir, Abu Tamim Ma'add al-

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Hasidei Ashkenaz

(12th–13th cent. C.E.)

Jewish pietist group

The Hasidei Ashkenaz (the German pietists) was an elite group within German Jewry that flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The group's main centers were in Regensburg and the Rhineland communities of Speyer,

Worms, and Mainz, and its most prominent members were Samuel b. Kalonymus ha-Hasid (the pious) in the twelfth century, Judah the Pious (c. 1150–1217), and Eleazar of Worms (c. 1165–c. 1230). There are two main types of Hasidei Ashkenaz writings: ethical works intended to influence religious practice and raise the moral level of the Jewish community, and esoteric mystical writings intended for a small group of mystics. The sect's most important ethical work was *Sefer Hasidim* (The book of the pious) by Judah the Pious.

The Hasidei Ashkenaz distinguished themselves from the rest of the Jewish community by their demand that the members of the group live by a higher religious standard, called the “law of heaven,” instead of the “law of the Torah” expected of ordinary Jews. The *rezon ha-bore* (will of God) was the basis for all their actions. They also taught the doctrine of commensurate repentance for pietists. That is, as a form of penance one must undergo an amount of physical pain and degradation equal to the pleasure and reward received in committing the sin. In this and some other of their practices, scholars have suggested the influence of contemporary Christian groups and concepts. Their social doctrine assumed that complete equality of resources and social status was the ideal situation and the social reality of inequality was the result of sin.

The ideas of the Hasidei Ashkenaz were not accepted by many members of the larger Jewish community, which led to a certain amount of communal tension and strife. They tried to deal with this rejection by cultivating an attitude of indifference to those who mocked them. “Humility for the sake of heaven” was seen as a great virtue. Though the Hasidei Ashkenaz did not last beyond the thirteenth century as an organized group, many of its concepts continued to influence German and East European Jewry for centuries, particularly through the popularity of *Sefer Hasidim*.

—Morris M. Faierstein

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Judah the Pious; Judaism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution

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Hasidism

(1730s C.E.–)

Jewish spiritual movement

Hasidism is a spiritual movement founded by Israel Ba'al Shem Tov (1698/1700–1760) in the 1730s in southeastern

Poland. It derives its name from the Hebrew word *hasid*, meaning pietist (and thus many groups who were not directly connected to Hasidism—for example, the Hasidei Ashkenaz—also used the term). Ba'al Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name, also known as “the Besht,” an acronym) was a *baal shem*, that is, a healer who inscribed amulets to cure physical and mental ailments. He was also a spiritual teacher who opposed the ascetic and elitist teachings of the mystical fraternities prevalent at that time. His innovative ideas began to attract disciples who were part of the intellectual elite, and he acquired a reputation as a charismatic holy man and miracle worker among ordinary people. The Besht taught the importance of worship, which was accessible to everyone, in contrast to the emphasis on talmudic study by the rabbinic elite.

The Besht's two most important disciples were Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Polonoye (c. 1710–1784), and Rabbi Dov Baer (d. 1772), the Maggid (preacher) of Mezhirech. The Besht did not leave any significant writings, but his teachings were preserved in the writings of Rabbi Jacob Joseph. The central points of his teachings for the spiritual and intellectual elite was that God can be worshipped with joy and a positive attitude toward the world rather than through the asceticism and self-mortification that were common at the time. He also taught that the elite were responsible for the spiritual welfare of the masses, and that ordinary people could participate in the spiritual path by accepting the leadership and guidance of the spiritual masters. After the Besht's death in 1760, the leadership of the Hasidic movement passed to Dov Baer, the Maggid of Mezhirech.

The Maggid emphasized the training of young scholars who would be the future leaders of the movement. The form of mysticism that he taught, more elitist than the philosophy of the Besht, focused on spiritual concerns such as contemplative prayer and the attainment of *devekut* (communion with God). The disciples of the Maggid were sent out to all areas of eastern Europe to spread the teachings of Hasidism and create Hasidic fellowships. After the Maggid's death in 1772, these disciples became leaders in their own right and founded the major Hasidic groups that flourished throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810) was virtually the only significant figure of the third generation who had not been a disciple of the Maggid. Nahman was the great-grandson of the Besht, and his claim to Hasidic leadership was based on ancestry rather than discipleship.

Among the Maggid's disciples were influential figures such as Levi Yizhak of Berdichev; Elimelech of Lyzhansk; Jacob Isaac, the seer of Lublin; and Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of the Habad school. Each of these disciples became a *tzaddiq* (Hasidic master), and Hasidism never again had one universally recognized leader. Different groups



In this painting entitled *The Rabbi Travels, the Way Is Getting Short*, the modern Israeli artist Moshe Bernshtein has caught the esoteric, joyful spirit of Hasidism. (Art Directors)

began to emphasize various aspects of Hasidic teachings. At the core of Hasidism was the relationship between the tzaddiq and his *hasidim* (disciples/followers). Some groups, such as the Habad and Bratslav schools, saw this relationship primarily in spiritual and intellectual terms, while others moved in a more materialistic direction. Indeed, the intellectual and spiritual teachings of Hasidism were not unitary but open to a wide diversity of interpretations. For example, the Habad school emphasized a systematic intellectual approach, while the Bratslav school sought the same goal through simple faith and an emotional outpouring of the soul to God.

The year of the Maggid's death, 1772, also saw the beginnings of a backlash against the Hasidic movement and its teachings by parts of the rabbinic elite and others opposed to what they saw as the dangerous innovations of Hasidism. A ban of excommunication was issued in Brody against the followers of Hasidism, who were now prohibited from all contact with those who accepted the ban. Other bans were also issued, and a period of tension ensued between Hasidism

and its opponents (*mitnagedim*) that lasted into the first third of the nineteenth century.

Hasidism was the dominant force in East European Jewish society in the nineteenth century, with the significant exception of Lithuania, where Hasidism never gained a significant foothold. The upheavals of World War I, along with modernization and urbanization, led to a decline in the centrality of Hasidism in East European Jewish life. The majority of Hasidic leaders and followers perished in the Holocaust. A small remnant that survived managed to reconstitute some Hasidic groups, primarily in the United States and Israel.

—Morris M. Faierstein

See also: Ba'al Shem Tov; Dov Baer of Mezhibezh; Joy; Judaism and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Priests; Ritual; Spiritual Guardians; Tzaddiq

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Hassan, Sayyid Muhammad ‘Abdullah

(1856–1920 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, rebel, nationalist

Sayyid Muhammad ‘Abdullah Hassan, a hero of resistance against colonialism, was born in the interior of Somaliland in 1856. As a boy, he had spent some time with his fellow clansmen and their livestock in the interior, but in the 1870s he left for Aden, where he enrolled as a fireman working for one of the steamships. This allowed him to travel to places such as Egypt, where apparently he heard stories about the Sudanese *mahdi*, Muhammad Ahmad ibn el-Sayed (1844–1885). He performed pilgrimage to Mecca and visited the Holy City many times before joining the “Puritanical” Salihyya order of sufis. He then began to preach in Somalia against the luxury of the age, but he gained few followers in Berbera. He moved to the interior, where he lived in the Nogal Valley. Through his religious and political teaching he established a dervish (sufi-based) movement that sought to expel the British from his country. For a few years he disciplined his followers and attempted to replace clan solidarity and authority of the elders with his own unique authority as an inspired Muslim leader. His military involvements initially had to do with self-defense against Ethiopia, but soon Britain and Italy mobilized forces to deal with his resistance. Early in 1899 he began his *jihad* (religious struggles) against the British.

Hassan was an orator and a poet. These were much-valued skills and social assets in Somali society and won him followers, especially among the Darood clan. The British had underestimated his following but found out soon enough that he was persistent in his anticolonial struggles. Hassan’s historic resistance to foreign European-Christian intrusion started in the 1890s and continued until 1920, when Hassan died. Hassan became a hero of Somali nationalism. His talents as an epic poet were partly related to his rise to prominence as the leader of a religious-military movement that pitted the dervishes against European powers and Somali collaborators.

In the aftermath of Hassan’s tenacious but disastrous (both in terms of lives and property) anti-imperialist struggles to rid the country of European rulers, the British made every attempt not to antagonize the clan-based pastoral nomads and prohibited Christian missionary activity. This

turn of events, however, led to a policy of doing very little for the colony, which remained a neglected backwater.

—Abdin Chande

See also: Muhammad Ahmad; Patriotism and Holy People; Sufism; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Hayashi Razan

(1583–1657 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

A Confucian scholar of the early Edo period (1603–1867), Hayashi Razan was one of the most politically and socially influential scholars in early modern Japanese history. Born in Kaga in 1583 and brought to Kyoto by his father Nobutoki at the age of fourteen, Razan studied literature at the Rinzaï sect’s Kenninji Zen temple in Kyoto until 1597. Although encouraged to enter the priesthood, he declined and returned home, where he continued his own study on Kyōgaku. In time, Razan realized he was more inclined to the Neo-Confucian teachings of Zhu Xi (1130–1200), and in 1604, he met the famous Neo-Confucian scholar Fujiwara Seika (1561–1619) and was heavily influenced by him.

In 1606, Razan received the title of doctor (*hakase*) and became the first secretary of the Tokugawa shogunate. Razan was a fervent Neo-Confucianist and strove to persuade Tokugawa Ieyasu (first shogun of the Edo period) to remove the influence of Buddhist priests from around him. Ieyasu arranged a debate for him with the famous priest Tenkai, but Razan did not perform well and soon after published two books in favor of Shintoism. Razan continued to serve the shogunate, serving as a teacher to the first four shoguns. He established a school and a monastery at Shinobugaoka in Uenō, which later became known as the Shōheikō.

In 1629, Razan received the honorary Buddhist rank of *hōin* (high priest). He wrote the drafts of the famous *Buke shohatto* (Laws for the military houses) and *Shoshi hatto* (Laws for the shogun’s vassals) in 1635 and was instrumental in the development of customs and ceremony and in determining foreign diplomatic relations with Korea.

Hayashi Razan is also known for his anti-Christian (*haiyaso*) and anti-Buddhist ideas. He attacked Buddhism for its denial of the reality of human relationships and the economic burden it placed on the country. Razan spoke about a Shinto that existed harmoniously with Confucianism in the heart of a person.

Razan's first name was Nobukatsu, his common name was Matasaburō, and his posthumous Buddhist name was Dōshun.

—*Timothy D. Amos*

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Scholars as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Helena

(c. 250–329 C.E.)

Christian pilgrim, patron

Helena, the mother of Roman emperor Constantine, a pilgrim, patroness, and saint in both the Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, was a woman of humble origins. She was a concubine of the Roman general Constantius Chlorus, but he abandoned her when he was made caesar in 293 for a marriage to a politically well-connected younger woman. Helena was very close to her son Constantine, and after the death of his father in 306, she joined her son in Britain and later moved with him to Trier. After Constantine's victory over Maxentius in 312, she moved to Rome and lived in the Sessorian palace complex. It is unclear when she converted to Christianity, but Eusebius (c. 260–c. 339) claims that it was at this time. In 324, when her son became the sole Roman emperor, he gave his mother the title Augusta, and shortly thereafter he restored and renamed her hometown in her honor, Helenopolis.

In 326, Helena left Rome for a journey that would cast her as one of the first Christian "pilgrims" to Jerusalem and an exemplar for later pilgrims. Apparently Constantine sent her in order to dispense imperial patronage and supervise the building of the churches ordered by him, including the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and, in Jerusalem, the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. Eusebius claims that she desired to offer prayers of thanksgiving for her son and grandsons where Jesus had stood. Shortly after her return to Rome, in 329, Helena died. She was buried by her son in a large mausoleum adjoining the basilica of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, near her own suburban properties and only a few miles away from the Sessorian palace.

Shortly after her death, two rooms of her palace were transformed into a church; at first it was called "Jerusalem" but later it was renamed Santa Croce. In 395, Ambrose attributed the finding of the True Cross, the cross on which Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem, to Helena, and by at least

the sixth century a piece of this relic was housed in Santa Croce. Most scholars dismiss any actual connection between Helena and the discovery of this important Christian relic, but the legend flourished beginning in the fifth century and has continued to the present day. Throughout the Middle Ages, depictions of Helena's discovery of the True Cross appear in art. The fresco cycle of Piero della Francesca in Arezzo, Italy, is perhaps the most famous example. In the Middle Ages, a legend developed that Helena was originally born in Britain, leading to many stories and depictions of Helena as an English saint.

—*Maribel Dietz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Constantine; Rulers as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Hemacandra

(1089–1172 C.E.)

Jain monk, scholar

The Jain scholar-monk Hemacandra was born in 1089 in the town of Dhanduka in Gujarat, India. Hemacandra as a young man became the disciple of a well-known Shvetambara (white-clad) ascetic teacher, Devacandra, whom he succeeded after mastering the various branches of Jain and non-Jain learning. He was given the epithet "The Omniscient One of the Corrupt Age" (the present) for his breadth of knowledge and his literary legacy, which is evident from his treatises on grammar, poetry, ritual, and other branches of Indian learning.

Hemacandra, in addition to his erudition, was instrumental in establishing Jain presence in Gujarat. His hagiographies depict him as closely linked to the dynasty of the Chalukyas who ruled the northwest of India. Particularly, he was the court scholar of the monarch Jayasimha (r. 1094–1143) and later the mentor to the royal patron's nephew and successor, Kumarapala (r. 1143–1172). Under his influence, the Chalukyan kings issued decrees instituting Jain principles such as prohibition of the slaughter of animals, erection of Jain temples, and the general advancement of Jainism.

After a fruitful life furthering the Jain faith, he is said to have attained final liberation, putting an end to all karma by taking up the austerities of voluntary starvation in 1172.

A sampling of his better-known works are *The Siddhahemacandra* (a treatise on grammar); *The Epic Poem with a Dual Purpose*, a book on rules of grammar and the history of the Chalukyan dynasty; *A Manual of Conduct*; *The Lives of Sixty-three Illustrious People*; and *The Deeds of Kumarapala*.

—Sucharita Adhuri

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Henry II

(973–1024 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Henry II was a Roman emperor, saint, and model Christian ruler (as king of Germany from 1002 to 1024, king of Italy from 1004 to 1024, and Roman emperor from 1014 to 1024). The son of Duke Henry the Quarrelsome of Bavaria and Gisela, daughter of King Conrad of Burgundy, Henry was born in 973 and educated at the cathedral school of Hildesheim in preparation for the church, as his father had rebelled against Otto II and had been temporarily deprived of his duchy. Henry married Kunigunde of Luxembourg in about 998. When Otto III died without heirs in 1002, Henry, the grandson of Otto the Great's younger brother Henry, became king. After defeating the rival claims of Margrave Ekkehard of Meissen and Hermann of Swabia, he was crowned at Mainz on June 7, 1002, with a ceremonial coronation at Aachen that September. His renunciation of Otto III's *Renovatio imperii Romanorum* (Renewal of the Roman Empire) in favor of *Renovatio regni Francorum* (Renewal of the Kingdom of the Franks, used on his seals from 1003) probably reflects the reality of his position more than a conscious break with his predecessor's imperial ambitions: Henry was not emperor in 1002 and was in no position to rule from Rome even had he so desired.

Henry II undertook three expeditions into Italy, first against Count Arduin of Ivrea in 1004, who had proclaimed himself king of Italy upon the death of Otto III. Although Henry was elected and acknowledged as king of Italy, Arduin had not submitted and had not yet been defeated. Indeed, Henry's rule in Italy was not fully established until his sec-

ond expedition in 1013–1014, when Pope Benedict VIII asked him to put down the disturbances in Rome. Henry's reward was the imperial crown he received in Rome on February 14, 1014.

Henry campaigned in southern Italy in 1021–1022 to check the Byzantine influence there. His devout nature and earlier training played important roles in his ecclesiastical policy. He used the church to build up his own power base, appointing bishops and abbots loyal to him—the first bishop of Bamberg, a see which Henry founded and generously endowed, was his chancellor Eberhard. Childless, Henry named God his heir, perhaps demonstrating his sacerdotal characterization of the monarchy. Nevertheless, he was succeeded by Conrad II, the great-grandson of Otto the Great's daughter Liutgard.

Most of the contemporary biography by Bishop Adalbold of Utrecht is lost. Henry was canonized by Pope Eugenius III in 1146. His feast day is July 15.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Kunigunde; Rulers as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Herakles

Greek hero, demigod

The demigod who was called Herakles by the Greeks and Hercules by the Romans was among the most popular of all ancient mythological characters. It could be that Herakles was a source of inspiration because, more than any other classical figure, in his myths and cult he challenged the limitations placed upon humanity. Unique among the heroes, he occupied a position simultaneously greater and lesser than any other human being.

This status can readily be seen in Herakles' traditional iconography, in which he wears the pelt of a lion. Like the American frontiersmen Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett, his wearing of animal skins marks him as a figure of the borderline, more at home in the wild, although he is a champion of civilization. As close in spirit to the animal world as Herakles might have been, his pedigree was strictly divine. His mother was the beautiful queen of Tiryns, Alcmene, whom Zeus seduced—over the course of three nights!—in the form of her husband, Amphitryon. In this doubtful pater-

nity, one can easily see a pattern that would emerge later in the questions concerning Jesus' birth as the son of either Joseph or God.

As a newborn, Herakles strangled the two snakes that had been sent into his crib by the chief goddess, Hera, Zeus's jealous wife. This action is an early indication of the tremendous strength he would exhibit later in the labors. These twelve labors, which he had to complete as penance for committing murder in the service of the unworthy King Eurystheus, largely consist of mastering wild animals. But the last labor—the fetching of Cerberus, the three-headed dog of the underworld—takes this theme to a transcendent, metaphorical level. In subduing the beast of Hades, Herakles signals his conquest over death itself.

Indeed, after his self-immolation upon Mount Oeta, there is some doubt in the ancient tradition about the fate of Herakles' soul. During his own descent to the land of the dead, Odysseus notes, "I was aware of powerful Herakles, his image, but he himself among the immortal gods enjoys their festivals" (Homer, *Odyssey* 11.601–603, trans. Lattimore 1967). The triumphant entry of Herakles into Olympus, riding in a chariot led by the goddess Athena, is a scene frequently depicted on Greek vases, particularly those containing the ashes of the dead. In his struggles through life as well as his overcoming of death, Herakles represents an archetype whose abiding significance can hardly be overstated.

—Christopher McDonough

See also: Apotheosis; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroics; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Nature

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Hereditary Holiness

Some saints are born to holiness. In tribal societies, the role of healer is often hereditary, as is a position as prophet. For example, among the Maasai, the descendants of their first prophet, Kidongoi, form a special subclan with powers of prophecy and healing, serving as intermediaries with God. Their power goes back to a divine genealogy: Kidongoi himself was descended from the divinity Eng'ai. Several other cultures have had lineages of intermediaries who claim descent from a deity (such as the emperors of Japan, who are regarded as holy in their office, if not as individuals, and the pharaohs of Egypt).

Other religions have regarded the kindred of holy people as likely to be holy themselves, especially their direct male descendants. The religions in which this tendency has been weakest are those that emphasize chastity as a central religious characteristic, such as Christianity and Buddhism. Even in Buddhism, however, Rahula, the son of the Buddha, is regarded as one of the "ten great disciples"; he is said to have displayed his holiness at an early age and entered the *sangha* (monastic community) when only seven years old. The Buddha's cousin Ananda, regarded as the most perfect of monks, also has a special charisma as a relative of the founder. Tibetan Buddhism, atypical in many ways, includes hereditary lineages, most notably the Sa skya lineage of forty-one "throne holders" directly descended from the great teacher Kunga Nyingpo (1092–1158). This is quite similar to the Daoist celestial masters, all descended from Zhang Ling (second century), sometimes called "Daoist popes," who are still leaders of the Daoist School of Right Unity.

Even Jesus, for whom no reports of progeny survive, cast a special luster on his brother James, who took leadership in the early Christian community, apparently because of this kinship. And in a backwards progression, Jesus' spiritual prowess rubbed off onto his mother, the Virgin Mary, and even back to his grandmother St. Anne. The tendency to believe that holiness is a family affair is especially prominent in early medieval Christianity, when it was quite common to regard all members of a family as saints, such as the family of Gertrude of Nivelles (626–659) or, most notably, the Frankish Maubeuge family of the seventh century, which produced eleven saints in three generations. The tendency for several siblings to be acknowledged holy people also appears in Hinduism; for example, the two brothers and one sister of Jnaneshvara (1275–1296) were also famous holy people.

Descent from a founding prophet is not by itself enough to make a person holy, but such descendants seem to be regarded as having a predisposition toward holiness. Thus the descendants of the Muslim prophet Muhammad through Fatima and 'Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661) are regarded with special honor and given the title *sayyid* (lord)—and many of them have lived up to their heritage with lives of piety. This is particularly strong in Shi'a Islam, which holds that the imams, chosen by God from Muhammad's family, are spiritually perfect and infallible. Indeed, this belief—that there is indeed a "holy lineage" that has authority to interpret Muhammad's revelations, and that these individuals are closer to God than the rest of humanity—marks the essential early divide between Shi'ism and the Sunni majority in Islam. In Isma'ili Shi'ism, the line of imams continues for holders of the office bearing the title "Aga Khan." On a less politically charged level, other Muslim holy people, such as Sayyida

Nafisa (762–824), owed much of their popular esteem to the fact that they were descended from Muhammad; it was considered a blessing that they lived among the people. This belief in an inherited holiness is also true in cases of descent from lesser holy figures. Most important, the heads of sufi orders tend to inherit their positions, rather than winning them based on superior scholarship or personal holiness (though it is assumed that they will be pious, and usually it is the most pious son of the last shaykh who inherits the position).

Belief in the hereditary transmission of holiness has also been important in the history of the two great religions that grew from Islam, the Sikh and Baha'i faiths. The early Sikh gurus passed over their sons, naming as successors particularly devoted disciples. But from the time of the fourth guru, Ramdas (1534–1581), the sons of gurus succeeded their fathers in the religious and political governance of the Sikhs. Unfortunately for the coherence of the Sikh religion, these gurus followed Muslim practice in naming a particularly talented or favored son rather than practicing primogeniture. Thus, each time a guru died, a series of splinter movements arose as the succession was disputed, especially by sons who felt slighted when a nonrelative was designated.

The Baha'i faith, too, passed on religious authority by heredity. The guardianship of the faith was restricted to male descendants of the founding prophet, Baha'u'llah (1817–1892). Again, lack of primogeniture caused a schism when Baha'u'llah appointed his eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921), as guardian of the faith, a decision rejected by the latter's half brother, along with most of his family. This emphasis on heredity could have caused a major crisis in 1957, when 'Abdu'l-Baha's grandson Shoghi Effendi died, leaving no children. Moreover, he had expelled his brothers and cousins as "covenant breakers." The crisis was weathered by Shoghi Effendi's widow, Rúhíyyih Khánum, who effected the transformation of Baha'i governance to the Universal House of Justice.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Aga Khan I; Ananda; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Gertrude of Nivelles; Imams; James, Brother of Jesus; Jnaneshvara; Kunga Nyingpo; Maubeuge Cycle Saints; Nafisa, Sayyida; Rahula; Rulers as Holy People

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Hermetica

Greek revelatory texts

The Hermetica are dialogues or discourses of revelation allegedly transmitted by Hermes Trismegistus, a Greek designation of the Egyptian god Thoth. The eighteen texts that are

collected in the Greek *Corpus Hermeticum* (CH), along with the Latin treatise *Asclepius*, comprise the majority of the Hermetica. Over the past century, however, other texts have been discovered that belong to the same tradition, such as the Armenian *Hermetic Definitions* and the Coptic *Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth*. Some other important hermetic quotes reach us mainly through the fifth-century C.E. Greek anthologist Stobeus.

Hermetic literature should not be regarded as a coherent exposition of a doctrinal system, but rather, as Jean-Pierre Mahé has said, means of spiritual awakening and illumination (Mahé 1978–1982). It includes practical, theoretical, philosophical, and magical materials that combine Egyptian and middle-Platonic as well as Judeo-Christian and Gnostic teachings. Speaking generally, the Hermetic texts assert that humans possess three faculties that allow us to rise to God—namely, knowledge (*gnosis*, which accompanies the spiritual awakening), word (*logos*), and the mind (*nous*).

In CH I, 6, it is God who embodies intellect (*nous*): "I am Nous, your god, who existed before the watery nature that appeared out of the darkness. As for the luminous Word who comes from Nous, it is the son of God" (Copenhaver 1992). God is called "Nous," or Mind, because he is the cause of mind. Mind illuminates by means of the knowledge it brings, and this knowledge is placed by God in the human soul. This soul, although of divine origin, is exposed to corruption through its association with the body. The *logos*, by joining with the mind, makes possible the vision of God, which is the way of immortality.

—Serge Cazelais

See also: Intermediaries; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People

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Hermits

Most of the world's religions have recognized as holy at least some people who have been hermits—who have fled to the "desert" (Gk.: *eremos*) to be alone, at least symbolically, with the divine. This category of holy people includes not only individuals or small groups living "in the wilderness" but also recluses—people who are voluntarily enclosed in a small



Caves for hermits and use as meditation retreats. Near Mucho, Nepal. (Art Directors)

cell, of necessity close enough to others so that someone can provide them with food.

Reclusion is the great exception to what is otherwise a mostly masculine category of holiness. Although there are some accounts of female hermits (many of them disguised as men and only discovered after their deaths), it is a simple fact that few world societies have been safe places for women living alone, even when cultural standards allow that level of female independence. The great distinction that appears between religions is that some regard the eremitical state as a temporary time of spiritual training, leading in time to renewed engagement with the wider society, while others believe that the hermit has committed him- or herself to a permanent state. Two of the world religions reject eremitism as an ideal completely: Confucianism and Judaism. For Confucians, the test of being a holy person is the ability to combine knowledge, morality, and action for others in the world. Thus, although in the Yüan period many of the Confucian literati gave up on the life of public service, some becoming recluses or hermits, in general they were condemned as self-

indulgent. Similarly, for Jews and some sects of Islam, detachment from the world seems to call into question the worth of God's creation.

For most religions that accept eremitism as a spiritual ideal, the goal has been to retreat from distraction in order to find the self and to forge links with the divine. Solitary ascetics appear in the earliest strata of Indian holy texts, such as the Rig Veda. Throughout history, Hindu ascetics have retreated to the stern beauty of the Himalayas, away from the bustle of towns. Daoists, too, have withdrawn to mountains, where accounts tell of them living on wild herbs, or sometimes just subsisting on breath. In the Daoist case, the goal has been for holy people to integrate themselves with the essence of life around them—Daoists probably have the most positive attitude to “flight from the world,” regarding it as intrinsically valuable. Many early Buddhists became “forest dwellers,” similarly avoiding life in cities or monasteries in favor of a life in which lack of human contact can be compensated with a rich meditational existence.

In both the Buddhist and Hindu cases, however, flight from the world is most normally regarded as a *stage* of spiritual life, rather than the end product. The holy person (normally a man) withdraws to life in a cave or on a mountain, deepening his enlightenment, training himself in deep meditation, and so on, and in time comes back to the world, or has the world beating a path to his doorstep. An extreme case is the Tibetan Buddhist Milarepa (1052–1123), who lived most of his life after finishing his training in a mountain cave, living on boiled nettles. He lived an extremely ascetic life following an admittedly evil youth. But this is not a case of Christian-style penitential retreat from the world: Milarepa first repented and purified himself, and only then did he retreat to his mountain. And gradually disciples came, eager to reap the benefits of their master's long withdrawal. Similarly, the ninth-century Chan master Ta-sui Fa-chen secluded himself on a mountain, living in a hollow tree trunk for ten years *after* his enlightenment, before coming down to teach others. This “time-out” for spiritual training also appears among the Muslim sufis, as in the case of Chiragh-i Dihli Nasiruddin (1276/1277–1356) who lived in the wilderness for a long time, subsisting on leaves and lemons, before returning to teach others. The same pattern can be seen in shamans around the world—spiritual training in the desert, then return to the community. The Hindu Prabha Jagadbandhu Sundar (1871–1921) is rather rare for retiring at the age of thirty-three to live as a recluse until his death seventeen years later.

Christianity is the most ambivalent of the world religions in its attitude toward eremitism. There is a tension between belief that secular society is tainted and leads even the virtuous to sin, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the missionary impulse given voice in Jesus' order to the apostles

to “go forth to all peoples, spreading the gospel” (Matt. 28:19). Is it selfish to go off and be alone with God, or is it a necessary and desperate spiritual defense? Protestantism, with the exception of the Anglican communion, has indeed dismissed eremitism as self-indulgence. For medieval Christianity and modern Roman Catholicism, the uneasy compromise is that, from at least the third century on, many Christians have withdrawn from secular affairs, many remaining isolated until death, and many drawn back into the world’s business—but the only holy people to do so have been *forced* by superior authority, the cries of the needy, or divine command. Thus, although many hermits emerged as leaders of Christian communities, the hagiographical topos is that they resisted the call to the utmost of their ability. Even then, there is a general sense that those who stay in the eremitical state are holier than their brethren who have become bishops and so on. As Sulpicius Severus said of his hero, the great holy man Martin of Tours, he worked many more miracles as a hermit than as a bishop.

Many hermits of the Christian tradition chose to retreat to places of great natural beauty, suggesting that at some level their goals were not dissimilar from those of Daoist holy people. But the emphasis in Christianity has in general been more on eremitism as purification. Most accounts of both hermits and recluses emphasize their living in conditions of extreme asceticism, practicing asceticism to the point of shortening their lives. Although Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 547) and later reformers, such as Romuald of Ravenna (c. 951–1027), regarded the hermit’s life as “upper-division” holiness compared to life in a monastery as the course for beginners, hagiography tends to differ, describing people going to the wilderness as the beginning rather than the end of a spiritual quest, in strong contrast to Buddhism and Hinduism. Like the Buddhist Milarepa, the Christian hermits of whom we hear eventually left the hermitage, or had the world come to them; the life of withdrawal is held to create a close tie to God, and therefore disciples through the centuries have come to learn from the “expert,” building monasteries around what used to be a hermitage. This was especially a danger for recluses, who, since they had vowed lifelong permanence in the cell of their enclosure, could not move further away when the crowds began to arrive. If, indeed, they wanted to. Many recluses and hermits seem to have accepted the role given them as spiritual advisers and teachers with good grace—but not with eagerness, which would have suggested that eremitism was merely a means rather than an end.

In general, then, the desert has played a role in most religions, but as a temporary state, a time to spiritually train oneself for service in the world. Perhaps the sentiment can best be summed up by the great Christian writer Gregory the Great (540–604), who had to come to grips with leaving the

monastic life when he was drafted as pope in the year 590—there is no holiness without contemplation, but after reaching that goal, one cannot remain there—living eyes cannot bear the light and have to turn away. Pure, ongoing contemplation can only occur in heaven. Thus the ideal holy life balances periods of withdrawal with periods of engagement.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Chiragh-i Dihli, Nasiruddin; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; Gregory I; Jagadbandhu Sundar, Prabhu; Martin of Tours; Milarepa; Monasticism and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Hernández, José Gregorio

(1864–1919 C.E.)

Roman Catholic physician, caregiver

Doctor José Gregorio Hernández is regarded in Venezuela and Colombia as a particularly faithful and venerable servant of God because of his abilities in the medical field, his spiritual wisdom, his charisma, and his devotion and untiring activity for the sick and poor in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He has been one of the most venerated figures in the region in recent years. Credited with hundreds of authenticated healings and other miracles, admirers cite his inexplicable powers as proof of his holiness.

Hernández was born on October 26, 1864, in the small town of Isnotú, Trujillo province, Venezuela. He entered the medical school at the Central University of Caracas at the age of seventeen. Due to his exceptional academic achievements, the Venezuelan president at the time, José Andueza Palacios, awarded him with a scholarship to continue his studies at the University of Paris, where he obtained his degree as a medical doctor.

Hernández returned to Caracas and practiced as a physician for a few years in a small town just north of the city. His deep devotion to God drove him to Italy in 1908, where he joined a monastery under the name of Brother Marcelo. Shortly after his arrival, he became ill and was ordered to return to his native Venezuela. He joined the Santa Rosa de Lima Convent in Caracas, but three years later he returned to Italy to study theology. A lung infection forced him to come back to Venezuela once again. Hernández was fully devoted to his labor as a doctor and was always ready to interrupt his theological and scientific studies to assist the poor and deprived.

Hernández was killed in an automobile accident in Caracas on June 29, 1919, on his way to assist a sick, elderly

woman. Thousands of devotees attended his funeral. The headlines in local newspapers read: "Our Saint Has Died."

The Roman Catholic Church declared him a blessed servant of God on January 16, 1986. His devotion, mystifying powers, and servitude to God and the poor earned him the title of "The Venerable Doctor José Gregorio Hernández." He is regarded as holy in Venezuela and believers continue to experience miracle healings through his intercession. The Roman Catholic Church is considering his formal beatification.

—*Francisco Melara*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Miracles

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Hero Cult, Greek

The worship of extraordinary human beings, most often male, usually long-ago dead, and sometimes imaginary, normally at each hero's actual or alleged tomb, was common in ancient Greece. Archaeological finds verify that the hero cult was an important element of Mycenaean religion from at least the fifteenth century B.C.E., and the phenomenon persisted into the fifth century C.E. Several hundred heroes are known to have been worshipped, most of them only by their descendants or the populace of their local region. Certain heroes, such as Herakles and Achilles, achieved much greater prominence than average. Such heroes especially were revered as having superhuman power and courage and for risking their lives in performing great deeds. They were typically regarded as semidivine, commonly through their parentage. Legends of these heroes tend to fit a general pattern valid of heroes across cultures.

The normal tendency of the hero cult to be located at the hero's tomb relates to the belief in the sacred power of bodily remains. Bones were sometimes transported: The Athenians brought the bones of Theseus home from Skyros; the Spartans those of Orestes from Tegea; the Thebans imported the bones of Hektor. The hero did not need to be a native of the locale of the cult; the mere presence of the remains sufficed. Sometimes old graves were discovered and attributed to heroes.

Worship rituals differed notably from those honoring the Olympian gods. The hero cult employed practices associated with the chthonic deities, focusing attention on the dead in the ground. Pits or hearths, rather than high altars, served as receptacles of sacrificial victims and libations. A festive meal

was enjoyed in honor of the hero. The rituals were performed in the evening. This distinctive form of worship reflects the Homeric insistence on the separation of immortal from mortal. The heroes, although in ways superhuman and semidivine, remained mortals (with the few exceptions of those who were apotheosized). They needed to be worshipped, but not as one would worship an Olympian god.

The hero cult itself is barely hinted at in Homer. But the legends of the heroes set forth there and in the later literature offer an abundance of details regarding their origins, features, superhuman deeds, and human frailties. As stories of once localized heroes became more widespread through the literature, the desire of particular communities to commemorate their own and thus to reconnect with local traditions naturally increased. In a variety of ways, then, the literature and the cult practices were interconnected.

Commonly the hero was said to be the offspring of a god (usually Zeus) and a mortal princess or queen. Goddesses also gave birth to heroes. Aeneas, for example, was the son of Aphrodite and the Trojan Anchises. In the case of the heroines, very often they themselves were mothers of heroes, or daughters, wives, or sisters. Heroines and heroes alike did not need divine parentage in order to possess superhuman attributes. For instance, Odysseus's powers were enhanced through the favoritism of Athena. The semidivine nature of Achilles was bolstered by his goddess mother Thetis, who dipped him in the River Styx (or, according to another version, held him in fire). In some cases, the semidivine status of the hero led to apotheosis. Most famously, Herakles ascended from his funeral pyre to Olympus. The great majority of heroes did not become fully divine, although often their shades were believed to enjoy a good afterlife in the Elysian Fields or Isles of the Blessed.

The heroes possessed special features and powers that set them apart as extraordinary. Normally they are depicted as being taller, more handsome, and more physically powerful than their fellow men. Herakles and Achilles are notable examples. Other qualities also amounted to heroic stature: Odysseus's resourcefulness, Orpheus's ability as a musician, Asklepios's healing talent, and so on. A hero's special feature or power was commonly emphasized through an epithet; for example, Homer's "swift-footed Achilles" and "Odysseus, man of many wiles."

Heroes also typically showed a very human side. Oedipus, for example, the only man clever enough to solve the riddle of the Sphinx, thereby saving Thebes, was too dependent on his own clever ways to be truly wise. This dual nature of the hero was elaborated upon in the tragedies of the Athenian dramatists.

The heroes' life stories, while quite diverse in details, conform to a general pattern of events that tends to apply to heroes cross-culturally. Joseph Campbell (1968 [1949])

identified a “monomyth” of the hero. Lord Raglan (1956) derived a list of twenty-two events, most of which can be shown to apply to many prominent heroes. For example, as noted here, usually the hero has a divine parent (or at least a divine ancestor). The hero often undergoes an abnormal birth and encounters danger as an infant. According to some accounts, Thetis gave birth to Achilles underwater. Oedipus was exposed as an infant. In youth, the hero typically is separated from his original home and raised by another—the centaur Cheiron in the case of Asklepios, Jason, and Achilles. At some point most heroes either descend literally to the underworld (for example, Orpheus, Herakles, and Odysseus) or else have some intimate encounter with chthonic powers (such as Perseus, who meets the Graeae and then the Gorgons). The hero frequently defeats a monster, often a dragon or serpent. Other tests and trials are also undergone, after which the hero usually becomes king.

Eventually, though, the hero is usually driven from the throne and dies a mysterious or unnatural death. Oedipus dies mysteriously in exile after his glorious defeat of the Sphinx and brief reign over Thebes. Herakles is tragically poisoned once he has accomplished his twelve labors and married the princess Deianeira. Nevertheless, the hero’s deeds and courage continue to inspire worshippers for generations.

—Jeffrey Brodd

See also: Apotheosis; Attributes of Holy People; Gods on Earth; Herakles; Heroes; Heroines, Greek; Heroization of Private Individuals; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Spiritual Guardians; Theseus

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Heroes

Are heroes holy? Certainly not in the sense of modern American culture, which tends to label any admired figure a “hero.” But in terms of world mythology, heroes occupy an interesting middle ground between gods and mere mortals. As Joseph Campbell (1972) has analyzed the mythology of heroism, heroes share several important characteristics: They usually have a divine parent, their birth was in some way unusual or abnormal, they were separated from their original home, they must face trials that often include de-

feating a monster, and they usually end up becoming king. Of particular interest is that, whether they actually had historic existences or not, the people for whom stories of heroes were important believed that heroes were indeed living human beings who in important ways played a liminal role between the mortal realm and the divine. They may have had superhuman power and courage, but especially the heroes of Greek mythology are intensely human, pushing the edge of human limitations but ultimately unable to transcend their assigned fate.

The Greek hero cult became important in the eighth century B.C.E. with the development of the Greek polis. Unlike earlier Mesopotamian heroes, for example Gilgamesh, the heroes of Greece were especially important when dead rather than during their lives. They were the “powerful dead” who could most notably act to protect their native city. Thus they were usually regarded as demigods, with at least a mediatory role in effecting change on earth, if not the power to act independently. People were not regarded as heroes during their lives at all, and most frequently heroes were figures of a distant “heroic age.” Other people whose influence withstood the test of time could also be venerated as heroes, including great writers, philosophers, and especially kings. The Macedonians celebrated hero cults of their dead rulers, a practice expanded in the Hellenistic period to downright deification of figures such as Alexander the Great and his successors.

In other cultures, heroes who might legitimately be regarded as holy people follow much the same pattern: They may have had a human existence (which is uncertain), they are venerated after death, and they have an important liminal position between divine and human spheres. Some gods may have their core in great historic human beings, such as the various avatars of Vishnu in Hindu belief; certainly Krishna and Rama appear in early epics as human heroes. Similarly, many of the *orisha*, gods of the Yoruba cosmogony of West Africa, appear in an earlier phase of legend to have been regarded as heroes stemming from legends of historic people.

In the Americas and African religions, heroes are even more liminal, bridging the gap not just between divine and human but between human and the rest of the animal world. For example, the Maasai legendary hero Kidongoi, a descendant of the god Eng’ai, was discovered on a mountain as a child. He had special gifts, including prophecy and miracles, and in some legends appears as part wild animal.

In the broader dictionary sense of a hero, as one who shows great courage and wins high admiration in return, all holy people have been heroes. Courage is a particularly noteworthy quality of holy people: They take a moral stand and do not back down from it, even at the risk of disgrace or death.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Alexander the Great; Herakles; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroines, Greek; Heroization of Private Individuals; Kidongoi; Krishna; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Rama; Theseus

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Heroines, Greek

The ancient Greeks honored extraordinary women, usually of the distant past, who functioned as exemplary figures and were sometimes worshipped because of their elevated status. As a general category, the heroine is found in many cultures (Sita or Draupadi in India, for example). Greek heroines exhibited particular characteristics. In most ways analogous to heroes, heroines surpassed ordinary women in beauty, cleverness, or courage. They were commonly descendants of or otherwise closely associated with divinities. Both nonhistorical and historical, heroines are observed in myth and legend and in evidence of cultic practice. They offered various paradigms: Penelope, the exemplary wife; Iphigeneia, sacrificial victim; Danae, who survived perils in giving birth to the hero Perseus; and so forth. In some cases, the heroine underwent apotheosis; Semele, for example, was rescued from death by her son Dionysos. Divine or not, heroines were widely worshipped, usually at their tombs (real or alleged).

The stories of Greek heroines are told in vase paintings and other artwork, and in most every genre of literature. Homer and Hesiod both catalog heroines in their epic compositions. The *Odyssey*, Book 11, for example, includes Odysseus's descriptions of famous women as he witnesses their shades in the underworld. The Athenian dramatists' contributions to elaborating upon the stories of heroines can be glimpsed merely by considering the titles of their productions: Elektra, Antigone, Medea, Iphigeneia, Helen, and so on.

Many heroines are mothers of heroes. Alkmene, for example, was the mother of Herakles. Typically their stories are highlighted by the conception and then the birth of the hero, both of which tend to be extraordinary and often dangerous events. Most of the other heroines are virgins who are for some reason denied marriage and normal adult life. Antigone is such, dying young in the wake of her courageous deed. Not all heroines fit so neatly into these categories, however. Ino, daughter of Kadmos and Harmonia, is exceptional in that her life story correlates so closely to that normally reserved for the hero; in fact, there is a notable correspondence

between her story and that of Herakles, the paradigmatic hero.

—Jeffrey Brodd

See also: Gender and Holy People; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Heroization of Private Individuals; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People

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Heroization of Private Individuals

Ancient Greece

Ancient Greek heroes, a class of beings between humans and gods, received their heroic status after death when the indication of their powerful presence required honor. Sometimes the hero's achievements in life suggested divine favor; he may even have experienced direct contact with the divine. Sometimes, however, it came as a surprise to the human community that an individual had a right to heroic honor, and the community then was forced to hasten to establish a cult in response to divine insistence.

Kings and lawgivers are among those whose communion with the divine could afford a heroic status after death. The hero Lycurgus, for example, the traditional founder of Sparta's system of government, was said to have received the laws he gave to Sparta directly from Zeus. Poets, too, could become heroes. Hesiod and Archilochus, both said to have been visited by the Muses, received hero cults, and the tragedian Sophocles was honored as a hero, not because of his poetry, but because he received the god Asklepios in his house. The founders of Greek colonies were regularly honored with hero cults because their position was due to divine choice, as determined by the god at Delphi.

An individual's status or achievement in life was no guarantee of heroic honor, however. The workings of the divine are unpredictable; human standards are irrelevant. There are instances in which valorous death in battle resulted in heroization, but they are rare. In myth, Oedipus became a hero not because of his outstanding leadership, wisdom, or virtue of any kind, but because of his extreme suffering as an outcast from human society; the most cursed became the most blessed. An athlete, punished for killing his opponent in the games, went mad and damaged a schoolhouse, killing sixty boys; when the townspeople stoned him, he escaped, miraculously, and the Delphic oracle proclaimed him a hero. Other dishonored athletes received heroic honors only after their

cities suffered a plague or blight and, seeking help from Delphi, were instructed to establish the cult. Heroines, too, received honor in death, in their case after being abused or wrongfully killed. We may think of the need to appease angry spirits, but there was emphasis also on the distance between human and divine judgment.

In the Hellenistic period and later, hero cults proliferated. Some were private cults for family members; sometimes the title “hero” seems to have lost its force to become simply a respectful title for the dead. There were also heroic honors for rulers, even while living, whose power to act as “saviors” was celebrated as divine. The long tradition of hero cult added to the luster of such titles; likening a city’s benefactors to the great heroes of the past was the highest possible honor.

—Rebecca H. Sinos

See also: Herakles; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Heroines, Greek; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Oedipus; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Spiritual Guardians

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Herrera, Remigio

See **Adechina**

Hilary of Poitiers

(c. 315–c. 367 C.E.)

Christian bishop, theologian, doctor of the church

Hilary, born in about 315, belonged to a distinguished non-Christian Gallo-Roman family and was raised with a firm grounding in the classics and philosophy. He was converted to Christianity through reading in the Bible the many sublime descriptions of God, which contrasted strongly with Greco-Roman mythology and materialism. Hilary was married and had a daughter named Abra. Elected bishop of Poitiers in about 353, he was the strongest opponent of Arianism (which

questioned the divinity of the son in the Trinity) in the West during the fourth century and was banished to Phrygia by the Arian emperor Constantius II. During his banishment, he studied Greek theology, wrote extensively, and corresponded with other Western bishops. He was released from exile in 361, after which he allowed Martin of Tours, the soldier-converter, to inaugurate the monastic movement in Gaul. Hilary spent the remainder of his life fighting the doctrine of Arianism and has been called the “Athanasius of the West.” Pius IX declared Hilary a “doctor of the Universal Church” in 1851. His feast day is celebrated on January 14.

Hilary was the first Latin writer to incorporate and acquaint Western Christianity with the writings of the Greek fathers. Both Augustine and Thomas Aquinas cited the importance of Hilary’s writings on the Trinity in their thought and development. Hilary’s writings can be arranged into four categories: scriptural exegesis, hymns, theology, and polemical works. His *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity) is the first extensive study of the Trinity in Latin.

Jerome indicates that Hilary introduced the singing of hymns into the West after seeing how effective they were in combating Arianism in the East. Only three incomplete hymns ascribed to him survive, and Ambrose would eventually continue Hilary’s influence and bring hymn writing to its full potential in the Western church. Hilary’s primary purpose in his writings was to prove that the son was consubstantial (equal and divine) with the father. He clearly taught that Jesus was only one divine person and that he had both a divine and a human nature (Arianism denied that Jesus was divine). Hilary also clearly conveyed the message of the unity and equality of each person within the Trinity. His writings had a major influence on the early development of Catholic theology during the Middle Ages.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Ambrose; Athanasius; Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Jerome; Scholars as Holy People; Thomas Aquinas; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Hilda of Whitby

(614–680 C.E.)

Christian abbess

Hilda, or Hild, was a sainted abbess who played a pivotal role during the period of conversion to Christianity and the or-

ganization of the church in Anglo-Saxon England during the seventh century. What we know of Hild can be found in the pages of Bede's eighth-century *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. She was born of noble parentage, an important factor in Anglo-Saxon female sanctity. The claim that she lived thirty-three years in the world and another thirty-three years in a monastery enhances her holiness by symbolically linking her life with the life of Christ. Bede never calls her a virgin, a telling omission, as Bede prized virginity highly as a significant factor of female sanctity, but three other elements common to the lives of most Christian saints are found in Bede's Life of Hild: While pregnant with her, her mother had a vision of her greatness; Hild piously and cheerfully endured a long illness and greeted death with joy; and her nuns had visions of her soul ascending to heaven. Wisdom, knowledge, and good counsel, vital characteristics in the construction of an Anglo-Saxon female saint, were Hild's strongest virtues.

Of the three monastic institutions with which Hild was associated, the most famous was Whitby, or Streonaeshalch. As Whitby's abbess, she established a rule that emphasized egalitarianism, good works, devotion, chastity, justice, and knowledge of the scriptures. She taught the monks and nuns in her care so diligently that five Whitby monks became influential bishops. Hild's reputation for wisdom was outstanding, and even kings and princes came to her for advice. It was probably because of this reputation that Whitby was chosen as the site for the famous synod that was to decide between the variant Christian traditions, Roman and Irish, practiced in England at the time. Although Hild did not possess stereotypical saintly attributes, she perfectly embodied the most important Anglo-Saxon female virtues to such an extent that she was considered holy, and she was so well loved that all who knew her called her "mother."

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Bede; Christianity and Holy People; Death; Gender and Holy People; Guidance

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Hildegard of Bingen

(1098–1179 C.E.)

Christian abbess, scholar, mystic

In an age when few women enjoyed an education or a voice in either secular or ecclesiastical affairs, Hildegard of Bin-

gen, founder and abbess of two convents near Bingen, Germany, was recognized in her lifetime as a gifted and publicly active individual who exercised considerable influence over kings and popes. Hildegard authored such works as *Scivias* (May you know, or Know the way) and the first morality play, *Ordo Virtutum* (The composition of virtue). Acknowledged as a mystic and reputed as a visionary, Hildegard's other talents included those of poet, illuminator, scientist, healer, philosopher, composer, respected and prolific letter writer, and inventor of her own secret language, her *lingua ignota*, as well.

The tenth and last child born to a lesser noble family in 1098, at the age of seven or eight Hildegard's parents presented her to the Benedictine monastery at Disibodenberg, dedicating her to a religious life. There is some dispute among scholars as to whether she immediately joined the recluse Jutta of Sponheim in an anchorite's cell attached to the monastery. However, she did spend some years of isolation with Jutta as her mentor. Some sources suggest that another young woman lived with them in the cell.

Jutta and the monk Volmar, who later became Hildegard's first secretary and lifelong friend, acted as her teachers, but to what extent she was educated is debated. She says of herself that she had little education, but it is likely that she refers to a formal classical education. There is no doubt that she had some education and that she could write in Latin. By the time Jutta died (c. 1137) and Hildegard was called upon to become abbess of the growing community, she was prepared for the administrative responsibilities of what had by then become a small convent joined with the Benedictine monks, forming a rare double monastery.

In addition to her administrative duties, within a few years of becoming abbess Hildegard felt compelled to write about her visions, which she says she first experienced as a very young child. She writes in the preface of *Scivias* that in 1141 she received a vision of new understanding along with a command to tell and write about what was revealed to her. At first reluctant to do so, she became ill, an experience common to mystics and visionaries. But with the help of the monk Volmar and permission from the abbot of Disibodenberg, she began to write, and in doing so, she recovered her health.

It took Hildegard ten years to complete *Scivias*, but during this time she gained acceptance and validation. Eventually, her work came to the attention of Pope Eugenius III, who publicly recognized her work as valid at the synod of Trier in 1147–1148. With his approval, encouragement, and authority, Hildegard finished *Scivias*. During this time, obeying another command from God, she moved her nuns to Rupertsberg (c. 1151), founding a new convent there. Within the first decade at Rupertsberg, Hildegard composed hymns and the music to accompany

them, the scientific work *Physica* (Natural history), *Causae et curae* (Causes and cures) on medicine, and *Liber vitae meritorum* (Book of life's merits), her second major work.

These accomplishments brought Hildegard much attention, and besides her writing, she traveled to tell about her visions and prophecies. The opportunity for a woman to preach in public was rare, but Hildegard is credited with having done so. She is known as well for her correspondence, and some 300 letters purported to have been written by Hildegard survive. Among the powerful and influential with whom she exchanged letters were King Conrad (r. 1138–1152) and Frederick Barbarossa (r. 1152–1190) of Germany and Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, king and queen of England. Laity and religious alike wrote asking for her prayers and advice.

Hildegard founded a second convent at Eibigen in 1165 and finished her third and final book of visions, *Liber divinorum operum* (Book of divine works) in 1174. Most of the last year of her life was spent at odds with the clergy at Mainz, who ordered the body of a man they considered an excommunicate removed from the cemetery at Rupertsberg. Hildegard refused the order. She died in 1179, shortly after the clergy withdrew their demand.

Despite the claims of miracles credited to Hildegard by her earliest biographers, both during her life and after her death, there is no record of a formal canonization. Nevertheless, by the fourteenth century her name and feast day appeared in various martyrologies. She was also included in the Roman Martyrology of the sixteenth century. She is honored as a saint, and her feast day is celebrated on September 17.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Hillel

(1st cent. B.C.E.)

Jewish sage

Hillel was a leading Jewish *hakham* (sage) who flourished about a century before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70

C.E. Later generations of rabbis remembered him as the very model of what a wise man ought to be. Little is known of Hillel's life; it is reported that he suddenly appeared among the sages as an unknown adult from Babylonia (see Babylonian Talmud [BT], Pesahim 66a, Sukkah 20a).

Many stories about Hillel depict the ideal sage's behavior in various situations. A famous example concerns a potential convert who approached Hillel's great rival Shammai and asked to learn the whole Torah while he stood on one foot. Shammai simply chased the man away, but Hillel seized the opportunity to teach the Golden Rule: "Do nothing to your fellow that you would not wish done to you: that is the whole Torah. The rest is commentary: go and study" (BT, Shabbat 31a).

Two different versions survive of Hillel's first encounter with his teachers. In one version (BT, Yoma 35b), he appears as a poor young student whose dedication to the Torah was so great that he listened to lectures through a skylight when he could not afford the admission fee. One night it snowed, and he was found in the morning still huddled on the roof, where he would have frozen to death if those below had not seen his still form darkening the skylight.

In the other version (see Jerusalem Talmud, Pesahim 6:1 33a), Hillel was already a learned man who resolved an issue that the established masters of the law had been unable to settle. This story uses Hillel to illustrate a critical stage in the developing rabbinic tradition: One year, the Passover sacrifice had to be carried out on the Sabbath, and the authorities could not remember whether the festival or the Sabbath took precedence (that is, whether the sacrifice should be offered at all). They consulted Hillel, of whom it seems they had previously only heard reports, and he proved to them that the festival offerings could be brought. The others kept rejecting his proofs, however, until he assured them that he had also learned the correct rule from his teachers Shemaya and Avtalyon. On hearing this appeal to tradition, they appointed Hillel their leader. In fact, he did this so brilliantly that they "immediately seated him at their head. . . ." (In the BT version, there is no resistance to Hillel's proofs and no need to appeal to authoritative tradition; his brilliance is enough to gain his colleagues' respect.)

Certain key legal enactments are attributed to Hillel. Of these, the best known is the so-called *prosbul*, a device that allowed creditors to avoid the cancellation of all debts in the sabbatical year (Mishnah Shevi'it 10:3).

Hillel is quoted more frequently in the third-century sayings collection *Pirke Avot* (Ethics of the fathers) than any other rabbinic master. After his death, his disciples, known collectively as Bet Hillel (House of Hillel), increasingly dominated the emerging rabbinic movement. Their legal opinions strongly influenced the Mishnah and later works, and their teachings effectively shaped the rabbinic tradition for all time.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Hakham; Judaism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Hilli, ‘Allamah al-

(1250–1325 C.E.)

Shi’i Muslim scholar

Abu Mansur Hasan ibn Yusuf, known as ‘Allamah (Very learned one) al-Hilli and Ibn al-Mutahhar, was a prominent Shi’i religious scholar. He was born in 1250 in Hillah in southern Iraq, which was for about 300 years the main center of Shi’i scholarship. He studied under Khwaja Nasir al-Din at-Tusi and under his uncle Muhaqqiq al-Hilli, the leading Shi’i scholar after Tusi’s death in 1274. ‘Allamah also studied under some Sunni scholars.

One of his main contributions was to bring to Shi’i Islam some of the techniques used by Sunnis to evaluate the authenticity of traditions (*hadith*) by examining the chain of the transmission of the tradition. ‘Allamah is also credited with having established *ijtihad* (the use of reason in addition to the Qur’an and the traditions to derive rulings on holy law) as the central methodology of Shi’i jurisprudence. He wrote numerous books on these themes, and his work *Tahdhib al-Wusul* (The rectification of attainment) on the principles of jurisprudence was a much-used text for many years.

During ‘Allamah’s lifetime, the Mongol rulers of Iraq converted to Islam and were favorable to Shi’ism. ‘Allamah and another Shi’i scholar were responsible for converting one of them, Khudabanda (1304–1316), to Shi’ism, and for a time ‘Allamah moved to Baghdad to consolidate the Shi’i position. However, Khudabanda’s successor was a Sunni. ‘Allamah died in Hillah in 1325 and is buried in Najaf.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Lawgivers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Tusi, Nasir al-Din at-

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Hinduism and Holy People

In Hinduism, there are both a relatively large number and a wide array of types of people considered holy. Such people are deemed to be spiritually advanced, having reached the

highest levels of spiritual realization, and to have the power to guide others toward that realization. They are thus treated with respect and reverence. A person can be transformed merely by being in their presence through the experience of *darshan* (both seeing and being seen by a holy person), even as a person can be transformed by being in the presence of deity. Such holy people may be seen to have accrued spiritual power through the practice of meditation, moral purity, devotion, and/or asceticism. They may even be considered incarnations of the Transcendent, conceived in personal terms, or of some earlier holy person who has again taken birth. There is no central authority in Hinduism that would validate the status of such holy people; rather, they are deemed holy by the consensus of communities and individuals who encounter them and experience them as such.

The Diversity of Hinduism

The diversity in types of holy people reflects the diversity of forms of religiosity that fall under the umbrella of Hinduism. The term “Hindu” originally referred simply to the people on the other side of the Indus River, and hence to all those who lived in the geographic region of the Indian subcontinent, and only secondarily to their religious practices. The Hindu religion as it has grown up does not have a single founding figure, as many other religious traditions do, nor does it have a text at its center, as might be said of Judaism and Islam, for example. Even the image of a single tree with multiple branches cannot encompass this diversity, and instead Hinduism has been likened to a banyan tree with multiple trunks, each distinct but part of the larger whole (Lipner 2000). The paths to religious realization are multiple and differ considerably in Hinduism, and correspondingly so do the types of holy people who guide others on those paths. These holy people range from teachers of meditation to renouncers to great lovers of God and ecstatic saints, tantric practitioners, and moral exemplars.

Holiness in Hinduism can be said to be principally grounded in a Hindu understanding of reality, which takes full form in the Upanishads. According to this Hindu worldview, a oneness, or unity, underlies all manifest existence, and it is this Oneness, called *Brahman*, which is ultimately real. Yet all that we see and experience in this world—and many other worlds as well—is a manifestation of this One. These manifestations may be viewed as *maya*, or illusion, particularly when we assume that they, and not Brahman, are ultimately real, but they can also be viewed as myriad aspects of the One, which in its abundance takes form. The manifest world is then understood as the *lila*, or play of the One, both as drama and as an expression of playfulness. This One can be experienced through particular manifestations, and the gods and goddesses of Hinduism are understood to be such particular manifestations.



Hindu swami in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. (Corel Corp)

This Oneness is sometimes characterized as being fundamentally constituted of *sat-chit-ananda* (being, consciousness, and bliss), and whether it is finally personal (that is, relational and akin to monotheistic conceptions of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), or is finally impersonal, is debated within Hinduism. Ramanuja (1017–1137) and followers of *bhakti* (devotional Hinduism) argue the former, and Shankara (seventh and eighth centuries) and nondualist followers of Advaita Vedanta argue the latter. In the former view, human beings, though manifest, have a separate existence, making relationship with and love of the one God possible, while in the latter, the distinction between the human and the One is only finally appearance, with unity and dissolution in the One the goal. In either case, all persons share in this fundamental Oneness, and a relationship of loving devotion with, a transparency to, and/or an ability to lead others to realization of the real is the wellspring of holiness.

Holiness as Part of Human Life

The notion of the holy person is built into the Hindu understanding of the stages of human life. There are four life

stages for a man (traditionally excluding men of the fourth and lowest caste level, the *shudras*), including a final stage of renunciation in which one may choose to become a holy man, or *sadhu*. In the first of the four stages, a boy becomes a student, traditionally going to study with a guru, or teacher, and living a life of celibacy dedicated to education in both his social responsibilities and duties (his *dharma*) and spiritual liberation. The next stage of life is that of the householder. Initiated by marriage, this period in a man's life is the appropriate time for love and family, the pursuit of wealth, and service to the community. This stage is to be followed by the forest-dweller stage, during which a man gradually withdraws from involvement in the world to focus on spiritual concerns.

The fourth and final stage, not taken by many but held up as a social ideal, entails complete renunciation of one's previous life to become a *sannyasi* (renouncer) or *sadhu*. In doing so, a man ritually carries out his own funeral and dies to all that he was in the past to pursue a life of nonattachment devoted entirely to spiritual pursuit, and sometimes also to selfless service. In this way, holiness is a potentiality in all men (and arguably all people), though many may not choose to enter this final stage. Sannyasis or *sadhus* are highly respected members of society and supported by those in other stages of life, their holiness elevating the community at large. Men and (to a lesser extent) women may also become renouncers—*sadhus* or *sadhvi*, respectively—before reaching this last life stage, taking the much more radical step of renouncing the householder life for a life of religious dedication, generally as a member of a community of other renouncers under the guidance of a guru. These people, too, are considered holy and highly respected, though there is also sometimes an attendant social critique, particularly of young women who choose to take this step.

Holy People in the Development of Hinduism

In the development of Hinduism, holy people have played a key role in the earliest layers of the tradition. The first and most venerated of the texts of Hinduism, the Vedas, it is said, were revealed by holy men or seers, called *rishis*, some 3,500 years ago. These men were said to have been so spiritually advanced that they were able to know, to hear, the sacred sound of these texts revealing the nature and structure of reality. Indeed, this early literature is referred to as *shruti*, “that which is heard,” while later religious texts outside the extended Vedic corpus, such as the epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, are said to be only *smriti*, or “remembered.” The hymns of the Rig Veda also include references to other types of holy persons—long-haired ascetics and hermits. Those who carried out the ritual sacrifices of Brahmanic Hinduism, referred to in these early texts and still carried out today, were also considered in some sense

more holy than others. This hereditary class of priests, or brahmins, maintained the practices designed to preserve physical purity.

In the texts of the Upanishads (the final texts within the Vedic corpus, which date from the middle of the first millennium B.C.E.), a new type of holy person appears. Here renowned and respected teachers, such as Yajñavalkya (eighth century B.C.E.), expound on the nature of reality and on the nature of the *atman*, or the self, which in its true form is one with the souls of all and with the One Reality, Brahman. These Upanishadic teachers, too, are considered holy people, having reached true realization through meditative practice and renunciation and being able to teach others to do the same. Within the Upanishads, wise women, such as Gargi, are also mentioned, and it is clear that realization and the attendant holiness were not the province of one gender alone, particularly in light of rebirth across multiple lifetimes.

The time in which these Upanishadic teachers were active is also that of the Buddha (c. fifth century B.C.E.) and of Mahavira (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.), the last of the twenty-four *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) of the Jain tradition. This period is marked by a preponderance of ascetics (*shramanas*), studying with a wide array of teachers. What these teachers taught came not simply from intellectual understanding but rather from their own transformative realization during meditative practices, and within the Upanishads the need for the guidance of a guru is stressed—the guidance of a holy person who has already reached this state of realization is essential to achieving liberation from ignorance and the endless cycle of rebirth. The meditative practices that might lead to such realization must also be coupled with practices designed to cultivate moral and physical purity, and Patanjali (third century C.E.) detailed the elements for such a yoga, or path to realization and holiness, in his *Yogasutras*.

The epics of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* as well as the Upanishads refer frequently to sages inhabiting the forests, carrying out rituals, and working to achieve liberation. Such sages and others who dedicate their lives to the pursuit of spiritual liberation are said to acquire *tapas*, or heat, through their meditative and ascetic practices. This *tapas* may manifest itself as magical powers, or *siddhas*. The person may have psychic knowledge of others' thoughts and feelings or foreknowledge of events, or he may be able to affect the physical world or have power over the minds of others. *Nath* holy men (belonging to a sect arising around the twelfth century and associated with the god Shiva, who is himself identified with asceticism and yogic practice) are particularly known for having such magical powers and are said even to be able to achieve physical immortality through a combination of hatha yoga and tantric and alchemical practices.

But it is not only the Naths who are said to have such powers arising out of their advanced spiritual state. Prescience is often attributed to ecstatic saintly devotees and gurus, as is the ability to transform physical substances. For example, a number of saintly people are reported to have picked up a handful of dirt in their ecstasy and offered it before a deity. When it was then distributed to worshippers as *prasada*, imbued with the presence and grace of the divine, what they tasted was the sweet confection normally offered. Others are said to appear in distant places while in meditation elsewhere and to spontaneously give off a perfume of sandalwood when emerging from meditative trance, or *samadhi*. The power to heal is also sometimes associated with holy persons. Such powers suggest a continuity between the physical and the spiritual and an understanding of holiness as a force that can profoundly affect the physical world.

The Bhagavad Gita (composed in the centuries surrounding the turn of the Common Era) is set in the midst of the epic *Mahabharata* and records a conversation between the warrior Arjuna and his charioteer, who happens to be Krishna (incarnation of Vishnu). Here Krishna lays out three major paths toward religious realization marking Hindu traditions. The path of knowledge, or *jnana yoga*, detailed in the Upanishads, is clearly one—a path of meditation and ensuing realization—yet there are also two others: the path of action, or karma yoga, and the path of devotion, or bhakti yoga. Those exemplary of the path of knowledge include the Upanishadic teachers and Shankara but also gurus such as Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Holy people of the path of action might include Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) and Vinobe Bhave (1895–1982), who lived lives of complete dedication to nonviolence and to actualizing truth, justice, and compassion in the world. Gandhi's movement of nonviolent resistance against British rule is well known. Vinobe Bhave worked to redistribute land to the landless by walking across India and inviting landowners to offer up a portion of their land. Both men acted out of explicitly religious motivations and lived very disciplined lives of self-sacrifice. They and others like them, who are able to work for a more just and compassionate society and to do so simply because it is the right thing to do, without personal egoistic attachment to the success or failure of their enterprise, embody a selflessness and power that also arises out of spiritual discipleship, and this spiritual depth is also recognized and revered within Hinduism.

The Bhagavad Gita also speaks of the path of devotion to the One, conceived of in very personal terms as God, such that one offers up all of one's actions in loving devotion, acting for God rather than self. Beginning in the sixth century of the Common Era, a broader devotional form of Hinduism emerged, first in South India and then sweeping up across

the subcontinent. This devotional path is characterized by a personal and loving relationship to the One Lord, experienced in particular forms (“with form,” or *saguna*) such as Vishnu or Shiva, and later as Vishnu’s incarnations, Krishna and Rama, as Devi or Goddess, or as the Lord who is beyond form (“without form,” *nirguna*). Religious authority within the emerging devotional religious movements was based on religious experience rather than heredity, and consequently women and men of all levels of caste were recognized as leaders.

Within these communities, particular individuals emerged who composed songs of overwhelming devotion and who could lead others into an ever-deepening relationship with the Lord. They were sometimes called simply *bhaktas*, or “devotees”—a term also used more widely for all who followed the path of bhakti, or devotion—and sometimes called *sants* (those who know the truth)—a term used more often for devotees of the *nirgun* Lord but also more widely for all those who belong to the community of truth, or *satsang*, of which all devotees are members. Like the saints of Christian tradition, elaborate hagiographic texts developed recording their inspirational life stories, and the term “saint” has been used to describe them, though miracles are not necessarily associated with them, nor are they awarded sainthood by an external authority as is the case in Christianity. Such saints often appear very human in their life struggles and their longing for God, and later devotees come to love and identify with them. Institutionalized religious groups sometimes arise around these figures. The founder of the Sikh tradition, Nanak (1469–1539), was among the fifteenth-century saints devoted to the *nirgun* Lord in North India. These saints use the language of human love—of parents for children, children for parents, friends, and lovers—to speak of the intimate relationship between human and divine, and particular styles of devotion are associated with each saint. Later devotees have continued to compose songs in their names and have sometimes experienced saints of the past as present, such that these saints continue to serve as gurus.

These figures are considered holy because of their supreme devotion to God and their ability to lead others into similar devotion, and some among their number have even been considered incarnations of the divine. The fifteenth-century saints Chaitanya, whose followers formed the Gaudiya *sampraday*, or tradition, and Vallabhacharya, whose followers formed the Pushtimarg (the two major strands of Krishna devotion), were both considered incarnations of Krishna. Others, too, have received similar appellations. Today the internationally renowned guru Anandamayi Ma is considered an incarnation of the Goddess by her followers. Holiness can also then reflect divine incarnation or a transparency to the divine so that those who encounter such individuals experience the divine directly.

One final category of holy people within Hinduism are transgressive in their behavior, exhibiting a kind of “madness” that also speaks of holiness and divinity. The Bauls of Bengal are an ideal example of this type of holy person, reflecting the indwelling divine by acting outside of the boundaries of social and religious normative behavior. Individual saints such as Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Yogeshvari Devi were known for being overtaken by madness in the overwhelming experience of the divine. Tantric adepts may also fall within this range of transgressive holiness, transcending notions of purity and impurity in striving to overcome duality through the ritual partaking of impure substances and engaging in ritualized sexual intercourse, transmuting desire into spiritual bliss and power. Tantric practices are a part of the devotional path of the Bauls and the Sahajiya Vaishnava devotees of Krishna, and were undertaken by Naths and Buddhists as well as devotees of the Goddess. Seemingly mad ecstatic saints and tantric adepts, too, are recognized holy persons within the Hindu fold, offering a vision of the holiness of all reality and the wild playfulness of the divine.

Holy people in Hinduism thus take myriad forms, with all people potentially holy, though not all achieving this status. Indeed, holiness is as boundless as the One that underlies all that is, and as diverse as the paths to realization of that One.

—Nancy M. Martin

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Ascetics as Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Aurobindo Ghose; Authority of Holy People; Bauls; Bhakti Saints; Bhava, Vinoba; Chaitanya, Krishna; Child Prodigies; Death; Demons and Monsters; Devotion; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gargi; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hagiography; Hermits; Insanity; Krishna; Legendary Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Miracles; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Naths; Patanjali; Patriotism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Ramanuja; Recognition; Reform and Reaction; Reincarnation; Rishis; Ritual; Rulers as Holy People; Sadhus; Sages; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Shankara; Shramanas; Suffering and Holy People; Tapas; Teachers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; Virashaivas; Vivekananda; War, Peace, and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Hippolytus of Rome

(d. c. 236 C.E.)

Christian priest, martyr, theologian

According to the inscription that Pope Damasus placed over his tomb on the Via Tiburtina in the fourth century, Hippolytus, a Christian presbyter martyred in about 236, had embraced the Novatian heresy, whose adherents found the Orthodox Christian stance on matters such as baptism and repentance too lenient, but had returned to Orthodox Christianity before his martyrdom. Prudentius (*Peristephanon* 11, c. 400) reiterated this point and included a description—taken from a narrative painting in the tomb—of Hippolytus's dismemberment by a pair of horses, a death intended to evoke that of his mythological namesake. This element, however, is legendary, not historical. It is more probable, as other ancient testimony indicates, that Hippolytus, along with the Roman bishop Pontianus, was exiled to the island of Sardinia by the emperor Maximianus Thrax in 235, where both men died soon thereafter. The remains of Hippolytus and Pontianus were returned to Rome, and they were venerated as martyrs thereafter. Although it is clear that Hippolytus had abandoned the Novatian schism before his death, it is unclear whether he did so before or during his exile.

Hippolytus was a highly prolific theological writer, though much of his output has survived only in fragmentary form. A statue discovered in 1551 near the site of Hippolytus's tomb on the Via Tiburtina, now at the entrance to the Vatican Library, has carved upon it a list of Hippolytus's works. He was the last major Western theologian to write in Greek, though most of his writings have survived only as translations into other languages. He wrote several biblical commentaries and apologetic works. His major extant work is *Philosophumena* (commonly translated as "Refutation of all heresies"). His feast day is August 13.

—Jessamyn Lewis

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Repentance and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Hiravijayasuri

(1527–1595 C.E.)

Jain monk, spiritual leader

Hiravijayasuri was born in 1527 in the city of Palanpur in Gujarat, India. He studied with the religious leader of a Shvetambara (white-clad) Jain sect, Vijayadasuri, and succeeded him as the spiritual leader of the Tapa *gaccha* monastic lineage. Hearing of his scholarship and wisdom, Akbar (r. 1556–1605) invited him to the Mughal court, where he spent two years instructing the emperor on the fundamentals of Jainism. He was also instrumental in influencing Akbar to issue decrees that would benefit the Jain community. So high was Akbar's esteem for this scholar-monk that he bestowed the title of *jagadguru* (world teacher) on him.

Much is available on his life's work through imperial records of decrees and also from inscriptions at Jain holy places such as Satrunjaya. All accounts document him as a spiritual guide to the lay community and a guardian of the Jain faith. In 1595, in accordance with Jain dictates, he voluntarily starved himself to death at the age of sixty-nine. Miraculous sights were reported at his cremation ground, which was later consecrated with his footprints. The site now houses a Jain temple, the complex known as Shah Bagh.

Biographies written after Hiravijayasuri's death include the *Hiravijayasuri Ras* (The play of Hiravijayasuri) by Rishabadas, *Hirasaubhagya Kavya* (The epic of Hiravijayasuri's auspiciousness) by Pandit Deovimal, and *Jagadguru Kavya* (The epic of the world teacher) by Padmasagargani.

—Sucharita Adluri

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Death; Judaism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Recognition

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Holy Innocents

(d. c. 4 B.C.E.)

Christian martyrs

The "Holy Innocents" are the baby boys of Bethlehem who were massacred at the order of King Herod after hearing

from the Magi of the birth of a king in that town. Nothing further is known of them. They came, however, to enjoy a very special status as martyrs over the ensuing centuries in Christianity. Although unbaptized and living in a pre-Christian world, they had, in effect, died *in place of* Jesus, rather than simply *for* him as other martyrs did. Thus they are entitled to special honor.

The Feast of the Holy Innocents is one of a group of feasts situated around the celebration of the birth of Christ on December 25. This group of feasts (St. Stephen on December 26, St. John the Evangelist on December 27, and the Holy Innocents on December 28) came to be known as the Christmas *triduum*. The Feast of the Nativity necessitated a memorial for the solemn memory of the Innocents, and this feast first appears in the church calendar of Carthage at the end of the fourth century. Early Christians were expected to fast on this day.

During the Middle Ages, a kind of celebratory practice developed around the Christmas triduum of feasts during which the various members of the clergy were given certain privileges and freedoms. As time went on, however, these celebrations began to take on more secular and, indeed, sacrilegious connotations. St. Stephen's Day for the deacons, St. John's Day for the priests, and Holy Innocents for the choirboys soon developed into outrageous rituals that shocked the Christian church authorities but became highly anticipated holidays for peasants. The Feast of Fools, the Feast of the Ass, and the Feast of the Boy Bishop are some of the traditions that developed. On these days, the clerics were allowed to usurp the traditional church authority and "take over" or "turn upside down" their local church or cathedral. Most of these rituals disappeared or were banished from the church by the time of the Reformation.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Child Prodigies; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Veneration of Holy People

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Homobonus

(d. 1197 C.E.)

Christian layman, caregiver

A Christian of the "civic saint" type from Cremona, Italy, who died in 1197, Homobonus was one of the very first saints to be elevated to the ranks of sainthood by papal decree. This was a major step in the direction of what would ultimately become a papal monopoly on the making of saints.

According to Innocent III's bull *Quia pietas* (1199), Homobonus combined an extraordinarily intense devotion to the liturgy with selfless service to the poor. In the words of

the bull, "He did as much for the poor—whom he kept with him, caring for and attending to them in his very own house—as he did for the other indigents, diligently carrying out acts of humanity on behalf of the living and devoutly offering burial for the dead." Though the document says nothing about Homobonus's status or occupation, we know from the metrical choral office composed in the saint's honor later in the thirteenth century that he was a merchant or businessman of some sort. The relevant verse reads, "Cutting himself off from the companionship of perverse business, he was summoned to the office of blessed contemplation; . . . deserting the commerce of worldly things, he was transformed into a merchant of the kingdom of heaven."

It is unfortunate that the original *Life of Homobonus* is no longer extant, because it would have been a useful source of evidence about the conversion and charitable activities of an early civic saint, that is, a layman whose conversion led him to stay in the "world" and assist the poor rather than retire to a monastery. Saints of this type began to appear in Italy in the late twelfth century, increased in number in the thirteenth, but then declined again in the fourteenth.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Laity

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Honen

(1133–1212 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, founder

Honen, born in 1133, was the founder of the Jodo (Pure Land) sect of Japanese Buddhism. His birth name was Seishi-maru, and his father was a police chief responsible for order in his region. Honen witnessed the assassination of his father in their home when he was nine years old because of an act of disrespect by his father against a government official. Owing to his mother's biological connection to lower-class silkworm workers, Honen experienced social discrimination during his life. Biographical material did not mention the fate of his mother. But it was reported that Honen was sent by an uncle to Mount Hiei to join the Tendai sect when he was thirteen years old. At the age of forty-three, Honen converted to Pure Land teachings after reading a text by the Chinese Pure Land monk Shan-tao (613–681).

Honen never intended to establish an independent sect or alienate any preexisting schools of Buddhism. However, although he conservatively adhered to the basic Buddhist precepts and equated the Pure Land with the paradise of Amida Buddha (Amitabha), he still created a new paradigm in which every believer accepted his or her status as an ordi-

nary person. This ordinariness included male and female, layperson and monastic, commoner and aristocrat. And yet his position represented something radical in the sense that it rejected the Buddhist assumption that the path to salvation must be based on difficult forms of practice. In response to his religious activities, political authorities sentenced Honen, his disciple Shinran, and six others to death in the so-called Ken'ei Persecution of 1205. The sentence was later commuted to exile, however.

Honen's worldview was shaped by the theory of the decline of the law (*mappo*). The law in this instance referred to the teachings of the Buddha, which theorists believed had been in decline since the first of three eras. During the initial era, there was the time of the true law in which people followed the teachings and could attain enlightenment. The second phase was the period of the counterfeit law, when people practiced the teachings of the Buddha, even though they thought enlightenment was impossible. During the third phase, the only thing left was the teachings, but no one bothered to practice them. This entire scenario evoked a sense of urgency because of the impending arrival of the final days and the imminent end of the world. Honen and others of this school believed that evil had gained a firm grip on the world and that humans were governed by neurotic cravings and desires. There developed in Japan a general belief that the final days had begun in 1052 with the conflagration of the Hasedera temple.

Within this bleak context, Honen distinguished between two paths of religion: a holy path (*shodo*) and a Pure Land path (*jodo*). The former was referred to as *jiriki* (relying on one's own strength), whereas the former was called *tarikiki* (relying on another's strength). Honen considered relying on one's own power to be the most difficult option, while relying on another was viewed as an easy path and the best choice within the context of the current degenerate age in which individuals could not be expected to achieve salvation by means of their personal efforts. Since the current situation was apparently hopeless for people trying to help themselves, people should recognize their imperfections and simply throw themselves upon the mercy of the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) Amida. Thus the only real hope that a person possessed was to be reborn in the Pure Land by means of the grace of Amida. The problem for the individual was finding a way to trigger this grace.

Honen's proposed solution was embodied within the context of the so-called Hozo myth. In this myth, Amida vowed to defer enlightenment when he was a *bodhisattva* named Hozo in a prior lifetime. In the guise of Hozo, Amida postponed his own liberation until everyone could be saved by the practice of *nembutsu* (chanting the name of a *bodhisattva*). The fact that Hozo had actually become Amida was incontrovertible proof that everyone was guaranteed

salvation. With this myth as his paradigm, Honen recommended chanting of Amida's name. A person was instructed to chant "name Amida" or "namu Amida Butsu," which could be translated as "I put my faith in Amida Buddha." This type of practice embodied a conviction that the name of the *bodhisattva* was the mysterious embodiment of its saving power. Honen emphasized fervent devotion and the endless repetition of Amida's name.

—Carl Olson

See also: Amitabha; Buddhism and Holy People; Intermediaries; Ippen; Monasticism and Holy People; Prophets; Ritual; Status; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Hong Xiuquan (Hung Hsiu-ch'üan)

(1814–1864 C.E.)

Chinese millennial leader

Hong Xiuquan was a Chinese millennial/messianic figure who lived during the nineteenth century. Influenced by missionaries, he claimed to be God's younger son and Jesus Christ's little brother. He founded the "God Worshipping Society" to spread his own heterodox Christianity and led the bloody Taiping Rebellion to establish the theocratic Taiping Tianguo (Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace).

Born into a poor minority (Hakka) farming family in 1814, Hong was raised to join the educated bureaucratic elite. Despite multiple attempts at the civil service exams, based on the Confucian classics, he failed to qualify. After one such exam in 1837, he suffered a breakdown. He had visions of a noble family who claimed him as a member and encouraged him to destroy evil demons. After reading a missionary tract with biblical selections, he interpreted this noble family as being God, Jesus, and their spouses and children. Refused baptism by his Southern Baptist mentor from Tennessee, he and his followers baptized each other and began zealously to spread their faith.

Although Hong rejected Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, his interpretation of the Bible remained influenced by Chinese millennialism and cultural values such as family piety. In his theology, he and Jesus were not members of a trinity but part of God's patriarchal family with spouses and children. Immoral stories about Hong's divine lineage, including accounts of Noah's drunkenness and the drunken sexual relations between Lot and his daughters, were rewritten for the "Taiping Bible." The movement was deeply puritanical, however, in its attempts to segregate the

sexes and abolish drinking, gambling, opium smoking, and prostitution.

Hong's movement began by desecrating temples in order to eradicate "demonic" idolatry. Meeting resistance, Hong rebelled against the Manchu rulers and declared himself king of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace in 1851. The Taiping attempted to realize the kingdom of God through religious conversion, military action, and socialistic redistribution. The "heavenly army" had many successes and captured a number of key cities, including Nanjing, which became the Taiping capital. Hong's moral-political code, based on the Ten Commandments and vigorously enforced with death sentences, was not applied to the polygamous Hong and other leaders.

The Taiping kingdom ultimately failed because it was undermined by power struggles and poor leadership from within, the alienation of the peasants who were its social basis, and the foreign support of Qing troops. Near the end, a withdrawn Hong prepared his son to rule and consoled himself with the book of Revelation. He committed suicide during the fall of Nanjing in 1864. His son was soon caught and executed.

—Eric Sean Nelson

See also: Extremists as Holy People; Gods on Earth; Prophets; Purity and Pollution; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Hongren (Hung-jen; Jap.: Gunin or Konin)
(601–674 C.E.)

Chan Buddhist patriarch

Hongren, the fifth patriarch of Chan/Zen Buddhism in China, was dharma successor to the fourth patriarch, Daoxin (580–651), and master of both Huineng (638–713) of the southern school and Shenxiu (605–706) of the northern school. Born in 601, at an early age (sometime between 607 and 615) he became a disciple of Daoxin thanks to a conversation about a *koan* (puzzle phrase). He lived on P'ing-jung (East Mountain), and his followers came to be known as the followers of "The Pure (Dharma) Gate of the East Mountain."

Hongren was one of the most influential Chan masters in China. Though records do not show his stature during his own lifetime to be that impressive, he was probably highly sought after as a teacher. His students spread throughout China, exerting an enormous influence on the landscape of Chinese religion. Not only did the sixth patriarch Huineng come from this lineage, but Shenxiu and the later "five houses" stemmed from his teachings as well.

Master Hongren's teachings come out of the Lankavatara schools but were known to also include sutras from the Mahaprajnaparamitas, that is, "the great perfection wisdom literature," especially the Heart and Diamond sutras. He was very innovative, using the currents of Buddhist teachings prevalent at the time and incorporating them into his own instruction. He employed a new form of meditation based on the Flower Garland Sutra that he was known to practice so diligently that he often spent the night in contemplation. The central aim of this practice was to find one's own buddha-nature, not through intellectual pursuit, but through meditation. This solitude of meditation and practice was paradigmatic, constituting the start of a cultural change in Chinese society in which the lay community was incorporated into the life of the temple. Outreach to the locals became the norm, and as a result monastic institutions were established in more rural areas.

—Jeff Flowers

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Huineng; Shenxiu; Teachers as Holy People

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Hoover, Willis Collin

(1858–1937 C.E.)

Pentecostal church founder

Willis Collin Hoover was the main founder and first superintendent of the Methodist Pentecostal Church in Chile, the first Pentecostal church in Latin America and the first theologically and financially independent Pentecostal church in the Third World.

Hoover was born in Freeport, Illinois, where his family belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1858. He studied medicine in Chicago and graduated in 1884, but after having felt a divine calling he gave up his career as a doctor and joined the Methodist mission of William Taylor in Chile in 1889, together with his wife, Mary Anne Hilton Hoover. After thirteen years in northern Chile, Hoover was appointed as a pastor in the city of Valparaíso in 1902. Inspired by a series of

studies on the Acts of the Apostles, and later by correspondence with churches in other parts of the world that had experienced Pentecostal revivals, Hoover and a group of Chilean lay members started to organize daily prayer groups and all-night watch services, praying for spiritual revival. During these activities, typical Pentecostal spiritual manifestations, such as glossolalia, visions, prophecies, and ecstasies, became a common occurrence. Members also started making incursions to the streets, preaching and screaming “Hallelujah.” Police intervention and critical articles in local newspapers did not discourage Hoover, who believed that revival and true sanctification were only possible if the Holy Spirit was given absolute freedom to manifest itself.

The Methodist authorities strongly disapproved of the revival, which was regarded as antibiblical and anti-Methodist, and in April 1910 it came to a final division when Hoover and 400 Chilean followers left the Methodist Episcopal Church of Valparaíso and together with two congregations in Santiago founded the Methodist Pentecostal Church. Hoover was superintendent until 1934, when he was expelled after internal disagreements. A possible source of conflict was his uncompromising puritanism, which meant that all “worldly” pleasures, such as dances, cinema, sports, and so on, were forbidden for church members. Nevertheless, he was followed by approximately half the members and founded Evangelical Pentecostal Church, which he led until his death in 1937.

Since the division in 1934, both churches have multiplied several times and foreign Pentecostal missionaries have founded other churches in Chile. Today, Pentecostalism accounts for more than 12 percent of the Chilean population (the great majority of Chileans are Catholics), mostly from the lower social strata. Street preaching is still a characteristic feature of Chilean Pentecostalism. Although there is no person cult in the Evangelical Pentecostal Church, Hoover is still respected and admired as an extraordinary servant who was used by God to initiate the Pentecostal revival in Latin America.

—Martin Lindhardt

See also: Prophets; Purity and Pollution; Status

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Hopkins, Gerard Manley

(1844–1889 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, poet

A Jesuit priest and English poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins was born on July 28, 1844, to prosperous parents in Stratford,

Essex, who fostered in him a strong Anglican faith and respect for the Bible in addition to artistic and poetic talents. From childhood, Hopkins demonstrated proficiency in composing, and his innovative use of rhythm and meter in spiritual poetry has made him one of the most important Victorian poets.

As a student at Balliol College, Oxford (1863–1867), Hopkins began to establish a reputation as a serious scholar and writer. In 1866, he converted to Roman Catholicism, and the following year he decided to enter the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), destroying the poetry he had written up to that point as a symbol of his decision to start a new life (only a fragment survives). In 1868, he entered the Jesuit novitiate, and he took his perpetual vows in 1870. Hopkins wrote very little during his early years with the Jesuits, but after he became used to his new religious life, he again felt a desire to write, a desire that was encouraged by his rector after Hopkins was deeply moved by a shipwreck that killed five Franciscan nuns.

“The Wreck of the Deutschland” marks the beginning of Hopkins’s return to writing poetry. It strongly draws from themes in *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556). Like “The Wreck,” much of Hopkins’s poetry from this early period (1875–1877) deals with the mystery of God’s relationship to humankind. Poems from the middle period (1877–1883) reflect the parish work that Hopkins was performing at the time. “As Kingfishers” and other poems examine the divine in humans. Finally, the poems from 1883 until Hopkins’s death on June 8, 1889, demonstrate a deepening spirituality and sense of abandonment by God.

Hopkins coined the terms “inscape” and “instress” to explain the relationship between humans and God in his poetry. “Inscape” is the sense data that explains the oneness of an object, and “instress” is the energy of being that supports everything through natural and supernatural force—it is the energy that determines inscape. In addition to their spiritual depth, Hopkins’s poems are significant because of their unique rhythm, called by Hopkins “sprung rhythm,” which builds on the natural rhythm of music rather than the smoothness of iambic pentameter.

—Michelle Ruggaber Dougherty

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People

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Huaca

Inca cultural heroes

For the Inca of Peru, the Quechua word *huaca* refers to a divinity and his or her permanent location. The divinities and the sacred places they occupy (hills, mountains, stones, rivers, lakes) are considered units. The huacas are not celestial gods, like Inti (the sun), Illapa (lightning), or Wiracocha (the creator of the world), but local or regional divinities present in the natural world. They can be male or female, and spaces are identified according to their gender. For example, male huacas live in the hills and mountains, whereas female divinities live in the rivers and lakes. From their natural union, following a male/female complementarity principle, life on earth is possible.

The translation of the term in Spanish is a controversial issue that has not been resolved. The Spanish chroniclers translated huaca as “local divinity,” but the notion seems to be larger and more complex than this definition implies. Huacas are located permanently in a geographic area, but they can walk, talk, travel, and appear in dreams. Like men and women, they express anger and happiness, passions and emotions, and they struggle among themselves for power. Sometimes, narratives tell of people turned into huacas.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Heroes

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Huangbo Xiyun (Huang-po Hsi-yun)

(d. c. 850 C.E.)

Chan Buddhist master

Huangbo Xiyun was a Chinese Chan/Zen Buddhist master who lived in the ninth century. He was a student of Baizhang (Pai-chang) and the teacher of Linji (Lin-Chi, Rinzai), founder of an eponymous, still active school of Zen Buddhism. Huangbo came from Fuzhou and entered the monastery of Huangbo, after which he is called. He was known for his striking physical appearance. He is said to have stood seven feet in height and to have had a large, protruding forehead.

Huangbo’s influential teachings were important for the development of the Hongzhou lineage of Chan Buddhism, founded by Mazu (709–788), which developed a confrontational and irreverent style of question and answer that has become the core of many *gongan* (koan) collections. Like

other characteristic Chan practices, such as the shout and the blow, the paradoxical questions and responses developed in these short dialogues are intended to expose one to the unfamiliar and strange in order to allow sudden enlightenment to occur through a moment of uncanniness or shock. However, this enlightenment is not something that can be achieved or cultivated, since it is not conceptual or intentional. Rather, buddhahood is without form and activity and is itself to be found in ordinary life; one cannot distinguish between the mind of the Buddha and that of other sentient beings. *Samsara* (cycle of rebirths) and nirvana (extinction) are thus only modifications of the same condition, what Huangbo called the “one mind.” Huangbo emphasized that the great issue of Buddhism is this one mind, also described as the “boundless void,” that is, the individual self in the present moment. The central questions of Chan are to be answered through radical nondualism, which promotes the openness of nonattachment, or a type of spontaneous responsiveness.

Huangbo’s sayings are developed in a fairly straightforward and systematic manner, despite the use of paradox. Huangbo thus played a crucial role in transmitting the concrete and immanent as well as the responsive and spontaneous approach of the Hongzhou lineage. Huangbo’s writings were purportedly edited and perhaps simplified by Peixiu, a government official in Wan Ling prefecture and a lay disciple who collected some of his discourses. His work was translated into English by John Blofeld in the late 1950s (Huangbo 1959). This was one of the first substantial Chan texts transmitted in English and has played an important role in the reception of Zen in the English-speaking world.

—Eric Sean Nelson

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Linji; Mazu; Scholars as Holy People

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Huangdi

(c. 2000 B.C.E.?)

Confucian sage-emperor

Huangdi (Huang-ti), the Yellow Emperor, is one of archaic China’s sage-emperors of the historically elusive Xia (Hsia) dynasty (2200?–1800? B.C.E.). As a culture hero, he is held to be a mythic hero, a semihistorical personage, a point of ge-

neological or philosophical lineage, and the originator of many elements of civilization.

Huangdi is the third of the sage-emperors, following Fu Xi and Shen Nong, and preceding Yao, Shun, and Yu. These six emperors are all esteemed for their virtuous actions and character and their ability to create ritual and order. They are also the points of origin of clan genealogies. All clans sought to trace themselves back to Huangdi, particularly the Ji clan and the Han emperors (which, given the peasant origins of the first Han ruler, Liu Bang, is intriguing).

Huangdi is mythically credited with the creation of humanity. He did this by making statues in the shape of men and exposing them to the vital breaths of the cosmos. After 300 years, they matured into humans in each of the Five Colors. An epic myth involving Huangdi pits him in a struggle to create order in the face of chaos, personified by the earth monster Chi Yu (this myth is pervasive throughout ancient China, although some territories change the names of the characters). To fight this battle better, Chi Yu invented weapons for himself. Huangdi called upon the forces of nature—armies of animals and a dragon. Chi Yu sought the aid of the wind and the rain, against which Huangdi sent the waters and, ultimately, his daughter Ba, the goddess of drought. Following Chi Yu's defeat, Ba was unable to return to heaven and was sent north.

Beyond the mythical creation of order, Huangdi is credited with creating many aspects of civilization. In the political domain, these include the crown, ritual, ceremonial vestments (which makes him the patron saint of tailors), and land divisions; in the religious domain, temples and the practice of placing effigies on doors to frighten evil spirits; in the broader cultural domain, writing, music, calendars, hair-dressing, and cooked food.

Huangdi is also the putative author of the *Huangdi nei-jing*, in English called the *Inner Classic of the Yellow Emperor*. This is a work that was probably compiled around the first century B.C.E. with later additions. Integrating various cosmological theories into medical practice and theory, it takes the form of a dialogue where Huangdi asks a minister to explain medical principles to him. The principles that are delineated strongly associate the body with the larger cycles of the cosmos and explain illness primarily as a problem with the body's flow of energy, *qi*.

In addition to being upheld as the ancestor of the clans, Huangdi is espoused as the founder of a wide range of scientific and philosophical schools. Chief among these is Daoism. Huangdi is sometimes credited with the composition of the *Laozi*, with patronizing a hermit in order to attain immortality, and with ascending to heaven on a dragon.

—Dan Wright

See also: Ancestors; Confucian Culture Heroes; Demons and Monsters; Rulers as Holy People; Sages

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Hubert

(c. 665–727 C.E.)

Legendary Christian bishop

The reputation of Hubert, an eighth-century bishop, changed dramatically during the early fifteenth century when an account of his conversion clearly borrowed from the vita of St. Eustace. Hubert was born c. 665. The legend tells that as a young man, he became an accomplished hunter in the Ardennes, the great forest in southern Belgium. While hunting illicitly one Good Friday, he chased down a stag and, miraculously, like Eustace, saw between its antlers a crucifix, which chastised him for his impiety. This incident converted him to a religious vocation, and upon the death of his wife, he became a priest.

According to the legend, in c. 705, after the death of Bishop Lambert of Maastricht, an angel informed Pope Sergius that he was to choose Hubert as his successor. An angel also provided Hubert with his crosier and vestments, and the Virgin Mary sent him his stole, woven with her own hands. While Hubert was celebrating his consecration mass, St. Peter reportedly appeared to him and gave him a golden key. In about 722, Hubert transferred the episcopal seat from Maastricht to Liège. Before an angel announced his imminent death to him in 727, Hubert evangelized the Ardennes and worked many miracles, the most popular of which was curing a man of rabies. He was recognized as a saint in 743, and in 825 his relics were translated from Liège to the abbey of Andage, which was rededicated to St. Hubert.

Besides his body (desecrated by Protestants in 1568), Hubert's stole, golden key, and hunting horn (now in the Wallace Collection, London) were all considered miraculous and were sought particularly for cures against rabies, until the discovery of a vaccine in 1885. His cult was focused on the Ardennes (sixty-three churches are dedicated to him in the dioceses of Namur and Liège). Because of his association with hunting, he became a popular patron of hunters. He is also included among the Four Holy Marshals, and two orders of chivalry were dedicated to him. Hubert is sometimes represented as a bishop and sometimes as a hunter. His feast is celebrated on November 3.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Lambert of Liège; Legendary Holy People

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Hugh of Lincoln

(c. 1247–1255 C.E.)

Christian "martyr"

Hugh of Lincoln died in 1255, 111 years after the death of young William of Norwich, the first child to be declared a Christian saint because he was thought to be a victim of ritual murder by Jews. In that time, several such accusations against Jews in various parts of England and France had resulted in the sanctification of at least five other murdered boys. Gavin Langmuir defines ritual murder as "the killing of a human, not merely from motives of religious hatred, but in such a way that the *form* of the killing is at least partly determined by ideas allegedly or actually important in the religion of the killers of the victims" (Langmuir 1972, 462).

Eight-year-old Hugh of Lincoln was such an alleged victim. His body was found in or near a well, perhaps as much as a month after his actual death. The deteriorated condition of the body encouraged the townsfolk to believe that they saw signs of torture that led them to accuse the Jews of Lincoln, England, of crucifying young Hugh. The story of Hugh's alleged martyrdom was told in one ballad and three separate chronicles, including one by Matthew Paris in the thirteenth century. These accounts record that a miracle occurred as the cathedral canons carried the body to the cathedral. They describe in detail the imagined tortures and the mother's grief, alleging that all the Jews in England participated in the macabre ritual. Hugh is pictured as an innocent and suffering martyr.

Despite the lack of evidence to support the accusations, many Jews were arrested. For the first time in England, the king, Henry III, took notice. The result was that nineteen Jews were executed. Had it not been for the interference of the Dominicans or the Franciscans (the records are not clear as to which group), many more might have died. The tale of little St. Hugh became part of a growing body of anti-Semitic myth that led to violence and persecution.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Anti-Semitism and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; William of Norwich

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Hugh of Saint Victor

(1096–1141 C.E.)

Christian monk, theologian, mystic

Hugh of Saint Victor, born in 1096, came from a noble family, possibly the Blankenburgs of Saxony, and became an Augustinian canon regular at the monastery of Hamersleben. Some of the traditional details about his life have been called into question by historical evidence. Two twelfth-century manuscripts indicate that he was born in Ypres, Flanders; another implies he hailed from Burgundy. Nevertheless, Hugh's Augustinian background was later to influence his reform ideas, which combined strict asceticism with service to the community.

Hugh was particularly devoted to education. He journeyed to Paris in 1115 with his uncle, Archdeacon Reinhard von Halberstadt. There, he joined the monastery of Saint Victor. Soon he began teaching at the abbey's school, and later he was made master, a post he held until his death in 1141. This school was quite influential, as it welcomed students from beyond the local community. Eventually, it was formally recognized as a residential college of the University of Paris. Details of Hugh's later life are scarcely more available than those of his early life. His signature appears on scattered official acts from 1127 to 1140, and he seems to have briefly occupied the office of prior in 1133.

Hugh is best known for his theological and mystical writings; however, he took the unusual position that secular learning was crucial to every individual. No learning was unimportant. Hugh's masterpiece was the *Didascalicon*, which is essentially an encyclopedia. The work encapsulates the standard medieval education. In it, he identifies four types of knowledge: practical, theoretical, discursive, and mechanical. Hugh also wrote numerous theological texts, including the influential *De sacramentis fidei* (The sacraments of the Christian faith). This work epitomizes Hugh's theological perspective. As he was heavily influenced by Augustine of Hippo (354–430) and other early church theologians, the work focuses on God's omnipotence and defends the Trinity.

In some of his other works, Hugh provided the basis for standard definitions of theological terms such as sacrament, faith, grace, and hypostatic union (the idea that two natures—one divine and one human—exist within the one person of

Christ). Finally, his mystical writings instituted the idea of the three-stage ascent: thought (God in nature), meditation (God in us), and contemplation (God's presence). Other works include exegetical commentaries on the scriptures and philosophical texts on the connection between reason and faith.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Huineng (Hui-neng)

(638–713 C.E.)

Chan Buddhist master

Called E'no in Japanese, Huineng, a Chan Buddhist master of the seventh and eighth centuries, was the religious successor of Hongren, making him the sixth patriarch of the Chan tradition in China. Huineng was born in 638, and, according to the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, which was composed by followers after his death, as a child he lost his father to premature death. This forced him and his mother to sell firewood to survive. One day, the young boy heard somebody reciting the Diamond Sutra, which awakened him to religion and motivated him to seek a teacher. When he approached the fifth patriarch, Hongren, for instruction, the master asked him how he could expect to attain buddhahood when he was nothing more than a mere barbarian. To the astonished and impressed patriarch, Huineng replied that there was no difference between a barbarian and a civilized person in the buddha-nature. Thereupon, Huineng was employed as an acolyte to do menial tasks within the monastery.

Desiring to find a worthy successor, in his last years the fifth patriarch instructed his monks to return to their rooms, examine themselves, seek intuitive wisdom, and compose a verse based on their wisdom. The fifth patriarch would review the verses for proof of an enlightened state of mind.

This person would be appointed his successor. The head monk, Shenxiu, composed a verse that depicted the mind like a mirror that was passive and must be continuously wiped clean. Since dust was a metaphor for obscurities and passions caused by desires, images, and thoughts, meditation was a method of purification and restoration of the mind to its original purity. After reading the verses, the fifth patriarch concluded that they were harmless but did not demonstrate true insight. The fifth patriarch told the head monk to think about his composition for a couple of days and then compose another one.

Huineng overheard another acolyte reciting the verses of the head monk, and he concluded that the composer had not attained enlightenment. Huineng, who was illiterate, instructed the other acolyte to write verses on the wall that he would dictate. These verses manifested an enlightened state of mind. After reading them, the fifth patriarch invited Huineng secretly to his quarters, where he expounded on the Diamond Sutra; this discussion triggered a full awakening in Huineng. Thereupon, the fifth patriarch transmitted his authority to him.

Huineng was a pivotal historical figure because his life served as a symbol of a complex historical process that extended over a period of time. After his death in 713, the status of the sixth patriarch was promoted by his chosen successor, Shenhui (684–758), in conjunction with the latter's attack on the northern school of Chan. A major dispute involved the stress on the suddenness of gaining enlightenment by the southern school against the emphasis on gradual awakening by the northern school.

—Carl Olson

See also: Authority of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Hongren; Ritual; Shenxiu

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Huitzilopochtli

Aztec hero

Huitzilopochtli (Hummingbird on the left) is the warrior who led the Mexica, or "Aztecs," from the caves at Chicomoztoc to the shores of Lake Texcoco in the Valley of Mexico. His historicity cannot be verified, but according to Mexica accounts, Huitzilopochtli led this wandering tribe through the desert in search of their promised homeland. They stopped several places and were unsuccessful in their attempts to settle until they reached the foretold city of Tenochtitlán. In these unsuccessful attempts, the Mexica incurred the wrath of Huitzilopochtli, who chastised them for not heeding his instructions. As a consequence, they lost in battle and became servants to the groups that defeated them. When the Mexica finally encountered the sign that Huitzilopochtli had

described, an eagle on a cactus growing from a rock, they established their city, Tenochtitlán (Place where the cactus grows from a stone). Some accounts include a snake in the eagle's beak, the symbol that appears on the Mexican flag, while other accounts illustrate the eagle screaming the Mesoamerican battle cry *atl-tlachinolli* (mist and blaze).

Huitzilopochtli is always perceived and represented as a human, but like the pan-Mesoamerican warrior divinity Tezcatlipoca, he is often shown with a smoking mirror in the place of his right foot. As the Mexica integrated into the cultures of the Valley of Mexico, they adapted the existing celebrations dedicated to Tezcatlipoca to also include Huitzilopochtli. At the same time, Huitzilopochtli can be linked to Quetzalcoatl because he was reportedly ripped from his mother's womb in full battle array. Huitzilopochtli's mother, Coatlicue (Serpent skirt), had become pregnant while sweeping when a ball of feathers drifted into the bodice of her dress. Like Chimalman, the Mesoamerican heroine, Coatlicue died in childbirth, offering the ultimate sacrifice in providing a warrior for her people. In another story, the Mexica patron once had to defend himself from an attack led by his sister, Coyolxauqui. He defeated her and threw her dismembered body down the pyramid or mountain where his mother lived.

The Templo Mayor in Tenochtitlán was dedicated to both Huitzilopochtli and Quetzalcoatl. The massive stone representation of the defeated and dismembered Coyolxauqui at its base reminded Mesoamericans of this warrior's great might.

—*Jeanne L. Gillespie*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Chimalman; Heroes; Mixcoatl; Nezahualcoyotl; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Tezcatlipoca

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Huiyuan (Hui-yuan; Jap.: Eon)

(334–416 C.E.)

Buddhist Pure Land patriarch

Followers of Pure Land Buddhism in China trace their historical roots to the period when Huiyuan and 123 clerics and literati assembled in 402 on Mount Lu and thereby established the Bailianshe (White Lotus Society). Although he studied Confucian and Daoist works, Huiyuan became a disciple of the famed Buddhist monk Daoan (312–385) at the age of twenty-one.

Huiyuan left Daoan in 378 and moved south to Mount Lu, where he stayed until his death in 416. This was a time of upheaval and renewal for Buddhism in China. The Amitabha

cult, also initiated by Huiyuan, had a prominent following. One of Master Huiyuan's most important expositions was one on karma, the *San-pao-lun*, in which he speaks of the fruition of deeds, meritorious or not, and the immortality of the soul. He is also well known for his statement "Monks do not pay obeisance to kings," which eventually freed the monks from political and worldly duties.

Although Huiyuan was an aristocrat, he was able to reach the masses with the idea of being born in Amitabha's western paradise. Later practices of Pure Land included the repetitive recitation of Amitabha's name as a way to be graced with Amitabha's power so as to gain favor and therefore be reborn in Amitabha's Pure Land paradise. Originally, Huiyuan advocated a meditation practice that employed a contemplation of Amitabha in one's inner mind without the oral recitation that became the common practice.

Recent scholarship traces the beginnings of the modern White Lotus Society to the Chinese monk Mao Ziyuan (twelfth century). But the custom of reciting Amitabha's name was believed by the people to be an original Pure Land teaching. In Chinese religious history, it is common to have different groups that share the same roots and in this way attach themselves to one lineage.

—*Jeff Flowers*

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Intermediaries; Politics and Holy People

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Huizhao

See Linji

Hujwiri, 'Ali ibn Uthman al-

(d. 1073 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, hagiographer

'Ali b. Uthman al-Hujwiri was born in a small town near Ghanzi, Afghanistan. He spent some time in Iraq and died in 1073 in Lahore, now in Pakistan, where he was imprisoned for a time. It was his sufi master, Abu al-Fazl al-Khuttali, who ordered him to move to Lahore from Ghazni. Of al-Hujwiri's ten books, only one, the *Kashf al-Mahjub* (Disclosure of the veiled), is extant. This is an important work and is the first comprehensive Persian work on sufism containing biographies of eminent saints and discussions of the stages and states of spiritual development that reflect personal experience as well as the sayings of previous masters.

In this work, the author quotes Abu al-Hasan of Fushanja as saying that “Sufism in the beginning was a reality without a name but it has become over time a name without a reality.” In fact, the sufi orders (*turuq*) had not become fully established by the time of al-Hujwiri, although one of the features of his analysis is the paradigm of twelve sufi “families.” This model was evoked by many subsequent authors. A striking feature of the book is the incorporation of anecdotes from the shaykh’s travels and experiences in Iran, central Asia, and the Middle East. For example, once he was traveling through Khorasan after taking a retreat at the tomb of Abu Yazid, and he requested hospitality at a sufi hospice. Because he did not have the regular sufi equipment and dress, the occupants treated him badly. They gave him moldy bread to eat while they feasted, sitting on a roof eating watermelon and throwing the rind down on him. As he patiently bore this humiliation, he felt his spiritual state becoming elevated.

Al-Hujwiri is known as the patron saint of Lahore. He is also known as Data Ganj Bakhsh, “the giver who bestows treasure,” and his shrine is one of the most important in Pakistan. His *urs* (the anniversary of his death) is held in the Islamic month of Safar and attended by hundreds of thousands of people.

—*Marcia Hermansen*

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Hagiography; Islam and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Sufism; Veneration of Holy People

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Hung Hsiu-ch’üan

See **Hong Xiuquan**

Hung-jen

See **Hongren**

Hus, Jan

(1372/1373–1415 C.E.)

Christian reformer, martyr

The Czech reformer Jan Hus was born in Husinec, Bohemia, in 1372 or 1373. He was educated at Charles University in Prague, earning a bachelor’s degree in 1396 and a master’s in



Jan Hus Memorial. Old Town Square, Prague, Czech Republic. (Art Directors)

1399. He was ordained a deacon in 1400 and appointed the rector and preacher of the Czech-speaking Bethlehem Chapel in March 1402. While serving as rector, he taught at Charles University and enrolled in the theological faculty, earning his bachelor's degree in divinity in 1404, but he never attained the doctorate. He did not neglect his duties as rector, however. It is estimated that he preached more than 3,000 sermons during the twelve years of his ministry.

An eloquent preacher and a devoted pastor, Hus genuinely cared for the spiritual welfare of his parishioners. His sermons, preached in Czech but recorded in Latin, reflect his interest in the reform of the church and document his progression from strict orthodoxy. His early sermons are entirely orthodox, addressing the moral reform of his listeners and presenting Catholic doctrine; later sermons denounce sin—notably avarice, fornication, luxury, and pride—and stress the importance of earning salvation through good works. After the scholar Jerome of Prague returned to Bohemia after studying in Oxford, the influence of John Wyclif is clearly seen among Czech reformers. Jan Hus quickly became the leader of this movement, embracing Wyclif's ideals of reform but rejecting—or at least passing over in silence—his heretical positions, refusing to condemn Wyclif without specific and proven cause.

Defining the church in Augustinian terms as “the congregation of the faithful to be saved,” Hus accepted an empirical, legal, and transitory church but also believed in a changeless and eternal “church of the predestined.” He did not reject transubstantiation, nor did he deny the sacramental character of episcopal orders or attack indulgences. His only real heresy was his rejection of the primacy of the bishop of Rome. Hus was excommunicated in 1412, accused by his enemies of denying the existence of the church militant. He was condemned at the Council of Constance in 1415, primarily because he did not renounce heretical doctrines that he neither taught nor held.

Nineteenth-century nationalists saw Hus as a hero, but the dispute between Czechs and Germans in the Prague church during the early fifteenth century was less about Czech nationalism and their support for King Wenceslaus IV at the Council of Pisa than it was about doctrinal schism (for the most part, the Czechs were realists, the Germans nominalists) and the reform of the church (the Czechs favored reform, while the Germans, who held large benefices, did not). Despite a safe conduct (perhaps unwisely) granted by Emperor Sigismund, Hus was burned at the stake in 1415 and his ashes scattered into the Rhine.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Husayn b. 'Ali

(626–680 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim imam, martyr

The third Shi'i imam, Husayn b. 'Ali, born in 626, was the grandson of the prophet Muhammad and son of Fatima and 'Ali b. Abi Talib. His death at Karbala, Iraq, in 680 earned him the title of martyr, and he is revered by both Shi'i and Sunni Muslims.

When the Umayyad caliph Mu'awiya died in 680, his son Yazid asked Husayn to pledge allegiance to him. Husayn refused, claiming that, based on an agreement reached between Mu'awiya and Husayn's elder brother, Hasan, he was more entitled to the caliphate. Husayn also argued that Yazid was not fit to rule the Muslim community because of his un-Islamic practices. With his life in danger, Husayn then left Medina for Mecca.

The Shi'is of Kufa, a garrison town in Iraq, wrote several letters to Husayn promising assistance if he would join them. Unsure of their support, Husayn sent his emissary, Muslim b. 'Aqil, to verify their pledges of allegiance. When Muslim assured Husayn of support from the people of Kufa, Husayn left Mecca with a group of about fifty male relatives and friends able to bear arms, along with women and children. In the meantime, Yazid introduced a new governor in Kufa, 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad, who established a regime of terror and oppression. Husayn's sympathizers in Kufa, and Muslim b. 'Aqil, were either imprisoned or killed. Husayn was stopped in the desert by the caliph's soldiers and forced to camp at Karbala. For three days, Husayn and his companions were denied access to water and suffered terribly from thirst.

As more troop reinforcements arrived from Kufa to secure Husayn's pledge of allegiance to Yazid, several attempts by Husayn at averting a conflict failed. A battle finally took place on the tenth of Muharram (the first month of the Muslim calendar). Despite putting up strong resistance against a numerically superior and better-equipped force, Husayn and his companions were massacred and their bodies trampled. After pillaging Husayn's tents, Yazid's troops took the women and children as captives to Yazid in Damascus.

Husayn's martyrdom instilled much emotion in Shi'ism at the time, and this reaction is evident in the Shi'i community even today. Shi'is still mourn, flagellate, and even cut

their bodies in memory of Husayn and his companions. Others reenact the events in Karbala with annual passion plays. Husayn's death injected a sense of passion for martyrdom into Islamic culture and inspired Shi'is to defy oppressive rulers.

Soon after his death, Husayn's followers in Kufa rose against Yazid. Even though they were defeated, the Penitents, as they came to be called, set the tone for further Shi'i uprisings against unjust rulers. Under Mukhtar b. 'Ubayd's (d. 687) revolt, many of those responsible for Husayn's death were captured and brought to justice. Husayn's death also inspired future Shi'i revolts against both the Umayyad and Abbasid regimes.

Because of the manner of his death and his close connection to the prophet, Husayn has been revered in both Shi'i and Sunni literature. He is exalted because of the motives that led to his sacrifice and for not compromising his principles against the threats of a dictator, preferring to die rather than live in humiliation. Shi'i hagiographic literature is replete with many legends about miracles performed by Husayn. His tomb in Karbala has become a pilgrimage site for the Shi'is, many of whom visit it to benefit from the miracles, blessings, and intercession reportedly available at his shrine.

—*Liyakat Takim*

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Fatima bint Muhammad; Hasan b. 'Ali; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Muhammad; Politics and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Husayn Bushru'i

(1813–1849 C.E.)

Babi disciple, martyr

Mulla Husayn Bushru'i was the first to believe in the Bab (1819–1850) and a member of the "Letters of the Living," the first and highest-ranking group of the Bab's disciples. As such, he helped to establish the Babi movement, an offshoot of Islam and forerunner of the Baha'i faith.

Mulla Husayn was born in 1813 in a village near the small town of Bushru'iyyih in northeastern Iran. His father

was a dyer and his mother a poet. During the course of his education in the cities of Mashhad and Isfahan, he became a follower of the Shaykhi teaching, and in 1835, he set off for Karbala in order to attend the lectures of the Shaykhi leader Sayyid Kazim Rashti. The latter regarded Mulla Husayn highly and chose him when he needed someone to go to Iran and canvass support from some of the senior clerics there for the Shaykhi teachings, which were at this time under attack.

Mulla Husayn returned successfully from his mission in January 1844 only to find that Sayyid Kazim had died shortly before. Mulla Husayn refused all efforts to install him as the new leader of the Shaykhis, and instead set off in search of a new leader, as Sayyid Kazim had suggested. This led him to Shiraz and a meeting with the Bab on May 23, 1844, at which the latter put forward a claim that Mulla Husayn accepted (an event commemorated annually by Baha'is as a holy day). Mulla Husayn thus became the first of the Letters of the Living and was sent off to proclaim the teachings of the Bab. His subsequent journeys and activities brought Baha'u'llah and many others into the Babi fold. After meeting the Bab again in Shiraz in 1845, he returned to Mashhad, where he set up a center for the propagation of the Bab's teaching. In spring 1848, he made a journey to Maku on foot (1,200 miles) to see the Bab, who was imprisoned there.

In July 1848, he raised a Black Standard in Mashhad (a sign of the appearance of the *mahdi* [messiah] in Islamic prophecy) and set off eastward with some 200 Babis. They were surrounded at Shaykh Tabarsi in October 1848 and besieged by royal troops. Although most of the Babis had regarded Mulla Husayn as the foremost of the disciples of the Bab up to this time, Mulla Husayn deferred to Quddus, another of the Bab's disciples, during this siege. Mulla Husayn was shot during a battle on February 2, 1849, and died later that same day. He was thirty-five. The Bab wrote a eulogy for him to be used when visiting his grave, and Baha'u'llah also praised him highly in his writings. His story as told in the early Baha'i history *Nabil's Narrative* presents a picture of courage, humility, and intellectual brilliance that has made him a spiritual hero for successive generations of young Baha'is.

—*Moojan Momen and B. Todd Lawson*

See also: Bab, The; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Kazim Rashti, Sayyid; Violence and Nonviolence

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I

Iamblichus

(c. 240–325 C.E.)

Neoplatonist philosopher

Iamblichus was a key figure in the development of Neoplatonism, the philosophical movement that dominated late classical antiquity. Although he was a competent philosopher—as is evident from the surviving fragments of his commentaries on Plato and Aristotle, he argued that philosophy alone could not save the human soul. In addition, one had to take recourse to specific rituals. This theory had implications for the Neoplatonic concept of the holy man.

The basic source for Iamblichus's life is Eunapius's fourth-century *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*. Born in about 240 in Syria, Iamblichus was from a wealthy background but lived a simple life, teaching numerous pupils. He did not show off his holiness—he laughed away rumors that he was able to levitate—but under the pressure of his pupils he demonstrated his holiness by summoning the gods who dwelled in two local springs. The gods embraced him as though he were their father.

In contrast to his contemporary Porphyry and the founder of Neoplatonism, Plotinus (205–270), Iamblichus argued that the human soul, which originates from the divine world, descends entirely into the material world when it is born. As a result, it cannot hope to ascend again to the divine world by itself but needs divine support. In *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, Iamblichus explains that there exists a natural bond of love between the gods and humanity, since we are their creation. This divine love empowers certain rituals that can purify people from the material world, enlighten them, and bring them into contact with the divine. These rituals are known as *theurgy*, the making of gods out of mortals. Even the souls thus enlightened (not unlike Buddhist *bodhisattvas*, enlightened beings) will reincarnate, however, in order to lead others to the truth. These people, Iamblichus included, were called “divine” by the Neoplatonists.

—Robbert M. van den Berg

See also: Apotheosis; Plato; Plotinus; Reincarnation; Ritual

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Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din

(1165–1240 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, writer

Considered the greatest mystic author in Islam, Muhyi al-Din ibn al-‘Arabi al-Hatimi al-Tai was born in 1165 in Murcia, Spain, where his father was governor. Ibn al-‘Arabi spent his youth in Murcia and studied traditional religious subjects as well as philosophy. While still a boy—with a reputation for having mystical visions—he had a meeting with the peripatetic philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who advocated discursive reasoning (*burhan*) against mystical knowledge, or gnosis (*irfan*). The latter had been prevalent in the Islamic tradition. At the age of thirty, Ibn al-‘Arabi left Spain for Tunisia and then went to Mecca, the holiest city in Islam. This pilgrimage was the first of his lifelong journeys to numerous cities and towns in Egypt, Syria, and Turkey. He finally settled in Damascus, Syria, accompanied by his most famous student, Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi. He was buried in Damascus after his death in 1240.

Ibn al-‘Arabi's influence went beyond the circles of sufism. His ideas, some of which were deemed controversial and heterodox, have been discussed, defended, or refuted by scores of scholars, jurists, theologians, philosophers, and mystics up to the present time. He is the most prolific mystic

author in Islam with a corpus of close to 500 books and poems. His fame earned him several titles by which he is most commonly known. “Muhyi al-Din” means “the reviver of the religion,” referring to his role in reinterpreting the entire Islamic tradition from a mystical point of view. His other title, “al-Shaykh al-Akbar,” means “the greatest master” and refers to the respect he has been accorded among his followers. His critics, however, have been no less staunch in their denunciation of him as an innovator, enemy of Islam, heretic, and “the greatest infidel” (*al-shaykh al-akfar*). In recent decades, together with Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), Ibn al-‘Arabi has had a deep impact in Europe and the United States. His works have been translated into numerous European languages.

Ibn al-‘Arabi is best known for his two most prominent books. *Fusus al-Hikam* (The bezels of wisdom) is a mystical treatise on prophetology in which Ibn al-‘Arabi discusses how each of the twenty-seven prophets mentioned in the Qur’an, from Adam, Noah, and Abraham to Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, represents a particular aspect of wisdom associated with divine names and qualities. Ibn al-‘Arabi’s most voluminous work, *al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah* (Meccan revelations), is a mystical encyclopedia comprised of several hundred chapters dealing with a bewilderingly vast range of subjects, from mystical life, rituals, visions, and philosophy to religious history, resurrection, and sanctity.

Several underlying themes can be identified in Ibn al-‘Arabi’s writings. He considers the world of creation to be a stage for the infinite manifestation and interplay of divine names and qualities. The word *tajalli*, theophany, applies to various degrees of existence, from minerals to angels. In this cosmic symphony of the self-disclosure of God, the divine essence remains unmanifested and untainted. Against anthropomorphism, which assigns humanlike qualities to God, thus blurring the ontological discontinuity between the creator and the created, and against transcendentalism, which turns God into an aloof, unreachable, and abstract principle, thus preempting the possibility of having an intimate relationship with the divine, Ibn al-‘Arabi tries to strike a balance between the two views and sees God as both immanent and transcendent.

By defining the world as a theophany, Ibn al-‘Arabi leans toward a form of natural theology where everything becomes a sign pointing to something beyond itself, that is, the divine. In this context, even evil, personified by Satan, has a place in the ontological scheme of things. Equally important is the idea that ultimately there can be only one being, everything else being derived from it. The Islamic concept of divine unity (*tawhid*) is thus translated by Ibn al-‘Arabi into the domain of metaphysics as the “oneness of being” (*wahdat al-wujud*)—his most famous doctrine.

Even though the oneness of being is not as central to Ibn al-‘Arabi’s teachings as many people assume, it has nevertheless been interpreted by his critics as a form of pantheism. The doctrine holds that God is the only real being, necessary and self-subsistent, and everything else is a shadow compared to his being. The oneness of being also underlies one of the central themes of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s metaphysics—the relationship between the one and the many, or God’s absolute unity vis-à-vis the multiplicity of the world. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, existence is generated by the “sacred effusion” (*alfayd al-muqaddas*) of the divine and by the “breath of the most merciful” (*nafas al-rahman*). In this scheme, human existence has a special place because it is the “locus of descent” for manifesting God’s names and qualities in the most complete manner possible.

Ibn al-‘Arabi uses the term “perfect” or “universal man” (*al-insan al-kamil*) to explain the special significance of the human state in God’s creation. The perfect man, which refers to the ontological-metaphysical state of humanity rather than to moral perfection, is ultimately the prophet Muhammad. For Ibn al-‘Arabi, the “Muhammadan grace” (*barakah muhammadiyah*) functions as the basis of sanctity in Islam.

—Ibrahim Kalin

See also: Islam and Holy People; Jili, Abd al-Karim al-; Muhammad; Mysticism and Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin

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Ichijian

See **Kikusha-ni**

Ida of Herzfeld

(c. 775–825 C.E.)

Christian laywoman

A Frankish noblewoman, Ida founded a church at Herzfeld (modern Germany) and later became its patron saint. Her exact genealogy remains obscure, but she is believed to have been either a cousin or half cousin of Charlemagne. Ida was formally canonized roughly 150 years after her death on November 26, 980. The primary information concerning her life and the subsequent miracles that occurred at her grave

site comes from her vita, written around this time. The author, Uffing, was a monk from the Benedictine monastery of Werden on the Ruhr, which had incorporated the Herzfeld church properties at the end of the ninth century.

As recorded by Uffing, Ida, born in about 775, was the daughter of a count in Charlemagne's service. Her father took in another of Charlemagne's soldiers, Egbert, who had fallen sick while fighting a campaign against the Gauls. Ida nursed Egbert, and, out of pity, grew to love him. They married, and the king appointed Egbert duke of all Saxony between the Rhine and Weser. On their journey to their new home, they stopped in Herzfeld, or "Hirutfeld" in the Saxon dialect. That night in a dream, Ida saw an angel who had been sent to her by God. The angel commanded her to use her own funds to build a church in which she could worship unhindered. Soon after Ida's vision, in 803 or 804, she commissioned the construction of a stone church at Herzfeld and dedicated it to the Virgin Mary and St. Germanus of Paris (c. 496–576).

According to Uffing, Ida lived an exemplary life. She spent much time in her church in prayer. There, she had a marble coffin in which she would periodically lie in order to remind herself of the transience of life. Uffing lists a number of miracles that occurred at Ida's tomb after her death in 825. With the exception of one miracle involving the discovery of a thief, the stories all deal with the miraculous healing of the blind, crippled, and possessed. St. Ida's feast day is celebrated on September 4, and she is frequently represented in art holding a replica of her church.

—Kristen M. Collins

See also: Charlemagne; Christianity and Holy People; Death; Gender and Holy People

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Idahosa, Benson

(1939–1998 C.E.)

Christian healer, bishop

Perhaps never in African ecclesiastical history has there been a greater charismatic leader, faith healer, and protagonist of Christianity than Archbishop Benson Idahosa, founder of Church of God Mission International, Idahosa World Outreach, and what is known today as Benson Idahosa University in Benin City. In the whole of Africa today, Idahosa is regarded as a man sent from God. He ministered to millions in more than a hundred countries, circling the world six times in his preaching mission.

Benson was born on September 11, 1939, as the fourth child to a non-Christian family of the Bini tribe, what is known today as Edo State in Nigeria. At birth, Benson was thrown on a rubbish heap and left to die as an unwanted child because of his sickly nature. However, by an act of divine providence and against the wish of his father, his mother escaped with baby Benson to her parents' home, where the child grew up.

Idahosa converted to Christianity in 1960 through the ministry of Pastor Okpo, of Igbo extraction. This began a life of evangelism and attacks on non-Christian holy images, which he burned, including those of his parents. He was later to burn many such idols all over Africa. In 1984, when a pan-African witches' convention was scheduled to meet in Benin, the international headquarters of his church, he boldly took to the media in a campaign to stop it from occurring. He challenged, "If I see these witches in Benin, I will invoke the Holy Ghost to break their wrongs so that none of them will fly again." The meeting was rescheduled elsewhere.

In 1968, about eight years after his conversion, Idahosa had a special encounter with God. One night as he slept, a voice woke him, calling him to preach the gospel. God later led Idahosa to an older missionary, Rev. S. G. Elton, a white man who became his primary spiritual mentor. Elton played a very significant role in bringing young Idahosa to a fulfillment of the divine mandate upon his life. Elton not only ordained him to the ministry as the first pastor of the new group that Idahosa founded but also introduced him to another American, Gordon Lindsay, who assisted in his ordination. In 1971, Lindsay offered Idahosa a scholarship for ministerial training at Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas.

Idahosa readily accepted and returned with a diploma in divinity. He later received a doctor of divinity degree in 1981 from the Word of Faith College in New Orleans and a doctor of laws degree from Oral Roberts University in 1984. In addition, he held various degrees from the International University in Brussels, Belgium.

Idohosa was a faith healer and transformed the material lives of many Africans with his apostolic inspirational teachings on prosperity. He believed that God's promises and miracles of providence apply to Africans as well as to Americans, and that if Africans planted in God's work, they would reap God's blessings. Though these teachings brought him criticism, many churches and individuals who follow Idahosa's teachings are being saved from poverty.

As a world-renowned Christian leader, Archbishop Benson Idahosa was able to raise other powerful Christian leaders in various African nations through his teachings, mentorship, and encouragement. Among these are the Nigerians Bishop David Oyedepo, Pastor Ayo Oritsajefor, Bishop Duncan Williams, and several others.

At Idahosa's death in 1998, his wife, Dr. Margret Idahosa, a mother of four children, was ordained a bishop (the first female bishop in Africa) to take over the leadership of the Church of God Mission International. The work has since then continued to grow.

—John U. Anaba

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles

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Idris (Enoch)

(dates unknown)

Muslim and Manichaean legendary prophet, sage

The Qur'an describes Idris as a prophet (*nabi*) who was "truthful" (*saddiq*), "patient" (*sabir*), and "righteous" (*salih*). It says, moreover, that God "raised him to a high station" (19:56–57; 21:85–86). In many accounts of the prophet Muhammad's ascension (*mi'raj*), Idris welcomes Muhammad into the fourth of the seven heavens, the solar sphere. In a canonical hadith, the prophet Muhammad, commenting on the first received verses of the Qur'an (96:1–4), identifies Idris as the first person who wrote with the pen. His dates are unknown.

Idris is popularly depicted as the first to sew clothing and is revered by tailors as the patron of their guild. Popular tales of the prophets narrate that Idris achieved immortality when he tricked the angel of death into letting him step into paradise for just a moment. When the angel asked him to come out, Idris slyly replied that once entering paradise, one cannot return.

By the tenth century, Abu Ma'shar al-Balkhi identified Idris as the biblical Enoch and Hermes Trismegistus (Hirmis al-Muthalath bi'l-Hikma), the legendary Greek figure associated with the Egyptian god Thoth. The historian Mas'udi (d. 956) identified Enoch as "Idris the Prophet" and the Hermes of the Sabaens. These associations were echoed by the bibliographer Ibn Nadim (d. 987) and the polymath al-Biruni (973–1050), who equated Idris with Mercury, the Buddha, and Hermes.

The relationship between the names Idris and Hermes may rest on the name of Hermes' initiatory guide, Poimandres, in the ancient Greek *Corpus Hermeticum* I.1. Although the form of the name Idris is not a recognized Arabic word, its etymological root (*d-r-s*) means "to teach." The prophet's mention of Idris as the first to use the pen conforms to Egyptian iconography of Thoth (who, combined with the Greek Hermes, became Hermes Trismegistus). The narrative of Idris's cunning entry into paradise parallels the Homeric "Hymn to Hermes" where Hermes elevates himself into the Olympian pantheon by offering a sacrifice to himself. Idris's

direct entry into paradise, and his association with the sun, echoes Enoch (Gen. 5:18–24).

Idris is identified as the first of three Hermeses. The first, Hirmis al-Haramisah, invented the alphabet, writing, tailoring, medicine, and astronomy. This Hermes also built the eponymous pyramids (*Ahram*). After the flood, the second one, the "Babylonian Hermes," master of Pythagoras, taught math, science, and philosophy. The third, "Egyptian Hermes," was a builder of cities and master of alchemy. In Manichaenism, Hermes was one of the five major prophets before Mani (216–274/277). The oldest extant version of Hermes Trismegistus's *Emerald Tablet* is ascribed to Jabir ibn Hayyan (d. 776), student of the sixth Shi'a imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (699–765). The historian Shahrastani (1086–1153) reported that the people of Harran (today's Altinbasak, Turkey) achieved "protected peoples" (*dhimmi*) status under Caliph al-Ma'mun (813–833) when they claimed to be the Sabaens named in the Qur'an (2.26) and identified Idris/Hermes as their prophet.

The hermetic motif of the man of light (*phos*) articulated by Zosimos and found in the opening of the *Corpus Hermeticum* appears in the Islamic illuminationist (*Ishraqi*) writings of Suhrawardi (1154–1191). Ibn Wahshiyah (ninth century), who first used the term "Ishraq," meant a class of priests descended from Hermes' sister. (In the hermetic *Kore Kosmou* (Virgin of the cosmos), Isis describes herself as Hermes' sister.) Suhrawardi and Ibn Sina (980–1037) present Hermes as the disciple of "perfect Nature," that is, Poimandres. Suhrawardi also constructed a hermetic lineage (the *hakim al-'atiqa*, "ancient wisdom"), including Hermes, Pythagoras, Plato, Empedocles, and the sufis Dhu'l Nun al-Misri (796–859), Sahl al-Tustari (818–896), and Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922). Suhrawardi's disciple Shahrazuri proposed that Idris founded the pre-Islamic monotheistic religion of the Hanifs. Suhrawardi's model was reiterated by Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) as *prisca theologia* (original theology).

The sufi master and theosophist Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240) identified Idris as the axial prophet (*qutb*) sharing exclusively with Jesus, Elijah, and al-Khidr (the Green One) the status of immortals. Islamic writers of hermetic, alchemical, and philosophical works, including Ibn al-'Arabi, designated Idris as the "prophet of the philosophers" and the "father of the philosophers" (Abu'l-Hukama') and revered him as the prophetic patron of alchemy and the hermetic arts.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Hermetica; Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Misri, Dhu'n-nun al-; Plato; Prophets; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Sages; Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin

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Ifá Moroté

See **Mora, Francisco**

Ignatius of Antioch

(d. c. 107 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Ignatius was the Christian bishop of Antioch from about 69 until his martyrdom in roughly 107. Unfortunately, no details of his life have survived outside of what can be gathered from the letters that he wrote after his arrest for being a Christian. There has been much debate as to the authenticity of some of the letters, but scholars have established a corpus of seven that can be attributed to Ignatius with some confidence.

Ignatius addressed six of these to the Christian communities of Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Rome, Philadelphia, and Smyrna and a seventh to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. The letter to the church in Rome is particularly interesting because in it Ignatius made it very clear how much he relished the idea of being surrendered to the beasts and becoming a martyr. In fact, the letter specifically and poignantly begs his friends in Rome not to intervene with the authorities to secure a pardon. As such, this letter serves as an early example of what would become commonplace within Christian literature regarding martyrdom: the overwhelming desire, on the part of the would-be martyr, for death in the name of Christ.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Ignatius of Constantinople

(c. 798–877 C.E.)

Christian patriarch

Ignatius, originally named Nicetas, was a patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century. Although his tenure

was marked by controversy and his eventual deposition, even Ignatius's opponents recognized his personal holiness, and he was eventually canonized by his main rival for the see of Constantinople, Photius. Ignatius's feast day is October 23.

Nicetas was born in about 798, the son of Byzantine Emperor Michael I Rhangabe (r. 811–813). When his father was deposed, Nicetas and his brothers were forced to become monks. Nicetas took the name Ignatius and later became the abbot of three monasteries that he himself had founded.

In 847, the empress Theodora (r. 842–855) appointed Ignatius patriarch of Constantinople. He inherited a church still suffering the aftereffects of the iconoclast controversy, a conflict between those who felt that icons should be venerated (iconophiles) and those who demanded that they be destroyed (iconoclasts). Ignatius's sympathies lay with the iconophiles, which led him into conflict with members of his clergy who felt that repentant iconoclasts should be treated leniently. In 853, Ignatius suspended several of these clerics, who appealed to Rome. Before the pope could reply, however, Ignatius became involved in the conflict between Empress Theodora and her brother, Caesar Bardas. Ignatius resigned his see in 858, and Bardas appointed Photius patriarch. Ignatius accepted the new patriarch and urged his followers to do the same, but some of his supporters revolted and Ignatius was briefly imprisoned. Pope Nicholas I sent two legates to Constantinople to investigate Photius's election, and while the legates concluded that the election had been valid, Nicholas later rejected their conclusion and excommunicated Photius in 863.

In 867, a new emperor, Basil I (r. 867–886), exiled Photius and reinstated Ignatius. Ignatius, however, did not have the support of the majority of the Byzantine clergy, and when Photius was recalled from exile, the two were reconciled. Ignatius planned to call a synod to recognize the end of the conflict, but he died in 877 before it could meet.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Ignatius of Loyola

(1491–1556 C.E.)

Roman Catholic founder, spiritual writer

Ignatius of Loyola, born in 1491, was a native of the Basque region of Spain, author of *The Spiritual Exercises*, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), and, since 1622, has been a canonized saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Ignatius embodied several features of holiness within the Roman Catholic tradition that, along with the force of his personality, the relevance of his teachings, and the success of his religious order, established him as one of the most important saints of the Catholic Reformation.

As a young man, Ignatius lived the worldly life of a Spanish nobleman. In his writings he describes himself during his youth as vainly concerned with his appearance and explains his decision to embark on a military career as inspired by the pursuit of fortune and fame. However, at the age of thirty, Ignatius's leg was shattered at the siege of Pampluna. During his extended period of convalescence he underwent a religious conversion. He cast aside his worldly aspirations, in a manner reminiscent of a long tradition of Christian holy men stretching back to Augustine of Hippo (354–430), and dedicated a year of his life to prayer and contemplation in a cavern at Manresa near the abbey of Montserrat. There he experienced both desolation and consolation through contemplation of his life and God. It was



Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. (Perry Castaneda library)

during this period of contemplation that he completed the first draft of his *Spiritual Exercises*.

Although Ignatius immediately recognized his spiritual calling, he found it more difficult to identify what God intended for him. Ignatius first conceived *The Spiritual Exercises* as a tool in his personal quest to discover God's will for him through meditation and prayer and as a source of inspiration to conform to this divine will. The exercises contained in the work became more than a personal means for contemplation, however. From 1522 Ignatius led others through them and offered advice to followers. The exercises were to remain a central feature of his spiritual thought for the remainder of his life, and they continue to be influential in the Catholic Church today. Ignatius's time in the wilderness, and his willingness to share his personal spiritual insight with others, places Ignatius firmly in the tradition of Catholic holy people.

Like Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226), Ignatius also used the force of his personality and his spiritual message to form a religious institution, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), dedicated to the active promotion of the faith. In 1528, Ignatius enrolled at the University of Paris, and in 1534 he graduated with a master of arts degree. While in Paris he attracted six disciples, including the future St. Francis Xavier, who all undertook the spiritual exercises. Together, on August 15, 1534, these seven men took vows of poverty and chastity at Montmartre outside of Paris. Their original plan was to travel to the Holy Land to work to convert the local population to the Catholic faith, but when they found it impossible to travel to Palestine because of war they turned to Rome to offer their services to the pope. A papal bull in 1540 formally recognized Ignatius and his followers as a religious order dedicated to the service of the papacy.

Ignatius had a talent for organization, and once he had accepted the task of founding a religious order he worked to define its constitutions and mission. His constitutions established a clear hierarchy with a central headquarters and an explicit oath of obedience to the papacy. Through time, Ignatius also identified the two principal activities of the order: the teaching of boys and missionary activity, both in Catholic Europe and in the non-Catholic world. By the time of his death in 1556, there were more than 1,000 members of the society; the Jesuits remain one of the largest and most influential Catholic religious orders today.

Ignatius, through the founding of the Jesuits, can be seen as following in the footsteps of other holy Christians who founded monastic orders. Nonetheless, his efforts were clearly shaped by the requirements of the sixteenth century. The tight organization of his society as compared to the medieval friars, along with his explicit subjugation of his order to the papacy, reflected the need for effective, centrally directed action during the period of Catholic renewal in re-

sponse to Protestantism. Ignatius himself described his new order as an army for Christ, a notion with real resonance for supporters of the nascent Catholic Reformation.

—Eric Nelson

See also: Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Dominic; Francis of Assisi; Guidance; Mission; Reform and Reaction; Suffering and Holy People; Xavier, Francis

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Ikkyu

(1394–1481 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist monk, scholar, artist

Ikkyu Sojun, an irreverent Zen Buddhist monk, scholar, poet, painter, and calligraphy master who rebuilt Daitokuji temple and influenced the early development of virtually all Zen arts of the Muromachi period (1333–1573), stands out as both the strangest and most human of medieval Zen masters.

Born as the natural son of the Japanese emperor Go-Komatsu and a court noblewoman in 1394, Ikkyu was a victim of court intrigue while still in the womb. As a result, his mother was forced to give birth in the house of a commoner. Raised as a foundling in Ankokuji temple, at sixteen Ikkyu became the disciple of Ken'o Soi, under whom he began a strict Zen training regimen. By the late 1420s, he had settled in the port city of Sakai, where he began to develop his infamous "Crazy Cloud" Zen by frequenting brothels and wineshops and writing sensuous love poetry. Ikkyu soon began to attract the attention of many well-known literary and artistic figures of the day, who enshrined his irreverent ways in poetry and song. Despite his status as a longtime critic of abuses at the temple, in 1474 Ikkyu became Daitokuji's forty-seventh abbot. His waning years were spent at Takigi, between Kyoto and Sakai, and he died in 1481.

Ikkyu was enormously influential on the various Zen arts evolving in the Muromachi period. His disciple Murata Shuko (1422–1490) became Japan's first official tea master, and his aesthetic ideas also had direct impact on Konparu Zenchiku (1405–1467), who developed the bare stage setting of Noh drama. In poetry, his work reflects the movement

from *renga* (linked verse) to haiku, which remains Japan's most distinctive poetic form. Ikkyu's main poetic work, *Kyounshu* (Crazy Cloud anthology), is a collection of more than 1,000 Chinese poems, many of which are sensuous love poems laced with double entendres. Ikkyu openly espoused Chinese Master Sung-yuan's (1139–1209) "Red Thread Zen," which taught that since man was inescapably connected with woman by birth, eliminating sexual desire was unnatural. He openly kept a mistress, a younger blind singer named Shin (or Mori) with whom he had a son.

Above all, Ikkyu hated the hypocrisy he witnessed among the religious institutions of his day, including most of his fellow priests at Daitokuji. Yet he fought hard for the preservation of Daitokuji's traditions. Not simply a rebel without a cause, Ikkyu aimed to shock others into rethinking their Zen practice (indeed, his adopted name, Sojun, means "essence of purity"). Perhaps fittingly, his legend lives on in modern Japan not through grandiose hagiography but rather as Ikkyu-san—a brilliant and mischievous imp in a popular children's cartoon.

—James Mark Shields

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Sexuality and Holy People

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Iloibonok

Maasai prophet-diviners

Iloibonok (*oloiboni*, singular) are male prophet-diviners believed by Maasai and other related groups in East Africa to be the direct descendants of the Maasai divinity Eng'ai through their mythical apical ancestor Kidongoi. Their special relationship as intermediaries with Eng'ai is evidenced by their array of special powers, which include prophecy, divination, ritual protection, sorcery, and healing.

As one early Western observer has noted, "The efficacy of the lybon [*sic*], or medicine-man, lies not in any innate ability of his own, but in his power of intercession with Ngai, who works through him, and imparts magical virtues to various objects" (Thomson 1968 [1885], 260). Their main method of divination is to use the complex Maasai numerology of auspicious and inauspicious numbers to analyze

stones and other objects shaken in a gourd or horn (called an *enkidong'*) and thrown onto the ground. They also prepare and provide ritual charms, amulets, and medicines to prevent illness, promote conception, curse other people, and ensure the success of cattle raids and other endeavors. Iloibonok prophesy through their dreams and vision, often induced by drinking large amounts of honey-beer. In return for their consultations and charms, they receive gifts of livestock, food, and other products, including a share of the cattle stolen on raids. In turn, they use their wealth to marry well, to form and strengthen their political alliances with other men, and to extend their power and prestige in a variety of other ways. The irony that their spiritual powers provide a significant source of wealth has not been lost on other Maasai, who often both admire and resent their success.

Iloibonok are divided, according to the efficacy of their powers and the size of their following, into major iloibonok (*iloibonok kitok*) and minor iloibonok (sometimes called *ilkuyatik*). Major iloibonok supervise and bless certain age-grade ceremonies, represent different territorial sections of Maasai, and are called upon in times of great crisis (such as prolonged drought) to appeal to Eng'ai. Several major iloibonok, including Mbatiany and his sons Lenana and Sendeu, also rose to prominence in the late nineteenth century by leading factions of *ilmurran* (junior men often called "warriors") in raids and wars against one another. British colonial administrators initially thought they were the "chiefs" of the Maasai, but this misunderstanding was eventually corrected. Most iloibonok, however, are minor, "private practitioners" (Bernsten 1979, 137). They usually do not prophesy but use divination and charms to help individual clients with more mundane problems such as sickness, fertility, and death of humans and livestock. People consult them according to their proximity and reputation.

Iloibonok were originally not Maasai but outsiders who slowly insinuated themselves as prophets and diviners among Maasai (Waller 1995 and Bernsten 1979). Eventually they were incorporated into the Maasai clan system as a new, separate subclan, the Inkidong'i (derived from *enkidong'*, the stone-filled horn or gourd used in divination). Initially, Inkidong'i lived in separate areas; these days, they live interspersed with other Maasai clans. Their spiritual powers were inherited through the male line, although occasional *inkoi-bonok* (female prophet-diviners) with spiritual gifts and roles, including prophecy, have been reported. There are many accounts of struggles and jealousies among the sons of major and minor iloibonok as they competed for power, prestige, and wealth.

In recent years, the power and prestige of iloibonok has declined. The Maasai have undergone rapid social, political, and economic change. In a time of drastic economic down-

turn, few Maasai can afford the increasingly steep payments demanded by some iloibonok for their services. Under pressure from first the colonial then the postcolonial state, cattle raiding by *ilmurran* has all but stopped. Moreover, growing numbers of Maasai are becoming Christians, and most Christian denominations perceive iloibonok as evil and preach to converts against any continuing involvement with them. Nonetheless, some Christian Maasai still consult iloibonok on occasion.

—Dorothy L. Hodgson

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Mbatiany; Prophets

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Imams

Shi'i Muslim holy leaders

The word *imam* has several definitions in Islam. It comes from the Arabic root meaning "in front" and literally means a person who stands in front, thus a leader or guide. It appears in the Qur'an (2:124, 21:73) to describe Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and it has been used extensively in the Muslim world to refer to the person who stands in front and leads the Friday prayers. It has also generally been used by both Sunnis and Shi'is to refer to certain leaders of the community, especially prominent religious scholars. For Shi'i Muslims, however, it has a special meaning, referring to a line of descendants of the prophet Muhammad who were designated by God. Shi'is believe the imams have been the true spiritual guides of humanity and also the lawful leaders of the Islamic community, even though their rightful position was usually usurped by others. Succession is supposedly handed down through each imam as he chooses the one to follow him, but in practice this process has not always been a smooth one.

All Shi'is are agreed that the rightful successor to the prophet Muhammad as both spiritual and temporal leader of the Shi'is was 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (600–661), his cousin and son-in-law. They believe that Muhammad gave a number of

indications during his lifetime that he wanted 'Ali to succeed him, but that after the prophet's death in 632, a group of prominent Meccans, led by Umar (r. 634–644), succeeded in having Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) elected as caliph. It was only after the death of the third caliph that 'Ali gained his rightful place at the head of the Islamic community. But by then, according to Shi'is, it was too late. Irreligious people had made their way into the heart of the Islamic community and now rose in revolt.

When 'Ali was assassinated in 661, only five years after becoming caliph, leadership of the Islamic community fell into the hands of the Umayyad dynasty. Shi'is believe that 'Ali had designated his son Hasan (624/625–669) to be the leader of Muslims after him, but Hasan was forced to give up his claims. After Hasan's death, his younger brother Husayn (626–680) tried to assert his claim but was martyred at Karbala in 680.

The main body of Shi'is in the world today believe that there was a chain of twelve imams who were the true successors of the prophet, beginning with 'Ali and ending with the twelfth, who, as a child, is said to have gone into hiding (occultation) in 874. This twelfth imam, it is believed, will return as the *mahdi* (rightly guided one) just before the Day of Judgment to defeat the enemies of the Shi'is and avenge all of the injustices that the imams and the Shi'is have endured. Shi'is taking this position are called the Twelvers (Ithna-'Ashari) and constitute the majority of the population in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Bahrain, as well as forming substantial minorities in Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, India, Turkey, and Afghanistan.

The Isma'ilis, another sect of the Shi'ah found mainly in Yemen, India, and East Africa, diverge from the main group because they believe in a different line of imams after the sixth one. One group of Isma'ilis believes that the line of imams remains unbroken to the present one, who is the current holder of the title Aga Khan. Another group of Shi'is, the Zaydis, hold that the true imam is whichever of the descendants of 'Ali and Fatima (Muhammad's daughter) manages to achieve political power. They are mainly to be found in Yemen. Apart from these, there are some groups of Shi'is who are considered by the others as extremists because of certain doctrines that are attributed to them: that they elevate the station of 'Ali to be equal to that of Muhammad or that they regard the imams to be cocreators of the world with God. These groups of Shi'is can be found among the Kurds in Iraq and the Alevis (Alawis) in Syria and Turkey.

Shi'is typically believe that, although anyone can say the declaration of belief (*shahada*) and be a Muslim, true faith (*iman*) requires submission to the imam of the age. For Shi'is, the true interpretation and explanation of the Qur'an can only be obtained from the imam, the true traditions (*hadith*) about the prophet Muhammad are only

those authorized and transmitted through the imams, and the imam is protected from error and sin. They argue that much of the text of the Qur'an refers in an allegorical or metaphorical way to the imams and that God's grace flows to earth through the imam. Indeed, they believe that if there is ever a time when there is no imam upon the earth, God will destroy it.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Hasan b. 'Ali; Hereditary Holiness; Husayn b. 'Ali; Intermediaries; Islam and Holy People; Messiahs; Rulers as Holy People

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Imitation of Christ

One of the earliest spiritual traditions in Christianity, the imitation of Christ—that is, striving to imitate, or follow, Christ on all levels, both physical and spiritual—dates to the days of the primitive church. One of the earliest written sources is the *Epistle to the Ephesians* of Ignatius of Antioch (c. 30–107 C.E.).

As noted by several scholars, the verb “imitate” does not appear in the gospels. Nevertheless, the metaphorical phrase of “following Christ,” or walking behind Christ, is of great importance as it indicates the individual's willingness and commitment to Christ and his church. The writings of Paul, however, explicitly prescribe such imitation. For Paul, imitation of Christ begins with the simple but important act of baptism. Ongoing imitation is exemplified in the crucifixion, as in Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” Ultimately, Paul is more interested in contemplating the example of Christ's life than in direct physical imitation. Through such contemplation, the individual would in effect grow closer to the spiritual example of Christ.

The famous passage from Book 7 of Augustine's *Confessions*, composed in around 400, indicates a strong tradition of imitation of Christ: “Why art thou proud, O man? God for thee became low. Thou wouldst perhaps be ashamed to imitate a lowly man; then at least imitate the lowly God.” For Augustine, Christ is both a sign of grace and an example to be followed. In Augustine's later mystical writings, imitation of Christ leads to a mystical union with Christ.

In the Middle Ages, physical imitation of Christ grew in practice. The Council of Tribur (895) issued a statement that the triple immersion of baptism was performed in imitation

of Jesus' three days in the tomb, while the rising from the water imitated the resurrection. It was no longer necessary to be a professional religious figure to engage in imitation; because Christ was indeed human, the "ordinary" human being could imitate Christ just as effectively as the monastic or priest. Perhaps this is nowhere more evident than in the escalation of asceticism for medieval Christians. Essentially the idea that the soul is good and the body evil, asceticism asked that individuals scorn or rebuff the physical body in lieu of edification of the soul. Hair shirts, whipping with chains, and extended fasts were all characteristic practices of the period. Penitents believed that such punishment would bring their souls closer to the perfection of Christ.

Bernard of Clairvaux's (1090–1153) extremely Christocentric mysticism was conducive to imitation on several levels. Bernard's emphasis on the humanity of Christ led him to believe that imitation of Christ is most evident in examples of humility and love, as he makes clear in his *De gradibus superbiae et humilitatis* (Steps of humility) and *De diligendo Deo* (On loving God). Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) contributed a simple but effective formula in the *Summa Theologiae* (ST) 2.2.186.5: "Religious perfection consists chiefly in the imitation of Christ." In ST 3.65.2, Aquinas writes of the "perfection of the spiritual life," stressing the importance of baptism as a first step in imitation and toward perfection.

Thomas à Kempis's (c. 1379–1471) *Imitation of Christ*, first issued anonymously in 1418, offered its readers explicit instruction on imitation. Divided into four parts, the book provides detailed spiritual guidelines. Thomas's book became the best-selling devotional work of all time. It continues in print in a variety of translations in many languages. The work's influence on later devotional texts and practices cannot be overstated.

The Reformation era introduced major shifts in the concept of imitation of Christ. In his *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (Manual of the Christian knight), Erasmus (c. 1466–1536) recommends something akin to imitation of Christ when he prescribes close study of Christ's philosophy. Elsewhere in the work, he recommends keeping Christ always in sight as a model. Martin Luther (1483–1546) made the connection between baptism and imitation of Christ even stronger in his *Commentary on Galatians*. Commenting on Galatians 3:27, he wrote: "Needless to say, when we have put on the robe of the righteousness of Christ we must not forget to put on also the mantle of the imitation of Christ." However, elsewhere in the same commentary, he said, "We do not deny that Christians ought to imitate the example of Christ; but mere imitation will not satisfy God." Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) expressed a strong sense of being "with Christ" and thus experiencing his humanity. In *The Spiritual Exercises*, he asks the exercitant to imagine himself at the foot of the cross, communing with the crucified Christ.

In the modern era, Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) preached imitation as evidence of love. Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) felt that imitation of Christ was the truest sign of a Christian—that without imitation, one was not a Christian, for to be a Christian was to be a "follower," or imitator, of Christ. The great scholar of mysticism Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941) focused on the crucifixion as a pattern for perfection. Contemplation on the crucifixion is then emblematic of an imitator of Christ in that the individual enters the space and time of the life of Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), writing in the shadow of Nazi Germany, wrote that those who follow Christ will bear his image.

Perhaps the most evident imitation of Christ for the late twentieth century has been the proliferation of "WWJD" paraphernalia. "WWJD," which stands for "What Would Jesus Do?" began with a youth group in Michigan. Taking their cue from a late nineteenth-century novel called *In His Steps* by Charles Monroe Sheldon, the group posed a simple question to their constituents. Some 14 million WWJD bracelets were being worn worldwide by the year 2000. A glance at the bracelet is supposed to compel the wearer to contemplate the question in difficult or unusual situations, thus prompting imitation of Christ and what his possible reaction to the same situation might have been.

—David A. Salomon

See also: Bernard of Clairvaux; Bonhoeffer, Dietrich; Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Models; Thomas Aquinas

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Imre

See **Emeric**

Incas

Peruvian rulers

Every year on June 24, the people of Cuzco, Peru, celebrate the festival of Inti Raymi, an ancient Inca religious feast. The

festival, which was banned by the Catholic Church for several hundred years until 1942, honors the Sun, the Incas' supreme god. Inti Raymi symbolizes and confirms every year the engagement of the Sun and his children, the Incas. It celebrates the Sun as the father of the first human couple, Inca (king) Manco Capac and Mama Oclla. Manco Capac, as the first Inca, was also the high priest of Inca society.

The whole Inca population was involved in this celebration. The culminating moment of the feast shows the Sapa Inca, or Inca king, offering sacred *chicha* (a drink made from yellow corn) in *keros* (sacred vases especially designed for this ceremony) to the Sun. In this way, the Inca, on behalf of his people, thanked the Sun for a fruitful year, confirmed their religious links, and started a new year. Most colonial chroniclers offer descriptions of this spectacular feast, although they tend to point out its idolatrous nature. The continuation of the festival is the best evidence we have that Inca rulers played an important mediating function thanks to the divine descent attributed to them.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Indigetes

Roman local gods/heroes

Indigetes is a collective term used to describe a sect of early Roman gods whose identity and roles are much debated by scholars. One popular belief is that the indigetes were the indigenous or original gods of the Roman state, in contrast to the *novensides* or *novensiles*, which are believed to be divinities adopted or adapted later. The great influence of the Greeks and other peoples on Roman religion makes a complete understanding of the indigetes' origins difficult. Yet, those who argue that the indigetes were the original gods of Rome generally see them as serving the functional needs of an early agrarian and warring society, only becoming overshadowed later by foreign cultural influences.

These gods are believed to have been personal forces that did not have human form or act in human ways as the Greek gods, which may make them seem more obscure at present, but not necessarily any less powerful in early Roman society.

Some significantly strong, multifunctional gods, such as Apollo, may have been considered indigetes. However, the multifaceted roles of these gods may have come after contact with the Greeks, whose own gods were more comprehensive and intricately involved in humanlike relationships among each other. The indigetes were not originally associated with any myths and were not anthropomorphized until the Romans were influenced by other cultures.

The religious-minded early Romans conscientiously honored the indigetes with rituals and offerings. A priest, or *flamen*, was assigned to a specific deity to carry out rituals for the state and to preside over the festivals of that god. In their turn, the divinities were believed to reveal their divine will through natural phenomena, which devout Romans then attempted to interpret. The invocation of the indigetes, each of whom was called by name when his particular help, protection, or worship was desired, was called *indigitamenta*.

Yet, a consensus regarding the character of the indigetes has never been reached. Although many historians believe that the indigetes were abstract spirits seemingly addressed indifferently as belonging to either sex, some scholars have argued that instead of being native gods of Rome, the indigetes were minor gods of exceedingly narrow function, wielding little power. The exact number of such deities would only be conjecture, but there would have been an exceptionally large number. These divine manifestations would have been known to worshippers as little more than names, always linked with a very specific purpose, or *numen*, divine power. For instance, an entire series of deities were responsible for the process of harvesting corn, one presiding over the plowing of fallow land, one for planting the seed, and so on. Other functions correlated to indigetes might be guarding over a child who was eating or protecting the doorway.

Yet another theory is that the indigetes were ancestral divinities created from humans, similar to the Greek hero cult. Although this may explain the description of Aeneas as one of the indigetes, other deities, such as Sol, are more problematic. Indeed, the inclusion of such a wide variety of deities under the same term has made it impossible for any current theory to fully explain all instances of its use.

—Shannon H. Neaves

See also: Apotheosis; Heroes

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Indra

See **Shakra**

Innocent of Alaska

(1797–1879 C.E.)

First Orthodox bishop of Alaska

Innocent of Alaska was born Ivan Evsievich Popov in Anchinskoe, Siberia, in 1797. He was renamed Ioann and later given the surname Veniaminov by the rector of his theological school in Irkutsk to honor a recently deceased bishop, Veniamin, and later known in Alaska as Father Ioann (John) Veniaminov. In 1817, Ioann married, in 1822 he became a priest, and in 1823 he answered the call to go to Alaska as a missionary.

Father Ioann arrived at Unalaska Island near the Alaskan Peninsula in 1824 where he taught Christian doctrine and instructed the local population in masonry. With his pupils' help, he built the first church in the Aleutian Islands. In 1834, Ioann transferred to Sitka. There, he studied the Tlingit language and continued to educate the local population in both Christianity and manual trades. Father Ioann traveled to northern California in that same year, where he visited Fort Ross and wrote down his impressions of Russia's southernmost American colony.

During his time in Alaska, Ioann studied the customs of the local tribes and attempted to understand their cultures even as he attempted to reveal to them the words of Christ and the traditions of the Orthodox religion. Accounts report that he was the most respected of the missionaries thanks to his considerate and gentle ways. Ioann also created a written alphabet and literary language for the Eastern Aleut dialect, which he used in his own writing and for translations. He was committed to the education of the local population and to the instruction of missionary priests in the local languages.

In 1838, Ioann traveled to St. Petersburg and Moscow. When he heard of the death of his wife, he became a monk, taking the name Innocent, and subsequently became bishop of Kamchatka, the Kurile, and the Aleutian Islands. In his diocese for the eastern Siberia region and Alaska, he sent out orders that conversions were to occur only by conviction, not coercion. Innocent became archbishop in 1858 and was transferred to Yakutsk. His onsite missionary work in Alaska ended in 1868, when he became metropolitan of Moscow, a position that he retained until death in 1879.

Innocent was an extraordinary missionary, linguist, and scholar whose works include a grammar for the Aleut-Lisiev language, *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska District; Journals in Alaska, 1823 to 1836; Instruction on the Paths to the Kingdom of Heaven* (lessons written in an Aleutian dialect); and other works on ethnography and language as well as

translations of Christian texts, such as the Gospel of Matthew. Innocent is commemorated on March 31 and September 23. He was canonized in 1977.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Mission; Orthodoxy and Saints; Scholars as Holy People

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Insanity

Often those who believe in a holy person's message regard them as touched by God, while nonbelievers simply think they're insane. The overlap between holiness and madness is recognized by followers of several religions, who declare that their spiritual heroes suffer from a "divine madness" or are "holy fools," a tradition that goes back at least to Plato, who says that Socrates had a "madness that comes by divine gift," marked by periodic trances and abandonment of social norms. Even with the aid of modern medicine, the line between mental illness and god-inspired ecstasy is not clear; in earlier ages, atypical behavior was often regarded as either divine or demonic in nature.

"Holy fools" are marked by their detachment from the standards of the world around them. They range from the Bauls, wandering mystics of India who reject scriptural authority and pursue an esoteric inner path to the divine, to the idiosyncratic holy people of Daoism, to Christian figures such as Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226). In all these cases, some believed that the practitioner was mad, rather than holy. In time, however, several religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, especially in Tibet and in Zen, accepted an entire category of mad saint. In the Tibetan case, holy fools such as Drukpa Kunley (1455–1529) were ascetic wanderers, turning the monastic norms on their heads by enjoying beer and women and cultivating eccentricity.

Theologians have decided that in such cases the appearance of madness is a matter of intense devotion—the holy person is so focused on the divine that he or she loses all



Innocent of Alaska (Library of Congress)

touch with accepted social practices. Whether these mad saints are actually insane or not is a matter of opinion. Certainly they have often had a specific message they were seeking to convey. For the Zen master Ikkyu Sojun (1394–1481), for example, an unconventional lifestyle was an overt critique of the decadent monastic life of his time. There are many tales of how he mocked conventions, going openly to

inns and brothels, dancing down streets waving a skull, and the like. This active critical role is especially clear in the case of the Russian holy fools, prominent during the Middle Ages. For example, the Muscovite Basil the Blessed (1469–1552), the “Fool in Christ,” renounced all earthly wisdom and thus could openly criticize those in power. Such people were tolerated as specially touched by God in circumstances where a

sane critic would be unlikely to survive, Basil bearding no less terrifying a figure than Ivan the Terrible himself.

Islam includes the belief that too close a contact with God can actually induce insanity. Besides a category of wanderers (*qualanders*) who neglect social rules, sufi teachings tell of *gazzb*—when the shock of divine illumination overwhelms the intellect—a state that can be permanent. This can make people behave in manners ordinarily regarded as insane. Ahmad Radwan (1895–1967), for example, could not bear to wear clothes, he was so inflamed by God. A whole class has earned the title “drunk sufis”—so intoxicated with the love of God that they act bizarrely and break social norms. The most famous is Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922) executed as a heretic. Hindu devotional saints have also sometimes seemed to cross the line between ecstasy and madness. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886) was a famous “mad saint” who broke purity rules, had hallucinations, danced with Kali’s statue, and in general led the locals to think him mad. His parents tried to cure him with marriage, and finally his holiness was only recognized thanks to the intervention of a holy woman who established that Ramakrishna was ecstatic, not insane.

Others have ended up in insane asylums only to be recognized as holy gradually. The prophet Muhammad (570–632) believed himself to be insane for a time after he began receiving his revelations, even considering committing suicide. His wife Khadija, however, led him to test the truth of his revelations, convincing him in time that he was indeed a prophet. Other holy people have not met so much understanding. The sufi mystic al-Shibli of Baghdad (c. 861–945) was so eccentric in his behavior, including rubbing salt into his eyes to prevent sleep, that he was committed to a lunatic asylum. But once there, he drew visitors from all over the Muslim world, with whom he discoursed on the sufi way—his tomb in Baghdad is still venerated. Such suspicion also fell upon several Christian saints of the seventeenth century, an era noted for its ecstatic religious outpourings. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647–1690) enjoyed so many visions and ecstasies that many of her fellow nuns thought she was insane or possessed by a demon. Similarly, Joseph of Cupertino’s (1603–1663) brethren thought his continual ecstasies were a sign of insanity or illness, and the saint was afflicted with seventeenth-century medicine at its worst.

One should also not dismiss the charge of insanity as a powerful tool in the hands of opponents of holy people. This is a particularly important theme in modern times, as science uncovers ever more biological reasons for abnormal behavior. But it is a particularly handy way to dismiss a troublemaker, if the followers can be led to believe the accusation. Insanity charges figure especially prominently when “enlightened” governments have faced troublesome holy people from a culture they have not understood. Thus,

the Jamaican prophet Alexander Bedward (1859–1930), who proclaimed that he was Christ and that the destruction of whites was imminent, was committed to an insane asylum after his movement was dispersed in 1921. The African American religious leader who took the name “Father Divine” (c. 1870–1965) also declared himself to be God in the early twentieth century. He was arrested, but the declaration that he was insane helped in his case—he was acquitted by a jury by reason of insanity. Even more recently, the Kenyan Elijah Masinde (1908–1987), who led a movement to restore native religion, was committed to a mental hospital by the colonial authorities, while his compatriot Mariam Ragot was accused of “delusions” and “mental illness” and imprisoned for six years, during which she was drugged to treat her insanity—a process that may indeed have broken her sanity. In all these cases, we simply lack the evidence to judge whether the person was insane or holy—or both.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bauls; Drukpa Kunley; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Ikkyu; Masinde, Elijah; Mysticism and Holy People; Radwan, Ahmad; Ragot, Mariam; Ramakrishna Paramahansa

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Intermediaries

The role of the holy person as mediator between the divine and the rest of humankind is so central to medieval Christianity and modern Roman Catholicism that it has often been argued that Protestantism has no saints—assuming that mediation is the only necessary attribute of Christian “sainthood.” Christianity very early evolved the notion that saints are able to intercede with God, while ordinary mortals do not dare to do so because of their sinfulness. Although saints do not have the power within themselves to work miracles, they can ask for miracles to be worked on their behalf. This belief expanded early from a focus on living holy people to dead saints, who, after all, are confirmed in their holiness and enjoy the presence of God in heaven. From there it was but a step to the creation of a full system for invoking saints, asking for their help in winning all sorts of favors from a distant God. Christian saints are still believed by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches (and many Anglicans) to have the power to intercede to help those who treat them respectfully, in favor of a particular locale, or, especially since the early modern period, in cases of particular illnesses or problems.

Other “religions of the book”—Judaism, Islam, and Protestant Christianity—have officially rejected the notion that holy people can intercede with God, and even that such in-



Russian shaman in animal skin clothes. (Art Directors)

tercession is necessary, believing, in Protestant terms, in the “priesthood of all believers.” Thus the official teaching, but reality blurs the distinction between these religions and traditional Christianity. At the popular level, many people in these religions believe that some people can pray “better” than others, and that therefore their prayers are more likely to be answered. And some people particularly please God, and thus are more likely to be heard. Thus the Qur’an teaches that no one can intercede for human beings but God alone, but nonetheless, the concept of the *wali*, the holy person—that is, a special person protected by God and given divine permission to intercede for lesser mortals—developed in Islam. This belief has been rejected by some sects of Islam but is particularly held by Shi’i Muslims, who believe that the divinely appointed imam is the only true interpreter of the Qur’an, and that thus one must submit to the imam of the age to be a true Muslim.

Judaism has also rejected for the most part the notion of holy people as necessary mediators between human and di-

vine, except in the case of scholars interpreting the meaning of scripture. But again, in popular religion, mediatory figures appear, especially in early Judaism and in the early modern Hasidic movement. Hebrew scriptures include large numbers of prophets, judges, and kings who conveyed God’s will to the people. Until the firm establishment of rabbinic Judaism, too, there were holy figures who interceded with God for humankind. For example, the Mishna, a rabbinic compilation from the second century C.E., describes Choni the Circle Drawer. He was asked to pray for rain—but God did not grant his request. Choni then drew a circle and stood in it, declaring that he wouldn’t move until God gave the right amount of the right sort of rain. He then got the rain he demanded. As the commentary says, he could presume with God, as a son can be presumptuous with his father. This sort of impertinent demand for God to act is usually more identified with the Christian saints of Ireland, such as St. Patrick (d. c. 493), who fasted until God gave in to his demands.

Similarly, Jewish Hasidic leaders such as Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810) emphasized God’s transcendence, making the role of the righteous holy man as intermediary especially important. The importance of holy mediators on the fringe of established religion is also significant in Protestant Christianity, especially such branches as Pentecostalism, which emphasize the role of a prophet. To give just one example of many, Elizabeth Clare Prophet (1940–), leader of the Church Universal and Triumphant, has a special role as “Messenger” passed on from her husband Mark Prophet when he died in 1973: She reportedly receives messages from saints and mystics of the past to help her church and its members.

The other major religion that gives an important role to deceased holy people as intermediaries is Daoism. Daoist immortals and perfected people are mediums for communication between heaven and earth, able to ascend or descend, or sometimes to manifest themselves in human form on earth. For example, the Daoist holy woman/goddess Bixia Yuanjun is believed to facilitate the birth of male children; the first celestial master, Zhang Daoling (34–156), was able to communicate between deities and believers; and at a more prosaic level, the Daoist sage Tao Hongjing (456–536) compiled a work on the necessary rituals to send documents to the gods, a practice any trained Daoist believer can carry out, thanks to the original work of holy people in making this information available to a broader public.

One of the most important functions of the holy person in Amerindian and African religions is also to serve as mediator between divine and human. Native American shamans have direct ties to spirits and the powers of the universe, which they can use on behalf of others. Often, rulers

especially were venerated as necessary intermediaries. The most important speech of the Aztec *tlatoani*, “speakers,” was that between gods and the people. This is also true of Africa, where rulers’ most important traditional role was often as intermediary. Zulu chiefs such as Shaka ka Senzangakhona (1787–1828), for example, were able to call on the ancestors. More generally, spirit mediums, common to many of the religions of Africa, are able to heal and protect the people thanks to their contact with the spirits of great ancestors and chiefs, who possess the mediums and speak through them. It is not surprising that many spirit mediums have been regarded as especially holy people with great influence in the community.

Examples of holy people acting as intermediaries with the gods can be found in most, if not all, religions over a great range of time. They appear in Greco-Roman polytheism (for example, the philosopher Pythagoras, c. 570–497 B.C.E.), and they play an important role in many new religions. Such figures range from the Sikh gurus, who are believed to be God’s representatives on earth, to Baha’i guardians of the faith such as ‘Abdu’l-Baha (1844–1921), who was named “Center of the Covenant” and the authorized interpreter of the Baha’i scriptures. They also include the founders of hundreds of Christian cults in America and leaders of new religions in Japan and other countries.

To end on a more prosaic note: Holy people are so often regarded as intermediaries with the divine because of their pious lives, impartiality, love of justice, and charismatic traits—the same qualities make them highly desirable as intermediaries within the human sphere. In all religions, holy people have been called upon to serve as ambassadors, have mediated peace, and have reconciled enemies. For example, Muhammad (570–632) was invited to Medina as arbiter in tribal disputes, a common use of holy men on the Arabian peninsula both before and after his time. Some holy people are even granted holy status in popular esteem especially because of their ability to mediate between earthly enemies. Thus, Alexander Nevskii (1220–1263), prince of Novgorod, was an important negotiator between the Russians and their Mongol overlords, while the Irish Laurence O’Toole (1128–1180) eased the transition to Norman rule of Ireland while serving as archbishop of Dublin.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: ‘Abdu’l-Baha; Bixia Yuanjun; Christianity and Holy People; Hasidism; Imams; Nahman of Bratslav; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Tao Hongjing; Zhang Daoling

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Ippen

(1239–1289 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, founder

Ippen, born in 1239, was a Japanese Tendai Buddhist monk who in 1274 founded the Jisho (Time) sect, a branch of Pure Land Buddhism. Together with Honen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262), he is recognized as one of the three originators of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism in the Kamakura period (1185–1333). His particular contribution to the Pure Land Buddhist practice was to introduce the *nenbutsu odori* (chanting Amida Buddha’s name while dancing), a type of Amida worship in which devotees dance in a circle beating drums, ringing bells, and chanting *Namu Amida Butsu* (hail to the name of Amida Buddha).

Ippen’s initial inspiration was an oracle he received from the Shinto *kami* (indigenous Japanese deity) at Kumano Shrine in Kii Province. This deity had long been identified in popular Japanese culture as a manifestation of Amida Buddha (Skt.: Amitabha), the central Buddha in Pure Land belief. According to this oracle, rebirth in Amida Buddha’s Pure Land is assured if one merely chants the *nenbutsu* (Amida’s name) fervently; faith does not matter. Ippen held that the *nenbutsu* transcends all human intentions. Therefore, people should abandon all religious practices except for the *nenbutsu*, for then one’s trust in it will be perfect.

Ippen’s teachings stress first and foremost this simple religious practice. Unlike his predecessors, Honen and Shinran, Ippen did not focus on the believer’s mental state but rather emphasized the primacy of religious practice and its power to elicit “single-mindedness without distraction” from the devotee. In order to propagate this belief, Ippen traveled throughout Japan and assembled people to intone the *nenbutsu* and to dance to its rhythm. This particular faith and practice greatly appealed to the common people because it was an easy path of salvation that was accessible to everyone.

Ippen’s religious travels are depicted in the *Ippen Shonin Eden* (Pictorial biography of the monk Ippen), also known as the *Ippen Hijiri-e* (Picture scroll of the wandering monk Ippen), an illustrated handscroll painting dating to the thirteenth century. This handscroll painting, a set of eleven scrolls, was produced in commemoration of Ippen and his teachings and serves as a historical record of his time.

—Monika Dix

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Honen; Ritual; Shinran

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Ireland, Twelve Apostles of

(6th cent. C.E.)

Christian saints

“The Twelve Apostles of Ireland” refers to a group of sixth-century Irish saints as well as to a manuscript of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The manuscript is part of the *Bethada Náem nÉrenn* (Lives of the Irish saints), a collection of Irish Lives assembled by Charles Plummer. Richard Woods refers to the twelve saints as “kind of a monastic Knights of the Round Table” (2000, 82). Although the names vary in different accounts, the Twelve Apostles usually include Colum Cille (or Columba) of Iona, Ciarán of Clonmacnoise, Brénainn (or Brendan) the Navigator, Molaise of Daim Inis (Devenish Island), Cainnech (or Canice) of Kilkenny, Colum (or Colmán) of Terryglass, Brendan of Birr, Ruadán (or Rúán), Mobhí, Clárainech of Glas Noiden, Ninidh of Inismacsaint, and Sinell.

The twelve were brought together by Finnian of Clonard (d. c. 549), who is sometimes counted as one of them. Finnian established the monastery of Clúain-Iráird (Clonard), where young men gathered, drawn by Finnian’s reputation as a teacher and holy man, in about 520. According to the Life of Finnian, the average number of students at Clonard was 3,000; the most famous of these students became known as the Twelve Apostles. These men were sent out by Finnian to found Christian monasteries throughout Ireland.

The most well-known of the apostles are Colum Cille (521–597) and Brendan the Navigator (c. 486–575). Ciarán (512–548) was a friend and rival of Colum Cille and became one of Ireland’s most honored Irish saints. He, like Finnian and others of the Clonard school, died during an epidemic in 548–549. He is remembered for having a temper and for his kindness toward animals. His feast day is September 9.

Cainnech (517–600) is the patron of Kilkenny; his feast day is October 11. Colum (d. 549) has his feast day celebrated on December 13. Brendan of Birr (d. c. 571) shares ancestry, as well as name, with Brendan the Navigator. He was the eldest of the twelve, and his school at Birr is famous for the MacRegol Gospels, which are now housed in Oxford’s Bodleian Library. His feast day is November 29. Ruadán (d. c. 584) is thought to have been related to the royal house of Munster and has his feast day on April 15.

There is some speculation whether all these men were actually trained by Finnian. Some seem to have lived before Finnian’s time, and it is thought others were connected to the Clonard circle by later writers to enhance the reputation of that monastery.

—Kelly A. O’Connor-Salomon

See also: Apostles; Brendan the Navigator; Christianity and Holy People; Ciarán of Clonmacnoise; Colum Cille; Monasticism and Holy People

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Irenaeus

(c. 135–c. 200 C.E.)

Christian bishop, scholar

A church father born sometime around 135, Irenaeus claimed to have known Polycarp of Smyrna and thus probably came from Asia Minor. He studied at Rome, eventually settling in Lyons, where he became a presbyter and ultimately bishop. As bishop, he led the Christian community in Lyons, evangelized the Celts of the region, and sought to establish peace and unity in the church. He died in about 200, possibly martyred.

During the second century, Irenaeus and other fathers of the church wrote treatises defending their faith against heretical doctrines. Although most of these tracts have been lost, including many written by Irenaeus, two of Irenaeus’s have survived: *Denunciation and Refutation of the So-Called Gnosis* and *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*. The *Denunciation*, generally known as *Against Heresies*, is of special note, as it not only details the Christian orthodoxy of the second century but also presents an exhaustive and objective description of Gnosticism. Irenaeus felt that Gnosticism, particularly that of Valentinus and his followers, was especially dangerous, both because of its radical syncretism and because of the tendency of its doctrines to sound so much like those of Christianity while its “sentiments are very different.”

Originally non-Christian, Gnosticism was mainly a Jewish movement that drew upon Hellenistic philosophy, Persian dualism, Babylonian astrology, and other concepts circulating during the first and second centuries. Like Christianity, it was a doctrine of salvation, but it differed fundamentally in that its proponents argued that the spirit must be liberated from the prison house of the material world, a world created not by the eternal God but by an inferior or evil being. For the Gnostics, salvation, or the release of the soul from the body, could only be achieved by the reception of a mystically illuminating knowledge, or *gnosis*, which would be delivered by a divine messenger. In the case of Christian Gnosticism, the messenger was Christ.

Irenaeus felt that this conceptualization of salvation was a “perverse mirror image” of the “Apostolic faith,” especially because it seemed to call into question the Christian ideas of God as the creator of the world, Christ as both human and divine, and the salvation of both the soul and the body. Because of this, Irenaeus argued the need to exhort true

Christians “to avoid such an abyss of madness and of blasphemy against Christ” (*Against Heresies*, I, Preface, II).

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Polycarp; Scholars as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Ireri wa Irugi

(fl. c. 1800 C.E.)

Aembu prophet

Ireri wa Irugi is the most famous, well-remembered, and highly respected prophet of the Aembu people of Kenya. Although his birth and death dates are unknown, he lived long before the Europeans came to Embu, probably in c. 1800. He hailed from Kigumo in Kyeni.

The stories handed down about Ireri wa Irugi contain several remarkable descriptions of him. He was said to be in communion with God, who called him to be his spokesman. He reportedly would sink underground to commune with God and had the special ability of appearing in different places within short periods of time. He was thus known for his abrupt, unexpected appearances. He apparently was able to foresee events by “beating a goat.” For the Aembu, the goat is the sacred animal used for sacrifices. Ireri’s choice was a white goat, which symbolized the purity and the presence of God, just as the snow at the top of Kirinyaga (Mt. Kenya) symbolized the dwelling place of God.

Some of the things Ireri prophesied included the coming of outsiders and the disruptive impact their presence would have on the Aembu peoples. The social order, he predicted, would undergo change because of formal education and its consequences. The economic setup would also change, especially with regard to land ownership. The roles of men, women, and youth would no longer be the same. Even the mode of dress and the dances would not remain the same. He lamented that the invaders would interfere with Aembu culture. He also talked of an animal that would come from the sky with an iron mouth (later understood as the airplane) and an iron snake (the train), both of which would destroy the people by opening them up to foreign influence. Ireri was quick to point out that any resistance against the invaders would be counterproductive because of their superior weapons and their determination to conquer.

Ireri also warned of impending dangers such as the jigger disease, declaring that the people, especially family members, should be prepared to nurse one another. The epidemic of jigger disease came to pass, but the prophecy has also been taken to signify the general disruption caused among the Aembu by the coming of the Europeans. Ireri is also remembered for designating the families from which individuals of outstanding political prowess or material prosperity would emerge, and this, too, came to pass.

To draw the attention of the people, Ireri would blow a horn, and many would gather to listen to him. He has been compared to Cege Mugo wa Kibiro (fl. c. 1890) in Agikuyu culture.

—Mary Getui

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Mugo Wa Kibiro, Cege; Prophets

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‘Isa

See Jesus (‘Isa)

Isaac

(c. 20th century B.C.E.)

Hebrew patriarch

Dating from possibly the twentieth century B.C.E., Isaac was one of the Hebrew patriarchs, the son of Abraham and Sarah and the father of Esau and Jacob by Rebecca. He is the most elusive of the patriarchs; in his appearance in Genesis 21–28, events usually happen to him, rather than him having an effect on events. His very lack of clear character helps shed light on Jewish notions of relationship with God: No personal qualities *earned* Isaac a special position with God; he appears as a very ordinary sort of person. What he is, above all, is the transmitter of a lineage: God made promises to Abraham, for which Isaac acts as hereditary bridge.

The primary importance of Isaac was that he existed at all. He was the child born in the great old age of his parents, Sarah and Abraham, as a central part of God’s covenant with Abraham. His position as the deeply longed-for son of old age made Isaac the perfect tool to test the faith of his father. In Genesis 19, Abraham is commanded by God to take his beloved son (Jewish and Christian traditions assume that this must be a reference to Isaac; Muslims attribute the tale to Isaac’s half brother Ishmael), build an altar, and sacrifice the child on it. Abraham does so, only to be stopped by an angel at the last instant. Abraham’s willingness to obey

proves the strength of his belief; Isaac's opinion of the matter is not given in Genesis. In Christian exegesis, however, Isaac becomes a mystical forerunner of Christ, serving as willing sacrifice for the world.

Isaac has a final strong appearance before his death at the reported age of 180, when his sons by Rebecca, the twins Esau and Jacob, are in contention. Jacob, the younger twin, manages to deceive his old and blind father into blessing him instead of Esau. As a result, God's promise to the lineage of Abraham is passed on to future generations through Jacob.

Isaac and Rebecca were both buried in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, also the burial place of Abraham and Sarah (and, according to tradition, of Adam and Eve). It is still an important pilgrimage site for both Jews and Muslims.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Abraham; Hereditary Holiness; Isma'il; Jacob; Judaism and Holy People; Patriarchs, Hebrew

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Isaac of Armenia (Surb Sahak)

(c. 338–439 C.E.)

Christian Armenian patriarch

Isaac of Armenia, or Isaac the Great, was the son of St. Nerses the Great, catholicos (patriarch) of Armenia (d. 373), and a woman of royal heritage. He was born in about 338 and educated in Constantinople, where he was an especially enthusiastic student of languages and literature. Although he married, he was left a widower at a young age and thereupon decided to become a monk. However, it was not long before the piety, devotion, and cultured intelligence of the man became known, and he was appointed catholicos of Armenia in about 388 or 390. As catholicos, Isaac undertook a rigorous program of reform and rejuvenation of the Armenian church, beginning with the establishment of its metropolitan autonomy from the see at Constantinople.

In so doing, Isaac enabled the Armenian church to affirm its own distinct, non-Cappadocian form of Christianity. Never having abandoned completely his affinity for monastic discipline (it was said that he himself lived as a monk even at the patriarchal residence), he reaffirmed the tradition of monasticism within the Armenian church and required a vow of celibacy of its bishops. He established new churches and monasteries throughout Armenia to replace those destroyed by the Persian overlords and to counter the

influence of Persian Zoroastrianism, demanded ecclesiastical accountability from all levels of the clergy, and renewed the authority of Byzantine canon law in the particulars of church governance.

However, his most lasting contribution was to help establish an Armenian alphabet and a native Armenian literature. Because of his own schooling, he was especially sensitive to the power of language and literary form in native dialect. Just as he desired the creation of an autonomous and distinct Armenian church, he desired the development of a native liturgical and spiritual literature. Thus, in about 390 he advised and assisted the monk St. Mesrop Mashtots in the development of an Armenian alphabet (the original and archaic form of Armenian and its alphabet having long since been lost, probably since the introduction of Christianity in the second century). The two supervised an assortment of scholars in creating the first translations of the Koine Greek and Syriac Bibles into Armenian. Isaac also requested a translation of the liturgy from the Syrian into Armenian, as well as texts from the Greek and Syrian fathers, including Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom. It was with those translations and others that Armenian literature is said to have begun, and with it, a firm sense of Armenian identity.

Isaac was able to continue as catholicos until 428, at which time he was asked to resign from his position, not by the Persian rulers but by resentful and threatened Armenian princes. Like his father before him, whose death, it is said, was the result of poisoning at the hands of a willful and bitter King Pap, of whose decadent lifestyle Catholicos Nerses could not approve, Isaac fell victim to court intrigue and withdrew from public life. Nevertheless, as a result of popular demand, Isaac returned to his patriarchal seat c. 430–432 and resumed his pastoral duties, even attending the synod of Ashtishat in 435. He died in Ashtishat in 439. His feast day is September 9 (also September 7, November 20, or two weeks prior to Lent).

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Athanasius; Basil the Great; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory of Nyssa; John Chrysostom; Patriotism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Ishida Baigan

(1685–1744 C.E.)

Confucian popular leader

Ishida Baigan was the founder of a popular self-cultivation movement in eighteenth-century Japan that was particularly

influential among the merchant class. Robert N. Bellah's famous 1957 book *Tokugawa Religion* even portrayed it as a kind of Japanese equivalent of Max Weber's "Protestant ethic." Baigan's disciple Teshima Toan (1718–1786) organized Baigan's teachings into a nationwide religious movement, naming it Shingaku (lit., "learning of the mind and heart") because it centered on knowing the (original) mind, the ultimate spiritual task that is classically described in *Mencius* 7A:1.

Born into a farming family in Tanba province near Kyoto in 1685, at ten Baigan was sent to work for a commercial house in Kyoto. At twenty-two he became an apprentice clerk for a kimono merchant there, a job he continued for twenty years. He had no teacher, but he always took books with him to read when he went out on business and liked to attend lectures by Confucian teachers. At first he was also strongly attracted to Shinto and thought of becoming a Shinto preacher. At the age of about thirty-five, he began to feel ill at ease about his understanding of the nature of the self (Jap.: *sei*; Chin.: *xing*). He continued listening to lectures by all sorts of teachers, but none was able to settle his doubts.

Finally, Baigan chanced to meet a recluse named Oguri Ryōun who was well versed in Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist teachings. Impressed by Ryōun's self-assurance, Baigan became his disciple and began practicing contemplation under his direction. When he had an insight that "the nature is the parent of heaven and earth and the ten thousand things," Ryōun objected, saying, "There is still an eye that sees that your own nature is the parent of heaven and earth and the ten thousand things. But the nature has no eye" (*Tohi mondō*, Ichikawa 1995, 446). This conversation propelled Baigan to bore into the question for another year and a half. One night as he lay in bed exhausted, a sparrow's chirp at daybreak pierced the deep silence, and Baigan had a profound enlightenment experience. From 1725, he began giving free public lectures at his residence. These talks led to the compilation of *Tohi mondō* (City and country dialogues) and a collection of his sayings. Both books quoted from the basic texts of Neo-Confucianism and philosophical Daoism as well as famous Chinese and Japanese collections of ethical maxims.

In his *Seikaron* (On ordering one's family), Baigan wrote, "If one is serving a lord, to devote oneself totally to the point of forgetting oneself, to work without regard for hardship, putting all thoughts of personal gain in the background. If one is serving one's parents, to love and cherish them, wearing always a cheerful countenance, managing oneself like a willow bends in the wind, serving them harmoniously and affectionately." When told he was being criticized for teaching Confucianism openly to all, even women, he said that the idea that learning should be restricted to certain classes of people had arisen from an overemphasis on the literary aspects of Confucianism at the expense of its true core, ethical action—that is, from forgetting *Analects* 1:2, 1:6, and 7:7.

Regarding religious worship, he taught that all reverence for the gods is for the purpose of making the mind clear and pure; to pray or wish for anything other than the will of heaven is a sin. "If one has understood the mind of Heaven, one knows contentment. Holding to one's own place in life, one will follow the will of Heaven with a joyful mind and one's body will be at ease" (Ichikawa 1995, 448–450).

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Status; Teachers as Holy People

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Ishmael

See *Isma'īl*

Ishmael ben Elisha

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Jewish rabbi

Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha, generally mentioned without the patronymic, left a significant mark on Mishnaic literature and thereby on later Judaism. A Cohen, that is, a descendant of Moses' brother Aaron, he was taken captive to Rome while still a child after the destruction of the Second Temple; later he was ransomed by Rabbi Joshua and became his student.

With Akiba ben Joseph, another Jewish sage of the second century, Rabbi Ishmael disputed interpretations of the Bible. Each teacher evolved a different system for such expositions that led to a school. Most of the extant halachic Midrashim belong to one of those schools. From Ishmael's school, we have the *Mekhilta de-R. Ishmael* on Exodus, the *Sifrei* on Numbers, and part of the *Sifrei* on Deuteronomy (1–54). Whereas Akiba interpreted every superfluous word and every repetition in the Torah, Ishmael maintained that "the Torah used human language" (Ker. 11a). He consistently sought the literal meaning of biblical texts as well as the poetic meaning within the literal.

Rabbi Ishmael's life and ethical teachings exemplify his love of humankind, especially of every Jew. He is said to have remarked that all Jews are to be regarded as princes (that is, there can be no distinction between Jews). So deep was his concern regarding the survival of the Jews that he believed that it was permissible to violate certain commandments rather than suffer martyrdom.

Some traditions include Ishmael among the sages killed in 135 C.E. after the Bar Kokhba revolt, but it is unlikely that he had survived so long. During the persecutions that followed the revolt, his students fled to Babylonia, where they continued to exert an influence.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Akiba ben Joseph; Cohen and Levite; Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Scholars as Holy People

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Isidore of Seville

(c. 560–636 C.E.)

Christian bishop, writer, doctor of the church

Isidore was one of the most widely read and revered authors of the European Middle Ages. There are 1,000 surviving manuscripts of his most famous work, the *Etymologies*, a twenty-book encyclopedia that incorporated knowledge from both Christian and pre-Christian authors of the first through sixth centuries. Isidore wrote several other very popular works, including histories, an anti-Jewish tract, and numerous theological treatises and manuals. He has been credited with preserving classical learning for later scholars and with shaping knowledge and thinking for the entire medieval period. He was canonized in 1598 and named a doctor of the church in 1722. In 1999, he became a front-runner in the search for a patron saint of the Internet, based on the breadth of information compiled in the *Etymologies*, which his supporters compare to a database.

Most of Isidore's writings were intended for practical purposes, particularly clerical education and discipline, which he saw as necessary for maintaining the church's holy authority. This pragmatism was also reflected in Isidore's involvement in the affairs of his own society, the seventh-century Visigothic kingdom in Spain, beginning in about 600 when he succeeded his brother Leander as bishop of Seville. Isidore and his contemporaries believed that their king's power and their society's stability emanated directly from God, and his favor depended upon enforcing absolute religious and ritual uniformity. Isidore advocated clerical discipline as one means to this end and promoted church councils as another.

Building on the conciliar traditions fostered by his brother Leander, he presided over provincial councils in Seville in 619 and about 624, and in 633 he led the Fourth Council of Toledo, which issued legislation calling for ritual uniformity, clerical discipline, regular councils, an end to re-

bellions, orderly royal elections, and the regulation and suppression of the kingdom's Jews. Throughout the rest of the century, Isidore was venerated for his learning and teaching, and he and the Fourth Council became unquestionable sources of holy authority for the Iberian clerical writers and legislators who continued to try to implement his ideas and programs. Despite the fall of the kingdom in 711, Isidorian ideas about the holy authority of education and enforced consensus and uniformity were disseminated throughout medieval Europe, not only in Isidore's writings but also in the collections of legislation produced by the seventh-century Visigothic church councils.

His feast day is April 4.

—Rachel Stocking

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Scholars as Holy People

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Isidore the Farmer

(c. 1070–c. 1130 C.E.)

Christian layman

A Christian saint born in about 1070 on the outskirts of Madrid, Isidore the Farmer was a man of humble origins who spent his entire adult life working as an agricultural laborer for a local knight. He married a peasant woman named Maria Torribia and had one son, who died as a youth. Though neither his social nor his marital status would suggest that Isidore was a likely candidate for sanctity in the twelfth century, he somehow managed to win a reputation for holiness, based primarily on the fact that he spent more time in the churches of Madrid than he did in the fields.

This choice could have had dire consequences for a person of his low station had it not been for timely divine interventions, the most famous being the appearance of an angel to assist Isidore with his plowing. Beyond this, Isidore was credited with miracles ranging from cursing a wolf to death to filling empty pots with food to feed the poor. Otherwise,

Isidore simply lived out his life of farming and prayer, with the added wrinkle that, after the death of his only child, he and his wife decided to live out their lives in continence.

Some forty years after Isidore's death, which had occurred in about 1130, his reputedly incorrupt body was translated from the cemetery to the church of San Andres in Madrid, a clear sign that he was already held in high regard in the area. Indeed, it was reported that Isidore actually appeared to King Alfonso VIII of Castile to assist him at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, the single most decisive campaign of the Christian reconquista of Muslim Spain. In 1265, a deacon at San Andres authored a *Life of Isidore* out of the bits and pieces of information that he could gather, most of it recounting miraculous healings associated with Isidore's body. In the early sixteenth century, Francis de Vargas petitioned Pope Leo X for permission to build a chapel at San Andres in Isidore's honor.

When Philip II chose to relocate his court to Madrid in 1562, thus elevating it from a provincial town to the capital of a far-flung empire, the status of its humble saint grew accordingly. The famous Spanish poet and playwright Lope de Vega, himself a proud native of Madrid, dedicated one of his earliest literary efforts to Isidore in 1599, apparently in an effort to advance the cause of the saint's beatification. But the biggest push seems to have come from Philip III, who attributed his recovery from an illness in 1620 to the intercession of Isidore. At the king's request, Pope Paul V beatified Isidore that same year, an event that was celebrated in Madrid on May 19, 1620, by a poetry contest hosted by Lope de Vega. Though Philip III had a relapse and died a short time later, in 1621, Isidore's path to sainthood culminated on March 12, 1622, when Pope Gregory XV elevated him alongside three other Spanish luminaries: Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, and Teresa of Avila. The feast day assigned to him, May 15, has been the principal saint's day in Madrid ever since.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Ignatius of Loyola; Laity; Miracles; Teresa of Avila; Xavier, Francis

Islam and Holy People

Holiness in Islam

The idea of the holy is most properly applied to divinity (Allah in the Muslim world). However, the notion of God as a Holy Person is understood metaphorically rather than in terms of a corporealized entity. Or, God's personhood is conceived as something beyond the capacity of the human mind to understand. Thus, various scriptural verses that refer to God's hands, or being seated on a throne (Qur'an 89:13), were understood by the Mu'tazilites, an early group of theologians, to be allusions to divine powers rather than as representa-

tions of divine corporeality. Other theologians, such as Ibn Hanbal (780–855), took the stance that such verses were to be accepted at face value, "without asking how" (*bi-la kayf*). For the mystics, allusions to God's person (*shakhs*) indicated not the physicality of God but aspects of divine *ipseity* (selfhood), being (*huwiyya*), or nature or essence (*dhat*). The monotheism of Islam precludes the incarnation of divinity in human or any other corporeal form, since entering the physical realm would be to greatly compromise divine omnipotence by placing corporeal limits such as death upon it. However, that is not to say that Muslims have not considered whether divinity may manifest or reveal itself in the cosmos and in the world without going so far as to identify either of these with divinity itself. Such questions arose, for instance, in their meditations upon a Qur'anic verse that declared: "For wherever you turn, there is the Face of God" (2:115).

For instance, the noted Spanish mystic Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240) conceived of divinity as revealing itself through a hierarchy of manifestations (*tajalli*), each veiled by increasing degrees of corporealization, thereby rendering all in creation to be holy at its source. Another allusion to the inherent holiness of everything created is the Qur'anic identification of all things in this world as *ayat*, signs, of divinity, thereby suggesting that while these may not be rendered identical with divinity, they nevertheless point to it and are representations of it (41:53). The term *ayat* also characterizes the verses of the Qur'an, in this case pointing to another medium through which divinity manifests or reveals itself.

Revelation to humans, then, occurs in several ways. Scriptural revelation is brought to humans such as Muhammad (570–632), the prophet through whom Islam as a religion was revealed, through the agency of the holy spirit (*al-ruh al-quds*), traditionally identified with the archangel Gabriel. Such revelation, or *wahy*, identified as the process through which God addresses prophets, is considered by Muslims to be a continuation of the stream of revelation that began with Adam, the primordial human being, continued with biblical and nonbiblical prophets, and culminated with Muhammad. Muslims consider Muhammad to be the Seal of the Prophets (33:40). That is, with Muhammad, divine scriptural revelation that is religiously binding and intended for the benefit of humankind came to an end.

However, Muslims have not uniformly believed that all communication from God ceased after Muhammad's career as a prophet, although there are some Muslim groups that consider such to be the case. The notion of divine communication includes, in addition to the concept of *wahy*, the concept of *ilham* (inspiration), which instructs the individual recipient as a divine gift. *Ilham* is available especially to those individuals whose souls or hearts are pure, most notably men and women of spiritual discipline and insight. Muslims have debated whether knowledge or insight gained



Shrine of Imam 'Ali b. Abi Talib, built around his tomb. Najaf, Iraq. (Art Directors)

in this manner is an authentic form of divine revelation, whether it could be mistaken for *waswas* (satanic whisperings), and whether it should be communicated to others as a guide to ethical conduct and inner illumination in the manner of *wahy*.

Generally, then, the categories of humans considered holy in Muslim circles are those who are recipients of divine communication. The first of these are the prophets, including the pre-Islamic ones, who were recipients of divine revelation, that is, *wahy*. The second category comprises those individuals among the Muslim faithful who through their spiritual exercises purified their hearts to receive divine guidance in the form of *ilham*. To these may be added a third category, those who by dint of being the descendants of the prophet Muhammad, primarily but not restricted to the progeny of the prophet's daughter, Fatima, through her marriage to his cousin, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, were considered by their loyalists (termed Shi'a) to be the spiritual heirs of the revelation received by the prophet and thereby authorized to interpret its inner meaning for their own generations. Such persons, termed *imams* by their community, constitute yet another category of holy people, and each succeeding imam is appointed through a designation termed *nass*. Within this category, a special place is accorded to 'Ali in his function as the executor (*wasi*) of prophetic revelation, thereby making his descendants, whether through Fatima or another wife, spiritually authoritative and thereby considered to be endowed with the ability to guide their communities.

Characteristics of Holy People

By and large, a constellation of concepts is attached to the notion of a person considered holy within Muslim communities. Chief of these is the Qur'anic term *wali* (pl. *awliya'*), which may be translated as "the friend of God," from the Arabic root *waliya*, "to be near or close." In legal parlance, the term denotes a manager, a guardian, a protector, and is also generally understood as intercessor. In mystical usage it has most commonly been translated into Western languages as "saint." But the Qur'anic *wali* both differs from and resonates with the Christian concept of the saint. On the one hand, the *awliya'* are not canonized by a formal authority, as in Catholicism, nor is public acclamation formalized only after death. On the other, both Muslim and Christian saints enjoy closeness to God, experience rapture, engage in intercession and miracle-working, and have paradigmatic lives. In Qur'anic usage, God alone is the *wali* of the believers; indeed, none can intercede for humans but God alone (2:48; 74:48; 6:51). However, a reference to the friends of God (*awliya'*) in 10:62 has led to these being understood as a special group of people whom God protects, and who indeed may, through divine permission (10:3), intercede with God on the behalf of other humans.

Thus, the logician and theologian Jurjani (1339–1413) understood the *wali* to be an '*arif bi'llah*, "one possessing mystical knowledge"; others, such as the mystic 'Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri (d. 1073), more popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh, whose shrine in Lahore attracts pilgrims to this day, have considered the *wali* to have influence with God and the ability to perform miracles (*karamat*). The *awliya'* are also at some level responsible for governing the universe. (Various hierarchies among the *awliya'* have been proposed by mystical writers. In the most commonly accepted hierarchy, the fifth rung is occupied by the *abdal* [pl. of *badal*, "substitute"], who preserve the universe and remain unknown to their fellow humans.) *Wali* may also connote anyone in the Muslim world who is considered to be spiritually authoritative, including the *pir*, *shaykh*, *imam*, *murshid*, *salih*, *murabit*, *siyyid*, *agurram*, and *amghar*.

Related to this concept are the two terms *wilayah* and *walayah*, both of which have loosely been translated as "sainthood." Although *wilayah* is a general legal term for any legal authority, and is deployed in specific manners in Islamic law, it is a term that buttresses the concept of holiness among the Muslim faithful. Primarily, it draws its signification as having been divinely delegated from 4:59, "O believers, obey God and obey the Prophet, and obey those in authority amongst you." Thus, in Shi'ite Islam the term *wilayah* in the Qur'anic context signifies the authority of the imam as the one who knows the *ta'wil* (signification) of the *tanzil* (that which is revealed). Put differently, the imam is the divinely authorized interpreter of the inner meaning (*batin*) of the outer or manifest (*zahir*) words of the revelation, and in his spiritual status, he embodies many of the characteristics of the *wali* more generally. The majority of the Shi'ites consider blood lineage to the prophet through Fatima and to 'Ali among the key criteria for holding the office of imam. However, many sufis, whether Shi'a or Sunni, extend such investiture of authority to any descendant of the prophet (*sharif*) as well as to any Muslim who has been accorded such authority through a mystical unveiling of divine mysteries and who is a recipient of *ilham*, usually under the guidance of the prophet, a mystical prophetic figure such as Khidr (the "green" prophet), 'Ali and his descendants, or a sufi master.

The terms *wilayah* and *walayah* are often used interchangeably to denote authority, whether delegated by God or by the ruler. However, as Vincent J. Cornell (1998) has pointed out, Muslim grammarians themselves have debated which of these terms is the correct verbal noun for *wali*, and sufis have also engaged in discussions about the subtle differences between the two terms. For instance, the renowned Indian sufi master Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya (1239–1325) elaborates on the distinction thus:

The saint [*wali*] possesses both *walayat* and *wilayat* at the same time. *Walayat* is that which masters impart to disciples

about God, just as they teach them about the etiquette of the Way. Everything such as this which takes place between the Shaykh and other people is called *walayat*. But that which takes place between the Shaykh and God is called *wilayat*. That is a special kind of love, and when the Shaykh leaves the world, he takes his *wilayat* with him. His *walayat*, on the other hand, he can confer on someone else, whomever he wishes, and if he does not confer it, then it is suitable for God Almighty to confer that *walayat* on someone. But the *wilayat* is the Shaykh's constant companion; he bears it with him (wherever he goes). (Cornell 1998, xix)

By dint of the wali's closeness to God, then, another key concept attached to holiness arises: the wali's possession of *barakah* (blessing), which often also connotes spiritual power or charisma. A wali, then, is considered to be a charismatic individual endowed with powers that may bring healing and benefit to others while containing also the possibility of harm if the wali is crossed, a potency that of course a wali would never exercise. The prophet Muhammad is considered to possess *barakah* par excellence because of his closeness to God and in his function as the intercessor for all creatures with God.

When asked, "What are the external signs of the friends of God?" the mystic al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. c. 905–910) enumerated nine signs: (1) When seen, they cause people to think of God; (2) they possess the power of that which is due, such that none can oppose them without being overwhelmed by the power of that which is due to God; (3) they are endowed with clairvoyance; (4) they receive divine inspiration; (5) whoever contends with them is cast down and comes to an evil end; (6) all tongues praise them save those who are jealous of them; (7) their prayers are answered and they are capable of miracles such as traveling distances over the earth and walking on water; (8) they converse with Khidr; and (9) their clearest sign "is what they say about knowledge with regard to its foundations" (Radtke and O'Kane 1996, 124–125).

Closely related to the concept of *barakah*, spiritual blessing that can be transferred to others as simply as through a glance from the wali, the shaking of a hand, or through a visitation to a wali's tomb, is the ability to perform miracles, or *karamat*. In his study of the Moroccan wali, Cornell identifies at least eleven types of miracles traditionally reported of various *awliya'*, the majority of which are concerned with what he terms "epistemological capital." That is, more than half the miracles studied involve the ability to read thoughts, while others include foretelling the future, uncovering hidden secrets, and, less common, receiving guidance from the prophets Muhammad or Khidr. His list includes mind reading, spiritual insight, prophecy, power over animals, food miracles, finding treasure, traversing distances, experiencing visions of the prophets Muhammad or Khidr, healing, com-

manding *jinn* (fiery spirits), and performing water miracles. The basis of such abilities lies in knowing that which is beyond the ken of ordinary humans, that is, in the "epistemological capital" of the wali (Cornell 1998, 115–116).

Taken together, the wali's ability to perform *karamat*, or miracles, his or her possession of *wilayah*, or divine support, through *ilham*, or nonscriptural revelation, and his or her intrinsic *barakah*, or blessing, all contribute toward a set of practices undertaken by the faithful so as to benefit from the wali's gifts. The foremost of these is discipleship, for the wali is a godservant (*'abd*), and his or her disciples are those desirous of spiritual insight (*murid*). A key component of the master-student relationship is engagement in continual prayer in forms such as *dhikr* (remembrance), in addition to the required prayers (*salat*), and in meditations on and the practice of virtues such as repentance, selflessness, gratitude, abstinence, patience, poverty, humility, fear of divine wrath, piety, trust, satisfaction in divine favors, nearness to divinity, love toward divinity, and the striving toward experiencing *tawhid*, the central tenet of the Islamic faith, in which God is alone the deity. Under the guidance of the wali and through divine grace the seeker may enter any one of a number of states (*ahwal*). The noted Persian mystic Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri (986–1072), author of perhaps the most widely read classical sufi treatise, enumerates a number of these states, ranging from the experience of fear and hope to constriction and expansion, through intimacy and awe onward to ecstasy, union, and separation, passing away and abiding, and nearness and distance, all of which are a few of the many states that could be experienced.

Veneration of Holy People

Instruction in the science of the heart can take place in institutional settings such as a *ribat* or a *khanaqah*, usually but not exclusively centered around the wali's living quarters. The specific school of teaching, that is, the religious order or brotherhood that may emerge from a wali of note, or *tariqah* (lit. "path"), institutionalizes the doctrines and practices of the wali and his disciples. A brief mention, then, must be made of the importance of sacred text emerging from a sacred figure. Although the Qur'an is held by Muslims to be divinely identified as Muhammad's only miracle, and the source of *barakah* par excellence, writings by wali-type figures have also been considered meritorious for those who perform and meditate upon them. For example, the devotional prayers of Zayn al-Abidin (658–713), great-grandson of the prophet, are thought to bestow merit upon those who recite them, and similarly, in south Asia the Satpanthis considered the writings of their spiritual guides "to possess the power to heal, to protect, to convert, and to enlighten" (Kasam 1995, 90).

Many practices stem from a desire to benefit from the wali's barakah. Common objects utilized by the wali, such as the prayer rug or mat—widely utilized by Muslims for performing the ritual prayer, the salat—are endowed with the power of the wali and cherished for their barakah-yielding powers. The material items associated with the holy person include the prayer mat, the patched mantle, the belt, the staff, the turban, the leather bowl, the rosary, and the robe (*khirqah*), each of which is endowed with symbolic significance. H. Landolt (cited in Knysh 2001) suggested, for instance, that the prayer rug, more than a ritual space for performing the salat, becomes the locus of a theophanic experience. Often the prayer mat is evoked as the platform from which the wali performs spiritual feats, such as praying in the air or on ocean waves, that testify to his supernatural powers. Prayer rugs, referred to as “the carpet of the Truth” or “the carpet of God,” are also used in initiation ceremonies for novices entering a tariqah or sufi order to indicate the divine presence. In parts of Anatolia and Iran, the sheepskin (*pust*) takes on the role of the prayer mat and is invested, for instance by the Bektashi order, with symbolic meanings to suggest the seats of God and the angels, or to denote the various stages of a seeker's journey into gnosis.

A popular form of spiritually derived healing consists of prayers, quite often in the form of qur'anic verses, often drawing upon the numerological significance of the letters that are written by the wali on parchment, which may then be washed and the residue drunk in order to cure the supplicant of his or her ailments. A supplicant may also derive barakah from visitations to the tomb of a wali, especially during a *mawlid*, or birth celebration. Foremost of the mawlid celebrations is that held in honor of the prophet Muhammad on the twelfth day of the Islamic calendar month Rabi' al-Awwal, a festival that is observed by all Muslims save those in Saudi Arabia, where the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam forbids any recognition of the prophet out of fear of competing with the honor due to God. Pilgrims performing the *hajj*, or visit to Mecca (Makkah), however, often remain for a few days to visit the tombs of Muhammad's youngest wife Amina, his first wife Khadija, various Shi'ite imams, and early Muslim notables. The “tomb of Eve,” another popular pilgrimage site, has been destroyed.

Other mawlid celebrations center around the tomb of a wali; thus, for instance, in Turkey one may visit the tomb of the celebrated mystic poet Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), founder of the Mevleviyya order (the whirling dervishes); or that of Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Rifa'i (1106–1182), founder of the “howling” dervishes; or Haji Bektash (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), founder of the Bektashi order. In Baghdad, assuming these have survived the ravages

of war, one may visit the tombs of 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166), Abu 'l-Qasim al-Junayd (d. 910), and Shihabuddin Suhrawardi (1145–1234), and near Damascus lies the tomb of Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240), while Shiraz hosts the tomb of Hafez (1300–1389).

All of these figures have left an illustrious legacy of illuminating mystical and philosophical writings that belong to the treasures of human longing for and experience of the divine. Mawlid celebrations in Egypt form a significant part of the Islamic calendar, and many celebrations in Iran center around the tombs of the Shi'ite imams or members of their families, termed *imamzadeh*. In North Africa, there are numerous tombs of walis, popularly termed *murabit* (Fr.: *marabout*), including several from the early modern and modern period, testifying to sufism as a living tradition. In the south Asian lands, pilgrimages are made to tombs of walis, more familiarly termed *pirs*, by Hindus and Muslims alike. Their importance to the members of both faiths suggests that reverence for the sacred and its power transgresses nominal boundaries.

—Zayn Kassam

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Child Prodigies; Compassion and Holy People; Extremists as Holy People; Fatima bint Muhammad; Gods on Earth; Hagiography; Hereditary Holiness; Hermits; Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Insanity; Intermediaries; Jilani, Abdul al-Qadir; Khidr; Lawgivers as Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Marabout; Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Miracles; Mission; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Muhammad; Mysticism and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Prophets; Purity and Pollution; Qushayri, Abu'l-Qasim al-; Recognition; Reform and Reaction; Rulers as Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Sages; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Suffering and Holy People; Sufism; Teachers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Isma‘il (Ishmael)

(c. 20th cent. B.C.E.)

Muslim prophet

According to Muslim tradition, Isma‘il (Ishmael) was the older of two sons of Abraham (Ibrahim), ancestor of the north Arabian tribes. He is sometimes regarded as the co-founder of the city of Mecca. Some, though not all, Muslim exegetes believe him to have been the intended sacrificial victim in the story of God’s call to Abraham to sacrifice his son.

The Qur’an mentions Isma‘il several times, calling him a messenger and a prophet, and says that together with Abraham he was called upon to raise the foundations of the Ka’ba in Mecca, the most holy structure in Islam, and to sanctify it (Qur’an 2:125–127). Later Islamic tradition narrates the life of Isma‘il in more detail, at times in disagreement with the biblical account. According to Muslim tradition, Hagar (Hajar) and Isma‘il traveled to Arabia with Abraham after Abraham’s wife Sarah had given birth to Isaac (Ishaq). Led by divine guidance, the family arrived in the vicinity of Mecca, where Isma‘il and Abraham built, or rebuilt, the Ka’ba. Since the Qur’an refers to the Ka’ba as the “first house” (3:96), later Muslim traditions claim that it had originally been built by Adam but was destroyed in the flood of Noah’s time; the angel Gabriel is said to have rescued the “black stone” of the original shrine and passed it on to Abraham and Isma‘il when they rebuilt the Ka’ba at the same site.

The Qur’an also reports that after Abraham left Hagar and her son behind in the Arabian Desert and returned to his wife Sarah, mother and son were overcome by thirst, as in the Hebrew Bible. When Hagar frantically searched for water, God, according to Muslim tradition, miraculously revealed the well of Zamzam to save the boy and his mother. The frantic search for water is reenacted in a ritual called the *sa’y*, which is part of the annual pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca. Muslim tradition holds that the city of Mecca gradually arose around the well of Zamzam, and that without this well the city could never have existed. The well still exists, and Isma‘il is sometimes regarded as the founder of the city.

In disagreement with the biblical narratives, later Islamic tradition also identifies Isma‘il as the intended victim in the narrative of the binding of Abraham’s son. Although the Qur’an does not mention the name of the intended victim, and early Islamic tradition is ambivalent about his identity, numerous later accounts not only identify the victim as Isma‘il but furthermore insist that both Isma‘il and his mother knew that he was the intended sacrificial victim, and willingly agreed. Abraham’s almost-sacrifice constitutes a pivotal narrative in Islamic theological discourse, as it is regarded as an example of absolute submission, or *islam*. Isma‘il, together with his father and mother, thus became an

exemplar of what it means to fully submit to the will of God, and all three are considered prototypical Muslims.

Isma‘il is also recognized as progenitor of the north Arabian tribes and ancestor of Muhammad. According to Muslim tradition, Isma‘il is buried, together with his mother, in a place adjacent to the Ka’ba called the *hijr*.

—Alfons Teipen

See also: Abraham; Attributes of Holy People**References and further reading:**

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Íte

(d. c. 570/577 C.E.)

Christian abbess, prophet

Throughout her vita and other medieval sources, Íte is depicted as an exemplary Christian widely respected for her virtue, wisdom, power of prophecy, and healing abilities. She is also shown as a powerful patron and an abbess who tempered her authority with great kindness. She was probably born near Waterford, Ireland, in the early sixth century, but she left her homeland shortly after her consecration to become the patron of the Uí Conaill in their lands southwest of Limerick.

Íte’s monastery, originally known as Cluain Credail, later Cell Íte (Killeedy), seems to have become a double or possibly a male monastery by the ninth century. Judging from the varied references in her own Life and the Lives of other saints, her influence spread throughout Munster, Leinster, and Connacht, and English and continental sources attest that the Irish took their devotion to her with them abroad. She is celebrated as “the foster-mother of the saints of Ireland.” The fosterlings attributed to her include the infant Jesus, Brendan the Navigator (c. 486–575), her nephew Mochaomhóg, and a stag-beetle that devoured her side.

Asceticism, particularly fasting, seems to have played a more prominent role in Íte’s life than in the lives of other Irish women saints. Her self-denial is said to have grown so extreme that an angel came to her and told her not to be so hard on herself. Íte refused to renounce this form of piety, so the angel resorted to force-feeding. Prophecy was also particularly pronounced in Íte’s life, enabling her to serve as an

impartial and effective judge, to demand that her faithful accept responsibility for their actions, to help them rectify their mistakes, and even to confront ageist sexism. At times her prophecies were temporarily frustrated, such as when those to whom she had promised certain fates died before her words had been fulfilled. Fortunately, her ability to raise the dead resolved such dilemmas.

A particularly compassionate saint, Íte joyously shared her divine gifts with others, be it a heavenly feast or wisdom acquired through meditation and contemplation. She is portrayed as exercising an active apostolate to the laity, providing for their needs in business, war, and family matters, teaching them about the divine, healing them, restoring them to life, and even converting the odd non-Christian. Her hagiography attributes to her a unique and powerful relationship with the divine, which she encouraged others to realize for themselves. As she told a nun who questioned her

special status with the divine, “God is always present with those who exemplify such devotion.”

—Maeve B. Callan

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Prophets

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J

Jacob

(c. 20th cent. B.C.E.)

Jewish patriarch

Jacob, also named Israel, is the ancestor of the people of Israel. His twelve sons were the ancestors of the twelve tribes. Jacob was the son of Rebecca and Isaac, and his story fills most of the second half of the book of Genesis in the Hebrew scriptures. Although the tale as it stands may include a mixture of traditions committed to writing at different times, few modern scholars doubt that a historic person lies at the heart of the legend. Jacob appears in two very different lights in Genesis: On the one hand, he is a devious, conniving figure, stealing his brother Esau's birthright and tricking his father Isaac into blessing him in Esau's place, tricking his uncle Laban out of large flocks of sheep, and so on. On the other hand, though, Jacob is very close to God, even wrestling with God in Genesis 32:28, after which he receives the new name "Israel."

Jacob was a quiet pastoralist, unlike his brother, Esau the hunter. He takes advantage of Esau's hunger one day to buy his birthright for a "mess of pottage." Then he dons an animal skin, masquerading as his brother ("a hairy man"), so the blind Isaac will bless him. He has to flee Esau's wrath, going to his uncle Laban, where he falls in love with his cousin Rachel. Laban agrees to let Jacob work seven years to win her hand, but at the last moment substitutes his elder daughter, Leah. Jacob then has to labor another seven years for Rachel. He eventually wins his brother's forgiveness and produces a large family, including twelve sons. Late in life, however, famine forces him to send his sons to Egypt to buy grain; there it is discovered that his beloved son Joseph, whom the brothers had sold into slavery and claimed had been killed, is alive and a chief servant of the king. Jacob and all his family then move to Egypt. His deathbed blessing, Genesis 49:2–27, is believed to be some of the oldest poetry of the Hebrew scriptures. After his death, Jacob's sons have

his body embalmed and take it to Canaan for burial in the Cave of Machpelah, where his parents and grandparents already lay.

For the most part, Jacob's importance to Judaism and Christianity lies in his role as transmitter of a lineage, the descendant of Abraham who passes on God's covenant to the people of Israel. But Genesis also describes two singular encounters Jacob had with the divine that have tantalized religious scholars ever since. In Genesis 32, what appears to be God himself attacks Jacob; they have a wrestling match, and although Jacob is crippled he manages to hang on until he is blessed. And in Genesis 28, when Jacob stops for the night during his flight from Esau, he sees angels ascending and descending from heaven. This is followed by a direct communication from God renewing the covenant he made with Abraham and Isaac. Both events suggest a much more personal position for Jacob in God's eyes than merely purveyor of a lineage. Scholars have suggested that the story of "Jacob's ladder" was invented to explain why the Jews used an old Canaanite altar at Bethel. Clearly, however, very many generations of Jews and Christians have made this part of their legend of the patriarch.

Jacob attracted a considerable body of rabbinic commentary. Hardly surprising for a figure named "Israel," the direct ancestor of the twelve tribes, Jacob was taken to represent the whole people of Israel. His conflict with Esau was understood allegorically, with Esau representing the Romans and Jacob the Jews, or Esau as a type of Christianity and Jacob as the form of Judaism—suggesting both antagonism and ultimate relationship between the two. Jacob, as a dweller in the tents while Esau went out hunting, is also seen as the ideal of Judaism: a man staying apart from society and studying Torah, while Esau represents the active life in the world.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Abraham; Hermits; Isaac; Judaism and Holy People; Matriarchs, Hebrew

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Jacob ben Meir Tam

See **Rabbenu Tam**

Jacobis, Giustino de

(1800–1860 C.E.)

Roman Catholic missionary

Giustino de Jacobis, an Italian born in 1800, was the first influential missionary in Ethiopia and the coastal region of the Red Sea after Ethiopia's leaders had reopened the country to Catholicism following centuries of closure. In local tradition in Tigray and Eritrea he is known as Abune Ya'qob or Qedus Yaqob (St. Jacob).

Jacobis was ordained as a Vincentian priest at the Congregation of the Mission in southern Italy in 1824. In 1839, he left for Ethiopia to establish the Prefecture of Abyssinia. He spent several years traveling through Ethiopia, getting to know the people and their culture and becoming involved in local political affairs. In 1843, he was offered the fiefdom of Amba Ahsa in Inticc'o, near 'Adwa, by Dejjazmach Webé (nicknamed "Ubie"). However, he did not accept but let it be given to the German convert to Catholicism, Dr. Wilhelm Schimper, a natural scientist. He did eventually acquire land, though, with the help of his local collaborators, Takla Haymanot and Gebre Mikael, both former Orthodox priests, in 1844. With it he established a missionary center at Gwal'a in Agame (Tigray). He was helped by members of the ancient Orthodox monastery of Gunde Gundé nearby.

In 1845, however, the Orthodox metropolitan excommunicated anyone who helped Jacobis in any way. Meanwhile, interest for Catholicism was still growing in the borderlands. A Saho subgroup, the Irob-Buknaito in Aliténa, for example, converted at around this time. In 1847, Jacobis's prefecture was raised to the status of an apostolic vicariate. He was appointed bishop and allowed to practice Catholicism following the Ethiopian rite. He was, however, expelled from the country in 1848 on the initiative of the Orthodox metropolitan. His missionary center was raided, and he went to Masawa on the coast, in Ottoman territory, where he was consecrated bishop in the greatest secrecy in January 1849.

Jacobis began a time of wandering, mostly in the borderlands of Akkele-Guzay and Irob, sometimes in disguise,

sometimes fleeing from soldiers ordered to kill him. Webé, interested in an alliance with France, however, still protected him. Due to his relations with the northern princes, Jacobis was politically influential. Often he promoted the idea of a closer alliance between Abyssinia and Europe, especially France. His involvement in politics was extensive. He was the inspiration behind several letters written by the princes, and he helped to set up a French protectorate over the northern parts and borderlands of Abyssinia. However, he could not avoid persecution. Arrested and jailed several times, he suffered much from health problems. On July 31, 1860, he died on a caravan journey near the canyons between the lowlands and the borders of Abyssinia.

Jacobis was beatified in 1939 and sanctified in 1975 by Pope Paul VI. The cactus fig (*beles*), abundant in the mountains of Tigray and Eritrea, is said to have been introduced by him. The plant still today provides some of the basic food needs of the rural populations. Jacobis's methods of conducting missionary work have been held up as a model for other Catholic missionaries.

—Wolbert Smidt

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gebre Mikael; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission; Takla Haymonot

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Jadwiga (Hedwig)

(1174–1243 C.E.)

Christian caregiver

Patron saint of Poland, Jadwiga came from an illustrious family of saints, which included her niece, Elizabeth of Hungary. Jadwiga, born in 1174, was one of the eight children of Agnes, daughter of the count of Rotletchs, and Bertold III, whose titles included duke of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Istria and count of Andech. She was reared by the Benedictines at Hitzingen, Franconia. At age twelve, she married Henry, who succeeded his father as duke of Silesia and head of the Polish royal family in 1202 at age thirty-four. They had seven children, but only their daughter, Gertrude, outlived Jadwiga. After the death of Jadwiga's husband in 1238, their son Henry inherited the throne, but he was killed in a battle against the Tartars in 1241.

After the birth of their last child, Henry and Jadwiga led a celibate life, and they pronounced a vow of perpetual continence before the bishop of Breslau in 1209. Henry was tonsured and let his beard grow like the Cistercians. Though she wore the gray habit of the Cistercians, Jadwiga never became a nun. The couple continued to endow and supervise the

building of churches and monasteries, as well as hospitals, hospices, and orphanages, also places of prayer and penance. They invited the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Templars to staff those institutions. Moreover, they assured the spread of the German language and customs throughout Silesia.

In 1238, Jadwiga joined her daughter at the Cistercian monastery that the couple had founded in 1202 as the first house for women in Silesia. Blessed Gertrude served as its abbess after 1212. Jadwiga gained renown for her exercises of piety and charity, especially for supervising the healthful development of children. She insisted that they eat a nutritionally sound diet, and she fed, educated, and played with them herself. She died in Trebnitz in October 1243 and was canonized in 1267. Her feast day is celebrated on October 17. She is the patron of widows and of mothers whose children predecease them.

In 1859, a Congregation of the Sisters of St. Jadwiga was instituted in Breslau. They adopted the Rule of St. Augustine and assured the education of orphaned children. Establishments of this order spread throughout northern Europe. Polish immigrants to the United States have further spread the cult of St. Jadwiga.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Ja'far as-Sadiq

(700–765 C.E.)

Muslim ascetic, jurist, mystic

An erudite jurist of Medina, Ja'far as-Sadiq was associated with a wide range of scholars. The great Muslim jurists Abu Hanifa (d. 767) and Malik b. Anas (d. 795), among other prominent figures, are alleged to have heard traditions from him. As-Sadiq is also credited with the construction of a legal system called the Ja'fari school of law, which Shi'is follow. In sufi circles, he is revered and regarded as an eminent ascetic. Many mystical ideas are narrated from him.

Highly respected in Sunni sources, as-Sadiq is considered by the Shi'is to be the sixth imam. He was reportedly the author of thousands of traditions that were recorded by his disciples and documented in later Shi'i literature by such figures as al-Kulini, Ibn Babuya, and Tusi. These sources also

indicate that as-Sadiq was responsible for the formulation and crystallization of the Shi'i doctrine of the imamate, which stipulated that the leader of the community (imam) had to be designated by God through the prophet or another imam. The imam was also believed to be infallible, hence empowered to provide authoritative interpretation of Islamic revelation. Designation and infallibility were complemented by the imam's possession of special knowledge that was either transmitted from the prophet or derived from inherited scrolls. The imams reportedly had access to esoteric knowledge and were able to foretell future events.

As-Sadiq taught coexistence with rather than rebellion against tyrannical rulers. This political stance became the cornerstone of Shi'i political theory. He also preached the doctrine of dissimulation, which meant that the imam did not have to publicly proclaim his leadership. As-Sadiq attracted an intellectual following and was responsible for training thousands of disciples in diverse fields such as theology, jurisprudence, and Arabic grammar. Speculative Shi'i theologians and jurists, including Hisham b. al-Hakam, Zurara b. 'Ayun, Muhammad b. Muslim al-Thaqafi, and Mufaddal b. 'Umar, and even extremists such as Abu al-Khattab, were associated with him. According to some Shi'i sources, some of his prominent disciples are reported to have differed with him on major points of law and theology, for which they were either condemned or excommunicated. As-Sadiq claimed that they had misrepresented his teachings.

—Liyakat Takim

See also: Imams; Lawgivers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism; Tusi, Nasir al-Din at-

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Jagadbandhu Sundar, Prabhu

(1871–1921 C.E.)

Vaishnava Hindu mystic

Prabhu Jagadbandhu (Friend of the World) Sundar (Beautiful One) was a Hindu saint-mystic belonging to the Bengali Vaishnava tradition. He taught the salvific potency of chanting the holy names of God (Krishna), spreading the message especially among the lower-caste groups of Hindu society. He was believed by his followers to be a reincarnation of the sixteenth-century god-saint Chaitanya who had come to

sweep up all in a flood of divine love called the Maha Udharana (Great Deliverance).

Jagadbandhu was born in 1871 in the village of Dahapara in the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal, India. Within a few years of his birth, all of the members of his immediate family passed away, and members of his extended family cared for him in the district of Faridpur (now in Bangladesh). His beauty, skin color, and personal charm attracted numerous admirers from among his acquaintances. He was sent to various schools, including one in Ranchi and another in Pabna (Bangladesh). In Pabna, he began to teach neighborhood boys and family members to practice celibacy and the public chanting of the names of God. By the time he was in the tenth grade, he had begun to experience ever more intense ecstasies, especially while singing Krishna's names. He left the tenth grade without taking the final examination, shaved his head, and went to visit the sacred pilgrimage sites of Vrindavana where Krishna had lived. He eventually settled in a compound called Shri Angan at Goalchamat, Faridpur, where for seventeen years he observed silence and reclusivity. He died there in 1921.

Jagadbandhu wrote several works, mostly collections of Bengali songs about Krishna and Gauranga (Chaitanya). Of special importance to his followers are two very enigmatic Bengali works, *Candrapata* (Moonfall) and *Trikala* (Three times). He taught, among other things, that one's mind and body become powerful through the practice of celibacy, that chanting the holy names increases one's good fortune, destroys pain, and brings joy, and that by surrendering oneself at the feet of God (Krishna) one's false pride is destroyed and one is inundated with joy.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Chaitanya, Devotion; Krishna; Mysticism and Holy People; Reincarnation; Sexuality and Holy People; Status

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Jainism and Holy People

Although it certainly has more ancient roots yet, the south Asian religion known as Jainism, the religion of the Jains, first emerges into historical view in the first half of the first millennium B.C.E. It and Buddhism are the only examples of ancient India's non-Vedic, heterodox traditions surviving today. Doctrinally, however, Jainism and Buddhism are profoundly different. It is hard to say how many Jains currently exist. The 1991 census of India records a Jain population of about 3.4 million, but this is certainly an undercount be-

cause Jains sometimes identify themselves as Hindus to census takers. Outside of India itself, the largest concentrations of Jains are in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States.

Basic Beliefs

In common with other Indian religious traditions, Jains believe in the rebirth of souls. Souls are infinite in number and inhabit not only animate bodies (human, animal, vegetable, and others) but also inanimate objects. Souls were never created nor will they ever cease to be, and individual souls have shifted from one form of bodily existence to another from beginningless time. This means that every soul has already undergone an infinite number of deaths and rebirths and has already occupied every possible type of material body—and indeed has already done so an infinity of times. The Jains view this journey of the soul as one of ceaseless pain and suffering. The object of Jain belief and practice is to liberate the soul from this cycle of death and rebirth.

Jains maintain that the cosmos is made of two constituents: souls and matter. They further say that the soul's bondage within the cycle of death and rebirth is a consequence of its accumulation of layers of karma, which—in Jain belief, but not in other Indian religious systems—is considered to be a type of matter that is attracted to the soul by an individual's actions and sticks to the soul because of the individual's desires and aversions. The accumulation of karmic matter prevents the soul's escape from the cycle of death and rebirth. Liberation, a process that occurs in successive stages, is preceded by the attainment of omniscience, which is an inherent quality of the soul but normally occluded by karmic matter. Liberation is achieved when the last vestiges of karmic matter are shed and the soul rises to the top of the cosmos, where, unaffected by the cycle of death and rebirth, it abides forever in a state of omniscient bliss.

Given the role of karma in the soul's bondage, the first requirement of liberation is to prevent or at least to slow the further buildup of karmic matter on the soul. This necessitates avoiding forms of behavior that, because of their rootedness in desires and aversions, cause such accumulations. Violent behavior is a particularly potent source of karmic accumulations, and for this reason the Jain tradition places great emphasis on nonviolence (*ahimsa*). Jain texts forbid occupations that involve the deliberate taking of life, and nonviolence is a norm followed in all departments of Jain life. An important focus of nonviolence is diet. Jains are strict vegetarians, and the most orthodox of Jains even avoid eating vegetables that grow underground (such as potatoes), for these are believed to contain multiple souls. Jains are active and vocal supporters of vegetarian and animal welfare causes.

The requirements of nonviolence are particularly stringent for Jain mendicants. The most advanced laity must



Devotees placing flowers around a cult statue in the Adishwarji Jain Temple, mouths and noses covered lest they accidentally harm a living being with their breath. Mumbai, India. (Art Directors)

avoid harming more complex forms of life (those with two or more senses, according to the Jain system of classification), whereas mendicants are required to avoid harming the simplest microscopic forms of life. Jain mendicants carry brooms for the purpose of moving aside small forms of life before sitting or lying down, they may not dig in the earth (for fear of harming small forms of life in the ground), they may not bathe (for fear of harming water-borne life), and so on. Some mendicants wear coverings over their mouths in order to prevent their breath from injuring or killing small airborne forms of life.

But the attainment of liberation must go beyond the avoidance of further karmic accumulations, because it is also necessary to get rid of the karmic matter already adhering to the soul. According to Jain belief, this requires ascetic practices, which are seen as “burning away” the soul’s karmic imprisonment. Jainism is, accordingly, renowned for the severity of the ascetic practices it promotes. Emblematic of this is the fact that death by self-starvation is one of the tradition’s highest ideals. Ascetic practice is a distinctive and nearly ubiquitous feature of Jain life. Among laity, austerities tend to be practiced by women, especially older women, and by men in retirement. Fasting is one of the most important

of the ascetic practices of lay Jains, and laywomen, in particular, engage in frequent fasts. The high valuation Jains place on fasting is indicated by the fact that successful fasters are often felicitated in public ceremonies. The ascetic practices of mendicants are more severe than those of the laity, but it should be understood that Jain tradition encourages ascetic practice for laity and mendicants alike.

Jain Society

Other Indians generally stereotype Jains as wealthy merchants, and to some extent this characterization is accurate. Many Jains are indeed traders and merchants, especially in northern and western India, where they are extremely prominent within the regional trading and banking class. Some of India’s richest merchant families are Jains. It is sometimes said that Jains have taken up business because nonviolence prevents them from entering other occupations. Although there is undoubtedly much truth in this, it must also be noted that not all Jains are traders. Although quantitative data are lacking, it is clear that, even in northern India, large numbers of Jains are in the professions or service occupations, and it is likely that a majority of southern Jains are farmers. Jains have even been soldiers.

Jain society is crosscut by many divisions, especially those of caste and region. However, the most basic division in the Jain world is that between its two major sects, the Shvetambaras and Digambaras, a distinction that seems to have crystallized around the fifth century. Shvetambara means “white-clad,” which refers to the fact that mendicants of this branch wear white clothing. Digambara means “space-clad,” referring to the fact that male mendicants of this sect wear no clothing. Shvetambaras are especially prominent in western India, the Digambaras more prominent in southern India. The two sects have different bodies of sacred writings, separate temples and traditions of worship, and few common religious activities. A major difference between them is their attitude toward gender and liberation. The Digambaras believe that liberation cannot be achieved from a female body, whereas the Shvetambaras believe it is possible. At the level of daily life, the sects are quite separate. Their membership is drawn from different castes, which means—because castes do not intermarry—that family connections across the sectarian divide are normally impossible. Subsects that have arisen over issues of textual interpretation and traditions of worship further subdivide both the Shvetambara and Digambara sects.

As idealized within the tradition, the Jain community consists of four sections: monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen. The monks and nuns are initiated, peripatetic mendicants, a small, world-renouncing elite. The mendicants’ way of life ideally incorporates the principles of asceticism and nonviolence to the fullest extent possible by functioning human beings. They are the custodians and transmitters of the tradition, exemplars of its highest ideals, and are physically completely dependent on the laity, on whom, in return for food and other forms of support, they confer teachings, blessings, and merit. Laymen and laywomen, in turn, perform the ordinary chores of life and support the mendicants. During most of the year, Jain mendicants travel from community to community, never remaining at a single place for more than a few days. During the rainy season, however, the mendicants stay in a single place for four months. These rainy season retreats tend to be periods of intense sermonizing and other religious activities among Jains.

Lay Jains regard all mendicants as worship-worthy and in fact treat them as objects of worship in a variety of ways. As a class, however, mendicants are certainly not seen as holy at the same level or in the same sense as the *tirthankaras* (see below), although specific monks and nuns can acquire special reputations for extraordinary personal sanctity. Some mendicants have achieved posthumous recognition as thinkers, authors of texts, reformers, or exemplars of piety. Distinguished deceased mendicants are worshipped in some Jain traditions.

The Tirthankaras

The idea of holy persons is embedded in the very concept of “Jainism.” The word “Jain” itself means someone who is a follower of a *jina*. A *jina* is a “victor” or “conqueror,” meaning someone who has achieved victory over the soul’s worldly bondage. A *jina* is also called a *tirthankara*. This term means “ford-maker,” that is, someone who has created a “ford” (*tirtha*), a crossing place that will enable others to make their way across what is often called “the ocean of existence” to the liberated state. A *tirthankara* is not a deity but a great teacher—a human being who, by his own efforts, completely subdues his desires and aversions, acquires omniscience, and teaches the path of liberation to others.

According to Jain teachings, there exist many types of deities, but these beings, in their present bodies, are incapable of achieving liberation; they are certainly not worthy of worship in the same sense as the *tirthankaras*, with whom they are never confused. At the end of a *tirthankara*’s life on earth, he sheds all remaining traces of karmic matter and becomes a liberated being. The *tirthankaras* are not unique in achieving liberation, for others attain this state as well. The *tirthankara*, however, achieves omniscience without the aid of any kind of teacher. On the basis of the authority conferred by his omniscience, he then becomes a teacher to others of the path to liberation. It needs to be clearly understood that the *tirthankara* is in no way the originator of the truths that he teaches. These truths are eternal and become known to the *tirthankara* because of his omniscient state.

The significance of the *tirthankaras* cannot be understood in isolation from the Jain concept of cosmic history. According to Jain teachings, the cosmos undergoes infinitely repeating cycles of physical and moral rise and decline over time. The terrestrial surface is a vast disk consisting of a central continent surrounded by concentric circles of ocean and atoll-like islands. The time-cycles affect the northern and southern parts of the central continent; the middle zone is unaffected. During a rising half-cycle, which takes eons to complete, those parts of the terrestrial surface affected by the cycle gradually change from a condition of physical and moral degeneracy to a state of perfection; the opposite occurs during the ensuing (and equally long) declining half-cycle. Each half-cycle is in turn subdivided into six separate eras. *Tirthankaras* appear only in the third and fourth eras of each rising and declining half-cycle, and exactly twenty-four *tirthankaras* appear in each. Given the fact that the cycles of time have no beginning and no end, there has already been an infinity of *tirthankaras*, and infinite *tirthankaras* are yet to come.

The world is currently in a declining half-cycle. The first *tirthankara* of the present half-cycle was Rishabha; the twenty-fourth and last was Mahavira, who, according to Jain teachings, lived and taught during the sixth century B.C.E.

Because Mahavira was the final tirthankara of this half-cycle, and because liberation for others is not possible in the absence of a tirthankara, there is no possibility of liberation for the denizens of the world until the next (and ascending) half-cycle. However, the central zone of the world continent, an area known as Mahavideh, is unaffected by the time cycles, and there are always tirthankaras teaching there. Liberation is therefore possible for those who are reborn in that legendary zone.

Of the twenty-four tirthankaras of the present half-cycle, the historicity of only two is beyond doubt. There is no question that the twenty-fourth tirthankara, Mahavira, lived, taught, and was a contemporary of the Buddha. Although his traditional dating is 599–527 B.C.E., his actual dates are a matter of conjecture and dispute. The twenty-third tirthankara, Parshva, was also a historical figure. He probably lived two or three centuries before Mahavira. None of the others can be said to be historical, although the twenty-second, Nemi, is possibly an exception. But historical or not, the tirthankaras are the heart of Jainism. They exemplify the tradition's highest ideals and are the focus of deep veneration.

In some ways, the tirthankaras are indistinguishable from each other. According to Jain teachings, each and every tirthankara has fragrant breath, has skin that does not accumulate sweat or grime, has milky white blood, and is impervious to illness. No hair grows on his body, and he is surrounded by a sacred aura. Wherever he goes, the weather is pleasant, nature is benign, and there is no unpleasantness of any kind. In his proximity, enemies lose their animosity and there is no illness or death. His intake of food and excretion are, according to the Shvetambara sect, invisible; the Digambaras maintain that he does not eat or excrete at all. Tirthankaras are always male. (The Shvetambaras, however, believe that the nineteenth tirthankara, Malli, was a unique exception to this rule.) Not only are all tirthankaras self-enlightened, but also, unlike ordinary mendicants, who are normally initiated by others, they initiate themselves into the ascetic life. The teachings of all tirthankaras are the same. Indeed, with some minor exceptions, the tirthankaras' images in temples look more or less alike. They are distinguishable primarily by means of small symbols (such as the lion for Mahavira and the snake for Parshva) carved on the base.

All of the tirthankaras, moreover, have very similar careers. The major events in the final lifetime of each and every tirthankara are five in number and are always the same. Known as the *pancha kalyana*, the "five welfare-producing events," they consist of the tirthankara's descent into the womb, his birth, his initiation as an ascetic, his attainment of omniscience (at which point his teaching career begins), and his liberation. When a tirthankara is conceived, his mother invariably has a series of visions or dreams of the sort that

presage the birth of a universal monarch or a universal teacher. A tirthankara is always born into a family belonging to the warrior (*kshatriya*) class. (According to the Shvetambaras, Mahavira was an exception because he was conceived in a brahmin womb, but the gods then shifted him to the womb of a woman of the warrior class.) The gods and goddesses celebrate the birth of a tirthankara by, among other things, giving the infant his first bath on the summit of (mythical) Mount Meru. The reenactment of the deities' celebration of the infant tirthankara's birth is among the most important rituals in Jain tradition.

Although the predisposition to renounce the world is already part of his nature, a tirthankara takes the decisive step of becoming a homeless mendicant at the urging of certain gods (known as Laukantika). He abandons his possessions, pulls out his hair by hand, and begins a period of severe austerities. After his attainment of omniscience, the gods prepare for each tirthankara a special preaching assembly hall, consisting of a circular arena, where an audience that includes humans, deities, and animals can attend him. A Jain temple is, in essence, a replica of the preaching assembly. Having completed his teaching mission, the tirthankara sheds the last residues of karmic matter and attains the liberated state.

But despite these common features of their careers, tirthankaras do indeed possess individual characteristics. Each tirthankara is associated not only with his own symbol but with a particular color. The tirthankaras are vastly different in height and have varying life spans. Although the five welfare-producing events are the same for every tirthankara, their individual biographies differ greatly in other details. According to Jain hagiographic traditions, a tirthankara's biography is not a matter of one lifetime alone; rather, it usually is presented as a chain of several births culminating in the lifetime in which the individual became a tirthankara and achieved liberation. The point of such a transmigrational biography is to account for the particular manner in which the soul arrived at his tirthankarahood. These accounts often begin with the lifetime in which the tirthankara-to-be first acquired "right belief" (*samyaktva*), which, according to Jains, guarantees liberation sooner or later. They then trace the several births leading up to the tirthankara-to-be's acquisition of the karmic prerequisites for becoming a tirthankara, which always occurs exactly two births before his final lifetime. The tirthankara-to-be then has a penultimate birth as a god in one of the Jain heavens, after which he is born into the lifetime, his final one, in which he becomes a tirthankara. The highlights of this culminating lifetime are the five welfare-producing events, but the exact circumstances are unique to each tirthankara.

All Jains revere the tirthankaras and consider their teachings to be absolutely authoritative. Many Jain subsects also

worship the tirthankaras in the form of images. Of the twenty-four tirthankaras of this half-cycle, the most frequently worshipped in temples are Mahavira, Rishabha, and Parshva. In their liberated condition, the tirthankaras are not only entirely devoid of desires and aversions but also completely disengaged from the world and its affairs. This being so, prayers directed toward them cannot be efficacious in the sense of bringing about the tirthankaras' intervention in one's life and destiny. Some Jains may indeed pray to the tirthankaras for such reasons, but this is contrary to Jain teachings and is viewed as an inferior sort of ritual activity that has nothing fundamentally to do with the tradition's true goal of liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Nor, it must be added, are the tirthankaras seen as savior deities who will in any way assist their devotees in achieving liberation. They are certainly aware of one's devotion, for they are omniscient, but even if they desired to do so—which they do not, since they are desireless—they could not help in the matter of liberation (or any other) because of their disengagement from the world of transmigrating beings. Their teachings, of course, provide a roadmap to liberation, but Jain doctrine avers that the liberation-seeker must rely on his or her own spiritual strength and resolve to achieve this ultimate goal. This does not mean, however, that prayer and devotion to the tirthankaras have no meaning in Jain tradition. Quite to the contrary, Jains treat the tirthankaras as objects of intense devotional feeling. But given the nature of Jain beliefs, the worship of these great teachers is seen as an act of remembrance and reiteration of their qualities and message, and in that sense alone assists the worshipper in his or her journey along the path to liberation.

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Guidance; Hagiography; Intermediaries; Legendary Holy People; Mahavira; Malli; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Nature; Nemi; Parshva; Reincarnation; Rishabha; Rulers as Holy People; Sadhus; Sages; Sexuality and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Jalal al-Din Hasan III

(1166–1221 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Jalal al-Din Hasan b. Muhammad was an imam of the Nizari Isma'ili branch of Shi'ite Islam and the sixth ruler of the Nizari Isma'ili state centered at the stronghold of Alamut in northern Iran. Born in 1166, he succeeded to the leadership of the Nizari Isma'ili community and state in 1210 upon the death of his father, Nur al-Din Muhammad (r. 1166–1210). Jalal al-Din Hasan III devoted his brief reign of some eleven years to improving relations between his Nizari Isma'ili followers, who were then concentrated in Iran and Syria, and the broader world of the Sunni Muslims.

As a result of the religious policies of the preceding Isma'ili imams and rulers at Alamut, this particular Shi'ite Muslim community had become increasingly isolated from the rest of the Muslim world. Jalal al-Din Hasan, who had become weary of this isolation, introduced his own religious reform to ameliorate the situation. Upon his accession, he publicly repudiated the earlier Nizari Isma'ili teachings, especially those associated with the declaration of *qiyama*, or spiritual resurrection, in his community in 1164, and proclaimed his adherence to Sunni Islam. He commanded his followers to observe the *shari'a*, the sacred law of Islam in its Sunni form. Jalal al-Din Hasan sent messengers to the Abbasid caliph, al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), and other Sunni Muslim rulers informing them of his reform. At the same time, he invited Sunni jurists of the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence from Iraq and Khorasan to come to the Nizari Isma'ili territories in Iran and Syria to instruct his followers. In 1211, the Abbasid caliph, who acted as the spiritual head of Sunni Islam, acknowledged Jalal al-Din's new dispensation and issued a decree to that effect. Henceforth, Jalal al-Din Hasan became known as the New Muslim, and his rights to the Nizari Isma'ili territories were formally recognized for the first time by the Abbasid caliph and other Muslim rulers.

Jalal al-Din Hasan's daring rapprochement with Sunni Muslims had other advantages in terms of peace and security for his community and state. In particular, the military campaigns of the Ghurid rulers against the Nizari Isma'ilis of eastern Iran ceased. Moreover, in Syria, the Nizari Isma'ilis received timely assistance from their neighboring Ayyubids against renewed attacks by the crusaders. The Nizari Isma'ilis of Iran and Syria accepted Jalal al-Din's reform without any opposition, evidently regarding it as imposition of the Shi'ite principle of *taqiyya*, or precautionary dissimulation of one's true religious beliefs in times of danger. The observance of *taqiyya* could be taken to imply any sort of ac-

commodation to the outside world as deemed necessary by the infallible (*ma'sum*) Nizari imam who guided his community and contextualized the interpretation of the sacred law of Islam.

The improved Isma'ili-Sunni relations also proved beneficial to the Sunni Muslims. Jalal al-Din Hasan joined the Abbasid caliph's alliances, and in 1213 the Nizari Isma'ili imam personally led his army to Azarbayjan, in northwestern Iran, to assist Muzaffar al-Din Özbek, one of the Abbasid caliph's major allies and the last Eldigüzid ruler, against a rebellious subordinate. Later in Jalal al-Din's rule, many Sunni Muslims and scholars who were fleeing from the invading Mongols in central Asia found refuge in the Nizari fortress communities. Jalal al-Din Hasan III died in November 1221 and was succeeded in the leadership of the Nizari Isma'ili Shi'ite Muslims by his sole surviving son, Ala al-Din Muhammad.

—Farhad Daftary

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Jalaram

(1799–1878 C.E.)

Hindu philosopher, poet

Jalaram, also known as Sant Jalaram Bapa (Saint Jalaram, the father of all), is a popular holy person from nineteenth-century Gujarat, India. He was known for his *sadavrata* philosophy, which involves taking a vow resolving to feed hungry people free of cost. Jalaram's temple is located in the city of Virpur in Saurashtra, where his *sadavrat* activities are still practiced today. He was a disciple of one Bhojo Bhagat, a poet who wrote *chabakha* ("lashes" poems) criticizing the social evils of his own days.

There is little information available about Jalaram's life. He was born in Virpur in 1799 and died in the same city in 1878. His father, Pradhan Thakkar, was a businessman, and his mother, Rajbai, was a religiously minded woman. He was the second child of his parents. At the age of sixteen he married Virbai, a woman committed to religious activities and social service. Jalaram's father tried to train him in business, but Jalaram did not do well as he was inclined more toward charity and religious activities. Finally, he separated from his father, and he and his wife started working as laborers. After

they collected sufficient grain, they decided to share it with society, and they started *sadavrat* in Virpur in 1819. Initially, they invested their own earnings, but later they were supported by various sections of the society, including even the local kings—Hindu and Muslim both.

There are various legends about Jalaram that speak about his popularity. One legend says Raghuvardasji Maharaj, a saint from Ayodhya, was pleased with his mother's hospitality and gave her a blessing, saying that her second son would become a great saint. Another legend says that when Jalaram was a child, a *sadhu* (renunciant) from Girnar came to see him and gave him a Ram-mantra (mantra of the god Rama). That reminded Jalaram of his previous birth, and he decided to serve the people. A third legend says that following a request from a sick, elderly *sadhu*, Jalaram gave his own wife to him (with her consent) so he would have someone to serve him. However, the same evening the *sadhu* disappeared, leaving a *jholo* (long shoulder bag) and a walking stick with Virbai. The *jholo* and stick are still worshipped today in Jalaram's temple.

—Babu Suthar

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Sadhus; Wealth and Poverty

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James, Brother of Jesus

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian leader, martyr

There are a number of people named James in the New Testament. One is James, the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Gal. 1:19), also identified as a "pillar" of the church in Jerusalem by Paul (Gal. 2:9). According to Acts 15, James was one of the participants in the Jerusalem council (see also Gal. 2:1–10). Traditionally, Catholic interpreters have argued that James and Jesus were cousins and not siblings. In recent years, several Catholic writers have eschewed this position and instead argued that James and Jesus were either full siblings, or that James was the older half brother of Jesus, the son of Joseph by a previous marriage. It is evident from the New Testament that James was not among the initial followers of Jesus. Yet in Gal. 1:19, Paul calls James an apostle. Perhaps Paul considered a postresurrection appearance of Jesus to James the necessary qualification for that title, just as Paul argued in his own case.

The status of James as a "pillar" of the Jerusalem church is somewhat enigmatic. The early chapters of Acts present Peter as a commanding presence and the dominant figure

within the Jesus movement in Jerusalem during its initial phases. Yet Paul depicts James as a leading authority, and according to Acts 15, James had, by the time of the Jerusalem council, surpassed even Peter as the leader of this church. Quite how James ascended to this preeminent position remains a mystery. In this role he was a staunch advocate of Jewish Christianity but apparently embraced gentile Christians as full members of the movement.

Later Christian tradition emphasized the devotion of James to Jewish law and tradition. Hegesippus claimed that his extreme righteousness earned James the nickname “the Just,” and that he prayed so often in the temple on his knees that they became hard like those of a camel. Both Hegesippus and the Jewish historian Josephus asserted that Jewish authorities executed James.

The New Testament also contains a book that bears the name of James. By common consent it is considered among the most Jewish of all the New Testament books. It teaches that faith without works is dead, a claim that seems to contradict Pauline teaching and that caused Martin Luther (1483–1546) to disparage the book. Several striking similarities to the teaching of Jesus, often appearing in forms simpler than are present in the gospels, have led some scholars to conclude that the New Testament book of James was probably written by a scribe who had heard James preach one or more sermons and recorded them in a slightly harmonized form.

—David Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Hereditary Holiness; Jesus; Luther, Martin; Mary, Virgin

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James the Greater

(d. 44? C.E.)

Christian apostle, martyr

James the son of Zebedee and Salome, brother of the apostle John, is portrayed in the gospels as one of three members of the inner circle of Jesus’ twelve disciples. He is sometimes referred to as James the Greater, principally to distinguish him from another James numbered among the twelve, James the Less (Mark 15:40). The designations probably refer to physical stature or perhaps to age, and not to importance.

The brothers James and John were active with their father in the family fishing business on the Sea of Galilee. The business employed other workers (Mark 1:20), suggesting relative wealth. Acts 4:13 famously claims that the disciples were unlearned and ignorant. Many scholars see this as a refer-

ence only to a lack of formal rabbinical training, arguing that as Galilean businessmen of some means, James and John would have been familiar with Greek and somewhat acquainted with the wider world. John 1:35–41 seems to suggest that John heard Jesus first, and then went and found his brother James. The synoptic gospels have James and John (the order may indicate that James was the elder brother) busy at work when Jesus found them. Their immediate response to the invitation to follow him suggests not only the urgency of the task but also the radical requirement of faith in Jesus.

James is frequently mentioned as among the foremost disciples. Peter, James, and John regularly are invited by Jesus to accompany him while the others among the twelve are left out. He is also paired with his brother as an example of importunate speech and action. The two make an embarrassing plea for positions of power in the kingdom, causing Jesus to declare that his kingdom is not about power and influence, but about service (Mark 10:35–45). The brothers also forbade a man from casting out demons in the name of Christ, eliciting another rebuke from Jesus (Luke 9:49). In this way, the brothers serve as representatives of human nature and as foils for Jesus, allowing him to proffer correct teaching.

James was martyred in 44 C.E., when Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, had him executed. He was the first of the disciples to suffer this fate. Acts 12:1–3 indicates that Herod did this to win favor with the Jewish authorities. Church tradition asserts that James traveled to Spain to preach before he returned to Judea and faced his ultimate martyrdom. Tradition also claims that after his death the body of James the Greater was miraculously translated to Iria Flavia in Spain, and then later to Compostela. This tradition made Compostela one of the most famous pilgrimage destinations during the medieval period.

—David Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; John the Evangelist; Peter; Veneration of Holy People

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Jamgon Kongtrul

(1813–1899 C.E.)

Buddhist polymath

Jamgon Kongtrul was a giant among giants in the 1800s, a century that produced many of the greatest philosophers,

saints, and literary geniuses of Tibet. Renowned as the incarnation of Vairotsana, Kongtrul was a *mahapandita* (great scholar) of the Indian Buddhist philosophical tradition, an unrivaled adept of esoteric tantric meditation and ritual, and also a master of other subjects, including medicine, astrology, and religious art. Most of the great Tibetan masters of the nineteenth century were related to Kongtrul as either teacher or disciple—and in many cases, both.

Kongtrul was born in 1813 to a family of prominent adepts of Tibet's indigenous Bön religion. As a boy, he was thoroughly trained in Bön doctrines. As a young man, he became a fully ordained Buddhist monk and studied the essential texts of Indian Mahayana Buddhism, especially the treatises of Madhyamaka (Middle Way) philosophy, Prajñāparamita (Perfect Wisdom), *vinaya* (monastic discipline), and *abhidharma* (psychology and cosmogony) as well as the *Five Treatises of Maitreya*, a work on the subject of yogic phenomenology and Buddhology. Later in his life, Kongtrul composed commentaries on these and many other subjects and redacted several of the most important textual collections in Tibetan literature. His collected works fill some ninety volumes.

Kongtrul's most important guru was Tai Situ Pema Nyinje Wangpo (1774–1853), one of the greatest masters of the Karma Kagyu lineage. However, Kongtrul's close relationship with Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820–1892)—perhaps the greatest *terton*, or treasure-finder, in the tradition of Pemalingpa in Tibetan Buddhist history—was crucial in the development of Kongtrul's ecumenical approach to the study of Buddhism, and in fostering Kongtrul's own potential as a *terton*. From Khyentse and many other teachers, Kongtrul received all of the most important historical *termas*, or dharma treasures, which he later edited and compiled as the *Store of Precious Treasure* in 108 volumes. With Khyentse and another important *terton*, Chogyur Lingpa (1829–1870), Kongtrul was involved in the discovery, decoding, redaction, or transmission of many newly discovered *termas*. Thus many of Kongtrul's important contributions owe their greatest debt to Khyentse Wangpo.

Jamgon Kongtrul's autobiography, recently published in English (2003), details his extensive activities as a yogi, scholar, teacher, editor, *terton*, and occasional diplomat. Alongside Kongtrul's rapturous accounts of dreams and visions, and numerous accounts of his studies and teaching activities, are scattered recollections of his efforts to overcome the personal and political challenges faced by a spiritual teacher revered in both religious and secular society. More than just a mystical memoir, Kongtrul's life illustrates how tantric Buddhist meditation, especially as practiced in monasteries, liberates persons and communities from the disturbing effects of political and personal rifts. Kongtrul was an instrument of healing and reconciliation in an era

when religion and politics were bound together in a difficult (but not necessarily unholy) union.

—John Whitney Pettit

See also: Pemalingpa; Reincarnation; Scholars as Holy People; Vairotsana

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Jan of Leyden (Beukelz, Beukelzoon, Bockelson) (1509–1536 C.E.)

Anabaptist prophet, leader

Jan of Leyden was an Anabaptist prophet and "king" of Münster in Westphalia (Germany) in 1534–1535. He was executed in 1536 following a siege by episcopal and imperial armies. The Anabaptists favored polygyny and community of goods (based on Acts 2:44–45, 4:32–37), but these doctrines, along with the violence that accompanied the movement at Münster, engendered long-standing horror of the so-called Radical Reformation among Europeans.

Born in 1509, Jan was an illegitimate son of a Leyden patrician. A well-traveled journeyman tailor, he was working in Leyden as an innkeeper, actor, and poet when he became influenced by the millenarianism of Melchior Hofmann. Dutch prophet Jan Matthijs baptized Jan and sent him to Münster after the introduction of the Reformation to that city in 1532. After February 1534, Matthijs took over the city council, ordered the inhabitants to be rebaptized, and expelled opponents. About 2,500 Anabaptists flooded to Münster, cleansing churches of images and nonbiblical books and intentionally burning records of feudal dues. After Matthijs's suicidal attack on the besieging troops in April, Jan dissolved the elected city council and appointed twelve elders, published a confession of faith, and legislated capital punishment for blasphemy, disobedience, adultery, and gossip. Community of goods really meant wartime rationing. Still, military success strengthened Anabaptist resolve, and 200 opposing soldiers deserted after hearing Anabaptist preaching from the ramparts and succumbing to bribes (which consisted of coins made from episcopal treasures).

Jan introduced biblically supported polygyny in July, perhaps out of lust for Matthijs's widow or to organize the Münster women, who heavily outnumbered the men, into households. Resisters were imprisoned or executed; Jan himself executed one of his seventeen wives. Later, women sought divorces. Opposition to polygyny strengthened the



The iron cages in which the bodies of Jan of Leyden and his chief followers were exposed after their execution in 1536 still hang from the tower of St. Lambert's Church, Münster, Germany. (Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

latent resistance, and a dissident faction imprisoned Jan. After his release, however, he had his opponents executed.

Jan enhanced his own personal charisma with ritual, costume, and rhetoric. These were described in eyewitness accounts. Residents were forced to dance, attend spectacles, and participate in communal meals. Jan lacked authority in the larger Anabaptist community, however, and his attempts in October to win external support failed. His messengers were executed; one, Heinrich Graess, became a spy. New embassies to sympathizers at Christmas failed when Graess betrayed the supporters' location, causing widespread persecutions. As hunger intensified in 1535, Jan ordered women, children, and older men out of the city. Besiegers killed many of those who followed his order. Two Anabaptists, John Eck and Heinrich Gresbeck, betrayed one of the gates to the

armies on June 25, and the city was taken and its male residents slaughtered after a vicious battle. Jan, along with other Anabaptists, was condemned, publicly tortured, and executed on January 22, 1536. His corpse was suspended from St. Lambert's Church in an iron cage that remains there to this day. About 3,500 women faithful to Anabaptism were expelled from the city.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Extremists as Holy People; Prophets; Reform and Reaction; Violence and Nonviolence

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Jerome

(347–420 C.E.)

Christian ascetic, scholar

Jerome, a Christian ascetic, biblical translator, and exegete, remains widely regarded as one of the most influential and learned men in early church history. In many ways, he served as a bridge between the East and the West. His travels throughout the Roman Empire extended his thought, and his mastery of Hebrew, Latin, and Greek produced a prolific body of writings, including the Vulgate, the authoritative Latin translation of the Bible. As well, his literary correspondence with a network of male and female spiritual friends attests to a significant form of early Christian community. His own piety was rooted in a call to Christian asceticism that was lived out in a variety of ways during his life.

Jerome was born in Stridon in Dalmatia, a region of the Balkan Peninsula, in 347. He studied in Rome and was baptized a Christian there in 366. Shortly thereafter, he moved to Aquileia in northern Italy, where he joined a group of companions, among them Rufinus, who adopted an ascetic way of life grounded in rigorous physical discipline, prayer, and renunciation in accordance with biblical principles and the life of Jesus Christ. In 372, Jerome left this cenobitic (communal) lifestyle for a more solitary one. After a brief stay in Antioch, he entered the desert in the region of Chalcis in Syria, where he lived as a hermit for several years.



Death of Jerome, his soul carried to heaven by angels. Prominent in the engraving are the lion who befriended him in legend and a cardinal's hat, since later stories made Jerome a member of the College of Cardinals. (Library of Congress)

Jerome left his solitude to attend the Council of Constantinople in 381. After this, he returned to Rome, where he sought ecclesiastical support for the episcopal consecration of his friend Paulinus as bishop of Antioch. In Rome, Jerome also embraced the opportunity to serve as a spiritual adviser to a group of Roman aristocratic women. His letters to Paula and to her daughter, Eustochium, are evidence that he encouraged among these women the cultivation of a form of urban asceticism that included, among other things, the practice of Christian virtues and the reading and recitation of scripture. These women were largely responsible for the financial support that made it possible for Jerome and Paula to travel from Rome to Bethlehem in 386 to establish monastic institutions for women and men. These institutions served the local Christian community and extended their hospitality to weary Christian pilgrims who traveled to the Holy Land from all regions of the empire.

Jerome's writings include a considerable body of translations, of which the most noteworthy is the Vulgate. He also authored biblical commentaries, homilies, ascetical and

polemical works, eulogies, letters, and a Christian hagiography on the life of Paul the Hermit (c. 235–345).

—Bernadette McNary-Zak

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Paul the Hermit; Scholars as Holy People

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Jesal

See **Toral and Jesal**

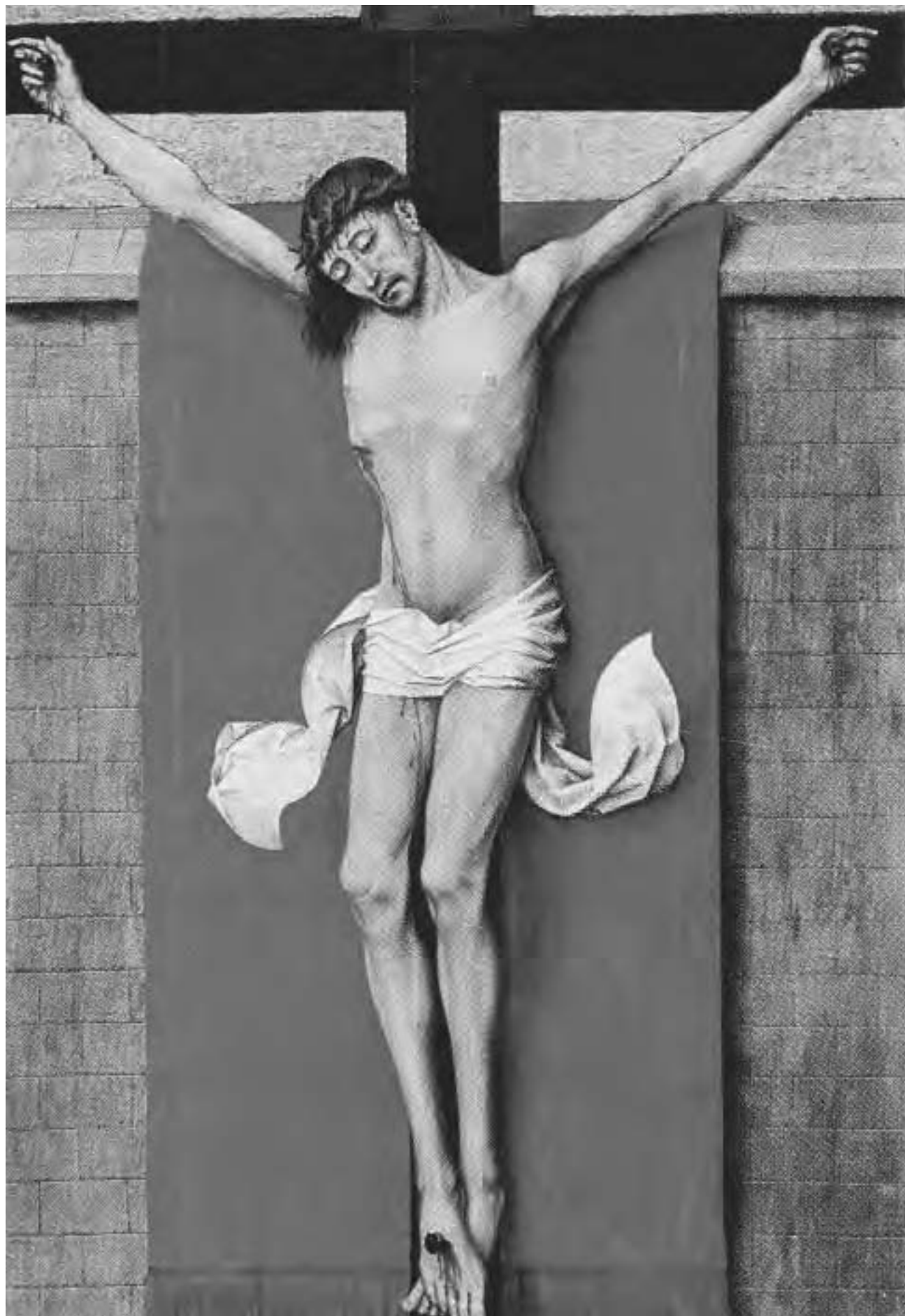
Jesus

(c. 6 B.C.E.–30 C.E.)

Christian founder

Jesus of Nazareth was a Jewish prophet and holy man whose life and teachings became the basis of the Christian religion. After his death by crucifixion in about 30 C.E., his followers had experiences that convinced them that he had been resurrected by God. They believed that although he had ascended to heaven, he would soon return as messiah (Greek: *Christos*, “anointed one”) to reign over a restored Jewish kingdom in Jerusalem. The movement they then founded spread rapidly and soon came to include non-Jews. Especially prominent in the Greco-Roman mission was the apostle Paul, whose reinterpretation of the new faith was especially influential. By the middle of the second century, the new movement, originally a Jewish sect, had achieved a distinct “Christian” identity, and it went on to become a world religion.

Although Jesus is mentioned by early second-century Roman historians (Tacitus, Suetonius, and others) and by the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, the best sources for our knowledge of his life and teachings are the four gospels of the New Testament. (The apocryphal Gospel of Thomas, a collection of sayings attributed to Jesus extant partially in Greek and completely in Coptic, may contain some early traditions.) Since the New Testament gospels were written to promote faith in the resurrected Christ, and reflect situations as they were recalled by disciples some decades after Jesus' time, they must be analyzed critically for information concerning the historical Jesus. Unfortunately, there is no unanimity among scholars about exactly who the historical Jesus was and what he said and did, but ever since the publication of Albert Schweitzer's seminal book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (2001; 1st German ed. 1906),



Rogier van der Weyden, Crucifixion, c. 1460. (Corel Corp)

most scholars (not all—for example, the “Jesus Seminar”) have interpreted Jesus’ teachings and activity against the background of first-century Jewish eschatology.

Jesus (Yeshu’a) was presumably born sometime before the death of King Herod the Great (a client of the Romans, d. 4 B.C.E.). He grew up in a pious Jewish home in Lower Galilee, the son of Mary (Miryam), the wife of a carpenter named Joseph (Yoseph). According to the New Testament, Mary was a virgin who conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, so Joseph is not technically considered his father. Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters (Mark 6:3). As a youth he learned Joseph’s trade. Sometime around 28 C.E., he underwent a ritual “washing of repentance,” or baptism, in the Jordan River by the Jewish prophet John the Baptist and presumably became John’s disciple. John’s message warned of the coming divine judgment, and his ritual washing was intended as a sign of repentance in preparation for that final event. After John the Baptist’s arrest by Herod Antipas, Jesus returned to his home territory and began a mission of his own in the rural towns and villages of Galilee. Sources differ on the length of this mission (in Mark it is a few months, but in John it could be for up to three years).

Jesus’ message is summarized by the earliest gospel: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:14). This message reflects an apocalyptic worldview, a dualistic conception of human history and destiny that contrasts “this age,” seen to be dominated by the forces of evil, with “the age to come,” which God would soon inaugurate, when sin, death, and the forces of evil would be brought to an end. Following upon a final judgment, the righteous elect would live with God eternally in a newly constituted world. Jesus’ characteristic designation for “the age to come” is the “kingdom” or (better translated) the “rule” of God.

Jews had for centuries worshipped God as their “Eternal King,” even during the time of the monarchy when the Judahite kings ruled in Jerusalem as God’s regent. Nevertheless, the experience of foreign (Roman) rule and widespread oppression of the powerless by the powerful brought pious Jews to pray for the full realization of God’s rule, as, for example, in the Aramaic *Qaddish*: “Magnified and hallowed be his great name in the world that he has created according to his good pleasure; may he establish his kingdom in your lifetime and in your days and in the lives of the whole house of Israel, very soon and in a near time.” This ancient prayer is reflected in two of the petitions of the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples (the Lord’s Prayer, Matt. 6:9–10). Jesus understood himself as a special messenger of God’s kingdom, announcing its nearness and challenging people to live according to its norms. In God’s kingdom, the norms of “this age” would be overturned, and the poor and oppressed would receive justice.

Jesus’ teachings and activity aroused the hostility of some of his contemporaries, notably the Pharisees, a party of pious Jews intent on following Torah (the Law) meticulously, and who enjoined purity regulations originally decreed for the temple priests. Jesus’ views were more lenient in terms of ritual purity, but they were more stringent in terms of moral requirements (for example, forbidding divorce). Jesus’ open table fellowship with traditional “sinners” (nonobservant Jews) and other deviants (such as tax collectors) was especially irritating to the Jewish authorities. In Jesus’ view, God rejoices more over repentant sinners than over people who think they do not need repentance. He saw himself as sent especially to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 15:24).

Although Jesus looked upon the “coming” of God’s kingdom as a future event, he also indicated in certain contexts that the kingdom was already present in his own actions and teachings. He is credited by all the gospels with performing miracles of healing, exemplifying the presence among those healed of God’s saving power. Jesus was also an exorcist. He looked upon his exorcisms as part of God’s final assault upon the kingdom of Satan and signs of the proleptic presence of God’s kingdom: “But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you” (Luke 11:20 and context).

Who did Jesus think he was? His followers looked upon him as God’s promised messiah who would restore the Davidic kingdom to Israel. The resurrection was taken as a sign of God’s vindication of him as this messiah, but even before his death some of his followers looked upon him as the one who had been foretold. However, there are no authentic pronouncements of Jesus in which he claims to be the messiah. Instead, the self-designation that occurs in many of his sayings is “the Son of Man.” “Son of man,” both in Hebrew and in Aramaic, means essentially “human being” (cf. Ps. 8:4). The prophet Ezekiel is repeatedly addressed by God as “son of man” (Ezek. 2:1, *passim*). In one of the visions in the book of Daniel, four kingdoms, represented as beasts, are brought to an end by the coming to God of “one like a son of man,” that is, a human being (Dan. 7:14). That passage in Daniel was interpreted by the earliest Christians as a reference to Messiah Jesus, who would come again to establish his kingdom. But Jesus spoke instead of the “coming” of God’s kingdom, and not of his own “coming” (cf. Mark 9:1, reinterpreted in Matt. 16:28). Jesus’ authentic “Son of Man” sayings have to do with his lifestyle (Luke 7:34; 9:58) and other aspects of his ministry, including his authority to heal (Mark 2:10), and (possibly) his role as God’s servant (Mark 10:45). He probably also expected to play a future role as witness for the defense before God’s bar of judgment (Luke 12:8, in contrast to Matt. 25:31 *ff.*). How many of the “Son of Man” sayings are authentic pronouncements of the historical Jesus is

disputed in scholarship. However one decides that, it is clear that Jesus' self-designation as "the Son of Man" is ambiguous, probably deliberately so.

The Gospel of Mark has Jesus predict three times that "the Son of Man" must suffer and die, and after three days rise again (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33 *ff.*). These sayings are usually taken as prophecies after the event, composed by Mark. Nevertheless, it is probable that Jesus did expect to die in the course of his ministry. Jesus was well aware of what had happened to John the Baptist (beheaded by Herod Antipas) and probably saw in this an indicator of what would happen to him (Matt. 17:12 *ff.*). When he was warned by some Pharisees that Herod wanted to kill him, he is reputed to have said that he would go about his business as usual, for it is in Jerusalem where they kill prophets (Luke 13:31–34). And to Jerusalem he went.

His last visit to Jerusalem was made with other Galileans on pilgrimage to observe the Passover festival. After his entry to the city, Jesus mounted a demonstration in the Temple against its money changers and merchants, thus incurring the wrath of the Temple priesthood. At night, on the eve of Passover, he was arrested by temple police and turned over to Pontius Pilate (Roman prefect of Judaea, 26–36 C.E.) with an allegation of insurrection. Pilate ordered him scourged and crucified, together with two other insurrectionists. Pilate's contempt for his Jewish subjects, including Jesus, is illustrated by the mocking inscription that he ordered posted on Jesus' cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

But that wasn't the end of his story.

—Birger A. Pearson

See also: Apostles; Christianity and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hagiography; James, Brother of Jesus; Jesus ('Isa); John the Baptist; John the Evangelist; Joseph; Magi; Mary, Virgin; Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Orthodoxy and Saints; Peter; Protestantism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction

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Jesus ('Isa)

(1st cent. C.E.)

Muslim prophet

Muslims revere Jesus (Arabic: 'Isa) as second to last in a long line of prophets that culminated in Muhammad (570–632). They thus consider Jesus a man of lofty spiritual estate, but no more than a human being. Born of the Virgin Mary, 'Isa was a specially chosen instrument of divine revelation, but he was not the Son of God, in their view. Muslim texts call Jesus the *masih*, but the term does not carry the sense of expectation connoted by its nearest English equivalent, *messiah*. He is "God's word," but not in the sense that Christians understand the term *logos*. Mary is mentioned more often by name in the Qur'an than in the Bible.

The purely human nature of Jesus is not the only major issue on which Islamic tradition disagrees dramatically with the Christian view. Qur'an 4:157 states that though the Jews boasted they had killed 'Isa, they did not in fact do so. It was, rather, one who looked like Jesus who hung on the cross. Muslim tradition holds, nevertheless, that God did raise Jesus bodily into heaven in the Ascension. Since 'Isa did not die an earthly death, he did not experience resurrection.

'Isa has a significant place in the Qur'an. According to the Islamic sacred text, Mary became pregnant with 'Isa when the angel Gabriel appeared to her in human form to announce the news. Joseph plays no part in the Muslim story of Jesus. After the child was born, Mary brought him to her people. When even they expressed doubt as to Mary's integrity, the infant spoke in her defense and lifted her opprobrium. One of the qur'anic stories not found in the canonical gospels is that the boy 'Isa formed a bird of clay in his hands, and when he breathed on it, it took flight—a story also told in the apocryphal Gospel of James. Principal qur'anic texts on 'Isa (and Mary) are: 3:37–48; 4:169–170; 5:76–79 and 109–117; 19:1–36; 21:91–92; 43:57–65; and 57:26–27.

Hagiographical texts in Islam known collectively as Tales of the Prophets expand further a number of important themes. The tales embellish the accounts of 'Isa's infancy and youth, feature 'Isa as a wandering ascetic with the power to give and restore life, and add to the number of his miracles, emphasizing his sinlessness and the significance of his ascension and the heaven and eventual second coming to earth.

Islam's mystical authors develop the figure of 'Isa in particularly colorful and imaginative ways. 'Isa is for many mys-

tics the image of the near-perfect sufi—only near-perfect because he once carried a needle with him during his desert wanderings, thus falling short of absolute trust in God. But even when storms threatened, 'Isa refrained from seeking shelter, for he epitomized the homeless pilgrim. Sufis also celebrate 'Isa as the prophet who laughed heartily and often, by contrast with Yahya (John the Baptist), who had a penchant for weeping. Sufi poets delight in tales of 'Isa's ability to restore life through the incantation of a powerful name only a select few may utter. Though the Qur'an does not mention Lazarus ('Azar) by name, sufi writers picked up, from popular hagiography, the story of 'Isa's raising him from the dead. Finally, sufis love to describe how Jesus embodies their focus on mystical knowledge through his mastery of the "donkey" of the body, a symbol of ignorance.

—Jack Renard

See also: Death; Jesus; Joy; Mary, Virgin; Muhammad; Prophets; Sufism

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Jianzhen (Chien-chen; Jap.: Ganjin)
(688–763 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, patriarch

A Chinese Buddhist monk responsible for establishing the Vinaya school in Japan, Jianzhen was born in Yangzhou in 688 and tonsured when he was fourteen. Having received *bhikus* (monastic) and *bodhisattva* ordination in 707, he traveled extensively as "cloud and water," that is, without possessions or human ties, in a learning tour. Under various masters, he became accomplished in the practices of the Vinaya school founded by Daoxuan (596–667). In 733, he returned to Yangzhou and immediately attracted a large number of learned and capable disciples. In addition to his Buddhist learning, Jianzhen was also proficient in Chinese medicine, literature, architecture, and painting.

In 742, Eiei and Fusho, two Japanese monks, invited Jianzhen to establish the Vinaya school in Japan. Jianzhen accepted the invitation and, together with his twenty-one disciples, prepared for the journey. However, the Chinese government prevented them from leaving the country. For the next

eight years, Jianzhen attempted several times to reach Japan by sea, but he was unsuccessful, partly owing to political problems. During his fifth attempt, Eiei died and Jianzhen went blind. Despite all of these setbacks, Jianzhen again set off for Japan in November 733, accompanied by many of his capable disciples, and they arrived in Kyushu in December.

Jianzhen brought with him a large number of Buddhist texts as well as texts on other elements of Chinese culture. In April 734, he presided over an ordination ceremony in accordance with the practice of the Vinaya school at Todaiji in Kyoto. The emperor, empress, and other members of the imperial family received bodhisattva ordination while more than 400 monks were ordained as bhikus. The event marked the beginning of full-fledged Vinaya practice in Japan, and Jianzhen has been regarded as the first patriarch of the Japanese Vinaya school. Under his instruction, Shodaiji, the paradigm of Japanese Buddhist architecture, was constructed in 759. Meanwhile, Jianzhen also educated the Japanese about Chinese culture. He is also honored as the founder of Japanese medicine. He died in 763 at the age of seventy-five.

—Xue Yu

See also: Bodhisattva; Monasticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir

(1088–1166 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, philosopher, ascetic

'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani from the region of the Caspian Sea is probably known in all corners of the Islamic world for his legendary mystical reputation and unyielding scholarly achievements. He won fame in a wide range of subjects, including mysticism, philosophy, theosophy, jurisprudence, and asceticism. He studied law with renowned scholars such as Ibn 'Aqil and al-Mukharrimi, and he led the construction of the first Hanbali seminary college (*madrassa*) in Baghdad. He was the founder of the Qadiriyyah order in sufism. Buried in Baghdad, 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani's tomb is still a center for sufis to visit and perform pilgrimage.

'Abdul Qadir's veneration goes beyond any one particular sufi order because his spiritual power is widely described and accepted in sufi literature. Accounts of his miracles appear in sufi diaries, biographies, and dictionaries, which credit him with taming animals by raising a hand or through a mere glance. Sufis believe that all creatures praise God in their own voice and that 'Abdul Qadir's purified soul directly spoke to the animals and communicated with them on some level of

consciousness. Other miracles attributed to ‘Abdul Qadir include curing illnesses by properly reciting religious formulae for healing. For example, he reportedly whispered into a deaf girl’s ear so that she could hear, touched the stomach of an infertile woman to enable her to bear children, and alleviated the pain of an infant through prayer. Nevertheless, ‘Abdul Qadir did not claim to be better than any other of God’s creatures. He synthesized his knowledge of Islamic theology with popular mystical practices in order to direct people’s attention toward God.

‘Abdul Qadir is revered in the sufi tradition as one of the most important sufi scholars and saints. He did not compromise basic religious practices or use asceticism to escape following the tenets of the faith. He asserted that the five daily ritualistic prayers were essential because it is a divine mandate to surrender oneself to the creator and, moreover, because prayer is a conduit for the believer to communicate with the divine. Although in some of his writings he comes across as a stern jurist, this is because he was concerned about sufis who drifted away from essential religious practices. For example, concerning fasting during the month of Ramadan and other times of the year, Qadir Jilani advocated the inner benefits of self-discipline and self-sacrifice. He viewed periodic fasting—for the more spiritually advanced, daily fasting—as a significant spiritual exercise for contemplation and heightened awareness. He felt this was the time when spiritual aspirants were able to attain the most knowledge.

—*Qamar-ul Huda*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Jili, Abd al-Karim al-; Miracles; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism

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Jili, Abd al-Karim al-

(1366–1408 or 1417 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, author

Abd al-Karim ibn Ibrahim al-Jili, one of the most popular and influential figures of classical sufism, is the author of the renowned work *Al-insan al-kamil* (The universal man). He was born in Jil, Baghdad, in 1366 and eventually became well known in much of the Islamic world, from Turkey to Indonesia. Little is known of his life, but his lineage goes back to ‘Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166), the celebrated founder of the Qadiriyyah order of sufism. Certain passages of his spiritual autobiography scattered through his writings indicate that he traveled in India and lived for some time in Yemen. He wrote about two dozen works. *Al-insan al-kamil* is the most famous of these and one of the classics of sufi metaphysics and spiritual psychology.

In his philosophical orientation, Jili continued the tradition of Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165–1240), perhaps the greatest mystical metaphysician in Islam, expanding and commenting upon Ibn al-‘Arabi’s mystical path of knowledge. The concept of “universal” or “perfect man” was developed first by Ibn al-‘Arabi as a comprehensive account of spiritual anthropology. According to this view, the human state as the microcosm reflects the culmination of the various names and qualities of God. The universal man has reached the highest state of human perfection. In the tradition of Ibn al-‘Arabi and Jili, the universal man is ultimately the prophet of Islam who functions as the pole around which sanctity and prophecy revolve in the Islamic tradition. The title is reserved primarily for the prophet Muhammad.

One of the central themes of Jili’s work is the relationship between God and his creation, on the one hand, and God and the human world, on the other. The first issue pertains to the multiplicity of the world in view of God’s absolute unity, a concept that underlies Islam’s strict monotheism. Jili explains the relationship between divine unity and manifest multiplicity by referring to such concepts as the transcendent unity of being and the theophany, or self-disclosure, of God. With Ibn al-‘Arabi, Jili argues that there is unity-in-diversity and diversity-in-unity, and this leads him to a holistic view of the universe. God’s absolute being and unity, however, transcend all multiplicities and contingencies and are not tainted by them. God’s relationship to humankind is explained through the doctrine of the microcosm, which refers to the human state, and macrocosm, representing the universe. Man is called the “small universe” and the universe the “big man.” This view takes all creation to be an act of God’s unveiling and self-disclosure and establishes an ineluctable bond between man and the universe.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Jilani, ‘Abdul al-Qadir; Sufism

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Jinshu

See Shenxiu

Jiva Gosvamin

(fl. 1555–1592 C.E.)

Hindu theologian

Jiva Gosvamin was one of the six famous theologians responsible for the articulation and development of the Bengal (Gaudiya) school of Vaishnava Hinduism, later known as the

Chaitanya movement, in the sixteenth century. Jiva was the most prolific and versatile of the six theologians (including his two uncles, Sanatana and Rupa). More than twenty works in Sanskrit are attributed to him, including commentaries on religious aesthetics, ritual, and philosophy, studies of Sanskrit grammar, and poetry. His major work was the massive *Sat-sandarbha* (Six compositions), which provides the metaphysical and theological foundations for the Bengal school. His birth and death dates are unknown but he was active from 1555 through 1592.

Basing his works on the mythological dramas involving Krishna as a playful and erotic cowherd in the classical Bhagavata Purana (c. eighth and ninth centuries), Jiva sought to explain the meaning behind Krishna's love trysts with the married milkmaids (*gopis*) as symbolic of the selfless love (*bhakti*) of the human soul for the divine. The goal of devotees is identification with one of the characters (especially the milkmaids) in the mythological drama, eventually to develop the divine love and emotions (*rasa*) that free one from the material world and lead to the eternal paradise of Krishna as *bhagavat* (full divinity). Jiva's major accomplishment was to articulate a cosmology of being and consciousness that supported this devotional process. With his uncles he also adapted earlier Sanskrit theories of aesthetics (*rasa-sastra*) to argue for the superiority of the emotional worship of Krishna over merely philosophical approaches. The Gosvamins (masters of cows) were devotees of the great Bengali god-man Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533), who sent them to the northern Indian village of Vrindavana to pursue their work. Jiva's own disciple, Krishnadasa Kaviraja, wrote the influential biography *Caitanya-caritamrta* (Pastimes of Chaitanya), which held that Chaitanya himself was the incarnation of both Krishna and his favorite milkmaid, Radha.

—Glen Alexander Hayes

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Gopi/The Gopis; Krishna; Rupa Goswami; Sanatana Goswami; Scholars as Holy People

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Jizang (Chi-tsang)

(549–623 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Jizang is a leading figure in the historical development of the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) tradition of Buddhist philoso-

phy in China. His Sanlun (Three Treatises) school is traditionally regarded as a Chinese version of Madhyamaka. The school's name comes from three Madhyamaka treatises that were translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva (344–413), the first to introduce the Madhyamaka teachings to China. Jizang achieved great fame for his great erudition and prolific scholarship, and he was influential in revitalizing the study of Sanlun doctrine after a period of decline. He established Sanlun as a major exegetical tradition in East Asia, although soon after his death in 623 the school became defunct and was superseded by new Sinitic traditions such as Chan and Huayan.

Born in 549 in a Buddhist family that immigrated to China from central Asia, Jizang received a traditional Chinese education. He was still a boy when he entered monastic life and became a disciple of Falang (507–581), a prominent exponent of Madhyamaka philosophy. Early biographies describe Jizang as a precocious youth, capable of mastering complex teachings and lecturing in front of large audiences. As he became widely respected for his extensive learning and intellectual brilliance, he received an invitation from the second emperor of the Sui dynasty (581–618) to take up residence in Chang'an, the capital of the newly reunified empire. Jizang continued to be a recipient of imperial patronage from the first emperor of the succeeding Tang dynasty (618–907), who appointed him as one of ten eminent monks who were in charge of the monastic order.

Jizang was an extremely prolific writer. His major works include *Erdi yi* (Meaning of the two truths) and *Dasheng xuanlun* (Treatise on the mysteries of Mahayana). He also wrote numerous commentaries on canonical texts, including the Lotus Scripture and the Vimalakirti Scripture. His major contribution to the doctrinal evolution of Sanlun is his analysis of the two truths (conventional and ultimate), which postulates three phases in the dialectical ascent of the realization of the two truths. Another major feature of Jizang's thought was his assimilation of the buddha-nature theory into his doctrinal system. Because of that, some scholars have suggested that his thought can be interpreted as a synthesis of the doctrines of emptiness and buddha-nature, rather than simply as a Chinese version of Madhyamaka.

—Mario Poceski

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Kumarajiva; Recognition; Scholars as Holy People

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Jizzini, Muhammad al- (Ash-Shahid al-Awwal)
(1333–1384 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim scholar, martyr

Ash-Shahid al-Awwal, “the First Martyr,” was the first of the major Shi'i religious leaders to emerge from the Jabal 'Amil region of the Lebanon, and he was thus responsible for starting the shift that moved the center of Shi'i scholarship to Lebanon from Hillah in Iraq. He is mainly remembered by Shi'is for his scholarship in the area of religious jurisprudence and for the fact that, by being executed by the Sunni authorities in 1384, he became a martyr.

Muhammad ibn Makki al-'Amili al-Jizzini was born in 1333 in Jizzin in the Jabal 'Amil area of Lebanon (between Beirut and Damascus). He studied in Hillah in Iraq under the leading Shi'i religious scholars of his time, as well as under some Sunni scholars, and then settled in Damascus. Syria was at this time controlled by Sunni rulers under the authority of the Mamluk sultans of Egypt. Thus ash-Shahid al-Awwal used *taqiyyah* (dissimulation of one's religious beliefs and practices in times of danger to one's life), a practice allowed under Shi'i law, to establish himself as one of the leading religious scholars of Damascus. He would thus give judgments to Sunnis in accordance with Sunni law, while at the same time being covertly the head of the Shi'i community and giving judgments to the Shi'is in accordance with Shi'i law. Although Hillah was to continue to be a major center for Shi'i scholarship, ash-Shahid al-Awwal started the movement that would put the Lebanon at the center of Shi'i scholarship within the next century.

The second wave of Mongol conquests under Timur (Tamerlane) occurred during ash-Shahid al-Awwal's lifetime. Although Timur was a Sunni, he was well disposed toward Shi'is and allowed the Shi'i rulers of the Sarbardarids in northeastern Iran to remain as his vassals. The Sarbardarid ruler sent an emissary to ash-Shahid al-Awwal inviting him to go there and help to establish Twelver Shi'ism in the area. Unfortunately, shortly before the arrival of this emissary, ash-Shahid al-Awwal had been denounced as a Shi'i, arrested, and put into prison. Nevertheless, while in prison, he did write for the Sarbardarid emissary and ruler his most important book, *al-Luma'ah al-Dimashqiyyah* (The Damascan gleaming), a work on Shi'i religious jurisprudence that would become the standard on that subject and the textbook used by students for some 250 years.

According to some accounts, ash-Shahid al-Awwal was in prison because he had been betrayed by a Shi'i. Other accounts say his arrest was the result of jealousy on the part of a Sunni religious judge in Damascus. At any rate, he was kept in prison for a year and then executed on the orders of Baydar, the governor of Damascus, and Mamluk sultan Barquq according to *fatwas* (judgments) issued by Sunni religious judges of Damascus. It is said that his execution was by

blows of the sword, followed by crucifixion, stoning, and then being burned.

—Moojan Momen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Scholars as Holy People

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Jnaneshvara

(1275–1296 C.E.)

Hindu writer

Jnaneshvara, a Hindu religious writer (also called Jnanadeva), was born in 1275 in Maharashtra, India, into a brahmin household. His father was a priest who became an ascetic but later changed his mind and returned to the life of a householder, getting married and having a family. Because this represented a violation of caste regulations, his entire family was excommunicated and persecuted. The four children, though denied an education and considered social outcasts, became important religious figures, but all died in their twenties. A brother named Nivrattinath, who gained fame as a poetic saint and yogi as a member of the Natha cult, influenced Jnaneshvara to also become a yogi. All four siblings were eventually considered incarnations of Hindu divine beings. Jnaneshvara was supposedly Vishnu; Nivrattinath was associated with Shiva; their other brother, Spondeva, was said to be Brahma; and their sister, Muktabai, was linked with the goddess Sri Lakshmi.

Jnaneshvara wrote devotional Vaishnavite poetry during his short life. In some of these poems, the more Maharashtran regional deities, Vitthal and Rukmini, often substituted for the deity Krishna and his consort Radha. But Jnaneshvara's greatest claim to fame was as the author of a text entitled *Jnaneshvari*. This work was both a paraphrase and commentary on the Bhagavad Gita that synthesized devotional philosophy and poetry. It has been highly venerated by the people of Maharashtra, who have tended to treat the book as a sacred object. In this text, Jnaneshvara stresses the importance of the guru (teacher) and the necessity of venerating and serving the guru, explaining the dualistic metaphysical system of Samkhya philosophy, the unknowable nature of God, various virtues and vices, the importance of renouncing the fruits of one's actions, and the devotional path to God. The text also stressed the divine name and its power. Overall, the work brought together the Advaita Vedanta philosophy of Sankara, classical yoga and its Samkhya metaphysics found in the Bhagavad Gita, and tantric thought. Jnaneshvara equates, for instance, the Purusa of Samkhya philosophy with the Brahman of Advaita thought, and he

refers to the awakening of the *kundalini* (spiritual energy) in the heart of a person.

Jnaneshvara was historically considered a member of the *sant* tradition. Although there is no precise meaning for the term *sant*, it has evolved to refer to early nonsectarian poet-saints. The sants represented the lower strata of Indian society that even included the untouchables; indeed, they were usually considered social misfits. It was thought, however, that God, through some kind of unexpected miracle, had verified the saintliness of the sant. But the ideal of saintliness was a lay notion. It was open to everyone and transcended sectarian and caste barriers. He brought his own life to an end in 1296 by burying himself alive, following yogic tradition.

—Carl Olson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Gurus; Status; Teachers as Holy People

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Joan of Arc

(1412–1431 C.E.)

Christian mystic

Joan of Arc, known only as Jehanne la Pucelle (Joan the Maid) during her lifetime, is the patron saint of France, soldiers, and prisoners of war. She is the only Christian holy woman to have led an army and is unique among Christian female saints in the intense nationalism of her spirituality.

Joan was born in 1412 to a peasant family in the village of Domrémy in Lorraine, surrounded by war. Over the next few years, France lost ground to England in the Hundred Years' War, and in 1420 the Treaty of Troyes gave succession to the French crown to Henry V of England. In 1422, both Henry and Charles VI of France died; it remained to be seen whether the uncrowned Charles VII could recover his realm from the English.

When Joan was about thirteen, she began hearing “voices,” which she later identified as those of the archangel Michael and two saints. In time, they gave her a mission: to liberate France from the English. In 1428, she appeared in the nearby garrison town of Vaucouleurs, where she proclaimed that the kingdom belonged to God, who wished Charles VII to reign. Joan returned in 1429 to insist that she be taken to speak to Charles because she was bringing him divine aid to win back France. In March she met him at Chinon. To test her holiness,



Ingrid Bergman in *Joan of Arc*, 1948. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

Charles had her questioned by theologians, then examined by women to verify her virginity. Satisfied, he supplied her with armor, horses, and men and sent her to raise the siege of Orléans as she had said she would. This she did in early May. A series of victories followed. Joan's next step was to convey Charles to Rheims for his coronation, which took place on July 17, with Joan dressed in full armor at his side.

Joan's fortunes then changed. Further military victories eluded her, and she was captured at Compiègne by England's Burgundian allies. Following lengthy negotiations, she was sold to the English for £10,000 and then tried for heresy. The trial, conducted by an inquisitorial court in English-held Rouen, lasted from January 9 through May 1431. Unable to establish independent grounds on which to formally charge her, the court questioned Joan directly in order to uncover some heretical offense with which she could be charged. This procedural irregularity later provided the basis for nullifying her conviction. On May 24, worn down by the questioning, Joan denied her voices and promised not to wear men's clothing again on the understanding that she would be removed from the military prison and held in female custody. Three days later, when this condition was not met, she resumed male attire. Condemned as a relapsed heretic, Joan was burned at the stake on May 30. In 1456, a retrial nullified the 1431 proceedings. Joan was canonized in 1920.

Joan's fervor restored French hopes and confidence at a time of low morale and helped bring about a turning point in the Hundred Years' War. Her memory has been invoked in times of national crisis, most notably during World War II, and also by feminists in arguments for female worth. Historians continue to find interest in Joan's spirituality and military ability, the cultural and legal ramifications of her trials, and the impact of her life, while literature and film have carried popular versions of her story to the wider world.

—Helen E. Maurer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Johane Masowe (John of the Wilderness)

(1914–1973 C.E.)

Christian prophet

Johane Masowe was born at about the same time that World War I broke out in 1914. He grew up under the family name Shonhiwa M'tunyane, or Masedza, in an African village called Gandanzara in Zimbabwe. The story of his sainthood begins after he abandoned school and left his village to travel between his home and the capital city of Harare. He tried various menial jobs, including gardening, carpentry, shoe repair, and probably farm labor, until he stopped work on account of chronic headaches that caused him to sleep long hours and have dreams about death.

Believing in the healing power of God, Johane started to preach the gospel during the 1930s. He led some of his followers from Zimbabwe to Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania, and Kenya. This journey has been described as an exodus for African people on a quest for a promised land. He died of a cardiovascular disease while in Tanzania in Sep-

tember 1973 in prayerful hope for the return of Christ and en route to the promised land. The forty-year migration created the setting for his saintlike behavior.

Johane's claim to authority began with experiences of marginality. As hinted above, he suffered from acute pain, nightmares about death, and, in other stories, was a victim of colonial oppression and violent abuse. Moreover, his dreams were also filled with the "voice" of God, and he experienced healing through what he believed was the power of the Holy Spirit. As a result, Johane sought his God in places he called *masowe* (wilderness) to draw attention to the biblical prophetic tradition of voices crying in the wilderness that saints embraced in the wider Christian tradition. Some of this made sense to Shona people. Their own traditional religious heritage used idioms of healers (*n'angas*) and spirit mediums to explain their suffering and sometimes withdrawal to the margins of society and anointments announced through dreams. Even Johane Masowe's ascetic behavior was meaningful to Shona people, who had a high regard for virginity and sexual abstinence in preparation for ritual.

Today, Johane Masowe's accepted holiness explains the popular use of the word *masowe* to designate places for prayer that are located on the fringes of landscapes. Today between South Africa and Nairobi, there are approximately 3 million people using the title "Johane Masowe Apostles" to name their churches.

—Isabel Mukonyora

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Prophets

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John XXIII (Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli)

(1881–1963 C.E.)

Roman Catholic pope, reformer

The future Pope John XXIII was born at Sotto il Monte, Bergamo, Italy, on November 25, 1881. He was pope from October 28, 1958, until his death on June 3, 1963.

Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was the third of thirteen children, and the first son, of pious Roman Catholic Italian peasants. At age twelve, he entered the diocesan minor seminary at Bergamo. His early training brought him under the influence of the progressive leaders of the Italian Catholic social move-



Pope John XXIII being carried ceremoniously to St. Peter's Basilica for the inauguration of the Second Vatican Council, October 15, 1962. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

ment. In 1901, he attended the Roman Seminary (Apollinare), but he interrupted his studies to serve for a year in the 73rd Infantry Regiment of the Italian Army. He was ordained a priest on August 10, 1904, after finishing a doctorate in theology.

He was appointed secretary of the bishop of Bergamo, Count Giacomo Radini-Tedeschi, whom he served for over nine years. During this time, he gained experience in all forms of Catholic social action and gained an understanding of the problems of the working class. He published several brief monographs during this time. In 1915, during World

War I, he served in the Italian chaplains corps. In 1920, he helped to organize the first national Eucharistic Congress to be held in Italy after the war. A year later, he was named director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Italy and appointed to the General High Council, helping Pope Pius XI write the motu proprio *Romanorum Pontificum* (May 3, 1922), which raised his society to papal status and transferred the headquarters from Lyons to Rome.

In 1925, Roncalli became titular archbishop of Areopolis and apostolic visitor to Bulgaria. He worked extensively

with the problems of Eastern Rite Catholics in this area, who comprised a scattered minority. In 1934, Roncalli was appointed apostolic delegate to Turkey and Greece. He introduced the use of the Turkish language into the Catholic rite and official documents. During World War II, Roncalli supplied much crucial information to the papacy regarding international espionage in Istanbul. In 1944, he was assigned as papal nuncio to France during the difficult political turmoil of that country during and following World War II. He was made a cardinal on January 12, 1953, and granted the titular church of Santa Prisca on the Aventine, and eventually he became patriarch of Venice in the same year.

After Pius XII's death on October 9, 1958, Roncalli was elected pope and took the name John XXIII. Of all the major accomplishments of John XXIII, it was the ecumenical council that he called for the universal church that stands out above everything else. Opening in October 1962 and ending in 1965 after John's death, the Second Vatican Council was the most revolutionary in Christian history: John XXIII challenged the clerics to renew the religious life of Catholics and bring the church up-to-date in its teachings, with the ultimate goal being the unity of all Christians. Vatican II (as it has come to be called) eventually led to the adoption of the vernacular in the Catholic rite, the ability of individual congregations to create and adapt the Roman Catholic liturgy to modern times and musical idioms, and led to greater decentralization of church authority and organization.

John XXIII was a man of lowly origins and background, and he never lost sight of his heritage or the needs and afflictions of the working class. He had strong reservations regarding the bureaucracy of the Roman curia and helped to diminish the cult of the papacy and the pontifical personality. His perceived need for reform in the church marks his pontificate as a turning point in the modern history of the Roman Catholic Church, and he instituted a new age in Catholicism as a result.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Pope-Saints; Reform and Reaction

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John Baptist de la Salle

(1651–1719 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, educator

John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Roman Catholic Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for the edu-

cation of the poor, was born in Rheims, France, on April 30, 1651. His parents were particularly attentive to his moral and religious development. He attended the College des Bons Enfants and on July 10, 1669, received a masters of arts degree. Though prepared for a career in law, John felt called to service in the church.

In October 1670, he joined the seminary of Saint-Sulpice and attended lectures at the Sorbonne. Both of his parents had died by 1672, and he had to leave Paris to take his place as the head of his family. However, this did not prevent him from continuing in his theological pursuits, and on Holy Saturday of 1678 he was ordained a priest.

After his ordination, John dedicated his life to the education of poor children, formally founding the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in 1684. The institute was to found free primary and elementary schools for Christian education aimed at inculcating positive social and moral values. Its membership was limited to lay brothers so that they could be dedicated entirely to teaching and not be distracted by sacramental ministry. A year later, he founded a normal school in Rheims for the education of teachers.

Most significant in the schools was their pedagogical style, the "Simultaneous Method," which grouped children into classes based on their intellectual capabilities. John used this method across disciplines. He was also dedicated to meeting the needs of the time. To help correct the inadequacy of secondary education, he founded several boarding colleges, including Saint-Yon in 1705. Further, he expanded the concept of the Sunday school, founding in the parish of Saint-Sulpice in 1699 a Sunday school with broad academic offerings. He also wrote numerous publications on pedagogical methods, religious life, and spirituality.

The last years of his life were spent in retirement at Saint-Yon, where he died on Good Friday, April 7, 1719. Before he died he blessed the brothers, leaving them to carry out his teaching mission.

—Melissa L. Smeltzer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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John Cassian

(c. 360–c. 433 C.E.)

Christian monk, author

John Cassian, monk and spiritual author, was the first to introduce the rules of Eastern monasticism into the West. His companion works, *The Institutes* and *The Conferences*, were

enormously influential for the development of both monasticism and Christian spirituality from the fifth century.

Cassian was born in about 360. After receiving a classical education, Cassian, accompanied by his friend Germanus, joined a monastery at Bethlehem. However, the two spiritual companions, driven by the desire characteristic of the age to perfect ascetic practice in the company of famous masters, also twice journeyed to the Egyptian desert and there met a number of great solitary ascetics, the desert fathers. Cassian and Germanus ultimately left Egypt, most likely fleeing the turbulence resulting from theological controversy that was rife in the area. Arriving in Constantinople, Cassian became a disciple of John Chrysostom, bishop of that city. After Chrysostom was expelled from Constantinople, Cassian was sent by the clergy of the city to Rome in about 405 as an envoy to interest Pope Innocent I in the plight of their bishop. Cassian spent a number of years at Rome, where he was ordained a priest.

The final years of Cassian's life, from about 415 until his death in roughly 433, were spent in Gaul at Marseilles, where he founded monasteries for both men and women and produced his important works on ancient monastic practice. *The Conferences*, a work devoted, according to Cassian, to the training of the inner man in a manner similar to that of many ancient writings, is cast in dialogue form. The twenty-four dialogues are between fifteen *abbas*, the desert fathers, and their eager pupils, Cassian and Germanus. In them the *abbas* provide guidance and impart ascetic wisdom and truth, authority, and tradition. With considerable psychological insight as well as moderation, these characters describe the goals of the monastic life: purity of heart, attainment of the kingdom of heaven, the cultivation of discretion, overcoming the eight principal vices, and winning the conflict between flesh and spirit. Initially extolling the solitary life of the anchorite, Cassian ultimately acknowledges the equality of the cenobitic life of monks living in common. *The Institutes* is concerned, according to Cassian himself, with the outer man. The first four books establish rules for the monastic life, and the final eight discuss the vices that impede the progress of the monk-athlete.

—Robert W. Zajkowski

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; John Chrysostom; Monasticism and Holy People

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John Chrysostom

(c. 349–407 C.E.)

Christian bishop, scholar, father of the Greek church

Born at Antioch, Syria, in about 349, John Chrysostom is considered the most important father in the Greek church. Due to his eloquence, he was dubbed Chrysostomos, or "golden-mouthed." Chrysostom's extant writings are more complete than those of any other Greek father, occupying almost twenty volumes of the *Patrologia Graeca*, the great nineteenth-century collection of writings of the Greek fathers of the church.

The fourth century saw fast growth in ascetic practices, and John was no exception. He seems to have joined the school of Diodore and Carterius. In an extant sermon, John suggests that this ascetic school renounced marriage and adopted a distinctive style of dress. Once he left home, John pursued his ascetic study, scarcely slept, and committed the Old and New Testaments to memory. An obvious believer in the fundamental principles of asceticism, he engaged in extreme fasting and other practices. Indeed, his stomach and kidneys were damaged after some six years of this, the final two having been spent in isolation in a cave. When he left seclusion, John became a priest at Antioch. He became patriarch of Constantinople in 398.

John proved to be an avid reformer, winning many enemies at the imperial court, including Empress Eudoxia (r. 395–404). When he delivered a sermon scolding the crowd for its adoration and frenzy at the unveiling of a statue of the empress, this became an excuse for her to move against him. The sermon started a firestorm, and when the empress heard about it, John was exiled from Constantinople. Although soon recalled (thanks to the "divine threat" of an earthquake), John was soon in trouble and exiled again. He died while being moved between places of exile on September 14, 407. His final words are supposed to have been "Glory be to God for all things."

John's extant work is only a part of what he actually wrote. Some 900 sermons survive. His writing is defined by an advanced and informed rhetorical style, a stress on literal biblical exegesis, and extensive reference to the ascetic schools. The numerous letters that survive show the care with which John tended to his congregation. His preaching, both in content and style, was unequalled in his lifetime and for years after. He often represented his sermons as having been transmitted to him directly by God, thus thrusting him more into the role of amanuensis than interpreter. His exegesis is on par with that of Origen of Alexandria (c. 185–c. 254), and his homilies on the New

Testament serve today as some of the most important writing on the topic.

John's role as theologian is attested to by those who followed him. His name was already being invoked at the Council of Ephesus, not thirty years after his death. It is perhaps his teaching regarding the eucharist that is most important. In his eighty-second homily, on the Gospel of Matthew, he writes, "When the word says, 'This is My Body,' be convinced of it and believe it, and look at it with the eyes of the mind. . . . How many now say, 'I wish I could see His shape, His appearance, His garments, His sandals.' Only look! You see Him! You touch Him! You eat Him!"

—David A. Salomon

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; John Cassian; Martyrdom and Persecution; Origen; Teachers as Holy People

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John Climacus

(c. 570–c. 649 C.E.)

Christian abbot, writer

John Climacus, a hermit, monk, and abbot of the monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai, is chiefly known for his influential treatise on the monastic life: *The Heavenly Ladder*, or *Ladder of Divine Ascent*. Biographical details on his life are scant. He was born in about 570 in the Holy Land, spent forty years as a hermit, became abbot, and then wrote his treatise at the request of an abbot of a nearby monastery.

His handbook, originally written in Greek, is addressed to monks and is divided into thirty chapters (the number chosen to correspond to Christ's age at his baptism). The ladder analogy was derived from the vision of Jacob's Ladder (Gen. 28:12). Although Climacus was by no means the first writer to describe the spiritual life as a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, his development of the analogy is extremely detailed. The thirty chapters, or rungs, primarily describe the virtues to be acquired and the vices to be overcome by those renouncing the world for the life of the spirit.

The text has a tripartite scheme, with the first section (three chapters) devoted to renunciation, the second section (chapters four through twenty-six) to the practice of the virtues (for example, obedience, humility, simplicity) and struggles against vices (such as anger, gluttony, pride), and the final section to the contemplative life and union with God (stillness, prayer, dispassion, love). The steps are not understood to be strictly consecutive but to give an overall de-

scription of the ongoing struggles of the soul to reach the enlightened joy of the love of God. John's writing is practical as well as highly mystical and enigmatic at times, and his compassionate tone emphasizes personal experience. He is one of the earliest authors to make reference to the single-phrase "Jesus Prayer," which, translated into English, is "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

The popularity of the text among both lay and monastic readers is attested by the fact that it was widely translated. Numerous illustrated as well as unillustrated versions survive. Illustrated manuscripts and icons often depict the scene of monks ascending a diagonally positioned ladder toward God in the heavens as John Climacus, standing to one side, exhorts them to continue. While angels guide the monks, demons pull some off the ladder to throw them into the jaws of a dragon (representing hell). John Climacus is also known as John of the Ladder or John the Scholastic. His feast day is March 30.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jacob; Monasticism and Holy People

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John Gualbert

(c. 995–1073 C.E.)

Christian abbot, monastic founder

John Gualbert founded the Italian abbey of Vallombrosa and served as its first abbot. He was born in Florence, Italy, in about 995 and died in Passignano on July 12, 1073. He was canonized by Pope Celestine III in 1193, and his feast is celebrated on July 12.

The son of the Florentine noble Gualbert Visdomini, John Gualbert was a knight until the murderer of one of his relatives begged for his forgiveness on Good Friday. After sparing the man's life, John went to pray at the Benedictine church at San Miniato, where Christ on his crucifix bowed his head to him in recognition of his generosity. John soon became a Benedictine monk at San Miniato. However, he discovered that the abbot was a simonist and refused to serve under him. Seeking a more austere and perfect life, he went to Camaldoli sometime before the death of Romuald in 1127. Despite his attraction to the monastic life, he left Camaldoli around 1030 to found a hermitage at Vallombrosa.

The monastery he founded there around 1038 followed the Benedictine Rule but made provisions for lay brothers to

perform manual labor and attend to the monastery's business. This modification allowed the choir monks to live an austere and contemplative life. The term *conversi* (lay brothers) occurs for the first time in Abbot Andrew of Strumi's *Life of St. John*, which was written at the beginning of the twelfth century. The strict asceticism and the holy lives of the first monks at Vallombrosa attracted considerable attention but few postulants. After John Gualbert's death, however, the order rapidly expanded across Italy. Pope Urban II took Vallombrosa under the protection of the Holy See in 1090.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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John of Damascus

(c. 675–c. 750 C.E.)

Christian monk, theologian, father of the church

Father of the church John of Damascus (or John Damascene) was an extremely influential Syrian theologian and hymnographer whose profound writings and eloquent sermons gained him the title “Chrysorrhoeas” (“Golden Flowing” or “Golden Speaker”). Born into a wealthy and prominent Christian family in Damascus in about 675, he received an excellent education and ultimately continued his father's duties in financial administration and as the representative of the Christian community under the Arab (Umayyad) rulers. Perhaps due to the new caliph's hostility toward Christians, he resigned his position around 700 or 715 (sources vary) and retired to the monastery of St. Sabbas (Mar Saba) near Jerusalem, where he lived until his death in about 750. He was ordained a priest, taught in the monastery, gave sermons in Jerusalem, and devoted himself to theological studies and writing.

John's most important theological and philosophical text is the *Font of Wisdom* (or *Fount/Source of Knowledge*). It includes an extensive synthesis of Greek philosophy, a history and refutation of heresies (including Islam), and a detailed exposition of the major tenets of the Orthodox faith regarding the creation, the Trinity, the incarnation, and the sacraments. Translated into Latin in the twelfth century, this work was considered a standard text for centuries. Among his other major works is the *Sacra parallela* (Holy parallels), a vast collection of scriptural and patristic texts on the moral and ascetic aspects of Christianity. Virtues and vices are described as parallels in the third section.

Famed as a composer of numerous hymns and sermons, John also wrote, between 726 and 730, three extremely sig-

nificant treatises in defense of holy images (*Apologetic Discourses against the Attackers of Holy Images*). His clear refutation of the contemporary iconoclastic position in Byzantium under the emperor Leo III played an important role in the eventual conclusion of the controversy (in the ninth century) and the reinstatement of holy images in the Byzantine church. His feast day is March 27 in the Roman Catholic Church and December 4 in Greek Orthodoxy.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Scholars as Holy People

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John of Gorze

(d. c. 975 C.E.)

Christian abbot, reformer

John of Gorze, also known as Jean de Vandières, was born sometime in the late ninth century in Vandières, France; he died in about 975 in the fortieth year of his monastic profession. Although he was never formally canonized, his feast is traditionally celebrated on February 27.

The son of a wealthy landowner, John studied first at Metz and then at the abbey of St. Mihiel. The death of his father and his mother's remarriage interrupted his schooling and forced him to return home to care for the family estate, where he arranged for the education of his younger brothers. During a pilgrimage to Rome that included a visit to the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino, he met Archdeacon Einold of Toul, and in 933, John, Einold, and five companions were sent by Bishop Adalbero of Metz to reform the monastery of Gorze. With Einold as the new abbot, John was placed in charge of the renovation of the monastery, both physically and spiritually. He insisted on the literal interpretation of the Benedictine Rule and introduced extremely severe penitential discipline. Gorze quickly spearheaded a tenth-century monastic revival that spread throughout Germany.

In 953, King Otto I sent John to Spain to serve as his envoy to the Umayyad caliph Abd-er-Rahman III. He spent three years in Cordoba, returning to Gorze when he was elected abbot after the death of Einold. Gorze's influence was spread

by the patronage of bishops and German princes. Soon both reformed monasteries and new foundations were established in Hesse, Swabia, and Bavaria. Unlike their close contemporaries at Cluny, the abbeys of the Gorzian reform retained their autonomy. Gorze was only the first in a series of “co-equal” monastic establishments linked through common prayer and friendship; no monastery had judicial control over another. Despite attempts to evangelize Hungary in 971, the Gorzian revival was for the most part contained within Germany and never created anything like the kind of influence and centralized control that was exercised by Cluny in France.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Odilo of Cluny; Odo of Cluny; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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John of Kronstadt (Ioann)

(1829–1908 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox priest, miracle worker

John of Kronstadt was the miracle-working priest of St. Andrew’s Cathedral in Kronstadt near the city of St. Petersburg in Russia. His followers are called “Ioannites” (*Ioannity*).

Born Ioann Sergiev to an impoverished family in the Archangel region in 1829, John studied first at home and then in an academy in the city of Archangel. He eventually entered the Archangel seminary, and in 1851 he enrolled in the St. Petersburg religious academy. John hoped to become a monk and travel overseas as a missionary, but in 1855 he received his degree in theology and married Elizabeth, daughter of the archpriest of the Kronstadt St. Andrew’s Cathedral, where John held his first position as a priest. In 1858, John became the religious instructor of Kronstadt’s elementary school, and in 1862 he began teaching in the gymnasium (upper school). As a priest in Kronstadt, Father John became renowned as a charismatic speaker and a miraculous healer. He even began to conduct public healing services, a practice alien to Russian Orthodoxy. In another unusual move, he instituted the ancient tradition of public rather than the more traditional private confession.

John’s ascetic lifestyle was maintained within an urban setting. He campaigned against alcoholism, relieved the poor,

and reportedly healed the sick through prayer. By the 1880s, John was famous throughout Russia for his eloquent speech. He attracted many followers to Kronstadt, often women from the lower strata of society. John built structures to house the poor, who came to him for healing and spiritual guidance. Images of John were created during his lifetime, and some Orthodox venerated him as if he were already a saint. Much of John’s own spirituality is recorded in his personal diary, and he authored many essays and pastoral tracts and pamphlets. He also wrote a confessional work entitled *My Life in Christ*. John’s innovations in Orthodox pastoral leadership were sufficient to appear as a separate sect within Orthodoxy, and after the 1905 revolution his followers formed a religious organization called the Brotherhood of John of Kronstadt, which began to publish a weekly journal, the *Kronstadt Beacon*. In 1909, the year after John’s death, the Brotherhood began to publish a daily paper entitled *The Storm*.

Certain of John’s followers considered him to be the incarnate Christ, and after his death many were attracted to the Ioannites as a messianic alternative to the official Orthodox Church. John’s popularity in Russia caused many self-proclaimed spiritual guides and healers to name him as their inspiration, and he was acclaimed by the church even as many of his followers were disciplined for asserting his divinity. John himself was called upon repeatedly to disavow claims that he was Christ, and he did so increasingly after 1905, as did leading members of the Brotherhood.

John spent much of his time administering charities in Kronstadt and beyond. He is remembered in Orthodoxy as a passionate believer, a healer, a father to the poor and suffering, and a charismatic religious figure in a time of increasing secular pressures.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Miracles; Orthodoxy and Saints; Teachers as Holy People

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John of the Cross

(1542–1591 C.E.)

Roman Catholic mystic, poet, doctor of the church

From a childhood of poverty in the sixteenth century to a final illness that ate away his body, John of the Cross underwent all manner of suffering with a patience born from compassion. He is renowned for his poetry, which describes

the “dark night of the soul” and the soul’s mystical union with God.

John was born in 1542 near Avila, Spain. Through the generosity of people who recognized his gifts, the boy was able to attend primary school and the Jesuit school at Medina del Campo, Spain. In 1563, he took the Carmelite habit in Medina, and the following year he entered the University of Salamanca for a three-year course in the arts, followed by a year’s course in theology. In September 1567, he met Teresa of Avila at Medina and agreed to join her Discalced (barefoot) Carmelite reform, taking the reform vows on November 28, 1568. Three years later he went to the university in Alcalá de Henares, where he served as rector of the College of the Reform and directed the Carmelite nuns. From 1572 to 1577, he was confessor to the convent of the Incarnation in Avila, during which time he and Teresa were in close spiritual dialogue.

In the winter of 1575–1576, John was the victim of soured relations between the Calced and Discalced Carmelites: Kidnapped by the Calced, he was imprisoned at Medina del Campo and released only through the intervention of the papal nuncio. In December 1577, he was kidnapped once again, this time imprisoned in the Calced Carmelite priory in Toledo. In the midst of unspeakable physical hardship and cruelty, he composed mystical poetry, including seventeen stanzas of the exquisite “Spiritual Canticle.” John escaped to the convent of the Carmelite nuns in Toledo in August 1578. From that time until his death in 1591, he served primarily in southern Spain, notably at Baeza as rector of the college he founded and prior of the house of Los Martires in Granada. He died at Ubeda in southern Spain on December 14, 1591. He was beatified on January 25, 1675, canonized on December 26, 1726, and declared a doctor of the church on August 24, 1926.

Compassion is the word that best expresses the holiness of John of the Cross. He reached out in compassion to persecutors and supporters alike, celebrating his joy in God and his creation in poems that are treasured as the jewel in the crown of Spanish poetry. At the request of nuns to whom he recited the poems, he wrote prose treatises to explain their meaning. An explication of the first two strophes of “On a Dark Night” became the two-volume *Ascent of Mount Carmel* (1578–1588) and *Dark Night of the Soul* (1582–1588). The “Spiritual Canticle” and “Living Flame of Love” were the inspiration for treatises of the same names, the first dating from 1578 to 1588, the second from 1585. The *Ascent* and *Dark Night* concentrate on the process of purging the soul of attachments that develop through the five exterior senses, the inner senses of imagination and fancy, and the faculties of understanding, memory, and will, which constitute the spirit. When the soul is aware of guiding the purgation, the process is active; when detachment occurs without direction from the soul, it is passive. The scheme of purgation covers

the active night of the senses in *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Book I; the passive night of the senses in *Dark Night of the Soul*, Book I; the active night of the spirit in *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Books II and III; and the passive night of the spirit in *Dark Night of the Soul*, Book II.

John describes two kinds of union between God and soul: substantial union, by which the soul is united by nature, and transforming or mystical union, wherein the soul’s will is conformed to God’s and the soul itself is made like God. The *Ascent* and *Dark Night* are maps of the journey to this marriage of wills. In the active night of the senses, the soul endeavors to rid itself of desires that come through the senses, while in the passive night of the senses God continues the purgation in terms of the seven spiritual imperfections. During the passive night of the senses, the soul feels absent from God and devoid of rewards from prayer and devotion. In the active night of the spirit, the soul labors to rid the three higher faculties of attachments. When the support of all specific understandings is removed and the soul is hung in darkness and confusion, the primary awareness is of suffering.

This suffering is epistemological; in the death of knowledge about God and the consequent pain of feeling abandoned, the soul knows God. The darkness of the night of faith is the light of love. In the “Spiritual Canticle” and “Living Flame of Love,” John suggests the nature of divine love, now through the imagery of spiritual betrothal and marriage, now in the transforming power of fire. In the crucible of his love for God, John mixed the ingredients of his poetic and theological talents, his compassion for all of God’s creation, and his desire to love God immediately and unreservedly.

—Mary E. Giles

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Teresa of Avila

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John the Almsgiver

(c. 550–616/619 C.E.)

Christian bishop

John the Almsgiver, a seventh-century patriarch of Alexandria, serves as a remarkable example of the constant cross-fertilization of more spiritual forms of Christianity from

East to West throughout the Middle Ages. Typical of Byzantine holy men of the period, and more unusual among their Western counterparts, John was born to the upper bureaucracy (in about 550) and was married before entering into the religious life. After the loss of his family, he became a cleric, and when he was in his fifties he was made patriarch by an influential relative, Nicetas, who was closely associated with the emperor Heraclius. Thus John could easily be assumed to move comfortably among the masters of a sophisticated, highly organized political power; it is no contradiction, however, that he also conformed very much to type by abandoning his wealth entirely, embracing, by way of a dramatic paradigm, radical poverty.

The perpetual dichotomy in the West between the active and contemplative lives was never so pervasive in the East, and John the Almsgiver is an excellent example of the Orthodox attitude. While serving one of the most contentious and intellectually active bishoprics in the Christian world, he nonetheless was known for his extraordinary practical activism: In addition to personally feeding, it is said, 7,500 poor a day, and founding a good number of hospitals, he also saw to the regulation of weights and measures, subsidized indigent merchants, and worked to alleviate taxes, even those imposed by his benefactor Nicetas. He not only adjudicated quarrels, but once left eucharistic services in the basilica to sit among those enjoying themselves outside, saying, "My children, the shepherd must be with his flock."

It was his practice of flamboyant generosity that so endeared him to the Christian imagination. The thirteenth-century Jacobus de Voragine tells the story of a thief stealing John's silver plate and selling it in the market. The purchaser, knowing its quality, then offered it to the patriarch, who bought it and made it available for the thief to steal once again, which he did. John once again purchased it, telling the thief that he could outlast him at this. The thief, repentant, changed his ways. Such stories gained wide currency and characteristically represent a positive and exemplary view of Eastern Orthodoxy that ran counter to a widespread animosity between Eastern and Western Christians.

Interestingly, John's hospitality so impressed the Western crusaders that he became the patron saint of the Order of St. John of the Hospital in Jerusalem. The Ottomans gave his relics to the Hungarian king Mattais Corvinus in the late fifteenth century, and they were eventually deposited in Bratislava. In the East, his feast is celebrated on the day of his death in about 616, November 11; in the West, on the day of his translation, April 9.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Wealth and Poverty

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John the Baptist

(1st cent. C.E.)

Proto-Christian prophet, reformer

John the Baptist is mentioned in all four gospels of the New Testament, although only Luke records that John and Jesus were cousins. He plays the role of forerunner to Christ, modeled on Isaiah 40:3, a passage that speaks of a voice calling in the wilderness to make straight the way of the Lord. All four gospels record that John the Baptist baptized Jesus, and all four also indicate that this event signaled the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Recent scholarship has endeavored to explore the social and political background to John's activity as well as its theological meaning.

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness near the Jordan River baptizing Jews with a baptism of repentance. He adopted the behavior patterns of an Old Testament prophet, wearing clothing made of camel hair and eating wild honey. Like the prophets, his message was one of impending doom that could be avoided if swift action were taken. On this basis he urged people to repent and be baptized (Luke 3:1–14). Mark (1:5) and Luke (3:7) explicitly indicate that great crowds went out to John in the wilderness. Josephus mentions this also. He adds that Herod became fearful of John's influence over the crowds, sensing the potential for popular revolt (*Antiquities*, 18.118), and ordered John's execution.

The Greek word *baptizein*, usually translated as "to baptize," means to dip or to immerse. The word can refer to ordinary washing or to a ritual cleansing symbolic of spiritual or moral purification. There were many different types of baptism in Judaism, but several features of John's baptism mark it as distinct from the others. The gospels of Luke (3:3) and Matthew (3:11) refer to John's baptism as a baptism of repentance. It is possible that John, like the ancient prophets, intended to convey the idea that the Temple ritual was not sufficient (Jeremiah 7:4–7). Proselyte baptism (baptism of non-Jews who wished to convert to Judaism) was known in Judaism, and some scholars assert that it was this "baptism of repentance" that John had in mind. In both Matthew 3:9 and Luke 3:8, John the Baptist argues that God can make true Israelites out of stone; that is, having Abraham as an ancestor is not enough. Matthew and especially Luke (3:10–14) add a moral component to this baptism, noting that John exhorted tax collectors, who were notorious for their dishonesty, to stop overcharging, the rich to share their wealth with the poor, and soldiers to stop bullying the people.

In the Gospel of John especially, John the Baptist obeys God no matter the consequences. He recognizes that while he has enjoyed notoriety, his true role is to point to Christ, even declaring that Jesus' fame must increase as his own diminishes (3:27–30). In Christian tradition, John is seen as the harbinger of Christ, a model of humility and faithful obedience.

—David Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Prophets; Reform and Reaction; Repentance and Holy People; Ritual

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John the Evangelist

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian apostle, evangelist

According to the gospels, John the son of Zebedee and Salome, brother to James the Greater, enjoyed one of the closest relationships with Jesus among the disciples. Only Peter, James, and John were invited by Jesus to witness the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37); the transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:1); and Jesus' difficult moments in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37). Along with his brother, John was a fisherman in the family business on the Sea of Galilee. Mark and Matthew both place emphasis on the call of Jesus to the brothers, pointing out that they immediately followed, even laying aside their work to do so. In this way, James and John are models of radical obedience.

The synoptic gospels also provide evidence that suggests James and John earned their nickname, "the Sons of Thunder" (Mark 3:17), perhaps signaling explosive tempers and impetuous natures. According to the synoptics (Mark 10:35–45; Matt. 20:20–28), James and John so misunderstood the point of Jesus' ministry that they asked him for positions of power in his kingdom. Luke (9:52–56) relates a story in which James and John asked Jesus to call down fire from heaven to destroy a Samaritan village, only to receive Jesus' rebuke. Yet even in Luke, John seems to earn a place of honor and respect among the disciples (Luke 22:8).

The disciple John is never mentioned by name in the Gospel of John, which instead speaks of "the disciple loved by Jesus" or "the other disciple." The gospel claims to have been written by this disciple (21:20–24). Many see this as a hidden claim that John is the author. Modern scholarship in the main dismisses the claim that John was the author of the gospel. Some scholars believe that the memories of John form the basis of the gospel, however.

The Gospel of John has been called the most theologically complex document in the Bible. It presents Jesus as the one who opens heaven (1:51), who does everything he sees the Father doing (5:19–20), and through whose death and resurrection others can enjoy the love shared by God the Father and Jesus the Son (14:17–23; 17:20–21). In John, Jesus asserts both "the Father and I are one" (10:30) and "the Father is greater than I" (14:28). This complexity led John to be a favorite resource of all sides in the great christological controversies of the early church. John is also credited with writing the book of Revelation.

In Christian art John is often pictured as an eagle, highlighting the notion that among the disciples he peered most deeply and accurately into the heart of Jesus' intentions and mission.

—David Nystrom

See also: Apostles; Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Hagiography; James the Greater; Jesus; Peter

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Johnny Appleseed

See Chapman, Jonathon

Johnson, James

(c. 1836–1917 C.E.)

Anglican priest, ascetic

An ascetic West African minister of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), James Johnson was born to Yoruba parents in Benguema, Sierra Leone, in about 1836. He verbally professed the Christian faith, but he did not experience a true personal conversion until he was studying at the Fourah Bay Institution. This experience, which occurred while he was reading the Bible, marked a turning point in his religious life and deepened his commitment to the Christian ministry. He was ordained as a deacon of the CMS Anglican Church in 1863. His eleven-year service at Christ Church, Pandeba Road, Freetown, earned him the sobriquet "Wonderful Johnson" and later, for his religious piety, "Holy Johnson."

Transferred to Lagos, Nigeria, in 1874, he became an outspoken defender of African interests in church and society, helping to form the Lagos Native Pastorate. An ardent preacher and an untiring and at times quixotic missionary, Johnson labored to extend and to strengthen the Yoruba mission of the CMS entrusted to his charge as the superintendent. His admirers saw his consecration as a "half-bishop" of the crisis-ridden Niger Delta Church in 1900 as "a gradual and larger fulfillment of the prophecy and promise that

‘Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God’” (Ayandele 1966, 233).

In spite of his unflinching advocacy for African nationalism, however, Johnson was a man of restraint. He demonstrated this twice in the heat of his ministerial vocation. First, he opposed the schismatic United Native African Church that emerged in 1891 in response to the crisis in the Niger Delta Mission. Second, in 1901, when more than half of his congregation at St. Paul’s Church, Lagos, seceded to form the Bethel African Church because of racial discrimination against him, he refrained from joining them. His understanding of what Christianity should be in Africa may have also been tacitly revealed in his opposition to the prophet movement of Garrick Braide in the Niger Delta. An enigmatic character, Johnson embodied the racial struggles of his age. He died on May 18, 1917.

—Kehinde Olabimtan

See also: Braide, Garrick Sokari; Christianity and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People

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Johnson, Samuel

(1846–1901 C.E.)

Protestant pastor, peacemaker

Samuel Johnson, a patriot dedicated to the healing of the Yoruba nation, was born in 1846 in Hastings, Sierra Leone. His father was a freed slave from the prominent family of Abiodun, the last great king of Oyo before the prosperous Yoruba kingdom disintegrated in about 1820. Conscious of the former glory of the defunct kingdom, and consequently burdened by the fratricidal wars that were decimating the Yoruba, Johnson devoted his Christian ministerial opportunities to healing the breaches among his people, sometimes putting his own life in jeopardy.

Significantly influenced by Rev. David Hinderer, a Church Missionary Society minister, and trained at the Abeokuta Training Institution, Johnson developed an interest in classical and biblical histories. This interest became for him an inspiration to write the *History of the Yorubas*. He was ordained in 1886 and became a pastor at Oyo in 1887. Unlike his fellow returnees from Sierra Leone, he saw beyond his elite status and considered it a reproach that the educated elite of Yorubaland were “well acquainted with the history of England and with that of Rome and Greece, but the history of their own country they [knew] nothing whatever!” (Johnson 1921, vii).

Johnson had a self-effacing personality and hardly hinted about his private life in his writings. He believed that the Christian gospel held the key to the restoration of the Yoruba nation and energetically applied his ministerial influence to broker peace among the warring factions. He expressed the hope “that peace should reign universally, with prosperity and advancement, and that the disjointed units should all be once more welded into one under one head from the Niger to the coast as in the happy days of ABIODUN, so dear to our fathers, that clannish spirit disappear, and above all that Christianity should be the principal religion in the land” (ibid., 642). Johnson died in 1901 believing that his people would one day be restored to wholeness.

—Kehinde Olabimtan

See also: Protestantism and Holy People; Status; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Jones, Jim

(1931–1978 C.E.)

Protestant Christian radical

James Warren Jones, more popularly known as the Reverend Jim Jones, was born in 1931 in Lynn, Indiana, the son of a construction worker. Jones attended college briefly but left to become a Methodist minister. He soon quit that position, however, to form an independent congregation in Indianapolis, the Community Unity. This religious sect, which changed its name in the late 1950s to People’s Temple, won notoriety and a special page in American religious history on November 18, 1978, when Jones and 913 followers committed suicide rather than face what they saw as the satanic persecution of a governmental investigation.

Jim Jones’s church practiced a Pentecostal style of worship and was notable for its era in crossing racial boundaries and demonstrating a deep commitment to social services. Although Jones was white, most of his followers were poor and black. But Jones came increasingly to focus his ministry on creating a haven safe from the interference of what he saw as a violent and evil world. By the 1960s, he was preaching anxiety about a future nuclear war; he saw Indianapolis as under nuclear threat, so moved his congregation to Ukiah, California. Jones was successful there, winning considerable wealth and positive notice for his social vision. Increasingly, though, his claims got broader, including declarations that

he could raise people from the dead, and he came to control the lives of his followers more and more.

By 1977, Jim Jones and his People's Temple had attracted media interest, which made Jones decide to move his community yet again, this time to a colony, "Jonestown," which he had established in Guyana, South America, in 1973. Followers flocked to his promised land in Guyana, anticipating a land free of Satan and his attendant evils, most notably racism. But U.S. attention remained focused on Jones and his activities, and in November 1978 Congressman Leo Ryan visited Jonestown to investigate—where he and most of his attendant staff were shot to death. Then, preferring to die rather than let Satan triumph in the community he had created, Jim Jones led his followers in a vast suicide/murder pact. Most of the church members died after drinking Kool-Aid laced with cyanide; some who were unwilling to commit suicide were hunted down and shot by more zealous followers.

Today Jim Jones is most often cited as an example of a cult "gone wrong," of a leader falling into megalomania and preaching a message of hysterical fear. Unfortunately, we do not have Jones's own words to help us understand his life; it is important to note, however, that he won the allegiance of a large body of followers, even to the point of death, who certainly believed that Jones preached a message sent by God.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Extremists as Holy People

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Joseph

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian foster-father of Jesus

Joseph, husband of Mary and adoptive parent of Jesus, appeared problematic in the first twelve centuries of Western Christianity. Scant references to him in the gospels, combined with theological dilemmas posed by his marriage to Mary, confined him to a marginal position in religious writing and ritual. As Christian doctrine solidified, theologians crafted for Joseph a saintly identity based on his chastity, protection of Mary and Jesus, and tender parenting of Jesus. By the sixteenth century, devotion to him abounded, and in 1870 he was declared the patron of the Universal Catholic Church.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke trace Jesus' genealogy through Joseph to David and recount Joseph's betrothal to

Mary, his distress when he discovers her premarital pregnancy, his reception of angelic guidance, and his leadership on the Holy Family's journeys to Bethlehem and Egypt. Both gospels describe Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit, yet Luke's reference to Joseph as Jesus' "father" establishes uncertainty about Joseph's role. The absence of references to Joseph in the canonical gospels' accounts of Jesus' later life typically has been interpreted to mean that he died before the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Apocryphal texts such as the second-century Gospel of James and Pseudo-Matthew, from perhaps the fifth century, challenge the canonical narratives by portraying Joseph as an elderly widower, not a virgin, and limit his image of holiness by depicting him as an incompetent father.

Early Christian and medieval writers focused on the significance of Joseph's genealogy; the nature of his relationship with Mary; his role, or lack thereof, as Jesus' parent; and his virtues. The most debated question about Joseph asked whether his marriage to Mary had been genuine, given the suggestion in the gospels that it was perpetually virginal. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century theologians, such as Hugh of St. Victor (1096–1141) and Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274), fully developed the position that a virginal marriage could be a real marriage. By establishing the goodness of Joseph's sexual purity and unconsummated marriage, they prepared the way for increasing interest in Joseph as a saint. Perceptions of Joseph's holiness were limited among the laity, however, by the tendency in art and vernacular plays and poetry to portray him as an aged, incompetent cuckold who was merely a servant to his wife and her son.

Writers after the twelfth century contributed to Joseph's heightening stature by defending his status as Jesus' parent. Some early Christian writers, such as Origen (c. 185–c. 254) and Augustine (354–430), wrote favorably of Joseph's services to Mary and Jesus and asserted Joseph's status as Jesus' nonbiological parent, yet provided no details about his parental role. The Benedictine Rupert of Deutz (c. 1125–1179) and several Franciscan writers of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries were the first to describe Joseph's fatherhood in detail, contributing decisively to the blossoming of his cult. Focusing on the protection they surmised Joseph provided to Jesus and Mary during their travels, and the masculine authority they believed he must have held over his spouse, they added the new idea that Joseph must have treated the baby Jesus with great tenderness and delighted in nurturing the child. The influential preacher Bernardino of Siena (1380–1444) followed Peter John Olivi (1247/48–1298) and other earlier Franciscans in presenting Joseph as so perfect in his treatment of Jesus and Mary that he should be the chosen intercessor for Christians who prayed to them, and a model for married men and fathers. A

few fourteenth-century Servite and Dominican writers also extolled Joseph.

In 1479, Joseph entered the liturgy of the church with his own feast day (March 19). By the early sixteenth century, a new generation of Franciscan writers had composed sermons on Joseph or hagiographical attestations to his exalted sanctity, which they almost equated with that of Jesus and Mary. Relics such as his betrothal ring and stockings attracted pilgrims. By the mid-1500s, laypeople influenced by Franciscans and Carmelites had established religious societies in Joseph's name, dedicated churches in his honor, and begun more frequent use of his name as a Christian baptismal name, which was nearly unknown before 1500. The early modern centuries saw the global spread of devotion to Joseph. He is the patron of a good death and of families, virgins, and workers.

—Chara Armon

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Bernardino of Siena; Christianity and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Hugh of Saint Victor; Jesus; Mary, Virgin; Origen; Sexuality and Holy People; Thomas Aquinas

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Joseph of Arimathea

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian follower of Jesus

According to Matthew 27:57–60, Mark 15:43, Luke 23:50–52, and John 19:38–42, Joseph of Arimathea was a rich but secret follower of Christ. After the crucifixion, he persuaded Pontius Pilate to give him Christ's body, which he and his friend Nicodemus carefully buried.

According to the widespread fourth-century apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, Joseph was imprisoned by the Jews for burying Christ but miraculously released and hidden by

Christ himself until the Jews' anger had calmed. Then Joseph and his son Josephes were baptized as Christians. Joseph helped John protect Christ's mother, Mary, until her death. According to Eastern tradition, he became a bishop in Lydda. His feast is celebrated in the East on July 31, and in the West on March 17.

According to later medieval Western traditions, Joseph accompanied the apostle Philip into Gaul. From there he went to Britain, where, in 63 C.E., he founded Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset. His presence and burial there established Glastonbury's claim to be the oldest continually operating church in the West.

Joseph's connection with the Holy Grail, the name given to the chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper, first appears in French Arthurian romances of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The Grail is guarded by generations of Joseph's descendants down to Galahad. Versions of this tale survive in Middle English, Portuguese, and Castilian as well as French.

According to late medieval Glastonbury legends, Joseph also brought two cruets with blood and water from Christ's side to Glastonbury. The cruets appear on a rood screen in Plymtree, Devon; in stained glass at Langport, Somerset; and in the coat of arms of the last pre-Reformation abbot, Richard Bere. Cornish legends of uncertain date make Joseph the uncle of the Virgin Mary and active in the tin trade, which brought him and the young Jesus to Britain.

The *Lyf of Joseph of Arimathia* printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1502 includes Joseph's Glastonbury miracles and the first mention of his miraculously flowering staff.

—Jeanne Krochalis

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; Legendary Holy People

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Joseph of Copertino

(1603–1663 C.E.)

Roman Catholic friar, mystic

Joseph of Copertino is known as the "Flying Saint" because of his propensity (attested on seventy occasions, according

to the proceedings for his canonization) to fall into ecstasy and float in the air. Born Giuseppe Desa in 1603 in the southern Italian village of Copertino, Saint Joseph was subject to ecstatic trances that rendered him unable to work or study. His childhood nickname was Bocca Aperta Gaper. When these fits prevented his admission to religious life, Joseph accepted a place with the Franciscans as a lay stable hand. However, he displayed such devotion that he was granted ordination as a priest despite his near-illiteracy. According to one of the many stories surrounding him, Joseph passed his clerical examination because he had learned, by rote, the answer to one question. The examiner happened to ask him just that question.

After his ordination in 1628, Joseph's life became a continual series of ecstasies, levitations, and manifestations. He so disrupted communal life in his monastery that he was forbidden to participate in singing the daily office or to eat in the refectory. His behavior led to the application of seventeenth-century medicine at its worst, including bleedings, purges, and beatings. It even brought him before the Inquisition in 1638, accused of "pretense of holiness" (*affettata santità*), a charge of which he was exonerated.

The pious began to make pilgrimages to Joseph's monastery even during his lifetime. His fellow Franciscans came to believe in his manifestations, including miraculous healings, considering them to be special marks of divine favor. He died in 1663 at the monastery in Ossimo; his body is buried in the church.

Joseph's holiness is of a sort alien to the current sentiment, which views holiness as derivable only from preeminent goodness. But this moralistic conception is a modern one. It fails to account for individuals like Joseph, "seized" by the divine despite their lack of any manifest distinction for which they may claim credit. Religious traditions do not hesitate to attribute holiness to such individuals. His biographers do note his virtues: patient endurance in the face of accusation, humility in the face of public acclaim, his insights as a spiritual guide despite his lack of education. But the case of Giuseppe Desa reveals one of the more unfathomable aspects of holiness.

Saint Joseph of Copertino was canonized in 1767. He is the patron saint of pilots, air travelers, astronauts, and students.

—Thomas F. Pyne

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Miracles

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Joseph of Volotsk (Volokolamsk)

(1439/1440–1515 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox abbot, writer

Joseph of Volotsk, founder of Volokolamsk Monastery and author of spiritual and polemical texts, was famed for his dedication to the ascetic life and involvement in religio-political issues such as the rooting out of heresy. His texts and letters are standard sources for scholars of pre-Petrine Russian religious history. The church was celebrating pan-Russian services in his honor by 1591. Accounts of his life were written by Dosifei Toporkov, Savva Cherny, and possibly Lev Filologue.

Tonsured in 1460 by Pafnutii of Borovsk, a disciple of Sergius of Radonezh, Joseph became superior of the monastery of Borovsk in 1477. In 1479, he left to found a cenobitic community in Volokolamsk. Joseph traveled in disguise to assess the spiritual life of other monasteries before founding his own. In his later years, he became involved in religious and political disputes with Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod, with Grand Princes Ivan III and Vasili III over heresies in the north and at court, and with a former patron, Prince Fedor Borisovich of Volotsk.

Joseph outlined his monastic precepts and instructions in two texts: "Discourses," and "Testament." Both stress proper deportment of monks, obedience to the traditions of orthodoxy and the monastery, and adherence to customary prayers. He supports his exhortations with references to the church fathers, previous monastic rules, and hagiography. These texts are often referred to as Joseph's long and short "rules." Another of Joseph's well-known texts is "The Enlightener," written to oppose the so-called Novgorodian heresies. Joseph successfully urged the grand prince and the metropolitan of Russia to burn some heretics who were adherents of a few small sects based around Novgorod.

Traditional historiography has associated Joseph with a dispute regarding the right to monastic landholding. Historians linked Joseph to "possessors," those who defended the right of monasteries to hold land and serfs, and his main adversary, Nilus, to "nonpossessors," those who opposed the concept of an estate monastery, and centered this dispute on a 1503 church council. Yet the two men disagreed more on the relative value of communal versus contemplative monasticism than on the appropriateness of both within the Orthodox tradition—their disagreement was concerned with spiritual life rather than communal property. Landholding issues surfaced later in the century as so-called "Josephans" defended the right to land and upheld the authority of church hierarchs.

Joseph is remembered on February 13, September 9, and October 18.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Monasticism and Holy People; Nilus of Sora; Orthodoxy and Saints; Reform and Reaction; Sergius of Radonezh; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Joy

People throughout the world and time have rarely chosen joy or happiness as a defining characteristic of a holy person. Instead, the dominant view is that the holy person is one who has been tried in a crucible of suffering, marked by endurance rather than happiness. This hagiographical attitude is especially surprising since the written works of holy people in all the world religions have often beautifully expressed a sense of deep joy at union with the divine, often in terms of a mystical wellspring of happiness at the core of their being. The songs of the Tibetan hermit Milarepa (1052–1135), which express joy, and indeed euphoria, at his enlightenment, are particularly splendid examples. Thus joy appears to be a common attribute of holy people—but only a band of saints would be likely to give it high marks on the spectrum of what defines holiness.

The few Christian saints who have won a reputation for happiness or lightness of heart are so rare that hagiographers do not know what to make of them. The norm in the lives of saints is solemnity, or at most evenness of temper. One of the few medieval saints who had a reputation for happiness was Faith (third or early fourth century), who had a posthumous fame for miraculous jokes and pranks. Her hagiographer seems to have been trying to emphasize Faith's "girlishness"—she was martyred at a young age. A parallel case appears much later, that of Kateri Tekakwitha (1656–1680), the first Amerindian to be canonized as a Roman Catholic saint—also a girl, surprising because she was known for her sense of humor despite the ill-usage she endured. The few joyous male saints, such as Philip Neri (1515–1595), who liked to play practical jokes on the Roman clergy, stand out as eccentrics. Again, it is usually

necessary to turn to the saint's own words to see the joyousness of their lives.

The sufis of Islam give more credit to joy as a spiritual state, although they rarely describe their holy people in those terms. But the term *bast*, a state of exalted joy, is prominent in the writings of Islamic mystics. It also appears sometimes in descriptions of mystics. A notable dividing point from Christianity is that for sufis Jesus is "the joyful prophet," noted for his frequent laughter and happiness, while the Christian New Testament describes Jesus weeping, but never laughing.

Various holy people have added "joyful" elements to worship, such as dance and music. The goal seems rarely to have been just giving joy to followers, however, at least in the eyes of the nonholy people, who describe the process in terms of teaching, separation from the mundane, and the like. The greatest exception to this rule is the extraordinary Ba'al Shem Tov (1698/1700–1760), the founder of Hasidic Judaism, who emphasized the worship of God with joy, with song and dance, and above all with a positive attitude toward the world.

Perhaps that is the key to the problem. For ordinary practitioners of most religions, worship is a solemn matter—the divine seems distant, the world is nearby and tempting but is recognized as a bar to spiritual advancement. It is only the spiritually adept, the holy people, who can regard the divine without an edge of fear, and who can indulge in pleasure without fear of sin.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Ba'al Shem Tov; Faith; Jesus ('Isa); Kateri Tekakwitha; Milarepa; Neri, Philip

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Juan Diego

(1474–1548 C.E.)

Roman Catholic visionary

Juan Diego is a comforting figure for the indigenous people of Mexico. He inspires their faith and veneration more than any other spiritual figure; indeed, veneration of Juan Diego has extended throughout the world. Since his birth as a royal Aztec prince in the Mexican town of Cuautitlán in 1474, he seemed predestined to holiness. His Aztec name, Cuahtlatotzín, means "the lord who speaks like an eagle." Along with his wife, he was among the first indigenous people to be baptized in 1524 after the Spanish conquest. He believed in Jesus Christ and converted to Christianity of his own free will, and he was said to be a kind and humble person. The Spaniards gave him the name Juan Diego during the evangelization process of Mexico.

On December 9, 1531, Juan Diego was on his way to attend daily mass when he saw an apparition of an attractive and celestial lady surrounded by a heavenly ray of light at the top of a hill called Tepeyac. She claimed to be the holy mother of God and spoke to him in his native Nahuatl language about her love for the people of Mexico. She commanded him to go to the local bishop, Juan de Zumárraga, and order him to build a temple at the top of the Tepeyac. Juan Diego notified the bishop about the lady's request, but the bishop initially rejected his story and asked Juan Diego for a sign to confirm that she had indeed appeared to him.

When Juan Diego stopped to visit his uncle, Juan Bernardino, he was dismayed to find him very sick with a deadly fever and set out early the next morning for Mexico City to seek medical help for him. Once again, the miraculous lady appeared to him. The humble man relayed the bishop's request for proof of her visitation, and the lady instructed Juan Diego to gather Castilian roses from the ice-covered, rocky terrain and present them to the bishop. The lady also reassured Juan Diego that his uncle had been cured of his illness. Juan Diego returned to the local authorities and opened his *tilma* (a traditional Aztec cloak) before the bishop and other local authorities, whereupon dozens of fresh and beautiful roses fell to the floor. Everyone was amazed to see the miraculous image of the mother of God imprinted on the cloak. As requested by the Virgin, a basilica to honor her was built in what is now Mexico City. Many Mexicans consider this site the holiest place in North America. The Virgin, now known by the name of Our Lady of Guadalupe, is usually depicted like the Indians who are native to the region. Juan Diego's *tilma* remains undamaged and is displayed behind the main altar of the basilica.

Juan Diego died in 1548. He has been credited with hundreds of posthumous miracles, including the healing of a young Mexican student who had suffered massive head injuries. Juan Diego was beatified in the seventeenth century and canonized by Pope John Paul II in July 2002. He is considered the holiest and purest figure of indigenous ancestry in Mexico, and reports of miracles inexplicable to science that are attributed to his intercession continue to this day. Juan Diego is remembered and venerated in Mexico on December 12 each year, the day that commemorates the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

—Francisco Melara

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Mary, Virgin

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Judah Halevi

See **Halevi, Judah**

Judah ha-Nasi

(c. 200 C.E.)

Jewish rabbi, leader

Judah ha-Nasi, the leading rabbinic sage of his generation around 200 C.E., was known in later tradition as Rabbi or Rabbenu ha-Kadosh (Our Holy Rabbi). Nasi (patriarch, prince) is a title indicating that he was the hereditary first among equals of the rabbis in the land of Israel and also political leader of the Jews, appointed by and answerable to the authorities of the Roman Empire. Combining those two roles, Judah represented “Torah and [worldly] greatness in one place,” according to the Babylonian Talmud ([BT], Gittin 59a, Sanhedrin 36a), the first Jewish leader since Moses to have accomplished that feat. A man of wealth and learning, supposedly on terms of intimate friendship with the Roman emperor himself (BT, Shabbat 119a, Avoda Zara 10ab; Jerusalem Talmud, Shevi’it 6:136d, Megilla 1:11, 72b, 3:2, 74a), Judah presided over the Jews’ political and economic recovery from the devastation of repeated wars against Rome and advanced the nascent rabbinic tradition at a key point in its early development.

Despite his epithet, Judah’s “holiness” was not reflected in charismatic healings, rainmaking, or the like. Rather, his greatest contribution to the Jewish tradition was the Mishnah, a massive collection of rabbinic teachings that was compiled under his leadership and that quickly gained acceptance as the central rabbinic text (see Rashi, BT, Bava Metzia 33b). Consisting mostly of legal rulings but not easily usable as an actual code, the Mishnah served instead as a kind of curriculum for the training of rabbinic disciples. Over the next several centuries, rabbinic study of the “oral Torah” took the predominant form of a paragraph-by-paragraph study of this text together with an increasingly complex and sophisticated body of elaboration and exegesis. These further materials eventually crystallized into two still larger bodies of teaching, the Talmuds (Jerusalem, c. 400; Babylonian, sixth century). These, especially the latter, continue to serve as the foundational texts of the rabbinic tradition.

After Judah’s time a certain alienation set in between his heirs in the patriarchate and the collective of rabbinic sages. The “House of the Nasi” increasingly relied on its political stature and its wealth but neglected the rabbinic erudition that had been its earliest distinction. Thus it turned out that

Judah's blend of "Torah and greatness" was not preserved. The memory of his own stature as a distinguished leader, however, only grew over time.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Priests; Scholars as Holy People

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Judah Loew ben Bezalel (The Maharal of Prague)

(c. 1525–1609 C.E.)

Jewish scholar

One of the most influential postmedieval Jewish thinkers, Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel, the Maharal of Prague, developed a new approach to the Aggadah of the Talmud and had a profound impact on all streams of Judaism. He questioned the educational methods employed in his day and insisted that children must be taught according to their intellectual maturity, with concepts being introduced only when a child is capable of comprehending them. He advocated that religious instruction begin with Torah, then Talmud, moving into more difficult commentaries only as the child is able to understand them. He encouraged group study of the Mishnah to facilitate greater understanding.

His many works include an important treatise on Rashi's commentary on the Torah, volumes on Passover in all its facets, on Torah, and on the development of character, as well as other texts and issues. A respected kabbalist, he was enormously influential in European Jewry, guiding the affairs of prominent communities in sixteenth-century central Europe. Once he was summoned to meet Emperor Rudolph II, but the reason for the meeting remains the subject of speculation.

With an avid interest in science and technology, the Maharal was respected as a learned and pious man by Jew and gentile alike. Unfortunately, he is often most closely associated not with his works of scholarship but with the unsubstantiated legend of the *golem*, a creature with a body fashioned from clay and reputedly transformed by the Maharal into a living being by kabbalistic (mystical) means. The *golem* was purportedly meant to protect Jews from persecution; its fantastic nature has insured it and its supposed creator a place in Jewish lore.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Kabbalah; Rashi; Scholars as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Judah the Pious

(c. 1150–1217 C.E.)

Jewish rabbi, mystic

Judah ben Samuel ha-Hasid, known as Judah the Pious, was the central figure of the Hasidei Ashkenaz movement. Contemporary sources report little about his life. Born around 1150, he lived in Speyer, Germany, spent some time in Regensburg, and then returned to the Rhineland (Speyer, Worms, and Mainz). He died in 1217. He was a mystic, but few of his mystical and esoteric writings have survived. Some of his teachings can be found as quotations in the writings of his disciples and other authors. He practiced extreme humility and even taught that an author should not sign his work, lest his children take pride in their father's accomplishments. This explains why his writings were circulated anonymously; even his disciples did not quote him by name. His most important disciple was Eleazar of Worms, the last major figure in the Hasidei Ashkenaz movement. His most important writings that still exist are in the areas of ethics and theology.

Judah was the primary author of the *Sefer Hasidim* (Book of the pious), one of the most influential works on ethics and religious practice for Ashkenazi (central and east European) Jewry. Parts of *Sefer Hasidim* are homiletical and exegetical, commenting on biblical verses and talmudic sayings. The majority of the book is ethical and addresses all aspects of life. It discusses religious concerns such as how to pray, study, and properly observe the commandments and gives advice on seemingly private matters such as how to dress, how to select friends, and which professions are suitable for a pietist. Its stance is one of uncompromising adherence to the observance of the commandments and the whole realm of religious ethics. No other Hebrew ethical work is so comprehensive in its scope and attention to the details of everyday life. All subsequent authors of ethical works in Ashkenazic culture used the *Sefer Hasidim* as the basis for their works.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, hagiographic stories about Rabbi Judah the Pious began to circulate. Many of these stories, which attribute magical and miraculous abilities to him that he used to protect the Jewish community, were collected in the *Ma'aseh Book* (Book of stories).

—Morris M. Faierstein

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Hasidei Ashkenaz; Judaism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution

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Judaism and Holy People

Surviving evidence of ancient Middle Eastern religions suggests that early civilizations regarded their gods as both physically and spiritually distant from humankind, though often represented in the material world by a physical object, place, or person. These representatives were considered holy because of their relationship to the gods. Religion was polytheistic, and each region, often each family or tribal group, worshipped its own gods, represented by figures of stone, wood, clay, or metal. In the person of Abraham, ancient Judaism rejected the notion of multiple gods, insisting on one almighty God who cannot be physically contained or represented. However, Judaism retained the idea that places, objects, and persons could be dedicated to God's service and therefore considered holy, set apart for a divine purpose (Heb.: *kadosh*, "holy;" pl. *kedoshim*; the noun form, *kodesh*, means "separation" or the state of being set apart). Scripture refers to God's holy temple and the holy priests who serve therein, the holy Ark of the Covenant, and, of course, the holy land of Israel.

Over time, *kadosh* came to refer less to the physical separation between God and humankind than to the spiritual gap between human striving and divine perfection. Eventually, these two ideas were held concurrently, suggesting that God and God's holiness could be approached through the performance of ritual action coupled with ethical behavior. In modern times, this entails the performance of *mitzvot* (acts of righteousness) and observance of *halachah* (Jewish law). Modern Torah-observant Jews also consider that God, the Holy One of Israel, requires certain practices, though other Jews may place varying emphasis on the ritual and ethical aspects of those requirements.

The definition of "Judaism" is subject to disagreement. The term "Jewish" can refer to religion, culture, historical civilization, ethical principles, ethnic identity, political stance, or combinations of these. Even within the categories, groups disagree about who is a Jew. Halachic Jews regard as Jewish those whose mother is Jewish; more recently, others recognize as Jewish anyone with at least one Jewish parent of either sex. Further, groups disagree about conversion requirements, so one congregation's Jew may be another's non-Jew.

The term "Judaism" derives from Judah, one of the patriarch Jacob's twelve sons whose name was given to the southern kingdom during the divided monarchy (Israel was the

northern). However, to understand Jewish concepts of holiness, one must go back to the patriarch Abraham. Genesis explains God's dealings with humankind in the narratives of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the flood, and others, but Abraham is considered the first Hebrew because he listened to the voice of God and traveled to Canaan, physically setting himself apart from his polytheistic neighbors and his former life in Haran to serve God. Abraham trusted God's promise to give him another son even in his old age, to create from him a nation set apart for God's purpose. Ishmael was Abraham's first son, born to Hagar, the servant of Sarah, Abraham's wife. But it is Sarah's son Isaac who passes on the Hebrew lineage. Isaac fathered twin sons; Jacob, the younger twin, produced twelve sons. One of the twelve, Joseph, was sold into slavery but rose to power in Egypt. As the result of famine, his brothers came to Egypt to buy food, met and reconciled with their brother, then moved from Canaan to settle in Egypt, in the land of Goshen. Following Joseph's death, the Hebrews multiplied and were enslaved by the pharaoh of Egypt, who feared their strength. Because the people of the one God dwelt among polytheists and were forced to serve them, the defining moment for Judaism was the Exodus, that moment when God delivered them from the nonbelievers, remembered the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and gave to them the Torah.

The Torah (in the narrowest sense of the word, the five Books of Moses given to the people at Sinai), the holy book of Judaism, contains the history of the Hebrews and their relationship to God in addition to God's commandments concerning a holy life. Because of this, it is the most sacred object in Jewish ritual. Torah scrolls are handwritten by a trained scribe, wrapped around wooden rollers, covered with a mantle of embroidered cloth, and decorated with a silver breastplate. The text must be perfect; any two errors render it unsuitable for public reading. Traditionally, a portion of the Torah is read aloud during the synagogue service each Sabbath so that the entire text is read within the span of each Jewish year. Simchat Torah (The joyfulness of the Torah), the day marking the end of one reading cycle, also marks the beginning of the next: One can never consider oneself finished reading the Torah or no longer in need of its instruction in holy living, for the moment Deuteronomy is finished, the reading returns to Genesis. Orthodox Jews believe that God gave the Torah in its present form to Moses at Sinai; others (both Jews and non-Jews) subscribe rather to the hypothesis that the text was compiled and edited over a long period of time until it reached its final written form.

Traditional Jewish ideas concerning holiness begin with the Torah, which is variously translated as the Teaching, the Path, or the Way. However, the five Books of Moses are not the whole of the scriptures, which also include the Prophets (Nevi'im) and the Writings (Ketuv'im). These are arranged



Rabbis studying Talmud in New York City, 1944. (Lucien Aigner/Corbis)

differently than in what Christians call the Old Testament, but many of the same books are included. In a broader sense, Torah can refer not only to the five Books of Moses but also to a much wider body of teachings concerning a holy life lived according to Jewish law, especially the rabbinic law, commentaries, and interpretations known as the oral Torah, which includes the Talmud, the Gemorah, and the Midrash.

The importance of these texts to religious Judaism cannot be overestimated as they explain what is necessary to live a

holy life pleasing to God. Chosen to receive the Torah, Jews were charged to conceive of themselves as a holy people, a nation of priests, set apart by God for a specific purpose and belonging to him in a special way. Holiness, therefore, is at the center of what it means to be a Torah-observant Jew. Designated for a special purpose, Jews are expected to live according to the teachings. According to the Torah, Jews are called to be holy because God is holy (Lev. 11:44–45); it is their responsibility to show forth God's holy presence in the

world. Further, because they are God's chosen people, Jews traditionally consider themselves charged with protecting the sanctity of God's name.

To sanctify "the Name," *kiddush Hashem*, means to behave honorably so that people recognize God's greatness through the righteous conduct of God's people. To behave in a manner that brings disrepute or shame upon the individual Jew also brings shame upon the Jewish people and causes *chilul Hashem*, the profanation of "the Name." This acute sense of Jewish responsibility for the sanctity of God's name explains the centrality of the Torah in the broader sense, for the Torah demonstrates what holiness is and how it may be achieved. Judaism recognizes that human beings can never attain perfection, can never observe all 613 Torah commandments, but their calling is continually to strive. Some observant Jews are so careful about the use of God's name that they substitute the Hebrew *Hashem*, "the Name," for the name of God, or write the English word without the vowel (G-d) in order to avoid the destruction or use of God's name in vain. Yet holiness is not only a matter of following the commandments to the letter. The Torah itself and later writings make clear that the spirit in which any activity is undertaken can render it holy or profane; one may perform a mundane task in the spirit of *kiddush Hashem*, or perform a religious practice in such a way as to cause *chilul Hashem*.

In the Talmud, Rabbi Simlai outlines the ethical principles that underlie the teachings found in the Torah, summarizing them in this way: 613 commandments were revealed to Moses at Sinai; King David summed up the 613 commandments in eleven ethical principles as he described who may dwell in God's holy mountain, that is, who is set apart to be like God. These eleven principles are: They live without blame, do righteous acts, speak the truth in their hearts, speak no deceit, do no harm to their fellows, bear no reproach, find a contemptible person abhorrent, honor those who fear the Lord, stand by their oath even when it is to their disadvantage, never lend money for interest, and never accept a bribe against the innocent (Ps. 15). The rabbi goes on to show how Isaiah summarized the 613 commandments in six principles. That is, holy persons walk in righteousness, speak honestly, spurn profit from fraudulent dealings, refuse bribes, do not listen to malicious words, and shut their eyes against looking at evil. Micah further distills the commandments, saying that the Lord requires only that people behave justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God (Mic. 6:8). Finally, Rabbi Simlai says, Habakkuk based them all on one principle: The righteous shall live by faith (Hab. 2:4) (Babylonian Talmud, Makkot 23b–24a). Faith leads to right action, and right action strengthens faith as it strengthens the relationship of Jews with God through observance of the commandments. The performance of a *mitzvah* (pl. *mitzvot*) is not separate from faith, but integral to its expression.

Historically, individual Jews have been considered to exemplify holiness in their lives. Biblical figures such as the patriarchs and matriarchs, Moses, Miriam, and others were called by God and given a specific task or position; they were set apart to perform the work God had for them and are credited in scripture with being responsive to that calling. Others serve God in specific religious offices, such as the Cohanim and Levi'im (priests and Levites), who performed certain tasks in the Temple and still retain specific rights and responsibilities within the community by virtue of their being set apart for such service.

Judaism highly values and encourages extensive study; those teachers and scholars who are dedicated to Torah study and who seek to exemplify the life they find described therein are also considered holy. Sages from the rabbinic period in the first and second centuries B.C.E., such as Akiba ben Joseph, Ishmael ben Elisha, Hillel, and others, were holy because they had a deep understanding of the Torah that they strove to embody in their daily lives. Many of these persons, as well as *tzaddiqim* (righteous ones) from the medieval and modern periods, were threatened with violence, some martyred, because of their faith and practice. Rabbis such as Amnon of Mainz (c. tenth century) risked their lives by observing the Torah and teaching others to do the same. Regardless of their personal safety, they continued to teach the Torah to students, to write commentaries, to adjudicate disputes, to encourage communities faced with persecution, and to live their own lives according to the Law as a tangible example of what the Torah means. Among the best known of these are Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides) (1135/1138–1204), Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides) (1194–1270), and Solomon ben Issac of Troyes (Rashi) (1040–1105). As in any tradition, reformers rose to preserve or promote those things they perceived as most important. These include figures such as Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (the Ba'al Shem Tov, or Besht) (1698/1700–1760), founder of Hasidism, and Abraham Heschel (1907–1972), a professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism whose profound learning, social justice activities, and abiding concern for Judaism and Jews would make him an extraordinary figure in any age.

Judaism recognizes that all human beings, even *tzaddiqim*, make mistakes; even holiness, because it here describes human beings, can be flawed. Judaism therefore provides observances to remind both the individual and the community of their calling to a holy life. Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) exemplify the relationship between ritual and holiness in Jewish thought. Rosh Hashanah is considered one of the most solemn days in the Jewish calendar: The first day of the new year signals a ten-day period of reflection and repentance. The *shofar*, ram's horn, calls the faithful to repent of their sins and to return to God; they are to account for their use of

God's gifts during the past year and to ask forgiveness from God and from any they may have wronged, as Judaism holds that only the wronged party may forgive. On Yom Kippur, observant Jews fast and pray, reciting the traditional catalog of sins and asking God's forgiveness. The evening service in the synagogue is introduced by the Kol Nidre, a legal formula chanted by the cantor asking God to forgive and annul unfulfilled vows made to him. The service ends with the sevenfold proclamation of God's unity and the sounding of the shofar to signal the end of the fast and the acceptance of repentance. These observances remind Jews of their calling to live a Torah-observant life, to be holy persons individually, and to be a holy people communally.

Part of what it means to be holy is actively to participate in *tikkun olam*, healing or perfecting the world. Human beings are called to work in partnership with God to create the best possible world. In this way, people are cocreators with God, in keeping with their creation in God's image (Gen. 1:26). Traditionally, Torah-observant Jews participate in *tikkun olam* through prayer and meditation; many modern American communities expand the definition to encompass other means to the same end, including but certainly not limited to charity, community service, political activism, and other efforts designed to improve life in this world. Jews who are extraordinarily dedicated to *tikkun olam* are often considered holy persons, living out the mandate of the Torah in their lives, striving to create a better world.

Within modern Judaism there are widely differing views of the role of the Torah in the experience of individuals, from those who center their lives on the teaching to those who largely ignore it. Within traditions, within communities, within families, individuals may have significantly different beliefs. Almost inescapably, these beliefs about the Torah and its precepts shape their ideas about holiness. Among the most orthodox of Jews there is the belief that the purpose of life is Torah study, free from distraction; they maintain that only total separation from secular society can ensure the survival of Judaism and the fulfillment of its calling in the world. Hasidism, founded in early eighteenth-century Europe by the Ba'al Shem Tov, couples Torah study with the joy to be found in serving God, rather than the fear of infraction. Holiness is sought in joyful performance of mitzvot, including Torah study; it is also safeguarded by the separation of Hasidic Jews from secular society, lest assimilation into the broader culture divert them from their obligation to be a holy, redemptive presence in the world.

Orthodox Judaism views the Torah as the direct revelation of divine teaching, rendering it immutable. The commandments, therefore, are central to Jewish life. To be an Orthodox Jew is to be observant: to study the Torah, to perform mitzvot, and to remain committed to the ritual expression

of Judaism as a means to personal and communal holiness and *kiddush Hashem*. Modern Orthodoxy, however, does not insist on the segregation of Jews from the rest of society and encourages its members to acquire the secular education and skills necessary to function in the wider world in addition to traditional Hebrew education. In this way, modern Orthodox Jews protect their traditions through religious education and observance, but also live in and directly affect the non-Jewish world.

The Reform movement in Judaism began in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century as a response to Enlightenment philosophy. Influenced by scientific discovery and higher criticism, the Reform movement rejected direct divine revelation as the source of the Torah in favor of divinely inspired human authorship. In its early years, Reformists viewed the commandments as instructional and inspirational but nonbinding. Ritual practices were considered less important than ethical behavior, and the liturgy was streamlined and modernized by substituting the vernacular for the Hebrew. In recent years, Reform Judaism has increased the use of Hebrew in services and has reintroduced a number of customs and practices omitted by earlier generations of Reform Jews. Further, the connection between ethics and ritual has been rediscovered, enriching both and leading to an understanding of holiness that seeks to understand that symbiosis.

The Conservative movement grew out of the Reform movement; originally, Conservative Jews felt that early Reform Jews had abandoned too many fundamental Jewish practices. The Conservative movement positions itself as a middle way between Reform and Orthodox Judaism, insisting on the divinity and centrality of the Torah, but recognizing that the world, and with it Judaism, has evolved, necessitating changes in Jewish practice and belief. Although Conservative Judaism believes there is room within the Torah for interpretations and applications that will make it relevant to each generation while retaining the integrity of its vision, like Orthodoxy it stresses the observance of ethical and ritual commandments as the means to holiness.

First articulated by Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan in the early 1920s in the United States, the Reconstructionist movement rejects the idea of a supernatural God and asserts that Judaism is not only a religion, but an evolving civilization. Further, Reconstructionism welcomes many of the newer movements within Jewish spirituality such as feminism, environmentalism, and others, making it suspect to more traditional Jews. Lastly, secular Judaism includes Jews who do not consider themselves religious but continue to self-identify as Jews, whether ethnically, culturally, ethically, or politically. Here, the issue of holiness is vexed, as secular Jews by definition reject the divine source of the Torah and with it

the idea that Jews are set apart by God. Yet secular Jews have long held that ethnic Jewish identity is closely connected with social justice movements such as socialism, civil rights, and national self-determination movements like Zionism; rejecting the Torah as divine does not necessitate rejecting the ethical principles it contains, though secular Jews might balk at referring to persons who live according to such principles as holy, *per se*.

Judaism views holiness as something attained through practice, but diversity of practice makes it difficult to reduce Jewish ideas of holiness to one coherent explanation. What is constant across traditions, however, is that holiness has to do with the way one lives one's life in this world, not necessarily with what one believes. Whether viewed as mitzvot required by the Torah or as acts of social justice or even as simple good deeds, actions are the source of and key to holiness in Jewish tradition.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Abraham; Akiba ben Joseph; Amnon of Mainz; Ba'al Shem Tov; Chosen People; Cohen and Levite; Compassion and Holy People; Death; Hasidism; Hillel; Intermediaries; Isaac; Ishmael ben Elisha; Joy; Judge; Kabbalah; Kings; Lamedvavniks; Lawgivers as Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Matriarchs, Hebrew; Messiahs; Miracles; Miriam; Models; Morality and Holy People; Moses; Moses ben Maimon; Moses ben Nahman; Mysticism and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Priests; Prophets; Purity and Pollution; Rebbetzin; Reform and Reaction; Ritual; Rulers as Holy People; Sages; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Tolerance and Intolerance; Tzaddiq; Veneration of Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Judge

Hebrew leader

The term *judge* (Heb.: *shophet*) in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) refers to a temporary leader of Israel who was appointed by God in response to the cries of the people in order to overcome a military threat. In the biblical conception of history, the judges were the leaders of Israel after the people entered the Promised Land but before the institution of the kingship. Although this office did carry judicial and arbitral functions, these were not the primary duties of an Israelite judge.

Judgeship is central to the Book of Judges in the Hebrew Bible. Within the book, a distinction can be made between major judges and minor judges. The major judges are the leaders about whom stories are told. Samson is an example of this kind of judge. The minor judges are remembered only in lists within the book. The Book of Judges is typified by a pattern of sin, repentance, and salvation. The people of Israel engage in some kind of sinful activity to which God responds with punishment and oppression. The judge is appointed by God to rescue the people from the punishment previously levied upon them once he is convinced that they have learned their lesson.

The Book of Judges was compiled much later than the events it purports to describe. These later authors and editors saw the judges as intermediaries between God and humans.

—Kevin McGeough

See also: Intermediaries; Judaism and Holy People; Kings; Rulers as Holy People

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Julia of Carthage

(d. c. 500 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Julia of Carthage, also known as Julia of Corsica, was the virgin daughter of a Carthaginian nobleman. During Genseric's attack on Carthage in about 489, the young Christian Julia was taken prisoner and sold as a slave. Her new owner, a non-Christian merchant named Eusebius, took her back to his home in Palestine. Although she was obedient to Eusebius and tried to remain cheerful in her dire situation, she refused to give up her faith—even when threatened. Because of her steadfastness, Eusebius did not harm her in any way or force her to renounce Christianity. As she grew older, Julia became more involved in Eusebius's business matters. However, when she wasn't working, Julia devoted herself to prayer.

Julia became such an asset to Eusebius that he took her with him to Gaul on a business trip. En route, his ship stopped in northern Corsica, where a traditional non-Christian festival was being celebrated, and the passengers, with the exception of Julia, disembarked to join the festivities. When the leader of the island, Felix, discovered Julia on board the ship, he asked Eusebius why she was not taking part. He explained her devotion to her faith and his willingness to let her be because she was such a hard worker. Felix offered to buy her from Eusebius, but he was refused—Eusebius valued her service too much. Felix was unwilling to let things be, so he got Eusebius drunk and approached Julia himself. He even offered to buy her freedom if she would simply worship his gods. She refused. He tortured her, but she still remained true to her faith. In a last fit of rage, Felix had her crucified.

One account of Julia's death states that a dove flew out of her mouth as she died; another says that she was surrounded by angels. Monks on the nearby island of Gorgon were divinely informed of her death and recovered her body. King Desiderius of Lombardy moved her relics to Breseia in about 765. Her relics are today in the basilica of Fausta in Carthage. Her feast day is reported variously as July 15, July 16, and May 23, and she is honored in the Russian Orthodox as well as the Roman Catholic Church. An alternate version of her life has her dying a century later, killed by Saracens.

—Kelly A. O'Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution
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Julian of Norwich

(c. 1343–after 1419 C.E.)

Christian mystic, recluse

Julian of Norwich was a Christian mystic, anchoress, prophet, and spiritual adviser of the late Middle Ages. She was also the first Englishwoman to write a book, yet her own name does not survive. She is known only by the name she took for herself, that of the saint to whose church she attached her anchorage cell, St. Julian in Conisford at Norwich. She was born in approximately 1343, but the exact date of her enclosure in the cell is unknown. It is likewise unknown whether she was ever married. She may have been a nun, or she may have been a widow who turned to the life of a recluse after her husband's death. Nevertheless, she was revered in her lifetime, and many men and women sought

her spiritual counsel. Her work, *The Revelation(s) of Divine Love*, survives in two versions, the Short Text and the Long Text. It is analyzed and admired today for its religiosity, for its literary value, and for the feminism she explores. Julian was among the first Christian religious writers to examine the notion of the motherhood of God.

Julian tells of two experiences that formed the foundation for her *Revelation* and her theology. According to her account in the Short Text, in May 1373, during a bout of severe illness, a physical condition that often accompanies mystics' experiences, she received a series of sixteen visions. She describes these as her *Shewings* (Showings). She writes that the visions lasted for twelve hours. It was not until twenty years later that she received what she called inner understanding enabling her to reflect upon and finally fully grasp the meaning of the early visions. She recorded her lengthy examination of them in her Long Text. Although Julian writes that she is a "symple creature unlettred," her work belies this modest disclaimer.

As with many women of the latter Middle Ages, whether she wrote the texts with her own hand or dictated them is open to debate. Yet her writing reveals a woman of considerable intellect. This intellect is demonstrated in her evolving theology, an area of contemplation considered the purview of men. The church forbade women to teach, let alone preach. This rule complicated the female religious' ability to communicate their ideas and avoid charges of heresy. Julian and Margery Kempe (c. 1373–c. 1440), the contemporary mystic and author of her own religious experiences (*The Book of Margery Kempe*), who visited Julian for spiritual counsel, skirted the boundaries of heterodoxy by interpreting what came to them in visions. Julian insisted that she was a witness rather than a medium.

She rooted her message in the primacy of love and in the concept of God as father *and* mother, with the emphasis on mother. She expressed this in terms associated with female space, speaking of the soul "knitted" to God with a secure "knot," and of a God who enjoys being father and mother, with a mother's love that is natural and "most loving." Some of her best-known imagery includes the notion of a hazelnut in the palm of her hand, which serves as a lesson in understanding the all-encompassing quality of God's love. Finally, at the end of her *Revelation* Julian writes that the "meaning is love." Her gentle language and her compassionate message had great appeal to those who came to visit her in her Norwich cell, as well as those who read her work during her lifetime and well beyond.

Although the medieval Church never formally canonized Julian of Norwich, she is honored by both Catholics and Anglicans on her unofficial feast day of May 13.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Guidance; Hermits; Mysticism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People

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Juliana of Liège (or of Mont-Cornillon)*(c. 1193–1258 C.E.)**Christian nun, visionary*

Juliana is one of the many thirteenth-century women saints who best might be described as “rebellious.” Often eschewing the mediation of the clergy, she made enemies within her order. Her devotion to the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the eucharist led to excessive asceticism, mainly fasting, and to a search for a complete mystical union with the divine. As one component of this piety, she advocated the new feast of Corpus Christi, which encouraged a more active veneration of the eucharist through exhibitions of the consecrated host.

Juliana, born around 1193 and orphaned at the age of five, was placed in the small monastic community of Mont-Cornillon near her home of Liège in Belgium. She became a nun there in 1207, and in 1208 she had her first vision, in which Christ instructed her to institute the new feast. Although the vision was repeated over the next twenty years, Juliana kept it a secret. When she finally revealed the vision to her confessor, he relayed it to the bishop, who began to celebrate Corpus Christi. The feast slowly spread to neighboring dioceses and then throughout northern Europe.

Political problems frequently distracted Juliana during those years. Prioress of her convent since 1222, Juliana’s rebelliousness, combined with her rigid definition of virtue and her own unimpeachable character, sometimes created tensions between her and others. The animosity of Roger, supervisor of her convent, forced Juliana to flee from the community to hide in Liège under the protection of her confessor and Bishop Robert de Thorate. The two men helped Juliana in her successful struggle to remove Roger from office and regain her position. The victory was only temporary, however. When Roger regained his position in 1247, Juliana again fled. She took refuge for a while with the beguines at Namur and then moved to Fosses, where she lived out her life as a recluse.

Her efforts produced similarly mixed results after her death in 1258. Although a number of miracles occurred at her intercession and while she was beatified in 1869, she has yet to be formally canonized. Even so, the feast she promoted was adopted into the Catholic liturgical calendar only six

years after her death and today is celebrated throughout the world on the second Thursday (in America, the second Sunday) after Pentecost.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Martyrdom and Persecution; Prophets

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Justin Martyr*(d. c. 165 C.E.)**Christian philosopher, apologist, martyr*

Justin Martyr was the first Christian thinker to use Greek philosophical categories and terminology in expressing the content of the gospel and attempting to reconcile faith and reason. His two apologies, literary defenses of the faith, describe Christians as moral and socially responsible citizens deserving of justice rather than persecution from the state. He also wrote a *Dialogue with Trypho*, an account of a debate with a Jewish intellectual on the question of whether Jesus was truly the messiah promised in the Jewish scriptures. Justin is one of the most important sources on the beliefs and practices of second-century Christians.

Little is known of Justin’s early life. He mentions in his writings that he was born at Flavia Neapolis (modern Nablus) in Palestine. His name, and that of his father, Priscus, a non-Christian, suggest that he may have been of Roman descent. As a young man Justin studied Stoicism, Pythagoreanism, Aristotelianism, and Platonism, but he found none of them satisfying. It was then, he says, that he met a mysterious old man who introduced him to Christianity. The account of his spiritual development in *Dialogue 2–8* relates that the stranger’s words set his soul “afire.” Following his conversion, Justin made his way to Rome, where he taught until his martyrdom under Rusticus, prefect of Rome from 163 to 167.

For Justin, Christianity was “the only sure and useful philosophy,” a conviction he illustrated by wearing the pallium, or cloak, of a philosopher. He insisted, however, that the ultimate authority in matters of truth was not human reason, as other philosophers believed, but God’s revelation in Christ,

whom he identified, following the Gospel of John (1:1–18), as the incarnate word, or *logos* (divine reason). Although the *logos* had been partially grasped before the Incarnation—by Plato, for example, in his description of the World Soul (*Timaeus* 36b)—it was not fully known until it was made flesh in Christ.

A central theme in Justin's thought is the essential harmony of Christianity and philosophy. Building on the Stoic teaching that human reasoning is a participation in the *logos*, the source of all reason and order in the universe, he argued that Christ is present whenever people engage in rational thought. This was true even before the Incarnation. In the *First Apology* (46), he wrote that "those who live in accordance with reason are Christians, although they have been considered atheists." For Justin, philosophers such as Socrates and Heraclitus were Christians before Christ.

Despite his interest in building bridges between Christianity and classical culture, Justin was acutely aware of their differences. He maintained the primacy of scripture over all

other repositories of wisdom, claiming in the *First Apology* (44) that truths described by philosophers and poets concerning such matters as the immortality of the soul and retribution after death were derived from Moses and the prophets. He could be critical of philosophy, which he regarded as inaccessible to most people, and he condemned Greek and Roman mythology as the work of demons. Still, by engaging in dialogue with Greco-Roman culture, Justin helped to encourage the widespread acceptance of a faith that in his day was still new and often misunderstood.

—Bradley P. Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Socrates

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K

Kabbalah

Jewish mysticism

Kabbalah (“that which is received,” “tradition”) is a form of Jewish mysticism emerging from the Jewish community in Spain during the thirteenth century. Its great practitioners won wide recognition as holy people for their deep insight into the hidden ways of God. The term has become the collective reference to modern Jewish mystical and esoteric spirituality.

The spiritual tradition and its written expression that became known as the Kabbalah was inspired by a vibrant revitalization of medieval Jewish culture in the study of Talmud, *halakhah* (the laws), and biblical exegesis. In a flowering of sacred and secular poetry and music, students and teachers of Torah and Talmud in northern Spain and southern France began to engage in theological and theosophical speculation that sought to move beyond the rationalism of pure philosophy and the legalism of contemporary Judaism. Early teachers of the Kabbalah, such as Rabbis Moses ben Nachmanides (1194–1270), Abraham ben David (Ravad) (c. 1125–1198), and particularly the latter’s son, Isaac Sagi Nahor (“the Blind”) (c. 1160–1235), did not wish necessarily to articulate a “new” form of Judaism but rather to unveil the interior, hidden, core truths of Torah that had remained latent because of the rabbinical emphasis upon law and tradition. The term *kabbalah* meant for its practitioners “tradition” in the sense that they believed they were simply exploring and revealing spiritual wisdom that was part of the chain of unbroken transmission of the oral Torah given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. Early kabbalistic texts, however, such as the anonymous *Sefer ha-Bahir* (The book of pure light) and the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (The book of splendor) of Moses de Leon (c. 1240–1305), do present a considerable departure from the accustomed mores and parameters of Jewish spirituality.

The mystic plunges into the depths of the transcendent, acknowledging the ultimately unknowable mystery that is

the divine, and yet, with that very apprehension, attempts to span the chasm that separates humanity from its creator. The kabbalists, perhaps in reaction to the rationalism of contemporary philosophy, embraced the concept of a personal God who is, finally, beyond human ken. They did so by asserting the fundamentally “hidden” nature of God. In texts such as the *Zohar*, the kabbalists referred to that ultimately unknowable aspect of God as *Eyn Sof* (“without end,” “infinite”), positing an eternal existence about which nothing can be spoken or described. However, there are aspects of God that can be perceived and are intelligible to human cognition: These “aspects” the kabbalists named the *Eser Sefirot* (the ten numerals), ten emanations from Eyn Sof that, as divine attributes, manifest the divine in human experience. Scripture, the kabbalists insist, must be read symbolically, and in that symbolic reading Torah reveals each of the divine attributes at various moments. Therefore, most of the narrative of Torah, such as the story of Abraham, and all the Hebrew scriptures, in fact, must be understood to be allegories explicating the dimensions of the Sefirot in the world. The Torah must be read not only as historical report, or as moral instruction, but especially as the self-revelation of Eyn Sof.

Over the centuries, the spiritual potency of the Kabbalah, its teaching of the Eyn Sof and its ten Sefirot, and all that that teaching implies about symbolism and allegory and the secreted potential of the unknowable and the unseen in the realization of religious truth, has not waned since its shadowy emergence in medieval Spain. Later kabbalists, such as the enlightened Isaac Luria (1534–1572) of Safed (along with Moses Cordovero [1552–1570], Joseph Karo [1488–1575], and others), fashioned their own interpretations of the mystical constructs of the Kabbalah. Religious movements in modern Judaism, such as the rise of Hasidism in eighteenth-century Ukraine, were clearly inspired by the rich imagery and interior spirituality presented in the Kabbalah. The Kabbalah took on an especial

appeal after the tumultuous expulsion of the entire Jewish community from Spain in 1492, when concerns were raised that the faith had become mired in legalism and ritualistic behavior and was thus too weak to withstand hostile forces in the world.

It was not until the twentieth century that such a sense of disoriented dislocation began to fade from Jewish consciousness, but even then, historical events conspired to perpetuate the ideation of diaspora. The spiritual wisdom of the Kabbalah presents the concept of a transcendental Infinite that will never be fully grasped by human cognition, but can be “glimpsed” by a transformed spirituality. Such spirituality must accept the assurance of the kabbalist truth that the Infinite and “real” do not exist in the coarsely material, but abide eternally, layering upon layering, in the recondite depths of existence. All that is, is that much more than it seems.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Hasidism; Judaism and Holy People; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Meditation and Holy People; Moses ben Nahman; Mysticism and Holy People

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Kabir

(c. 1450–1518 C.E.)

Hindu syncretic devotee

Kabir, the iconoclastic low-caste Hindu devotee of the “Lord Beyond Form,” as he referred to God, is perhaps the best known of the saints of *bhakti* (devotional Hinduism). His appeal has reached across time and across religious and linguistic boundaries. Quintessentially a preacher, he spared no one in his caustic critique of hypocrisy and of all social and religious hierarchies. In his songs, the religious leaders of his day, both Hindu and Muslim, are castigated for trying to hold on to privileges of caste and distinctions of purity and for focusing on particulars of religious practice and belief rather than on the one God they both worshipped. Kabir ridiculed reliance on holy books, be they the Qur’an or the

Vedas, on mosques and temples, and on images or ritual practices of prayer, instead advocating a path of realization of the One who is beyond all distinctions and limited human categories. And he challenged all to look death squarely in the face, abandoning meaningless pursuits and false sources of security in an uncompromising devotion to God.

According to hagiographic accounts, Kabir was born in about 1450 to a very low caste of weavers in Banaras, India, who had converted en masse to Islam. According to legend, he sought initiation into *bhakti* and, fearing rejection, tricked the great saint Ramanand (1299–1410?) into accepting him as a disciple by lying down on the steps leading to the Ganges River where he knew Ramanand would pass. Tripping over Kabir’s prone body, the startled Ramanand called out “Ram” (a general name for “God”), and Kabir took this to be his guru-given mantra. This story places Kabir in the lineage of this great saint, however historically unlikely their meeting might be.

Other stories of Kabir report the many ways he was tormented and challenged by brahmin priests and Muslim religious leaders, who rankled under his sharp tongue and his flaunting of traditional religious beliefs and practices and were outraged at this low-caste man exercising religious authority. With the encouragement of Kabir’s enemies, King Sikandar Lodi had Kabir thrown into the river in chains to drown, had him bound and left in a burning house, and let loose a mad elephant to crush him, but Kabir was miraculously unharmed, his saintliness confirmed. Kabir chose not to die in Banaras (though those who die there are said to achieve immediate liberation) but instead in the despised city of Magahar. His Hindu disciples wanted to cremate his body, while his Muslim disciples wanted to bury him, but when they pulled away the cloth covering his body, they found only flowers. Even in death, then, Kabir challenged his disciples to transcend their differences and keep their focus on Ram. He died in 1518.

We find early manuscript sources for songs attributed to Kabir not only in the *Bijak*, which is dedicated exclusively to his works, but also in the sacred scriptures of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth, and in manuscript collections preserved by the later Dadupanth, another sect founded by the saint Dadu, a cotton-carder living in Rajasthan in the latter half of the sixteenth century. A sect devoted to Kabir, called the Kabirpanth, has been established by others who share his low-caste status.

—Nancy M. Martin

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Bhakti Saints; Devotion; Ramanand; Status; Virashaiyas

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Kaibara Ekiken (Ekken)

(1630–1714 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

Kaibara Ekiken is remembered in Japan for his popularization of Confucianism, his extension of Confucian learning into herbological and naturalistic studies, and his critical reflections on Zhu Xi's (1130–1200) teachings. The most famous of his more than 150 works are *Kinshiroku bikō* (Notes on *Reflections on things at hand*); *Yamato honzō* (Medicinal herbs of Japan); *Yōjōkun* (Precepts for healthy living); *Yamato zokkun* (Precepts for daily life in Japan); *Onna Daigaku* (The *Great learning* for women); and *Taigiroku* (Record of great doubts). The last is an intense questioning of the Zhu Xi school from the point of view of Luo Qinshun's (1465–1547) monistic cosmology of material force and the rejection of Buddhist and Daoist influences on Confucian thought.

Ekiken was born into a samurai family in 1630. His mother and stepmother died early in his life, however, and he was raised by a townswoman (*chōnin*) servant in the commercial town of Hakata, outside of the Kuroda clan's domain castle in Fukuoka City, Kyushu, in close contact with other townspeople. His father was also compelled to move to the countryside several times during his childhood. These circumstances, plus his later experience from 1650 to 1657 as a *rōnin* (masterless samurai), did much to cultivate his dedication to popular edification. In 1657, he was sent to Kyoto to study at domain expense, remaining until 1664. In addition to studying under scholars of the Zhu Xi school such as Kinoshita Jun'an (1621–1698), he was exposed to the trend toward empirical and practical learning that had arisen within the growing commercial economy in the period preceding the Genroku era (1688–1704).

These youthful experiences exerted much influence on Ekiken's style of thought. For instance, he made a special point of listening to what ordinary *chōnin* had to say and made inquiries about mundane matters even of people of the most lowly station, believing that "there is nothing in the world that is outside of the sphere of principle." He emphasized that questioning and doubting were essential to progress in learning. In *Yōjōkun*, he compared the life force within human beings to plants and trees continually sprouting forth new life—naturally peaceful, he said, it makes the heart eternally joyful. It can be made to thrive through the dedicated practice of humaneness (equated with filiality), a

practice that unites all things together in one body and thus necessarily leads to concern for the hardships and practical needs of other beings. "Nourishing life and [practicing] humaneness are not two different things," he wrote. "Nourishing life belongs to Heaven and humaneness belongs to humans." In addition to humaneness, the presence or absence of a feeling of gratitude for the blessings one has received was Ekiken's criterion for distinguishing the superior person from the petty-minded.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Zhu Xi

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Kaleb

See Caleb

Kalemba Mulumba (Wante) Matthias

(c. 1832–1886 C.E.)

Roman Catholic martyr

Kalemba is believed to have been the oldest of the twenty-two Ugandan Catholic martyrs who have contributed to the rich tradition of African saints. Because African cyclic time does not record dates of birth, Kalemba's age at the time of his death in 1886 is unknown. He was estimated to be between thirty and fifty years old at his baptism in 1882. Kalemba's probable birthplace was Bunya, Busoga. A victim of Baganda raids while still young, he became a servant to Magotto, a Ssinga chief (in Mityana). His uprightness earned him adoption by the chief, a name change from Wante to Kalemba, and promotion to supervisor of the chief's household, with the title "Mulumba."

In his search for religious truth, Kalemba inquired about Islam and Anglicanism; eventually, he was won to Roman Catholicism by missionaries who arrived in Uganda in 1879 under the leadership of Père Simeon Lourdel ("Mapera"). Becoming a catechumen on May 31, 1880, Kalemba was baptized on April 30, 1882, by Père Girault. After his conversion, he divorced all his wives except one and undertook manual labor and cooking. He resigned his position among the Ssinga, renounced bribes, looting of cattle, and slavery, and began to earn his living by making pottery and tanning leather. Legends of Kalemba's bravery report that he rescued a baby elephant from its mother's attack and fended off a

buffalo with a stick. Two hundred converts in Mityana—including future martyrs Luke Bannabakintu and Noe Mawagali—regularly met at Kalemba's house. Kalemba resolutely embraced Christianity and put his trust in God's deliverance.

Missionaries expelled by King Mutesa I (r. c. 1857–1884) in November 1882 returned in 1885 only to witness persecution against indigenous Christians. King Mwangi's (r. 1884–1897) anger had been ignited by Christian chiefs and others who opposed idolatry, polygamy, debauchery, war, witchcraft, and especially the king's homosexual advances toward Christian pages. Christians, "the praying ones," who had adhered to a "white man's religion," were considered traitors. At the height of Mwangi's fury, Kalemba was arrested on May 26, 1886, and prosecuted for engaging in behavior unacceptable for a chief—including divorcing his wives, cooking for himself, and having an emaciated physique. He suffered a barbaric death in Old Kampala near Nakivubo Stadium. His hands were cut off at the wrists, his arms and legs at the elbows and knees. His flesh was torn and roasted within his sight; his arteries and veins were tied together. For two days, mutilated, writhing in pain, and crying for water, he bled to death, but with a joyous countenance. As he expired on May 30, 1886, he exclaimed "Katonda, Katonda—my God, my God" (Faupel 1984, 177).

—John B. Kauta

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Kamalakanta Bhattacharya

(c. 1769–1821 C.E.)

Hindu poet

Kamalakanta Bhattacharya is the second-ranking figure after Ramprasad Sen (c. 1718–1775), in chronology as well as talent, of the genre of Hindu devotional poetry to the goddesses Kali and Uma in Bengal. Born in about 1769, he lived in the Burdwan district of what is now West Bengal, after 1809 under the patronage of the zamindars or rajas of the area, who engaged him as temple priest and supported his poetry writing.

As with Ramprasad, little is known about his life, although legends abound: He charmed a gang of murderous thieves by singing to Kali; the goddess appeared to him twice as a low-caste woman whom he did not at first recognize; he turned wine into milk to confound his patron who had ac-

cused him of drunkenness; for this lack of faith he cursed his patron's lineage to be without heirs for several generations; he received initiation in esoteric eroto-yogic rituals, which he practiced with his wife; and as he lay dying, the river Ganges miraculously burst from the ground near his bed to bathe him. In comparison with the legends about Ramprasad, Kamalakanta's have more stories of the miraculous and of the poet's own spiritual powers.

Kamalakanta died in 1821. His poetic corpus contains 269 poems to Kali and Uma and a meditation manual called *Sadhaka Ranjana*. In form and content, Kamalakanta's compositions are very similar to Ramprasad's, although his descriptions of Kali are sweeter and the tone of his poetry less caustic and more petitionary. Kamalakanta's goddess is less unpredictable and unjust—an indication that the softening process begun by the earlier poet had borne fruit by the time of the later one. Kamalakanta does include, however, many more references to the esoteric tantric path. Several of his most interesting poems focus on the lovemaking of the goddess and her consort in the devotee's own body. Another sign of Kamalakanta's originality is his poetry on Uma, which tells a developed story of her life with Shiva and contributes to the growing tradition of devotion to Uma as the daughter who returns once yearly to Bengal for a reunion with her devotees.

—Rachel Fell McDermott

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Ramprasad Sen

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Kamalashila

(c. 740–795 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Kamalashila was an Indian Mahayana Buddhist monk-scholar who greatly influenced the early formation of Buddhism in Tibet through his writings on meditation and philosophy. He is thought to have been an abbot at the famous Indian university of Nalanda before being summoned to Tibet. Kamalashila was invited to Tibet during the reign of the religious king Trisong de Tsen (Tib.: khri srong lde btsan, c. 740–798) to carry on the work of his teacher, Shantarakshita. He played a leading role in the establishment of Buddhism there toward the end of the eighth century.

According to Tibetan accounts, Kamalashila's teacher prophesied that he would come to Tibet to settle the factional divisions between Buddhist schools. This is perhaps from a posthumous legend of the famous part he played at the Council of Tibet, or Samye (bsam yas) Debate, in which

he advocated a gradualist theory of attaining enlightenment as opposed to the “simultaneist” teachings associated with the late eighteenth-century Chinese Chan meditation master known as Huashang Moheyan. In the literature associated with this debate, Kamalashila advocated a philosophical theory that utilized teachings of mind-only (*cittamatra*) as a stepping-stone to the Middle Way (Madhyamaka) philosopher’s goal of realizing the lack of essence, or emptiness (*shunyata*), of all factors of existence, including the mind itself. He indicated that the process in which this realization occurs is through a sequence of discerning scripture and proofs of reasoning in conjunction with study, reflection, and meditative cultivation. Whatever may be the exact historical events that occurred at this debate in Tibet, if the debate occurred at all, Kamalashila’s articulation of a spiritual path demarcated by progressive meditative realization through a unified combination of quiescence of mind (*shamatha*) and cognitive insight (*vipashyana*) had a lasting influence on the Buddhism that was to develop in Tibet.

Among his many writings, Kamalashila provided, at the request of King Trisong de Tsen, an outline of the Mahayana Buddhist spiritual path in his three-part *Sgom rim thog mtha’ bar gsum* (Stages of meditation). The first section indicates the doctrinal principles that an aspirant must train in to reach omniscient buddhahood for the benefit of all beings, such as great compassion and the spirit of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) conjoined with study, reflection, and cultivation. The second section explains how to engage in the practice of these principles, and the third section discusses the profound results of buddhahood that arise from the complete actualization of the practice.

—James B. Apple

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Scholars as Holy People; Trisong de Tsen

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Kami

See **Shinto and Holy People**

Kamikaze of World War II

(d. 1941–1945 C.E.)

Shinto heroes, kami

Kamikaze, literally “divine wind,” is the name given to Japanese pilots during World War II who volunteered to crash their airplanes into American warships. Contemporary Japanese revered these men as god-like heroes, a view that persists, es-

pecially among right-wing apologists for Japan’s role in the war. The term is actually a contraction of *Kamikaze* (or *Shinpû*) *Tokubetsu Kôgekитай*, “The Divine Wind Special Attack Corps,” which in Japan is usually contracted to “Special Attack Corps” (*Tokkôtai*).

The term “Divine Wind” originally referred to the typhoons that wrecked Mongol fleets attempting to invade Japan in the late thirteenth century. In modern Japan, suicidal attacks were first popularized after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), when a Japanese army officer wrote a novel glorifying one example. Later, weapons the Japanese used at Pearl Harbor included miniature submarines that could not have been expected to return safely. The systematic use of suicidal tactics, however, appeared only in October 1944, when the Japanese, suffering repeated defeats, in desperation dispatched five navy pilots to their death in the Philippines. Subsequently, the practice grew and was adopted by the army. Typically, young men were given limited flight training, placed in airplanes loaded with bombs, and instructed to crash into American ships. Other suicidal weapons were also devised.

Japan’s military had no trouble finding enthusiastic volunteers for these missions. They included the elite of Japanese youth, many having been drafted out of universities. Estimates of their number range from approximately 2,000 to 5,000. In modern Japan, until the end of World War II all Japanese killed in action were enshrined as *kami* (Shinto deities) at Tokyo’s Yasukuni Shrine, established in 1869 by the Japanese government, but the purity of their sacrifice made kamikaze pilots seem particularly holy. After the war, their last writings were published to demonstrate the folly of militarism. These works found a wide audience of readers who admired the kamikaze without necessarily supporting their cause. Today, museums at Yasukuni Shrine and Japan’s naval academy continue to glorify them.

—Robert Borgen

See also: Apotheosis; Patriotism and Holy People; Shinto and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Kanakadasa

(16th cent. C.E.)

Hindu singer-saint, poet

Kanakadasa, a much-revered Hindu singer-saint and poet from the Kuruba shepherd clan, lived during the height of

the Vijayanagara Empire in the 1500s. He composed many songs in the Kannada language, and other compositions in Sanskrit. His lower-caste birth status did not hold him back from becoming one of the great singer-saints and poets of southern India. The story of his dramatic conversion experience on a battlefield and the impressive power of his devotion live on in southern India today, as do many of his songs.

In Bada near Dharwad, in what is now Karnataka State, Kanakadasa was born to Bacchama, the wife of Birappa, a feudal chief and revenue collector of a village of herders and hunters. Birappa was the local revenue collector for the Vijayanagara ruler. The pious Kuruba couple prayed to Lord Venkateshvara at the sacred mountaintop pilgrimage shrine Tirupati for a child. When their prayers were answered and a baby was born to them, after twelve days they performed the naming ceremony and put him in the cradle, calling him Timmappa. An energetic child, he grew up enjoying an active boyhood. As a young man in Tirupati, Timmappa came into contact with the saintly teacher Tatacharya, who initiated him into Vishnu devotion.

Timmappa once discovered a treasure while digging a well. He thus came to be known as Kanaka Nayaka, "Golden Chief." Timmappa built a temple in the village of Kaginele (in what is now north Karnataka) to house the image of Lord Adikeshava, a form of Krishna, which he brought from a tumbledown temple in nearby Bada. As a young man, he lived an active life in pursuit of prosperity. Taking over his father's duties, he sometimes went to Hampi in an official capacity as revenue collector. There he heard the Vaishnava guru Vyasaraaya.

Stories of Kanaka's life relate how he repeatedly dreamed of Lord Krishna. Each time, the holy presence, before vanishing, requested him to become his servant. Each time, Kanaka said he did not yet want to renounce the world. Then, during a conflict with a neighboring kingdom, Kanaka Nayaka was wounded. Left for dead, after hours of lying unconscious he recovered awareness. A dark form asked "Are you ready? Will you become my servant now? I saved you from death, you're supposed to be my servant. We have a special relationship. In past lives you were my servant, and you took this birth to serve me too. . . . If with my touch I heal your wounds will you believe and serve me?"

Kanaka agreed and found that he was undamaged by the fray. Revived and enthused, Kanaka ran to the temple, but found it locked. He looked up and realized it was the middle of the night. In his intense mood of spiritual desire he pounded his head against the gate and wept at being kept out: "Open the gate, allow me to serve you, O Lord. Why can't you hear my pleas? When . . . when . . . why not now?" With this song the gate opened, bells rang, and worship flames waved before the sacred image. Kanaka Nayaka wept to see this vision of divine radiance.

He next went to the guru Vyasaraaya. Despite the fact that he was of the shepherd caste and such people were normally not given initiation by royal gurus, Kanaka asked the sage for a mantra. The guru Vyasaraaya, knowing nothing of Kanaka's vision, surrounded by high-caste devotees, impatiently told him: "You can have a mantra—repeat: 'Water buffalo, water buffalo. . .'" Kanaka innocently took the highborn guru's word as a literal instruction and went off to recite his "buffalo mantra" religiously. His faith was such that he was able to move a big boulder blocking a spring. When Vyasaraaya saw this, he gave Kanaka a real initiation, welcoming him into the community of devotees.

The most famous legend about Kanaka recounts how as a low-caste man he could not enter the Krishna temple at Udipi in southwestern Karnataka. He gazed through a hole in the wall with devotion so intense that he provoked the eastward-facing image of Krishna to face west where Kanaka stood.

Besides composing many songs, Kanakadasa wrote four poetic works: *Mohana Tarangini* (The river waves of enchanting Krishna); *Ramadhyaana Caritra* (The story of the grain blessed by Rama); *Nala Charitra*, on the theme of suffering for a worthy cause; and *Hari Bhakti Sara*, one hundred devotional verses to Krishna. Kanaka lived to the age of ninety-eight. The Haridasas believed that Kanakadasa was the reincarnation of the sage Vidura, whose story is told in the *Mahabharata* epic.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Reincarnation; Status

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Kanji Swami

(1889–1980 C.E.)

Jain teacher, mystic

Kanji Swami was a Jain teacher and founder of the Kanji Swami Panth, an important Jain mystical movement claiming to represent an authentic revival of Jainism in the tradition of the mystical philosopher Kundakunda (c. second and third centuries). Kanji Swami was born in 1889 in the Gujarat region of northern India into a family of Sthanakvasi Jains (an aniconic subsect of Shvetambaras in which monks wear white robes and facedcloths). He took initiation as a Sthanakvasi monk but became disillusioned with ritualism

and increasingly impressed by the mystical philosophy of the Digambara sect (whose monks practice ascetic nudity). Kanji Swami discovered the works of the Digambara philosopher Todarmal (1719–1766), but his main influence was Kundakunda's *Samayasara* (Essence of the doctrine). This became the key to Kanji Swami's reading of Shvetambara scriptures.

Another major influence was Shrimad Rajcandra (1867–1901), whose teachings integrated Digambara and Shvetambara elements. Kanji Swami first tried to incorporate Digambara mystical teachings into his sermons, living as a Sthanakvasi monk but considering himself a spiritual Digambara. In 1934, on the occasion of Mahavira's (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.) birthday, he threw away his Sthanakvasi facecloth and proclaimed himself a Digambara layman (although he remained celibate throughout his life). The site of this proclamation, the small town of Songadh in the northern Indian state of Gujarat, near the Jain holy mountain Shatrunjaya, is now a major center of the Kanji Swami Panth.

Kanji Swami de-emphasized succession of disciples and ascetic initiation, favoring instead direct mystical apprehension of the soul and right knowledge; this reverses the usual Jain priority. The Kanji Swami Panth has no monks, although its founder maintained respect for initiated renunciants. Kanji Swami claimed to be a restorer of the Jain doctrine, merely repeating the eternal truth that others proclaimed before him. He wrote no books, but his charismatic preaching is available on cassette tapes.

Kanji Swami claimed to have been in the presence of an omniscient Jain sage, Simandhara Swami, in a past life and in another realm. It is there that he personally heard the true Jain teachings imparted to Kundakunda. He and his followers thus claim the authority of direct revelation, if not full omniscience, for Kanji Swami. He died in 1980. Many of his followers believe that in his next birth he will be an omniscient sage, a claim disputed by many Jains. The Kanji Swami Panth is controversial, but it is growing, especially outside India, for example, in East Africa. Kanji Swami himself made a missionary trip to Mombasa, Kenya. In recent years there has been a convergence of the Kanji Swami Panth and the Shrimad Rajcandra movement, part of a trend toward a more ecumenical and less sectarian Jainism among educated, mobile Jains living overseas.

—Jerome Bauer

See also: Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Rajcandra, Shrimad; Reform and Reaction; Sages

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Karmapa Reincarnation Lineage

(1110 C.E.–present)

Tibetan Buddhist lineage

The Gyalwa Karmapas are the spiritual leaders of the Karma subschool of the Kagyu lineage, one of the four major branches of Buddhism from Tibet. The Karma Kagyu lineage originated from the second propagation of Indian Buddhism to Tibet in the tenth to thirteenth centuries. (The first propagation was from the seventh to the ninth centuries.) Central to this second propagation were courageous Tibetan figures such as Marpa (1012–1097), who journeyed to India to gather teachings from great Indian tantric adepts such as Naropa (956–1040). The seventeen incarnations of the Karmapa have primarily served to uphold the instructions from the Indian saints Tilopa (988–1069) and Naropa passed on to the Tibetan saints Marpa, Milarepa (1052–1135), and Gompopa (1079–1153).

Tibetan Buddhist traditions of reincarnated spiritual leaders originated from the rebirth of the first Karmapa (Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa; 1110–1193). The process leading to recognizing an incarnation involves the dying incarnation leaving signs, usually in a letter, to indicate the location of the next birth. The close students of the previous Karmapa can interpret these signs and use various divination procedures to find the new incarnation. According to Tibetan traditions, the Gyalwa Karmapa incarnations are emanations of the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteshvara coming to the world in order to help alleviate the sufferings of humanity. The coming of the first Karmapa is believed to fulfill a prophecy made by the Buddha Shakyamuni, predicting that 1,600 years after his passing there would be a man of great spiritual attainment and compassion known as Karmapa, “Man of Action.”

The first Karmapa was a disciple of both Gampopa (sGam-po-pa) and Rachungpa (Ras-chung-pa). Dusum Khyenpa established the monastery in Tsur phu (mTshurphu), 50 miles west of Lhasa, which became the official seat in Tibet for the proceeding Karmapa incarnations. His successor, Karma Pakshi (Ka-rma Pak-shi; 1204–1283), was recognized as the second reincarnation. Karma Pakshi was believed to be a descendant of the Tibetan King Trhisong Detsen (Khri-srong Ide-brtsan; 755–c. 797) and was invited to the courts of Kublai and Monge Khan in 1254. The third Karmapa, Rang Jung Dorje (Rang-'byung rdo-rje; 1284–1339), was renowned for his scholarship and was invited to China by Toghon Temur, the last Mongolian emperor. Rang Jung Dorje was followed in the succession of Karmapas by Rolpay Dorje (Rolpa'i rdo-rje; 1340–1383), De Shin Shekpa (De-bzhin-gshegs-pa; 1384–1415), Thong Dorje (mThong-rdo-rje; 1507–1554), and a series of masters to the present day. The sixteenth Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje (Rang-byung rig-pa'i rDo-rje; 1924–1981), was recognized and

brought up in the manner of his predecessors, but due to the Chinese invasion he took refuge in 1959 in Sikkim, where he founded a large monastic center for the promulgation of the Karma Kagyu order. With the spread of Tibetan Buddhism beyond Tibet since 1959, numerous Karma Kagyu centers outside of the Tibetan cultural region have emerged.

The tradition of spiritual and institutional leadership being passed down through reincarnation has not been without political entanglements. Disagreements about the real incarnation have been a hallmark of the current seventeenth Karmapa. The thirteenth Sharmar Tulku recognizes Trinley Thaye Dorje (1982–), and the twelfth Situ Tulku recognizes Orgyen Trinley Dorje (1985–). Although the first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa, stated that even while he was alive there existed several of his incarnations simultaneously as separate emanations of his body, speech, mind, and wisdom, tradition maintains that only one Karmapa at a time may officially function as the lineage holder.

—Garth Copenhaver

See also: Reincarnation

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Karo, Joseph

(1488–1575 C.E.)

Jewish legal authority, mystic

Joseph Karo was the leading *halakhic* (legal) authority of the sixteenth century and author of the *Shulkhan Arukh* (The prepared table), the definitive code of Jewish law accepted as authoritative to the present. He was also a mystic who was visited by a *maggid*, a heavenly mentor who imparted mystical teachings to him. Born in Spain in 1488, Karo left with his family for Turkey after the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. In Turkey, he met Solomon Molcho, Joseph Taitazak, and Solomon Alkabez, mystics who influenced his path. He left for Safed in 1536, where he was the leading halakhic authority and head of a large yeshiva.

Joseph Karo was associated with the leading kabbalists of Safed, including Moses Cordovero and Isaac Luria. Karo's mystical teachings are preserved in his diary, *Maggid Mesharim* (The preacher of truth). Only a portion of this diary survived after his death in 1575. Published in Amsterdam in 1708, it is a record of Karo's visitations by his heavenly mentor, the personification of the Mishnah. His colleague, Solomon Alkabez, recounts in a letter that he was present during a Shavuot (Pentecost) night vigil when Karo had a visitation from his *maggid*. Alkabez reports that Karo was not in a trance when he received this visitation and others present could hear the *maggid* speaking through Karo, but in

a voice that was not his. Karo remembered the messages and subsequently wrote them down.

The messages are a combination of mystical teachings and personal communications encouraging or admonishing Karo in his mystical practices. Although not creating a new kabbalistic system or synthesizing previous ones, they reflect the mystical currents in Safed prior to the kabbalistic innovations of Isaac Luria. Karo had been strongly influenced by the martyr's death of Solomon Molcho in 1532, and he dreamed of being burned at the stake to sanctify God's name as Molcho had.

—Morris M. Faierstein

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Kabbalah; Lawgivers as Holy People; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Karunamayi, Sri

(1958 C.E.–)

Hindu guru

Karunamayi (She who is permeated with compassion), also known as Bhagavati Sri Sri Sri Vijayeswari Devi (The goddess of victory), is a Hindu woman guru who lives in India and visits the United States regularly. Vijayeswari is her given name; the triple "Sri" (Sacred, Venerable, Auspicious) is an honorific prefix of respect. Disciples consider her to be an incarnation of Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge, music, and the arts, and refer to her as Amma, or mother.

Bhagavati Sri Vijayeswari was born on Vijaya Dashami (The victorious tenth day), considered to be one of the most auspicious days in the Hindu calendar, in 1958. This day usually marks the end of nine nights of celebration in the fall festival of Navaratri, when the goddess is worshipped in her multiple forms. In 1980, Sri Vijayeswari is said to have left home to go to the remote forest of Kanva ksendra (Penusila Kshetram) in Andhra Pradesh, southern India. After fourteen years of meditation, she founded a hermitage and charitable institution called Sri Mathru Devi Viswa Shanthi Ashram on the outskirts of the forest at Penusila. Sri Karunamayi gives regular discourses in her native language, Telugu, and in English in many parts of the world. She regularly leads her disciples in ritual worship of Lalitha, a form of the goddess Parvati, with the recitation of a thousand names of



Man praying at tomb of Joseph Karo in the cemetery of Zefat, Israel. (Art Directors)

the deity. She also initiates some devotees into a special mantra (sacred syllables) for the goddess Saraswati.

Official web pages and brochures of the organization say that the aim of Sri Karunamayi's mission is universal peace and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Her main message is that human beings should achieve higher levels of consciousness through the regular practice of meditation. She conducts regular meditation retreats to help religious seekers on the path to liberation and advises one to two hours of meditation daily. The organization also runs medical and educational programs, especially for the poor. She maintains a meditational and charitable center (ashram), the Karunamayi Shanthi Dhama, in the city of Bangalore, where apparently more than a thousand people per month are fed. Her followers have also started an orphanage, a hospital, and a school for children with special needs.

—Vasudha Narayanan

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Kassapa

(5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist disciple

Also called Mahakassapa in Pali (Kashyapa or Mahakashyapa in Sanskrit), Kassapa was one of the Buddha's chief disciples in the fifth century B.C.E. Known for his austerity and exacting observance of monastic rule, he adhered to strict ascetic practices such as sleeping in the forest, wearing robes of rags, and living on scant alms. He was exemplary in his relations with the laity, often seeking out the poor and despised to offer himself as a recipient for their alms, thereby ensuring them great merit and future beneficial rebirths. He also had a very close relationship with the Buddha; on one occasion they swapped robes, a gesture of high regard that the Buddha conferred on Kassapa alone among his disciples.

Kassapa was born into a brahmin family and from a young age longed to live a religious life. Against his wishes,

his parents pressured him to marry. Kassapa finally relented on the condition that they find a woman who equaled in loveliness the image of a maiden fashioned in a golden statue. To his dismay, a woman named Bhadda Kapilani was found who matched the statue, and he was forced to marry her. However, she shared with him a desire to renounce the world. They decided to keep their marriage chaste until they were able to abandon household life and ordain into the Buddha's community. Kassapa obtained enlightenment a week after his ordination.

According to Chan/Zen tradition, once when the Buddha was asked about ultimate truth he smiled and simply held up a single flower. Only Kassapa understood this gesture and received direct mind-to-mind transmission of sudden awakening. He is thus regarded as the first in the lineage of Chan patriarchs.

After the Buddha's passing away, Kassapa, fearing the loss of the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine), convened the First Buddhist Council and presided over the recitation of the Buddha's teachings. Although the Buddha did not appoint a successor, Kassapa's important leadership role and seniority made him, in effect, the head of the *samgha* (monastic community) for the next twenty years.

Kassapa is said to dwell to this day inside a mountain in northern India. In the account of the seventh-century Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang, Kassapa was entrusted by the Buddha with his robe to safeguard until the future Buddha Maitreya appears. Kassapa entered Cock's Foot Mountain and now waits for the ages to pass and Maitreya to arrive. When Maitreya appears, he will retrieve the robe from Kassapa and various fabulous miracles will ensue. Kassapa will at that time reach final enlightenment.

—*Maria Heim*

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Hagiography; Messiahs; Spiritual Guardians

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Kateri Tekakwitha

(1656–1680 C.E.)

Roman Catholic Native American laywoman

“The most beautiful flower that bloomed among the Indians” is the epitaph on the tombstone of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American and the first American laywoman proposed for canonization in the Roman

Catholic Church. Protector of the environment and patron of ecology, Kateri serves as an enduring testament to the great reverence the Native American people hold for all of creation and for the author of the cosmos. She is a loving witness to personal qualities that help to unite the human family in all its diverse richness: gentleness, kindness, compassion, good humor, and purity. She is called “The Lily of the Mohawks.”

Kateri Tekakwitha was born in Ossernenon (now Auriesville), New York, in 1656, the daughter of a Christian Algonquin woman and a non-Christian Mohawk chief. When she was four, her health was weakened, her face badly scarred, and her eyesight permanently damaged during a smallpox epidemic in which her parents and younger brother died. Some translations of the name “Tekakwitha” are thought to refer to her impaired eyesight: It could mean “She who feels her way with her hands” or “She who bumps into things.” Yet other translations seem to give an indication of her mystical sense of charity, perseverance, and service to others: “She who moves things before her” and “She who puts all in order.”

After the death of her parents, Kateri made her home with her uncle, who had become chief of the tribe, and his family. Jesuit missionaries from France paid visits to their village, and in 1676 Kateri, profoundly influenced by their teachings about Jesus, asked Father Jacques de Lamberville to baptize her. Suspicious of her new faith because it differed in many ways from traditional Iroquois practices, members of her tribe ostracized and physically threatened her. Kateri was forced to leave her village and went to live with Christian Native Americans in Canada. There, she made her first communion in 1677 and took a vow of permanent chastity in 1679.

Kateri Tekakwitha was a woman of innocence, simplicity, faith, and prayer whose intense spirituality and austere lifestyle made a lasting impression on her companions. Her personal suffering and immense faith enabled her to transcend the boundaries of her own traditions. She chose a new way of life that was nonconforming and potentially dangerous, yet richly rewarding. She demonstrates how suffering and pain can be transformed into a spirituality of inner peace, patience, and hope.

—*Mary Ann McSweeney*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Kaygusuz Abdal

(15th cent. C.E.)

Muslim sufi poet, folk hero

Kaygusuz Abdal, one of the well-known figures of Turkish folk literature, was reportedly the son of the governor of Alaiye (present-day Alanya in Antalya, Turkey, along the Mediterranean shore) in the fifteenth century. He is revered particularly in the Baktashi tradition but is also known as a folk hero and bard among the Turkish people. According to some sources, he was well educated and traveled extensively in Anatolia and the Balkans. In keeping with Turkish sufi literature, his poetry conveys messages of love, longing, friendship, and spiritual ecstasy. His poems also contain some descriptions of the life of nomadic Turkish tribes and references to specific places.

The most important feature of Kaygusuz Abdal's work, however, is its depiction of nomadic spirituality. In fact, all poets and sages who are given the title "abdal" exhibit this feature to some extent. The abdal tradition refers to mostly nomadic but occasionally sedentary poets who have traveled long distances from central Asia to Anatolia. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the abdal groups, also known in plural as *abdalan*, played a key role in the Islamization of Anatolia with their sufi teachings, lodges, and fraternities. After the centralization of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the fifteenth century, the *abdalan* groups were assimilated into city culture and largely lost their distinctly sufi character. The tradition of traveling poets-bards, however, has continued well into the modern period, with most of the *abdals* now settled in central Anatolia.

Kaygusuz Abdal is a prototype of this tradition. Considering that he lived in the fifteenth century, when nomadic Turkish tribes were still struggling with their historic transition into a sedentary life in relatively big cities, it is not surprising that his poetry both depicts natural scenery and criticizes the moral decadence and spiritual decline of the cities. Like many of his peers and followers, Kaygusuz used satire as a powerful way of conveying both social criticism and spiritual advice. His function can be described as one of social therapist. Along with his satirical approach, his eloquence of speech, and his poetic and musical skill, he uses his knowledge of religious subjects to achieve this unique social commentary. In spite of references to some specific places and events, the timeless quality of his mystical and social imagery can hardly be contested. This, in part, explains his fame as a living legend.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism; Yunus Emre

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Kazim, Musa al-

(c. 745–c. 799 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim imam

Musa al-Kazim, born around 745, was the seventh Twelver Shi'i imam. According to some leading Shi'as, he succeeded his father, Ja'far as-Sadiq, as imam in 765; according to others, the lineage was passed on via his elder brother Isma'il (thus leading to a branching between the two groups).

Quiet and retiring, al-Kazim spent most of his time in prayer and contemplation. Like his father, he presented lectures and spread Shi'i thought to his disciples. He had a difficult life, however, as the Abbasid authorities constantly sought to control and belittle him. On the orders of the Abbasid al-Mahdi, he was brought to Baghdad as prisoner in 780 or shortly thereafter. He was released after a brief imprisonment—and given a gift of 3,000 dinars by the authorities. Al-Mahdi had apparently had a dream in which 'Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661) appeared to him and berated him for imprisoning his progeny. Later, in about 795, during the reign of Harun al-Rashid, he was again arrested and brought to Baghdad. In confinement he continued to meet with and direct the affairs of his followers. He felt that it was permissible and valid to cooperate with the Abbasids, despite his belief that it was an illegitimate rulership, provided the cooperation furthered the Shi'a cause. Al-Rashid grew angry at seeing the relative ease of al-Kazim's imprisonment, however, and now wanted him killed.

Various traditions are presented regarding his death in roughly 799. He died at a prison or mosque near the al-Musayyab or Kufa gate. According to some, he died a natural death; others believe he was poisoned. Some of his followers refused to accept the authority of his son and successor, declaring that the imamate had ended with him. Their opponents called them the *al-wakifa*, "those who stop." However, this group later merged with the Twelver Shi'as. The Bushariyya, after Muhammad b. Bashir (alternatively Bushayr), the gnostic from Kufa, claim al-Kazim to be divine; they believe he did not die but went into concealment, and that he would return as the *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse). In the interim, Bashir himself claimed to be the imam. Al-Kazim was buried in a prestigious cemetery in northwest Baghdad. His tomb, together with that of his grandson, subsequently became an important center for pilgrimage. Musa al-Kazim apparently had many offspring—estimates range from thirty-three to sixty. His descendants are referred to as the Musawi. In Iran, 70 percent of the *sayyids* (descendants of Muhammad) are considered to be descended from him. He was succeeded by his son 'Ali al-Rida, the eighth Twelver imam.

Since birth al-Kazim was thought to be endowed with special powers. Several miracles are associated with him. It is

said that he was able to speak as an infant, for example, and guide people on various issues. Throughout his life he modeled paradigmatic piety. At the center of his followers as imam, because of his devout demeanor he was also a focus for those on the sufi path. The ascetic sufi Shaiq b. Ibrahim al-Balkhi regarded him as a holy person and a devout worshipper. Other sufis, such as Ma'ruf al-Kharkhi and Bishir al-Hafi, were also affiliated with him.

A gifted polemicist, al-Kazim was able to win over his opponents. For instance, the celebrated Sunni legal scholar Abu Hanifa was silenced by him, and even Christians who came to dispute with him about religion accepted Islam. Sunni scholars have regarded him as a respected traditionalist. A small book of traditions by him called the *Musnad Musa al-Kazim* is extant, compiled by Abu Bakr Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Shafi'i al-Bazzaz. Al-Kazim's answers to some legal queries are available in a volume called *Wasiyya fi al-'akl* in two versions, one abridged and one complete.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Ja'far as-Sadiq; Miracles

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Kazim Rashti, Sayyid

(1798–1844 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim teacher

Sayyid Kazim Rashti was appointed by Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i (1753–1826) to carry on his teaching. He was thus the second leader of the Shaykhi school of Shi'i Islam.

Sayyid Kazim was born in Rasht, Iran, to a family descended from the prophet Muhammad. He had a traditional religious education in his hometown, and in 1815, acting on a dream that involved the daughter of the prophet Muhammad, he moved to Yazd and became a student of Shaykh Ahmad. He was regarded by Shaykh Ahmad as his foremost pupil and appointed by him to take over leadership of his circle of students upon his death in 1826. By this time, Shaykh Ahmad's teachings had provoked a great deal of opposition among some of the prominent Shi'i religious leaders. Sayyid Kazim had several open debates in which he was called upon to defend these teach-

ings, and he thus became a rallying point for students who were disillusioned with the traditional learning and came to study under him in Karbala.

Some 171 works by Sayyid Kazim can be identified over a broad range of subjects including philosophy, mysticism, theology, exegesis, and religious jurisprudence. Many of these were written in answer to specific questions that came to him from all parts of the Shi'i world. In 1843, when the Ottomans sought to reassert their authority over Karbala, the house of Sayyid Kazim was one of only two places the Ottomans designated as safe refuges for the people once the Ottoman army entered the city and began a general massacre.

According to Babi and Baha'i sources, Sayyid Kazim referred frequently in his lectures to the near advent of the day when the hidden Shi'i imam, or *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse), would appear. He declined to appoint a successor to himself but instructed his followers that, after his death, they were to go out and search. Thus it was that after the death of Sayyid Kazim after midnight on the last night of 1843, a group of his students set out on a quest that led them eventually to accept the claims of the Bab, thus boosting the Babi movement. Those followers of Sayyid Kazim who did not become Babis divided into a number of sects, two of which remain to the present day. One of these follows the Ibrahimi Kirmani family centered in Kirman and Basra; the other follows the Usku'i family centered in Kuwait.

—Moojan Momen

See also: Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, Shaykh; Bab, The; Islam and Holy People; Mahdi, al-; Prophets; Recognition

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Kentigern

(d. 612 C.E.)

Christian missionary, bishop

The Christian saint Kentigern, popularly known as "Mungo," who died in about 612, was the founder of the see of Glasgow and a missionary in the ancient British kingdoms of Cumbria and Strathclyde. His popular veneration in Scotland has enjoyed a long history. The chief sources on Kentigern are the *Herbertian Life* (c. 1115) and the *Life by Jocelyn* (c. 1180). There is little in the existing sources that can be corroborated (they are all rather late), but the legends about Kentigern tie him not only to the major kingdoms of early medieval Britain but also to some of the major saints and kings of the period, such as Colum Cille of Iona and King Rhederch. Kentigern is said to have been the son of a British king (later sources name the famous Urien, king of Rheged)

and the daughter of a British prince. In the Herbertian Life, Kentigern was the product of a virgin birth, a legend that Jocelyn's sensibilities found heretical and that he left out of his version of Kentigern's life.

Kentigern was born at Culross, in Fife, and was educated by St. Serf. His early life at the monastery was a very ascetic one—he wore a hair shirt and held vigils in cold water. In his mid-twenties, Kentigern began his career as an evangelist in the area around modern Glasgow. He was consecrated bishop while in Strathclyde, is said to have been in Wales for a time (where he met St. David), and then returned to Strathclyde. King Rhederch recognized Kentigern's holiness, and Jocelyn claimed the king submitted himself and his descendants to the see established by Kentigern. The saint remained near Glasgow where he continued his missionary efforts and performed many miracles. He reportedly returned a ring to a queen whose husband had thrown it away. He also produced cheese from jars of milk. Jocelyn writes of a meeting between Columba and Kentigern; the famous Irish saint apparently had wished to meet and share personal concerns with Glasgow's famous holy man. A number of places in Scotland, and a few in England, were associated with the saint. Kentigern's relics reside in Glasgow Cathedral. His feast day is January 13.

—James B. Tschen Emmons

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Colum Cille; Mission

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Kevin of Glendalough (Coemgen)

(d. c. 618 C.E.)

Christian abbot

Kevin, who died in about 618, is one of a number of semilegendary saints of the earliest period of Irish Christianity. Like a number of his holy contemporaries, Kevin was reputed to be of royal blood. And like Brendan, Ciarán, and most of the others, his conversion to a spiritual life involved turning from the benefits and obligations of his clan and tribe to seek the rigors of an isolated life in nature. Very much in emulation of the desert saints of the Middle East, he retired to a cell. Tradition locates it beside the upper of the two lakes of Glendalough in County Wicklow; there he prac-

ticed physical exercises—*ascesis*—in order to concentrate his mind. Although these practices often involved pain, the real purpose was to build endurance so that the solitary might wholly contemplate the transcendent. That this contemplation was meant to conform to nature rather than oppose it can be seen in two stories from the life of Kevin.

In one, the saint, praying in his narrow cell with his arms outstretched, extended one hand out the window. A female blackbird landed on his hand and began to build her nest. Rather than disturb her, Kevin continued praying while the bird completed the nest, laid and hatched her eggs, and, when the young were old enough, flew off with them. No matter its credibility, the story affirms that spiritual and natural rhythms can and should conform to each other. In the second, Kevin was in his hermitage when he was approached by an angel, who indicated that a pleased God had promised Kevin a vast monastery and great city in the valley below. Furthermore, no one buried in the monastic cemetery would know the pains of hell. The four mountains surrounding the valley would be leveled to accommodate all these wonders. But Kevin refused, calling the animals of the mountains his housemates, and not wanting to move them on his account.

As Kevin's fame grew, many arrived to emulate him; so Kevin became abbot to a monastery built between the two lakes. Like Antony of the Desert (fl. 300–340), though, he remained a hermit, only occasionally visiting his monks. This may have been the general custom among Irish monasteries of the early period. Ruins survive in Glendalough, and indeed one should be thankful to Kevin, as the site is one of the most beautiful in Ireland. His feast day is June 3.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ascetics as Holy People; Brendan the Navigator; Christianity and Holy People; Ciarán of Clonmacnoise; Desert Saints; Hermits; Nature

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Kharraqani, Abu al-Hasan 'Ali al-

(d. 1034 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Abu al-Hasan 'Ali al-Kharraqani was an early sufi who came from humble peasant origins and whose views on the mystical tradition in Islam have been frequently quoted over the



Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Kharaqani, a leading early sufi. (Art Directors)

centuries since his death in 1034. He stated, “A true sufi is he who is not.” This seeming paradox has been the focus of considerable commentary. It illustrates the concern that a designated identity may indeed be the result of empty pretensions, whereas the mystical state does not require defined parameters or terms.

Kharaqani’s influence has been far-reaching. Many prominent sufis were his disciples. These, in turn, influenced subsequent spiritual teachers. Abu Isma’il Abdallah al-Ansari (1006–1089) is regarded as one of his primary disciples. The prominent sufi community of the Naqshbandi that takes its name from Baha’uddin Naqshband (d. 1390) traces its devotional and sacred heritage to Yusuf Hamadani (1048–1140), who in turn acknowledges a spiritual affiliation with Kharaqani and Abu Yazid Bistami (d. c. 875). Kharaqani does not seem to have traveled much; instead, people came to visit him on account of his piety.

For this spiritual master, the weeping and humble devotee was a paragon of the spiritual path. He stated, “God is fond of His servant’s crying.” He experienced intense love for God, and his yearning for the Beloved was proverbial in sufi

lore. He declared to God that he would be considered to be included among the martyrs and be resurrected as such, asserting, “I have been killed by the sword of longing for Thee.” Though he has been very popular, he was not a scholar but a zealous servant of God. He has been described as an “illiterate peasant”; his pronunciation of Arabic was faulty at a time when it was used as a primary language for scholarly discourse. According to tradition, he was initiated into the mystical path not by a living guide but rather by the spirit of Bistami, a long-dead spiritual master. Thus the experience of the spiritual path, not textual explication, was important for Kharaqani. He felt that a follower of the prophet should be designated by deeds, not by idle talk or endless literary explications. For Kharaqani, “The heir of the Prophet is he who follows the Prophet with his actions, not he who blackens the face of paper.” The verb he used refers to an action that causes embarrassment or shame. Thus he was emphasizing the futility and even shamefulness of writing useless texts.

Some apocryphal stories present Kharaqani as having a negative view of women. In the sixth volume of his *Mathnawi*, for example, Mevlanna Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273) presents a story about Kharaqani’s spiritual prowess that exemplifies this. A disciple once arrived at Kharaqani’s house when he was not in. His wife met him and related nasty tales about her “lazy” husband. The saddened disciple went to the forest, where he found that the master was mounted on a lion, riding it with a snake as a whip. His mastery of the animals was his cosmic reward, a sign of divine approval for tolerating an unpleasant wife.

Kharaqani’s tomb is in the village of Kal’a-yi Nav, northeast of Bistam in the vicinity of the city of Shahroud, east of Tehran. It is frequently visited by the devout. The teachings and statements of Kharaqani that were collected by one of his disciples is entitled *Kitab Nur al-ulum*, of which only an abstracted version is known. This text is at the British Museum.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Ansari, Abu Isma’il Abdallah al-; Baha’uddin Naqshband; Bistami, Abu Yazid; Islam and Holy People; Nature; Sufism

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Khayyam, Omar

(c. 1048–1122 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, scholar

Recognized by some as a sufi master and by others as an agnostic hedonist, Omar Khayyam, known for his quatrains (*Ruba’iyyat*), was a Persian gnostic philosopher, poet, and



Modern artist's impression of Omar Khayyam, sufi and mystic.
(Art Directors)

mathematician. Abu'l Fath Omar ibn Ibrahim Khayyam was born in the district of Shadyakh of the old city of Nayshabur in the province of Khorasan in eastern Iran in about 1048. The title Khayyam, which means "tent maker," in all likelihood was inherited from his father, Ibrahim, a poor, illiterate tent maker who realized the genius of his young son early on. He asked Imam Qadi Muhammad to teach the young Omar qur'anic sciences, Arabic grammar, literature, and other introductory religious sciences.

Khayyam continued his studies with Khawjeh Abu'l-Hasan al-Anbari, with whom he studied branches of mathematics, astronomy, and traditional cosmological doctrines. Khayyam pursued his advanced studies with Imam Muwaffaq Nayshaburi, concentrating on qur'anic sciences and jurisprudence, and finally he immersed himself in philosophy under the direction of Shaykh Muhammad Mansur, who taught Khayyam the writings of Avicenna, particularly the *Kitab al-isharet wa at-tanbihat* (Directives and treatments). It is also possible that he studied with Bahmanyar, the fa-

mous pupil of Avicenna. Khayyam's passionate public defense of Avicenna and the latter's six philosophical treatises clearly indicates that he was an avid supporter of Avicennian philosophy.

Khayyam soon established himself as a one-man university who was given honorary titles such as Hujat al-Haq (The evidence of truth), Ghiyath al-Din (The patron of faith) and Imam, all indicative of the respect he had in the community and his position as a religious authority. He wrote very little, but what he did write was of great significance. He accepted few students but was scrupulous in his teaching. Even though Nayshabur was one of the greatest centers of learning at the time, Khayyam did not participate much in the scholarly debates and circles. It is said that he may have been shy and sensitive, an impatient man with little interest in sharing his knowledge with others. Some have attributed his lack of interest in teaching to a desire not to be intellectually conspicuous.

Despite his withdrawn and somewhat monastic existence, Khayyam associated with a number of well-known scholars, the most famous of whom were the poet Abu al-Majd Majdud Sana'i, the great theologian Zamakhshari, Maymun ibn Najib, Imam Muzaffar Isfizari (with whom he collaborated to produce the *jalali* calendar, which is still the official calendar of Iran), and finally the most famous of them all, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, with whom he had a difficult relationship.

Khayyam's contemporaries accused him of heretical tendencies, and others privately questioned his faith. Khayyam performed his pilgrimage to Mecca as a way of demonstrating his faith and exonerating himself of such allegations.

Khayyam wrote on sciences and philosophy and expressed many of his views through poetry. A number of his quatrains have been subject to controversy. Because his *Ruba'iyat* presents a cynical view of life and human existence, he was accused by some of being an agnostic hedonist; others interpreted the quatrains as the esoteric utterances of a sufi master. His *Ruba'iyat* became renowned in the West when Edward FitzGerald, an English poet, translated them in the 1850s.

To date, fourteen treatises are attributed to Omar Khayyam. The English translations of the titles are: *On the Proposition That Says Genera Are of Four Types*; *Treatise on the Elaboration of the Problems Concerning the Books of Euclid*; *Treatise on Dividing the Quarter of a Circle*; *Treatise on Proofs for Problems Concerning Algebra*; *Treatise on the Deception of Knowing the Two Quantities of Gold and Silver in a Compound Made of the Two*; *Treatise of Avicenna's Lucid Discourse*; *Treatise on Being and Necessity*; *The Necessity of Contradiction in the World and Determinism and Subsistence*; *Treatise on the Brightening of the Intellect on the Subject of Universal Knowledge*; *Treatise on the Knowledge of the Universals of Existence*;

Treatise on Existence; Treatise to Respond to Three Problems; Treatise on Discovering the Truth of Noruz; Quatrains and Other Poems.

—Mehdi Aminrazavi

See also: Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism

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Khedrup Jey (Tibetan: mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang)

(1385–1419 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar

Khedrup Jey, one of the most important scholar-saints in the history of the Tibetan Buddhist scholastic tradition, is considered the third patriarch of the Gelukpa (Tib.: dge lugs pa), or Gandanpa (dga' ldan pa), school that was founded by Tsong kha pa (tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa (1357–1419).

"Khedrup Jey" is actually a title more than a proper name and literally means "the honorable virtuoso scholar and spiritual adept." This epithet evinces his achievement not only in scholarly pursuits (*mkhas pa*) but in spiritual realization (*grub pa*) as well. The Tibetan tradition believes Khedrup Jey, who was born in 1385, to have been the incarnation of Devendrabuddhi, who had been a disciple of the great Indian logician Dharmakirti (c. 600–c. 680), as well as of many other previous Buddhist saints, including the Indian scholar Bhavaviveka (c. 500–c. 570) and the Tibetan savant Sakya Pandita (1182–1251), among others.

Renowned for his great skill in dialectics, Khedrup Jey was a charismatic teacher who wrote eleven volumes containing many excellent commentaries on sutra and tantric lineages. He played an important role in the education of the first dalai lama. He is often depicted in Tibetan works of art in what is known as the Jey Yab Sey Sum (rje yab sras gsum) or "The Trio of the Precious Master and (his two chief) Disciples" in debate posture, with prayer beads brandished at an imaginary opponent. Khedrup Jey was the successor to Tsong kha pa's throne at the Ganden monastery. He was quite close to Tsong kha pa and had five visions of this venerable master (*rje gzigs pa lnga ldan*).

Before Khedrup Jey passed away in 1419 when he was fifty-four years old, he had a vision of Tsong kha pa and requested to enter final nirvana (*parinirvana*). Tsong kha pa is

said to have consented. Khedrup Jey then had a vision of the six-armed wrathful emanation of compassion Mahakala, who requested that he remain for the benefit of beings, but Khedrup Jey passed away into the "land of the *dakinis* [female buddhas]."

—James B. Apple

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gendun drubpa; Reincarnation; Sakya Pandita; Scholars as Holy People; Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa

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Khidr

Muslim legendary holy figure

Few characters in popular Islamic religious lore are as enigmatic as Khidr. The name means "Green One," suggesting that this character originated as a generic mythic or folkloric fertility figure. Some scholars connect Khidr with the Gilgamesh epic's sage Utnapishtim, who had survived the Flood. Gilgamesh searches for Utnapishtim in hopes that the sage will guide him to a plant that will provide him with the secret of immortality. Islamic lore attributes to Khidr arcane knowledge of the whereabouts of the fountain of life. Some accounts of his discovery of the fountain pair him with Ilyas (Elijah), since Elijah is another of the few who (along with Jesus and Idris) have attained immortality. Even as Jews often leave a chair and a glass for Elijah on ritual occasions, some Muslims greet the unseen Khidr because they know he is there somewhere.

Khidr's mysteriousness is deepened by the fact that he is one of only three significant figures not specifically identified in the Qur'an to whom later tradition has attached names. The others are Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.), associated with the qur'anic Dhu 'l-Qarnayn—"The One with Two Horns"—and Joshua (c. thirteenth century B.C.E.), who is said to be the anonymous servant of Moses in the qur'anic story now connected with Khidr.

An intriguing narrative in Qur'an 18:61–83 tells how Musa (Moses) and his servant (Joshua) head off in search of the confluence of the two seas (which some interpreters take as a symbol of the juncture between the seen and unseen worlds). The two have brought along a fish to eat, but when Moses looks away momentarily, the fish comes to life and swims away. This they take as a sign that they must retrace

their steps, for they have apparently gone too far unawares. Turning back, they meet the figure whom God describes as “one to whom we gave mercy from ourselves and to whom we taught a knowledge from our presence” (Qur’an 18:64). Recognizing this person as a guide, Moses asks to follow him. The guide hesitates, insisting that Moses will be too impatient with the guide’s actions. Moses promises to hold his peace on pain of being left to journey on alone.

As they proceed, Khidr performs three actions that Moses deems morally untenable: He scuttles a ship, murders a boy, and rebuilds a wall for people of questionable character. At each juncture, Moses criticizes Khidr’s actions. Finally, Khidr has had enough; he agrees to explain himself, but then Moses is on his own. He sank the ship because he knew an evil king was planning to do great harm with it; he killed the youth to prevent his parents from having to grieve his inevitable rebelliousness; and he rebuilt the wall so that the owner’s orphaned children would eventually be able to inherit the treasure their father had buried beneath it for them. Exegetes often explain the story by associating Moses with outward knowledge and Khidr with the inward, esoteric knowledge that comes uniquely from the divine presence. Some argue that Khidr must have been a prophet, for Moses would surely not have followed a figure of lesser stature than himself. Special knowledge is without a doubt Khidr’s decisive attribute. It is on this account that he assumes a life of his own beyond his scriptural relationship with Moses. Since he represents esoteric, mystical knowledge, Khidr is of great importance in the history of sufism.

Sufi exegetes and poets transform Khidr into the master of the mystery to which all seekers must surrender themselves in their quest for guidance on the Path. Spiritual aspirants must be willing to endure his apparently draconian authority in view of higher meanings. For sufis, Khidr functions as the spirit-shaykh who appears in dreams and visions to invest seekers with the patched garment of spiritual poverty that is the mark of all duly initiated. He is the symbol of the spiritual “sap”—the water of life—that greens all things in its upward movement through creation. As one who reads hearts and sees with the very eyes of God, Khidr is the epitome of the spiritual guide. Serious seekers must be willing to set out on the very ship (the body) that Khidr scuttled, as a token of authentic spiritual poverty.

—Jack Renard

See also: Guidance; Islam and Holy People; Moses; Sufism

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Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi

(1902–1989 C.E.)

Shi’i Muslim jurist, mystic, revolutionary leader

Imam Khomeini, as he came to be called, is best known for his revolutionary leadership of the Islamic Republic in Iran. The formal qualifications for this lay in his position as a leading *faqih*, an expert in Islamic jurisprudence. He was also a practitioner of *irfan*, a form of philosophical mysticism (drawing on Ibn al-‘Arabi [1165–1240] and others) known in Iran that involves an ascetic lifestyle and that is thought to impart considerable inner certainty and moral courage. Furthermore, he both used and was seen to exemplify the key “myths” of Shi’ism, such as that of Imam Husayn b. ‘Ali (626–680), martyred at Karbala by the tyrant Yazid, and the return of the hidden twelfth imam. There was also a populist element in his ideology and a common touch to his manner, and he had a facility with the classical Persian poetry beloved by Iranians.

Khomeini was born on September 24, 1902, to a clerical family in Khomein, a village in central Iran, and studied under Abd al-Karim Ha’iri Yazdi, who reestablished the center of learning at Qum in the early 1920s. By the 1930s, he had his own circle of students and was giving very popular lectures in ethics as well as private lessons in *irfan*. In about 1944, he began to lecture in *fiqh* (jurisprudence).

Khomeini published a book criticizing secularist tendencies, governmental and otherwise, in 1943, but it was in 1963, during bloodily suppressed demonstrations in Qum against the shah of Iran’s policies, that he came to the fore politically. He was arrested and later exiled, settling finally in Najaf, one of the Shi’i holy cities in Iraq. About the same time, he became recognized as one of several grand ayatollahs, the highest interpreters of Shi’i *fiqh*. From Najaf he continued to criticize the shah and was in contact with nonclerical activists, adopting some of their language and ideas. In a series of lectures in 1970, later published under the title *Vilayat-i Faqih* (Governance of the jurist), he attacked secularism as a ploy of Western imperialism, called for government by Islamic law, and articulated two novel propositions, that monarchy in principle is un-Islamic, and that *faqih*s should govern. There was a populist aspect, also, since it was the people who were to demand Islamic government.

As the shah eliminated or co-opted his secular opposition, Khomeini’s significance increased. When the revolutionary movement began in January 1978, Khomeini provided leadership and symbolic focus for the disparate oppositional groups. He was variously compared to Husayn b. ‘Ali, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, Moses, Abraham, and the prophet

Muhammad. Meanwhile, he and others compared the shah to the evil caliph Yazid and the demonstrators to Husayn. Many even thought Khomeini might be the twelfth imam, though the more acceptable view was that he was preparing the way for the imam. Khomeini returned to a massive reception on February 1, 1979, and soon formed a government. Later in the year, plebiscites established the Islamic Republic and its constitution, institutionalizing his doctrine of *vilayat-i faqih*. The ruling group that emerged out of the power struggles from 1979 to 1983 was dominated by clergy, many of them Khomeini's students. This group was highly factionalized, but Khomeini was able to remain above the factions and arbitrate among them.

In spite of the many problems faced by the government, Khomeini remained popular in Iran and beyond. Events such as his condemnation of novelist Salman Rushdie in 1989 gained him notoriety in the West but support from many Muslims. In his last months, he approved constitutional changes that helped ensure a relatively smooth transition of power. He died on June 3, 1989, and his funeral was marked by a vast outpouring of emotion. He continues to attract popular devotion, and Iranian politicians continue to appeal to his heritage. His mausoleum dominates the martyrs' cemetery in Tehran.

—William Shepard

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Extremists as Holy People; Husayn b. 'Ali; Islam and Holy People; Mahdi, al-; Messiahs; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Tolerance and Intolerance; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Khusrau, Amir

(1254–1325 C.E.)

Muslim poet, composer

Amir Khusrau, born in 1254, is considered one of India's most celebrated Muslim court poets; he was also versatile, witty, and a musical composer. Although he was not officially affiliated with any one sufi order, his closest colleagues were two prominent Chishti sufi masters of his time, Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya (1239–1325) and Hasan Sijzi Dihlawi (d. 1328). Amir Khusrau is remembered by his epic poems, historical poetic novels, and theories on finding truth in the midst of a chaotic world.

As sufiism became a massive movement in India during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Amir Khusrau's poetry was obviously influenced by a great many sufi practices and beliefs. Like many of his colleagues, he wrote devotional poetry dedicated to the prophet Muhammad, or *na'atiyya*, which is still sung in musical sufi concerts. Listeners are easily taken to a state of near ecstasy at these events. In this genre of poetry, Amir Khusrau illuminates how everything revolves around the light of Muhammad. For example, in his famous poem "I Do Not Know Where I Have Gone," he writes:

I do not know which place it was,
The nightly place in which I was
Muhammad was the candle there—
The nightly place in which I was.

—Qamar-ul Huda

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad; Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja; Sufism

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Kidongoi

Maasai cultural hero

Kidongoi is believed by Maasai in East Africa to be a direct descendant of their divinity Eng'ai and the first *oloiboni* (prophet-diviner; pl. *iloibonok*). Although there are different versions of Maasai myths, the common elements are that Kidongoi was discovered by Maasai on or near a mountain (mountains, because of their proximity to the sky, also called *eng'ai* in Maa, where Eng'ai resides, are believed to be holy sites and perhaps even the occasional home of Eng'ai); he revealed his special gifts (which ranged from prophecy to the ability to find water in a parched area, shake stones in a calabash, start a fire in a rainstorm, and other miracles); and Maasai then adopted him into their family.

Kidongoi became the apical ancestor of the Inkidong'i subclan, the subclan of the iloibonok. Some myths describe him as part wild animal and part human, which both marks his unique powers and underlines the liminal status of iloibonok in Maasai society. The name Kidongoi (and thus Inkidong'i) is derived from the Maa word *ol kidongo* (tail) and/or *enkidong* (the gourd or horn filled with stones that the iloibonok use for divination).

—Dorothy L. Hodgson

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Heroes; Iloibonok; Nature; Prophets

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Kikusha-ni (Tagami Michi, Ichijian)

(1753–1826 C.E.)

Buddhist nun, aesthete

A Japanese Buddhist nun of Jōdo Shinshū sect, Kikusha-ni was known in her lifetime for poetry, painting, music, and tea ceremony. Born in 1753, until age sixteen she was the only child of Tagami Yoshinaga and Tane, a samurai family of Chōfu in Nagato (Yamaguchi prefecture). When a brother was born she married into the Murata family. After eight years, her husband died; childless, she returned to her parents' home. She set out on a life of travel at age twenty-seven. At her first stop, Seikōji temple in Hagi, she became a nun of the Pure Land sect founded by Nichiren (1222–1282). Her first artistic discipline was *haikai* (the forerunner of haiku and the type of communal linked poetry practiced by Bashō). She wrote with Kobayashi Issa several times and often worked in the company of Buddhist priests. Her work exemplifies the interpenetration of art and spiritual life.

Kikusha-ni also wrote *waka* (classical tanka) and *kanshi* (Chinese poetry by Japanese), and thus she mastered the three major forms of Japanese poetry of her day. She also excelled in calligraphy, painting, the Chinese zither, or *qin* (ch'in), and *chanoyu* (tea ceremony). Stopping at times for extended periods in Edo (Tokyo), Kyoto, Mino (home of her haikai master), or at home in Chōfu, she spent most of her life traveling in Honshu and Kyushu.

Kikusha-ni's poems reveal her spiritual mind. For example, during a journey in northern Honshu, she wrote the following *hokku* while literally lost in the mountains:

amid mountains . . .
only falling-leaf sounds
on a straw hat
(Kawada 1937, 24)

This example resembles the mendicant monk Santōka's verses from the early twentieth century. Reading *Taorigiku* (Hand-picked chrysanthemums), her autobiographical poetry journal published in 1813, one often finds reference to

the moon. The image may seem relatively secular, as in this well-known verse:

the moon and I
alone are left here
cooling on the bridge
(Higginson 1996, 71)

However, she also wrote moon-verses deeply imbued with religious meaning, such as the following *hokku*, which began as a haikai written with others on the death anniversary of Daruma (Bodhidharma, the first Chan/Zen patriarch, fifth century):

To meet and gaze
in the same well of clouds
at one moon
(ibid., 70)

"Well of clouds" indicates the world of illusion; the moon represents enlightenment.

—William J. Higginson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People

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Kilian of Würzburg (Killena, Cillíne)

(d. 689 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary, martyr, apostle of Franconia

Kilian was one of the many Irish monks who left their homeland and kin to become "pilgrims of Christ," preaching the gospel throughout the European continent. Kilian's mission in the seventh century eventually led him to Franconia and Thuringia; there his activities centered around the castle of Würzburg and his alliance with Duke Gozbert.

Kilian's greatest accomplishment was the conversion of Gozbert. But the two men soon fell into dispute with Gozbert's wife, Geila, since Christian rules about consanguinity made their marriage invalid. Geila, fearing repudiation, hired a killer, who murdered Kilian and his two fellow missionaries in 689. According to tradition, the murderer and Geila herself met swift divine retribution. Both were driven insane before meeting most painful deaths. Spectacular miracles later allegedly occurred at the site where the killer had secreted the bodies, books, vestments, and liturgical vessels of Kilian and his companions.

A delay of more than 200 years between Kilian's death and his first extant biography obscures further details about his career. The evidence is further complicated by subsequent rewritings of Kilian's biography to fit divergent notions of sanctity in the Germanic lands (where Kilian preached) and the Irish church (which formed his lifestyle and mission). Continental legends stress the building of ecclesiastical institutions. They relate, for example, how Kilian undertook his mission only after he traveled to Rome in 686 to obtain permission from Pope Conon and to receive consecration as bishop of Würzburg. Irish legends, by contrast, focus on Kilian's personal holiness and his inspired preaching.

Burchard, a later bishop of Würzburg, encouraged veneration of Kilian, translating his relics first to the church of Our Lady in 743 and then to the cathedral of Our Savior in 752. The vitality of Kilian's cult later in the Middle Ages inspired the construction of a new cathedral at the place of his murder. Today Kilian is the patron saint of the city of Würzburg, where his feast day is lavishly celebrated on July 8 as a civic holiday and where scholarship on the tangled body of evidence about Kilian's life and career is fostered.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Kimbangu, Simon

(1889–1951 C.E.)

Christian prophet, healer

Simon Kimbangu was born in N'Kamba, Congo Free State, in 1889 to parents of the Kongo ethnic group. He grew up a devout Protestant and aspired to be an evangelist for his church, the Baptist Missionary Society. As a young man, Kimbangu taught for some time in a mission school, where he was fond of telling the story of David slaying Goliath. In July 1915, he was baptized in a river near Ngomba-Lutete in Lower Congo.

Then under Belgian colonial rule, the Congo of Kimbangu's time was one steeped in misery. Millions of Congolese died under forced labor policies designed to enrich Europe. Because of this grave injustice, in 1908 the Congo Free State was annexed from King Leopold II by the Belgian gov-

ernment and renamed "The Belgian Congo" (1908–1960). Exacerbating the pains of colonial oppression, a sleeping sickness epidemic claimed half of the country's population, soon followed by the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918–1919, making central Africa ripe for religious revival.

During the flu epidemic, Kimbangu heard a voice that proclaimed to him: "I am Christ. My servants are unfaithful. I have chosen you to bear witness before your brethren and to convert them." For three years, he resisted this call, feeling unworthy and unprepared. Then, in April 1921, he visited a gravely ill woman in his native village of N'Kamba. Kimbangu felt called to pray for her and place his hands on her head. The woman was healed, and word soon spread of his powers as a *ngunza* (healing prophet). Kimbangu immediately began a healing ministry using the waters of the N'Kamba spring, which transformed the village into New Jerusalem for his followers. Along with his healing, possession by the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues, during the several extraordinary weeks of "the N'Kamba revelation" Kimbangu preached against the use of fetishes and added several commandments to the ten in the Bible: no smoking; no drinking; no dancing; no naked bathing or sleeping; no gambling; no fetishes; no eating pork or monkey; no resentment toward others; the confession of sins to witnesses; and the payment of taxes.

Kimbangu's rapidly blossoming movement was so threatening to the Belgians that he was soon imprisoned and sentenced to death—a sentence that was commuted to 120 lashes and life imprisonment. Thousands of his followers were exiled to other parts of the Congo Basin, which only served to spread the movement into an international multiethnic church that today counts some 5 million adherents, making it the largest African-originated church ever.

Kimbangu died in an Elizabethville (Lubumbashi) prison in 1951, and his remains were brought to rest in a mausoleum in N'Kamba. His son, Joseph Diangiende, was then pronounced the leader of the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu (l'Eglise de Jesus Christ sur la Terre par le Prophète Simon Kimbangu, EJCSK). The church was formally recognized by Belgian authorities in 1959, one year before Congolese independence. Since 1970, EJCSK has been a member of the World Council of Churches.

—*Terry Rey*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Miracles; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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King, Martin Luther, Jr.

(1929–1968 C.E.)

Christian civil rights leader

Martin Luther King, Jr., was the icon of the civil rights movement in the United States and an advocate of nonviolent direct action. His emergence signaled an end to Jim Crow society and legalized discrimination against blacks and other minorities. His oratorical and organizing skill endeared him to some and angered those who upheld the status quo. King's love for humanity and willingness to sacrifice for the good of all helped to bring sweeping changes in U.S. race relations in the twentieth century.

King was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1929. He attended good schools as a child and later graduated from Morehouse College in Atlanta. He then moved north to attend graduate school and received his doctorate of divinity from Boston University.

King is most noted for his adherence to and propagation of the philosophy of nonviolent direct action. Building on the teachings of Jesus and Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948), King believed that blacks could help solve America's race problem by disobeying unjust laws, voluntarily going to jail, and displaying love toward racists. His first opportunity to test his philosophy came in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955. After Rosa Parks's arrest for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man, blacks in Montgomery mobilized for a boycott against the bus line. The Montgomery Improvement Association was formed to coordinate the boycott, and King, as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, was thrust to the forefront. At the end of an eleven-month boycott, the bus line capitulated, and King became the national spokesman for the growing civil rights movement.

At this point, he left Montgomery and moved to Atlanta. There he organized and became president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization of ministers working together to end segregation. Having broadened his horizons through study and international travel, King returned to the United States in 1959 ready to take on segregation and racial discrimination. Ironically, his tactic of nonviolent direct action worked well only when he convinced his opponent that violence was necessary to stop the protests. This violence, if timed right, would then be captured by newspaper reporters and television cameras that quickly spread the drama throughout the country and the world. Because the Cold War had reached its height by this point, King knew that scenes like these would embarrass America in the eyes of other countries, especially those newly independent ones that had not yet chosen between communism and capitalism.

His strategy usually worked, and before long the federal government intervened to prevent further violence and damage to its image as the defender of freedom and democ-

racy. King proved especially adept at using this type of violence in the now famous Birmingham and Selma, Alabama, marches. The televised scenes of vicious dogs, water hoses, and electric cattle prods being used by police and sheriff's deputies to subdue peaceful and unarmed protesters helped to encourage federal legislation in the guise of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act outlawed discrimination in all sectors of public life and represented one of the crowning achievements of King's career. His courage and bravery in the face of danger led many people to believe that God had sent him to help the African American people. Because of his efforts and the grassroots work of people on the local level, the Voting Rights Act passed the following year.

Even after achieving these victories, King continued to hammer at the core of America's racism: economic injustice and the violence that perpetuated it. To publicize his efforts, he organized the Poor People's Campaign, a movement designed to put pressure on the White House by having the poor from throughout the country set up camp in Washington, D.C., and stay until Congress passed an economic stimulus package. King, however, did not live to see his idea come to fruition. Having joined forces with labor, black and white radicals, and anti-Vietnam War protesters, he was assassinated on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968. King's courage and boldness in speaking out against racist oppression, economic inequality, and unjust war has not yet been equaled.

—Curtis Austin

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Jesus; Politics and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Recognition; Violence and Nonviolence

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Kings

Hebrew

A king (*melek*) in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is a person who was granted leadership of a state by God. In the books of Samuel and Kings, the editor (known as the Deuteronomist) interpreted God as the causative force in history. God puts kings on the throne and removes them as he sees fit. The right to rule, in other words, was granted by God. Other books of the Bible depict specific kings as having

a special relationship with God. For instance, King David is attributed with authorship of many of the psalms (often songs of praise to God), and King Solomon's divinely granted wisdom is often described.

Kingship in the Bible is seen as both a positive and negative institution. Initially God grants the Hebrews a king based on their request to be like the other nations. He warns them (through the prophet Samuel) that kingship brings with it negative effects as well as positive ones. God's first choice is Saul, who does not follow the Lord's instructions. God then replaces him with David, whose line is granted kingship forever because of the Lord's love for him. But various sins (according to the biblical writers) led to the separation of the northern kingdom (Israel) from the southern kingdom (Judah). David's line retained leadership in the south; the north had a variety of rulers. All of the kings are evaluated in the Bible based on their piety and faithfulness to the Lord.

—Kevin McGeough

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Judge; Rulers as Holy People

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Kinjikitile Ngwale

(d. 1905 C.E.)

Tanzanian spirit medium, revolutionary leader

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Rufiji Valley of southeastern Tanganyika (now Tanzania) was conquered and incorporated into the German-African empire. More than twenty nominally independent ethnic groups with various degrees of political systems occupied the region covering some 100,000 square miles. Beginning from 1902, however, the region was forced to implement a colonial compulsory cotton production and tax scheme that diverted people away from food farms. By 1904, farmers began to experience hardships as they were not getting enough income from cotton, and taxation imposed more hardships. These difficulties degenerated into anti-European tension as well as an era of religious revivalism called the Maji-Maji movement led by Kinjikitile Ngwale.

Kinjikitile lived at Ngarambe in southwestern Matumbi. He was virtually unknown until 1904, when, after an absence of several days, he reappeared, claiming to have been possessed with Hongo—a spirit medium through whom Bokero (chief deity at Kibesa) communicated with his adherents. Kinjikitile convinced his followers that he had been



David tells Solomon his Plans for Building temple. Painting from Henry Collier's Story Bible. (Art Directors)

instructed by the ancestors to unite the ethnic groups and lead an anti-European revolt. His movement combined local beliefs in divinity, spirit possession, and medicine and merged them into a new idea that encouraged territorial leadership, interethnic unity, and divine protection. These ideas, which earned him wide acceptance in the region, helped galvanize the anticolonial Maji-Maji rebellion of 1905–1907 in Tanganyika. Kinjikitile gave his followers *maji* (water or war medicine) that was supposed to render them invulnerable to bullets from their German oppressors. He also anointed local leaders with the water and encouraged them to spread his message to every community in the region.

Southeastern Tanzania had historically been subjected to fluctuations in the fortune of the Rufiji River. For instance, high waters could result in flooding and social disruption, and inadequate water affected crop and fish production. Thus with the socioeconomic tensions that were associated with German rule, there was widespread belief that crops would flourish and that plantations would be spared from the ravages of wild pigs and other animals if sprinkled with the *maji*. Even people outside the cotton and Bokero cult region hoped that the water would protect them against witch-

craft attacks and sickness and provide commercial success. The multipurpose utility of the maji enabled Kinjikitile's followers to use it to address problems as they arose, hence a large region was primed to rebel.

Kinjikitile's tactic, which not only recognized the importance of the river but also incorporated war efforts, impacted on adherents of indigenous religion as well as Muslims and Christians. Pilgrims flooded to Ngarambe to collect maji to the point that it became a commodity sold for money and textiles. Because of the diffused state structure in the area, however, Kinjikitile's grip over his followers was weak. Therefore, rather than waiting for him to declare the commencement of the revolt, the people looked to local rulers and priests, who acted as Kinjikitile's deputies and representatives. As the instigator of the revolt, Kinjikitile was arrested very early in the rebellion and hanged on August 4, 1905. Despite this, his message spread, and the revolt continued over the next two years, resulting in the massacre of about 250,000 people.

—*Olatunji Ojo*

See also: Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Kirill

See **Cyril of Beloozero**

Kitamura Sayo

(1900–1967 C.E.)

Japanese religion founder

Founder of the new Japanese religious movement called Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō (Religion of the shrine of the sun goddess), Kitamura Sayo is venerated by her followers as the incarnation of the Shinto deity Tenshō Kōtai Jingū.

Kitamura Sayo was born in 1900 in the town of Yanai in Yamaguchi prefecture. At the age of twenty-one, she was married to a farmer in the village of Tabuse, where she had to endure various hardships. Consequently, she turned to religious and ascetic practices until, in 1944, she finally experienced a sudden possession (*kamigakari*) by the absolute god of the universe, who later revealed itself as the deity Ten-

shō Kōtai Jingū. Tenshō Kōtai Jingū is thought to be identical to the main deity of Shinto, the sun goddess Amaterasu Ōmikami. In the following year, Kitamura Sayo claimed to be chosen by this deity, who took its shrine in her to save the world by promoting world peace and establishing the realm of god on earth.

Thereafter, Kitamura Sayo engaged in proselytizing activities and in preaching the teachings of Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō, which combine mainly elements of Buddhism and Shinto in a syncretistic manner, centering around the notion that this world, which is thought to be in a poor condition as a result of the egoism of humankind, should be transformed into a land of God in which peace prevails and people are able to live as the children of God. It was out of this thinking that Kitamura Sayo developed a highly critical stance against the rulers of Japan, including the *tenno* (emperor), and against the Shin sect of Pure Land Buddhism, which she criticized openly. She is credited by her followers with various miracles and cases of faith healing. She is also referred to as the dancing goddess (*odoru kamisama*) because she propagated ecstatic dance as a means of religious practice. Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō is commonly known as the dancing religion (*odoru shūkyō*).

After Kitamura Sayo's death ("ascension" in the view of her followers) in 1967, her granddaughter Kiyokazu (born 1950) succeeded her as the religious leader of Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō. The life and teachings of Kitamura Sayo are recorded in the *Seisho* (Book of life), which constitutes the canonical scripture of Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō. Kitamura Sayo is venerated as a living god (*ikigami*) and referred to as a great goddess (*ōgamisama*) by a large discipleship, presently including more than 465,000 followers all over Japan. She also has followers in many other countries.

—*Tobias Bauer*

See also: Gods on Earth; Prophets; Ritual; Shinto and Holy People

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Kivebulaya, Apolo

(c. 1864–1933 C.E.)

Anglican missionary, apostle to Pygmies

Apolo Kivebulaya was a Ugandan missionary to Boga, a territory across the Ruwenzori Mountains that was first considered to be part of Uganda but in 1915 was transferred to the Belgian Congo. His dedication, holiness, suffering, and

poverty made him a saint. Born in 1864, he started his life as a Muslim. He became a soldier and a hemp addict and was strongly opposed to Christianity as a young man, but he converted to the Christian faith after reading the Gospel of Matthew under the direction of Anglican missionaries. Like many of the early converts in Uganda, after his baptism he became a church teacher and evangelist.

In 1896, Kivebulaya started his missionary work in Boga, across the Ruwenzori ("Mountains of the Moon"), equipped with only his Bible and his hoe. His message was well received by some, but the king forbade his subjects to give him food. When he was beaten and left for dead, a local woman found him and secretly nursed him back to life. Falsely accused of being involved in the accidental death of the king's sister in 1898, he was sent to Uganda to be tried. While in prison, he had a vision of Christ, who encouraged him to continue his work. With much delay, his innocence was finally proven, and King Tabaro welcomed him back and even became a Christian. Kivebulaya and the king became close friends.

Kivebulaya was ordained a priest in 1903, and after 1915 he settled for good in Boga to strengthen the church there and to reach out to the people of the forest. In 1932, the first Bambuti Pygmies were baptized and Kivebulaya became known as the "apostle to the Pygmies." He died on January 30, 1933.

Kivebulaya is a highly respected figure in the region in which he worked. His dying message was the commission to take the gospel further to those forest people who had not yet been reached. Today Boga has its own bishop and is one of the six dioceses of the Anglican province of Congo. In 1977, the postal service of Uganda honored him with a special stamp, and the worldwide Anglican communion made him a saint. January 30 is his feast day.

—Klaus Fiedler

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Mission

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Klongchen rab-'byam-pa

See Longchenpa

kLu-yi sDe

See Nagasena

Kōbō Daishi

See Kukai

Kodōjin (Fukuda Toshiyasu, Seishō, Haritsu)

(1865–1944 C.E.)

Daoist aesthete

A Japanese literati painter and poet, Kodōjin balanced modern life and the ideals of Chinese Daoism. Born in Shingū, Wakayama prefecture, in 1865, he was the second son of Nakamura Jun'ichi. Adopted by a childless family, he grew up as Fukuda Toshiyasu. He apparently composed his first haiku at age four, but Chinese poetry dominated his youth. At fifteen, he left home for Osaka, then Kyoto, where he studied *kanshi* (Chinese poetry written by Japanese) and painting. After a few years of study alone back in Shingū, in the early 1890s he went to Tokyo. There, as a disciple of Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), the reformer of haiku and tanka, he received his haiku pen name, Haritsu (Bundled Chestnuts). He was also known as Kodōjin (Old Daoist) in literati painting and tanka, and Seishō (Quiet Place) in kanshi. After marrying Yoshiyama Misu, the daughter of a scholar, in 1899, in 1901 he moved to Kyoto, where he lived until his death in 1944. The couple had four children.

Kodōjin lived reclusively and often refused to sell his paintings and calligraphy, which were much prized by those who knew his work. He preferred to make his slim living as a teacher of Chinese poetry and, occasionally, haiku. He spent most of his time studying Chinese classics. Among his friends were prominent haiku poets, painters, classical scholars, and Buddhist monks. To some he seemed a latter-day Han Shan or Shi De (or Shih-te, both fl. 640), and his kanshi often allude to Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu, c. 369–286) and Tao Qian (or T'ao Ch'ien, 365–427), the prototypical Daoist poet. Kodōjin was known for his voluntary poverty and the Daoist ideals that governed his life. During World War II, he became weak and malnourished but continued to donate to charity and refused to patronize the rampant black market.

Although some haiku from Kodōjin's forties employ radically free form and images of modern life, his kanshi frequently read like classic Chinese poetry in the Daoist or Chan Buddhist tradition. In one kanshi, he summarizes his own way thus (translation by Jonathan Chavez):

Intoxication, sobriety—both suit me fine!

—Truth's flavor savored, serene, forgetting words.

(Addis et al. 2000, 137)

—William J. Higginson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Daoism and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty; Zhuangzi

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Kōgaku Sōen*See Shaku Sōen***Kolbe, Maximilian***(1894–1941 C.E.)**Roman Catholic priest, martyr*

The Kolbes were a family of weavers and third-order Franciscans who cultivated ardent piety and patriotism under Russian rule. Under the influence of the Franciscan mission in the parish of Pabianice, three of the Kolbe children entered the seminary of the Conventual Franciscans in Lviv around the turn of the twentieth century. One of these was Raymond Kolbe, born in 1894, who entered the seminary in 1907 along with his brother Francis. Raymond took the name Maximilian on September 4, 1910, as he became a Franciscan novice. The other brother, Joseph, entered the seminary that same year. In 1911, Maximilian professed his first vows. He was soon sent to Rome to study philosophy at the Gregorian University (1912–1915) and theology at the Collegio Serafico, obtaining doctorates in both. In the meantime, as Maximilian Maria, he professed his solemn vows in 1914; he was ordained a priest on April 28, 1918.

Still as a deacon, Maximilian founded a Marian movement called Militia Immaculatae (Militia of the Immaculate One)—a spiritual and educational movement dedicated to apostolic work. In Poland, the Militia opened its own printing press, which circulated periodicals, daily newspapers, and numerous catechetical and devotional writings to more than 1 million people. In the fall of 1927, Father Kolbe obtained land just west of Warsaw from Prince Jan Drucki-Lubecki and there established an evangelization center and soon the largest Catholic religious house of the time (762 members in 1939), which he called Niepokalanow, the “City of the Immaculata.” Mindful of his apostolic mission, he envisioned Marian centers in every country and set out to Asia, where he founded friaries, seminaries, and printing houses in Japan and India. The bold initiative of a worldwide movement, however, was thwarted by lack of funds.

On the eve of the Nazi threat, after Father Maximilian was recalled to Poland in June 1936 to supervise the original Niepokalanow, the center intensified its didactic and apostolic activity within Poland. With the German invasion of September 1939, the friary was dissolved, and its members heeded the call of the Polish authorities to serve the Polish Red Cross. In the same month, the Nazis arrested Father Kolbe along with thirty-seven other brothers who remained in Niepokalanow. After the friars were released in December 1939, they resumed their charitable work. The friary sheltered more than 3,000 displaced Poles during the war until it was closed down in February 1941.

Together with four companions, Maximilian was taken to the Gestapo prison in Warsaw and then transported to Auschwitz, where he was tattooed with the number 16670. While working in the camp, he ministered to other prisoners, secretly heard confessions, held mass, and delivered communion, using smuggled bread and wine. At the end of July, in retribution for an escape from Kolbe’s bunker, Commandant Karl Fritsch sentenced ten prisoners to death by starvation. Father Kolbe offered to die for one of the condemned and was placed together with the other prisoners in starvation chamber number eighteen. After two weeks, four men were still alive, among them Maximilian. They were killed with injections of carbolic acid on August 14, 1941, their bodies cremated the following day. On October 17, 1971, Maximilian was beatified by Pope Paul VI, and on October 10, 1982, he was canonized by Pope John Paul II, who proclaimed him a “martyr of charity.”

—Ewa Słojka

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Kongzi*See Confucius***Krishna***Hindu god, hero, avatar*

Krishna is a multifaceted figure in Indian mythology. Nowadays, he is—along with Rama—one of the most worshipped deities in northern India. He is mainly known from the great Sanskrit epic *Mahabharata* (dating in its present form from about the fourth century), which tells the story of the eighteen days of war between two clans of a royal family, the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Several times, Krishna plays decisive roles in this story, influencing the heroes on both sides of the warring parties, more often than not spinning cunning intrigues that serve to increase the enmity and hatred between the parties rather than to pacify them. In fact, in most of these episodes, Krishna appears to be a human hero and not yet deified.

One episode tells, for instance, how Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandava brothers, performs a great sacrifice to which all allied kings and chieftains are invited. When at the

end of it Yudhishtira wants to give the first gift of honor to Krishna, Shishupala, the king of Cedi, protests—and in the resulting quarrel is killed by Krishna. Another episode describes the five Pandavas in exile after a fateful game of dice in which Yudhishtira loses everything to the Kaurava Duryodhana. Krishna is the first to visit them in the forest. He suggests that they fight Duryodhana and reinstall Yudhishtira in power. On later visits, again and again Krishna tries to instigate Yudhishtira to take up the fight. When war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas finally appears inevitable, both sides try to gain as many allies as possible. The Kaurava Duryodhana even attempts to win Krishna over to his camp, arriving at Krishna's place while Krishna is sleeping. Shortly after Duryodhana's arrival, Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, arrives there, too. When Krishna wakes up, he first sees Arjuna, but then realizes that Duryodhana was there first. He decides to extend his help to both the parties and gives Duryodhana a choice: He can get Krishna's advice, or he can receive help from the army of the Yadavas. Duryodhana chooses the army—hence Arjuna qualifies for Krishna's advice. This decision results in the most famous episode of the entire epic: The Bhagavad Gita is Krishna's advice to Arjuna.

The Bhagavad Gita is situated in the text at the point where the Pandava hero Arjuna descends onto the battlefield for the first time. When he sees the opposing forces and recognizes among them his own relatives and former teachers, he lets his weapons sink and becomes reluctant to go into battle because he does not want to kill his kinsmen. At that moment, his charioteer—who is none other than Krishna—steps forth and instructs Arjuna about his duty as a warrior who is engaged in a *dharmic* (morally justified) war: He must fight the war and not shy away from the action.

The teaching touches upon many topics, probably most important among them being instruction on different possible ways to God. There are three of these. Jnana yoga, the way of knowledge, is the highest and most difficult way, fit only for people who are able to comprehend highly abstract ideas and concepts. Karma yoga is the way toward God through action, but not just any way of acting can lead to God. Karma yoga requires the individual to carry out those actions that are considered one's duty while remaining entirely disinterested in these actions and their results. In other words, one should be fully detached from the action. Bhakti yoga is the way of loving devotion. This is the way most of the common people choose. Bhakti yoga demands that one feels loving devotion toward God. It is the way for more simple minds for people who have not yet developed higher intellectual faculties and gained the ability to understand highly abstract concepts. Bhakti yoga easily combines with ritualistic temple worship.

A later addition to the *Mahabharata*, the *Harivamsha*, tells the legendary biography of Krishna, now considered one of the ten incarnations of the god Vishnu. He is considered to

have grown up among herdsmen, where he performed a multitude of miraculous and heroic deeds. Later texts (also in vernacular languages) deal with episodes of this mythology. It is difficult to connect this Krishna to the Krishna known from the *Mahabharata* itself, where—but for the Bhagavad Gita episode—he does not show any divine characteristics but is as human as the human heroes surrounding him.

—Ulrike Niklas

See also: Devotion; Gods on Earth; Heroes; Hinduism and Holy People; Rama

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Krishnamurti, Jiddu

(1895–1986 C.E.)

Hindu teacher

Jiddu Krishnamurti was one of numerous Indian teachers of the twentieth century who had a considerable impact on Western audiences. The first third of his life was inextricably linked with the Theosophical Society (TS), a curious amalgam of "Eastern mysticism" and Western esoterica created by the charismatic Russian clairvoyant Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891). The mission of the TS was to weave a synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy by drawing upon an anthropology and metaphysics that assumed latent, occult powers both in the human person and in the universe. Concerning the latter, a host of "Tibetan masters" were said to channel secret wisdom through Blavatsky and other leaders of the TS, including C. W. Leadbeater. It was Leadbeater who discovered Krishnamurti on the Adyar beach in 1909, and, struck by his "aura," immediately suggested to Annie Besant, then the leader of the TS, that this radiant Telegu brahmin boy might be the coming World Teacher. Messianic teaching had been advanced by the Esoteric Section of the TS and later by a group known as the Order of the Star of the East.

The youthful Krishnamurti, who had been born in 1895, came under the care of the TS, being carefully groomed by Leadbeater, Besant, and others. In 1925, Besant formally declared Krishnamurti to be the messiah, but in 1929, Krishnamurti publicly repudiated such claims, rejecting all forms of institutional organization, hierarchy, tradition, scriptures, and even teachers as subtle and not-so-subtle escapes from the hard work of self-realization. Truth, he declared, is a pathless land, demanding personal authenticity and responsibility, which the stultifying program of "religious tradi-

tion” betrays. In this appeal to an “inner revolution,” an inward turning to subjective experience and awareness, Krishnamurti’s inspiration recalls the exhortation of the Buddha to his disciples: “Be a lamp unto yourself”; that is, test all teachings by the truth of experience. There is, Krishnamurti often admonished, no “second-hand enlightenment.”

There are further parallels in the teaching of Krishnamurti to other long-standing and even contemporary expressions of Indian thought. The most obvious is that of the Advaita Vedanta, a nondualistic school of philosophy that was systematized by the eighth-century thinker Shankara. Though Krishnamurti rejected the institutional, cultural, and linguistic matrix of all “tradition,” even Hindu traditions, his philosophy clearly has a nondualistic emphasis. Krishnamurti repeatedly drew attention to the “space” between thought, a space in which all distinctions dissolve and that issues in an experience of profound unity and freedom. Distinctions emerging from subject/object dichotomies are the cause of suffering; resolving those distinctions into that quiet space brings freedom. His nondualism, freed from the jargon of Advaita, represents a particularly modern form of classical Indian philosophy, one that shares striking parallels, in substance, if not in style, to that of Ramana Maharshi, a contemporary of Krishnamurti. Both were south Indian brahmins who were profoundly shaped by “mystical” experiences at an early age; the formative experiences in both cases implied a nondual awareness in which the limited ego is surrendered.

Ramana, however, remained at his ashram for his entire life, while Krishnamurti, elegant, urbane, and sophisticated, traveled frequently around the world giving lectures at many universities and cultural centers.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Maharshi, Ramana; Messiahs; Teachers as Holy People

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Krishnananda Agamavagisa

(17th cent. C.E.)

Hindu writer

Krishnananda Agamavagisa is the most famous Hindu literary figure associated with the systematization of goddess

worship in eastern India. His renowned *Tantrasara* (The essence of the tantras) is a 5,000-verse compendium of ritual and lore culled from various Sanskrit tantras (philosophical and ritual texts on the esoteric worship of goddesses and gods) popular in Bengal, Assam, and Orissa. Although the digest covers a number of deities, male and female, it is likely that Agamavagisa’s reason for writing it was to make public, or to advertise, the goddess traditions that were under threat of extinction in the wave of enthusiasm for Krishna in seventeenth-century Bengal.

Agamavagisa’s success in this venture is indicated not only by the continued influence of the text but also by the large number of Bengali translations from the Sanskrit that have been published since his day. Raja Krishnacandra Ray of Nadia (1728–1782), the most important goddess-worshipping patron of the arts and religion in the eighteenth century, viewed himself in conformity with Agamavagisa’s project. Aside from commissioning Bengali translations of the *Tantrasara*, he also patronized the poet-saint Ramprasad Sen, an ardent devotee of the goddess Kali, paid for the erection of many goddess temples, and urged people in his districts to celebrate the annual festivals to the goddesses Kali and Durga.

Because of Agamavagisa’s literary importance and key role in popularizing goddess worship, a number of legends have become associated with his name. The most important of these concerns his part in standardizing the now-common iconographic form of the goddess Kali. Kali appears to him in a dream announcing that he should publicize her image exactly as she reveals it to him the next day. Accordingly, when he sees a young servant girl slapping cow dung on a hut wall to dry, her body curved, her arms stretched, and her tongue stuck out in embarrassment at his presence, he realizes that he has seen Kali’s preferred silhouette. Other legends profess his superhuman abilities, gained through tantric meditation and worship—for instance, his ability, when tested, to turn a dark night into one illuminated by a brilliant full moon.

—Rachel Fell McDermott

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Miracles; Reform and Reaction

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Ksitigarbha

Buddhist bodhisattva

One of the eight great *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings) in Buddhism, Ksitigarbha was little known in Indian literature, gaining recognition only later in China. Often referred to as the

“bodhisattva of hell” or “savior of the damned,” Ksitigarbha (Dizang in Chinese; Jizo in Japanese) enjoyed increasing popularity in China from the sixth century on, and entire temples came to be devoted to his worship. Textual sources for Ksitigarbha can be traced back to Indian Pali and Sanskrit works, although the cult of Ksitigarbha was unknown in India and central Asia. Yet by the medieval period in China, the predominant works relating to the underworld, or “hell,” involved the worship of Ksitigarbha, usually in conjunction with Buddhist rituals related to the ten kings of hell. The ten kings are Chinese Buddhist interpolations based on apocryphal sutras, perhaps created in response to Chinese concerns for the dead.

One of the most popular representations of Ksitigarbha in China and Japan was that of a monk carrying a six-ringed staff as well as a miraculous jewel, objects used to open up the gates of hell and light the darkness for the suffering souls therein. Others depict Ksitigarbha as overseer of hell with the ten kings in attendance, and Ksitigarbha in princely attire befitting his rank as a bodhisattva. Ksitigarbha swore a vow to save the damned, and because of this he is considered the true ruler of hell, capable of releasing loved ones from their torments, provided their descendants participate in periodic Buddhist rituals. Chapter seven of the Chinese text *Sutra on the Origins of Dizang Bodhisattva* is devoted to an explanation of blessings to be received by the living who have rituals said for the dead, who make images of Ksitigarbha, or who take refuge in him for but one moment.

—*Karil Kucera*

See also: Bodhisattva; Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians

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Kuan-ti

See **Guandi**

Kukai

(774–835 C.E.)

Buddhist school founder

Kukai (posthumously Kôbô Daishi) was the founder of the Japanese Shingon (True Word) school of Buddhism. The

Shingon doctrine is based on the Dainichi-kyô (Mahavairocana Sutra, in Sanskrit) and the Kongôcho-kyô (Vajrasekhara Sutra). The basic concept for this esoteric faith is that the Buddha possesses a phenomenal body (*nirmanakaya*) and an ineffable body (*dharmakaya*). The buddha Dainichi (Vairocana), the solar buddha of light and truth, is the central deity in Shingon faith. The historical exoteric Buddha Shakyamuni and the esoteric Buddha Dainichi are identical because, according to Shingon doctrine, Dainichi is a manifestation of Shakyamuni idealized as dharmakaya, “who is neither born nor dies.” Shingon’s idea of the nonduality of the Buddha (that is, the idea that the phenomenal and the transcendental bodies are not separate entities but different manifestations of the same absolute principle) found artistic expression under Kukai in the form of two esoteric *mandalas* (cosmic diagrams of the Buddhist pantheon): the Kongôkai (Diamond world mandala), representing the transcendental aspect, and the Taizôkai (Womb world mandala), representing the phenomenal aspect.

According to Kukai, anyone can attain enlightenment in this very existence through contemplation on these mandalas. The believer visualizes the symbols of the mandalas and in so doing learns the three mysteries of body, word, and thought, which cannot be expressed in words. Through chanting *mantras* (mystic syllables) and practicing *mudras* (hand gestures) used in esoteric meditation and ritual, believers communicate with the deities.

In 804, Kukai went to China to study esoteric Shingon Buddhism at its source with the Chinese master, Huiguô (746–805), who is considered the eighth Shingon patriarch. After his return to Japan in 806, Kukai joined the monastery Jingô-ji in Kyoto, where he lectured on the Shingon doctrine and performed Shingon initiation ceremonies for the next fifteen years. In 816, Kukai petitioned Emperor Saga (r. 809–823) for a grant of land on Mount Kôya, south of present-day Osaka in Wakayama prefecture, where he built his monastery Kongôbu-ji. It was only in 823, the year after the death of Saichô (767–822), founder of the Japanese Tendai school of Buddhism, that Kukai was given a temple in the Kyoto capital. He converted Tô-ji, as it is still commonly known today, from traditional Buddhism to a teaching center for the Shingon sect, renaming it Kyôgokoku-ji (Temple for the defense of the nation by means of the king of doctrines). It houses the oldest esoteric mandalas in Japan, the Kongôkai and the Taizôkai, as well as various other works of esoteric Buddhist art designated as national treasures. Kukai died in 835, but Shingon remained the dominant school of Buddhist thought in Japan through the tenth century.

—*Monika Dix*

See also: Scholars as Holy People; Vairocana

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Kumarajiva

(344–413 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, translator

One of the greatest Buddhist translators of Sanskrit works into Chinese, Kumarajiva became a model for the scholarly, pious, and philosophical monk. He was born in Serindia in the city of Kucha in central Asia in 344. According to legend, his father was an emigrant Indian aristocrat and an ex-monk, whereas his mother was a Kuchean princess who became a nun when he was seven years old. He accompanied his mother for two years at her convent.

The early places at which he studied Buddhism were centers of the Sarvastivadin school of the tradition, but he eventually converted to Mahayana Buddhism. Ordained at twenty years of age, he spent two additional years studying Mahayana scriptures. The Chinese captured him during a military campaign in 383. This afforded him an opportunity to study the Chinese language until he was liberated. By 401, he was in the city of Chang-an, where he spent the remainder of his life teaching and translating. The religious authorities placed him in charge of the entire process of translating Buddhist texts into Chinese in 402. He died in 413.

By the seventh century, Kumarajiva had been credited with translating more than a hundred titles. But a sixth-century catalog attributed only about thirty-five titles to him. The bulk of the works that he was credited with translating were related to the Mahayana philosophy of emptiness, although he was also credited with translating some devotional texts. Five works on meditation were also attributed to him. Moreover, he is given credit for additions made to the monastic literature of the Chinese canon. His various translations demonstrated his primary interest in the philosophy of emptiness and a wide variety of other topics. He was even credited with translating the legendary lives of Nagarjuna (c. 150–250), founder of the Madhyamaka school of thought, and Vasubandhu (fourth and fifth centuries), a great Yogacara philosopher. Many of his translations were begun at the request of a disciple or donor.

The Buddhist tradition gave Kumarajiva credit for founding the classical Chinese Buddhist school of Sanlun (Three

Treatise school), even though this was probably not historically accurate. Nonetheless, the Three Treatise school referred to two texts composed by the Madhyamaka philosopher Nagarjuna, the *Madhyamika-sastra* (Middle stanzas) and the *Dvadasadvara* (Twelve topics). The third text was attributed to a follower of Nagarjuna named Aryadeva and entitled *Satasastra* (Hundred treatise).

—Carl Olson

See also: Aryadeva; Buddhism and Holy People; Mission; Nagarjuna; Scholars as Holy People; Vasubandhu

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Kumazawa Banzan

(1619–1691 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

Kumazawa Banzan stands out in the history of Japanese Confucian thought for his unusual combination of Mencian moral idealism with political pragmatism and his deep concern for spiritual cultivation along with a flexible, empirical attitude toward the pursuit of knowledge. Though his teachings aroused considerable opposition among the guardians of orthodoxy in the seventeenth century, many who met him or read his works came to regard him as a man of great wisdom.

Born in 1619, at the age of eight Banzan was adopted as heir by his maternal grandfather, a samurai in the service of Mito domain, where Banzan was educated until 1634. He then entered the service of Ikeda Mitsumasa (1609–1682), governor of Okayama domain. Determined to become a model samurai (and to lose weight), he undertook a strict regimen of self-discipline and training in the martial arts. In 1638, after being criticized for disobeying his lord's orders, he resigned his position on the grounds that "in the service of a lord one has no free time at all, so one is not able to practice the literary and martial arts."

It was at this time that Banzan resolved to devote himself to learning, and he soon went to Kyoto in search of a teacher. One day he happened to hear a fellow lodger mention a teacher named Nakae Tōju who lived in Ogawa village in Ōmi, and he immediately set out to pay him a visit. After much imploring, Tōju agreed to meet with him, but it took another visit in the winter before Tōju agreed to give him instruction. The two became very close, but Banzan was only able to study under Tōju for some six months, as he had to return to Kirihara in about 1642 to support his struggling family. They continued, however, to exchange ideas by letter.

In 1644 or 1645, Banzan was again engaged as a personal attendant to Mitsumasa. Around this time he received

transmission of Tōju's instruction regarding Wang Yang-ming's (1472–1529) teaching on the innate knowledge of the good, as a result of which, he wrote, he was able to “acquire great strength in the method of mental discipline [*shinpō*].” Banzan was charged with lecturing to Mitsumasa's family and chief retainers on Tōju's teachings regarding the way of the samurai as articulated in his work *Okina Mondō* (Questions and answers with an old man). He also advised Mitsumasa in matters of governmental policy. In 1651, Mitsumasa managed to rally his three chief councillors around Banzan's “learning of the mind” (*shingaku*), giving Banzan's ideas a pivotal role in the domainal government. However, Mitsumasa's hereditary vassals became alarmed at Banzan's rapid rise in rank and his criticisms of domainal administration. Moreover, several plots against officials were uncovered, and Banzan was implicated when two interrogated leaders of the plot reported that they admired his teachings. On this basis, the Neo-Confucian philosopher Razan (1583–1657) argued that Banzan was seducing the ignorant into forming seditious cliques. Mitsumasa, however, did not lose his trust in Banzan, and the two worked hand in hand in directing relief and reconstruction after a serious flood and famine in 1654.

Banzan's early writings exhibited the strong contemplative bent of Tōju's late teachings, but through his hands-on experience in administrative reform and economic reconstruction he came to believe that Tōju's late teachings were not fully mature. He felt that the essence of extending one's innate knowledge of the good lay in distinguishing what sort of action constitutes “perfect goodness” in practical administrative situations based on a grasp of the concrete, objective circumstances of “time, place, and rank”—an idea that Tōju had emphasized in his middle period.

Banzan resigned in 1657, and in 1661 he moved with his family to Kyoto, where he fraternized with court nobles and studied the courtly traditions of music and literature. In time, however, he was accused of leading the nobles astray with his *shingaku* teachings, and in 1667 the shogunal deputy banished him from Kyoto. In his later years, Banzan remained somewhat of an exile, but he was free to travel to Kyoto and Okayama as he wished—until 1687, when he was confined by the *bakufu* (military government) to house arrest for his alarming predictions of an impending Manchu invasion. The work that caused suspicion, *Daigaku wakumon* (Questions on the *Great Learning*), has been called “probably the most distinguished analysis of Japanese society and economy to come from seventeenth-century Japan” (McMullen 1979, 338).

Banzan's writings were admired by many later Confucian scholars, and his reverence for the traditional culture of the court prefigures some aspects of the later development of the National Learning school and imperial loyalism.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Kunawi, Sadr al-Din al-

(1207–1274 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, philosopher

Sadr al-Din Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Muhammad ibn Yunus al-Kunawi is the most famous disciple of Ibn al-‘Arabi and the first important figure of the school founded by his master. As a prolific writer of influential works, Kunawi is credited with spreading Ibn al-‘Arabi's teachings and making substantial contributions to the development of a rigorous sufi metaphysics in Islam. Kunawi's relationship with Ibn al-‘Arabi is well recorded. In fact, Ibn al-‘Arabi married Kunawi's widowed mother, and Kunawi stayed with and served his master until the master's death in 1240.

Kunawi was born in 1207—in Konya, as his title “Kunawi” suggests—where he received his early education. It was also here that Kunawi became a madrasa professor, teaching traditional subjects. He was extremely well versed in Islamic studies, and in fact his collection of forty esoteric sayings of the prophet Muhammad is still a widely circulated book. In addition to his meticulous scholarship, Kunawi is also known for his spiritual visions. Compared to other Muslim mystics, Kunawi's style is more vigorous and less ecstatic, and this may partly be due to his philosophical predilection. The fact that Kunawi was a member of the school of Ibn al-‘Arabi as a writer and a devoted disciple does not seem to have deterred him from venturing into purely philosophical and metaphysical subjects. This is clearly shown by his famous correspondence with Nasir al-Din at-Tusi (1201–1274), the philosopher-scientist credited with attempting to revive peripatetic philosophy in the thirteenth century.

Although Kunawi's works follow closely the teaching of Ibn al-‘Arabi, his style ushered in a new genre of metaphysical writing in Islam. While Ibn al-‘Arabi's corpus deals with virtually every aspect of spiritual life, Kunawi appears to be deliberately selective, focusing mostly on philosophical issues. This can be regarded as a step toward combining realized knowledge, or gnosis, with logical-discursive thinking—a tendency that can be seen in the likes of Suhrawardi (d. 1191), the founder of the School of Illumination, and Mulla Sadra (d. 1640), the last great figure of this tradition. In some ways, Kunawi is credited with “sys-

tematizing” Ibn al-‘Arabi’s vast body of teachings into a primarily mystical metaphysics. This, however, has not prevented his followers and others from seeing him as a sanctified sage and philosopher.

The central theme of Kunawi’s metaphysics is the question of being (*wujud*). Like his teacher, Kunawi interprets being as a mercy from God through which one can gain proximity to the divine. The world of existence is construed as hierarchical, based on the various degrees and stations of being. Kunawi’s epistemology is predicated upon what Ibn al-‘Arabi calls unveiling (*kashf*), which can be interpreted as a subcategory of spiritual hermeneutics. The concept of unveiling assumes that veritable knowledge can be attained only by removing the obstacles that stand between the truth and the self. In this view, knowledge or truth is not constructed but discovered. Spiritual training and purification is essential for knowledge because it is only by refining the soul that one can develop one’s faculties to receive the reality of things as they are. Moreover, knowledge is defined as an alchemical process whereby the knower becomes united with his object of knowledge, whose ultimate reality resides not in the mind or in things themselves but in the world of the eternal archetypes, that is, the Platonic Forms.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Tusi, Nasir al-Din at-

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Kuncewicz, Josaphat

(c. 1580–1623 C.E.)

Uniate Christian monk, archbishop, martyr

Josaphat Kuncewicz was born in Volodymyr in Volyn, Lithuania, around 1580. Baptized Johannes Kunczyc, he grew up in a pious family of Orthodox town-dwellers and received an early education at an Orthodox catechetical school there. For the Ruthenian Church, it was a gloomy period of ignorance, demoralization, divisions, and intolerance. The Union of Berest’ in 1596 had left the schismatic Orthodox clergy hostile and full of hatred toward the proponents of reconciliation with Rome. The few adherents of the union gathered in the Vilnian Church of the Trinity, where in 1599 the young Josaphat, by then an apprentice, was introduced to Catholi-

cism. Under the spiritual direction of such Uniate and Jesuit thinkers as Genady Khmel’nitsky, Peter Arkudiusz, Welamin Rutsky, and Hipacy Pocij, Josaphat entered the Basilian order at the age of twenty-four and after five years of theological study was ordained a priest. Entrusted with superintending the novitiate, where his extraordinary zeal and kindness soon attracted converts, he labored intensely to enkindle enthusiasm for the Catholic faith among the divided Ruthenians.

The esteem that the saint gained for his knowledge, preaching talent, austerity of life, and sacrificial work in the community allowed the Uniate church to grow rapidly. In the position of first bishop (consecrated November 1617) and then archbishop of Polotsk (1618), he was a model administrator and reformer, greatly contributing to the regeneration of religious life in the country. However, the schismatic party, including Josaphat’s particularly active antagonist, Meletius Smotryckyj, confronted this fruitful labor of the Uniates with a growing enmity, manifested after 1621 in riots and rebellions in Ruthenian towns. The accumulated hatred erupted again on November 12, 1623, when with an ax-stroke and two bullets an enraged crowd in Vitebsk, Russia, claimed the saint’s life.

The cult of St. Josaphat, who was beatified in 1642 and canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867, reinforced the Catholic Church in Rus’ and allowed it to survive the centuries of tsarist persecution. His feast day is November 12.

—*Ewa Slojka*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Mission

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Kunga Nyingpo (Tibetan: Sa chen kun dga’ snying po)

(1092–1158 C.E.)

Buddhist master

The first of the five patriarchs of the Sa skya lineage (Tib.: *sa skya gong ma lnga*) of Tibetan Buddhism, Kunga Nyingpo was more commonly known as Sa chen kun dga’ snying po, or simply “Sa chen” (The great one from Sa skya). His father, Dkon mchog rgyal po (1034–1102), founded Sa skya monastery in southwestern Tibet in 1073. Sa chen, born in 1092, had a vision of the bodhisattva Manjushri at age twelve. From him he received the verse called “Zhen pa bzhi bral” (Parting from the four attachments).

Sa chen’s teachers were his father, Ba ri lo tsa ba (1040–c. 1111), and especially Se ston kun rig (1029–1116) and Zhang

ston Chos 'bar (1053–1135), from whom he received the Lam 'bras (Path and result) teachings. Sa chen's writings on the Lam 'bras were his greatest contribution to Tibetan culture.

From among Sa chen's many students, two of his three sons are the most famous: Bsod nams rtse mo (1142–1182) and Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1147–1216). The present Sa skya khri 'dzin Ngag dbang kun dga' (1945–), known to his students as his holiness Sakya Trizin, is the forty-first throne-holder of Sa skya and a direct descendant of Sa chen.

—Cameron David Warner

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Manjushri; Prophets

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Kungo Gyalsthen

See **Sakya Pandita**

Kunigunde

(d. 1033 C.E.)

Christian empress

Kunigunde was a German empress who has been venerated since her death on March 3, 1033. Wife of emperor and saint Henry II, Kunigunde was known for her exemplary life and her foundation of the Benedictine convent at Kaufungen in Hesse, which she entered after her husband's death. She had no children, and according to her late twelfth-century vita, she and Henry took vows of virginity on their wedding day. Her vita was written in 1199 to accompany a request for her canonization, and Pope Innocent III canonized her in the following year.

Kunigunde's parents, Sigfried, count of Luxembourg, and his wife Hedwig, gave their daughter a religious education as a child. She married Henry, duke of Bavaria, in 999, and he became king of Germany in 1002. In 1013, they went together to Rome to receive the titles of emperor and empress

from Pope Benedict VIII. Later legend tells that at some point during their marriage, Kunigunde was accused of scandalous behavior. To Henry's relief, she defended her innocence by surviving an ordeal of walking over red-hot plowshares without injury.

Partly through the encouragement of his wife, Henry founded the monastery and bishopric at Bamberg in 1007. It was lavishly endowed and became important for its close links with the imperial chapel and chancery and for its prestigious schools. Kunigunde's convent at Kaufungen was nearly finished when Henry died in June 1024. His death marked the end of the male Saxon line, and until his successor, Conrad II, was elected, Kunigunde held the reins of the kingdom's government. During the interim, she directed all of her energies into preserving her husband's memory and legacy. Upon the election of Conrad, Kunigunde handed over the royal symbols she had kept and transferred the political power she had held as queen and widow to him.

According to her vita, Kunigunde celebrated the first anniversary of her husband's death by inviting a number of churchmen to the dedication of Kaufungen. When the gospel had been sung at mass, she offered at the altar a piece of the True Cross, a relic believed to be from the cross that Jesus Christ was crucified on. Then, taking off her imperial robes, she took the nun's habit and received the veil. Once she entered the convent, it was reported that she forgot her past rank and spent the rest of her days praying, reading, and comforting the sick. She spent her remaining wealth on the diocese of Bamberg, most likely to support her husband's cult and preserve his memory.

Upon her death in 1033, her body was taken to Bamberg to be buried next to her husband's. Many miracles were reported to have occurred along the way.

—Helen A. Gaudette

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Henry II; Rulers as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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L

Ladislás

(c. 1040–1095 C.E.)

Christian king

One of the most popular Hungarian saints, Ladislás (Hung.: László), king of Hungary (r. 1077–1095), was the embodiment of the ideal Christian knight. He was canonized in 1192; his feast day is June 27.

Ladislás I belonged to the Árpáadian dynasty and was the son of King Béla I and the Polish princess Richeza. He was born in about 1040 in Poland and ascended the throne of Hungary in 1077 after decades of internal power struggle within the newly founded Christian monarchy. The two decades of his rule brought consolidation and relative peace, which was further preserved with the introduction of several new laws regarding the protection of private property and the judiciary system. The new cathedrals (Várad [today Oradea, Romania], Zagreb) and monasteries he founded, along with the canonization of his predecessors, King Stephen I and his son Emeric in 1083, strengthened the position of Christianity in the country. Chronicles and legends report on different aspects of his life. The emerging picture shows Ladislás living a virtuous life and defending his church and country against the invading nomadic peoples.

Ladislás died in 1095 and was buried at the cathedral of Várad. After his death, many healing miracles were associated with him and his burial place. As a result, he was officially canonized in 1192, and shortly thereafter, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, his legend was written. Várad became the center of his cult and his head was put on display there in a marvelous reliquary bust. Apart from individual cult images, the most characteristic medieval depiction of Ladislás shows him in the 1068 battle of Kerlés against the Petchenegs (Cumans), in which Ladislás saved an abducted Hungarian girl. The painted narrative of this heroic struggle is found on the walls of countless Hungarian churches as well as in manuscripts. After the cathedral of Várad was de-

stroyed during the Reformation and the Turkish wars, the relics of Ladislás were transported to Gyor (1607), where they are kept today. A number of popular stories and legends are associated with his name, and László is still a popular given name in Hungary.

—Zsombor Jékely

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Laity

Some religions, most notably Christianity and Buddhism, have clearly defined categories of full-time religious professionals, who are often contrasted strongly to the "laity"—everybody else, from the Greek *laicos*, "of the people." Laypeople continue to work at trades in the world, marry, and lead normal social lives in the community. In religions that make this distinction, members of the laity rarely win a reputation as holy people, a status more normally reserved to priests, nuns, and monks. Some exceptional people, however, have surmounted this holiness divide, especially martyrs, whose heroic deaths have apparently compensated for any "deficiencies" in their lives. More important is a category

of holy people, especially in Buddhism and Christianity but appearing in other religions, who made it their life's work to bridge the gap between the professional religious and the religious commoners, bringing them a higher priestly or monastic ideal of salvation and life.

When laypeople have attained the rank of "holy" in professionalized religions, they usually form a peculiar halfway group—not professed or ordained members of a religious community, but adopting the values system of the religious elite. Best of all, they care for the religious professionals and enjoy holiness by reflection. The wealthy banker Anathapindika (c. fifth century B.C.E.), for example, after he was converted by the Buddha used his wealth to care for monks. At other times, they act like professional religious. One of the rare Buddhist laymen recognized as a holy man is Han-shan, who probably lived in the mid-seventh century. Although he did not follow religious rules, he lived as a hermit on a mountain rather than in a secular community. It is rare, indeed, to find another individual like the Tibetan Marpa (1012–1097), a married holy man who worked as a farmer and paid heed to his worldly obligations while devoting himself at the same time to a spiritual life. Similarly, in Christianity, although Ramon Lull (1232–1316) remained a layman (that is, he was not ordained a priest and did not enter a monastic order), he gave up his possessions and became an evangelical preacher. Very few of the canonized Roman Catholic saints were married, and many of those who were are believed to have lived chastely with their spouses, again crossing the divide from typical lay behavior to adopt the virtues of the religious elite. Also rare are married, sexually active saints, such as Elizabeth of Hungary (1207–1231), who lived a life of astounding self-abnegation that included donning course haircloth under her royal robes.

Some holy people of the religious elite, however, have left their rarefied atmosphere to reach out to the laity. For example, the sufis formed a spiritual elite within Islam, but some sufi leaders, such as Baha'uddin Naqshband (1317–1390), emphasized a practical theology and daily spiritual practices that were accessible to the lay population. Francis of Assisi's (c. 1180–1226) foundation of his third order or Ignatius of Loyola's (1491–1556) propagation of his spiritual exercises were similar. Some holy people have made it their life's work to promote basic knowledge of their religion among the laity. Besides missionaries (treated in a separate article), this includes people such as the Indian Muslim leader Hasan Nizami (1878–1955), who made a simple translation of the Qur'an and reached thousands thanks to the printing press.

The poet-saints of India also worked to make the truths of their religion accessible to householders, rather than only to renunciants, for example, writing in the common language of their region rather than in the religious language of Sanskrit.

Indeed, the Jain layman and reformer Banarsidas (1586–1643) made the radical argument for his time that spiritual development is not reserved for monks only, subordinating ritual and monastic authority and making elite religious practices accessible to the masses. He even went so far as to de-emphasize the need for ascetics as spiritual guides.

The Protestant Reformation in Europe and its precursors similarly presented the view that laypeople could bring God into their everyday lives. The preacher Gerard Groote (1340–1384) attacked ecclesiastical abuses and launched a program to provide religious texts in the vernacular. He also founded an in-between, semiprofessional religious community, the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, who, while legally still laypeople, replicated many professional religious ways in their lifestyle. Similarly Frances of Rome (1384–1440) and Angela Merici (1474–1540), laywomen, organized congregations for laywomen to care for others that provided a halfway state between monastic and lay life. Even in regions where Protestantism triumphed and abolished the monastic life, professional clerics have continued to be recognized as "other" from the lay populace (despite loud protestations of a "priesthood of all believers").

Buddhism probably has the largest class of holy people, members of the religious elite themselves, who have rejected the monastic community and worked to spread Buddhism to the common people. Important early examples are the Korean monk Wonhyo (617–686) and the Japanese monk Gyogi Bosatsu (668–749), who both worked to transform Buddhism itself from an elite religion to a religion of the masses among their people. In like fashion, the *mahasiddhas* (great masters) of eighth- to twelfth-century India opposed the emphasis that Mahayana Buddhism placed on monasticism, for women as well as for men, for all social classes. Most famous, though, are the proponents of variants of the Pure Land school, beginning with Huiyuan, the first Chinese Pure Land patriarch (334–416). The common thread of these religious leaders is that they believed that, in their degenerate age, no human could reach enlightenment by his or her own efforts—not even monks. Instead, they made a real effort to reach the masses, teaching that those who call on Amida Buddha (Amitabha) will be reborn in Amida's western paradise. The most famous teachers of Pure Land philosophy are the Japanese Honen (1133–1212), Shinran (1173–1262), and Rennyo (1415–1499).

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Baha'uddin Naqshband; Banarsidas; Francis of Assisi; Gyogi Bosatsu; Honen; Huiyuan; Ignatius of Loyola; Lull, Ramon; Marpa; Merici, Angela; Mission; Monasticism and Holy People; Priests; Rennyo; Shinran; Wonhyo

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Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Abu 'Ali

(d. 1262 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, ascetic

Abu 'Ali Lal Shahbaz Qalandar was originally from Marwand in Sistan and eventually settled in the town of Sehwan, in the Sind province of the Indian subcontinent. His name, Lal Shahbaz (The red falcon) may have been attributed to him because of his alleged miraculous ability to attract a flock of birds to his shrine. Lal Shahbaz falls into a category of sufis called *qalandars* who wander from region to region and are not concerned with outer religious duties. Many *qalandars* practiced intense asceticism, begging for their meals and neglecting outer observances and social responsibilities such as wearing clothing, earning an income, seeking shelter, pursuing an education, and getting married.

Sufi thinkers of the medieval period have made categorical differences between the *malamatis* and the *qalandars*. The former adhere to the essential religious practices required while at the same time demonstrating outer piety. Although these categories are not fixed, and were meant to identify the varieties in the sufi landscape generally, the evidence of sufi literature attests that Lal Shahbaz Qalandar led an impoverished lifestyle and attracted many sufis to him because of his passionate love for the divine.

There are conflicting narratives regarding whether Lal Shahbaz Qalandar belonged to a particular sufi order. According to Suhrawardi literature, he was a disciple of the eminent sufi master Baha' ud-din Zakariyya of Multan. In addition, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar considered himself in the spiritual lineage of Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922), the illustrious sufi master who was martyred in 922. Lal Shahbaz's sufi legacy was his ability to be completely immersed in divine union and love, confessing a faith that was intoxicated with divine presence and compassion. He is credited with performing numerous miracles, such as bringing peace to the most hysterical individuals.

In popular belief, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar is thought to have always been connected to God and led by the divine at all times. This would account for some assertions that he was a source of salvation for the forgotten poor and marginalized in society. Today his shrine in Sehwan, Pakistan, attracts millions of pilgrims each year, many of whom believe that he is still capable of interceding in temporal and spiritual affairs.

—*Qamar-ul Huda*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Morality and Holy People; Sufism; Zakariyya, Baha' ud-din

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Lalibela

(Mid–12th cent. to c. 1225 C.E.)

Christian emperor, visionary

Lalibela was a twelfth-century Ethiopian emperor canonized in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He is reported to have come to the throne reluctantly, at the end abdicating in favor of his nephew. Widely noted for his devotion to the Christian faith, Lalibela is the most famous of the Zagwe rulers. Not claiming direct Solomonic descent, the Zagwe encountered problems of legitimacy, which continue even to this day. His birth name, by which he is most commonly called, "Lalibela" means "the bees recognize his sovereignty." It was said that at his birth a swarm of bees descended on him without harming him, thus the name.

Beginning in his youth, Lalibela had visions. It was in one such vision that he was directed by God to build the series of churches at Roha, the Zagwe capital, now known as Lalibela. The rock-hewn churches of Lalibela were not the first in Ethiopian history, but they are the most famous. These eleven churches, an important pilgrimage and tourist site today, are connected by an extensive and complex subterranean passageway. According to tradition, the churches were built under the direct supervision of the emperor and with the assistance of angels. Every day, when they returned to work, the builders would note and remark that the construction had advanced beyond where they had left it the previous day. According to the Ethiopian Royal Chronicles, "They [the workers] doubted whether angels were doing this work because they could not see them, but Lalibela knew, because the angels, who understood his virtue, did not hide from him; the angels were his companions and for that reason did not hide from his sight" (Pankhurst 1967, 12). The chronicles note, with great pride, that the churches were not built by forced or slave labor. In fact, Lalibela requested each worker to tell him exactly what he wished to be paid, and the emperor did so.

Before becoming emperor, Lalibela spent some time as a hermit in the mountains. He also made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a major undertaking in the world of the twelfth century.

Although it is widely noted that Ethiopia became a Christian kingdom in the fourth century, Christianity was most likely not practiced by the majority of the population even in the Middle Ages. The conversion of King Ezana to Christianity in the fourth century affected little the lives of the majority of ordinary peasants. The spread of Christianity occurred slowly, though the kings of Ethiopia often



Church of St. Lalibela, Ethiopia. (Art Directors)

sponsored missionary efforts by building churches, encouraging missionaries, and extending the territories under their rule.

Compared to earlier and later periods in Ethiopian history, relatively little is known about the Zagwe rulers. Even the dates of Lalibela's reign are in dispute. Much of what we do know about the Zagwe comes from those who considered them usurpers. It is perhaps remarkable, given the hostility to the Zagwe, that Lalibela, as well as two other Zagwe rulers, should have been canonized in the Ethiopian Church.

—Anene Ejikeme

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Ezana; Rulers as Holy People

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Lalla

(14th cent. C.E.)

Hindu mystic, renunciant

Lalla, also known as Lal Ded or Lalleshwari, was a fourteenth-century mystic from Kashmir. Her aphoristic verses were orally transmitted for centuries and became part of Kashmiri folk culture. Legends speak of her married life as filled with suffering and her renunciation at a young age to become a wandering ascetic.

Lalla's compositions, originally uttered in old Kashmir, come to us in a form that is fairly modern, except for occasional archaic expressions with obscure or unknown meaning. Collections of Lalla's verses have been compiled from time to time. The first scholarly collection in the West was put together by Sir George Grierson and Lionell D. Barnett in 1920. This collection provides a fairly accurate text of Lalla's verses based on various sources, including meticulous records of oral tradition. Aside from this 109-verse collection, entitled *Lalla Vakyani*, Pandit Anand Koul collected 75 more verses. These were published in various issues of the *Indian Antiquary* in the 1930s. Later collections have primarily relied on these two sources.

Lalla's verses reveal her deep knowledge of the esoteric practices of Kashmir Shaivism. She describes Shiva or the

self as permeating both the manifest and unmanifest reality, repeatedly stressing the continuity between the self and Shiva, and the self and the world. Lalla is the first woman known to have spoken openly to common people about esoteric Shaiva practices, which were available in her time to only a select few. Some of her verses deal with the means to overcome her limited vision that binds her to the material reality, while others relate her experiences with sustained introspective contemplation. In yet other verses, she turns her attention outward, taking the role of a teacher and instructing others in the nature of limited knowledge and the means to overcome it. She urges people to regard the self and the other as equal and to refrain from religious bigotry and intolerance.

The evocativeness of Lalla's verses arises from vivid and concrete images she uses to convey her experiences. Some examples of her jewels: "using untwisted yarn to pull a boat" or "a grass arrow fitted on a wooden bow" for representing a weak will as she begins her quest; "twisting ropes of sand" for ineffectual efforts; and "water leaking from unbaked clay saucers" for unfocused attention. Lalla employs the imagery and metaphors of daily life in her verses to convey to common people her vision of reality, provoking them to look beyond the veil of inhibitions and constraints imposed by societal institutions. Lalla has left a permanent mark on Kashmiri language and culture, and her legacy has survived innumerable political upheavals and religious conflicts.

—Jaishree K. Odin

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Lamas

Tibetan Buddhist teachers

Lama (*bla ma*), the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term "guru," usually refers to advanced spiritual teachers. There are many types. Lamas may be celibate or married, may rise to their positions or be born to them, and may give many public teachings or live in remote hermitages, rarely emerging from retreat.

The two syllables of "lama" are explained in various ways. "La" means "highest" and "ma" means "mother"; the former is indicative of *bodhicitta*, altruistic compassion, which is the most sublime attitude, and the latter is indicative of wisdom, the mother of enlightenment. Hence, a lama should be someone so advanced in compassion and wisdom, the two "wings" of buddhahood, that he or she could guide students

all the way to their own enlightenment. That implies that a lama could serve as initiator and guide even for the esoteric tantric practices, in which case he or she would be the focus of preparatory visualizations that blend the lama with Buddha figures.

Although the ideal lama is a spiritual teacher, not all teachers are lamas and not all lamas are teachers. Normally, a religious teacher is *gen* (*rgan*, the abbreviated form of *dge rgan*, guide of virtue) rather than "lama" unless he or she exhibits special personal qualities and of course has the qualifications to initiate and teach students in the esoteric tradition. Conversely, some lamas rarely, if ever, function as spiritual guides because they remain in meditation retreat.

The designation "lama" is not normally formal; a person is called a lama if students approach him or her *as a lama*, such as by requesting initiations and spiritual guidance. However, in some places, such as Ladakh, the custom has been to refer to all monks as lamas regardless of their spiritual status. Sometimes the term has been applied to all ritual masters in an area. And the heads of some lineages within the Kagyu and Nyingma monastic orders have begun in recent times to confer the title of lama on the best graduates of three-year meditation retreats.

Tulkus (*sprul sku*) are almost always called lamas. A tulku is a person recognized as the reincarnation of an advanced practitioner. The followers of such a person ask a great lama about him, and he divines whether the person in question is spiritually advanced and intended to start a line of tulkus. Then a search for the reincarnation occurs within a few years after each death. However, it is well recognized that tulkus do not necessarily, especially in their early lives, exhibit the special qualities that a lama should possess.

Few monks are lamas, and many lamas are not monks. Many are unmarried lay yogis or married householders. Hence, there is also no requirement that a lama live in a monastery or be a solitary hermit, although many are. The late seventeenth-century Manchu rulers of China used the term "Lamaism" (*lamajiao*) to designate Tibetan Buddhism, which was understood to mean that Tibetans worshipped lamas or that all monks were lamas. The term has been widely used by Western writers as well. Another Manchu convention was the designation of all tulkus as *hefo*, "living buddhas." Both of these designations are obviously misleading.

—Daniel Cozort

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gurus; Reincarnation; Rulers as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Lambert of Liège

(c. 635–c. 705 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Bishop Lambert of Tongres/Maastricht, Belgium, was credited for the flourishing growth of the city of Liège when pilgrims visited his site of martyrdom there. Standard hagiography, probably based on Eligius's *vita*, describes Lambert's aristocratic roots in a Maastricht family (perhaps Christian converts), into which he was born in about 635, and his education by Bishop Theodard, whom he succeeded in episcopal office in 670, after training at royal court—fitting preparation for statesmanship and administration. His sanctity and noble virtues led King Childeric to view him as “dearest of all bishops” (Jacobus II: 159). At Childeric's death in 674, however, palace intrigue and instability resulted in Lambert's exile at Stavelot monastery, which only ended when Pepin II became king in 681.

Known for helping Christianize Toxandria (northern Brabant), Lambert destroyed temples and cult images and established several local churches for the diocese of Tongres, including Maastricht (favored by his predecessors) and his own beloved Liège, where he met his demise at the hands of political enemies in about 705. When attacked, he drew his sword in defense, but quickly discarded it, deciding that reliance upon prayer when threatened with death was a nobler course of action.

His successor, Hubert, carried Lambert's remains to Maastricht for burial alongside his father, but the martyrdom site became a popular cult center where numerous miracles occurred. These, and the remarkable conversion of one of Lambert's assailants to monasticism, soon convinced Hubert not only to return his relics to his dearest domicile but to also move the diocesan seat to Liège by about 718. This translation and popular acclamation were the signs of Lambert's canonization, and a basilica was built at the location where a pilgrim's sight was restored. Commercial enterprises established around the new pilgrimage center prospered and made the city an important regional attraction. In the tenth century, Liège became a principality, with Lambert's relics a palladium—credited for success in battle and carried by military troops on sorties.

Many early cult objects created for Lambert, including reliquaries and battle standards, are now lost. A lavish sixteenth-century bust reliquary and a large nineteenth-century shrine remain in the cathedral treasury, and dissemination of the cult is in evidence throughout Europe, with many

church dedications as well as numerous statues and other pictorial remembrances. Lambert is generally shown giving a blessing with his right hand, bearing miter and staff, and wearing a particular cape-like garment (*superhumeral*) with a crenellated lower edge—symbolizing an elevated episcopal status—with regal bearing and military implications.

—Rita W. Tekippe

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hubert; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People

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Lamedvavniks

Jewish legend

The *lamedvavniks* are thirty-six righteous men, often referred to as *lamedvav tzaddikim* (Thirty-six just [righteous] men) or *tzaddikim nistarim* (Hidden just men), in Jewish legend. The tradition teaches that in each generation the world is maintained by the presence of at least thirty-six righteous people who are so humble that they do not even know their own identity.

The tradition may be traced to the Babylonian Talmudic (BT) passage that teaches: “Abaye has said: ‘There are in the world not less than thirty-six righteous persons in every generation upon whom the Shekinah [spirit of the Lord] rests; for it is written, “Happy are all they that wait for Him” [Isaiah. 30:18]. The last word stands numerically for thirty-six” (BT, Sanhedrin 97b; Sukkoth 45a). It must be understood that each letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numeric correspondent. In Hebrew, the last word of the verse in Isaiah is *lo*, which translates as “him.” “Lo” is spelled by the letters “lamed” and “vav,” which, respectively, have the value of 30 and 6 for a total of 36.

Jewish mystical tradition understands that these men bear the sins and the sorrows of the world. It is due to the piety of the “lamedvavniks” that God does not destroy the world even when the sins of humanity are overwhelming. It is felt that the world continues and escapes annihilation by the very virtue of their existence. The presence of these men are so important to the existence world that when one dies another is born so that their number remains constant.

Eastern European literature drew on the theme of the hidden just men and many legends grew around supposed lamedvavniks. In some of the literature, a stranger would come to the village just in time to avert some horrible catastrophe that was about to befall the Jewish community. This

stranger, it turns out, is an undisclosed lamedvavnik who fades from the scene once the danger has been thwarted. Traditions grew up around these stories to view all strangers and wayfarers as potential lamedvavniks.

In more recent post-Holocaust thought and literature, the term “lamedvavnik” is frequently applied to a “righteous gentile” who aided the Jews or the Jewish community during the Nazi era. And now the designation is frequently used of any self-effacing person who is generous to the community with time, effort, or other forms of philanthropy.

—Sharon R. Keller

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Tzaddiq

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Laozi (Lao-tzu)

(6th cent. B.C.E.)

Daoist sage, founder

Laozi, literally “Old Master” and also known as Li Er, is considered the founder of Daoism, China’s oldest indigenous philosophy and religion. He is considered to have been a contemporary of Confucius who lived in the sixth century B.C.E. during the Eastern Zhou dynasty (771–265 B.C.E.). At some point, Laozi, unhappy with China’s political instability, left China for the western lands. At that time, he is believed to have given the *Daode jing* (Classic of the way and its power) to a frontier official named Yin Xi. The *Daode jing* subsequently became the earliest and most fundamental text for the teachings of Daoism.

The term *dao* itself can be translated as the way, road, path, or method, and by extension, “rule of life.” It is thus at once a simple term and yet quite profound. It is the way of all things, the way of the universe, and the source for all reality. Its essential principles are clear: first that there is duality (*yin* and *yang*) and balance in all things (that is, without day there is no night, without up there is no down, and so on); second that matter and energy are interchangeable; and finally that change is constant.

Although Laozi is generally considered the author of the *Daode jing*, there is debate as to authorship as some have argued that the book could not have been written until the fourth to second centuries B.C.E. And for many, there seems to be no doubt that the text had more than one author. Many of the eighty-one “chapters” of the *Daode jing* are written poetically, but they are more like brief entries in a dictionary of life, or a collection of adages using rhymes, and some sections contain more prose than poetry. The text discusses nu-

merous issues, including statecraft and political alternatives. It teaches that the sage is an individual who understands the natural way (*dao*) of things and lives in harmony with it; thus changes in society are made through the individual who changes according to the way. The text is also meant to be a kind of guide for relationships and human experience and for living in harmony with the natural world. The first “chapter” may be translated:

The Way (Dao) that can be spoken of (Dao) is not the eternal Way (Dao);

The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

The nameless, is the origin of heaven and earth;

The named is the mother of all things.

Always desireless, one can discern its mystery;

Always desiring, one can discern its outer manifestations.

These two emerge from the same source but differ in name,

Their sameness is called the primordial,

The origins of the primordial,

The gate to all mystery.

(trans. Richard A. Pegg)

In typical fashion, this text begins by plainly stating that words cannot describe the way. They can merely point to, or indicate the way to, the true understanding of the way. And yet, it is often through word play, the rational means of communication, that Daoist texts attempt to convey some meaning. The way is the undivided unity in which the distinctions and contradictions of existence are ultimately resolved. There is an essential truth of the universe that is the essence of this philosophy. The *Daode jing* is written in a manner that typifies the essence, with wit and paradox, that words, no matter how eloquent or convincing, cannot truly convey principles that can only be understood intrinsically.

Laozi is considered the founder of religious Daoism and as such has been deified. He is venerated as either Old Lord (*Lao Jun*) or Celestial Noble of the Dao and De (*Daode tian-cun*). Some consider him a founder, while others consider him just one of several holy men of Daoism; as such, he is known as Most High Lord Lao (*Taishang Laojun*).

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Reincarnation; Sages

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Lasair*(6th cent. C.E.?)**Christian abbess*

Over a dozen female Christian holy women named Lasair are commemorated in Irish martyrologies, and several surface in the Lives of other saints, but only one has a Life of her own. This Life, in Irish, of a Lasair from possibly the sixth century, is incomplete and survives only in seventeenth-century copies, probably based on a medieval original. According to this text, she descended from royalty on both sides. She had five sisters and one brother, all of whom her parents ensured were well educated. Lasair was sent to study under the famed ascetic Molaise of Devenish in Lower Lough Erne and within a year outshone all the students who had been training there for seven years, an accomplishment attributed to her tutorials with the Holy Spirit rather than to her teacher Molaise.

More so than the other female Irish saints described in the sources, Lasair reveals the testy side of Irish saints, infamous for their maledictions and the dire punishments they placed upon those who displeased them. She promised those who neglected to pay the tax she had imposed upon her extensive lands that they would be rewarded with hell, then detailed their damnation so there would be no misunderstanding: ill-fortune, poverty, anger, hatred, murder of kinsfolk, weakness, wounds, and war. Those who render Lasair her due, however, shall receive many blessings, including a happy sex life. She had a miraculous bell, *Ceolán Lasrach*, into which she once poured a healing potion that she then administered to a woman who had been suffering from pregnancy for nearly two years; the woman was immediately delivered of two lizards and a son. By a similar treatment, she cured a man who for four years had endured an alarming illness that had caused him to consume his own waste.

Lasair's name means "flame," and she proves impervious to fire when reavers burned down Devenish; similar miracles are told of Íte, Samthann, and Brigid, but in those cases the fire is presented as an illusion or as an indication that the Holy Spirit burns within them, not an actual physical threat. Lasair founded several communities, one described as composed of male and female scholars, and the center of her cult is Roscommon. Owing to the lateness of the account and the multiplicity of Lasairs, however, little can be said about her with any degree of historical certainty.

—Maeve B. Callan

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Miracles

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Laszlo*See Ladislav***Latif, Shah Abdul***(1689–1752 C.E.)**Muslim poet, mystic*

Shah Abdul Latif, one of the most popular sufi poets of all time in south Asia, is revered by both Hindus and Muslims. He was born in Hala, near present-day Hyderabad, Sind, in 1689, and his tomb in Bhit Shah, covered with floral patterns depicting paradise and exuding serenity, stands as one of the most exquisite examples of Muslim funerary architecture. Part of a long line of Sindhi mystical poets, Abdul Latif drew from folktales that everyone knew to describe the qualities of heroes and heroines—hope, fear, ambition, courage, and desire to heal the world—as well as obstacles such as greed, suffering, and injustice.

Influenced by Suhrawardi and Naqshbandi sufi thinkers, Abdul Latif's sufi poetry plays on riddles of lost love and uses the motif of the bridal song. The rain that showers humanity with divine contact is also an important recurring image in his work. His poetry venerates the prophet Muhammad, commonly referred to in sufi poetry as the Perfect Man, a light of divine vision over the darkness of human failures. Abdul Latif portrays the prophet with many honorific symbols, one of which is the veil of light that invites the sufi seeker to become closer to him. Another theme in his work, particularly meaningful for peasants, is that the outer afflictions of suffering are only temporary and are tied to our shortsightedness and neglect; the true way of salvation is to return to the essence of the divine.

Appealing to many Hindu and Muslim classes, Abdul Latif's poetry contained musical modes according to the classical Indian scales (*ragas*). It was popularly sung in the fields and in the marketplace. In a collection of poems entitled *Shaha jo risalo* (The book of shah), through mystical syncretism he illustrates the immense importance of such figures as the prophet Muhammad and his grandson Husayn in spiritual development. In other poems, he uses various characters—a washerman's daughter, a prince, a fisherman—as well as creatures such as lions and birds, to illustrate the transformation of the self from the boundaries inherited while living on earth.

Whether it is discussing the restrictions imposed on a prince or the obstacles faced by a peasant girl, Abdul Latif's mystical poetry tackles the complexities of space, time, gender, class, and religious identities to emphasize the pains of the journey toward the divine and to induce in the reader or listener the longing of the soul to break away from exile. Using multiple characters from various cross-sections of society, Abdul Latif appealed to both Muslims and Hindus in

the Indian subcontinent because of the ways in which he focused on the inner journey and applied mystical feelings as an expression of reconciliation and healing.

—*Qamar-ul Huda*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Husayn b. Ali; Muhammad; Mysticism and Holy People

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Latimer, Hugh

(c. 1485–1555 C.E.)

Protestant bishop, martyr

The holy people of sixteenth-century England were largely a product of reformist teachings, Henry VIII's break with Rome, and the consequent struggle between Catholicism and what had become known as Protestantism. Hugh Latimer's holiness, perceived by those Protestants who upheld him as a martyr for the cause, was rooted in his continual promulgation of church reform. Latimer was born somewhere between 1485 and 1491. He graduated from Cambridge in 1510 at a time when the works of Erasmus, Martin Luther, and John Wyclif were avidly studied and discussed. The university remained at the center of reform until an abusive sermon preached by Robert Barnes in St. Edward's Church on Christmas Eve, 1525, caused the group of reformers to be taken to London and examined before Cardinal Wolsey. Latimer, however, was allowed to return to Cambridge with a general license to preach.

Latimer now devoted himself to the cause of church reform, and he gradually became an ardent and eloquent preacher. He especially attacked those abuses that Erasmus had satirized, including indulgences, pilgrimages, and the veneration of images. But many of his sermons spoke little of doctrine, and he may not have been such an ardent upholder of Protestantism as his later followers suggested. He preferred to urge men to live the life of Christ and remember their devoutness in prayer, and certainly never created his own conception of the church or attacked the doctrine of the sacraments, as was asserted at his trial in 1555. Yet he was soon summoned again, this time by the bishop of Lon-

don, who condemned his teachings. He was restored to favor only by appealing to Henry VIII and agreeing to fourteen points of religious practice and worship, including the approval of Lent and the lawfulness of crucifixes and images in the churches.

Through the favor of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cranmer, Latimer received the bishopric of Worcester and continued to preach reform. But in consequence of the Act of Six Articles (a definition of the faith) being carried in Parliament, he resigned his bishopric in July 1539 and was consequently imprisoned in the Tower of London. Released during the reign of Edward VI, the Catholic Mary reimprisoned him soon after her accession to the throne in 1553. Hugh Latimer, along with the fellow reformers Nicholas Ridley and Cranmer, was transferred to Oxford for trial and sentencing. All were found guilty of heresy, and they were burned at the stake on October 16, 1555.

—*Eleanor Pridgeon*

See also: Cranmer, Thomas; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Ridley, Nicholas

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Laurence O'Toole

(1128–1180 C.E.)

Christian archbishop, reformer

Born to the king and queen of a small district in County Kildare in 1128, Laurence O'Toole (Lorcan Ua Tuathail in Irish) survived a dangerous childhood to become the abbot of Glendalough and then archbishop of Dublin during one of the most violent periods in Irish history. At a young age, he was a hostage to Dermot MacMurrough, the king of Leinster who brought the English to Ireland. When he was twelve, he was released and went to meet his father at the great monastic complex at Glendalough, where he decided to remain and become a monk. The boy grew in learning and piety, and eventually Laurence became abbot. An abbacy was a position of great power in Ireland. Demonstrating his holiness and administrative ability, Laurence steered Glendalough through a severe famine and outlaw attacks. He was known for his charity and began to earn a reputation for performing miracles.

Church reform was a saintly endeavor and Laurence rapidly became one of the great reformers of the Irish church. He continued this work when he became archbishop of Dublin, originally a Danish trading town. Laurence was its

first Irish archbishop. Bishop-saints had to be both adept at worldly politics and display a holiness that transcended worldly matters. Laurence was the epitome of such a saint. He fed the poor in his own house every day. It was said that he had the healing touch and could see into the hearts of sinners. He lived in a palace but wore a hair shirt and lived a monastic life. Such abstinence in the midst of luxury and power was an important component of his sanctity.

When Dermot MacMurrough brought the English into Ireland to fight for him, they devastated Dublin. Laurence rallied Dublin's priests to stay and help the wounded, bury the dead, house the homeless, and feed the hungry. Afterward, he mediated between the warring factions. On behalf of his oppressed people, he traveled to the court of Henry II in France and England and to the papal court in Rome, where he was appointed papal legate to Ireland. On one such trip, in 1180, he fell ill and died at the French monastery at Eu. Visions and signs accompanied his death. The monks at Eu had been so impressed with his holiness that they, and not the Irish, developed his cult and pressed for his canonization. On December 5, 1225, Laurence became the first Irish saint to be officially recognized by the pope in Rome.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Lawgivers as Holy People

Several religious traditions regard law as a special gift from god(s), and in these religions the human lawgiver who transmits the law from the divine realm to humankind is often accorded holy status. In such traditions, the interpreter of the law is also often honored as a holy person, inspired by the divine. This is a significant theme especially in the beliefs of Judaism and Shi'a Islam, although it appears in other religions. Thus, for example, the ancient Spartan Lycurgus, credited with creating the Spartan legal and moral code, was regarded as an inspired hero. Similarly, much of the Iroquois Deganawida's (c. 1550–c. 1600) status as holy person derived from his function as lawgiver who could draw together the warring nations of the Iroquois.

The most famous holy lawgiver to most readers will doubtless be Moses, the great Jewish leader credited not only with receiving the Ten Commandments directly from God but with communicating the whole Jewish legal code from God to the people of Israel. Since Moses had done his work

so thoroughly, later Jewish holy figures were left only with the task of interpreting the prescriptions of the Torah, a role that was at times central to Jewish holy people. The need for inspired figures to interpret the law became especially important after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, when rabbis emerged as leaders in all aspects of communal existence. The great rabbis who created the Talmud, the massive commentary on especially the legal code of the Torah, were in effect commentators on the law originally transmitted by Moses. Several later Jewish holy people also won their reputation because of their skill in interpreting law. Moses ben Maimon's (1135/1138–1204) greatest life work was a comprehensive code of Jewish law; similarly, Joseph Karo (1488–1575) was the leading legal authority of Judaism in the sixteenth century and author of a definitive code of Jewish law.

Islam, especially in its Shi'a branch, has also recognized the interpreters of *shari'a*, Islamic law, as inspired holy men (and, very rarely, women). Experts in religious law have a special status that has created a presupposition of special holiness; thus, a disproportionate number of Shi'a holy people have been jurists. For example, the great jurist Mirza Hasan Shirazi (1815–1895) was recognized as his society's sole point of reference on religious law, a position of enormous dignity and responsibility. Much earlier, the Medinan jurist Ja'far as-Sadiq (700–765) constructed the school of law followed by the Shi'i sect. Other great holy jurists in the Shi'a tradition include 'Allamah al-Hilli (1250–1325), Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (1628–1700), Muhammad Baqir Bihbihani (1706–1792), Murtada Ansari (1799–1864), and Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989). Emphasis on jurisprudence in both Sunni and Shi'a Islam proved so strong that sufism developed as a movement in opposition to it.

The other religion that has recognized a significant number of lawgivers or law interpreters as holy people is Christianity. With the development of the legal function of church institutions beginning in the eleventh century, ecclesiastical authorities increasingly recognized the utility of those who could make sense out of a large body of often conflicting canon law (church law) as in some way befitting recognition for holiness. Although such men never seem to have had popular cults, they won formal canonization from a grateful papacy. A notable example of this phenomenon is St. Raymond of Peñafort (1180–1275), the great systematizer of canon law, who appears to have had no special attributes of holiness besides a deeply committed and logical mind that could grasp complex legal issues.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Ansari, Shaykh Murtada; Bihbihani, Muhammad Baqir; Hilli, 'Allamah, al-; Ja'far as-Sadiq; Karo, Joseph; Khomeini,

Ruhollah Musavi; Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir al-; Mirza Hasan Shirazi; Moses; Moses ben Maimon

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Lawrence of Rome

(d. 258 C.E.)

Christian deacon, martyr

Lawrence of Rome died August 10, 258, during the persecutions of the emperor Valerian. His tomb is beneath what is now the church of San Lorenzo Outside the Walls in Rome, part of which was originally dedicated in the early fourth century by the emperor Constantine.

Though Lawrence is listed in the *Depositio Martyrum* of 354 (a list of martyrs venerated in Rome) and was memorialized by Pope Damasus in the late fourth century with an inscription at his tomb, the earliest extant detailed versions of Lawrence's martyrdom come from Bishop Ambrose of Milan and the Spanish poet Prudentius at the end of the fourth century and beginning of the fifth. According to these narratives—the details of which may derive from an oral, not written, tradition, and are of dubious historicity—Lawrence, grieved by the martyrdom of Pope Sixtus II, was comforted by the pope's prediction that Lawrence would be martyred three days later. Soon thereafter, Lawrence was summoned before the magistrate, who insisted that Lawrence turn over the riches of the church to him. Lawrence agreed to do so, and three days later he presented to the magistrate all of Rome's poor and diseased who depended on the church, wherein lay its true wealth. Lawrence was summarily martyred, placed on a gridiron to die slowly. Before he died, Lawrence prayed for the conversion of Rome, and (according to Prudentius) Lawrence's martyrdom led the people of Rome, ancient families and obscure alike, toward a mass conversion to Christianity.

The cult of Lawrence was exceptionally popular and widespread from the fourth century on, extending from Rome—where alone there were thirty-four churches dedicated to Lawrence, many of which still exist today—throughout Italy, Spain, northern Africa, France, England, and into northern Europe as far as Scandinavia, where the eleventh-century cathedral of Lund (Sweden) was dedicated to him. In keeping with the popularity of his cult, Lawrence and his martyrdom were frequently depicted in art. The earliest representation is thought to be the fifth-century mosaic in the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, in which the martyr is depicted standing near a gridiron. However, there has been some doubt about the identification, and it is possible that the martyr depicted is actually Vincent of Saragossa, who also suffered on the gridiron.

—Jessamyn Lewis

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Vincent of Saragossa

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Lazarus

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian saint

The evidence for Lazarus is found solely in the Christian Gospel of John (11:1–44). In the East, his feast day is the Saturday before Palm Sunday; in the West, it is December 17. John begins by describing Lazarus as dwelling with his two sisters, Martha and Mary, in the village of Bethany, less than two miles from Jerusalem. (This Mary was identified early on with Mary Magdalene.) In John's narrative, Lazarus sickens, so the two women send for Jesus, who is staying on the other side of the Jordan with his disciples. In a peculiar and potentially disturbing response, Jesus refuses to come, apparently awaiting the time when Lazarus would have died. When Jesus finally announces his intentions to return to Judea, his disciples remonstrate because of the dangers.

Nevertheless, Jesus does return and is greeted by Martha. In an extraordinary exchange, Martha's gentle reproach is answered by Jesus' affirmation that he personally is "the resurrection and the life" (v. 26); a similar interview with Mary follows, and Jesus asks to be brought to the tomb. After weeping, Jesus calls Lazarus forth from his tomb, and as he emerges, Jesus commands that Lazarus's hands and feet be unbound.

In John's narrative, this miracle is presented as precipitating the passion (vv. 47–53), and this explains Lazarus's feast day in the East. In Christian theology and popular religion, however, he seems not to have figured prominently, certainly not as prominently as his putative sister. An Eastern legend relates that Lazarus and his two sisters were later placed in a rudderless boat by Roman persecutors, and after they landed on Cyprus, Lazarus became bishop of Kition (modern Larnaka). In a Western version, he and his sisters landed in Provence, and he became the first bishop of Marseilles.

In medieval literature, Lazarus plays a curious role: Rather than exemplifying the certainty of personal resurrection for Christians, he frequently becomes a witness for the certainty of death and the very real possibility of damnation. In modern literature, the appearance of Lazarus in Nicholas Kazantzakis's *Last Temptation of Christ* (1960) is entirely ironic: Lazarus is raised, but still clad in flesh four days putrefied.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Death; Jesus; Martha; Mary, Sister of Martha

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Le Saux, Henry

(1910–1973 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, interfaith dialogue leader

Henry Le Saux, born in 1910, was a French Benedictine monk and a leader in the dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism, especially in terms of mysticism, that emerged during the twentieth century. Le Saux actively attempted to develop and to integrate “Christian Vedanta” after visiting, with his priest-colleague Jules Montchanin, the Hindu saint Ramana Maharshi (1878–1950) in 1949. The encounter with Ramana left a profound impact on Le Saux, impressing upon him the truth of the ineffable self (*atman*). Ramana’s presence, above all, Le Saux later wrote, “enfolded everything, and seemed to penetrate to the core of one’s being, causing one to be recollected at the centre of the self, and drawing one irresistibly within” (Abhishiktananda 1990, 2). Le Saux and Montchanin established Shantivanam ashram on the banks of the Cauvery River in southern India; these pioneering efforts at building a cross-cultural synthesis at Shantivanam were later to be developed and led by the English Benedictine monk Bede Griffiths (1907–1993).

Le Saux’s seminal encounter with Ramana was enhanced by several retreats that he later took in caves on the sacred hill of Arunachala, at the base of which was the ashram of Ramana Maharshi. Later, he encountered other teachers in the tradition of nondualism favored by Ramana. These included Poonja-ji, a disciple of Ramana himself, and Gnanananda Giri of Tapovanam ashram, not far from Shantivanam. Le Saux considered Giri to be his guru and took the name of Abhishiktananda (Bliss of the anointed). Eventually, Le Saux left Shantivanam, wandering about in the traditional manner of a Hindu *sannyasi* (renunciant).

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Griffiths, Bede; Maharshi, Ramana

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Leander of Seville

(c. 564–c. 600 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary, scholar

Leander (feast day February 27) was credited by his brother Isidore of Seville (c. 560–636) with having converted the Visigoths in Iberia from Arian to catholic Christianity. In an age of decreasing literacy in Western Europe, Isidore described Leander in his work *De viris illustribus* (On illustrious men) as being “as eminent in virtues as he was in learning.” The value placed on learning by both Leander and his brother helped lay the basis for a revival of clerical education and writing in the seventh century.

Leander was born in about 564. As bishop of Seville from approximately 579 until his death, he became a central figure in the conflict between the Arian king Leovigild and catholic Iberian leaders during the 580s. In addition to contributing anti-Arian treatises to the polemics of the struggle, Leander became a player on the international stage by traveling to Constantinople, apparently seeking imperial support for Hermenegild, a catholic rebel against Leovigild. The support was not forthcoming, but while there, Leander befriended the future pope Gregory I, with whom he later corresponded. In 589, Leander organized the Third Council of Toledo, called to celebrate the conversion of a new king, Reccared, to catholicism. Leander went on to pursue further conciliar activity in his own province. In promoting conciliar governance, he helped to establish the divine authority of church councils as a central governing belief in the Visigothic kingdom, a catholic principle based on the idea that councils are attended by the Holy Spirit. Leander’s role in the conversion of the Visigoths, the Third Council of Toledo, and the rise of conciliar governance in the kingdom; his international ties, especially to Gregory the Great; and his apparent role in educating his younger, better-known brother Isidore have all contributed to the veneration of Leander for his prominent part in the creation of a unified Visigothic kingdom and culturally eminent church.

Only two of Leander’s writings are extant: his sermon at the Third Council of Toledo (“Sermon of the Triumph of the Church for the Conversion of the Goths”) and a monastic rule (“The Training of Nuns”), written for his sister Florentina (also a Christian saint). Although his anti-Arian tracts and letters to Gregory I have been lost, one of Gregory’s responses is extant as his *Epistle* I.41. The *acta* of the provincial council held under Leander, the First Council of Seville, have also been preserved.

—Rachel Stocking

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Isidore of Seville; Politics and Holy People

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Lee, Ann

(1736–1784 C.E.)

Christian mystic, Shaker founder

Mother Ann Lee (or Lees) founded the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming (Shaking Quakers; Shakers). Born on February 28 or 29, 1736, in Manchester, England, Ann Lee was one of eight children of John Lee, a blacksmith. The family was extremely poor, and Ann went to work at a cotton mill when she was about eight years old. When she was about twenty-two, sickened by the poverty and despair in which she lived and worked, Ann began to frequent the religious meetings of a group of unusual Quakers in nearby Bolton. There, the nominal Quakers Jane and James Wardley had become part of a community of enthusiasts who were awaiting the second coming of Christ. The Wardleys conducted their services in a manner similar to their Quaker tradition, usually waiting in silence upon the experience of the "inner light"; however, often "Mother" Jane would break the silence with her shouted revelations, and others were observed to shake and tremble as the spirit took possession of each believer.

The "Shaking Quakers," or "Shakers," were continuously persecuted by governmental authorities and local mobs. In 1770, Ann herself was imprisoned in the Manchester Gaol and spent several days there in the summer heat, alone and hungry. As she prayed for deliverance, she was filled with the very real sense of the presence of the Christ, which she understood to be a revelation of the long-awaited second coming. After her release from prison, Ann went at once to the Shaker meeting to testify to her experience. As she spoke, those in attendance began to be conscious of the divine presence, and they also witnessed to the authenticity of the *parousia*. From then on, Ann Lee was perceived to be not Christ incarnate, but the one chosen by God to bear witness to and welcome in the new age of the *parousia*.

Thereafter, Ann became more prominent, and thus more visible to the local constables. Ann was arrested several times. Traditional clerics denounced the Shakers, since sev-

eral times the Shakers employed aggressive strategies to spread their message, such as interrupting church services to testify before the assembled worshippers. Finally, after being tortured and almost stoned to death as a witch, Ann Lee, her husband, and seven other believers sailed for America in 1774. The small group barely survived for two years, then settled in Watervliet (Indian name, Niskeyuna), New York, near Albany, in 1776. After a few years, Ann and her husband would separate permanently. Several factors led to the separation, not the least of which was Ann's decision to lead a celibate life after her visionary experience at Manchester Gaol.

Although small and somewhat isolated, the new religious community of believers did not escape notice, and there are extant accounts that report individuals observing aghast the Shakers' "extravagant postures" and "religious exercises" as they worshipped as a community. Ann Lee, now commonly called "Mother Ann," became the leading member of the Niskeyuna settlement, although James Whittaker became the public voice of the community. Therefore, on May 19, 1780, the "Dark Day" (so named because of the dark, overcast sky), James Whittaker preached the Shaker doctrine for the first time to a public congregation, which day has been referenced in Shaker history as "the Opening of the Gospel." It was not long before spiritual seekers from upstate New York and New England found their way to Niskeyuna to join the new movement.

From 1780 to 1784, Mother Ann Lee and some of the other believers began an itinerant evangelism, establishing communities of converts. However, their English heritage was problematic in New England during the Revolutionary War, and bands of citizens charged the small contingent of Shakers with British sympathy and espionage, especially as one of Mother Ann's most prominent themes was the call to Christian pacifism. Her experiences in Massachusetts were particularly troubled, not only because of her British lineage and encouragement of nonviolence, but also because of her teachings on the necessity of celibacy and the full equality of women and men among the believers. Her radical consciousness of the human condition in the Christlife without gender distinction or sexuality threatened the traditional mores of society, and, more important, conflicted with the natural structure of the family. Moreover, celibacy as an aspect of the religious life was identified with Roman Catholicism. Thus, in Massachusetts, Mother Ann Lee was accused of harlotry, popery, and witchcraft, and in some places she and her band were set upon by mobs, beaten, and driven out of the towns where they went to preach.

Mother Ann Lee was clearly the inspired focus of faith and witness for her believers. As the "mother" of her community, Ann was often depicted maternally: compassionate, loving, and careful of her "children," but also unwilling to

allow indifference or carelessness on the part of any believer, including herself, in the quest for spiritual perfection. She remained herself a believer among the believers, a humble penitent before God. On September 8, 1784, Ann died quietly in her bed at Niskeyuna, exhausted by her physical and spiritual exertions. She was forty-eight years old.

—*June-Ann Greeley*

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Prophets; Sexuality and Holy People

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Legendary Holy People

It is often hard to discern the dividing line between history and fiction in the lives of holy people; many historic figures have had “pious exaggeration” added to their life stories, especially when the holy person has been held up as an example of a particular type of virtue. There is also a tendency to alter saints’ biographies to make them conform to a given society’s notions of what makes a holy person. Some holy people, however, are purely fictional creations, called into being for a variety of needs. At times these legendary spiritual heroes serve to explain why things are as they are to later worshippers, or provide a sense of community with events of a distant past. At other times, the creation of holy people seems to have sprung from a calculated desire to enhance the importance—or spiritual protection—of a particular community.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all have legends of people of surprising longevity, kept alive as witnesses to God’s work in the world. The Jewish Serah bat Asher appears in two biblical books, Genesis and Numbers, creating the impression that she lived a surprisingly long time and was a special witness to the Exodus. Her legend grew: She was thought to have been alive several centuries later, at the time of King David—and to have continued living for still more centuries, as witness to God’s power in saving the Jews. Finally, she either entered paradise living or died well into the Middle Ages. The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, who appear in both Muslim and Christian legend, play a similar function—a group of men who hid in a cave to escape persecution, they slept for 200 years, emerging to give witness to an earlier age.

In the case of Eastern legendary holy people, the emphasis is on even greater continuity, often going back countless eons. For example, Dipamkara, the first of the twenty-four

buddhas before the Shakyamuni Buddha, was a giant, with a retinue of 84,000 *arahants* (fully enlightened ones), and lived for 100,000 years. The Jain *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) similarly go back to earlier cycles of the world and enjoy incredible majesty and grandeur, emphasizing the link between then and now. In more historic terms, the Hindu rishis, patriarchal poet-sages credited with writing the Vedic hymns, provide a more concrete continuity, since they are believed to be the primary ancestors of the major priestly families. They also hark back to a lost golden age of human achievement, since even the gods are said to have been in awe of their wisdom. The same can be said of the legendary five emperors, or five sages, of China. By the second century B.C.E., it was believed that they had ruled China back in the third millennium—and had brought China every gift of civilization. Such legends may arise and catch on because they emphasize that a culture has the favor of the gods; in this case, depicting Chinese culture as god-given rather than the product of gradual historic development.

This role of legendary holy person as primordial link with the divine also appears in African legend. For example, the Dinka people of Sudan have a legend of a primordial figure named Aweil Longar, one of the first humans to reestablish a link with the divine after humankind was severed from the creator. He had amazing powers given by God, including the power of life over death. And the continuity continues: Important Dinka spiritual leaders still claim descent from Aweil Longar.

The historicity of other saints is not clear. The great reorganization of the Roman Catholic calendar in 1969 led to the deletion of many saints because there was no evidence of their existence, including such popular figures as George, Christopher, and Catherine of Alexandria. In each case, these had become popular saints because they were believed to embody a particularly desirable attribute. George was a paragon of military virtue, Christopher found himself in the enviable position of carrying the Christ child, Catherine was a model of how Christian wisdom could defeat even great philosophers. These saints, even though they were probably invented, had the power to inspire with the stories that were told of them. Similarly, the Muslim Sayyida Nafisa may have been invented as a model woman saint—it is suspicious that the first mention of her does not appear until 150 years after her purported death in 824, and her veneration did not rise in Egypt until the thirteenth century.

The “model saint,” probably not consciously a fraud but rather originally a story created to inspire, also appears in Judaism in the tale of Amnon of Mainz. His legend developed in the twelfth century, reporting that Amnon was pushed to convert to Christianity about 200 years before. He delayed, and finally the persecuting bishop ordered that he be cut apart piece by piece. The gallant Amnon asked that his

tongue be cut out first to punish it for not refusing point blank when ordered to abandon his faith. The universality of this tendency to create ideal saints can also be seen in the case of Malawi's mythical martyr, Mbona. He is portrayed as offering himself in a Christlike self-sacrifice that is deeply inspirational. No historic man lies behind the story though: His legend is an adaptation of an earlier cult in a process of centralization in the seventeenth century.

Holy people have also been invented or their biographical details have been altered to add prestige to places associated with them. It is impossible to tell at this remove whether the creators of such stories were gullible or mercenary, or merely wishful thinkers. Many locales have claimed that particularly important holy people visited them or served as parent of their communities, ranging from Glastonbury in England, where a supposed visit from Joseph of Arimathea bolstered the monastery's claim to antiquity, to locales in India that at various times "discovered" a connection to the historic Krishna, to the Buddha, or to another great holy person. A particularly common feature of medieval Christian Europe was to forge fictional connections with figures who appeared in the gospels—dozens of dioceses claimed that the obscure saints buried in their crypts were actually disciples of one of the original twelve apostles. The rediscovered "antiquity" of these churches increased their importance in the Christian world (if the claim won acceptance).

Ultimately, most tales of saints, wherever they lived, contain strong elements of legend, which most likely developed as people strove for absolute certainty that some people, indeed, are especially beloved of the gods.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Amnon of Mainz; Catherine of Alexandria; Christopher; Confucian Culture Heroes; George; Hagiography; Joseph of Arimathea; Mbona; Nafisa, Sayyida; Rishis; Serah bat Asher; Seven Sleepers of Ephesus

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Lekganyane, Ignatius (Engenas)

(c. 1885–1948 C.E.)

Pentecostal church founder

Ignatius Lekganyane was founder of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), South Africa's largest and fastest-growing independent church. The ZCC combines strong charismatic elements such as healing, exorcism, baptism, prophecy, and miracles with traditional African beliefs, particularly the intercession of ancestors. It celebrates Easter each year with gatherings of more than a million church members. The

church has its origins in the Zionist movement founded by John A. Dowie in Zion City, Illinois, in 1896, which sent missionaries to Africa in 1897. Its headquarters are in Zion City, Moria.

Lekganyane, a rural farm worker born in 1885, was educated by Scottish Presbyterian missionaries, and Presbyterian doctrine is also reflected in some of the church's theology. His ministry began in 1916 following two spiritual experiences, including the healing of an eye disease after baptism. Schisms characterized the early years of the Zionist churches in South Africa, and Lekganyane seceded from the Zion Apostolic Faith Mission in 1925 to form the ZCC.

Following Lekganyane's death in 1948, his son Joseph took over the ZCC; his other son, Edward, founded the St. Engenas Zion Christian Church. The ZCC remains by far the largest branch, with some 2 million to 6 million members. Today it is led by Lekganyane's grandson, Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane.

—Roger B. Beck

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles

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Lekhraj, Dada

(1876–1969 C.E.)

Hindu sect founder

Dada Lekhraj was founder of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization, a religious movement rooted in Hinduism and notable for the preeminent role of women in its leadership and membership. Born in a village near Hyderabad in Sind (now in Pakistan) in 1876, Lekhraj spent most of his life as a successful and well-to-do diamond merchant. At the age of sixty, he began to have a series of dramatic visions focused on the nature and history of the cosmos and the coming destruction of the world. As word of his extraordinary experiences spread, he attracted a mainly female following from the wealthy business community of Hyderabad, and a formal organization was established in 1937. Shortly

thereafter, controversy concerning the role of women in the movement forced its roughly 300 members to move to Karachi. After the subcontinent's partition between India and Pakistan in 1947, the movement shifted to Mount Abu in India in 1950 and established permanent headquarters there. Members began to proselytize in various Indian cities in 1952.

Lekhraj taught that cosmic history consists of an infinite series of completely identical 5,000-year cycles in which the world repeatedly begins as a paradise and then degenerates into the degraded state that is its current condition. At the end of each cycle, the world is destroyed by a cataclysmic war, after which the paradise returns. Just prior to the destruction, the Supreme Soul (known as Shiva Baba) imparts to humanity knowledge of the true nature of cosmic history and the paradise to come by speaking through the mouth of Dada Lekhraj. Movement members practice a special technique of meditation called raja yoga and pursue a lifestyle characterized by celibacy and other behavioral restrictions in order to become fit to be reborn in the coming paradise.

Lekhraj is believed to have continued to communicate with the movement by means of trances and visions after his death in 1969. In the meantime, the movement has flourished and internationalized, currently claiming more than 3,000 centers in India and abroad.

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Death; Hinduism and Holy People; Prophets

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Lenshina, Alice (Mulenga Lubusha)

(1919–1978 C.E.)

Christian church founder

Alice Lenshina founded the Lumpa Church in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) in 1958. The church became involved in political disputes in the 1960s that led to her arrest and to the death of many of her adherents.

Lenshina, born in 1919, was raised as a Presbyterian. The turning point for her spiritually came in 1953, after she experienced “rising from the dead.” During this experience, she allegedly spoke to Jesus and John the Baptist in Chibemba, her native language. They instructed her to visit the white man, who would give her the rest of God’s message. After her vision, she visited the local missionary, Fergus MacPherson at Lubwa, to recount her experience. MacPherson did not

dismiss her or her story. Lenshina was baptized and christened as Alice in the Church of Scotland. She eventually broke away from the Presbyterian Church, however, and began baptizing on her own and accepting those thrown out of the mission orders.

Some write that indigenous churches were able to accommodate aspects of local culture that were incompatible with missionary church teachings. Her church did not accept polygamy, and Lenshina was adamantly opposed to widow cleansing, a practice by which a woman had to have sexual relations with a male relative of a dead husband before she was free to marry outside of that family (her own husband, Petros Chitankwa, was a male relative of her first husband). She stipulated that in marriage, both parties had to make known their intention of *willingly* entering into the relationship. Lenshina also preached against witchcraft, whereas missionaries chose not to deal with the theme in their teachings. She convinced her followers to turn in their talismans to show their denunciation of the practice. Among these talismans, however, were Catholic rosaries, which strained her relationship with the Catholic Church. Moreover, the Central Church of Africa, with which she was affiliated, expelled Lenshina and her husband for not correcting practices the church felt were incompatible with Christianity.

Lenshina’s followers were loyal, however. With their help, she was able to construct her own church, a grand structure in Kasoma. More than 20,000 attended the opening ceremony for this church in 1958, and it became the mother house of the denomination known as the Lumpa Church. In addition, she had several temples built on the outskirts of villages. After its expansion, the church performed confessions, baptisms, marriages, and ceremonies blessing the seeds before planting. Her deacons and choir members had special status. Between 1953, when she began preaching, and 1960, the Lumpa Church came to boast a million members.

Politically, the church developed at a time when the nationalist and independence movements in Zambia were very active. When Zambia gained its independence in 1964, her followers were considered anarchists and did not pay taxes. The tension between her members and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) proved deadly. Between 1964 and 1968, some 19,000 people were killed in fighting between government forces and church members, and others exiled themselves to the Katanga region of the Congo. Lenshina submitted herself to the authorities to prevent further conflict and lived, under house arrest, at a Mumbwa prison near Lusaka until her natural death in 1978. She requested that no autopsy be performed on her body and left specific details regarding her burial (not all of which were followed). The membership of the Lumpa Church has spread throughout Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nyasaland, and the Congo.

—Wilmetta Toliver-Diallo

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Death; Prophets; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Leo the Great

(d. 461 C.E.)

Christian pope, doctor of the church

Leo I is one of two popes called “the Great” (Gregory I is the other). Leo’s insistence on the primacy of the bishopric of Rome and his active leadership in the church as a whole helped lay the foundations for the authority and power of the medieval papacy. His 143 surviving letters and 96 sermons are important sources for the history of the church in the early Middle Ages. His feast day is November 10 (formerly April 11) for Western Catholics, February 18 in the East.

Leo was born in the late fourth century, probably of Tuscan parents, perhaps in Rome. He served as a deacon under Celestine I and Sixtus III and was an influential adviser to both popes. Leo learned of his election to the papacy in August 440 while in Gaul on a mission on behalf of the imperial court. He returned to Rome and was consecrated on September 29.

An able and energetic pope, Leo was much admired by his contemporaries. He exercised his authority most actively in Italy, but his advice and rulings were also sought by the bishops of Spain and northern Africa. In Gaul, he intervened to limit the ambitions of Bishop Hilarius of Arles, and he maintained a papal vicariate in Illyricum in the southern Balkans. In 448, Leo was approached by a Byzantine abbot named Eutyches who had been deposed by the bishop of Constantinople for teaching monophysitism, the doctrine that Christ’s human nature was completely absorbed by his divine nature at the Incarnation. Leo supported the condemnation of Eutyches in a work known as the *Tome*, in which he set out the orthodox belief that human and divine natures coexisted in Christ. When the Council of Ephesus upheld Eutyches’ teachings in 449, Leo branded it an “armed robbery” (*latrocinium*) and called for a new council. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon reversed the decision of Ephesus and accepted Leo’s *Tome* as containing the correct teaching on Christ’s natures. Leo, however, delayed his approval of the Council of Chalcedon until 453 because one of the canons

passed by the council gave the see of Constantinople the same status as Rome in ecclesiastical matters.

Leo lived during a time when the Roman Empire was beginning to collapse in the West, and he stepped in to fill partially the power vacuum left by the ineffectiveness of the Western emperors. In 452, he met with Attila the Hun at Mantua and convinced him to spare Rome and abandon his invasion of Italy. In 455, Leo persuaded the Vandal king Gaiseric to moderate his attack on Rome and spare the lives of the Roman people. Leo’s actions foreshadowed the wider role that later popes would play in the politics of central Italy.

After his death in 461, Leo was buried in the vestibule of St. Peter’s in Rome. His body was moved into the interior of the church in 688. Benedict XIV declared Leo a doctor of the church in 1754.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Politics and Holy People; Pope-Saints

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Leoba

See Lioba

Leonard

(d. c. 559 C.E.?)

Christian legendary saint

Leonard of Noblac (and of Limousin), patron of prisoners, is a Christian saint widely venerated up to the early twentieth century despite the fact that the earliest account of him, written in the eleventh century, is considered historically worthless. Indeed, some scholars have suggested that this Life was a forgery by Bishop Jordan of Limoges written to foster the local cult. In any case, there are no traces of Leonard in any document preceding this period. Nonetheless, his cult was very popular and hundreds of churches were dedicated to him.

The eleventh-century Life claims that Leonard was the son of nobles at the court of King Clovis (r. 481–511) and

that he became a follower of Remigius, renowned missionary to the Franks. His first miracle was performed at Remigius's monastery, where he turned water into wine after giving the sacrificial wine to a beggar in need. Leonard later went into the wilderness around Limousin, a popular hermitage for solitary monks. Here, he heard lamentations for the queen, who was dying nearby. After curing her through prayer, Leonard obtained from King Clovis the right to free any prisoner he considered worthy.

Leonard is supposed to have died around 559, and many of his posthumous miracles involve the release of prisoners, including noteworthy individuals such as King Richard I (r. 1189–1199; "Richard the Lion-Hearted") of England. Bishop Gerland of Naumburg wrote in 1115, "Under his hand the hardest iron melts like wax before the fire [and] the captive's chains are broken" (Arbellot 1910, 64). The broken fetters were often brought to the shrine of Leonard in tribute. Leonard is possibly mythical in origin and so he stands as a reminder of the power of written texts to generate history. The eleventh-century Life inspired several other medieval accounts and these spread throughout Europe, resulting in the hundreds of churches and towns that still bear his name.

—Asa Simon Mittman

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Remigius

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Leonard of Port Maurice

(1676–1751 C.E.)

Roman Catholic friar, preacher, spiritual writer

Born in Porto Maurizio, Italy, in 1676, Paul Jerome Casanova was educated by Jesuits in Rome. Taking the name Leonard, he joined the Franciscan order at Ponticelli in the Sabine Mountains and was ordained a priest in 1703. After a long illness, he settled at the Florentine friary of San Francesco del Monte and succeeded in restoring the Rule of St. Francis. He later became guardian and established a retreat at Incontro in the mountains near Florence, where friars retired for solitude, fasting, and silence.

Leonard went on to preach in Umbria and Genoa, his missions marked by huge congregations and many extraordinary conversions. He was very often obliged to preach in the open, as churches could not contain the thousands who

came to listen. He preached not only the way of the cross, but also the devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus, the perpetual adoration of the eucharist, and devotion to the Immaculate Conception. One of his aspirations was to see the latter defined as a dogma of faith by Rome.

In 1744, Pope Benedict XIV sent Leonard to Corsica in the hope that his energetic preaching would vanquish lawlessness there. He had to be rescued from those angered by his attacks on their morals, however, after six months, and even the papacy, which held him in high esteem for his preaching, recognized that it was inadvisable for him to return to the island. In 1750, he set up the stations of the cross in the Colosseum. But after preaching extensively in Lucca the following year, he returned to Rome to die.

Leonard composed numerous devotional treatises and letters. His most famous work is *Proponimenti* (Resolutions), a tract for the attainment of higher Christian perfection. He was beatified in 1796 and canonized in 1867. The church of the monastery of St. Bonaventure al Palatino in Rome claims his body.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Leopold III of Austria

(1073–1136 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Leopold III, born in Melk in 1073, succeeded his father in the Babenberg line as margrave of Austria in 1096. In 1106, he married Agnes, daughter of Emperor Henry IV. They had eighteen children, of whom eleven survived childhood. Leopold arranged politically strategic marriages for most of those who survived; however, his most accomplished son was Otto of Freising, a Cistercian monk and bishop whose historical writings are still referred to today.

Leopold played several important parts in the politics of central Europe. In 1105, at a crucial moment in the war between the emperor and his son, Leopold withdrew his troops, resulting in Henry IV's defeat. He also participated in the negotiations between the pope and the emperor that resulted in the Concordat of Worms in 1122, which settled the Investiture Contest. In 1125, he declined an offer of the imperial crown from the German princes. Throughout his reign, Leopold was a generous patron of ecclesiastical institutions. He founded the monasteries of Heiligenkreuz, Marizell, and Klosterneuburg, which played important parts in

the religious life of Austria through the Middle Ages and are centers of religious activity to this day. He died in 1136 and was buried at Klosterneuburg, outside of Vienna.

The earliest traces of a saintly cult are found in the fourteenth century, when the pope and the bishop of Passau issued letters approving public veneration of Leopold. The wife of the Hapsburg duke of Austria started an annual pilgrimage in 1339 to Leopold's tomb in thanksgiving for the birth of her first child. This marks the beginning of a long and eventful association between that dynasty and Leopold. In the late fourteenth century, the canons of Klosterneuburg composed a new biography of Leopold. This Life emphasized Leopold's good rulership, personal religiosity, and generous patronage of the church. It also gave a prominent role to Agnes as a holy woman and a collaborator in her husband's charitable activities.

In the late fifteenth century, the Hapsburg emperor and duke of Austria, Frederick III, sought a patron saint to enhance the dignity of his dynasty, its claim over Austria, and its significance in the Holy Roman Empire. He settled upon Leopold and petitioned the pope for Leopold's canonization. The Italian humanist and canonist Franciscus de Pavinis led the campaign for canonization at the papal court, and Pope Innocent VIII canonized Leopold in 1485. Frederick then commissioned an elaborate genealogical work that stressed the connection between the Babenberg family and his own. This text can still be found in Klosterneuburg.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, the University of Vienna hosted an annual panegyric to Leopold in which the margrave-saint's rulership and family life were eloquently praised. Since the sixteenth century, St. Leopold has been a symbol of Austria's Catholic identity. Leopold is a patron saint of Austria, and Austrians still celebrate his feast day on November 15 with great pomp.

—David J. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians

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Libasse Thiaw

See **Limamou Laye, Seydina**

Liguori, Alphonsus

(1696–1787 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, order founder

Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists, a Roman Catholic religious order established to serve the poor, was born on September 27, 1696, near Naples. He was not sent to school but tutored under the guidance of his father. He received a law degree at age sixteen and became a successful lawyer. However, in 1723, in a case involving 500,000 ducats of property, he overlooked a significant document and lost the case. He believed that this failure was an act of God, calling him to greater prayer and humility. In August of that same year, he had a vision of light and heard a voice telling him to leave the world and give himself fully to God. He was ordained a priest on April 6, 1726, and quickly dedicated himself to the service of the poor.

On November 9, 1732, Liguori founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, also known as the Redemptorists, to serve the country's poor. Though challenged by many divisions between the initial members, Liguori held firm to his vision of the order. Not desiring episcopal power, he avoided being named archbishop of Palermo; instead he was consecrated bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths, a poor diocese in desperate need of reform, in 1762. From May 1768 to June 1769, Liguori suffered from rheumatic fever, leaving him paralyzed until his death. His illness finally led him to resign from his see in 1775.

Unfortunately this was not an end to his travail. The Redemptorist houses in Naples became overly connected to local politics. As a result, other congregations in the papal states, with the support of Pius VI, separated from the original Neapolitan house. Effectively, this severed Liguori from the rest of the order he had founded. He died seven years later on August 1, 1787. In 1793, all branches of the order were formally reunited.

—Melissa L. Smeltzer

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People

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Limamou Laye, Seydina (Libasse Thiaw)

(1843–1909 C.E.)

Muslim reformer, mahdi

In 1883 on the peninsula of Cap-Vert in present-day Senegal, Libasse Thiaw, an illiterate fisherman born in 1843, began to preach Islamic virtue and to proclaim himself the *mahdi*, the special God-sent individual who would come to restore the faith. He took the name Seydina Limamou Laye. Many laughed, but many listened. Thus, a following developed and

a new Islamic brotherhood came into existence, the Layennes. Limamou Laye's doctrinal concentration was on purifying Islam through the destruction of the indigenous practices that had filtered into Islamic life. He called for *jihad*, holy war, but proclaimed that true holy war is *jihad al-nafs*, the battle to overcome the base passions of the flesh.

According to one tradition, Limamou Laye declared himself a reincarnation of the prophet Muhammad. Another tradition says that he called himself only the shadow of the prophet Muhammad. Whatever the case, he was revered as the mahdi, and immediately an oral tradition of miracles sprang into being to support his claims. He was said to be able to heal any sickness through the simple blowing of his breath onto the infirm. His following multiplied among people from other regions, including adherents from Waalo in northern Senegal. The villages of Yoff and Cambèrene became holy communities similar to Mecca and Medina. The French colonial authorities were paying attention. Limamou Laye's call for jihad led to French fears of rebellion, and the government kept him under surveillance and eventually arrested and imprisoned him for three months in 1887.

The arrest further solidified Limamou Laye's reputation as a holy man, and to some a prophet, owing to the miraculous events reported surrounding the event. Furthermore, his son, Seydina Issa Rohou Laye, came into his own as a man of spiritual stature. Seydina Issa proclaimed himself the reincarnation of 'Isa (the Arabic name for Jesus Christ). This only added to the stature of his father and the importance of the family in the eyes of followers. At the death of Seydina Limamou Laye in 1909, Seydina Issa Rohou Laye headed the group and it grew and expanded under his leadership.

—Douglas Thomas

See also: Islam and Holy People; Mahdi, al-; Messiahs; Muhammad; Reform and Reaction; Reincarnation

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Linji (Huizhao)

(d. 866/867 C.E.)

Chan Buddhist sect founder

Linji in the ninth century founded his own Chan Buddhist lineage, which became the Rinzai sect in Japan. His name is derived from a small temple called Linji, which means "overlooking the ford." There is a revealing story about how he received the transmission of authority from his master. According to the narrative, some monks were walking to the

fields to work. Linji was following his master, Huangbo, who noticed that his disciple was not carrying a hoe. After listening to Linji's feeble excuse about why he did not have it, the master called the disciple nearer, threw his hoe on the ground, and challenged Linji to pick it up. After Linji picked up the hoe, Huangbo announced that it was now unnecessary for Huangbo himself to help in the fields, and he returned to the temple, leaving Linji holding his hoe and the authority of the master.

Linji was famous for his strict and harsh teaching methods, which included beating students and shouting at them. He was convinced that a teacher should not teach or explain anything but instead must force students to experience truth for themselves. This pedagogical emphasis was consistent with his focus on wordless teaching. He also stressed "naturalness" in his method, which included the elements of "no concern" and "no seeking." That is, he felt that if a student was overly concerned about learning or diligently seeking for the truth, taking an "unnatural" approach, the aspirant would only go further astray.

Linji's thought embodied an egalitarian spirit. The true human being, he believed, was someone without rank or title who was freed of all fetters. This was a radical position to take in a society in which social rank was so important. Such a person, he said, existed concretely in the present and was lively, dynamic, attuned to nature, and dependent on nothing. Furthermore, grounded in the transcendent, the true human being was ordinary, simple, natural, and direct and revealed the buddha-nature. He was without face, a solitary and independent figure freely following the way, indefinable, not clinging to motion or its opposite, a marginal figure on the fringes of society. As such, Linji's true human being shares traits in common with Daoist notions of the sage. Such a figure, Linji said, must be willing to destroy all obstacles to liberation. Linji defined these obstacles in terms of opposition to five great sins: killing one's father, mother, or a buddha, destroying the harmony of the monastic community, and burning the scriptures.

Linji devised a four-step technique to open a student's mind, grounded on the four basic propositions of Indian Buddhist logic. The initial step involved taking away a sense of individual selfhood but not one's objective station, with the overall objective of freeing one from attachments. The second step involved taking away the objective situation but not the person, which meant being free from the attachments of objectivity and letting subjectivity remain. Being detached from objectivity, he believed, liberates a person from bondage to what is exterior. The third step involved taking away both the person and objective situation, which represented liberation from both subjective and objective bondage. Finally, the fourth step involved taking away neither the person nor the situation, which allowed both sub-

jectivity and objectivity to become identified with each other. This happened when a person became master of him/herself.

—*Carl Olson*

See also: Authority of Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Huangbo Xiyun; Status; Teachers as Holy People

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Lioba

(d. c. 780 C.E.)

Christian abbess, missionary

Lioba, or Leoba, an Anglo-Saxon woman from Wessex, was a nun at the monastic community of Wimbourne, under the rule of the virtuous abbess Tetta, when she was called by her relative, St. Boniface, to join him in his missionary work among the unconverted Germanic tribes on the borders of the Frankish kingdom in the eighth century. Such missionary work was dangerous, and the very real possibilities for martyrdom made saints out of many of those who brought Christianity to the region. Boniface put Lioba in charge of the new double monastery of Bischofsheim in Germany, which housed both men and women.

A ninth-century account of her life offers a glimpse of some of the many obstacles she faced in the performance of this enormous administrative task. We see her performing miracles through the power of her prayers, heroically organizing a bucket brigade to fight a fire, and hurling prayers into the teeth of a violent storm to calm it. She not only protected those in her care with the power of her holiness, she also diligently taught them scripture and the beliefs of their new religion. Her reputation for learning and wisdom as well as her manifest concern for the spiritual rather than the material made her much sought after by kings, nobles, princes, and bishops for her good counsel. They all respected and loved her. She was often at the court of Charlemagne, and she had a close friendship with his second wife, Hildegard. Her ability to both act as an effective force in the world of secular politics and maintain her focus on God was a particular sign of her sanctity. She performed one healing miracle while alive, but many such miracles were recorded at her tomb following her death in about 780, providing further proof to people of the Middle Ages that she was a true and powerful saint.

Lioba's hagiographer, the monk Rudolph, had difficulty reconciling the social, political, and administrative activism demanded of a missionary with the expectations of Roman orthodoxy that women religious be passive and cloistered. Rudolph thus spends an unusual amount of time recounting the events of Lioba's early life, when her activities were more

conventional. The story of her birth echoes many biblical stories, and her life at Wimbourne was strictly disciplined. She was humble, obedient, and abstemious to the point of asceticism. She steadfastly pursued spiritual perfection, and she was well versed in scripture, church law, and the writings of the church fathers. These attributes alone marked her with a special spirituality, but it was as missionary and abbess that she acquired true sanctity.

—*Diane Peters Auslander*

See also: Boniface; Charlemagne; Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mission

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Liudger

(c. 744–809 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Liudger (Ludger of Münster, Liuger) is patron saint of Münster, the city itself named for the monastery he founded there in 795. He was born in about 744 near Utrecht to noble Christian Frisians, educated at Utrecht and York under the great Anglo-Saxon scholar Alcuin, and ordained c. 777. He returned to the continent as a missionary, and in 758 he built two churches in Frisia, which were destroyed by Saxon invasions but later rebuilt. Liudger evangelized Westphalia and Eastphalia with wide success, and he is said to have converted the Saxons by kindness, whereas the repressive efforts of Charlemagne had failed. Against his own modest protests, he was consecrated bishop in 784. He died in 809 at his monastery at Werden, where his relics remained until 1984, when they were translated to Münster.

Three Lives of Liudger survive, all written by the end of the ninth century. One survives in an eleventh-century illuminated manuscript (Berlin, Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Theol. lat. fol. 323) with twenty-three illuminations depicting scenes from his life, from his birth through his posthumous miracles, including typical images of healing the blind and lame, resurrections, and exorcisms. This Life contains many elements common to numerous contemporary saints (for example, Armand, Cuthbert, Millán, and Maur), including miraculous provisions of fish, resurrections of the dead, and numerous healings of the blind. In one such image, Liudger raises St. Lebuin (Liafwin), an English monk from Ripon and a fellow missionary in Frisia, from the dead. As

the popular celebration of the cult of saints grew dramatically in the eleventh century, Liudger's relics were rehoused in a new crypt built in the mid–eleventh century and then elevated to a shrine behind the altar by Abbot Adalwig only a few decades later. This shrine came to be a site of healing, as can be seen in the eleventh-century manuscript depicting a man with gout being healed by lifting the saint's head in his hands.

—Asa Simon Mittman

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Miracles; Mission

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Lull, Ramon

(1232–1316 C.E.)

Christian layman, author, preacher, mystic

Ramon Lull was a founding figure in the creation of vernacular literature in Europe. Patron saint of the Balearic Islands, he was also a missionary and visionary layman. His reputation among mainstream theologians has been as a marginal thinker; indeed, he was condemned in the century after his death by the inquisitor of Aragon for his unorthodox methods, and he was rumored to have been an alchemist. Lull's fame rests chiefly upon his "Art," a complete system of logic and theology that he used in his missionary efforts.

Born into a prominent family of Majorca in 1232, Lull spent his youth composing works in the troubadour style. Around age thirty, he had a series of visions of Christ crucified—his "conversion to penitence." This experience was not unlike that of Francis of Assisi; Lull, too, gave up his possessions and dedicated himself to evangelical preaching and poverty while remaining a layman. He spent the rest of his long life wandering the Western Christian world, attempting to persuade popes and princes of the need to evangelize the Muslims and Jews. To forward this notion, he many times attempted to set up schools for the teaching of Arabic, all the while preaching and writing more than 250 works.

Lull may have remained a more conventional figure had his first mystical experience been his last. But around 1274, while living as a hermit on Mt. Randa, he had another revelation from God. In the midst of contemplation, God illuminated Lull's mind with the method by which he might convince unbelievers to accept Western Christianity. This was the genesis both of Lull's later fame as the "Illuminated Doctor" and of his famous Art, which was to remain the focus of the rest of his career. All knowledge could be represented and explained, he believed, by the techniques of the Art: a series of revolving wheels with symbolic letters that corresponded

to all levels of existence. With this system, Lull said, all arguments could be stated and all questions answered; theology became logically explicable, and all logical operations could be recognized as a part of theology.

Lull made several missionary trips to Tunis, disputing religion with learned Muslims. He is reputed to have been martyred there, though scholars believe that he actually died back on Majorca in 1316. Regardless, a cult for the martyr grew up in the Balearic Islands, where he is regarded as the patron saint. His saintly reputation received some formal recognition in 1847, when Lull was beatified by Pope Pius IX.

—Matthew M. Slepik

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Francis of Assisi; Mission; Prophets; Scholars as Holy People

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Longchenpa (Tibetan: Klongchen rab-'byam-pa)

(1308–1363 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar

Longchenpa was born in east central Tibet in 1308 and from an early age demonstrated a gift for learning. He quickly mastered most of the systems of philosophy of Tibetan Buddhism and became adept at ritual as well. At nine years old, he memorized *The Transcendental Practice of Discriminative Awareness*, both in the 25-line and 8,000-line versions. When he was twelve, he became a novice monk, ordained by Samdrup Rincen of Semye and Kunga Oze. At nineteen, he entered the great center of logic and philosophy, Sangpu Neutok. There he mastered literature, yoga, and ritual as well as philosophy. He studied especially the philosophers Nagarjuna (c. 150–250), Chandrakirti (c. 580–660), Santideva (c. 650–750), and Atisha (982–1054), becoming an excellent debater. Philosophically, he accepted Nagarjuna's view that there was an ultimate reality, beyond conception, and that conceptual knowledge was only relative truth. Through tantric practice and meditation one could achieve the correct view, beyond all duality, inner, outer, subject, object, and so on. This was the blissful awareness of the Great Perfection (*dzogchen*).

There were many cliques and power struggles within the monastery, and Longchenpa, disillusioned and saddened be-

cause of all the suffering of sentient beings, left to practice meditation alone. Just before leaving, he posted a comic poem, each line beginning with a letter of the alphabet, lampooning the monks from Kham who had constantly harassed him. Setting off on his journey, he encountered the great saint Kumaraja, who became his teacher. Although he received many offerings, he always used them in the service of the teachings. He was very humble and ate the food given to him by the poor as if it were the greatest delicacy. Yet he never honored the rich and powerful.

At the end of his life, although he was very ill, he continued to teach. After announcing his approaching death, he traveled to Semye Chempu monastery, saying that he would leave his body there. At this place, asking all his students to be silent, he passed away in 1363. Although he died in wintertime, it was said that the earth became warm and flowers burst into bloom.

—Marie Friquegnon

See also: Atisha; Chandrakirti; Death; Nagarjuna; Scholars as Holy People

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Longinus

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian legendary saint

Longinus is the Roman soldier who pierced Christ's side with a spear as he hung on the cross; his name is probably derived from the Greek *longche* ("lance"). The spear, or lance, went on to become an important relic in its own right and was eventually absorbed into the Arthurian Grail Cycle.

According to tradition, Christ bled onto the spear and the blood found its way into Longinus's eyes, curing him of blindness. After this incident, Longinus converted to Christianity, left the army, and became a monk in Caesarea. His teeth and tongue were removed when he refused to honor non-Christian gods, but he still spoke clearly. Longinus then destroyed the cult statues of the gods, which caused the local governor to go blind and insane. Longinus was beheaded at that point, and some of his blood splattered the governor, curing his blindness.

Longinus's feast day is March 15 in the West and October 16 in the East; his relics are in St. Augustine's Church in Rome. The spear was supposedly discovered in a church in Antioch during the First Crusade. That relic has been split up: The tip is in the Treasure Room of the Hofburg Palace in

Vienna, and the shaft is in one of the four pillars over the altar in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

—Kelly A. O'Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Legendary Holy People; Repentance and Holy People

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Lorcan Ua Tuathail

See Laurence O'Toole

Losang Gyatso (Dalai Lama V)

(1617–1682 C.E.)

Buddhist spiritual leader, ruler, monk

The "Great Fifth" is arguably the most important of the fourteen dalai lamas. From his time onward, the dalai lamas have been the symbol of Tibetan nationhood as well as the leading figures of the Buddhist religion in Tibet. He became the secular as well as the religious leader of Tibet, established a strong relationship with the rulers of China, and built one of the world's most remarkable buildings, the Potala Palace of Lhasa.

The child who would be identified as the fifth dalai lama was born in central Tibet in 1617 amidst auspicious signs and dreams. His parents followed the Nyingma traditions, which is notable because he was the dalai lama who did the most to unify the dominant Gelukpa tradition with the older tradition of Nyingma. His mother was related to the powerful king of Tsang, whose military excursions, ironically, led to a minor civil war and a conflict with Mongolian forces that delayed the process whereby he was discovered.

Three candidates were found, but the usual divining instruments—consultation of two oracles and subjecting the boys to the test of recognizing the effects of the previous dalai lama—proved inconclusive. Two prominent lamas performed a divination by placing the names in barley meal balls and rolling them around a bowl until one fell out, and this sealed the choice. The child chosen was taken to Drepung Monastery in 1622 and given the name Losang Gyatso (Tib.: blo bzang rgya mtsho).

When he was seven, Losang Gyatso went on pilgrimage to the Oracle Lake monastery, where a statue miraculously "offered" him an offering scarf (a gust of wind blew it from the statue into his hands). He was trained in the extensive Gelukpa curriculum of philosophy and ritual but still managed to spend five to six hours per day in meditation and to

pursue many other subjects. He became an expert in astrology and classical Indian poetry and, even more astonishing, completed the lengthy, complex training required to become a doctor of Tibetan medicine. When he was seventeen, Losang Gyatso began to train in the Nyingma tantric lineages. His interest in Nyingma thought and practice continued to grow, and in later years he became an important bridge between these alienated sects. He is, in fact, considered by the Nyingmas to have been a major holder of one of the Nyingma lineages, which did not sit well with the Gelukpas.

When Losang Gyatso was still in his early twenties, the king of Tsang, intent on wiping out the Gelukpa monasteries of central Tibet and taking their wealth, instead incited the Qoshot Mongols under Gushri Khan to enter Tibet in defense of the dalai lama. They united the splintered kingdoms and principalities of Tibet under one government and named the dalai lama its head, a position the dalai lamas have kept to the present. One of his first acts was to suppress a rebellion of supporters of the imprisoned king of Tsang. He closed thirteen monasteries that had actively backed them, including the great Jonangpa Monastery. He was accused of using this opportunity to solidify Gelukpa dominance.

One of the Great Fifth's achievements was the construction of Potala Palace, residence of the dalai lamas and a monastery and administrative center. The foundations were laid in 1645, but construction was not completed until after Losang Gyatso's death. The Potala dominates the Lhasa skyline and has become one of the world's best-known structures. He also built the national medical college, implemented the first system of taxation, commissioned the first census and land survey, and undertook measures to protect wildlife. He was a prolific writer, his collected works comprising twenty-eight volumes that included accounts of his visionary experiences.

Losang Gyatso was invited to Beijing in 1650 and after much deliberation decided to meet the new Manchurian emperor. He was received with great pomp and devotion. At the emperor's request, he wrote a monastic charter that was used to establish dozens of Tibetan Buddhist centers in Manchuria and China. Tibetan Buddhism became the principal court religion of the Manchu rulers for centuries.

In 1679, soon after installing Sanggyay Gyatso as his "desi," or manager, the Great Fifth went into a meditation retreat from which he never emerged. His death in 1682 was concealed for fourteen years because Sanggyay Gyatso feared that the Potala might otherwise never be finished. This greatly delayed the search for the sixth dalai lama, a layman who proved incapable of the job.

—Daniel Cozort

See also: Action in the World; Buddhism and Holy People; Reincarnation; Rulers as Holy People

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Louis IX

(1214–1270 C.E.)

Christian king

Louis IX, king of France, member of the Capetian dynasty, and crusader, was the last important royal saint of the Middle Ages. Born to Louis VIII and Blanche of Castile in 1214, he reigned from his father's death in 1226 until his own death in 1270, although in his youth under the regency of his formidable mother. Despite an early threat to his rule by ambitious barons, France flourished under Louis, and the peace and prosperity the country enjoyed during his reign allowed him to direct his energies toward projects of personal interest and devotion. As king, Louis was sincerely interested in executing true justice and ensuring peace. He outlawed private duels, and he served throughout his reign as an important arbiter of conflicts both within and outside of his kingdom. His governmental reforms of 1254 were designed to safeguard the rights of the poor and disenfranchised against overzealous governmental agents in an effort to institute a level of moral purity within his kingdom.

Deeply pious, Louis spent long hours in prayer, loved sermons and the company of monks, aided the poor and sick, and built hospitals and leper houses. Although he was a devoted patron of the Cistercian abbey of Royaumont, which he and his mother founded, it was the newly formed ideology of the mendicant friars that was particularly attractive to him. Louis spent much time with, and lavished many alms and gifts on, the Franciscan and Dominican orders. It has been said that Louis's kingship and piety was influenced by the mendicant movement, and outward indications, such as the confessors he chose and the foundations he supported, are evidence of this commitment. After purchasing Christ's crown of thorns from Emperor Baldwin II of Constantinople in 1238, Louis built the Ste.-Chapelle to house the relics.

Louis was passionately committed to recovering the Holy Land, and twice he organized and led crusades. The first was the disastrous Seventh Crusade to Egypt (1248–1252), during which he was captured and ransomed, and the second was his crusade to Tunis in 1270, during which he died. Louis's sincere piety and his desire to serve the interests of

Christianity did not mean he was a puppet of the church, and he steadfastly defended the prerogatives of the monarchy against French bishops and the papacy.

Louis's saintly life was immediately recognized at his death, and miracles were reported as his bones were transported from Tunis to France for burial at Saint-Denis, where a papal inquiry into his sanctity was held in 1282–1283. Philip III (r. 1270–1285) and in particular Philip IV (“the Fair,” r. 1285–1314) lobbied for papal canonization. This finally occurred in 1297 as a political concession amid a dispute between Philip IV and Pope Boniface VIII.

After his death, Louis's Dominican confessors Geoffrey of Beaulieu and Guillaume of Chartres wrote accounts of his life and virtues. After 1302, the Franciscan Guillaume of Saint-Pathus, his widow's confessor, wrote another vita based on the now lost canonization records of 1282–1283. Primarily clerical in inspiration, these vitas speak little of Louis's rule or kingship. Jean of Joinville, who was a longtime friend of the king and participated in his first crusade, took a distinctly different approach in his memoirs, written before 1309 at the request of Philip IV's wife. Joinville's account broke from traditional saints' vitas and presented a vivid, personal portrait of Louis as king, crusader, family member, and friend. With time, Louis came to be remembered for his ideal rule, in no small part because the Capetian and Valois kings of France often used Louis as an example of good kingship and a symbol of dynastic legitimacy. Louis's cult was revived under Richelieu, Louis XIII, and Louis XIV in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as an authoritative symbol of an absolutist monarchy.

Louis IX's feast day is August 25. In the Middle Ages, the feast of the translation of Louis's head, which was celebrated in the Paris area, fell on the first Tuesday after Ascension.

—*M. Cecilia Gaposchkin*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Louis of Toulouse

(1274–1297 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Louis of Toulouse, born in 1274, was the second son of Charles II of Anjou, king of Naples (a nephew of St. Louis IX of France), and Mary of Hungary (a great-niece of St. Elizabeth of Hungary). In 1288, following the imprisonment of his father after he lost a naval battle, Louis and two of his brothers were sent as hostages in exchange for their father's release. During Louis's seven years of captivity, he was educated by Franciscans. In October 1294, Pope Celestine V made Louis the administrator of the archbishopric of Lyon despite the fact that he was still in captivity. Following his release the next year, Louis went to Naples, whereupon he renounced his rights of succession in favor of his brother Robert and entered into a life of great penance and meditation within the family castle.

Shortly after his ordination as subdeacon in Rome, he was made a deacon and a priest in Naples in 1296; the same year, Pope Boniface VIII named him bishop of Toulouse, which Louis accepted after formally joining the Franciscan order. Louis set out in early 1297 for Toulouse, where he soon won the admiration of the locals on account of his virtuous pastoral care. Following a journey to Barcelona, he set out for Rome to attend the canonization of his great-uncle King Louis IX. En route, he went to his sister's house in Brignoles, where his father was also a visitor. Here, weakened by his travels and paying the price for years of punishment inflicted by his imprisonment, as well as by his own self-inflicted penances, he died during the night of August 19–20, 1297. He was only twenty-three years of age.

Louis was buried in the Franciscan church of Marseille following a great funeral procession during which people were already speaking of miracles attributed to his intercession. Several French bishops soon began collecting information in regard to his sanctity, and Pope John XXII—who once had served as a secretary to Louis—canonized him in the cathedral of Avignon on April 7, 1317, in the presence of his mother and his brother Robert. His remains were translated to Marseille in 1318. His feast is celebrated on August 19.

—*George Ferzoco*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Elizabeth of Hungary; Louis IX; Suffering and Holy People

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Lü Dongbin (Lü Tung-pin)*(c. 8th–9th cent. C.E.)**Daoist patriarch*

Lü Dongbin was a patriarch of Quanzhen (Perfect realization) Daoism who reputedly lived during the Tang dynasty (618–906), probably in the eighth to ninth centuries. Known as a master of interior alchemy (*neidan*), a calligrapher, a poet, a sword master, and a soothsayer, Lü served as the patron deity of scholars, ink makers, swordsmen, and the wine trade. His cult initially developed in the tenth century and expanded with the growth of Quanzhen. Lü is also a member of the Daoist assemblage known as the Eight Immortals (*baxian*), who have been thoroughly integrated into Chinese popular religion. Demonstrating Lü's widespread appeal, he has been worshipped in Buddhist, Daoist, and popular temples as well as in domestic shrines.

One of the best-known stories about Lü, “The Yellow Millet Dream,” describes how he turned to a spiritual life. Lü had journeyed to the capital to pursue a political career. He stopped at a tavern and met a strange man who started to cook some millet for them to eat, but Lü fell asleep. After he awoke, he left the tavern and had a successful career, attaining the rank of prime minister. However, his fortunes changed when the imperial court turned against him and he was accused of a serious crime. As a result, he lost his family and wealth and was sent into exile. Lü ended up in a remote area trapped in a winter storm—on the brink of death. But then he awoke to discover that his whole “life” had been a dream . . . and the millet was still cooking. The strange man turned out to be the immortal Zhongli Quan, who proceeded to teach Lü the ways of inner alchemy.

Lü Dongbin is usually depicted in a traditional Chinese scholar's robe and cap. He often wears a sword on his back, at his waist, or in his sleeve. Called *qingshe* (green snake), Lü's sword was believed to have the power to ward off calamities. One of the most famous sites associated with Lü is the Daoist temple complex Yongle gong (Palace of Eternal Joy) in Shanxi province. Murals illustrating his life and teachings adorn the temple's walls.

—Noelle Giuffrida

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Eight Immortals; Spiritual Guardians

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LucumiSee *Santería***Lucy** (Lucia)*(d. c. 310 C.E.)**Christian martyr*

Lucy was a virgin martyred during the persecution of Diocletian in about 310. Patron of ophthalmologists, she is the intercessor for eyesight and eye diseases, as Lucia means “light.” Her feast is celebrated on December 13, the winter solstice in the Julian calendar.

Lucy, who converted secretly to Christianity, took her widowed mother to the tomb of St. Agatha (d. c. 250–253) in Catania to obtain a cure for her hemorrhaging. Lucy told her mother that if she believed that Agatha derived her power from Christ, she would be healed. At mass, they heard the gospel story of Jesus healing a woman with the same illness, then Lucy had a vision of St. Agatha, who spoke about her spiritual marriage to Jesus. Furthermore, Agatha announced that she had the power to heal and that she would be patron of Syracuse.

Lucy vowed to remain celibate and to give her dowry to the poor so that she might attain spiritual wealth. With her mother's approval, she carried out her plans, but her thwarted suitor denounced her to the local consul, Paschasius. Before a crowd of spectators, Paschasius ordered her to sacrifice to the gods of the state, but, undaunted, Lucy spoke of her belief in Jesus, which enraged him. He accused Lucy of seducing people with both body and words, but she proclaimed her virtue and incorruptibility. Paschasius ordered his men to take her to a brothel; however, they were unable to lift her. The consul accused her of witchcraft, but she boasted that Jesus was safeguarding her. Her *vitae* describe different types of physical torture, all ineffective. Finally, the consul's henchman thrust a dagger into her throat, but she continued to speak, foretelling Maximilian's death, Diocletian's downfall, and her victory as patron of Syracuse. Finally, Lucy received the viaticum, and the crowd is converted before her death.

A popular figure in art and literature, St. Lucy represents illuminating grace. Paintings of her martyrdom often depict her carrying a pair of eyes on a tray. The Swedes light candles on her feast day, the beginning of their Christmas season. Some of their customs derive from the legend of her taking bread to the Christians hiding in underground tunnels. Lucy wore a wreath of candles on her head to light the way.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Agatha; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Sexuality and Holy People

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Luke

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian evangelist

Luke is considered to be the author of both the third gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. His writings, cast in beautiful prose, constitute nearly one-quarter of the New Testament. Second-century church fathers identified him as the "beloved physician" (Col. 4:14) and as the trusted companion of Paul (2 Tim. 4:11), who stayed with Paul during his imprisonment (Phil. 24) and accompanied him on two earlier missionary journeys (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–21). But based on research that shows that the description of the life of Paul in Acts conflicts with Paul's own accounts, that the speeches in Acts differ significantly from the theology of his epistles, and that the so-called "we" passages of Acts are typical of the "first person style of ancient sea voyage narratives in general" (Perrin and Duling 1982, 244), most contemporary scholars reject the idea that the author of Luke/Acts was the Luke mentioned by Paul in his letters. The anonymous "Luke" is to be found in his two-volume work, with its emphasis on the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, the delay of the *parousia* (the "second coming"), and the place of the church and its leadership within the Roman Empire.

In Luke/Acts, the long travel narrative of the gospel, which brings Jesus ever closer to Jerusalem and his passion and ascension, is set over against the description in Acts of Paul's missionary journey, which extends from Jerusalem to Rome. Luke understands the destruction of Jerusalem to be a consequence of the passion of Jesus, and he sees the "savior's" glorious ascension as the beginning of a new, universal mission to the gentiles, which had its origins in the work of Paul. The juxtaposition of the travel narratives of Jesus and Paul in Luke/Acts is instructive for understanding how the author severs the close connection that Mark's gospel had defined between the fall of Jerusalem and the *parousia*. Unlike Mark, Luke downplays the imminence of Jesus' return, explicitly warning against those who declare that the end of the world is near (Luke 21:8). Although the destruction of the Temple is vastly important, the end will not arrive "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24b). In Luke/Acts, then, the apocalyptic elements of Mark's gospel are overturned by way of a nonapocalyptic focus on Jesus as a universal savior who offers hope to all.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Jesus; Paul

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Luria, Isaac ben Solomon (Isaac Ashkenazi)

(1534–1572 C.E.)

Jewish mystic

Isaac ben Solomon Luria was an important kabbalist and creator of the Lurianic version of Kabbalah, a Jewish form of mysticism. Born in Jerusalem in 1534, Isaac Luria was the descendent of Ashkenazi (paternal) and Sephardic (maternal) émigrés. Little can be verified about his childhood. It is documented that in Egypt he was an eager and apt student of *halakha* (Jewish law) and rabbinical literature. He is said to have married a cousin when he was fifteen, but within seven years he had become so immersed in the mystical aspect of Judaism, particularly after he had discovered the recently published *Zohar*, the thirteenth-century Spanish kabbalist text by Moses de Leon, that he began to remove himself from common social interaction. Readings from other kabbalists, especially the work of his contemporary, Moses Cordovero, consumed his waking hours, and Luria soon began to write his own commentaries on Kabbalah, most notably a reflective study of the "Book of Concealment" from the *Zohar*. He also began to experience visions, especially of the prophet Elijah.

In 1569, Luria returned to Jerusalem with his family, but they soon moved to the city of Safed in northern Israel (then Palestine) to study Kabbalah further. Safed was in the process of becoming an important center of Kabbalah. Luria would meet with his circle of kabbalists to lead discussions on mystical themes and sessions on spiritual meditation. With the death of Cordovero in 1570, Rabbi Luria was regarded as his successor, and so the initial circle of kabbalists continued to expand until they formed, as it were, a separate congregation of mystical Judaism in Safed. Some of his disciples even attributed miraculous powers to "the Ari" (Lion). He died during a plague epidemic in 1572, only thirty-eight years old.

Unfortunately, the Ari committed almost none of his teachings and lectures to formal writing. It became the work of his students, notably Hayyim Vital, to collect Luria's own

notes, and the notes from those who had attended Luria's lectures, and compile material for publication. All copies of the manuscripts remained in Palestine until the end of the eighteenth century. Luria's teachings on the Kabbalah were not designed to change what was already there, or to refute what had been established. Indeed, he considered all that he taught firmly grounded in tradition and did not approve of "replacing" rabbinical Judaism with the esoteric kabbalistic approach to Jewish teaching (although many of his followers did, eagerly). Luria offers, rather, a new perspective, a new insight, in that every aspect of his Jewish faith and belief was now seen through the lens of mystical interpretation: Everything, from religious behavior to spoken names, possessed deeper and more profound meaning, pointed to something more authentic and divine.

This understanding was based on Luria's mystical theology, which posited that at the very moment of creation, there was a kind of *zimzum*, or "contraction," when the Almighty (*Ein Sof*) "withdrew unto Himself" and thereby created *tehiru*, the first, primordial space, poised in chaotic becoming. Into that remnant space poured out the unutterable Absolute (that is) Light; however, the Light could not be contained in the self-determined vessels (*kelim*) of the ten *Sefirot* that constituted the primordial man, *Adam Kadmon*. Therefore, the *kelim* shattered, and the Light, as divine "sparks," and the broken shards from the vessels (a kind of dismemberment of *Adam Kadmon*) tumbled into realms of darkness, into the tumult of creation. Those divine sparks are diffused throughout creation, yet their natural state—and the natural state of the cosmic whole—is to be connected as one within the Divine Light. Thus, human beings are obliged to live lives of moral and spiritual purity so that each individual can "raise the spark" within his or her own soul, and so aid in the "raising of sparks" from throughout this world, back into the primordial divine.

The Lurianic Kabbalah refers to that "raising of sparks" as *Tikkun ha-Olam*, the "Restoration of the World" to a redemptive order and cohesion. Human beings participate in the *Tikkun ha-Olam* by, among other things, adhering to the injunctions of the 613 *mitzvot*, or divine commandments, as presented in the Torah, and especially by engaging in contemplative prayer and meditation. It is perhaps most truly through prayer and meditation that the individual can obliterate the artificially imposed barrier of the self and permit the lighted soul to realize the transformative potential of "raising sparks."

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Kabbalah; Mysticism and Holy People

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Luther, Martin

(1483–1546 C.E.)

Protestant reformer

Martin Luther, a Saxon monk, was the professor credited with provoking the Protestant Reformation, the movement that replaced the illusory medieval vision of united Christendom with the diverse beliefs that characterize modern Christianity.

Luther, born in 1483, attended school at Magdeburg and Eisenach before matriculating at the University of Erfurt and achieving the bachelor's and master's degrees in 1502. He entered the Reformed Augustinian cloister there in 1505, becoming a priest in 1507 and receiving a doctorate in theology in 1512 at Wittenberg, where he lectured on the Bible. In 1517, he published ninety-five theses on indulgences, sparking pan-European controversy with his criticisms. Repeated commands from authorities to recant, formalized in the papal bull "Exsurge domine" (1520), were ignored; Luther immortalized his stance at the 1521 Diet of Worms with the possibly apocryphal words, "Here I stand, I can do no other; God help me," and was placed under imperial ban.

At the Wartburg Fortress, under the protection of Saxon Elector Frederick the Wise, Luther translated the New Testament into German (1522; his translation of the entire Bible was completed in 1534). Popular and elite polemic obscured the changes Luther initiated from those he did not (communion in two kinds, clerical marriage, vernacular services). Luther also enjoys a reputation as a composer of Reformation hymns. His greatest pedagogical achievement was the 1527 Small Catechism, still used by Lutherans. In 1530, the evangelical estates of the Holy Roman Empire codified their beliefs in the Augsburg Confession, which Luther substantially influenced. Later, Luther and his students worked out the details of a theology quickly characterized as "Lutheran." Luther died in 1546. Influential deathbed reports, such as one by Justus Jonas, emphasized the absence of supernatural events at Luther's deathbed, opting to portray an ideal death with similarities to *ars moriendi* literature intended to counter rumors of Satan's presence.



Statue of Martin Luther, Wittenberg, Germany. (Art Directors)

Although Luther abjured the eponymous naming of the movement, 1519 saw the first use of the word “Lutheran.” Publicity around the 1521 diet occasionally emphasized his supernatural qualities, and propaganda tied perceptions of the Reformation with the figure of Luther. Opponents depicted Luther as a seven-headed monster or an overfilled wineskin, while supporters followed portrait conventions relating to Apollo, Hercules, St. Jerome, or generic saints. Luther may have failed to restrain publicists, some of whom, such as Lucas Cranach, he knew well. Luther’s own self-understanding remains obscure. Although at times he characterized himself as God’s slave and Christ’s faithful servant, at other times he compared his role to that of a biblical prophet. Immediately after his death, contemporaries’ ambivalent opinions did not allow for a thoroughly heroic portrayal, and Philip Melancthon’s funeral oration contained

markedly faint praise of his colleague. Funeral sermons by Michael Coelius and Johannes Bugenhagen avoided saintly portrayals, as did the first Luther biography, by Johannes Mathesius (1566).

Compendia of Luther’s remarks, the elite *Table-talk* and the popular Luther prophecies, as well as the commemorative sermons of Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg and the Cranach-school altarpieces, however, contributed to a more heroic and possibly hagiographical image. Such developments elicited charges by the Swiss reformer Johann Bullinger that Lutherans elevated Luther above the apostles. Only at the end of the sixteenth century, in connection with the first centennial of the Reformation (1617), and in the tense context of the impending Thirty Years’ War, did elite images of Luther become purely heroic. The seventeenth century inaugurated supernatural Luther-myths, such as the “incombustible Luther,” a portrait of Luther that refused to burn in a catastrophic fire. These myths played on supernatural aspects of the Luther narrative, such as the lightning storm that provoked Luther’s monastic vows, a fit he suffered in Erfurt, anxiety while reading his first mass, many originally spread by Catholic opponents such as Johannes Cochlaeus (1479–1552). They had little relation to a saintly cult of Luther; rather, they were didactic tales fabricated by Lutheran pastors. Simultaneously, the scholarly estimations of Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) and others rooted Luther’s activities in scriptural prophecy; both trends drew from intensification of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German confessional culture.

Emphasis on Luther’s personal qualities grew even as theologians distanced themselves from his writings as a singular theological authority. Pietists such as Jakob Spener (1635–1705) praised Luther as a liberating hero even as they criticized his teachings. But Luther’s centrality meant that both pietists and orthodox supported their arguments from his writings. Later orthodox Lutherans defended themselves against the inroads of enlightenment philosophers by warning against exaggerated veneration of Luther. Georg Walch (1693–1775) defended Luther on the basis of Lutheranism’s unity with the interests of the developing German state. Even as Enlightenment philosophers such as Gotthold Lessing (1729–1781) reformulated theology as the philosophy of religion, they emphasized Luther’s actions as liberating Germany from the “oppressive yoke” of Catholicism.

Interest in a heroic Luther intensified in the Romantic period, inaugurated in the United States by the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), usage of Johann Lorenz von Mosheim’s (c. 1694–1755) laudatory church history textbook, and heavy German immigration after the 1820s. Widespread anti-Catholicism in the early republic increased interest in Reformation history. Not until the confessional German immigration of the 1840s, however, did

Luther become a central figure in America. Later nineteenth-century Lutheran immigrants frequently left Europe insistent on maintaining “pure” Lutheranism against attempts by rulers such as Frederick William III of Prussia to consolidate confessions. The “old” Lutheran heroic view was augmented by the likelihood of Americans of all denominations to study the theology and history of Germany.

After 1864, the nationalistic Luther became a motif in the ultimately unsuccessful Kulturkampf, a Prussian policy seeking to eradicate Catholicism. The Luther Renaissance (a theological reevaluation of Luther’s importance) and a critical edition of Luther’s works after 1881 stimulated continuing interest. The *Table-talk* remained a widely disseminated text. In literature of the 1917 German Reformation anniversary, Luther appeared as a pan-German hero. He was mobilized in support of German nationalism in the 1930s; one of his most troublesome texts, *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and their lies, 1543), was cited in support of National Socialist (Nazi) racial propaganda. After World War II, the scholar William McGovern attempted to draw a direct line between Luther’s political ideas and those of Hitler. East German and Soviet Marxist historians in the USSR demonized Luther as a traitor to the German peasantry. Despite the central role of views of Luther within Lutheran culture, the commonplace that Lutherans viewed Luther as an object of saintly veneration is largely overstated.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Patriotism and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Ritual; Scholars as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Luwum, Janani Jakaliya

(1922–1977 C.E.)

Roman Catholic martyr

Janani Jakaliya Luwum was one of the most influential leaders of the modern Catholic Church in Africa. Born in 1922 at Mucwini in East Acoli in northern Uganda, he started life as a goat herder before enrolling in a colonial school. He went on to Gulu high school and Boroboro teacher training college and became a schoolteacher. He then converted to Christianity through the East Africa Revival and soon became an evangelist.

In 1949, Luwum attended Buwalusi Theological College in eastern Uganda, and he was ordained a deacon in 1955 and a priest a year later. He later studied in England and returned to become the principal of Buwalasi College. His leadership ability was soon recognized, and he was appointed provincial secretary. In 1969, he was consecrated bishop of northern Uganda. In both posts, Luwum provided needed leadership and commitment.

In 1974, Luwum was elected archbishop of the metropolitan see of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Boga-Zaire (the second African to hold the position). He soon confronted the injustices and atrocities of Idi Amin (1928–2003), who had overthrown the government of Uganda and established a military dictatorship. Luwum’s popular radio broadcasts were censored and often interrupted and taken off the air. Luwum frequently went to the offices of the dreaded State Research Bureau to secure the release of innocent people who had been accused of various offenses against the government.

On February 12, 1976, Luwum delivered a protest letter against Amin’s arbitrary killings of innocent people. In his Christmas message of that year, he attacked the ruthless regime of Idi Amin and threatened a public demonstration against Amin’s government of repression. Amin’s reaction was swift: In February 1977, he ordered his security forces to raid Luwum’s home for alleged hidden arms. Apparently Luwum was falsely accused of treason. In response, Luwum, along with other bishops, sent an open letter of protest to Idi Amin, with copies sent to government ministers and the All African Conference of Churches in Nairobi. A few days later,

Luwum was arrested and brought before Idi Amin for questioning. Following that meeting, Luwum was pronounced dead, along with two cabinet ministers. The cause of death was listed by the government as a car accident, but it was clear that they had been shot on orders from Idi Amin. Archbishop Janani Luwum was recognized at once as a hero of resistance to Amin's rule of terror. He became a martyr alongside the Uganda martyrs of a century before.

—*Samuel K. Elolia*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People

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Lyons, Martyrs of

(d. 177 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

Forty-eight martyrdoms were recorded at Lyons and Vienne in Gaul (modern France) in 177. The martyrs included Bishop Pothinus (also spelled Phothinus) of Lyons; the slave girl Blandina; a fifteen-year-old boy named Ponticus; Deacon Sanctus; a recently baptized physician, Alexander; Attalus of Pergamus; Biblis; Vettius Epagathus; and Maturus, a catechumen. The group was unusual in their variety of status and professions.

Popular sentiment at the time was against Christians in both Lyons and Vienne and in surrounding areas. Prior to specific charges being brought, locals ostracized Christians from markets and baths. As animosity grew, public persecution included threats, beatings, and stonings. Finally, numerous charges were brought against the Christians, some by their own servants. Among the charges were acts of incest

and eating their own children. Christians were arrested by magistrates, placed in prison, and tortured in an effort to induce them to confess their crimes.

Various and extreme forms of torture were used. Although ninety years old, Bishop Pothinus of Lyons was escorted through an excited mob to his trial. When asked to explain the Christian God, Pothinus answered, "If you are worthy, you will know." Pothinus was then kicked and beaten until he lost consciousness; he died two days later in prison. Blandina, the slave girl of a Christian, was repeatedly tortured by beatings, torn by iron hooks, and forced to sit on a burning-hot iron chair. Remarkably surviving these tortures, she was then wrapped in a net and gored to death by a bull. Blandina's youth, courage, and endurance were thereafter enhanced by popular stories. Deacon Sanctus and Maturus were also forced to sit in the hot iron chairs until their throats were cut.

Under such brutality, ten did renounce their faith, such as the woman named Biblis; however, when Biblis was then pressured to confess the crime of cannibalism, she refused and instead reaffirmed herself as Christian and thus died a martyr. Others died in prison from damp conditions and from starvation. Many were killed by beasts in the arena to pacify the excited crowd. Some who were Roman citizens died swiftly from beheadings. Christian witnesses recorded these events in letters to other churches; one such missive was carried by Irenaeus to Rome. These letters were preserved by Eusebius, a Church historian of the early fourth century, who wrote at length about persecutions in his *Ecclesiastical History*. The feast day of the Martyrs of Lyons is June 2

—*Loretta Reed*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Irenaeus; Martyrdom and Persecution

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M

Maccabees

(2nd cent. B.C.E.)

Jewish martyrs

Both Jews and Christians have memorialized the group of saints called Maccabees, also known as the Maccabean martyrs. Thus, although the reasons for honoring them in Judaism and Christianity are not exactly the same, the martyrs serve as rare examples of holy people who are revered in both traditions. The story of the Maccabees probably originated from accounts of Jewish resistance against the Seleucids during the second century B.C.E.

The first preserved text concerning them is 2 Maccabees 6–7. The story has two parts. First, a priest named Eleazar was martyred for refusing to eat pork, giving witness in a speech to his obedience to the law of God. The second part recounts how seven brothers, encouraged by their mother, were martyred for refusing to eat pork as commanded by the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The narrative climaxes when the seventh son engages in a long speech stressing obedience to God over Antiochus's unjust command. Though not killed, the mother also dies at the end of the narrative. Other accounts were written about these martyrs around the first century C.E. Notable among them are 4 Maccabees and various Syriac works. Although both Jews and Christians remembered the Maccabees as martyrs, they developed differing traditions about them. In rabbinic Judaism the Maccabees represent the covenant faithfulness of Israel in the face of persecution. In Christianity the Maccabees were considered the first Christian martyrs, despite predating the life of Jesus.

Three versions of the story of the Maccabees exist in rabbinic Judaism. Generally, only the story of the mother and her seven sons is recounted. These versions come from Palestinian and Babylonian sources between the third and fifth centuries and were written as reflections on the Hadrianic persecutions of the 130s. In these traditions, the sons

are martyred for resisting imperial orders to commit idolatry. In Ashkenazi Judaism, the tradition of the Maccabees appears in accounts of crusade massacres that occurred in the Rhineland during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These texts tell stories of women who killed their children rather than have them baptized by crusaders. Such acts are defended by comparing these mothers to the mother who encouraged her sons to martyrdom. The mother and her seven sons are listed as martyrs in liturgies for the fast day of Tish b'Av.

The Maccabees were venerated in early Christian circles. A cult dedicated to them developed at their tomb in Antioch; by the fourth century, their cult is well attested in a variety of sources. The Maccabees form the subject of patristic sermons and treatises on martyrdom, and their commemoration appears in some of the earliest martyrologies. Their cult continued in the medieval Latin west, and their feast was observed in various regions. Most Christian writings on the Maccabees underscore that their martyrdom was Christian because it occurred for the sake of Christ. The relics of the Maccabees were moved from Antioch to Constantinople and then to Rome, where they were deposited at the church of St. Peter in Chains. Other traditions have the relics moving to Cologne and Spain. Their traditional feast was August 1, but it has been removed from most Western Christian calendars.

—Daniel Joslyn-Siemiatkoski

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People

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Macedonian Ruler Cult

(4th–2nd cent. B.C.E.)

Alexander the Great (r. 336–323 B.C.E.) was not the first Macedonian king to receive divine honors. He followed in the footsteps of his father, Philip II (359–336 B.C.E.). At Olympia in the Peloponnese (site of the ancient Olympics), Philip ordered a small round temple to be built for his family cult. Both the style and the use of chryselephantine (wood overlaid with ivory and gold, normally reserved for statues of gods) for the statues of Philip and his family indicate more than the usual heroic honors. And in fact, near the end of Philip's life, the orator Isocrates wrote, "Having united Greece . . . the only thing left you would be to become a God" (*Epistles* 3.5). On the morning of his assassination in 336, at the grand festival celebrating his planned invasion of Persia, Philip's fateful—and fatal—entrance into the Aegean theater was preceded by thirteen statues on wagon bases: twelve Olympians, and Philip himself, whose statue was no smaller than that of the gods. Naturally, *hubris* (pride) was named as one cause for Philip's demise.

Yet even before that, in about 404, the Spartan Lysander had been honored as a god on Samos with altars and sacrifice, hymns, and even a renamed festival (the Lysandria). There are other precedents, including Dion of Syracuse in 357, and Brasidas at Amphipolis in 424. These are, essentially, enlargements on the long-established tradition of the hero cult in Greek religious practice. As time passed, Greeks had to stretch further to honor exceptional men who had surpassed the heroes of myth.

In the case of the Macedonian kings, there appears to have been a hero cult traditionally established for them after death. The Greek dead were given certain offerings at their graves, and the founder of a Greek colony enjoyed posthumous heroic honors. Thus, the royal cult of the Macedonian king fit within that tradition. By the time of Alexander the Great, royal cult beliefs and practices were in full swing, and Alexander actively promoted the notion that he was the son of Zeus. That Philip, and later his son, would receive divine honors during their lifetimes was only to be expected, given the changing patterns of worship and honor in the classical Greek world.

—*Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman*

See also: Alexander the Great; Greek Ruler Cult; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult

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Machig Labdron (Tibetan: ma-gcig lab-sgron)

(1031–1126 C.E.)

Tibetan Buddhist master

Machig Labdron was a Tibetan Buddhist master of the gChod lineage during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. She is revered by Tibetans as a manifestation of Yeshe Tsogyal, the eighth-century queen of Tibet who was, in turn, a manifestation of the female buddha Prajnaparamita, a reflected image of ultimate reality beyond conception.

Although there are some discrepancies in her biographies, Machig Labdron was said to have been extraordinary from her birth in 1031, intellectually brilliant, and determined not to marry but to live a monastic life. She mastered all the philosophical treatises as well as the rituals and yogic practices. The teacher Dampa Sangye, who was believed to be a form of the great philosopher Kamalashila, initiated her into the practice of gChod. This practice, derived from the Prajnaparamita (perfection of wisdom literature), is a ritualistic visualization that is supposed to break one's attachments to one's own body and mind in order to benefit all sentient beings.

Machig Labdron taught that it is important to interpret gChod within the context of *mahamudra* (great seal), that is, the understanding of ultimate reality as symbolized by the union of appearance and emptiness. In this sense, the most profound gChod is to see *samsara* (the phenomenal world) as mere appearance and to give up all attachment to it. This follows the teachings of Nagarjuna, the great second-century philosopher, who found the phenomenal world, when carefully analyzed, to be so full of contradictions that it could not be real. But ultimate reality can be reached through nonconceptual meditation when attachment to the phenomenal world is decreased. The practice of gChod is a technique for becoming less attached.

Later in her life, Machig Labdron gave up monastic life, married a yogi from India, and had at least three children who became yogis and teachers. She is venerated as an enlightened being endowed with miraculous powers, great wisdom, and limitless compassion for all sentient beings.

—*Marie Friquegnon*

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Kamalashila; Nagarjuna; Scholars as Holy People; Yeshe Tsogyal

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Maciel, Antonio

See **Conselheiro, Antonio**

Macuilxochitl

(Late 15th cent. C.E.)

Aztec singer

Women who participated in the Aztec empire were not frequently named in colonial sources, but Macuilxochitl (Five Flower), the daughter of the great Cihuacoatl (Woman Snake) or her second in command, Tlacaoel, retains a mention as a great singer, or *cuicanitl*, in the *Cantares mexicanos* (Mexican songs). Since she was female, she would actually have been a *cihuacuicanitl* (woman singer). Her presence in the colonial record from the late fifteenth century is particularly interesting because sources indicate that the Mexica singers were very highly trained and dedicated to the proper recitation and composition of texts. It is well known that both civil and military leaders attended schools and underwent rigorous training in all aspects of Mexica life. Although little mention is made of women participating in this schooling, from the presence of Macuilxochitl, their role can be inferred.

Macuilxochitl's text narrates the victory of her uncle, the warrior and *tlatoani* (speaker) Axayacatl, against the Matlazinca people. In this battle, Axayacatl was mortally wounded. In Macuilxochitl's record, he calls the warrior who wounded him to his court. The women dedicated to this warrior appear and offer their favors to the dying Mexica ruler to save the offending warrior. This text and others contained in the *Cantares mexicanos* were more than just military history. They were also part of a sacred performance that would have included a sacrifice and an invocation that called the ancestors to bless the narrative offered just as they were called to bless the military campaign narrated in the text.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Gender and Holy People

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Madhva

(1239–1318 C.E.)

Vedanta Hindu school founder

Madhva, or Madhvacarya (also known as Purnaprajna, or Anandatirtha), was the saint-founder of the Hindu school of Vedanta known as Advaita Vedanta in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The tradition refers to itself as the Tattvavadi (Speakers of the Truth) school. Madhva and his followers have been the most ardent opponents of the non-dualistic form of Vedanta taught by Shankara in the seventh and eighth centuries. Madhva's form of Vedanta is theistic, centering around the deity Vishnu/Krishna, and realistic, insisting on the reality of the world.

Madhva was born Vasudeva in 1239 in the Kanara district of Karnataka in southern India. As a student he was extremely precocious, beginning his education earlier than usual (at the age of five) and exhibiting the extraordinary quickness of mind that served him so well in later debates. As a boy he ran away from home to seek a renunciation guru, finding one in Acyuta Preksha of Udupi. Acyuta Preksha initiated him as Purnaprajna at the age of twelve, according to the traditional accounts. Shortly after his renunciation, Madhva began his lifelong critique of Advaita Vedanta while studying it with his guru. He also showed an uncommon genius in elucidating the text of Bhagavata Purana. In recognition of his advanced abilities, his guru renamed him Anandatirtha. He toured southern India with his guru and later made two long pilgrimages to Badarinath in the Himalayan north.

Madhva wrote thirty-seven works, or thirty-nine according to some, including four commentaries on the Brahma Sutra, commentaries on the ten principal Upanishads, two commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita, and a number of independent, polemical treatises. His main teaching was that there exist two fundamental realities, one independent (God) and the other dependent (the living beings and the world). The relationship between dependent reality and independent reality is like that of a mirror image with respect to its original. Specifically, dependent reality is dependent on independent reality in its essential nature, its awareness, and its motivation. Thus, the living beings and the world are regarded as real, but not independent of Ishvara (God).

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Child Prodigies; Hinduism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Maggid

See **Dov Baer of Mezhirech**

Magi

(1st cent. C.E.)

Zoroastrian priests, Christian saints

The magi (or “wise men”) who came from the east, guided by a star, to bring gifts to the newborn infant Jesus, are briefly described in the Gospel of Matthew (2:1–12). Although minimal information about these figures is provided in the gospel account, the magi have been the subjects of a vast amount of further stories through the centuries and have figured prominently in art from the early Christian period to modern times.

Perhaps derived from accounts of ancient Near Eastern (Persian/Zoroastrian) priests, astrologers, or magicians, the Christian legends emphasize the “exotic” origins of these first Christian pilgrims as symbolic of the universal acceptance of Christianity by all peoples. In Matthew’s narrative, the magi follow a star from the “east” and journey to Jerusalem to pay homage to the “king of the Jews.” After consultation with King Herod, they travel to Bethlehem to present their gifts to the infant Jesus. They return to their own country after being warned by God in a dream not to verify the child’s existence to Herod. Herod, feeling threatened by the possibility of a rival, orders the massacre of all children two years old and younger in the region of Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary, with the infant Jesus, forewarned by an angel of this upcoming slaughter of the innocents, escape to Egypt.

Matthew does not specify the number of magi and so later texts state their number as two, four, six, or even twelve. The three gifts mentioned in the gospel, however (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), have resulted in the most common tradition of three magi. Their three gifts may be symbolically understood as references to Christ’s kingship and power (gold), his divine nature (frankincense), and his mortality (myrrh). In early Christian and later narratives and commentaries, the magi are described as “kings” (for example, by Tertullian in about 200), and texts from the sixth century give them various names (often Melchior, Balthasar, and Caspar or Gaspar). They are depicted wearing crowns in art from the tenth century onward, and in twelfth- and thirteenth-century art their costumes and crowns increasingly resemble those of European rulers.

Expanded accounts of the magi appeared especially in the Middle Ages, such as the thirteenth-century *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine and the fourteenth-century account of John of Hildesheim, which specifically states that one magus was a black Ethiopian. The representation of the black magus was firmly established in art by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the Adoration of the Magi is one of the most frequently represented subjects in medieval and Renaissance art. The subject of late medieval mystery plays and early Renaissance courtly festivals, the magi also became symbolically associated with the ages of man (so may be depicted ranging in age from youthful to elderly) and the three parts of the world (Asia, Africa, and Europe). They are seen as patrons and protectors of pilgrims and travelers. Their supposed relics were transferred from Milan to Cologne in the mid-twelfth century. The Adoration of the Magi is celebrated liturgically in the Feast of the Epiphany (manifestation of God in Jesus) on January 6.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Legendary Holy People

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Magnus of Orkney

(c. 1075–1116 C.E.)

Christian ruler, martyr

Magnus Erlendsson, a Christian, born in about 1075, was the eldest son of Erlend of Orkney (coruler with his brother Paul) and his wife Thora, and he shared a common ancestor with both Henry I of England (Rognvald, earl of Möre) and Henry’s queen, Matilda (Malcolm II of Scotland). In 1098, Magnus Barefoot (or Barelegs), king of Norway, removed Erlend and Paul from power and ordered them back to Norway. Magnus Erlendsson and his cousin Haakon, Paul’s son, were then forced to accompany the king on his raids along the English coast. When the king’s ships reached Anglesey, Magnus refused to attack people he had no reason to fight. The king accused him of cowardice, but Magnus stayed on board his ship, chanting psalms. Magnus was able to escape when the

fleet passed close to Scotland, and he found refuge in the court of Malcolm III of Scotland.

After the death of Magnus Barefoot, Magnus Erlendsson was free to return home to the Orkneys. Magnus did marry, but there is little information about his wife except that her name may have been Ingarth. The two apparently had a chaste marriage. Like his father, Magnus ruled the Orkneys, in Magnus's case with his cousin Haakon, and for a while there were good relations between the two. However, Haakon was jealous of his cousin's popularity and turned against him. On the brink of civil war, the two earls agreed to meet on Easter on the island of Egilsay to discuss a truce in 1116. Haakon violated the terms of the meeting by bringing eight ships instead of the agreed-upon two. Magnus, in an attempt to save his cousin's honor, offered to go into exile, to be imprisoned, or even to accept maiming, but nothing would satisfy Haakon's men except Magnus's death, so he was beheaded. According to the *Orkneyinga Saga*, Magnus accepted his death and prayed for his killers.

Although the reasons for Magnus's death were more political than spiritual, he was still recognized as a martyr. Miracles were credited to him and he became the chief saint of Orkney, Shetland, and northern Scotland. He is also the patron of fishmongers. His relics were eventually housed in the cathedral that bears his name in Kirkwall, and several other churches throughout the British Isles were dedicated to him as well. Legend has it that he appeared to Robert the Bruce on the eve of the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 and promised him victory. His feast day is April 16.

—Kelly A. O'Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rulers as Holy People

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Mahadeviyakka (Akkamahadevi)

(fl. 1160 C.E.)

Hindu ascetic

Mahadeviyakka (or Akkamahadevi), a Hindu saint from southern India, is known for her passionate imagery celebrating the immanence and beauty of the god Shiva. She

wandered as a naked ascetic to the city of Kalyan during the height of a Hindu reform movement headed by the politician and saint Basavanna in the twelfth century.

Though legends abound, and her life gets reconstructed to match changing cultural expectations, a few stories have universal acceptance. "Akka" or "Sister" Mahadevi was born to a merchant family in Karnataka and as a girl became devoted to a particular form of Shiva, whom she addressed as "lord white as jasmine" (Ramanujan 1973, 111). A local Jain chieftain named Kausika pursued her; she probably married him, though hagiographers later absolved her of abandoning a husband by asserting that she never married.

Married or not, she left Kausika and walked, "air-dressed," to Kalyan. Though nudity was accepted among male ascetics, it was frowned upon for women. At Kalyan, she debated the subject, convincing questioners that she was spiritually advanced. She remained in the city for some time, creating Kannada prose poems (*vacanas*) that honored the egalitarianism and energy of the reformers and described the indescribable joy of union with Shiva. Eventually she left for a sacred mountain, where she died, still in her twenties.

Some 400 of Mahadeviyakka's *vacanas* survive. They are used for meditation by Kannadigas who worship Shiva and venerate images of her. In these depictions, she is modestly covered by thick tresses. Like others in her Virashaiva tradition, she views reality as Shiva—immeasurable, immanent, energized bliss—whose presence is covered by layers of illusion (*maya*). The body, gender, language, and even death are illusory for her. She uses sunlight, fire, wind, perfume, seeds, and erotic union to hint at the power that she knows as most real but least seen. Her imagery is kinesthetic, sexual, arguably tantric.

A complete English translation of her works was made by Armand Menezes and S. M. Angadi in 1973 (Akkamahadevi 1973). However, the selections published in Ramanujan's *Speaking of Siva* (1973) are more widely read in the West.

—Elizabeth Delmonico

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Basavanna; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Virashaivas

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Mahakassapa

See **Kassapa**

MahamoggallanaSee **Moggallana****Maharal of Prague**See **Judah Loew ben Bezalel****Maharshi, Ramana**

(1879–1950 C.E.)

Hindu holy person

Ramana Maharshi was one of the greatest Hindu saints in the contemporary era. Born in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu into a nominally religious brahmin household in 1879, he directly confronted his fear of death (at the age of sixteen) by visualizing it and “experiencing” it in meditation. The outcome, a liberating state of awareness, was what he took to be a direct and immediate realization of the deathless, ubiquitous self. Ramana almost immediately left for the ancient town of Tiruvannamalai, outside of which is a hill, Arunachala, considered to be a sacred manifestation of the god Shiva. There he remained silent for twenty years, deepening and cultivating his nondual realization, which in the Hindu school of Advaita Vedanta means that all transitory phenomena are unreal in any substantial sense; the only “real” reality is the divine self (*atman*). For this reason, Ramana has often been considered a modern heir of Shankara, the great eighth-century systemizer (and, undoubtedly, mystic as well) of Advaita philosophy. Ramana, however, tended to minimize or at least relativize traditional Hindu models of religious organization and did not appeal to any external legitimization, such as spiritual lineage or caste, to validate his authority; instead, he spoke of the authority of direct and immediate personal experience.

Ramana’s witness to the nondual self had an enormous impact. He never left Tiruvannamalai, but the world came to him. Seekers, devotees, and scholars from all parts of India came to the ashram that was constructed at the base of Arunachala. Many of these visitors testified to the compelling and calming presence of the saint. Although Ramana’s responses to their queries are collected in numerous volumes, perhaps his most compelling “methodology” was his “silent teaching,” namely, his mindful, compassionate presence, which seemed to calm the mental agitation of visitors. This effect seems to have continued for years after his death in 1950. Klaus Klostermaier noted that “the place where he lived is somehow charged with spiritual power, emanating from him” (1989, 396–397).

Ramana, convinced of the ubiquity of the nondual self in virtue of his own experience, invited all seekers to penetrate the mind-body complex with the fundamental human question, “Who am I?” All mental constructs, he argued, are limitations and projections of the ego; they are transitory and

ephemeral and therefore not fundamentally real. Our “deepest,” most real identity is the divine self; realization of this truth issues in a direct experience of our ultimate nature and destiny: unalloyed bliss and freedom.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Action in the World; Awakening and Conversion; Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Shankara; Teachers as Holy People

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Mahasiddhas

(8th–12th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist laypeople

The *mahasiddhas* (the great perfected) were men and, in several cases, women who lived in India from the eighth to the twelfth centuries teaching a form of Buddhism that, in spirit, doctrine, and practice, defied and challenged the traditional, monastically oriented Theravada, Mahayana, and even Vajrayana institutions that dominated the landscape of early medieval Indian Buddhism. Although they did not form a cohesive group, in the sense that the term was an official designation stamped on an individual after specified training, allegiance to a particular doctrine, and so on, the *mahasiddhas* shared certain defining marks. Their teachings can be succinctly characterized by their emphatic insistence that the surest, if not only, way to the human awakening known as buddhahood is the path of *mahamudra siddhi*—“the powers of the great seal.”

Power (*siddhi*) has both a mundane (*laukika*) and transcendent (*lokottara*) aspect. In the former sense, it denotes six extrasensory perceptions (such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, and ability to recall one’s past lives) and eight great powers (for example, the ability to pass through matter, to create and destroy at will, and to speed walk). Although such powers may have a pragmatic value for leading others to awakening, they do not constitute the highest goal of *mahamudra* (great seal). Although the *mahasiddhas* constantly warned that *mahamudra* is not subject to word and symbol, it may be briefly defined as signifying the vast, empty, open, sky-like nature of mind and phenomena. Similes of space are, in fact, prevalent in the *mahasiddha* literature. The ma-

hasiddha Tilopa, for instance, sang this teaching to his disciple, the mahasiddha Naropa:

Is space anywhere supported? Upon what does it rest?
Like space, *mahamudra* is dependent on nothing.
Relax and settle in the continuum of unalloyed purity,
And, your bonds loosening, release is certain.

Gazing intently into the empty sky, vision ceases.
Likewise, when mind gazes into mind itself,
The train of discursive conceptual thought ends
And supreme enlightenment is gained.
(translation by Kunzang Tenzin)

Such a practice points to certain sociological features of the mahasiddha milieu. A recurring rhetorical undercurrent in the mahasiddha literature is the perceived inadequacy of the monastic establishments for leading the practitioner to an actual, as opposed to a merely conceptual, comprehension of reality. Thus, other features that the mahasiddhas have in common are their unorthodox, antinomian approaches to awakening, innovative use of language, disregard of social convention, high regard for (temporary) insanity, and regard for social outcasts. Among the mahasiddhas we find next to princesses and brahmins, for instance, a prostitute, a compulsive liar, a gambler, a thief, a slutty recluse—and even a musician!

Today, the primary preservers of the medieval mahasiddha traditions are the Tibetan Bka' brgyud (Kagyü) schools. To a lesser extent, the Rnying ma (Nyingma) and the Sa skya (Sakya) also derive teachings and practices from the Indian mahasiddha traditions.

—Glenn Wallis

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Insanity; Laity; Naropa; Tilopa

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Mahavira

(trad. 599–527 B.C.E.)

Jain tirthankara

According to Jain teachings, Mahavira was the last of the twenty-four *tirthankaras* (ford makers) of the current de-



Statue of Mahavira, the last of the Jain tirthankaras (ford makers), at Adishwarji Jain Temple, Mumbai, India. (Art Directors)

clining half-cycle of time. Western writings usually treat him as the founder of Jainism, although the Jains regard him as one of a series of teachers who all enunciated the same basic truths. His historicity is not in doubt, and he is known to have been a contemporary of the Buddha, but his exact dating is uncertain. Jain tradition assigns his dates as 599–527 B.C.E. Although scholars differ as to the nature of the relationship between Mahavira and Parshva, the twenty-third tirthankara and also a historical figure, it seems likely that they renounced the world and taught within the same tradition. Shvetambara and Digambara Jains have different versions of his career, but the main lines of the story are the same.

Jain hagiography traces Mahavira's story through many births prior to the lifetime in which he attained tirthankara status. In one of the most famous of his previous births, he was Marichi, grandson of Rishabha, the first tirthankara of the current half-cycle of time, and it is said that Rishabha predicted his future tirthankara status. Another well-known story is that of his birth as a prince named Triprishtha. Famously, Triprishtha poured molten lead into the ears of a servant in a fit of temper. Many births later, the same servant—now a cowherd—hammered nail-like thorns into Mahavira's

ears when he had become a wandering mendicant prior to his attainment of omniscience.

Tradition asserts that Mahavira took his final birth in 599 B.C.E. in Kundagrama, a city in the kingdom of Vaishali, India. His father was a chieftain named Siddhartha, and his mother was Trishala. His parents are said to have been followers of the teachings of Parshva. At the time of his conception, his mother experienced an extraordinary series of dreams or visions that presaged the birth of a universal emperor or a universal teacher (that is, a tirthankara). As is the case with all tirthankaras, both gods and humans celebrated his birth, and the gods gave him his first ritual bath on the summit of Mount Meru. He was named Vardhamana, "bringer of wealth," because his conception and birth had brought great prosperity to his family. Mahavira, meaning "great hero," was an epithet bestowed by the gods.

Shvetambaras and Digambaras agree that Mahavira renounced the world at the age of thirty, but they disagree concerning certain significant details. According to the Shvetambaras, Mahavira married, fathered a daughter, and did not renounce the world until after his parents' deaths because of a vow, made while still in the womb, not to cause them pain. The Digambaras maintain that he never married and that he renounced the world while his parents were still living. According to the Digambaras, at the time of his renunciation he abandoned his possessions, pulled out his hair by hand, and left his clothing behind. The Shvetambaras, however, maintain that he donned a special divine cloth given to him by Indra, the king of the gods. He later gave half of this garment to a greedy brahmin who had begged for it. Then, still later, the remaining half was accidentally pulled off his body by a thorn. The point of the Shvetambara account is that, even if Mahavira was a nude mendicant, his nudity was not intended, thus legitimizing the principle that a full mendicant may be clothed, an idea vehemently rejected by the Digambaras.

Having renounced the world, Mahavira became a homeless mendicant and engaged in the most severe austerities with special emphasis on fasting. According to the Digambaras, he was completely silent during this period. The Shvetambaras, however, maintain that he not only spoke but also took Makkhali Gosala (a famous mendicant of the age and the leader of the Ajivika sect) as a disciple and companion for six years. His attainment of omniscience occurred twelve and a half years after his renunciation of the world, and was the fruit of his relentless dedication to ascetic practice of the harshest sort. According to the Digambaras, from this point forward he did not eat, drink, excrete, or engage in any mundane activities at all. He sat in a trancelike state in the preaching assembly hall created for him by the gods. The Shvetambaras, however, maintain that he did eat and engage in other mundane activities.

Although the two traditions differ on the precise manner in which their initial meeting occurred, both traditions maintain that Mahavira's first mendicant disciples (*ganadharas*) were a brahmin named Indrabhuti Gautama and his two brothers. Eight other brahmins soon joined them, and these eleven brahmins formed the core of his new mendicant order. Then ensued Mahavira's long teaching mission, which lasted until his seventy-second year. Tradition maintains that in the end his following consisted of 14,000 monks, 36,000 nuns, 159,000 laymen, and 318,000 laywomen.

Mahavira is said to have shed his body and attained liberation at Pavapuri (near Patna in modern Bihar) in 527 B.C.E. It is said that Indrabhuti Gautama attained omniscience only hours later.

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Malli; Nemi; Parshva; Reincarnation; Veneration of Holy People

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Mahbub-i-ilahi

See Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja

Mahdi, 'Abd Allah ('Ubayd Allah) al- (c. 873/874–934 C.E.)

Shi'a Muslim imam

'Abd Allah al-Mahdi was the eleventh imam of the Nizari Isma'ili Shi'as. Born in 873 or 874, he was only eight years old when his father passed away. He was then raised by his uncle, Sa'id al-Khayr, whose daughter he later married. Five of 'Abd Allah's immediate predecessors as imam had lived anonymously in Persia and Syria. During these times of secrecy, the message (*da'wa*) of the imams was spread by their *da'is* (agents) in various parts of western Asia and North Africa.

Upon reaching maturity, 'Abd Allah decided to travel to Yemen and so proceeded to Egypt. He then had a change of plans and traveled to North Africa. Already the Berber tribe of Kutama had accepted the imam and become his main supporters owing to the effort of the *da'i* Abu 'Abdallah al-Shi'i. The Kutama under the leadership of al-Shi'i captured large areas of North Africa, making Qairawan their capital. Meanwhile, according to tradition, 'Abd Allah was captured and imprisoned by the governor of Sijilmasa, but al-Shi'i and

his Kutama supporters rescued him. Thence the entire entourage traveled to Raqqada, and here the imam was declared as the ruler in January 910. At this time, he also publicly proclaimed his titles of *mahdi* (the rightly guided) and *amir a muminin*, “commander of the faithful.” In the edict of his enthronement it was declared that he was a progeny of the prophet Muhammad via his daughter Fatima and that he was establishing a caliphate that had been usurped first by the Umayyads and then by the Abbasids. The meaning and intent behind this assumption of the title al-Mahdi has been the subject of much debate. As his power grew, some of the Kutama tribesmen as well as the kin of al-Shi’i rebelled. Though hitherto deeply attached to al-Mahdi, al-Shi’i joined the protest and was killed with the others when they were subdued. Al-Mahdi, however, acknowledged the services of his past da’i by attending the burial ceremony.

In time, al-Mahdi’s hegemony was also extended over the island of Sicily, and he instituted new cities, including the fortified coastal city of Mahdiya (in present-day Tunisia), which became an important port and the new capital. He ushered in the period of the Fatimid caliphs and an era of learning and culture, and the imams became both spiritual leaders and temporal rulers. Al-Mahdi secured his rule and also ensured the spread of his da’wa. With skill and energy, he was successful in both endeavors. Al-Mahdi died in 934, and he was succeeded by his son al-Qa’im.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Mahdi, Muhammad al-

(c. 868–874 C.E.?)

Shi’i Muslim imam, messiah

Muhammad b. al-Hasan, known as al-Mahdi (the Rightly Guided One), is regarded as the twelfth and final imam by the imami, or Twelver Shi’a. According to the sources, he was born in about 868 in the Abbasid capital of Samarra in Iraq. His father, al-Hasan al-’Askari, the eleventh imam, had been imprisoned. His mother was a Byzantine slave named Narjis or Saqil; some sources claim she was the daughter of the Byzantine emperor.

Muhammad al-Mahdi is the central figure in Shi’i eschatology. He is expected by Muslims to return to earth as an important harbinger of the last times. Some of the epithets conferred on him signal this distinctive status, for example:

al-Imam al-Muntazar (the Expected Leader); al-Qa’im (the One Who Will Arise); and Sahib al-Zaman (the Master of the Age).

When his father, al-Hasan al-’Askari, died in 874, Muhammad would have been about six years old. There was considerable confusion at this time among al-Hasan’s followers, who were not sure whether he had left a son to succeed him. About fifteen to twenty factions emerged, most of whom expressed doubt that there was a twelfth imam. One group, called the Qat’iyya, accepted the existence of a son but did not agree about who he was, his age at the time of his father’s death, and so on. Some belonging to this group maintained that a son called Muhammad had indeed been born to al-Hasan. Because of the danger he faced from the Abbasids, they said, the young Muhammad immediately went into occultation, from which he was (and is) expected to return in the last days to rule the earth in justice and peace. These are the views that eventually prevailed and became part of orthodox Twelver Shi’i belief. The other factions disappeared within a century.

According to the doctrine of occultation (*ghayba*), the twelfth imam did not die in 874 but remains alive in concealment, protected by God from his enemies. During the period of the Lesser Occultation (874–940), the hidden imam communicated with his followers through four emissaries. When the last emissary died in 940, it was no longer possible to maintain any kind of communication with the imam. This turn marks the onset of the period of the Greater Occultation, which will last until the *mahdi*’s return. Belief in the existence of the hidden imam and his return at the end of time is part of basic Twelver Shi’i eschatology. It is thought that upon his return to earth, the mahdi will vanquish the forces of evil, inaugurate a reign of justice, and pave the way for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The occulted imam remains the spiritual and political leader of the Shi’i community in absentia. However, as Shi’i states arose in later centuries, the political realities demanded that temporal rulers exercise some of the functions of the imam. In more recent times, Ayatollah Khomeini (1902–1989) of Iran promulgated the concept of *vilayat-i faqih* (the rule of the legist), which allowed the *ulema* (religious scholars) to assume not only the religious functions of the hidden imam (for example, the collection of certain tithes and leading the Friday prayer) but also his political authority and duties.

—Asma Afsaruddin

See also: Hasan al-’Askari, al-; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi;

Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Politics and Holy People

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Mai Chaza

(d. 1960 C.E.)

Christian leader, prophet

Mai Chaza (Mother Savior, Magenga) was the twentieth-century founder, leader, and prophet of the Guta Ra Jehovah (City of God), a widely recognized religious movement based in Zimbabwe. The ministry is famous for its faith healing practice. The prophetess, a member of the Nyamushanya family, was thought to have the power to command even nature. Prior to her call, she was a local preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. She was married and had eight children, although later four died. She then developed a chronic illness that led her husband to “return her” to her family; she was received by a brother instead, as she had been orphaned since 1914. The family sought treatment for what appeared to be a family- or culture-oriented illness because the hospitals could not handle the problem effectively. She “died,” but only for one day. After her “resurrection,” she claimed that she had met Jesus, who had given her the ability to minister to the sick through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mai Chaza’s healing and preaching ministry started in 1949 and lasted until her death in 1960. However, legend has it that by the time the mourners lowered the coffin in the grave, Mai Chaza had departed, fulfilling what she had said during her ministry: “*handina guva panyika*” (I will not have a grave here on earth). She did not appoint a successor.

Throughout her ministry, she allegedly made many predictions that came true. When she preached, demon-possessed people in the congregation were reportedly unable to resist her message and power and would immediately fall to the floor and acknowledge the authority and presence of the Holy Spirit in the prophetess. Her power was manifested through prayer, song, and preaching. Popularly known as Mai Muponesi (Mother Savior) or Maqenga (Heavens), she transformed and saved numerous lives through her healing ministry.

Mai Chaza established a center at Seke, near Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, then at Zimunya near Mutare, Zimbabwe’s third-largest city. Here the sick from all over the nation came to be healed. Today, people still visit for spiritual and physical healing. To gain entry, visitors are required to make a confession, a criterion begun during Mai Chaza’s ministry.

—Gwinyai Muzorewa

See also: Death; Miracles; Prophets

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Maimonides

See Moses ben Maimon

Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir al-

(1628–1700 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim scholar

Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi was the foremost Shi'i scholar of the late Safavid era in Iran. He wrote a number of important books and moved Shi'ism decisively in a pietistic and legalistic direction. Born in Isfahan, then the capital of Iran, in 1628, he was the son of the prominent religious scholar Muhammad Taqi Majlisi. He studied under the foremost religious scholars of his time and was appointed shaykh al-Islam of Isfahan, the leading religious post in the kingdom. He held this position until his death in 1700 and was held in great respect by the Safavid kings, especially Shah Sultan-Husayn.

Majlisi was a great scholar in his own right. His encyclopedic compilation *Bihar al-Anwar* (Oceans of lights), a source of Shi'i *hadith* (traditions), is still used today, and he wrote a number of other books that have been widely used in the Islamic world, including biographies of the imams and manuals of religious practice. His writings indicate that he favored the Akhbari school of law in Shi'ism.

Majlisi's most decisive influence, however, came in his social and political role. He had Shah Sultan-Husayn very much under his influence and used this to push for major changes in the religious landscape. The majority of Iranians had only recently become Shi'is after the Safavid dynasty came to power in 1501. For most of the population up to Majlisi's time, adherence to Shi'ism was fairly superficial. Majlisi made it his task to propagate Shi'ism vigorously and to suppress Sunni Islam. Most Shi'i literature had been in Arabic, but Majlisi wrote a number of books in Persian, including theology, manuals of religious practice, and books detailing the sufferings of the imams. He encouraged such specifically Shi'i practices as ritual mourning for the imams and pilgrimages to the shrines of the imams and their descendants. Majlisi also brought to the fore the concept of the imams as saviors who would intercede for true Shi'is on the day of judgment. In these ways, he helped to popularize Shi'i Islam and engage the masses in its practices.

Majlisi propagated a “dry,” formal, pietistic, legalistic style of Shi'ism as the only true form of Shi'ism. Up to Majlisi's time, there had been many styles of Shi'ism. Some Shi'is engaged in mystical practices based on sufi orders. Many Shi'i scholars were engaged in a high mystical philosophy that has come to be known as the school of Isfahan. Majlisi suppressed the sufi orders (which he called “that foul and hellish growth”) and the philosophers (“followers of an infidel Greek”) (Momen 1985, 115).

Paradoxically, Majlisi's activities both strengthened and weakened Shi'ism. His strident anti-Sunnism roused the Sunnis in Afghanistan to action that eventually led to the overthrow of the Safavid dynasty in 1722 and the coming to power of a Sunni Afghan in Iran. But at the same time, his popularization of Shi'ism meant that, despite some persecution of Shi'is in the following decades, Iran did not revert to Sunnism.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Makandal, François

(d. 1758 C.E.)

Muslim prophet

Historical sources say little about the origins of François Makandal, an Islamic prophet who led a resistance movement that was a precursor to the Haitian Revolution. Probably he was born and socialized in West Africa during the first half of the eighteenth century and at some point enslaved (perhaps at age twelve) and sold into bondage in the French colony of Saint-Domingue (1697–1804). Some scholars cite evidence, such as his name and the names of his closest conspirators, Mayombe and Teysel, that Makandal hailed from central Africa rather than West Africa. These suggestions, along with others concerning reports of Makandal's orchestration of Vodou rituals derived from central Africa (the Petwo rite, for example) and his adept use of poisons, are tenuous because it is just as likely that he learned Petwo rites in Saint-Domingue and that his knowledge of poison came with him from West Africa.

Makandal's fluent Arabic and Islamic devotion are the strongest evidence of his West African origins (not unlike those of his contemporary, the African American poet Phyllis Wheatley). It is possible that in Africa he had been a Qur'anic scholar and cleric. This is highly significant because the Islamic notion of jihad may have inspired his revolutionary activities in Saint-Domingue, much as this notion helped fuel such resistance among Islamic slaves in Bahia, Brazil, during the following century.

By 1740, Makandal had escaped from the plantation on which he labored to become a leading figure in a Maroon (escaped slave) community in the island's northwestern mountains. Although organized armed uprisings involving small clusters from among the island's half-million slaves occurred as early as 1522, and several others erupted during the twenty-five-year period between 1679 and 1704, such vi-

olent insurrections were relatively infrequent in Saint-Domingue. One significant exception was the Makandal conspiracy of the 1740s and 1750s, which spread from plantation to plantation, involving unknown numbers of slaves and Maroons in a network of resistance that aimed to overthrow the French by burning their crops and poisoning them and their livestock.

The impressive longevity (eighteen years) and defiant success of Makandal's movement was due chiefly to its development as a Maroon community. Operating from a Maroon base, Makandal is said to have had the powers to transform himself into a variety of animals in order to evade capture and bring messages to satellite Maroon communities to ferment resistance. Although finally captured and burned at the stake in 1758 (though some believe that he escaped execution by transforming himself into a fly), he set an important precedent as a charismatic leader of resistance to the slave regime and thus, as historian Carolyn Fick puts it, "his memory was sufficient to nourish the long and bitter struggle that would one day lead to emancipation" (1990). Beyond the Haitian Revolution, Makandal's name has been adopted in Haitian Creole to designate a particular class of poisons and other paraphernalia associated with sorcery. He is also one of the few human beings to have been deified as a spirit in Haitian Vodou.

—*Terry Rey*

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Apotheosis; Compassion and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Malachy

(c. 1094–1148 C.E.)

Christian archbishop

Malachy was archbishop of Armagh and the first formally canonized Irish saint. Born Maolmhaodhog Ua Morgair in about 1094 in Armagh, Ireland, he took the name Malachy when he entered the religious life. He was ordained deacon in about 1117, advanced to the priesthood two years later, and was made vicar of Armagh by 1120. He received his earliest education from his father, Murgrón Ua Morgair, the chief lecturer at the cathedral school at Armagh during the reign of the reforming archbishop Cellach Ua Sinaig (Celsus of Armagh).

Although the reclusive Culdee Imar O'Hagan, an ardent reformer, was an important influence on his life, Malachy

learned the Benedictine way at Lismore monastery before being appointed bishop of Down in 1123 and then abbot of Bangor and bishop of Connor in 1124. After being forced to leave northern Ireland in 1127 or 1128, he established a monastery at Iveragh in County Kerry, serving as its first abbot. Archbishop Celsus of Armagh designated Malachy as his successor shortly before his death in 1129, which broke a long line of hereditary succession to the see of Armagh. After much controversy and violence, Malachy was finally accepted as archbishop in 1137, at which point he promptly resigned to return to his monastery at Bangor.

In 1139, Malachy went to Rome to request the pallium for the two metropolitan sees of Ireland, Armagh and Cashel. He stayed at Clairvaux along the way, where he was befriended by Bernard and greatly impressed by the Cistercian way of life: Malachy was later responsible for the establishment of the first Cistercian monastery in Ireland, Mellifont, in 1142. Pope Innocent II refused Malachy's request for the pallium on the grounds that it had not been requested by a general council of Ireland's clerical and lay leaders; he did, however, appoint Malachy papal legate to Ireland. A synod held in Dublin in 1148 sent Malachy to Rome to request the pallium again, but he died en route at Clairvaux on November 2, 1148.

The so-called "Prophecy of St. Malachy," which identifies the 111 successors of Pope Celestine II, is a sixteenth-century forgery. Malachy's feast is celebrated on November 3. He was canonized in 1190.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Bernard of Clairvaux; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Malcolm X

(1925–1965 C.E.)

Muslim leader

Malcolm X, born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1925, became a Muslim leader who integrated racial pride and black nationalism as a member of the Nation of Islam (NOI). By the age of six, Malcolm had already experienced the sting of racism when the Ku Klux Klan burned down his family's home in Lansing, Michigan. Later, his father was brutally murdered and his mother went to a mental institution. In the eighth

grade, after spending several years in foster and detention homes, Malcolm dropped out of school. He worked menial jobs and eventually moved to New York, where he discovered the world of drugs, pimping, and gambling. While serving a prison sentence for burglary, he converted to Islam.

Upon his release in 1952, he met with Elijah Muhammad, leader of the NOI. Malcolm X soon became a strong influence within the NOI, and his message of black separatism and self-dependence transformed the organization into a national movement. Indeed, the name of Malcolm X became synonymous with the Black Muslim movement. At this point, however, conflicts between Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad began to emerge. Upon returning from his pilgrimage to Mecca, where he prayed and ate with Muslims from all over the world, in 1964, Malcolm's ideas of black separatism began to change. This widened the rift between him and the NOI leader.

Following Malcolm's public response to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963, Elijah Muhammad found reason to silence Malcolm for ninety days. Weeks later, Malcolm discovered a conspiracy within the NOI against him and resigned. On March 8, 1964, he started his own organizations, the Muslim Mosque and the Organization of Afro-American Unity. His extensive travels to Africa and the Middle East brought him closer to the traditional orthodox practices of Islam. In 1965, shortly after his return to the United States from one of his trips, he was assassinated by members of the Muslim movement, who denied being part of any conspiracy.

—Samuel A. Paul

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Muhammad, Elijah; Patriotism and Holy People

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Malik Sy, Al-Hajj

(1854–1922 C.E.)

Muslim intellectual, sufi

Born in Gaé, Senegal, in 1854 Al-Hajj Malik Sy became one of the most significant Islamic thinkers and sufi figures in French West Africa. A recognized leader (*muqaddam*) of the

Tijaniyya sufi order (*tariqa*), he was an important ally of the French colonial administration. He developed a widely recognized reputation for piety, Islamic learning, and the esoteric sciences and gained a large popular following of both formal students and laypeople. His teachings and growing following culminated in establishing the Malikiyya suborder of the Tijaniyya tradition. The Malikiyya continues today as one of the most important sufi orders in Senegal.

Malik Sy's early years remain obscure, but he came from a poor, ethnically Wolof family in the western Futa Toro region of Senegal. His family established ties to the Tijaniyya sufi order through al-Hajj Umar Tal's proselytization, though they did not join the latter's jihad in the 1850s. Between 1870 and 1895, Malik Sy studied and traveled widely, gradually gaining a reputation as a sober, talented scholar and sufi. He developed close relations with the French administration after settling at the peanut production center at Tivaouane near Dakar in 1902. In 1910, he wrote a crucial sermon denouncing jihad against the colonial government, and in 1912 he issued a circular (republished and distributed by the French) urging his followers and colleagues to support the administration unconditionally. The French, in turn, allowed him to expand his following and teaching activities at a time when the administration severely limited other Muslim leaders, such as Ahmad Bamba and his Muridiyya. Fed by the growing spiritual and social influence of Malik Sy, the Malikiyya became the prominent Tijani-based sufi order in the region. Tivaouane remains an important school and pilgrimage site today.

—David Gutelius

See also: Bamba, Ahmad; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Malli

(Historicity uncertain)

Jain tirthankara

According to Jain teachings, Malli was the nineteenth tirthankara (ford-maker) in the current declining half-cycle of time. The Shvetambara Jains assert (and the Digambaras deny) that Malli was a woman.

According to the Shvetambaras, the soul that later became Malli once took birth as a prince named Mahabala,

who renounced the world with six close friends. Although mutual agreement required them to perform exactly the same ascetic practices, Mahabala cheated by doing more than the others, and because of this he acquired the karma that results in a future birth as a female. But, also because of his ascetic practices, he acquired the karma that results in a future birth as a tirthankara. Mahabala was later reborn as a princess of unparalleled beauty named Malli, and the six friends took birth as princes of six nearby kingdoms.

Knowing of things to come, Malli caused a building to be constructed, consisting of a central room visible from six surrounding rooms through grillwork. In the central room, she had a hollow statue installed that was an exact replica of herself, and each day she deposited a handful of her food into it through a hole in the top. In the meantime, each of the six princes had become inflamed with desire after hearing accounts of her beauty. Each sent a proposal of marriage to her father, but he rejected all of them. At this point, the six frustrated princes made common cause, besieged the capital, and were victorious against her father's army. Malli then instructed her father to invite each of the six suitors to come secretly to spend the night and to ensconce each separately in one of the six rooms surrounding the central chamber. When this was done, all six gazed longingly at the image, thinking that it was Malli. Malli then lifted the cover from the image, and a vile stench of rotten food filled the air, disgusting and repelling the six suitors. The real Malli then gave the six a lecture dealing with the futility of pleasures of the body and also told them about their previous births.

Malli later became a mendicant, achieved omniscience, taught, and ultimately shed her body and attained liberation at Mount Sammeta (in what is now Jharkhand).

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Gender and Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Nemi; Parshva; Reincarnation; Rishabha; Sexuality and Holy People

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Mana

Polynesian holy force

Definition of the Polynesian word "mana" is complex and elusive, and it generally requires more than a few words to describe it adequately. As a word now accepted in the English

language, it means “the power of the elemental forces of nature embodied in an object or person.” Other synonyms could be suggested, such as “supernatural or divine power, might, authority, influence, prestige, reputation, and charisma.” Although it might be hard to describe precisely, most Polynesians can recognize persons who possess a great deal of mana. It might be a prestigious leader, who is well respected in his or her community; it might be a grandfather or grandmother whose life exemplifies the finest qualities one can imagine; or, it might be an artist or craftsman whose exquisite work and whose personality set him or her apart from all the others. Once when asked whom I regarded as a Pacific personality who possessed great mana, I responded without hesitation “The king of Tonga and Ratu Sir Kamise Mara, the prime minister of Fiji.” Other names, of course, came to mind immediately thereafter.

Anciently, mana emanated from the gods who possessed it to a superlative degree. A Polynesian legend suggests that when the god Tāne threw his lightning bolt and killed Ātea (space), Ātea’s mana did not die with him but passed down to his earthly descendants, the high chiefs and nobility of Polynesia. One way humans can obtain mana, therefore, is through genealogy or birthright. Chiefs, especially those in the highly structured societies of Tonga, Tahiti, and Hawai’i, were imbued with a kind of supernatural aura or power inherited from their father. The more mana that the father possessed upon his death, the more that could be transmitted to his eldest son. Junior sons as well as daughters could inherit this power, but to a lesser degree, and marriages were frequently arranged between children of high-ranking families—even between brothers and sisters—in order to preserve the family’s unique mana.

Another way of receiving mana was to acquire it during one’s lifetime. A young priest acquired ritual mana through exposure or contact with the supernatural during his training, and as he grew in wisdom and stature, his mana increased exponentially. A craftsman obtained mana as his expertise and skills increased, and as a result, he became well respected in the community. As a brave warrior succeeded in victory after victory over the tribe’s enemy, his reputation (mana) rose accordingly. But acquired mana is volatile. A priest who forgets the proper chants, a craftsman whose skill is lost because of old age or blindness, or a warrior whose victories have turned to defeats may all lose a portion or all of their mana. The common explanation for this loss of mana is that the gods have become displeased and have relinquished this person’s mana; or perhaps, an evil entity has gained power over the individual. If the later is the case, the person may have to resort to religious ceremonies and priestly advice to help alleviate his problem.

Even those born with the potential of great mana may not rise to the expectations of society. The way rulers conduct their lives and carry out their duties determine the actual

mana gained during their lifetime. Weak rulers or perhaps those that rule despotically might find themselves without subjects or perhaps the object of a revolution to depose them.

—Robert D. Craig

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See also: Hereditary Holiness; Rulers as Holy People

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Manco Capac

(c. 1022–c. 1107 C.E.?)

Inca ruler

Manco Capac is a character with historical and mythical features. The Incas trace their ancestry to mythical figures who emerged from holy places that were later regarded as shrines. Manco Capac was the legendary founder of the Inca Empire in Peru and the reputed founder of the capital, Cuzco. Although exact dates are missing, it is generally acknowledged that the establishment of the Inca kingdom in Peru falls roughly within the twelfth century.

According to oral tradition, Manco Capac led a group of fellow tribesman from their homeland near Lake Titicaca in southeastern Peru and headed north. They chose to settle in a fertile valley where they successfully conquered the local people. It was here that Manco Capac founded Cuzco, the center of the future Inca Empire. Manco Capac and his sister, Mama Ocllo, were believed to be the son and daughter of the sun god, Inti. They claimed to have been sent by the sun god to end the struggles and wild life of the people in the Andean region. Some legends state that Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo went out from Lake Titicaca and wandered around the Urubamba Valley until the gold cane they carried sank into the ground. This was the sign to found Cuzco, which means “navel of the world.” Others state that Manco Capac and his three brothers and four sisters, Mama Ocllo among them, went out of Tambotoco Mountain to found Cuzco. On their way, Manco’s brothers showed disrespect toward the *huacas* (Andean gods) and were transfigured by them into stone figures. Only Manco Capac and his sisters reached their destination and founded Cuzco.

Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo married and established the royal bloodline, which continued with each succeeding emperor, favored son marrying sister. Manco Capac was the original Sapa Inca (highest or first Inca), the first supreme ruler of the empire. He had many wives, but his sister was the principal wife, and it was from the sons of this union that the future em-



Manco Capac Puño Week celebration, Peru. (Art Directors)

peror would be chosen. This son would marry one of his sisters, and their union would in turn produce the next successor. The royal family, consisting of the many children and relatives of the emperor, assumed the highest position in society.

Over time, Manco Capac established social communities called *ayllus* to organize the population. *Ayllus* ranged in size from small farming settlements to large towns. Entire families lived in the same *ayllu* and shared lands, crops, and animals. In this way, he started the Inca dynasty, which ruled the Peruvian Andes for almost 300 years before the arrival of the Spaniards. Sinchi Roca, his son with Mama Ocllo, was proclaimed Inca emperor after Manco Capac's death. There was little growth in the Inca domain over the next 200 years. However, all this changed during the reign of the eighth and ninth Inca emperors, Viracocha (d. 1440) and Pachacutec (r. 1441–1471). The Inca Empire grew to a great size, encompassing an area estimated at 350,000 square miles.

All Spanish and Indian chroniclers start Inca history with Manco Capac, placing him in the eleventh century, based on the oral accounts of old Quechua speakers of the fifteenth century. Most of them portray Manco Capac as the founder and early organizer of Inca society. However, the Andean chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala depicts Manco Capac as

an idolatrous king who brought disgrace to the Andean race and then died poor at the age of 165.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Mandate of Heaven (Tianming)

Chinese political/religious doctrine

Tianming (*t'ien-ming*), the “mandate of heaven,” is a notion that grounds Chinese political power in virtue. The “virtue” serves as a legitimization of the holder of power, a challenge to

that ruler to maintain an exemplary level of behavior and leadership, and a reason to remove that ruler should the moral quality of his or her rule degrade below acceptable levels.

The mandate of heaven is first mentioned in texts of the Western Zhou period (1045–771 B.C.E.). The concept was seemingly developed to legitimate the Zhou conquest of the Shang, wherein Zhou leaders sought to retain much of the Shang political system. The late Shang rulers were cast as lacking in moral character, thus rendering the conquest a virtuous action intended to ensure governance by those of sufficient merit. The mandate of heaven to rule was seen as hereditary (although finite) for successive “sons of heaven.”

Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) saw *ming* (fate), or the will of heaven, as purposeful. Later Confucian writers used the term to refer to the total set of conditions and forces around a specific occurrence. Dong Zhongshu grounded the moral foundation of all post-Zhou dynasties by alleging that Confucius himself had received the mandate of heaven, and thus the Confucian imperial order.

Natural disasters were commonly interpreted as macrocosmic imbalances, signs that the ruler was in heavenly disfavor. Indeed, macrocosmic disturbances, whether natural, political, or social, could function as reasons for the removal of the ruler. A ruler without the mandate of heaven was ultimately considered an impostor to office. This removal, it should be noted, was seen as the duty of the ministers of the court, not of the general populace, a call for replacement and not for revolution.

—Dan Wright

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Mengzi; Rulers as Holy People

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Mandela, Nelson Rolihlahla

(1918 C.E.–)

Christian human rights activist, leader

Nelson Mandela was born on July 18, 1918, in the Transkei in South Africa. Raised in the Protestant tradition as a Methodist, he maintains a very private religious pluralist spirituality that embraces the truths and values of all reli-

gions. As a product of Christian missionary education, he credits his achievements in life and his place in history to his formative religious education. In 1942, Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC). Educated as a lawyer, he and ANC president Oliver Tambo started the first black legal firm in the country. After the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, the ANC was banned, and Mandela was detained until 1961, when he went underground to lead Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC. Under his leadership, it launched a campaign of sabotage against the government in an effort to put an end to apartheid, or racial segregation, in South Africa.

In 1964, Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment in Robben Island as one of the accused in a mammoth treason trial. At the trial, he conducted his own defense on the grounds that a judiciary council controlled entirely by whites was an interested party and could not be impartial. Mandela rejected offers made by the Afrikaner government for remission of sentence in exchange for accepting the Bantustan policy by recognizing the independence of the Transkei and agreeing to settle there. Again in the 1980s Mandela rejected President P. W. Botha’s offer for release on condition that he renounce violence.

Throughout twenty-seven years of his life in prison, Mandela never compromised his political principles. Released from prison on February 11, 1990, he plunged into his life’s work, striving to attain the goals he and others had set out to achieve almost four decades earlier. He and his delegation agreed to the suspension of the armed struggle in favor of negotiating an end to apartheid with the white South African leadership. The first multiracial elections were held in 1994, and Mandela was elected president.

Mandela has never wavered in his devotion to democracy, equality, freedom, and education. His life has been an inspiration, in South Africa and throughout the world, to all who are oppressed and deprived. He accepted the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of all South Africans who suffered and sacrificed to bring peace. He was inaugurated as the first democratically elected president of South Africa on May 10, 1994, serving until June 1999. He sacrificed his private life and his youth for the freedom of all people and remains South Africa’s best known and loved hero, viewed in South Africa as a religious as well as a political figure. The reward of his sacrifice was attaining freedom and democracy in an open society that respects the rights of all individuals. His life personifies struggle, reconciliation, and forgiveness.

—Samuel A. Paul

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Recognition; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Mani

(216–274/277 C.E.)

Manichaean founder

Mani was the third-century Persian prophet who founded Manichaeism after an angel reportedly revealed to him that he was the paraclete and the seal of the prophets. Reconstruction of Manichaean teachings and history used to rely solely on the reports of opponents of the religion, including Titus of Bostra (d. c. 370); Augustine of Hippo (354–430); who was himself a Manichaean for many years before becoming Christian; Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373); and Serapion of Thmuis (d. c. 370). But important discoveries in Egypt and China of original Manichaean texts preserved in Coptic, Chinese, Persian, and other middle-Asian languages, as well as the discovery of the Greek *Cologne Mani codex* during the first half of the twentieth century, greatly expanded scholars' understanding of the religion.

Manichaeism is characterized by a dualistic division of the universe into a kingdom of light—the spiritual world where God reigns—and a kingdom of darkness, which consists of matter—where Satan reigns. Humanity takes part in the conflict between light and darkness in that the human body is matter, while the soul is spiritual, a fragment of light that must be saved. However, the essence of Mani's gospel was the teaching that he was himself the culmination of a prophetic line stretching from Adam and Seth to Jesus in the West, Zoroaster in Persia, and Buddha in the East. During his life, his doctrines were preached in the Roman Empire in the West and as far as India in the East.

Mani was born to an aristocratic Persian family in 216. From the age of four, he was raised in the strict observance of Elkesaism, a Judeo-Christian Baptist sect. When he was twelve, he had his first revelation when his “twin spirit” appeared to him, followed by another appearance when he was twenty-four. This spirit indicated that he was to be the final prophet. An attentive reading of the epistles of Paul, interpreted in the light of this revelation, led Mani to reject Elkesaite rituals and doctrines and to teach that salvation is primarily related to the knowledge of the kingdom of light. Thus, for Mani, salvation comes from divinely revealed knowledge and not from the strict observance of rituals. He affirmed the truth of the original teachings of Jesus and Paul

but felt that Christianity had been corrupted and that it was through his revelation that its purity could be restored.

Having gained the protection of the Persian emperor Shapur I, Mani commenced his missionary activities. He made a journey to India in 242, where he learned about Buddhism and incorporated elements of it into his system, having already been influenced by Thomasite Christian communities (communities that claimed to have been founded by the apostle Thomas) with which he had interacted. Mani's openness to other religious traditions gave his teaching a universal character that greatly helped its expansion. He argued that the ancient prophets had limited themselves to one area of the world and one language, whereas his own mission was universal. The success of Manichaeism provoked the hostility of the Zoroastrian religious leaders. Upon the accession of a new Persian emperor, Bahram I, in 273, Mani was arrested as a heretic. He probably died in prison sometime between 274 and 277, although he may have been executed.

After his death, his doctrines reached as far as China in the East and were also successful in the West. Manichaeism survived at least until the eleventh century in China as the “doctrine of light,” and some have claimed that the French Cathar movement of the Middle Ages was a late form of Manichaeism.

—Serge Cazelais

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Ephrem the Syrian; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Prophets; Reform and Reaction; Reincarnation; Suffering and Holy People

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Manjushri

Buddhist bodhisattva

Manjushri is the Indian Buddhist personification of wisdom (*prajna*) and “patron saint” of Buddhist scholasticism. Perhaps the oldest and most significant mythic *bodhisattva* (enlightenment hero) of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, Manjushri is generally portrayed as a dazzling, sixteen-year-old crown prince atop a lotus throne. In his right hand, he holds aloft his hallmark emblem: the razor-sharp sword of wisdom that severs the delusive thinking that binds people

in a cycle of suffering and rebirth. In his left hand, Manjushri balances a perfection of wisdom text—the source and embodiment of liberated awareness, as is Manjushri himself. Manjushri typically appears as interlocutor in texts expounding Mahayana Buddhism's signature interpretation of voidness (*shunyata*, the absence of any inherent self-existence), the philosophical cornerstone of twenty centuries of pan-Asian Buddhist scholastic explication. Manjushri thus signals and embodies a landmark in the history of Buddhist thought.

Manjushri emerged in Buddhist texts from the second century C.E. to fulfill a range of pedagogical functions. In the *Ajatasatrukaukrtyavinodana Sutra*, Manjushri travels effortlessly through universes as numerous as the grains of sand in the river Ganges, demonstrating that perfected wisdom is far more than mere verbal or intellectual acuity. In the *Vimalakirti Sutra*, the crown prince shows the wisdom of the Mahayana practitioner Vimalakirti to be far superior to that of non-Mahayana monks, tacitly underscoring the superiority of the Mahayana way. Manjushri's manifestation of critical wisdom in the *Ratnakaranda Sutra* so overwhelms the followers of a competing Jain teacher that they drop to their knees to praise the Buddha. Likewise, Manjushri brings the Buddha's teachings to "incalculable numbers" of beings in the highly influential Lotus (*Saddharmapundarika*) *Sutra*, and even converts a prostitute to the Mahayana path in the *Manjushrivikridita Sutra*.

Manjushri's popularity as an object of devotion and meditation spread well beyond India. Manjushri worship developed into "one of the most important Buddhist cults of Tang China" (Birnbaum 1983, 8) and spread to Korea and Japan. From the eighth century, Manjushri traveled to Tibet, where he became identified with influential religious and political figures who legitimized their teachings around their visions of the crown prince; "to see Manjushri" was tantamount to a direct experience of the most profound nuances of the Buddha's teaching. In Nepalese legend, Manjushri wields his glittering sword to drain the Kathmandu Valley. Manjushri subsequently joined the pantheons of Bhutan and Mongolia, and he continues to be revered by Buddhist practitioners throughout the world.

—Laura Harrington

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Scholars as Holy People

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Mankiller, Wilma

(1945 C.E.–)

Cherokee chief

As the first woman chief ever elected, Wilma Mankiller led the entire Cherokee nation in fourteen counties of Oklahoma from 1983 to 1995. Founder of the Cherokee Community Development Program, she focused on rebuilding the Cherokee nation, community by community. Her spirituality is reflected in the faith she has in her people and their ability to solve their own problems. Mankiller stresses the interconnectedness of the tribe as one of the most important Cherokee values. She cites an ancient prophecy that states that as long as the Cherokee continue their ancient dances, the world will remain the same, but if the dances cease, the end of the world will come. Mankiller's programs of community self-help encourage the Cherokee to continue to dance. During her tenure as principal chief, tribal membership tripled, health services and services to children greatly expanded, and the annual budget doubled.

Wilma Mankiller blends two worlds as she lives in both the Indian and American mainstreams. She combines the best of Cherokee tradition with the best of Euro-American culture. Her activism began in earnest after the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz by American Indian activists. As a contemporary healer, she is still an important Cherokee spokesperson and leader even though she decided not to run for the position of principal chief in 1995. She is currently writing and consulting. She has been the recipient of more than twenty-five awards, including American Indian Woman of the Year in 1986, Spirit of the People in 1994, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998.

Wilma Mankiller was the sixth of eleven children born into a poor Cherokee family in Oklahoma in 1945. She is the mother of two daughters and three stepsons, and grandmother of seven. Mankiller is an old Cherokee name, *Asgayadihi*, that signifies someone who safeguards a Cherokee village. Balancing cultures and empowering the Cherokee, Wilma Mankiller continues to preserve the Cherokee traditions and works for equality for all.

—Connie H. Rickenbaker

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People

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Chief Wilma Mankiller, of the Cherokee Nation, 1992. (Peter Turnley/Corbis)

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Mansur, al-

(914–953 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim imam, caliph

Abu Tahir Isma'il al-Mansur bi'llah, hereditary imam of Isma'ili Shi'ite Muslims and third Fatimid caliph, reigned in Ifriqiya in North Africa. He was born in Raqqada, near Kairouan, in January 914. He succeeded his father, Muhammad b. 'Abdallah al-Qasim, and reigned for less than seven years. Known as a pious, generous, and eloquent man, he died before the age of forty on March 18, 953.

Al-Mansur was proclaimed heir apparent on April 12, 946, only five weeks before his father's death. At that time, the Fatimid state was facing a serious armed rebellion led by the Kharijite Abu Yazid, who had stirred up the Berbers against Fatimid rule and quickly conquered southern Ifriqiya. Al-Mansur took over the task of fighting the rebel and showed exemplary bravery and tenacity during the long and dangerous campaign, which he led personally. When his father died, al-Mansur concealed his death lest Abu Yazid gain advantage. Then, on May 24, 946, he began his

campaign against the rebel, who was forced to abandon his siege of Sousse and fall back toward Kairouan. Emboldened by this victory, al-Mansur pursued Abu Yazid westward, where he subjugated other Kharijite adherents in the region of the Aures Mountains. Abu Yazid was eventually taken prisoner, and he died of his wounds on August 19, 947. Having suppressed the rebellion, al-Mansur made public his father's death and his own accession to the throne. He founded near Kairouan his new capital city, al-Mansuriyya, which was beautified by palaces in commemoration of his brilliant victory.

Al-Mansur resumed military campaigns in the central Maghrib and contained the influence of his rivals, the Spanish Umayyads, in the farthest Maghrib. He fought against Byzantium in Sicily, where Fatimid rule was reestablished, and its government was entrusted to the faithful family of the Kalbids. In the east, al-Mansur endeavored equally to reestablish Fatimid influence against his Abbasid rivals. It was at his request that in 951 the Carmathians restored to Mecca the Black Stone that they had carried off from the Ka'ba after seizing the Muslim holy city in 929.

—Hamid Haji

See also: Imams; Qasim, Muhammad b. 'Abdallah al-; Rulers as Holy People

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Mara*Buddhist legendary figure*

Mara, a Buddhist mythological figure, is the archenemy of the Buddha and a symbol of evil. He enters the narrative of the life of Prince Siddhartha when he attempts to thwart the prince from attaining enlightenment under the bodhi tree.

Mara, who perceives the Buddha as a threat to his domain of the afterworld, at first tempts the Buddha by telling him to gain merit in order to be rewarded in heaven. After this fails, he sends his hideous army to destroy the meditating Buddha. The weapons of the army become powerless in the holy aura of the Buddha and are turned into lotus flowers. According to some accounts, Mara uses his considerable powers to create whirlwinds, a great rainstorm, flaming rocks, and darkness, but nothing is able to deter Siddhartha. Finally, Mara attempts to seduce Siddhartha by sending his three daughters, named Discontent, Delight, and Desire, but they, too, are unsuccessful.

At the end of their encounter, Mara and Siddhartha engage in an argument over the seat occupied by Siddhartha, which is symbolic of a royal throne. Mara claims that the seat is his because he has given the most alms. The Buddha calls forth the earth to be a witness to his generosity in his former births. Because the act of generosity is the primary duty of kings in ancient India, the encounter between the Buddha and Mara is a battle over the kingship of the earth.

It is possible to grasp the magnitude of this battle by investigating the name of Mara, which is derived from a Sanskrit root that means “to die.” Thus, Mara, a demonic being, was etymologically connected to death itself. He is known as the deity who slays or causes to die. Moreover, his name connects him to all conditions that are impermanent and subject to death and all defilements, fetters, and interruptions that cause death. From his root meaning, Mara is that which kills or destroys. Mara is thus the symbol of suffering in Buddhism. Moreover, his realm is equated with birth and death in Buddhist scriptures. Mara also represents the wide variety of unenlightened states of mind. He thus serves in Buddhist literature as a metaphor for death and negative states of mind.

—Carl Olson

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Gautama

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Marabout*Muslim holy person*

The term *marabout* was made popular by the French colonial regime in North Africa and signifies a Muslim holy person, saint, or sufi leader. The word derives from the Arabic *murabit* (pl. *murabitun*), which originally referred to men preparing for battle at the frontier. The term is also used in North and West Africa to refer to a Muslim holy person’s shrine or tomb.

From the Arabic root meaning “to tie” or “to adhere,” “murabit” originally designated a voluntary soldier near the frontier of the Islamic world, frequently a lonely outpost requiring watchfulness, vigilance, and religious devotion. The term gradually gained a slightly different meaning in the western Islamic lands, including Spain and North Africa. The frontier settlements (often called *ribats*) that dotted this region from the 700s became places imbued with holy power and symbols of the strength of Islam not only against non-Muslims but, more broadly, against all the powers of evil. The title “murabit” in the vernacular Arabic of Spain and North Africa gradually came to denote someone exhibiting piety, contemplation, prayer, and holiness rather than the warlike characteristics of frontier soldiers. By 1200, the term had separated from the act of *murabata* (the military obligation of defending the Islamic frontier) to refer to a pious individual who withdrew from urban centers to a remote spiritual retreat, often attracting other followers. In North Africa during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, many murabitun remained in major cities, while many rural ribats, or *zawaya*, grew into towns—expanding from hermitages to religious, economic, and political centers.

“Murabit” has been a part of Western languages since the late medieval period (Latin: *morabiti*; Spanish: *al morabidin*, *morabito*, *moravito*; Portuguese: *morábita*; French: *marabout*; English: *marraboo*). Europeans used the term as they heard it used among Muslims at a particular time, but they also frequently extended its meaning to cover any sort of “holy” person, which at times included imams, magicians, cemetery workers, madmen, and beggars.

The formal study of marabouts and *maraboutisme* came with French colonialism in the nineteenth century. In 1848 in Algeria, the French government established an Académie d’Alger (which in 1909 became the Université d’Alger), which promoted the study of local cultures and languages

and became highly influential in shaping French colonial policies in Muslim Africa. Here, the marabout and its related cult of saints became a major focus of study among both civilian social scientists and military intelligence personnel. For French officials, marabouts became a metaphor for what they saw as the peculiar and irrational form of Islam in North and West Africa and explained in part why these societies were so “backward.” Manipulating the popular influence of marabouts and other religious leaders emerged as a central goal in French colonial policy—a goal at which they largely succeeded.

—David Gutelius

See also: Islam and Holy People; Sufism

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Marcion

(c. 85–160 C.E.)

Christian teacher

Marcion was a Christian teacher denounced as a heretic by church fathers of the second through the fourth centuries. His writings are not extant, and thus historians must rely upon his catholic opponents for information about him, chiefly Tertullian's five-volume *Adversus Marcionem* (Against Marcion) written in about 200. Marcion, born in about 85 C.E., grew up in the town of Sinope in Pontus (Asia Minor) as the son of a Christian bishop. He became a wealthy ship owner and migrated to Rome in about 135, contributing to the church there 200,000 sesterces. Finding his teachings unacceptable, the church excommunicated him in 144, returning his gift. Marcion founded his own church and embarked on a series of missions that resulted in Marcionite churches in North Africa, Asia Minor, and Syria.

Marcion produced two basic works: a Bible and *Antitheses* (Contradictions). His Bible (the first “canon” of New Testament scripture) was in two parts: *Evangelikon* (Gospel), an edited version of Luke, and *Apostolikon* (Apostle's book), ten reedited epistles of the apostle Paul (omitting 1–2 Timothy,

Titus, and Hebrews). His textual editing had as its purpose the elimination of alleged Jewish “corruptions.” Of the apostles he accepted only Paul. Marcion's *Antitheses* established the basic contradictions that he saw between the law of the Old Testament and the gospel (good news) of Jesus.

Marcion's teachings consist essentially of an interpretation of Paul's letters. In Rome, he came under the influence of a gnostic heretic named Cerdo, which may account for his radical dualist theology. He posited that there were two gods: the just creator of the world revealed in the Old Testament, and a completely good God, previously unknown and revealed by Jesus Christ. Jesus was not the messiah predicted in the Old Testament but the son of the good God sent to redeem humans from the bondage in which they are held by sin, death, and the law of the creator. Not born of a woman, Christ appeared suddenly in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. His body, Marcion said, was comparable to that of an angel, and he suffered on the cross in order to redeem humanity from bondage to the God of the law. In the end, that God and those who belong to him will be destroyed by fire; those redeemed through faith in the good God will live eternally in heaven.

Marcion made no claims for himself, but his followers regarded him as especially holy and assigned him a special place in heaven. Marcionite churches in the East persisted into the fifth century.

—Birger A. Pearson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Teachers as Holy People

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Margaret of Antioch (Marina)

(4th cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary martyr

Margaret of Antioch (Marina in the Eastern church) was a Christian virgin martyr from the reign of Diocletian (r. 284–305) known for possessing the extraordinary physical fortitude and spiritual resolve of those saints or angels who see evil directly in a visible form. She confronted not only a human tyrant, Olibirus, but also demons. Her best-known adversary was a dragon, the staple of her iconography. Margaret is one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers of the Catholic Church. She triumphs over the threats that surround humanity at its most vulnerable moments of spiritual passage: birth, prayer, and death.

Margaret's historicity is uncertain. She was perhaps known to Greek Christians in the fourth century. She was known to continental Europe and England by the late ninth century, and perhaps to Anglo-Saxon England. She remained popular throughout the Middle Ages in Europe. The various legends agree that Margaret's father was a non-Christian of Antioch in Pisidia who disowned her because she converted to Christianity. She caught the eye of the prefect, Olibrius, but refused to marry him. The angry Olibrius forced Margaret through an array of fantastic tortures. For example, she emerged from a boiling cauldron and the dragon's belly unscathed. Some legends describe her wounds in excruciating detail bordering on the erotic. Such details highlight the synergistic relationship of the body and the soul in traditions of Christian devotional practice. In Margaret's case, they depict the continuity imagined for the Christian soul as it moves into and through this life and into the next with an integrity signified by the body's wholeness.

The accounts also highlight the paradox of the body's vulnerability and durability, an enigma brought into relief at critical moments of passage, such as birth and death, when the workings of spiritual forces on the human individual are thrown into relief. This may explain Margaret's status as the patron of pregnant women and newborn infants. She was an intercessor for the dying and those attacked by demons, especially popular during the crusades. Margaret's speeches and prayers often contain medieval liturgical language, especially from the psalms. Her ability to see evil and confront it may have had a special resonance for medieval monks, nuns, and lay religious whose lives were organized around a constant attention to the spiritual world through prayer, meditation, and liturgical observance. They and others may have found in Margaret a holiness defined by its resilience in adversity and clarity of vision.

—*Donna Alfano Bussell*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fourteen Holy Helpers; Hagiography; Intermediaries; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Margaret of Cortona

(1247–1297 C.E.)

Christian tertiary, caregiver, hermit

Margaret of Cortona, a prominent member of the Third Order of St. Francis, was renowned for her penances, social

involvement, and devotion to the suffering Christ. Her lengthy biography by her confessor, Fra Giunta Bevegnati, establishes Margaret as one of the important female penitents in medieval hagiography.

Born in Laviano in Umbria to a peasant family in 1247, she ran off with a young noble, Arsenio, and lived in his castle for some nine years. One day, Arsenio's dog led Margaret to the dead body of Arsenio, who had been the victim of a robbery or feud. But when she returned to her ancestral home in Laviano with her nine-year-old son, her stepmother, her father having remarried, refused to allow her to enter. Abandoned, in about 1275 Margaret and her boy walked to Cortona in Tuscany, where she hoped to find work. When two noble ladies saw her begging by the Berarda Gate, they put her up in one of their small rooms.

Margaret made a living by serving as a midwife. She quickly became a well-known figure about town, respected for her piety and concern for the poor. In about 1278, she was accepted into the Third Order of St. Francis, a loosely knit group engaged in penitential practices and works of charity. Margaret founded a confraternity and a hospital, and she persuaded the bishop of Arezzo not to attack Cortona. People came from throughout the region to seek her advice and prayers; by means of her confessors, her influence on the town's spiritual life was extensive. Her extreme forms of penances and her ecstasies won her numerous admirers. In roughly 1290, she left the vicinity of the church of St. Francis, where she had lived in a cell, and went up the hill to live as a hermit. She remained there until her death in 1297.

Margaret was closely associated with the Franciscans and became a model for tertiary women, who were becoming increasingly numerous in central Italy. Although the town's leading citizens promoted her sainthood, she was in fact not canonized until 1723. Fra Giunta's biography, completed in 1308, reflects many contemporary trends: the devotion to the humanity of Christ in his suffering; penitential spirituality; the desire to visualize and participate in Christ's earthly life as depicted in the gospels; the poverty controversy in the Franciscan Order; the way saints were raised to patronage of towns; apocalyptic expectations; and the activities of laywomen in central Italy who were engaged in charitable works. He wrote the Life in the form of a dialogue, a common device at the time.

—*Thomas Renna*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Repentance and Holy People

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Margaret of Hungary

(1242–1270 C.E.)

Christian nun

Margaret of Hungary (of the Árpáadian dynasty) was a Hungarian princess and Dominican nun of the thirteenth century. She led a life of extreme asceticism and died young in 1270. Although regarded as holy immediately after her death, she was officially canonized only in the twentieth century. Her feast day is January 18.

Margaret was the daughter of King Béla IV of the Árpáadian dynasty and was born in 1242 during the Mongol invasion of Hungary. Upon Hungary's liberation, Margaret's parents dedicated her to God. She was educated at the Dominican nunnery of Veszprém and from 1252 lived at the nunnery on the Island of Hares (today Margaret Island, Budapest). She quickly became famous for her extreme asceticism and self-inflicted pain. Although her father tried to marry her off to various princes for dynastic purposes, she resisted and lived as a nun until the end of her life. Efforts to canonize her began soon after her death.

Margaret's confessor, Marcellus, wrote the first legend of Margaret, and numerous testimonies regarding her sanctity were also collected. These documents of the thirteenth-century canonization process form a uniquely important group of sources in Hungary. Because of internal strife in Hungary, however, her canonization did not take place at the time. She was officially elected among the saints in 1943. Nevertheless, her cult, centered at her burial place on the island, flourished during the Middle Ages. In Italy, she was venerated primarily within the Dominican order and was thought to have received the stigmata. Margaret's representations are common in Italian and Hungarian art alike, but unlike her aunt, St. Elizabeth, she remained largely unknown in the rest of Europe. Margaret had little effect on postmedieval popular beliefs, but her cult was revived during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when many romantic images were created of her.

—Zsombor Jékely

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Elizabeth of Hungary

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Margaret of Scotland

(c. 1046–1093 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Margaret was the granddaughter of the English king Edmund Ironside and the wife of Malcolm III of Scotland and lived during the eleventh century. Historians credit her with a spiritual and cultural influence in Malcolm's work of unifying Scotland and with the foundation of the church of the Holy Trinity at Dumfermline.

Scholars debate whether Agatha, the woman the English prince Edward married in Hungary, was Margaret's mother, but most agree Margaret was probably born in Hungary in about 1046. Although Margaret was drawn to a cloistered Christian religious life, she married the Scottish king as her mother wished. As queen, her spiritual interests found expression in a pious secular life of regular prayer, fasting, and charitable works. Three twelfth-century copies of *The Life of St. Margaret* are known to exist. This work records the details of Margaret's piety and the example she set as wife, mother, and princely model, roles for which medieval Christians revered her.

The surviving twelfth-century stone chapel within the precincts of Edinburgh Castle in Scotland is associated with the lifetime of Queen Margaret. Margaret was canonized by Pope Innocent IV in 1250. The celebration of her feast day was moved in 1969 to November 16.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Marie d'Oignies

(c. 1177–1213 C.E.)

Christian laywoman

Marie d'Oignies was one of the most representative of the beguines from the Low Countries. She was born in Nivelles in about 1177 and married at the age of fourteen. She and her husband converted their house into a leper hospital, where they cared for the sick. Later, she lived as a recluse in a cell at the church of Oignies near Liège and became well known for her severe penances and austere way of life. Marie was one of the earliest saints to manifest something of the stigmata and associated her afflictions with Christ's wounds. As was common among beguines, she made a living by her own labor (weaving) at home, while continuing to serve the poor and give counsel when asked. Her characteristic virtues

were her devotion to Christ's passion and the eucharist, her intuitive knowledge of the scriptures, her ecstasies and visions, and her prophetic gifts. She died in 1213.

The famous hagiographer James of Vitry (c. 1160–1240) wrote her biography, which was intended in part to chastise the clergy; promote preaching, regular confession, and communion; and attack heresy, particularly the dualist Catharism. This Life typifies some of the then-current trends in Western Christian teaching and practice and describes the spirituality of the beguine movement.

In about 1230, Thomas of Cantimpré (c. 1201–c. 1270), who, like James of Vitry, was an Augustinian canon regular, wrote a supplement to James's vita of Marie. More than an account of Marie's career and the holy women of Liège, Thomas's biography reprimands James of Vitry for taking focus from Marie's ideal of the *vita apostolica* (apostolic life). The Lives of Marie by Thomas and James reveal much about the early beguines, the religious life of urban Belgians, the spirituality of the apostolic life, the renewed emphasis on preaching, and the changing demands of hagiography and the canonical process for making saints. They also provide information about the de facto conditions in the Low Countries, as well as the ideals of two of the most important hagiographers of northern Europe. Marie's influence extended even to the Franciscans.

—Thomas Renna

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Laity; Mysticism and Holy People

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Marina

See **Margaret of Antioch**

Mark

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian evangelist, martyr

Identified by second-century church fathers as the anonymous writer of the second gospel, Mark is traditionally linked to the John-Mark mentioned in Acts as the son of Mary who accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their evangelical missions (Acts 12–15). He was also thought by the early church to have been a devoted follower of Peter, perhaps because of the reference in 1 Peter 5:13 to “my son Mark,” who faithfully recorded what he could remember of the apostle's preaching. This understanding may have given rise to the further tradition that the Gospel of Mark was written in Rome, the place of Peter's martyrdom, although internal evidence suggests that it was probably written in southern Syria.

The gospel itself does not identify its author or the time that it was written. But based on its emphasis on nation rising against nation, the faithful undergoing resurrection, and the need for Christians to endure until the end (Mark 13:13), scholars conclude that the gospel was written during the Jewish-Roman War, which extended from 66 to 70 C.E. and culminated in the destruction of the Temple. Thus, Mark is usually considered the earliest of the four gospels, with Matthew, Luke, and John coming later and relying on the Marcan material. Characterized by a rather awkward syntax and narrative construction, the gospel is nonetheless vividly detailed. That the author knew Greek reasonably well is obvious, as scriptural quotations are taken from the Septuagint rather than from Semitic originals. But the author's own Semitic background is also evident because in places Aramaic phrases are quoted and then translated.

The threat to the community represented by the extended conflict of the Jewish-Roman War is what gives rise to the apocalyptic quality of Mark's gospel. Within the unique literary context of the gospel, so different from the letters, chronicles, and apocalypses of other movements, Mark brings together past, present, and future in order to emphasize the point that the “kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). Toward this end, he constructs his gospel as a three-part narrative that focuses on the past of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and Judea, the present of Jesus' ministry in relation to the church, and the future ministry that Jesus will exercise when he comes as the Son of Man.

Medieval legend reports that Mark was martyred in Alexandria. In the ninth century, his purported relics were stolen by Venetian merchants, and Mark became the patron saint of the city of Venice. His feast day is April 25.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Jesus; John the Evangelist; Luke; Veneration of Holy People

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Marley, Bob

(1945–1981 C.E.)

Rastafarian leader, musician

In his short life Bob (Robert Nesta) Marley rose from poverty and obscurity in Kingston, Jamaica, where he was



Jamaican reggae musician Bob Marley in concert, 1980. (Lynn Goldsmith/Corbis)

born in 1945, to the status of international superstar because of his Rastafarian faith and the music it inspired: reggae. His transformation poised him to become a heroic figure to poor and oppressed people everywhere because of his passionate articulation of their plight, his relentless calls for political change, and the spiritual solutions he offered that gave people hope.

Marley's adoption of Rastafarianism shaped the ska sound of Kingston into reggae. A complex set of mystical beliefs that held Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia (whose given name was Ras Tafari, r. 1930–1974) as a living god who would lead blacks out of oppression and into an African homeland, Rastafarianism was considered the religion of outcasts and lunatics until Marley represented it as an alternative to the violence and despair experienced by so many Jamaican blacks. Rastafarianism lent dignity to their suffering and offered the hope of eventual relief. Rastafari culture preaches compassion and justice through “one love” and the unification of all humanity. The music of reggae, therefore, is the way to give glory to Jah (God) and to communicate the message.

The dreadlocks, dietary rules, and use of *ganja* (marijuana) were Marley's external manifestations of a faith that inspired music of peace, love, and justice. Many of his lyrics are based on biblical themes and scripture, and despite his anxiety about the responsibility, he accepted his role as a prophet for his faith. Marley's appeal in Jamaica reached messianic proportions and so challenged the ruling powers that they attempted to assassinate him in 1976. Not long after, his music reached a global audience and inspired others as well.

Marley's appeal succeeded in transcending militant versions of black activism because of his emphasis on spiritual redemption. He believed his music would shine the light of Jah on all who heard. Marley's untimely death in 1981 was the result of his following the strictures of his Rastafarian faith, which disallowed conventional medical treatment. When he died he was given a state funeral in Jamaica and eulogized as an inspiration for freedom fighters worldwide. His homes in Jamaica—Hope Road (where Marley used to hold court and dispense charity, now home to the Bob Marley Foundation and Museum) and Nine Miles (his birthplace and site of his mausoleum)—have become popular sites for pilgrims.

—Kimberly Rae Connor

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Haile Selassie

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Maroon Nanny

(c. 1700–1740 C.E.)

Obeah leader, rebel

To many people the name “nanny” suggests a governess or a contemporary *au pair*. The word has a different meaning in the history of West Indian resistance to slavery and colonization. On the West Indian island of Jamaica, the name Maroon Nanny, or Granny Nanny, is connected to the military battles that fugitive African slaves had with the British during the eighteenth century and the beginning of England's forced establishment of plantations and slavery in the West Indies.

Before Christopher Columbus's first claim to Jamaica in 1494, the island was inhabited by Arawak Indians. In 1655, the English captured Jamaica from the Spanish. By this time African slavery had been introduced, and a small group of

slaves took advantage of the upheaval between the English and the Spanish and fled to the mountainous areas of Jamaica, where they became fugitives known as Maroons in full rebellion against the British and enslavement. Many of them were Coromantees from West Africa. To the British, who wanted to maintain their enslavement, they were known as a fierce Ashanti-Fanti-speaking people.

Maroon Nanny inspired and helped lead the Windward Maroons of Jamaica in their resistance against slavery for a time during the First Maroon War (c. 1655–1739). The Maroons were known for their brutal ambushes, betrayals, and ruthlessness toward the British and often toward other fugitive slaves who were not Maroons. They were practitioners of traditional African religions, or what came to be known in Jamaica as *obeah*. Because of her religious and military leadership in fighting for freedom, Nanny empowered herself through obeah. As a religious and military leader, she had a special sense of “otherness” that was elevated by the Maroon followers themselves.

According to Maroon oral stories that continue to be told, Nanny had been born in West Africa (possibly around 1700) and had supernatural powers. The Akan name, Nanna, may have become modified in the New World but still signified sacred characteristics of the female force as healer and spiritual progenitor of cultural and religious beliefs. As an extension of West African traditional religions, obeah played a major role in the spiritual lives of the Maroons as well as in their political agendas. Nanny eventually agreed to a treaty with the British in around 1740. In return for cessation of the war, the British deeded 500 acres of land to Nanny and her people. The Maroons had won freedom for themselves even as slavery would continue until its abolition in the nineteenth century.

Nanny’s religious empowerment was a central component of her military strategies against the British. Because of her charisma as a holy woman and a “technician of the unseen,” she was a mediator between her people and their belief in Nyame (Nyankopon), the Ashanti creator god. Surrounded with many legends and supernatural tales, the Nanny icon expresses official national heroism in Jamaica today.

—Angelita D. Reyes

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Intermediaries; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Marpa

(1012–1097 C.E.)

Buddhist layman, teacher

Marpa was a famed eleventh-century Tibetan master instrumental in the transmission of Indian Buddhist tantra to Tibet. His search for Buddhist teachings led him on three journeys to India and Nepal. His principal teacher was the Indian master Naropa, who guided him into the practices of esoteric Buddhism. Marpa, a layman, assimilated his teacher’s realization and became one of Naropa’s principal students. After returning to Tibet, he translated the teachings he had received in India and became a major force in the spread of Buddhism. He is regarded as the father of the Tibetan practice lineage known as the Kagyu school.

Marpa was born in 1012 in the southern part of central Tibet during the second wave of the Tibetan importation of Indian Buddhism (eleventh to thirteenth centuries). Having completed his preliminary education in Tibet, he traveled to India to seek out an authentic Buddhist master to guide him in his quest for enlightenment. In India he remained with Naropa for more than sixteen years, during which he received the complete transmission of Naropa’s teachings, learning the Hevajra and Cakrasamvara tantras and the *mahamudra* (great seal) view.

Back in Tibet, Marpa became known for his mastery of meditation, and his life story speaks of his clairvoyance and supernatural achievements. His great skill in guiding students and the spiritual efficaciousness of his tradition brought many seekers to his residence requesting initiation. Among these disciples the most prominent figure was the ascetic Milarepa (1052–1135), who became Marpa’s spiritual heir and continued the tradition of the Kagyu school after Marpa’s death in 1097. Marpa was an unconventional master who sustained both family and a farm; in the spirit of Naropa’s unorthodox tradition, he successfully mingled spiritual training with the activities of daily life to the extent that he reportedly achieved complete enlightenment within a single lifetime.

—Andreas Doctor

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Laity; Milarepa; Naropa; Repentance and Holy People

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Martha

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian disciple

The New Testament gospels grant significant places to women among the followers of Jesus. This was unusual in Palestine of the first century. Among the closest and most devoted followers of Jesus were Martha and her sister Mary.

Luke 10:38–42 records that Martha (her name is from the Aramaic meaning “lady” or “mistress”) had a sister named Mary. It is left to John’s gospel to reveal that the sisters had a brother named Lazarus (John 11:1–12:11). John indicates that the family lived in Bethany near Jerusalem. Luke does not mention this but places Jesus’ visit to their home directly following the story of the Good Samaritan in which the road from Jerusalem to Jericho figures prominently, suggesting that Luke and John are in agreement.

Luke relates that Martha invited Jesus into the family home, indicating that she was the elder sister. John mentions Martha’s anxiety (11:20–27) and the fact that she served at supper (12:2). This accords nicely with Luke’s portrait of Martha as busy with much serving (10:40), while Mary sat at the feet of Jesus. When Martha expressed concern, Jesus offered a mild rebuke, expressing his belief, revolutionary at the time, that women as well as men are called to be full disciples.

John includes a long discussion between Martha and Jesus that is found nowhere else in the New Testament (John 11:17–37). Unlike the male disciples, Martha has confidence that Jesus can raise her brother from the dead and offers a rather developed statement of faith, claiming that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (11:27). Martha, in John’s gospel, is a model of belief. She is loved by Jesus, has faith in the face of doubt, receives teaching from Jesus, and tells others about him.

—David Nystrom

See also: Action in the World; Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Jesus; Lazarus; Mary, Sister of Martha

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Martial of Limoges

(3rd cent. C.E.?)

Christian missionary

Though little information concerning the life of Martial survives, hagiographers have managed to portray a sense of holiness, largely through his miracles and his works of conversion in a time of interreligious conflict during the third century. Gregory of Tours (538/539–593/594) informs us

that the pope sent seven bishops to Gaul to preach the gospel, including Denis to Paris and Martial to Limoges. Martial converted the inhabitants of Limoges to Christianity, erected a shrine to St. Stephen on the site of the present cathedral, and became bishop of Limoges.

As was often the case with medieval hagiography, later additions (probably largely inaccurate) were made to the story of the life of St. Martial. An anonymous life (the *vita primitiva*) was “discovered” by Abbot Arbellot in the eleventh century. The author claims to be Aurelian, Martial’s successor to the bishopric of Limoges. According to this work, Martial was born in Palestine, was one of the seventy-two disciples of Christ, attended the Last Supper, and was sent on a conversion mission by St. Peter. A controversy has arisen over the date of this biography. C. F. Bellet believes it belongs to the seventh century. L. M. O. Duchesne questions this conclusion and maintains that the *vita primitiva* is much later.

Martial allegedly performed numerous miracles, many of which were associated with conversion. When a non-Christian priest wished to throw him into prison, Martial struck him dead and later resurrected him as a Christian. After his death, Martial’s tomb became an important place of devotion and pilgrimage. In the ninth century, the Benedictine abbey dedicated to St. Martial was erected on the site. It was rebuilt in the eleventh century, leading to a growth in devotion toward the saint.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Denis of Paris; Disciples; Mission; Peter

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Martin de Porres

(1579–1639 C.E.)

Roman Catholic layman, healer

Martin de Porres, a Dominican lay brother of Lima, Peru, was renowned and respected during and after his lifetime for his outstanding gift for healing; his ministry to widows, orphans, lepers, and prostitutes; the establishment of hospitals and orphanages; his work with the poor of Lima, especially the indigenous and African population; his love and care of animals; the miracles he worked among people from all walks of life; and the intimate encounters he experienced with God in the eucharist and among the people. The people of Lima considered him a saint long before he died in 1639. Martin de Porres was beatified in 1836 and canonized in 1962, the first black American saint of the Roman Catholic Church.

Martin de Porres, born in 1579, was the natural son of Don Juan de Porres, a Spanish *hidalgo* (noble), and Ana Velázquez, a freed black slave known for her skills with healing herbs. Don Juan refused to publicly acknowledge Martin as his son, thus forcing on him the status of illegitimacy, a lowly and difficult position in the hierarchical society of Lima. However, he did take responsibility for Martin's education, apprenticing him to a barber when the boy was twelve. At that time, a barber was also an apothecary, knowledgeable about medicines and the healing arts. Martin's natural gift for healing was enhanced by this placement.

At fifteen, Martin joined the Dominican friars as a *donado*, a member of the third order who ate and lodged with the friars in exchange for menial labor. When he was twenty-four, the friars persuaded him to take vows as a lay brother, and he was given charge of the infirmary. Everyone from slaves to archbishops gave testimony about miraculous healings facilitated by Martin.

Martin de Porres, born of an interracial family, provides a healing presence in the effort to foster an understanding of Christianity that is no longer Eurocentric. Martin is a saint for people from all races and walks of life and acts as a reminder that all people must be treated with equal dignity and respect. Considered an outsider because of his parentage, Martin shows the way to bring the outcasts—the poor, sick, abandoned, rejected, oppressed, and hungry—into a compassionate and hospitable community. He offers a model for humble, true, and faithful witness to Jesus' command to love one another.

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Status

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Martin of Tours

(c. 336–397 C.E.)

Christian ascetic, bishop

Martin, bishop of Tours from 371 to 397, was an ascetic wanderer, popular healer, and ex-soldier. The principal source for his life comes from the biography written in 396 by Sulpicius Severus. Born in Pannonia (modern Hungary) in about 336, Martin moved with his family to Italy when he was young. Martin wanted to devote himself to God, but he was forced to

join the military because of an imperial edict compelling the sons of veterans to enlist. In the fourth century, the life of a soldier was considered incompatible with Christian belief. Sins committed after baptism were considered “permanent” and thus many early followers of Christianity delayed baptism until the end of their lives. Martin, however, was baptized in his third year of military duty. Severus felt the need to explain why and how Martin remained in the military for another two years and went to great lengths to portray the holy character of the young soldier. He recounts that while spending a cold winter in Amiens, Martin saw a beggar shivering in the cold, took his sword and split his cape, and gave half to the old man. Martin was ridiculed for his tattered cloak, but that night he had a vision of Christ wearing half of his cape. This famous story became an important part of his iconography and the basis of many depictions of Martin.

Martin attempted to leave the army honorably. When confronted by the emperor Julian just before a major battle in Gaul, Martin asked to be released from service. He called himself “Christ’s soldier” and claimed, “I am not allowed to fight” (Noble and Head 1995, 8). Angered, the emperor ordered Martin to face the enemy unarmed, saying that if his god protected him and he survived, he would be released from service. When the enemy “miraculously” surrendered without resistance the next morning, Martin was set free and promptly went to seek out the holy bishop of Poitiers, Hilary. Hilary gave Martin, an uneducated ex-soldier, the lowest position in the church, that of exorcist. Severus transforms this encounter to one showing Martin’s humility, stating that he had declined higher positions offered to him by the bishop.

Martin then decided to travel to his parents’ home, and Severus paints this as a religious journey full of difficulties. Martin lost his way and was robbed, kidnapped, and almost killed, but he began to convert those he met, including his own mother. For a short time, Martin secluded himself on a small island with another holy man, where they practiced asceticism by living in a harsh environment and consuming only roots, including poisonous ones. Hearing that Hilary had been exiled from Poitiers, Martin set off toward Rome to find him, traveling first to Rome and then back into Gaul, where he set up a small monastery.

It was at this time that Martin began working miracles, including bringing the dead back to life, and became a popular holy man. One incident involved a young man who died before he was baptized. Martin so lamented this fact that he secluded himself with the body and prayed for two hours until the man came back to life. The crowd that had gathered around the hut quickly spread word about Martin’s power. He was so loved by the populace that they forced him to accept the bishopric of Tours in 371—a move that was not supported by neighboring bishops, who derided Martin’s lack of education, appearance, and suitability. As bishop, he contin-

ued to live an ascetic life, limiting his diet, dressing in ragged clothing, and wearing his hair long—behavior considered odd for a bishop. His monastic cell attracted many followers and soon became a monastery of more than eighty brethren. Martin spent much of his episcopate wandering the countryside destroying temples and shrines, converting people to Christianity, battling demons, and healing the sick.

Martin died an old man in 397, but his cult became one of the most popular in the Middle Ages. His sarcophagus in the basilica of Tours was an important pilgrimage site until its destruction in the sixteenth century.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Hilary of Poitiers; Mission; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Martyrdom and Persecution

The Greek root of “martyr” means “witness,” and in normal parlance a martyr is a person willing to die for his or her faith. This is a phenomenon central to the definition of holy people in Judaism, all branches of Christianity, Shi’a Islam, and the Sikh and Baha’i faiths—all religions that have been a minority presence in an antagonistic society during at least part of their history. Death, or at least persecution, for their faith has also formed an undercurrent in the history of holy people in Buddhism and even Daoism, usually when religious thinkers have broken from the dominant paradigms of belief and practice and have suffered for it.

In general, though, martyrdom and persecution have been much more important in the monotheistic religions than in polytheism, since the nature of monotheism itself encourages a confrontational approach to the religious beliefs of others. There is considerable truth in John Ruskin’s (1819–1900) statement that “most martyrs have been made away with less for their faith than their incivility.” People are quite naturally outraged when their cult statues are knocked over and trampled or they are told that they have been worshipping devils. Similarly, many people feel threatened when told that the traditional beliefs of their religion have been misinterpreted and are essentially false. Still, martyrs are admired by their coreligionists as the ultimate witnesses to divine truths, and their steadfastness in the face of death has often inspired people to convert.

Usually central to the definition of martyr is that the would-be martyr has a *choice*; by foreswearing the faith, she or he can escape death. Instead, they have won a great moral contest, and for many people they express in very straightforward terms the triumph of good over evil. It is not always easy, however, to tell if a person made a choice for martyrdom or was only a victim—a recurring issue in studies of the Holocaust, for example. Also a central concern in the history of martyrdom is the problem of resistance—is a person who tries to fight back rather than relying completely on God a true martyr? What of a person who provokes his or her death, sometimes even committing suicide in a self-proclaimed act of faith? And what of people who accept death in witness to their faith while killing other people in the process, such as kamikaze pilots or suicide bombers? Moreover, is martyrdom compatible with the humility expected of saints, or are they merely putting on a “tragic show” out of egotism, as the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius accused the early Christian martyrs?

Both martyrdom and persecution that does not reach the point of death have proven to be extremely powerful tools for conversion, presenting a model that in essence declares, “My God is *worth* this great a sacrifice.” The persistence of the prophetic founders of various religions in the face of persecution shocked and awed their contemporaries, as well as later generations, starting with Zoroaster (c. 1400 B.C.E.), who tells how he was cast out by his kinfolk and rejected by many of his contemporaries. The stories of early Christian martyrdom are replete with examples of martyrs winning others to the faith by their steadfastness in the face of death, and examples continue in modern times among Christian missionaries. For example, when the Ugandan Apolo Kivebulaya (c. 1864–1933) began his Anglican missionary work, the king ordered his subjects to deny Kivebulaya food and soon had him beaten and left for dead. But a sympathizer secretly nursed the near-martyr back to health, and in time he was welcomed back and the king converted to Christianity.

Other persecutions and martyrdoms have served to confirm people in their own faith. The earliest person for whom a true martyrdom account was created was Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.), whom Plato skillfully presented as ready to die for his principles. More influential in the Judeo-Christian-Muslim tradition, however, was the Jewish resistance to King Antiochus IV (r. 175–164 B.C.E.), a tale of civil disobedience for the sake of God that was skillfully told in the books of Maccabees. The account focuses on the old man Eleazar and a mother martyred with her seven sons, the “Maccabean martyrs” of 167 B.C.E. who refused to deny God by eating pig meat that had been sacrificed to Zeus. Jews have made a central virtue of steadfastness to their faith, including a willingness to die for the “sanctification of the divine name” (*kiddush ha-shem*) rather than

allowing themselves to break the laws of idolatry, unchastity, or murder, all of which are crimes that separate one from God. The Hasidei Ashkenaz movement of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries particularly stressed martyrdom as the ultimate sign of love for God. Similarly, the Sikhs venerate Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675), who was arrested by the Mughal authorities of India and tortured for days before being decapitated, but who consistently refused either to convert or to perform miracles to convince or entertain his captors, a stance reminiscent of Jesus of Nazareth before King Herod. A particularly inspiring example is the Baha'i martyr Badí (c. 1852–1869), who at about the age of seventeen agreed to convey Baha'u'llah's message of the new religion to the shah of Iran, despite the near certainty he would be killed for it. Sure enough, "the pride of martyrs" was tortured slowly and killed for daring to present this witness to his faith.

Still other martyrdoms have occurred in defense of a moral paradigm, be it an individual act of conscience or one that could affect a whole state. The twentieth century can boast a significant number of martyrs who spoke out against political corruption or cruelty over much of the world, ranging from Oscar Romero (1917–1980) of El Salvador to Anglican archbishop of Uganda Janani Luwum (1922–1977), an outspoken opponent of Idi Amin's regime who was arrested and shot. At a more personal level, Emmeram of Regensburg (d. c. 700) accepted the blame for a noblewoman's pregnancy to shield the true father, for which he was chopped in pieces by an outraged brother. The great martyrdom of Uganda, which culminated in 1886 with the execution of thirteen Anglicans and thirteen Catholics, was provoked when some of the king's pages, after converting to Christianity, refused to allow the ruler sexual favors. This paradigm extends beyond Christianity; according to legend, the Tibetan scholar Vairotsana (eighth century) refused the queen's sexual advances, whereupon she arranged his exile.

European colonialism produced a rich crop of martyrs whose religious views were regarded as dangerous by colonial authorities. In many cases, persecution—or more properly, the holy person's steadfast resolve in the face of persecution—had the opposite of the desired effect, popularizing movements that might otherwise have remained peripheral. For example, the Baptist missionary Simon Kimbangu (1889–1951), who started a mass religious movement in the lower Congo, was sentenced to death for alleged sedition. The sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment, but his movement fed on his suffering, and Kimbanguism now has about 5 million followers.

Hard to define but perhaps the most inspiring of holy people are those who have accepted persecution and death to defend their own interpretation of their religion. If the views they advocate triumph, such people are hailed as

great martyrs and teachers of the faith; if they fail, they are stigmatized as heretics or even lunatics. Surely, at least some of the Christian "heretics" who have been persecuted and killed by Christian authorities merit the title of martyr—or would, if they had left followers to acclaim them. There is perhaps some hope even for these: The Roman Catholic Church is currently considering a case for the canonization of Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), burned at the stake as a heretic for his vehement attacks on ecclesiastical corruption. The Christian tradition is filled with tales of men and women martyred by their own coreligionists and entered on the rolls of saints when their cause triumphed, such as Maximus Confessor (c. 580–662), who was mutilated and exiled for defending orthodoxy against monothelite teachings, or, in the Anglican communion, the protomartyrs of Protestantism, such as Jan Hus of Bohemia (1372/1373–1415) and the 288 Protestants burned during the reign of "Bloody" Mary of England (r. 1553–1558). Although not giving them such a large role, other Protestant denominations recognize and honor the thousands of "heretics" executed on the continent of Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The execution of heretics who are later acclaimed as martyrs also occurs in other religions. The Bab (1819–1850), founder of the Baha'i religion, was executed as a heretic Muslim. Several sufis suffered a similar fate, for example Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922), executed because his religious vision was regarded as blasphemous. Indeed, he aroused such deep hatred that he had his hands and feet hacked off before being decapitated, then his body was burned and the ashes were thrown into the Tigris River—but he is still venerated today as a martyr to a deeper, mystical vision of Islam. In the eighteenth century, mainstream Jewish authorities persecuted followers of Hasidism. And less formally, several accounts exist of Buddhists who were persecuted or killed by rivals from other schools of theology.

For example, the Chan patriarch Bodhidharma (sixth century) was nearly poisoned by rival teachers, at least according to legend. Another tradition tells that the second Chan patriarch, Hui-k'o (487–593), was forced by persecution to flee to southern China, and after his return to the north, influential Buddhist priests got him charged with heresy and executed. A spectacular case of Buddhist rivalry run amok was that of Honen (1133–1212) in Japan. Founder of the Pure Land school in Japan, he alienated the other Buddhist schools by considering his own teaching supreme. In turn, they arranged for Honen's expulsion from the *samgha* (monastic community) and his exile at the age of seventy-four—a persecution that probably increased his popularity. Similarly, the Japanese reformer Nichiren (1222–1282) criticized all other Buddhist schools as heretical and tried to convince the emperor to suppress them. This backfired, how-

ever, and when they failed to murder him, Nichiren's rivals arranged his exile to a remote island—a persecution that convinced Nichiren that he was an incarnate bodhisattva.

The case of Nichiren, however, brings up a problem: Is a person who provokes his or her own fate a legitimate martyr? The only true standard by which to reckon in terms of personal holiness is whether the person involved was indeed venerated as a martyr. Thus, the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith (1805–1844) is a martyr to the Church of Latter-day Saints, although outsiders tend to view his death at the hands of a lynch mob as something he “had coming to him” after his increasingly dictatorial practices, culminating in wrecking the presses of a rival newspaper.

A similar issue is the proper position of a political dissident: Is a person who opposes his or her government for the sake of religion a martyr or just a traitor? Modern belief in much of the world supports the former reading of dissidents. The problem is by no means so easy to resolve in regions and at times when secular and religious government are mingled. The Roman Catholic missionaries executed in Protestant England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries *were* traitors by the standards of Protestant England, rebelling against a legitimate, divinely ordained ruler—but by Catholic standards they died as triumphant witnesses to the faith in a classic struggle of good against evil. Similarly, when several Sikh gurus were executed by order of the Mughal emperors, they died as rebellious and traitorous subjects, but they are acclaimed by Sikhs as martyrs to the faith. As in other types of martyrdom, the way a victim is viewed depends on how well he or she stood firm in the face of persecution; good, heroic suffering is an enormous support to a movement and can sometimes cause the persecution to backfire on the persecutors. A good modern example is the Iranian religious leader Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989), who was attacked, imprisoned, almost killed, and driven into exile; his son was murdered in the aftermath of all this. The Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979 broke out when Khomeini was slandered in a semiofficial newspaper, since by that time he was a popular hero.

Can a person still be holy who avoids persecution? A tale beloved of Christians is the legend that Peter tried to sneak out of Rome to avoid martyrdom, only to meet Jesus going into the city—on his way to be crucified again. Of course, Peter then turned back and won his martyr's crown. Such cases, however, have caused difficulties for theologians of several religions. Is not suicide a way of taking fate into one's own hands, rather than trusting in God? Not to mention the practical problem that if all the leaders of a religion are killed the faith will be thrown into disarray. Thus Shi'a Islam, subject to frequent persecutions as a minority “heresy” throughout its existence, allows pious dissimulation of true religious beliefs (*taqiyya*) in times of danger. Even God has collabo-

rated in this process, in 874 hiding away the twelfth Shi'a imam, who is expected to return someday to usher in a new world order. Similarly, the Jewish rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha (second century), very concerned about the survival of Judaism, argued that it was acceptable to break certain commandments rather than be martyred. Catholic missionaries to Protestant lands also brought dissimulation to a high art, assuming false names and clothing and pretending to conform for the sake of their greater mission. The third Chan patriarch of China, Seng-ts'an (d. 606), even pretended to be insane to escape execution during a persecution of Buddhism. He went into hiding for ten years. All of these practices are essentially antimartyr in sentiment, arguing that the utility of living people is more important than the example of dead martyrs, although the mainstream of these religions continued to regard martyrs with admiration.

Is any resistance to death acceptable, or does it disqualify a person from martyr status? A Buddhist embarrassment was the great Chan master Yen-t'ou Ch'uan-ho (828–887), who cried out (although with supernatural loudness) when stabbed to death, conduct unbecoming an enlightened being. By the tenth century, Christianity had decided that any resistance at all meant that a person was deficient in trust in God, even removing from the legend of Boniface (c. 675–754) the saint's efforts to fend off the axes of his enemies with the book that, slashed through the middle, is still preserved in the city of Fulda in Germany.

But are those who want martyrdom too much and bring it on themselves indeed martyrs? This has particularly been an issue in Christian theology. For example, Ignatius of Antioch (d. c. 107) makes it clear in the letters written after his arrest that he longs for martyrdom, and he begs his friends in Rome not to intervene to save him from execution. Theologians are similarly exercised by the problem of the martyrs of Cordoba (851–858), who provoked their own executions with provocative behavior against the Muslim authorities. Theologians have debated whether Apollonia (d. c. 249), who threw herself on her funeral pyre rather than give her guards the satisfaction of killing her, was a true martyr. Even more problematic are several early tales of suicide, usually by virgin martyrs who killed themselves not to save themselves from a painful death, but to prevent the preliminary stage of rape. In Christianity, the argument of the early third-century Clement of Alexandria has won, that a person who does not avoid persecution when possible is an “accomplice in the crime of the persecution.” This view does not hold in other religions, however. Judaism recognizes that there is sometimes a need for suicide for the faith, and Vietnamese Buddhist monks, such as Thích Quang Đức, who burned themselves to death in the 1960s in protest at the ill treatment of Buddhists in the country, are honored and credited with helping restore religious freedom to Vietnam.

Belief that a martyr must wait to be attacked rather than taking the initiative tends to blur the lines of free will, especially when denial of one's faith will not win relief from persecution or death. Some people are regarded as martyrs who died of disease because they put themselves in the way of death while witnessing the faith, such as the Christian king Louis IX (r. 1226–1270) or the Baha'i Keith Ransom-Kehler (1876–1933), who died of dysentery and smallpox, respectively, while about the work of their religions. More problematic to define are the great atrocities perpetrated against practitioners of several religions in the twentieth century. Communist Russia in the 1920s and 1930s imprisoned and killed multitudes of bishops, priests, monks, nuns, and pious laypeople, numbering at least in the tens of thousands. Similarly, the Communist triumph in China, and then its annexation of Tibet and the Cultural Revolution, led to the destruction of most monasteries and the execution of thousands of monks and nuns. The Khmer Rouge of Cambodia launched devastating attacks on Buddhism, during which an estimated 60,000 monks disappeared. And 6 million of the Jews of Europe fell victim to the Holocaust. Are these people martyrs? They had no choice in their fate, although many did witness to their religion, dying professing their faith or protecting others.

There is no answer to such questions. In popular estimation, though, it is fair to say that those who are venerated as martyrs have passed the test of popular religion. The human mind finds it hard to grasp the magnitude of these twentieth-century atrocities, however, encouraging believers to find *individuals* who model in a heroic fashion the virtues of the many who died—a practice that can be seen in the habit of Christian martyrologies to list an individual saint “and companions,” who usually remain unnamed. Tales of martyrdom always emphasize individual steadfastness, individual heroism. Legends magnify the suffering of saints, while, in truth, authorities have often ordained grotesque tortures for dissidents in hope of breaking the courage of the sufferer and thus winning the battle for popular esteem. Many martyrs have as a result died horrible deaths; the ones who persist to the end are regarded as martyrs, those whose courage failed are simply victims. Perhaps the palm is held by the French missionary martyr to Quebec Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649), who died by being slowly roasted and eaten while still alive.

Tales of the martyrs, of whatever religion, have been among the great inspirations of their respective faiths, winning an emotional response that cannot be matched by any other attribute of holy people.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bab, The; Bodhidharma; Boniface; Brébeuf, Jean de; Cordoba, Martyrs of; Hasidism; Honen; Kamikaze of World War II; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Kimbangu, Simon; Kivebulaya, Apolo; Louis IX; Luwum, Janani Jakaliya; Maccabees; Maximus

Confessor; Mysticism and Holy People; Nichiren; Ransom-Kehler, Keith; Romero, Oscar; Savonarola, Girolamo; Shoah; Socrates; Tegh Bahadur; Vairotsana; Zoroaster

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Mary, Sister of Martha

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian saint

There are several figures identified by the name Mary in the New Testament. Both Luke and John mention Mary the sister of Martha. John also indicates that the sisters had a brother named Lazarus. The gospels record that Jesus was a close friend of the family, perhaps using their home as a retreat for times of rest and reflection.

Mary the sister of Martha in Luke is a foil for the business of her sister Martha, activity that prevents Martha from focusing on the more important task of hearing the word and learning from Jesus. In John's gospel she is further the model of patient faith, remaining by the grave of her brother Lazarus while Martha goes to find Jesus. Her location at the feet of Jesus while he is teaching (Luke 10:39) is extraordinary. Jesus' association with the sisters must have aroused interest, as there were potent social conventions against unmarried women being visited by a teacher or receiving theological instruction.

John's gospel has Mary anoint Jesus' feet (12:1–8), and Luke (7:36–50) records that an unnamed woman anointed the feet of Jesus. Due in large part to this remarkable parallel, Catholic scholars have traditionally identified Mary of Bethany with not only the unnamed sinful woman of Luke but also Mary Magdalene, claiming that the three are actually the same person. The Greek fathers saw the three as distinct persons, and Protestant scholars generally harbor the same suspicions. In Christian tradition the association of Mary of Bethany with these other figures served to heighten her importance as an example of God's forgiveness.

—David Nystrom

See also: Action in the World; Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Lazarus; Martha; Mary Magdalene

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Mary, Virgin

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian saint

In the Christian scriptures, Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ, having conceived him by the power of the Holy Spirit when she was a virgin. According to the preponderant traditions of Christianity (the Roman Catholic and Orthodox, as well as the pre-Chalcedonian churches), Mary is the holiest human being who has ever lived, apart from her son, who is God incarnate. In the Orthodox churches, her most common title is *Panagia*, “All-Holy.” She is the most widely invoked of all the Christian saints, with the greatest number of shrines and church dedications. Her intercession with God is considered to be especially effective. The most visited pilgrim shrine in the world is that of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. Mary is also venerated in Islam. Although Muslims do not hold the Christian doctrine of the incarnation, the mother of Jesus is regarded in Islam as a figure of exceptional sanctity. There is an extensive account of her in the Qur’an, and Muslims make pilgrimages to sites traditionally associated with her, such as the house at Ephesus, in modern Turkey, where, according to local belief, she lived and died.

Almost nothing is known of the life of Mary in first-century Palestine. The earliest texts to refer to her by name are the three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), with Luke making the most extensive references to her, and Matthew and Luke both giving accounts of the virginal conception (Matt. 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38). These gospels also mention her presence during Jesus’ ministry. John’s gospel says that “the mother of Jesus” was present at her son’s crucifixion (19:25–27). The book of Acts recounts that she was also among the first members of the Christian community in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit descended upon them at Pentecost (1:14) following Christ’s ascension into heaven. The Odes of Solomon and the Protevangelium of James, which probably date from the second century, give more details of Mary’s life, including her birth to a couple who had been believed to be infertile, and her giving birth to Christ without loss of her physical virginity. This seems to indicate that Mary was a focus of pious reflection among Christians at a very early period. Other beliefs arose that, by the seventh century, had come to be generally accepted: that she never committed any sins, that at the end of her earthly life, her soul was taken by Christ to heaven, and that her body was thus preserved from corruption. In the Eastern church this event is celebrated as the Feast of the Dormition, or “falling asleep,” and in the West as her Assumption into heaven.



Coronation of the Virgin, with Saints John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene (left), Francis of Assisi and Augustine (right). (Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

Mary’s status in Christianity is higher than that of other saints—indeed, she is in a category of her own. Although *latria*, or adoration, is due only to God, and *doulia*, or veneration, is due to the saints, Mary is honored with *hyperdoulia*, an exceptional veneration. This is because of her unique role in the work of salvation. God redeemed the world from human sin and from death by means of the incarnation; that is, he took human flesh, thus uniting himself to the whole creation. His human nature came from his mother Mary. Without her, therefore, the world would not have been redeemed in precisely the way it was. Mary’s contribution to the incarnation is both a moral one, since she accepted God’s word and consented to be the mother of Christ, and a physical one, since she conceived and bore the savior of the world. Her sanctity is manifest in both these aspects: Obedience to the will of God is a primary requirement for Christian holiness, and Mary’s cooperation with God’s will led to her being the uniquely sacred vessel who gave her own substance to God’s incarnation on earth.

If the purpose of the Christian life is to attain union with God, then Mary is the person in whom this purpose is most perfectly accomplished. She is uniquely the godbearer, or mother of God, and was thus fully united to God in the flesh, as well as enjoying the greatest possible spiritual union with him. In Latin Christianity, the union between Christ and Mary has sometimes been expressed as a union of wills, or of hearts. Mary’s office as godbearer has led some authors, such as Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), to refer to her as the “bridge” between God and humanity: As God in Christ chose to come to the world through her, so it

is right for people to go through her (to ask her prayers) in their approach to God. Many of the Virgin's shrines embody the principle that, as it was her body in which God and humanity were united in Christ, so she remains the meeting place of heaven and earth. Natural formations, such as caves (Covadonga [Asturias, Spain]), springs (Lourdes [Hautes-Pyrénées, France]), bushes (Arazanuz [Euskadi, Spain]), and the sea (Vailankanni [Tamil Nadu]), are favored sites for her cult, suggesting the meeting of two worlds, either because of their wilderness locations or because they apparently provide an opening into concealed places.

An important aspect of Mary's sanctity is her virginity. Since she conceived and bore her son without loss of her virginity, the conception and birth are miraculous. Moreover, the celibate state was valued as a path to holiness from earliest Christian times, and Mary has been seen as an exemplary figure for both male and female ascetics. An unusual feature of Christianity is its promotion of lifelong virginity as a path to perfection for women as well as men, and Mary provides the primary example of such a path. Mary's perpetual virginity (rejected by Protestants) is an image of heaven on earth, since its changelessness recalls and signifies the state of eternity that is characteristic of heaven.

Closely connected to Mary's virginity is her moral purity. The earliest known prayer to the mother of God, a Greek inscription from Egypt (John Rylands Library, Manchester, Gk. 370; c. late third to mid-fifth centuries), describes her as *agnia*, a word that means "chaste" and is cognate with the word *agia*, meaning "holy." Even more than the Ark of the Covenant, or the chalice containing the eucharistic blood of Christ, Mary is the sacred vessel par excellence, having borne and given substance to God incarnate. She must therefore be free of all pollution, both physical and moral. Perpetual virginity is part of this, but in the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and most of the Eastern churches, Mary is also free of any personal sin. In the Catholic Church it is also taught that she was conceived without original sin. This is the state of sin that, according to Western teaching, pertains to all humanity since the fall of Adam, regardless of a person's actual sins. Normally it is removed through baptismal consecration. In the case of Mary, however, the grace that others receive through baptism was given her in the first instant of her conception, which is therefore described as "immaculate" (lit. "stainless"). Images of inviolability, such as "enclosed garden" and "sealed fountain," taken from the Old Testament Song of Songs, were used in the Middle Ages to refer to Mary's miraculous virginity and in the early modern period to her immaculate conception.

The doctrine of Mary's immaculate conception associates her with the holiness of God's creation from before the fall of humankind. The female figure of Holy Wisdom is portrayed in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus as being present

with God from before the foundations of the world, and these texts have been applied to Mary, in liturgy and preaching, since the high Middle Ages. Mary's conception on earth is understood to be the realization of God's plan from all eternity. Her association with the foundations of creation is a frequently recurring theme in the history of Christian devotion and forms a certain parallel to Muslim mystical ideas concerning the prophet Muhammad. It is possible that "black Madonnas" (images of Mary that are black in places where the native population is white), such as those at Le Puy, France, or Tindari, Sicily, signify the blackness of prime matter, the dark waters out of which the world is formed, and this may have some connection with sacred black figures in other traditions, such as the Hindu Kali.

Although Mary does not have the overwhelmingly fierce aspect of Kali, it should be noted that her holiness can stand to condemn as well as to bless. Thus, if she commands that a chapel be built in her honor, she may strike with illness those who fail to carry out her command. More commonly, however, she has been seen as a helper to sinners of every kind, if only they call upon her name.

In recent decades, Catholic theology of Mary has often focused upon her as the perfect disciple of Christ, since she heard God's word and obeyed his will. However, discipleship is not an end in itself but the pathway to ultimate holiness, and the dominant traditions of Marian devotion present her perfect sanctity as exemplifying the attainment of the journey's end.

—Sarah Jane Boss

See also: Bernard of Clairvaux; Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Jesus; Maryam/Mary; Sexuality and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Mary Magdalene

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian disciple

In the New Testament Mary Magdalene is one of Christ's most devoted followers. She is most simply represented as the tearful penitent usually associated with the season of Lent, a period of sorrow for one's sins that precedes Easter. The Magdalene's holiness comes from her penitence and charity, remedies for a soul sickened by sin.

Mary Magdalene is the patron saint of sinners, the laity, the physically ill (particularly those with leprosy), and prostitutes. Early Christian legend begins to identify her as the unnamed woman caught in adultery in the Gospel of John, and then as a reformed prostitute. Even as a penitent, Magdalene's sexuality and sensuality often remain among her signature characteristics, represented iconographically by her flowing red hair and luxurious figure or clothing.

The New Testament provides little information about Mary Magdalene. There are perhaps twelve references in the New Testament that are traditionally interpreted as references to her. However, only a small number of these identify the woman in the narrative as Mary of Magdala. She is the woman out of whom Christ cast seven demons (Luke 8:3). All four gospel accounts name her specifically as a woman at Christ's crucifixion or as one of the first of his followers—all women—who learn of the resurrection (Mark 16, Matthew 28, Luke 24, and John 20). Mary Magdalene is also commemorated as a preacher and "apostle to the apostles" because she is charged in these gospel accounts with informing the eleven remaining (male) disciples of Christ's resurrection.

It is the penitent Magdalene rather than the preaching "apostle to the apostles," however, who fills much of Christian exegesis and Western art, liturgy, and literature. The image of the sorrowing Magdalene is related to another, anonymous Mary. In the gospel narrative of Luke 7, an unnamed woman (later identified in Christian tradition as the Magdalene) washes Christ's feet with her tears and dries them with her hair. This woman's tears came to represent the individual Christian—and also the Christian church as a whole—utterly overcome by penitence. In some late medieval and early Renaissance art, the Magdalene's sorrow is increasingly rendered as ecstatic, further conflating the Magdalene's penitence with her sensuality. Mary Magdalene's penitence highlights one of the most elemental condi-

tions for human sanctity in the tradition of Christian thought: a sorrow that allows one to perceive the difference between the human and the divine, and desire to be in the presence of God above all else.

Mary Magdalene's penitence moved her to embrace an eremitical life, an association that originates in another gospel account. A Mary of Bethany chose to sit at Christ's feet instead of tending to household duties as her sister Martha did. Martha complained, but Christ praised Mary for choosing the better path. Thus both Martha and Mary (later identified as the Magdalene) represent two types of lives Christians may lead: "Martha's" life of active service, concerned with the pressures of everyday life, and "Mary's" contemplative life, in which daily activity is organized around a routine of meditation and prayer. During the Middle Ages, many Christian laypeople began experimenting with ways of expressing piety by using a mixture of these two models. The Magdalene not only presents the possibility that the laity can emulate some aspects of the contemplative life but also suggests that penitence be one of the foci for that life.

Mary Magdalene's own "active" life as a woman preaching to the disciples has traditionally been a more troublesome model of holiness for Christian exegetes and church leaders. Lay and religious people in the Middle Ages and early modern Europe knew not only the gospel and legendary accounts of the Magdalene's eremitical life but also legends that depicted the Magdalene preaching to others besides the disciples after Christ's death. Some lay Christians of the later Middle Ages, especially the Lollards in England, argued that preaching could be a legitimate expression of holiness open to the laity in general, or even to women in particular. Such notions defy doctrines limiting preaching and the administration of the sacraments to authorized, male clergy. The Magdalene's example inspired (and continues to inspire) some Christians to challenge established doctrines on gender, social roles, and the scriptural basis for clerical privileges.

—Donna Alfano Bussell

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Jesus; Mary, Sister of Martha; Repentance and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Mary of Egypt

(5th cent. C.E.)

Christian legendary hermit

According to the account of the priest-monk Zosimus, who met Mary of Egypt in the desert east of Palestine shortly before she died in the fifth century, Mary had worked as a prostitute in Alexandria from age twelve. Her life's path took a radical turn when she decided to accompany a shipload of pilgrims bound for Jerusalem, offering her professional services in exchange for the cost of her passage. Upon entering the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, she found that an invisible force prevented her from crossing the threshold into the sanctuary. Seeing an image of Mary, she prayed to it, promising to mend her ways if only she would be allowed to enter the church. Her wish granted, Mary walked into the church, praying for direction. Upon leaving, she left the city, crossed the Jordan, and disappeared into the desert, where no one laid eyes on her for forty-seven years.

By the time Zosimus came upon her, Mary was an old woman whose bare skin—covered only by her long hair—had been ravaged by the sun. Against her better judgment, Mary decided to share her story with the man, knowing that she would need a priest to administer the eucharist to her now that she had atoned for her sins. The two agreed that Zosimus should return to administer the sacrament to her on Holy Thursday of the following year. He did just that. But when he returned another year later, he found Mary dead. With the help of a docile lion, the story goes, he buried the holy woman in the desert. He then returned to his monastery and, for the first time, shared his remarkable story. The account became popular in the West as well as in the East over the course of the Middle Ages.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Nature; Repentance and Holy People

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Maryam/Mary

(1st cent. C.E.)

Islamic perspective on the Virgin Mary

The Virgin Mary is known as Sayyidana Maryam (Our Lady Mary) and Batul (the Virgin) in Islam. She figures in seventy verses in the Qur'an, leaving only Moses, Abraham, Noah, and Jesus more extensively narrated. She is the only woman named in the Qur'an and the only woman among eight people whose names appear as chapter titles (Sura Maryam, Chapter 19). The Qur'an asserts that God "made her [Mary] and her son a sign for all peoples" (21:91, 23:50). Mary is described as a woman of truth (*Siddiqa*, 5:75) and obedience

(*Qanut*, 66:12). The prophet Muhammad named Mary among the holiest women in Islam along with Khadija (his first wife), Asiya (Pharaoh's wife), and Umm Musa (Moses's mother, Qur'an 28:7). To this list the Shi'a add Fatima, the prophet's daughter, who, like Mary, is both a mother and a virgin (*batul*) and sometimes referred to as "Maryam al-Kubra" (Mary the Greater).

The Qur'an always refers to Jesus as "Jesus, the son of Mary" (*Isa ibn Maryam*), an idiom suggesting three implications: (1) Mary was the mother of Jesus rather than the "Mother of God" (*theotokos*), (2) Jesus had no father (3:59), and (3) Jesus especially embodied Mary's distinguishing characteristics of human piety, purity, and prayerfulness. Mary's giving birth to Jesus without either divine or earthly father is explained by analogy to Adam's fatherless birth (3:59). From the cradle, Jesus explains that God has enjoined him to be dutiful and reverent to his mother (19:32).

Many commentators in Islam give the meaning of Mary's name as "the one who worships." A part of a verse about Mary often frames mosque prayer niches (*mihrab*): "Every time Zakariya [Mary's uncle] went to her in the prayer chamber (*mihrab*) he found her provided with sustenance" (3:37).

According to the Qur'an, the angels announced to Mary that God "chose," "purified," and "preferred" her above all the women of creation (3:42). The choice of the verb "preferred" links Mary to the prophet Muhammad's title, al-Mustafa, "the Chosen." Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240) compared Mary and Muhammad as both vessels of God's word. The prophet Muhammad affirmed Mary's immaculateness: According to hadith literature, he said, "Satan touches every son of Adam the day his mother bears him, except only Mary and her son." One popular hadith reports that when the prophet Muhammad cleansed the Ka'ba of idols in 630, he preserved the icon of Jesus and Mary.

Since the angel Gabriel appeared and spoke to her, Mary carries the closest possible ranking of any woman in Islam to that of a prophet. However, only a few commentators (for example, Ibn Hazm [d. 1064], Qurtubi [d. 1272], and al-Asqalani [d. 1449]) identify her as a prophet. The injunction, "Commemorate Mary in the Book" (19:16), which is later repeated of Abraham and Moses, and a summary statement in 19:58, further suggest her likeness to a prophet.

The Qur'an also states that Mary gave birth to Jesus after withdrawing from her family to a prayer chamber in the East under the care of her uncle Zakariya (19:16). God sent his Spirit to Mary in the form of a perfect man bringing tidings of a "pure boy" (19:19). Through the angel Gabriel, God "cast" (4:171) or "breathed" (21:91; 66:12) his Spirit into her. Since Mary was at this time fulfilling a vow of a fast of silence to God Most Merciful (19:26), such a fast is called *Sawm Maryam*, the eponymous "Fast of Mary." It was in *si-*

lence that Mary gave birth to Jesus, the “Word from God” (3:45), and it was in *seclusion* that she gave birth to a son who so intimately knows and *relates* to creation (3:49–50).

The postures of Islamic ritual prayer (*salat*) are more fully described in Mary’s narrative than in any other except that of Abraham and Isma‘il (2:125–128): Zakariya stood in the *mihrab* (3:39); Mary fulfilled God’s command to prostrate and bow (3:43). Mary’s title *qanut* (66:12), the “obedient,” connotes enduring long in prayer. Her devotion was so pure that, during her labor pains, she was provided with sustenance from a date palm (which she was instructed to shake to release its dates) and a stream beneath it (19:23–26). Mary is implicitly compared with Muhammad in sharing the distinction of having reached the “farthest place” of prayer (19:22, cf. 17:1). Jaroslav Pelikan (1996) suggests that the motif of Mary withdrawing from her family during pregnancy links Mary to Hagar, the matron of the Arabs.

Mary’s chapter (19) holds an important role in the early history of Islam. When Muhammad sent many of his followers to seek asylum with the monophysite Negus of Abyssinia, it was hearing Sura Maryam recited that moved the monarch to tears, so that after affirming his resonance with their reverence for Mary and Christ, he granted the Muslims refuge.

Mary’s qur’anic appellations, “daughter of Imran” (derived from 3:34), and “sister of Aaron” (19:28), are honorifics that signify metaphorically that Mary descended from the house of Moses. In the past century, the Catholic Church has identified and restored a site in Ephesus, Turkey, which it believes to be the house where Mary lived her last years. Many Catholic scholars have expressed the hope that Mary might be a “bridge-builder” (*pontifex*) between Muslims and Christians.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Abraham; Gender and Holy People; Isma‘il; Jesus; Mary, Virgin; Muhammad; Prophets

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Mary/Mama (Mama Matakafu/Mtakafu, Holy Mother Mary)

(c. 1876–1966 C.E.)

Christian prophet, church founder

Cofounder with Baba Messias (Father Messiah) Simeo Ondeto of Legio Maria, sub-Saharan Africa’s largest African-

instituted church (AIC), Mary/Mama is considered by Legios to be the Virgin Mary who came to Africa as an old black woman. Some sources claim she really was Mariam Ragot, who founded the Dini ya Mariam (Religion of Mary) in 1952. Some assert she was Margaret Aduwo (Oduor), regarded by most Legios as Ondeto’s foster mother. Some have sought Legio’s “mysterious” Mary in Gaudencia Aoko, Maria Tinga, or other women. Most Legios contend, however, that these women had links to specific lineages, parents, husbands, and children, while the “true Mary,” born to Joachim and Anne among “the white people,” came to Africa “from God,” independent of specific earthly ties and encumbrances.

Many Legios are ex-Roman Catholics, and some avoid mariolatry. Others claim Mary is greater than her son. Some place Mary at creation as a witness, assistant, or cocreator, citing biblical support (for example, Proverbs 8:22–31), and contend that mothers, in heaven and on earth, have more wisdom and power than their children. Those taking this view argue the Bible has “a bibliography,” further materials from the Holy Spirit, showing that Mary surpasses her son. Legios say Ondeto, Legio’s black messiah, told them to honor Mary “more than even himself.”

For many Legios, the “third secret” of the 1917 Marian apparitions at Fatima, Portugal, concerned the coming of Legio and African independence. Rome’s failure to disclose it in 1960, as promised, moved Mary to tell her son that they had to convey Fatima’s message to Africa in the flesh. Colorless in heaven, Mary and her son came to earth on a rainbow. They arrived in different African eras. Mary dropped off the rainbow into Lake Victoria. She emerged from it as a ninety-year-old black woman moving through the past recounted in Luo oral narratives.

Some Legios link Mary to the old woman of the Nilotic “Spear-Bead Quarrel” migration narratives, who lived in the forest amid elephants and had a role in separating battling brothers. She is also associated with the tale about Nyamgondho, a poor fisherman, where an old woman brings Nyamgondho wealth and wives but returns with everything to Lake Victoria when he forgets his promise not to drink alcohol or verbally abuse her and his wives. Moreover, she is the strange old woman who visits the village in the Simbi Nyaima narratives. The village floods and turns into a lake because its inhabitants fail to accord hospitality to her, unaware she had planned to give them the gift of controlling rain. Some linked her to the independent women of the more recent Min Omolo and Obunga narratives.

Legios say Mary returned to the twentieth century to find her son. Some maintain that she inspired several other AICs before finding him, including Zimbabwean Johane Masowe’s Korsten Basketmakers (1932), and the Dini ya Mariam (1952). They believe that when Mary met Simeo Ondeto at

Mount Kwer-Kalafare (Calvary) in the early 1960s, she recognized him as her son. Legio then began as an organized movement in Kenya, and Legios insist it was Mary who “introduced the idea” of Legio. Consulting with Ondeto, Mary appointed Timotheo Atila, Legio’s first pope, and organized and laid groundwork for the movement, though she did not move about extensively. Legio faced government opposition at its start, and some Legios maintain that Mary was briefly hospitalized by the government for a broken rib caused by police brutality in clashes at Mt. Kwer-Kalafare, or for a disease that the government alleged she had.

From Mt. Kwer-Kalafare, Mary/Mama reportedly went to live in the church compound built adjacent to the home of Legio Cardinal Karilus Mumbo in Nzoia. She died, or, in Legio terms, “returned to heaven,” at Legio’s Nzoia-Effeso (Ephesus) Mission Church on December 23, 1966. Legios believe that Mary continues to speak through individual Legios to other Legios via glossolalia. Some glossolalia is semantic, approaching mediumship. Legios say Mary sends “telephone calls” and takes “photographs” of Legios from heaven, and that she is interested in contemporary technology.

—Nancy Schwartz

See also: Aoko, Gaudencia; Compassion and Holy People; Mary, Virgin; Ondeto, Simeo; Ragout, Mariam

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Masinde, Elijah

(1908–1987 C.E.)

Indigenous African/syncretist leader

Few people in Kenya have aroused more controversy than Elijah Masinde, the twentieth-century politico-religious leader of the Dini ya Msambwa. Both the colonial administration and the Kenyan government treated him with contempt. However, to his followers, Masinde was a messiah sent by God to deliver African people spiritually and politically from colonial rule. He did not think that the Western missionaries had taught them anything they did not already know regarding God.

Masinde, born in 1908, encountered Christianity when he attended the Friends Mission School at Kamusinga. He embraced Christianity, but he left the mission when he took a second wife. After that, he worked on the native tribunal court for a short period until he received a dream to start Msambwa. The dream directed him to Mount Elgon, where

he reportedly obtained a special message from God to liberate his people from European political, religious, and cultural subordination. He then denounced Christianity as the religion of the imperialists and castigated the missionaries for being an arm of foreign domination and for having taken African land.

According to Masinde, the missionaries perverted Christian teachings by straying from such Old Testament practices as animal sacrifices, circumcision, and polygamy. He revitalized the African beliefs in the ancestors and elevated the concept of creator spirit to a central position, also adopting selectively Christian symbols and practices. From its inception in 1938, the movement instigated a campaign with an aim to destroy the institutions of colonialism. There were assaults on government employees and rampant destruction of government buildings and settler farms. Such lawlessness led to Masinde’s arrest and subsequent commitment to Mathare Mental Health Hospital.

When Kenya attained independence in 1963, Masinde was hopeful that the new president, Jomo Kenyatta, would support him and his movement, but he was soon disappointed. The new government embarked on the project of building a multiracial society and a liberal economy that allowed foreigners and white settlers to remain in the country. In addition, some of the educated Luhya kept a respectable distance from Masinde. In 1968, Attorney General Charles Njonjo declared Dini ya Msambwa an unlawful society, and once again Masinde was forced to operate illegally. When he died on June 8, 1987, the Bukusu rites were performed. The coverage of the death by all the newspapers in the country attracted major attention, and several national dignitaries attended the burial.

—Samuel K. Elolia

See also: Contemporary Holy people; Insanity; Patriotism and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Mason, Charles Harrison

(1866–1961 C.E.)

Pentecostal Christian preacher, founder

Charles Harrison Mason was a Holiness-Pentecostal preacher who founded and led the second-largest Pentecostal denomination in the world around the turn of the twentieth century. This short, thin, African American man

garnered a grand mystical stature over the years through his rhythmic, sonorous sermons and prayers. He was known for touching the infirm and healing them immediately. Mason also kept alive Afro-Christian spirituality and worship forms. Reminiscent of the West African religions of his ancestors, Mason's theology insisted on a spiritual conversion akin to that described in the second chapter of Acts. This, along with his mystical healing and prophetic powers, served to increase his following among African Americans. His charisma also created an interracial following in a segregated society. Because of persecution from other whites, in 1914 many white ministers left the Church of God in Christ with Mason's blessing to form the Assemblies of God.

Charles Harrison Mason was born on September 8, 1866, to Jerry and Eliza Mason on the Prior Farm in Tennessee. During Mason's childhood, African American churches began a process of assimilating to mainstream American Christianity, shedding many of their worship practices and religious ideas, such as spiritual conversion. In the face of this, Mason prayed fervently with his mother, a woman renowned for her long hours of prayer, and asked "above all things for God to give him a religion like the one he had heard about from the old slaves and seen demonstrated in their lives" (Clemmons 1996, 5).

The focus on retaining Afro-Christian spirituality led Mason to join with Charles Price Jones of Mississippi and others in forming the Church of God in 1897. In petitioning the clergy bureau in Washington, D.C., Mason and Jones discovered that other bodies used the names "Church of God" and "Church of Christ." Mason suggested the name Church of God in Christ, citing divine inspiration, and it was accepted.

After Mason and others attended the Pentecostal Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1907, Jones and Mason split over Mason's insistence on glossolalia as necessary evidence of the full baptism of the Holy Spirit. Mason won rights to the organization's name. As leader, Mason organized and expanded the denomination. In 1961, thousands mourned Mason's death at the Church of God in Christ headquarters, Mason Temple, located in Memphis, where his remains are housed.

—Douglas Thomas

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Reform and Reaction

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Masowe

See **Johane Masowe**

Matilda

(d. 968 C.E.)

Christian queen

Matilda was a holy tenth-century German queen who has been venerated since her death on March 14, 968. Renowned for her virtue and piety, she used her position to found important convents at Quedlinburg and Nordhausen, support the church, dispense royal alms to the poor, and seek pardons on behalf of criminals. She is revered as the patron saint of the Ottonian royal dynasty founded by her husband, King Henry I. Henry supported his wife's pious undertakings and, according to the unknown hagiographer who wrote the later version of *Matilda's Life in 1002–1003*, God repaid them for their good works with five extraordinary children: Otto I, who succeeded his father and cemented the dynasty's reign as elected king in 936 and emperor in 962; Henry, known as "the quarrelsome," duke of Bavaria; Bruno, venerated archbishop of Cologne; Gerberga, who married King Louis IV of France; and Hedwig, mother of Hugh Capet, king and founder of the Capetian dynasty in France. An earlier *Life of Matilda* written in 974 also portrays their marriage and dynasty as divinely favored.

Daughter of the Saxon count Theodoric, Matilda could trace her noble lineage back to Widukind, the Saxon duke who surrendered to Charlemagne and converted to Christianity in 785. She was raised by her grandmother in the convent of Herford, where she learned needlework and spent many hours dedicated to prayer. Noted for her beauty and modesty as well as her nobility, Matilda caught Henry's attention and it was love at first sight. They were married in 913. According to the later *Life*, Matilda and Henry ruled with modesty, reason, and virtue and were very happy. However, she would leave her husband's bed to pray during the night, as St. Radegund, the sixth-century Merovingian queen, had done. Often she appeased Henry's anger and sought pardons on behalf of criminals. Together she and Henry planned the convent of Quedlinburg, but he died in 936 before it was completed. Just after his death, she asked a cleric called Adeldach to say a mass for his soul.

Her first action as widow and dowager queen was to finish the foundation of the convent and establish herself as its abbess. Henry's body was moved to Quedlinburg, and Matilda became the caretaker of his body and memory and

continued her pious works while looking after the nuns under her care. She founded Nordhausen to celebrate the memory of her family as well. It was not until the death of Henry, her favorite son, that Matilda fully embraced widowhood and dressed without her royal garments. Before she died, she gave her granddaughter Matilda, abbess of Quedlinburg, the responsibility of commemorating the members of her family who had died and praying for their souls. Matilda was venerated as a saint from the moment she died and was buried next to her husband at Quedlinburg.

—*Helen A. Gaudette*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Matriarchs, Hebrew

The biblical matriarchs of Genesis—Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel—are revered as the mothers of the Jewish people, and their lives became models of holiness for future generations. Each matriarch, linked in the biblical narrative to a particular patriarch by kinship and marriage, played a central part in Israel's unfolding destiny.

Sarah (originally Sarai) is first mentioned as the wife of Abraham (originally Abram) in Genesis 11:29; according to Genesis 20:12, she was also his half sister. Genesis 11:30 relates her infertility. Miraculous births to apparently barren women is a recurring theme in these narratives, indicating God's intervention in human history: Sarah was over ninety when she gave birth to Isaac in fulfillment of divine promises (Gen. 17–18). Isaac's wife, Rebecca, Abraham's great-niece, bore twins, Esau and Jacob. The sisters Leah and Rachel married their first cousin Jacob (Gen. 29–35); Leah, the unloved wife, gave birth to six sons and a daughter; the beloved Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, died in her second childbirth. Jacob also fathered another four sons with his wives' maidservants, Bilhah and Zilpah; according to ancient Near Eastern custom, these children were seen as offspring of Leah and Rachel.

The authors of Genesis present the four matriarchs as complex individuals who acted in questionable ways to advance their offsprings' interests. Sarah insisted that Ishmael,

Abraham's son by her maidservant Hagar, be expelled with his mother from the household, even though Sarah had initiated their relationship as a remedy for her own childlessness (Gen. 21). Rebecca deceived Isaac to ensure that her younger son, Jacob (later renamed Israel), would receive both the blessing of the firstborn and his brother's birthright from his blind father (Gen. 24–25). The rejected Leah and the long barren Rachel are portrayed as living in an environment of favoritism, envy, and resentment. Nevertheless, in the biblical context these women's actions, however ambiguous, were essential elements in advancing the history of the Jewish people according to divine plan.

Postbiblical rabbinic Judaism celebrates Sarah's virtues as the mother of the Jewish people, praising her modesty, beauty, and prophetic abilities (Babylonian Talmud, Baba Metzia 87a, Yebamot 77a; Megillah 14a, 15a); her ungenerous behavior to Hagar is said to have been justified by Hagar's arrogance (*Genesis Rabbah* 45:5, 53:15). Similarly, Rebecca is lauded for her loveliness, kindness, and prophetic insight; her preference for Jacob is attributed to her recognition of his piety in contrast to Esau's essential wickedness (*Genesis Rabbah* 63:10, 65:6). Some interpretive traditions about Rachel and Leah depict these sisters as exemplifying female friendship, despite biblical evidence to the contrary (*Genesis Rabbah* 71:8). However, the generally affirmative view of Rachel does not always carry over to Leah, the less loved of Jacob's wives, who is criticized for participating in the deception of her husband (Gen. 29) and for her brazenness in sexually soliciting him (Gen. 30). Some traditions suggest that Leah's daughter Dinah's questionable conduct in going out to visit the daughters of Canaan in Genesis 34, which resulted in her ruin, was not surprising given the inappropriate behavior of her mother (*Genesis Rabbah* 80:1).

In Jewish women's prayers from early modern Europe, the merits of the matriarchs were frequently invoked by female worshippers to hasten the Jewish people's redemption. These vernacular supplications (*tkhines* in Yiddish) were intended for female use both in synagogue worship and in individual rituals. Prayers to be recited on occasions such as baking sabbath loaves or visiting the ritual bath often imagined the matriarchs as participating in and sanctifying these same activities, a reinforcement of traditional female roles that afforded both dignity and holiness to women's everyday lives.

Traditionally, Judaism understood communal participation in daily prayer as obligatory only for men, and the Hebrew liturgy, oriented toward male worshippers, included numerous references to the patriarchs but not to their wives. In recent decades, with increased female involvement in communal worship and the ordination of women as rabbis and cantors, numerous liturgical changes have been undertaken in all branches of Judaism except for Orthodoxy. Among many gender-sensitive innovations, Reform, Conser-

vative, and Reconstructionist prayer books now incorporate invocations to the matriarchs along with the patriarchs in the Amidah, or “standing” prayer, the central core of all Jewish religious services. In this way the community of worshippers acknowledges the mothers as well as the fathers of the Jewish people.

—Judith R. Baskin

See also: Abraham; Gender and Holy People; Isaac; Jacob; Judaism and Holy People

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Ma-tsu

See **Mazu**

Maubeuge Cycle Saints

(7th cent. C.E.)

Christian saintly family

Three generations of noble Frankish landholders in seventh-century Neustria produced a remarkable cluster of eleven Christian saints. They stemmed from St. Waldebert, a royal official in 626–627, and St. Bertilia (sister of Gundeland, mayor of the palace 613–639, and the warrior Landeric). Their younger daughter, St. Aldegunde, rejected marriage to found the abbey of Maubeuge in about 660–665. Their elder daughter, St. Waldetrude, married St. Vincent Madalgar, son of Madalbold and a commoner, Onnoguera (an unusually low status in Frankish hagiography). Madalgar retired to monastic life at Hautmont in about 657 and later founded the abbey of Soignies. Waldetrude founded the convent of Sainte-Waudru around 656–660 at Mons, the capital of Hainaut. Both foundations eventually became collegiate churches.

Hainaut’s medieval rulers revered Waldetrude as the county’s patron saint, believing that she had been their collateral ancestress and “duchess of Lotharingia.” Her children with Madalgar were St. Landeric, who became abbot of Soignies; St. Dentelin, who died in infancy; and Sts. Madaltrude and Aldetrude, who both became abbesses of Maubeuge. Waldetrude’s niece St. Aye later ruled her convent of Sainte-Waudru. Aye’s husband, St. Hidulf, died in 707 after becoming a monk.

The Roman calendar omitted some of these saints because they were canonized locally at a time when Christian

bishops sanctified holy people in response to popular devotion simply by raising their relics before an altar. But the Bollandists recognized them all in the *Acta Sanctorum*. Taken serially, their prose biographies resemble narratives in secular medieval poem cycles, the epic *chansons de geste*. Therefore, hagiographers often call these saints’ Lives collectively the “Maubeuge Cycle,” after Aldegunde’s abbey. Apart from Aldegunde’s visions, recorded in 684 soon after she died, the cycle’s surviving works were written long after the seventh century. These Lives present their heroes and heroines as loving spouses and parents, saintly children, eminent soldiers, royal officers, holy visionaries, and pious abbots and abbesses, all of whom befriend good kings, caring bishops, and other holy people. Probably first transmitted orally, and often reworked, like epic narratives their biographies blend fact with fiction and myth in a contemporary context.

Church and altar dedications and Internet sites recognize all these saints. But only three Maubeuge Cycle saints are still objects of popular devotion. In Belgium, citizens of Mons honor Waldetrude and parade her relics on Trinity Sunday, while Vincent Madalgar’s devotees are centered in Soignies. Aldegunde’s widespread votaries reverence her in ancient Lotharingian territories in northern France, Belgium, and the Rhine valley.

—Aline G. Hornaday

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Veneration of Holy People

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Maudgalyayana

See **Moggallana**

Maurice (Mauritius)

(d. c. 287 C.E.)

Christian soldier, martyr

Although Maurice has now sunk into relative obscurity, he was the most important military saint in Europe during the early Middle Ages, and he later rather curiously underwent a transformation from Caucasian to African. Maurice was a Roman military commander in charge of the Theban Legion

in the third century. He and his men were massacred at Agaune-en-Valais in Switzerland in about 287 because of their Christian beliefs. Little else is known about Maurice, although much later and unlikely elaborations of his legend mention his baptism by St. Erasmus, a meeting with Pope Marcellinus, and a reputed sister, St. Fidis. His cult spread quickly, moving south into Savoy, west into France, and particularly into Germany. The cathedrals of Vienne, Tours, and Angers were all dedicated to him. Agaune became a substantial pilgrimage site, and by 672, St. Maurice was acknowledged as the patron of the Burgundian kingdom and eventually of the Merovingian dynasty. An important monastery of St. Maurice was founded at Niederaltaich in Bavaria by Duke Odilo in 741.

Maurice was regarded as the patron saint of the western imperial army from Carolingian times, invoked before campaigns for protection and victory. In about 960, the German emperor Otto I acquired relics of Maurice and translated them to a new monastery in Magdeburg, which in 967 became the seat of an archbishopric. Otto made Maurice the patron of his whole empire, and Magdeburg became a second focus of his veneration. Maurice's lance became identified with the Holy Lance with which Longinus had pierced Christ's side on the cross, and it became part of the coronation regalia of the Holy Roman emperors, along with the sword with which Maurice was beheaded.

The eleventh century was the high point of imperial interest in Maurice, but he remained an important force in Magdeburg throughout the Middle Ages. The cult declined in France from the eleventh century, but King Louis IX revived interest in it, acquiring relics from Agaune and, in 1264, dedicating a chapel to St. Maurice in his palace at Senlis. In the fifteenth century, two orders of chivalry were dedicated to him: the Order of the Crescent, founded by King René of Anjou, and the Order of St. Maurice in Savoy. Albert of Brandenburg (archbishop of Magdeburg, 1513–1541) propagated spurious legends about Maurice to enhance his monomaniacal relic collection, but interest in Maurice was even then on the decline. His feast day is still celebrated by the Roman church on September 22.

Maurice was particularly venerated by the nobility, and he was also recognized as a patron saint by knights and soldiers, including the papal Swiss guard, and by weavers and dyers, clothiers, launderers, and glass painters. His relics were considered efficacious against gout and demonic possession, and in Venezuela he is still invoked against locusts. A statue in Magdeburg Cathedral, made c.1240, is the first depiction of St. Maurice as a black African. Fanciful etymologies of his name may have been behind this curious change of identity. Black images of St. Maurice were rare before the fifteenth century and were limited to parts of the Holy Roman Empire.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Maximus Confessor (Maximus the Theologian)

(c. 580–662 C.E.)

Christian monk, theologian, martyr

The "father of Byzantine theology," Maximus was born in about 580 to a prominent family in Constantinople. Maximus clearly had an excellent education, but not until his early thirties is something definitively known about the course of his life. By about 618, Maximus had resigned his position in the imperial chancery and entered the monastery at Chrysopolis (outside Constantinople), eventually to become its abbot. Within a few years of that removal, seeking more ascetical devotion, Maximus joined the monastery of St. George at Cyzicus (modern Erdek).

While at Cyzicus, Maximus began to write, including compositions on the spiritual life such as *Centuries on Love*. Soon driven to flight by a Persian invasion, Maximus settled in North Africa and soon became the disciple of St. Sophronius, who was elected as patriarch of Jerusalem in 634. While in Carthage, Maximus composed the bulk of his theological writings, at the center of which was his persistent defense of orthodox christology in the face of numerous heterodox teachings on the personhood and true nature of Jesus Christ. Maximus considered the incarnation the pivotal event in human—and universal—history. In this regard, Maximus was especially vocal in his opposition to the heresy of *monothelism*, which insisted on the singularity of the will and energy of Christ: one person, one will, one nature, joined in a perfect union. Maximus considered strongly that a denial of the duality of the wills and energies of the Christ was untenable because it would necessarily threaten the salvation of the very human will of collective humanity.

Maximus's stand against monothelism won him imperial disapproval, since the emperor forbade all discussion of the

topic. Maximus was arrested by imperial command in 653, but he was sent to Constantinople by 655 since he was widely understood to be the spiritual leader of Eastern Christendom. A transcript of his first trial indicates that Maximus was accused of having engaged consistently in rebellion against the imperial will by plotting against the emperor and refusing to be silent concerning the orthodox teachings on the wills and energies of Christ. The trial transcript reads, in part, “Then casting himself upon the ground with tears, the servant of God [i.e., Maximus] said, ‘Let not the good and pious lord be offended by my lowliness. I cannot grieve God by keeping silent about what he ordered us to speak and to confess’” (Maximus Confessor 1985, 24). Maximus also insisted, despite repeated tortures, that the emperor had no authority to address or to direct dogmatic and theological matters.

Maximus was condemned to exile in Bizya, Thrace (now on the border of Turkey and Bulgaria), but with no provisions or means of assistance. At that time, Maximus was seventy-five years old. Cold and hunger plagued Maximus, as well as frequent visits by bishops and consuls sent by command of the emperor to compel the suffering monk to recant his rejection of the imperial will and to cease his defense of the unified church. Maximus refused, and in 662 he was again on trial, along with his disciples, in Constantinople. At this trial, Maximus was anathematized and mutilated: His tongue and his right hand were cut off. Maximus was then sent into exile again, this time to Lazica on the Black Sea, and there he died on August 13, 662. His death went unmourned by any official authority; however, at the sixth ecumenical council in Constantinople in 680, his teaching on the two wills in Christ, the doctrine for which he had been tortured and died, and for which he rightly was accorded the epithet “Confessor” (of the true teachings of the Christian faith), was formally accepted.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Scholars as Holy People

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Mayer, Rupert

(1876–1945 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest

Rupert Mayer, Jesuit priest, pastor, and opponent of the Nazis, was beatified by the Roman Catholic Church in 1987. Rupert was born in Stuttgart on January 23, 1876. He studied philos-

ophy in Freiburg (Switzerland) and Munich and theology in Tübingen. In 1899, he was ordained a Catholic priest, and in 1900 he entered the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). As a Jesuit he first worked as a traveling preacher in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. He joined the military chaplaincy in 1914, serving on the fronts in France, Poland, and Romania. He was among the very few military chaplains awarded the Iron Cross. In 1916, his leg was shattered and had to be amputated. For his convalescence he returned to Munich.

In 1921, Mayer was appointed director of the Marian Sodality in Munich, an organization for active Catholic laymen, and under his leadership its membership surpassed 7,000. His sermons from the 1920s and 1930s reveal a passionate concern for the social ills that were giving rise to extremist party politics in Germany. He attended meetings of the Communists and the National Socialists (Nazis) for the sake of debate. Mayer decided more quickly than others that Nazism and Christianity were fundamentally incompatible. Because of his sermons against Nazism, the Gestapo arrested Mayer several times for “misuse of the pulpit” beginning in 1937. He continued preaching despite a government prohibition. The Gestapo decided to remove him from Munich in 1940 and sent him to the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen. The frequent arrests and imprisonments, however, had left the sixty-four-year-old war hero weak, and lest he become a martyr by dying in Nazi custody, the Gestapo put him under house arrest in Kloster Ettal, an isolated monastery in southern Bavaria.

In May 1945, U.S. troops liberated Mayer and the other Kloster Ettal prisoners. He returned to pastoral duties in Munich. While celebrating mass on November 1, 1945, Mayer suffered a fatal heart attack. He was initially buried in the Jesuit cemetery outside of Munich, but with great solemnity his body was transferred in 1948 to the crypt of the Bürger-saal in the center of Munich, the principal church of the Marian Sodality. Pope John Paul II beatified Mayer on November 3, 1987. His tomb has been the most active religious site in Munich ever since.

—David J. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Mazu (Ma-tsu)

(709–788 C.E.)

Buddhist monk

As a famous Chan Buddhist monk, Mazu, whose name means “horse,” was a member of the same lineage as the

sixth patriarch Huineng (638–713) of the third generation. When his master asked him early in his career why he sat in meditation, Mazu replied that he wanted to become a buddha. Thereupon, his master picked up a tile and started rubbing it on a stone in front of the hermitage. Mazu asked him what he was doing, and the master replied that he was attempting to make a mirror. When Mazu inquired about how this was possible, the master countered with his own question about how it was possible to become a buddha by sitting in meditation. This anecdote suggests that a person cannot purify or polish oneself to create an enlightened being if the buddha-nature is not originally present.

Mazu was later to refine the trigger mechanism for sudden enlightenment by pioneering several unusual teaching methods. He was, for instance, the first master to ask a novice an unanswerable question. While the novice struggled for an answer, Mazu would shout at him in order to jolt the student into a nondualistic state of mind. Mazu also used physical violence, and he encouraged a spirit of violence and fearlessness in his students. He combined the use of such methods with a simplified notion of enlightenment, which he defined as seeing into one's own nature, that is, achieving an intuitive understanding of the self.

In order to gain this type of awareness, a person must master self-control, a process that Mazu often referred to as herding an ox, a metaphor for the uncontrollable aspects of human nature. The herding of the ox did not involve making value judgments or following rules; it meant doing what seemed most rewarding at a particular moment. He was pleased, for example, when a disciple explained how he pulled the figurative ox by its nostrils when it began to overindulge itself. For Mazu, there was nothing abstract about a simple physical action that stressed a natural and simple activity.

This kind of simplicity was turned against Mazu when he returned to his native village for a visit. When he arrived, the villagers welcomed him warmly, with the exception of an old woman, who was his next-door neighbor while he was young. She came to see what all the commotion was about and was disappointed to discover that it was nothing more than the son of what she called the garbage cleaner. Nonetheless, Mazu exerted a strong influence on the Chan tradition.

—Carl Olson

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Huineng

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Mbatiany

(c. 1824–1889 C.E.)

Maasai prophet

Mbatiany, born in about 1824, was one of the most renowned Maasai *iloibonok* (prophet-diviners; *oloiboni*, singular) in East Africa. He lived in northern Tanzania and is remembered by many Maasai for presiding over the time of their greatest prosperity and unity, attributed, in great part, to his spiritual authority and leadership. After his father Supeet's death in the mid-nineteenth century, Mbatiany became the major *oloiboni* (*oloiboni kitok*) of the Purko and Kisongo sections of southern Maasai and led the *ilmurran* (junior men, usually glossed as "warriors") in the successful defeat of the Laikipiak section of Maasai.

Because of his tremendous spiritual powers and following, Mbatiany was considered by the British to be the "chief" of the Maasai. He is perhaps most famous for his prophecy that accurately foretold the decimation of Maasai cattle herds by disease (rinderpest), followed by the coming of the British: "A disease will destroy the herds of cattle and a civil war between the parties of Lenana and Senteu will thin the ranks of the warriors. Then will a white hawk approach from the coast and settle in our land and deliver us from the edge of ruin. But after this time of testing, the Maasai people will have new blood and their old power" (Bernsten 1979, 289).

According to Maasai traditions, Mbatiany went insane toward the end of his life because of a curse by his brother Mako. He abandoned his family and wandered alone in the plains. His madness only increased his spiritual powers and reputation as a prophet, and people thought of him as a "child of Eng'ai" (a Maasai divinity). Now that he had completely forsaken the secular world around him, he was completely open to Eng'ai's power and visions. Some reported that he could even "infuse dry dust with his power and give that dust to warriors as a charm for their success" (Bernsten 1979, 289).

Unfortunately, upon Mbatiany's death in 1889, two of his sons, Lenana and Sendeu, fought over the right to inherit his position. Their rivalry provoked violent confrontations between their followers, and eventually they became the chief *iloibonok* for different territorial sections of Maasai.

—Dorothy L. Hodgson

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Iloibonok; Insanity; Prophets

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Mbona

African mythical martyr

In southern Malawi, the mythical martyr Mbona is the object of veneration of a territorial cult possibly going back to the sixteenth century. According to Mang'anja oral tradition, Mbona, which could be translated as "the seer" or "the overseer," was a gifted rainmaker who undermined authority and had to flee for his life. After a number of miraculous events (for example, making a well in a rock and being invulnerable to iron weaponry), he sacrificed himself, leaving directions for the founding of a cult. His story, paralleling the life of Christ, has caused Mbona since the advent of Christianity to be recast as the Black Jesus. At its peak, the cult drew people far into present-day Mozambique and Zambia.

A sacred grove in Khulubvi, Nsanje district, is the center of the cult. Here, a shrine stands where Mbona's decapitated head supposedly lies buried. A number of officials reside in the grove and look after the shrine, bringing offerings at times of drought and other calamities. Living at some distance, the chief of the Tengani presides over the rebuilding of the shrine when the need arises. The ultimate responsibility for the cult lies with the Lundu paramount, who is to provide Mbona with a "wife." This elderly woman, called Salima, lives in Khulubvi and communicates Mbona's wishes received through dreams and possession. An outside medium may also perform this function, and local chiefs have subsidiary shrines.

The Mbona cult is an adaptation of the Chisumphi cult found among related Maravi peoples. Mbona, who was introduced as a mediator to the high God Chisumphi, is a transformation of the beheaded snake of central African mythology. Mbona can appear in the guise of a python. The adaptation was part of the process of centralization under the Lundu in the early seventeenth century. By replacing cult leadership and ritual innovation, the incoming political elite aimed to gain control over the cult, which was a political stronghold for the autochthonous population. The existence of a spirit medium nevertheless left some room for popular critique on leadership.

In the wide corpus of Mbona myths, three distinct traditions can be discerned. These traditions differ with regard to place of initial departure, the identity of Mbona's adversary, Mbona's social status, and the political organization at the time of events. The streams reflect spatial and professional proximity to the Khulubvi shrine. Moreover, the traditions are thought to have originated at various stages of political centralization.

During the course of its existence the cult has shown considerable resilience. After the decline of the Lundu kingdom in the eighteenth century, the shrine was reduced in importance. In the 1860s, the Portuguese slaver Mariano even ransacked Khulubvi. The cult's centralization and Mbona as a

Black Jesus contribute to its present-day survival. With the installation of a new Lundu paramount in 2002, the cult is even expected to regain importance.

—Menno Welling

See also: Legendary Holy People; Nature

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McKenna, Terence

(1946–2000 C.E.)

Psychedelic researcher

An American ethnobotanist, writer, lecturer, and psychedelic researcher, Terence McKenna is a good example of an American holy person of New Age spirituality. Born in Hotchkiss, Colorado, in 1946, he was influenced in his youth by the psychedelic works of English novelist Aldous Huxley, including *The Doors of Perception* (1954) and its sequel, *Heaven and Hell* (1956). Matriculating at Berkeley in 1965, he later graduated with a distributed degree in ecology, resource conservation, and shamanism. In 1971, McKenna and his brother Dennis (a neurobiologist) led an expedition to La Chorrera in the Colombian Amazon basin and conducted a series of experiments with psilocybin mushrooms and the psychotropic plant *ayahuasca*. His discoveries in the Amazon led to a lifelong personal engagement with entheogenic (god-manifesting) plants and laid the foundation for a public career as a spokesman for the psychedelic movement.

In the early 1980s, McKenna acquired a reputation on the West Coast as a spellbinding lecturer, mesmerizing packed auditoriums with eclectic "rants" on mathematics, history, philosophy, and shamanism. In the 1990s, his popularity spread on the basis of an energetic speaking agenda, including appearances on nationally syndicated radio, as well as the publication of a series of books (*The Archaic Revival*, *Food of the Gods*, *True Hallucinations*, *The Invisible Landscape*) that quickly became cult classics. Pioneer psychedelic guru Timothy Leary, several years before his own death in 1996, referred to McKenna as the "Timothy Leary of the

Nineties.” Although never as publicly divisive or politically controversial as Leary, McKenna’s ability to provide articulate explanations of the anthropological, historical, and religious significance of hallucinogenic drugs brought the psychedelic movement to maturity in the 1990s and wedded it to new technologies such as the Internet and virtual reality.

Among McKenna’s original contributions to late twentieth-century consciousness are “Novelty Theory,” an application of A. N. Whitehead’s philosophy of organism to the findings of psychedelic research, and the “Timewave Theory,” a unique and complex interpretation of the Daoist classic *I Ching* that locates the *eschaton* (end of history) on December 21, 2012, a date coinciding with the Mayan calendar’s “world age shift.” McKenna also introduced the term “Archaic Revival,” referring to a civilization-wide psychedelic impulse that he believed would bring the modern industrial world back into contact with humanity’s oldest religions. As an ethnobotanist, McKenna was a pioneer in cataloging the medicinal properties of plants of the Amazon basin and helped establish Botanical Dimensions, a Hawaii-based project that rescues and preserves endangered medicinal plants. In 1999, he was diagnosed with brain cancer, and after months of various treatments, he succumbed in April 2000.

—Eric Cunningham

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Ethnopharmacology

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Mechtild of Hackeborn

(1241–c. 1298 C.E.)

Christian nun, mystic

Mechtild of Hackeborn, born Matilda von Hackeborn-Wippra in 1241, whose mystical visions make up the *Liber specialis gratiae* (The book of special grace), took up residence in the monastery at Rodarsdorf, Germany, at the age of seven; her sister Gertrude of Hackeborn (1232–1292) was already a nun there. She joined the Cistercian convent at seventeen, about the same time Gertrude became abbess of the community and moved it to Helfta near Eisleben in Saxony. Mechtild of Hackeborn and Gertrude the Great (1256–1302) lived at Helfta during the same period, and they are both remembered for their mystical writings and for the development of the cult of the Sacred Heart at Helfta. Catholics venerate Mechtild as a saint for her visions and for her association with devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Mechtild was a teacher at the convent school as well as a singer and choir mistress. The convent under Abbess Gertrude

was recognized for its emphasis on education and on the intellectual and spiritual development of the nuns. Besides her reputation as a teacher and singer, Mechtild’s accessibility to the other women of her community, as well as to friars, priests, and laypeople, added to her renown as a trusted counselor. In her visions and prayers she often asked questions and sought advice for the benefit of and with concern for others.

Mechtild’s association with the cult of the Sacred Heart is also connected with her visions. According to her revelations, contemplation on the wound in Jesus’ side led directly to seeing the Sacred Heart of Christ depicted as a house or shelter and a place of refuge. Although this was not a new idea, Mechtild’s and Gertrude the Great’s visions and writing helped to develop the concept. Some scholars suggest that Mechtild of Hackeborn was the model for Florentine writer Dante Alighieri’s (1265–1321) character Matelda in his *Purgatorio*, Cantos 26 and 27.

Mechtild of Hackeborn died in around 1298, and her feast day is celebrated on February 26 and 27.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Gender and Holy People; Gertrude “the Great” of Helfta; Mysticism and Holy People

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Meditation and Holy People

Meditation or contemplation, focusing of one’s thoughts, is a very powerful tool for spiritual development, one that many holy people have perfected to a high degree. This is especially true of the religions of Asia, which have developed systems to teach meditation and have given it a central position in religious discipline. In a less formalized fashion, however, other religions have recognized the meditative abilities of some of their holy people. In Christianity, this is more likely to take the form of “contemplative prayer,” prayer so focused that the practitioner effectively cancels out all distractions of the surrounding world.

The essential purpose of religious meditation is to link the soul to the divine. The most complete system for doing so is Hindu yoga, which is literally a “yoke” intended to unite these two elements with the use of carefully controlled body positions and breathing techniques while practicing meditation. It should be noted that yoga concentrates on the soul of the practitioner rather than on an external god. Buddhist

meditation similarly focuses on liberating the soul from the constraints of this world. It was through meditation under the bodhi tree that the Buddha attained awakening, and meditation has been regarded as the main tool to win awakening ever since. This focus on the soul of the individual marks Hindu and Buddhist meditational practice as essentially different from the Judeo-Christian tradition. In Jewish Kabbalah, as formulated especially by Isaac Luria (1534–1572), the world is full of “divine sparks” that became scattered when the vessels containing primordial divine light were shattered. It is the duty of human beings to help bring the sparks together again, through prayer and meditation as well as by keeping divine law. More generally, Christians, Jews, and Muslims meditate to try to reach a point of contact with God, rather than to change their souls by their own efforts.

Successful meditation by a true adept has been regarded in many religions as an essential separation from the constraints of the body. Especially pervasive are stories that people in deep meditation can levitate, a belief that runs through Europe and Asia. A noted example is the Christian saint Joseph of Copertino (1603–1663), who had so many levitational experiences that he is now the patron saint of astronauts. Belief that such experiences occur is so common in Buddhism that there is a standard list of supernatural results of meditation: (1) magical powers, (2) clairaudience, (3) knowing others’ minds, (4) clairvoyance, (5) ability to recall details of former existences, and (6) “knowledge of the extinction of defilements.” Teachers have warned their disciples not to become puffed up over such paranormal experiences as clairvoyance or other supernatural abilities. They are indeed only the first stage of spiritual development, and in turn have to be eliminated before one can reach true enlightenment. Some of the greatest Buddhist holy people, such as the Tibetan Gampopa (1079–1153), are so regarded because of their ability to guide others in meditation. The Chan/Zen school of Buddhism, established by Bodhidharma in the sixth century, emphasizes motionless seated meditation as the key to enlightenment.

Bodhidharma practiced what he preached. Legend tells that he sat motionless before a wall for nine years to perfect his meditation skills, during which time he not only cut off his eyelids to keep himself from falling asleep but had his legs wither away from disuse. Such superhuman feats of meditation form an important part of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain legend. The Hindu legendary figure Valmiki, credited with authorship of the *Ramayana*, was a robber before he devoted himself to Rama. So he did penance, meditating for so long that ants built a hill around him, leaving only his eyes visible; the name Valmiki is derived from the word for an anthill. The twenty-third Jain *tirthankara* (ford-maker), Parshva, was similarly credited with astonishing powers of concentration. His enemy tried everything to try to keep him

from attaining enlightenment, finally creating a great flood. Even then, Parshva did not lose his concentration, continuing to meditate even when the water was up to his nose. In more recent times, it is told of the Hindu Sadashiva Brahmendra (c. 1700) that once a shifting riverbed covered him with sand while he was meditating without disturbing him. Popular belief in the extraordinary staying power of meditation masters can perhaps best be seen in the case of Zhabs Drung, a Buddhist who became political as well as religious leader of Bhutan. He probably died in 1651, but his death was concealed from the public by the claim that he was simply in a meditational trance—until 1705! The Christian tradition, however, maintains that contemplation cannot be maintained for long periods, the divine vision being too great to be sustained while in mortal form. Sometimes criticism of excessive meditation also appears in the Eastern religions, as in the case of Ramakrishna (1836–1886), who was once in a trance for six months, until finally Kali came to him in a vision and ordered him to settle for a more normal state of consciousness.

Several modern holy people are especially noted for their efforts to spread meditation practices to the populace at large. Notable among them are the Christian Thomas Merton (1915–1968), whose central message was the centrality of contemplation in the Christian life, and Mahasi Sayadaw (1904–1982), the great reviver of meditation in Theravada Buddhism.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bodhidharma; Gampopa; Gautama; Joseph of Copertino; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Merton, Thomas; Parshva; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Sadashiva Brahmendra; Sayadaw, Mahasi

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Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People

The pre-Christian Mediterranean world covered a wide geographical area and a multiplicity of cultures, languages, and religious practices. Therefore it is no surprise that conceptions of individuals thought worthy of veneration or of those thought to be conduits to the divine are equally varied. In general, the major social function of religious practice in this region was the reinforcement of ethnic identity and community solidarity. Thus with rare exceptions, ancient Mediterranean religious traditions tended to discourage living individuals

whose special sense of “otherness” set them apart from the group. Nor was holiness a state to be achieved by special study or lifestyle. Particularly in Greek and Roman religious practice, priesthoods were normally civic offices held by elected officials as part of their administrative duties for a specific term; priests were not distinguished by expectations of exemplary conduct.

Certain patterns of individual sanctity can, however, be observed. The institution of kingship tended to be imbued with spiritual authority, and numerous rulers carried a strong aura of personal sanctity, both during their lives and after their death. Certain private individuals were regarded as especially great and powerful because of some extraordinary activity or skill, and their tombs could form a special locus of the divine for an entire community. The rise of philosophy as a guide for living created more abstract notions of the divine not centered on traditional religious cults of deities; as a result, the founders or chief practitioners of influential philosophical schools were much revered as models of an exceptional life. Although there are many ways in which concepts of holiness in the Mediterranean through the 3,000 years of antiquity overlap from one area to another, in general these concepts can be traced separately, by region, in chronological progression. The three main regions are the ancient Near East, Greece, and Rome.

The Ancient Near East

In the ancient Near East, here defined as Egypt and the states of western Asia, the most influential spiritual systems were those rooted in local tradition and local practice; they often predated the power of the ruling state and probably had more impact on the life of the average person. Religious systems could, however, also be an extension of the state, and this encouraged a sense of holiness in the monarchy. This concept was most marked in Egypt, where the institution of divine kingship emerged, along with the development of a central unified Egyptian state, in the late fourth millennium B.C.E. and continued until the absorption of Egypt into the Roman Empire. Each Egyptian king, or pharaoh, was worshipped as a god in his lifetime and, in theory at least, enjoyed perpetual cult after his death. The elaborate burial complexes of the pharaohs, with their provision for continuing worship, are a direct result of this belief.

Although all Egyptian rulers claimed divine status, one New Kingdom pharaoh, Akhenaten (r. 1367–1347 B.C.E.), used this ideology to create his own definition of divinity and reshape the ruler’s position in it. Akhenaten claimed that the only true divinity was the Aten, or sun disk, and that only the divine ruler (i.e., himself) could communicate directly with the Aten. This ideology formed a major challenge to the long-established regional and state cults of Egyptian religion and therefore met with considerable resistance. After Akhen-

aten’s death, the cult of the Aten was banned and traditional Egyptian cults were reinstated. Scholarly opinion is still divided on the motives of Akhenaten’s actions—that is, whether he was a serious religious reformer or an egomaniac trying to force all religious attention on himself. It is clear, however, that his efforts were unsuccessful. The tradition of the divine kingship functioning amid a large number of regional cults was maintained until the death of the last Egyptian ruler, Cleopatra VII (r. 51–30 B.C.E.).

In western Asia, the pattern of competing political powers inevitably means that the religious picture is much more varied. Religious practices tended to center on regional loyalties, and only rarely did specific individuals stand out as having a special status with the divine. One who did is the early Mesopotamian king Naram-Sin (r. c. 2250–2220 B.C.E.), fourth king of Akkad, the first state to weld all of Mesopotamia into a unified kingdom. Naram-Sin was the first Mesopotamian ruler to claim the status of divinity and demand personal worship, probably in an effort to enhance his own attempts to consolidate his hegemony. This seems to have been an effort limited to one individual and was rarely repeated. Indeed, the collapse of the Akkadian kingdom at the hands of the Gutis was later ascribed to Naram-Sin’s arrogance in claiming divine rule.

One individual who framed his spiritual identity outside of royal power was Zarathustra (Zoroaster). He is a shadowy figure whose dates (probably during the early first millennium B.C.E.) and place of birth (probably in eastern Iran) remain uncertain. Zarathustra argued that the world was divided into a competitive dualism between good and evil, in which an ethical life was necessary for good to triumph. Good was represented by the principal divinity, Ahura Mazda. Zarathustra also taught that earth, fire, and water were sacred, and he mandated exposure as the means for disposal of the dead. The immediate reaction to his religious system is unknown, although it is likely that acceptance of his teachings meant the abandonment of local polytheistic cults and their influence on regional Iranian groups. Zarathustra’s teachings exercised an enormous influence on the kings of the Persian Empire, sixth through fourth centuries B.C.E., and became even more dominant during the Sassanian Empire, second through sixth centuries C.E.

The Greek World

In the Greek city-state, or polis, the emphasis on religious cult as a means of reinforcing traditional loyalties to families and political groups meant that living individuals rarely sought special veneration. Such status could, however, be given to them through divine selection. Prophets were believed to be able to communicate with the gods because of divinely inspired gifts. The most revered prophets, such as Calchas and Mopsus, belonged to the mythical past, al-

though there were historical examples, including the Pythia, the priestess of Apollo at Delphi. The Pythia priestesses took the position of oracle of Apollo for life and were consulted on a wide range of subjects by many people in the society from the eighth century B.C.E. to the third century C.E. A strong sense of holiness could also be attached to extraordinarily talented or influential individuals after their death, and their presence, usually associated with their tombs or their remains (actual or imputed), exerted a considerable impact on both civic and private religious practice. The cult of the powerful dead, known as hero cult, is one of the key features of Greek religious practice. Despite claims for the great antiquity of this practice, the hero cult does not appear in the Greek world until the development of the polis in the eighth century B.C.E.

Heroes could take many forms. Several of those venerated were prominent figures of Greece's mythical past, including great warriors of the Trojan War and other putative ancestors. Every major athletic festival, including the Olympic Games, was ascribed to the cult of a hero. Other heroes were thought to enhance a city's military or political situation. The kings of Sparta regularly brought the Dioskouroi, the twins Castor and Polydeuces, into battle with them (Herodotos 5.75). When a specific crisis threatened, a hero could be invoked and his remains transported to his ancestral city in order that he might provide benefits. In a telling instance, an oracle ordered the polis of Sparta to seek the bones of Orestes, son of the Trojan War leader Agamemnon, and rebury them in Sparta in order to gain the hero's aid in a war with a neighboring city. After various false moves, a skeleton identified as that of Orestes was located and transported to Sparta, whereupon the Spartans' military position improved substantially (Herodotos 1.67–68). A hero's cult could also be instituted in return for help already rendered. During the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.E., several Athenians claimed that their cause was aided by the ghost of the much revered early Athenian king Theseus, who led the charge against the Persians. After their victory, the Athenians sought and obtained the bones of Theseus, which they reburied in the city center, making the hero's grave into an important civic shrine (Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 35–36). Several anonymous tombs were identified as the burial places of heroes, and the cult offerings placed there were intended to ensure a hero's continued presence and protection. The relics of a hero were clearly a powerful talisman, a valued aid in a Greek city-state's efforts to assert its identity and independence.

The status of hero could be applied to the recently dead also. Virtually all Greek colonies, that is, newly founded Greek cities outside of Greece, honored the original leader of the colonial expedition, whose tomb formed the locus of both cult worship and of the new city's claim to territory. Lit-

erary figures, including the poets Archilochos (mid-seventh century B.C.E.) and Sophocles (c. 496–406 B.C.E.), were honored as heroes and, like prophets, believed to be divinely inspired. Not all heroes were admirable figures; there were several examples of individuals whose violent actions had to be appeased with a hero cult. Nor were all heroes male, for outstanding female figures, or heroines, were also honored with cults. Some of these achieved recognition as close family of male heroes, while others became noteworthy because of independent actions.

The best-known example of the practice of recognizing the recently dead as a hero is the fourth-century general Alexander of Macedon (356–323 B.C.E.). Alexander's impressive military record and personal charisma led to his acquiring near-divine honors during his lifetime, and after his death, he was accorded the status of hero. His tomb, in Alexandria in Egypt, was the locus of ongoing cult worship. Alexander's elevation to a special status was in part the product of the Greek tradition of hero cult, but it was also a continuing example of ruler cult known in the Near East. As Alexander brought western Asia and Egypt under his control, he absorbed the ideology of the divine ruler and demanded such recognition during his lifetime. A visit to the oracle of Zeus Ammon in the Sahara desert convinced Alexander that he was the son of Zeus and therefore deserving of divine honors. Although several of his followers were reluctant to give these honors to a living man, they found it expedient to do so after his death in order to support their own efforts in claiming legitimacy as his heirs. This process led to a new application of the status of venerating individuals in power, ruler cult, a practice unknown in the Greek world before the Hellenistic period (323–31 B.C.E.), but that became a regular feature of Greek cult during that time.

Some of the impetus for Greek ruler cult came from Alexander's successors, who divided his kingdom after his death, and from their heirs, as a means of strengthening their power. These individuals were of Macedonian origin and thus were outsiders in their kingdoms, especially in western Asia and Egypt. In western Asia, ruler cult was first established by Antiochus I (r. 281–261 B.C.E.) in 280 B.C.E. in honor of his deceased father Seleukos, but the practice was soon extended to living kings as well. In Egypt, the Ptolemaic rulers became the heirs of the much older Egyptian practice of acknowledging living kings as divine rulers, and so claimed this special status for themselves. In contrast, the Attalid rulers of Pergamon, in northwestern Asia Minor, were worshipped as gods only after their death.

Although modern reaction to the Hellenistic ruler cult tends to regard the practice as a matter of political expediency mixed with flattery, contemporary sentiments help express its power. A hymn to Demetrios Poliorcetes, the Macedonian ruler of Athens in 293–289 B.C.E., offers a good



Ruins of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, where for over a millennium people from around the Greek world came to the Pythia for oracles. (Wolfgang Kaehler/Corbis)

example. The people of Athens addressed Demetrios as a god in their midst: “The other gods are far away and do not see us . . . but you are present among us” (Athenaios 6.253). This reflects the political realities that acknowledging a living ruler as a divinity could bring more tangible benefits than traditional religious cults.

On a more personal level, private individuals could seek spirituality through participation in mystery cults, including the rites of Demeter, Dionysos, Orpheus, and other Greek divine figures who were thought to communicate direct personal inspiration to their adherents. The sense of sanctity found in a mystery cult was not limited to the famous and powerful, but available to anyone willing to undergo rites of initiation. Participation in mystery cults was limited to initiates, who were then sworn to secrecy; they observed this injunction so faithfully that little is known about mystery rites. It seems certain, though, that mystery cults included ecstatic rites, activities such as song and dance that were designed to

induce a sense of spiritual openness to the divine within the participant. Those who completed the initiation rites successfully claimed a greater degree of spiritual purity that could bring comfort: “Blessed is the man who has seen these things,” the Hymn to Demeter records of the Eleusinian Mysteries to the goddess, implying special rewards to the cult’s initiates after death.

The Roman World

Roman religious practice, like the Greek, stressed proper observance of rituals as a means of encouraging membership in the family and social group. Private individuals rarely claimed any special status of holiness, and such status was given to only a handful of individuals from the mythical past—for example, Romulus, traditional founder of Rome. One Roman group with a special status of holiness was the Vestal Virgins, six women chosen in early childhood to tend the state hearth fire in the temple of Vesta in the Roman Forum. Much respected in Roman society, the Vestal Virgins were expected to meet a high standard of personal chastity and were severely punished for breaking it. The very anomaly of the Vestal Virgins’ position, though, tends to emphasize how rare this status of sanctity was.

Divine honors for the recently dead are first noted in the later republic, often for prominent military figures such as Flaminius and Marius (late second and first centuries B.C.E.). Julius Caesar was declared a god after his death in 44 B.C.E. This practice probably laid the groundwork for the institution of the imperial cult, which began with the death of the first Roman emperor, Augustus, in 14 C.E. and continued until the establishment of Christianity as the state religion in 313 C.E. At first, the actual status of divinity was accorded to an emperor only after his death. First-century C.E. exceptions to this practice—for example, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian—seem to be more the product of a deranged mind than an actual belief in the ruler’s divinity. Augustus, however, merged the cult of his Genius (or guiding spirit) with the cult of the Lares, the household gods of Rome, thus making prayers for the safety of the empire and emperor identical. Augustus and his successors also enjoyed divine cults in the provinces during their lifetimes, particularly in the east, where the tradition of ruler worship had been established during the Hellenistic period. The living emperor, moreover, gained status as the son and heir of a god, and by the third century C.E., failure to acknowledge the imperial cult was considered a mark of disloyalty to the state.

During the later third century, the court ceremonials surrounding the imperial presence became more elaborate, designed to enhance the majesty of the emperor’s person and his quasi-divine status. Rites such as the arrival (*adventus*) and triumph of the emperor served to emphasize the psychological distance between emperor and subject and rein-

force the belief that an emperor ruled with and through divine support. While not claiming outright divinity for an emperor, such rituals laid the basis for the emperors to position themselves as representatives of divine right under the Christian church in the fourth century C.E. and later.

Another approach to individual holiness was practiced by the adherents of several major philosophical schools, who advocated spiritual self-examination through philosophical inquiry as a means to a fulfilling life. These started in the Hellenistic period and became more influential under the Roman Empire. Though nominally following the teachings of a school's founder, the practices of such groups often diverged widely from the founder's original thought. Examples include the Neopythagoreans, followers of the sixth-century B.C.E. philosopher Pythagoras, who claimed to find spiritual symbolism in numbers and in the ascetic life of their founder, and the Neoplatonists, who traced their origin to Socrates and Plato. Neoplatonism, the dominant intellectual school in the later Roman Empire, created a new system of spirituality and new definitions of the divine and human relationship to it. Influential Neoplatonist thinkers were highly regarded by their followers, and their lives were held up as moral examples. Chief among these were Plotinus, mid-third century C.E., and Iamblichus, early fourth century C.E. The ongoing influence of philosophers can be noted in a third-century C.E. oracle recording that the holy lives of Pythagoras and Plotinus were rewarded with perpetual happiness among the blessed dead, an honor that they shared with the heroes of the Greek mythical past.

The teachings of philosophy were probably too abstract for many people. A more popular way to seek contact with the divine was the use of spells, charms, and dream interpretations, activities known collectively as magic. Several practitioners of such skills, or magicians, also gained a significant personal following. Although intellectually poles apart, the followers of both philosophy and magic had in common a desire for spiritual awareness and for communication with the divine that often translated into a reverence for those practitioners seen as particularly effective.

One individual holy man whose claim to personal revelation was framed as a challenge to the dominant authority was Mani (216–277 C.E.). A native of Mesopotamia and originally a member of a Christian sect there, Mani based his assertion of holiness on visions sent to him by the divine. He traveled widely, teaching the dualism between good and evil, in which perfection of the good in life was achievable only by those who practiced an extreme form of asceticism. His teachings were originally well received in the Sassanian Persian court, although he was eventually executed there for his beliefs. After his death, his followers, the Manichaeans, continued to proselytize his beliefs. Their efforts exerted consid-

erable influence on Christianity and the religions of India and western China, as well as Iran.

—Lynn E. Roller

See also: Adventus; Akhenaten; Alexander the Great; Augustus; Calchas; Cleopatra VII; Dioskouroi; Greek Philosophers; Greek Prophets; Greek Ruler Cult; Hero Cult, Greek; Heroes; Heroines, Greek; Heroization of Private Individuals; Mani; Mopsus; Naram-Sin; Orpheus and Orphism; Pharaohs of Egypt; Priests; Prophets; Ptolemaic Ruler Cult; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Pythia; Rulers as Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Theseus; Triumph; Veneration of Holy People; Vestal Virgins; Zoroaster

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Meher Baba

(1894–1969 C.E.)

Indian prophetic leader

This Indian master and self-proclaimed incarnation of God was born Merwan Sheriar Irani, the second of six children in a middle-class Zoroastrian family, in Pune, India, on February 25, 1894. An intelligent youth, fond of Persian poetry and cricket, he eventually enrolled in Deccan College, but in 1913 an aged Muslim woman, Hazrat Babajan, kissed him on the forehead and initiated him into a lifetime of spiritual experience and activity. His "unveiling" continued through contact with other masters, including the renowned Sai Baba of Shirdi and the Brahman Upasni Maharaj; the latter hailed him, in 1921, as "avatar of the age." The disciples who soon gathered around Merwan began calling him Meher Baba (Compassionate Father), a name he used thereafter.

Settling at an abandoned British military camp near Ahmednagar (now in Maharashtra) that became known as Meherabad, Meher Baba created, at various times, charitable schools, dispensaries, and shelters for the mad and for those he called “masts”—“intoxicated” or “God-mad” seekers. According to Meher Baba, such projects were merely outer “scaffolding” for “inner work” within the consciousness, an explanation that also extended to his enigmatic “New Life” (1949–1951), when he disbanded all centers and took to “hopeless and helpless” wandering with a small band of disciples. Frequent periods of fasting and seclusion were likewise not spiritual practices, he said, but conditions of his work, as was the unbroken silence he maintained from July 10, 1925, communicating (and dictating several books in English) through an alphabet-board and later through gestures.

In the 1930s, Meher Baba made ten visits to England, Europe, and America, where he attracted a small but dedicated group of disciples, most of whom would remain to welcome him again on three trips in the 1950s, when he also visited Australia. He periodically gave public *darshan* (audience) to thousands, yet more typically traveled incognito, often to remote places to contact “masts,” lepers, and destitute families. He was severely injured in two automobile accidents (in Oklahoma, 1952, and Maharashtra, 1956) that left him crippled and in constant pain. Despite secluding himself increasingly after 1960, he maintained contact with thousands worldwide through letters and telegrams and sent messages warning Western seekers against the use of mind-altering drugs. On January 31, 1969, he “dropped his body” and was buried in a small tomb at Meherabad that has since drawn pilgrims from many countries.

Meher Baba emphasized that he was not a “saint” or holy person; rather, his self-identification as “avatar” was central to his message and work. He defined himself as “the Ancient One” and “the first soul to emerge from the evolutionary and involutory process” and achieve “self-realization” (Meher Baba 1997, 267–268). This soul, he said, takes birth periodically, and he identified Zoroaster, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad as earlier advents. Despite the association of these names with major religions, Meher Baba said he came not to establish a new cult but to “awaken” humanity through “a release of love in measureless abundance” (*ibid.*, 8). His intimate circle included people of six major religious backgrounds, and his writings (mostly unexamined by scholars) include terminology from Hindu, Muslim, and Christian traditions. He did not appoint a successor and his followers have avoided large-scale organization, gathering informally to express devotion through storytelling, songs, and plays; they have also produced a sizable literature of biographies and memoirs.

—Philip Lutgendorf

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Gods on Earth

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Meiji Tennō

(1852–1912 C.E.)

Japanese emperor, kami

Meiji Tennō was the 122nd *tennō* (emperor) of Japan in the traditional count and considered to be of divine ancestry. During his reign, known as the Meiji period (1868–1912), a rapid modernization of the country took place that resulted in drastic changes in all aspects of life. Meiji Tennō was posthumously enshrined in the Meiji Jingū in Tokyo.

Emperor Meiji was born in 1852 as the son of Emperor Kōmei. His personal name was Mutsuhito. He succeeded to the throne in 1867 and became the rallying point of a movement that intended to overthrow the Tokugawa shogunate, which had ruled the country for more than two and a half centuries. Under the slogan *sonnō jōi* (revere the emperor, expel the barbarians), advocates of this movement intended to restore direct imperial rule and sought to strengthen Japan against the threatening pressure from the Western nations that tried to end Japan's seclusionist policy. The efforts of the royalists resulted in the so-called Meiji Restoration. In 1867, the shogun handed back his authority to the emperor, who in 1868 moved the capital from Kyoto to Tokyo and proclaimed *meiji* (enlightened rule) as the motto of his reign.

The main features of the large-scale transformations that were carried out under the reign of Meiji Tennō were the abolition of the feudal system in favor of a new government in the form of a modern state based on a constitution and the authority of the emperor; promotion of the industrialization of the country; political, social, economic, and cultural modernization; and the establishment of Japan as a world power. Although it is not easy to establish the exact degree of Meiji Tennō's personal contribution to the extraordinary changes accomplished during his reign, he without doubt functioned as the symbol of modernization and was closely associated with these achievements by his admiring subjects.

Meiji Tennō, or rather the institution of the *tennō*, played a crucial role as a source of legitimacy for the Meiji government. The idea of the divine ancestry of the *tennō*, traced

back through an unbroken line of divine ancestors to the mythological Jimmu Tennō and further to the sun goddess Amaterasu Ōmikami, served as one of the key concepts of the ideological foundation of the new government. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 declared the tennō to be “sacred and inviolable” (Lu 1997, 340). Together with the emphasis on the uniqueness of the Japanese national polity (*kokutai*), this concept of the divinity of the emperor constituted the basis of the endeavors to install Shinto as the state religion. These endeavors had their starting point in the early Meiji period and culminated in what was later referred to as State Shinto.

Upon his death in 1912, Meiji Tennō’s remains were entombed in a mausoleum in Momoyama (part of the city of Kyoto) in accordance with Shinto rites. Further, in the following year the diet approved the construction of a Shinto shrine called Meiji Jingū, in which the spirits of Meiji Tennō and his consort, Empress Shōken (1850–1914), were enshrined in 1920. Located in Tokyo’s Shibuya Ward, the precinct of Meiji Jingū covers (including its outer garden) an area of more than one square kilometer. It is a favorite location for the first shrine visits on New Year (*hatsumōde*). The birthday of Meiji Tennō, November 3, is the day of the shrine’s annual festival and also a national holiday called Bunka-no hi (Culture Day).

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Patriotism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Shinto and Holy People

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Meinrad

(d. c. 861 C.E.)

Christian hermit, martyr

Meinrad was martyred in about 861 near Zurich, Switzerland. His story is a classic monastic hagiographical account of martyrdom. The theme of increasing solitude in the quest for God, as well as hospitality to one’s enemies, were popular themes in monastic literature going back to St. Antony of Egypt (fl. 300–340).

Meinrad was the son of Count Berthold von Sulchen, who offered his son as a boy to the monastic life. Young Meinrad advanced quickly and was ordained to the priesthood. His abbot, Hatto, then sent him to a small monastery on the Zuecher See, where Meinrad became schoolmaster and studied music and singing. Meinrad, however, longed for a more solitary life in the Alps beyond the Zuecher. He re-

treated first to Rapperswyl, where a peasant woman permitted him to build a hermitage. After seven years, he retreated still further to a dark, wooded area surrounding a spring above Zurich. Later this spring (and the saint’s intercession) would be associated with various healings, and the spring is still a focus for pilgrimage.

After twenty-five years in this hermitage, Meinrad was attacked by two intruders, Reinhard (or Richard) and Peter. Stories vary as to their purpose. Some say they were thieves who came to rob the hermitage of gifts given to Meinrad; others suggest they came with the express purpose of killing the monk. Nevertheless, Meinrad welcomed his killers, provided them food and clothing, then asked that they light candles at his head and feet after doing their deed. Enraged by the hermit’s prescience, the two beat and then strangled him, then placed the candles as requested. Returning to light the candles, they found them already burning and fled the scene. Meinrad’s two pet ravens chased the killers into a nearby village, where their deed was discovered and both men were executed. The hermitage remained unoccupied until the mid-tenth century, when clerics associated with the Ottonian dynasty established a monastery (Einsiedeln) on the site. Meinrad’s original chapel is enshrined in the abbey church and houses the famous Black Madonna of Einsiedeln.

—George R. Hoelzeman

See also: Antony of the Desert; Attributes of Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Meir of Rothenburg

(c. 1220–1293 C.E.)

Jewish scholar

Born in Worms, Germany, in approximately 1220, Meir ben Baruch was the leading talmudic scholar of his day. He studied in Würzburg, Mainz, and France and was present at the Talmud Disputations of 1240, which were a result of Pope Gregory IX’s June 1239 encyclical attacking the Talmud and other rabbinic writings. In 1242, he witnessed the burning of twenty-four cartloads of Talmud parchments at the order of Pope Innocent IV. His moving poem regarding their destruction is still used in Ashkenazic communities on Tisha B’Av.

Returning to Germany after the burning, Meir ben Baruch settled in Rothenburg, where he lived for forty years. A recognized talmudist despite his youth, he wrote almost 1,000 responsa to communities' legal questions, significantly influencing Ashkenazic synagogue and home rituals. His lifestyle likewise had a decisive influence, as his students studied his daily life from morning to night. The most famous of these students, Samson ben Zadok, described in great detail the rabbi's daily practices in the *Tashbetz*, a popular and influential book that described actions that subsequently became customary for Ashkenazic Jews.

When Emperor Rudolph I (of Hapsburg) declared in 1286 that all Jews were his property (consistent with earlier papal decrees), thousands prepared to emigrate from Germany to Palestine, including Meir ben Baruch, who was betrayed and imprisoned. The Jews of Germany sought his release, offering an enormous ransom, despite his plea that they offer no ransom for him of any kind; he feared that European rulers would blackmail Jewish communities by threatening their rabbis. In this case, what the emperor wanted was not money, but the Jews' admission that they were indeed his property. They refused, and Meir ben Baruch remained imprisoned.

Even without his library, his learning was sufficient to allow him to continue to write responsa, commentaries, and letters of instruction and encouragement to his students while imprisoned in Ensisheim, Alsace. By the end of his life, he had produced eighteen tractates on the Talmud in addition to the responsa and had secured his position as the most influential rabbinic authority of his generation. Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg died in prison in 1293; his body was ransomed fourteen years later.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Models; Scholars as Holy People

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Melampus

Ancient Greek seer

One of the greatest seers of Greek mythology, Melampus was said to have come from Thessaly in northern Greece. The legends concerning him report that one day, after migrating with his parents to Pylus in the Peloponnesus, Melampus awoke to discover, to his horror, that baby snakes, whose parents had been killed by a farmer, were licking his ears. Ever after, he could understand the speech of animals.

Melampus was close to his brother Bias, who fell in love with Pero, the daughter of Neleus, king of Pylus. For

bride price Neleus demanded the cattle of Phylacus, who lived in Thessaly. An unsleeping dog guarded them. Melampus offered to steal the cattle for his brother, although through his powers he knew that he would spend a year in prison in the process of carrying out the theft. Indeed, Phylacus captured him in the act of rustling and placed him in a small cell. A year later, Melampus, still in the cell, overheard woodworms as they chewed at beams supporting the roof. "Almost there," one said. Phylacus shrieked, and the guard pulled him from the room just as the roof collapsed.

Impressed by his powers, Phylacus now offered to give the cattle to Melampus if he could cure his grown son Iphiclus, swift of foot but impotent. To solve the puzzle of Iphiclus's impotence, Melampus started by killing two bulls. A vulture came to eat and described how Iphiclus, as a child, had watched Phylacus gelding rams and had run away in fear. Phylacus had run after him and stabbed the bloody knife into a tree, which grew around the knife, causing impotence in his son. Melampus found the knife, scraped some rust from it, and made a potion that cured Iphiclus. Phylacus gave the cattle to Melampus, who returned with them to Pylus, and Bias married Pero.

King Proetus of Argos now asked for his help in curing his daughters, who through an offense against Hera or Dionysos imagined they were cows and wandered through the hills mooing. Melampus agreed, so long as he received one-third of the kingdom and Bias the rest. Through herbs and ritual, Melampus cured the girls, and he and Bias married two of them (Pero is forgotten). Numerous prominent seers numbered among their descendants, including Amphiarus, seer of the Seven against Thebes and grandson of Melampus.

As a seer, Melampus's special abilities were understanding animal speech and healing people of various illnesses, features not found in the careers of Tiresias, Calchas, or Mopsus, the other great seers of Greek legend.

—Barry B. Powell

See also: Calchas; Greek Prophets; Mopsus; Prophets; Tiresias

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Melania the Younger

(c. 383–439 C.E.)

Christian pilgrim, patron

A Christian noblewoman, pilgrim, and patroness of monasticism, Melania was the daughter of Publicola, a prominent Roman senator, and the granddaughter of Melania the Elder,

herself a Roman holy woman. Most of what we know concerning Melania comes from the writing of her contemporary Gerontius, author of her hagiography. Melania the Younger, born around 383, fell under the influence of her namesake grandmother when the latter stayed in her house for a brief visit after returning from Jerusalem. Melania the Younger admired her grandmother and wished to lead a monastic life as well, but her father forbade it. Publicola had been left behind as a young boy and was critical of the life his mother led. Instead, at age thirteen, Melania the Younger was forced to marry her cousin Pinianus, the son of the wealthy prefect of Rome. When both children she bore to him suddenly died, Melania convinced her husband that it was a sign that they should lead a monastic life. Their marriage then became a chaste one, and Melania began to give away their property to the poor. When her grandmother returned once more from Jerusalem, Melania fell further under her influence.

The Visigothic invasion of Italy caused Melania, her grandmother, and Pinianus to leave Rome, escaping first to Sicily and later to their family estate in North Africa. They remained there for seven years, befriending bishops, such as Augustine and Alypius, and establishing monasteries. Eventually the group left for the East, but shortly after their arrival in Jerusalem, the elder Melania died. Melania the Younger persisted in her vocation and together with Pinianus traveled to Egypt and visited numerous monks.

Melania the Younger also established monasteries in Jerusalem, including a woman's monastery on the Mount of Olives and, near the Church of the Ascension, one for men. Her traveling did not come to an end with the death of her husband; in 436, she made a journey to Constantinople to see her still-polytheist uncle who was visiting from Rome. There Melania met with Emperor Theodosius II and his new wife Eudocia, and she convinced Eudocia to undertake her own trip to the Holy Land. Melania's final days were spent traveling back and forth between various Eastern shrines and her monastery in Jerusalem. She died in 439 and was buried with many of the items she had collected from the holy people she had visited throughout her life.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Menas

(d. c. 300 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Veneration of Menas, one of the most popular and important saints of early Christian Egypt, continues today. Legends tell that Menas, who served for a time as a soldier in the Roman army, was martyred for his faith during the persecutions of the emperor Diocletian in the late third or early fourth century. Numerous expanded versions of his Life and various miracles of healing associated with this soldier-saint attest to the early popularity and widespread growth of his cult.

His shrine, located southwest of Alexandria and Lake Mareotis (at Karm Abu Mina or Abu Mena), was a major pilgrimage center from the fourth century until the Arab conquest of the region in the mid-seventh century. The extensive complex (with church, monastery buildings, and accommodations for pilgrims) was excavated in the early twentieth century. Archaeological evidence indicates that the church was enlarged several times.

Numerous pilgrimage tokens from the shrine at Abu Mena have been found all over the Mediterranean world. These portable objects are primarily small terra-cotta bottles (*ampullae*) that were used to contain curative holy water drawn from the shrine's well or oil from the lamps burning over the saint's tomb. These ampullae customarily include an image of St. Menas as an *orant* figure (standing in a gesture of prayer with arms raised up to either side of the body) and flanked by two kneeling or standing camels. This image was depicted on a sculptural relief in the crypt of his burial place (*martyrium*) at Abu Mena, and this original cult image appears to have provided the inspiration for this persistent iconography.

The meaning of the camels is still a matter of speculation. They may represent the traditional mode of transportation of pilgrims visiting the saint's shrine. Several legends about Menas also involve camels (they may represent the beasts that refused to transport the saint's relics away from Egypt and/or the ones that attacked a ship carrying away the saint's relics). The depiction has also given rise to the suggestion that Menas may have been a merchant or camel-driver. The patron saint of merchants and desert caravans, his cult was still popular in the West during the medieval period. Churches were dedicated to St. Menas in Egypt, Palestine, Constantinople, Rome, North Africa, and Arles. His feast day is November 11.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Mencius

See **Mengzi**

Mengzi (Mencius)

(c. 372–289 B.C.E.)

Confucian philosopher

Mengzi, often known by the Latinized name Mencius, is considered the second-greatest philosopher in the *ru* tradition. *Rujia* is a Chinese term referring to the tradition or doctrine of scholars and is called “Confucianism” in the West. Mengzi, born in what is now Shantung province in around 372 B.C.E., is highly regarded as a moral and political thinker. His basic teaching was that humans are innately good and that environment and education can enhance or pervert human nature. He lived during the tumultuous Warring States period (403–222 B.C.E.).

Mengzi defended *Rujia* against its critics, such as Mozi (c. 470–c. 380 B.C.E.), and provided a deeper foundation for the philosophy based in human nature and the way of heaven. Mengzi’s expansion of Confucian thought is seen as an “idealist” form of Confucianism in contrast to its “naturalist” form developed by Xunzi (c. 370–286 B.C.E.), who argued for the opposing thesis that human nature is inherently evil. Mengzi traveled to many kingdoms as a political adviser. A number of his recorded discussions are attempts to explain to rulers the superiority of morality over profit and gain. They should rule with benevolence (*ren*) and righteousness (*yi*), which are the two central concepts of Mengzi’s thought, sharing with the people rather than exploiting them in various political and military projects. Like Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) before him, he failed in his political efforts and became a teacher, and it is in this role that he would become a leading figure of Chinese thought. After his death, students composed the book named after him based on his sayings and dialogues.

Mengzi grounded ethics on virtues rooted in moral feeling. *Xin* (translated as “heart” or “mind”) constitutes the basic capacity of a person’s intellectual and affective being to morally respond to events and achieve the fundamental Confucian goal of humaneness (*ren*) in accordance with the way of heaven (*tian*). This basic moral condition is a fragile “shoot” or “sprout” (*duan*), which must be neither

neglected nor forced to grow (*Mencius*, Book II, 1, 4). Mengzi argued for the innate benevolence of the human heart by using a thought-experiment: If a child falls into a well, then prior to reflection and calculation of the possible advantage and risk of saving the child, the human heart is moved to save the child (*Mencius*, Book II, 1, 6). Mengzi broke down this heart/mind nexus into four innate feelings that can be cultivated into corresponding moral virtues. According to Mengzi, “The feeling of compassion is possessed by all alike; likewise the feeling of shame, the feeling of respect, and the feeling of right and wrong to wisdom. Benevolence or compassion (*ren*), dutifulness or righteousness (*yi*), observance of rites or propriety (*li*), and wisdom (*zhi*) are not welded onto me from the outside; they are in me originally” (*Mencius*, Book VI, 1, 6; translation modified from Mencius 1998).

Mengzi is also influential in Chinese political thought because of his emphasis on benevolent and righteous rule as well as his development of the theory of the “mandate of heaven,” that is, the notion that the justification of political authority comes from heaven itself. If a ruler acts contrary to the way of heaven and fails to bring about peace, order, prosperity, and welfare among the people, then the people are freed from any loyalty to this ruler and can revolt. This justification of rebellion was repeatedly used and repressed throughout Chinese history. Mengzi insisted that the prince has to act out of the highest benevolence and righteousness in order to secure the happiness of the people and thus be worthy of ruling in heaven’s name.

—Eric Sean Nelson

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Mandate of Heaven; Politics and Holy People; Sages; Scholars as Holy People

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Meninha de Gantois, Mãe

(1894–1986 C.E.)

Candomblé leader

Maria Escolástica da Conceição Nazaré, born in 1894, better known as Mãe Menininha de Gantois, was the most famous *iyalorixá* (bride of the orisha, cult-house leader) of Brazilian Candomblé. She initiated hundreds of Filhas de Santo (Daughters in the Saint) who now lead Ile Axé (temples of Candomblé worship) throughout Bahia and Brazil. Her extensive connections with political and academic elites were

instrumental in the legalization of the Candomblé religion and its rituals in the 1970s. She brought the once secretive religion of Candomblé into the public sphere and helped to do away with hundreds of years of prejudice against Afro-Brazilian religions and their practitioners in Brazil.

Candomblé is a Brazilian religion related to Yoruba and Fon/Ewe religious traditions in West Africa and Congolese and Angolan religions in central and southern Africa. Mãe Menininha was initiated to serve the goddess Oxum, the Yoruba orisha of beauty, gold, and sweet-flowing water, by her aunt Púlcheria at the age of eight. At the age of twenty-eight, having completed all of the ritual foundations of Candomblé priesthood, Menininha succeeded to the leadership of Gantois, or Ile Iyá Omi Axé Iyamassê, one of the oldest and most respected Afro-Brazilian cult houses in Bahia.

Her confirmation as *iyalorixá* of Gantois marked an innovation in the means of succession to headship of a Candomblé temple. Whereas most priestesses receive their appointment from the priestess who initiated them, Menininha was appointed by three men who were regarded as gods incarnate, Oxossi, Xango, and Oxum. She remained at the helm of Gantois for fifty-four years and achieved seventy-four years of initiation.

Menininha freely admitted whites and Catholics to her temple, and in turn she won approval from a Bahian bishop for followers of Candomblé to enter Catholic churches wearing their traditional dresses and the necklaces that mark their devotion to the orishas. She counted famous politicians, musicians, authors, academics, and artists among her followers and gave spiritual advice and ritual services to such Brazilian luminaries as Jorge Amado (author of *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*, originally published in 1966), Vincius de Morães (composer of *The Girl from Ipanema*, 1963), Antonio Carlos Magalhães (senator from Bahia and one of the most powerful men in Brazil), the illustrator Carybé, and anthropologists Pierre Verger and Edson Carneiro, two scholars who shaped the trajectory of Afro-Brazilian studies. These connections gave her a powerful voice in advocating for the legal rights and social stature of followers of Afro-Brazilian religions.

But Menininha's greatest legacy was her dissemination of Candomblé. Menininha died in 1986. Her *Filhas de Santo* now have initiatic daughters and granddaughters of their own. Proud of their lineage to Menininha, they operate Candomblé temples throughout Brazil.

—Brian Brazeal

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Priests; Santería

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Merici, Angela

(1474–1540 C.E.)

Christian laywoman

Angela Merici founded the Company of St. Ursula, a lay community of women living in their own homes and devoting their lives to charity. Born on March 21, 1474, in Desenzano, a town in northeastern Italy, sometime before 1515 she entered the Franciscan tertiary (third) order, which offered an alternative to cloistered life for laymen and laywomen who wanted to devote themselves to the church. During this period, Angela was reported to have lived a pious life dedicated to prayer, contemplation, and charity. She also fasted, confessed, and took communion frequently.

In 1516, Angela went to Brescia, a northeastern Italian city suffering from political, religious, economic, and social turmoil. Here she came into close contact with a number of charitable religious organizations (including the Company of Divino Amore) that administered to the urban inhabitants' physical and spiritual needs. Earlier in her life, Angela had experienced a celestial vision that she was to found a religious company for laywomen, and during the early 1530s she fulfilled this vision by organizing a community of girls, single women, and widows who wanted to live "in the world" (that is, not in the cloister) while dedicating themselves to God's service. In 1535, Angela and her companions founded the Company of St. Ursula, named after the legendary fourth-century virgin saint martyred with 11,000 other virgins in Cologne, Germany. Angela's company was socially diverse and attracted women from very different economic backgrounds. She was elected mother general of the company and held this position until her death.

Angela wrote a rule to guide her company. The women were to remain virgins living in their own homes and were to devote themselves to prayer and charitable acts. They were instructed to fast, confess frequently, attend mass daily, and live a relatively simple lifestyle. Girls could enter the company at the age of twelve with their guardians' permission. Her other works, *Legati* (Testament) and *Ricordi* (Counsels), both emphasized the importance of good teaching, and educating children became a focus of the company. In 1566, it was reported that "all the hospitals and all the schools of Christian doctrine for girls are staffed by the Ursulines" (Blaisdell 1994, 111).

After Angela's death in 1540, the growing company underwent a number of significant changes. Several branches developed that take the name "Ursuline," but teaching is still a primary focus of the order. Angela was canonized in 1807.

—Christine F. Cooper

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Laity; Teachers as Holy People; Ursula

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Merton, Thomas

(1915–1968 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, writer

Thomas Merton, a Roman Catholic monk, made a widespread appeal to men and women of all walks of life to answer God's call to contemplation. Born in Prades, France, in 1915, he moved with his family to New York in 1916, only to return to France in 1925 to begin his schooling. Three years later he enrolled in school in England, and in 1938 he entered Cambridge. Having suddenly left Cambridge, he enrolled in Columbia University the following year. Bright, radical, and a confirmed atheist, Merton began to change when he wrote a master's thesis on William Blake (1757–1827); consequently, his interest turned to Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274), Augustine (354–430), and the spiritual classics. By 1948, when the best-selling account of his conversion, *Seven-Storey Mountain*, was published, he had taken solemn vows as a Trappist monk, and in the following year he would be ordained to the priesthood. On December 10, 1968, during a trip to the Far East and India, he was accidentally electrocuted and died.

The monastic lifestyle appealed to Merton's longing for solitude, discipline, and contemplation. In many of his writings, Merton speaks to the centrality of contemplation in the Christian life. He follows in the contemplative path great apophatic mystics such as Meister Eckhart (c. 1260–c. 1327) and John of the Cross (1542–1591). The latter was an especially strong influence on him, as certified by Merton's book on the Spanish mystic, *The Ascent to Truth* (1951). Like John, Merton lauds the *via negativa*, the approach to God by defining what God is not, as leading into the divine presence.

One reason for Merton's continuing appeal to all manner of people—Christian or not—is his confirmed interest in social justice and his ecumenical spirit. This spirit embraced Eastern religions and interreligious monastic life. These

themes he developed in his writings, which included poetry, essays, and books. Through all his writings, however, runs the thematic thread of contemplation. His *Contemplation in a World of Action* (1973) speaks to the need for contemplation in a world of increasing busyness and distraction. For Merton, contemplation was no luxury but the vital mode of being ever more present to God. The more Merton opened to other religions of the world, the greater his realization that the contemplative way is cultivated outside of Christianity, albeit differently. Merton was ecumenical in spirit while rooted firmly in the tradition of Christian mysticism and contemplation.

—Mary E. Giles

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; John of the Cross; Meditation and Holy People

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Messiahs

The Hebrew-based word "messiah" means "anointed one." In Jewish belief, it is used specifically to refer to a holy person specially sent by God as a savior, usually with the assumption that he will be a king and create a new world order. In popular idioms, the word is used not just for Judeo-Christian messiahs but for holy figures who have served a similar function in other religions. Belief in a coming messiah, a human being sent from a god who will restore the world to an earlier pristine state, is very widespread in the world's religions. The earliest evidence of such a belief is in Zoroastrianism, which holds that the forces of good will finally be victorious under the leadership of Saoshyant (Future Benefactor), a descendant of Zoroaster himself who will restore the world to its original purity in a great "Making Wonderful." This belief spread to Judaism by the third century B.C.E., and thus to Christianity and Islam. But Chinese belief in a messiah who will create the Taiping, the "heavenly kingdom" on earth, is not clearly linked to these Middle Eastern beliefs and may be an independent development. Hinduism holds that the last avatar of Vishnu, Kalkin, has not yet appeared and will come to bring in the new age of the world—a belief that already appears in the Mahabharata. Buddhism



Trappist monk Thomas Merton, c. 1951. (Library of Congress)

also has a future Buddha—Maitreya—who will come with fabulous miracles and a remaking of the world. Other religions, in Africa and the Americas, appear to have developed belief in a messiah after exposure to Islam or Christianity. Thus, for example, the American Quetzalcoatl legend, one version of which tells that the hero will one day return, later became associated with Christ's second coming.

Belief that the messiah will come is one of the thirteen articles of the Jewish faith. But the form the savior will take has

been a subject of controversy since at least the second century B.C.E. Many Jews believed that the messiah did indeed come—and became Christians (followers of the “anointed one”; *christos* is simply Greek for “messiah”) as a result. The Hebrew scriptures indeed present widely varying views of what the messiah will be—whether king or sufferer, royal or common, and so on. One Jewish tradition tells that the messiah was created at the beginning of time and is waiting with God for the moment of redemption; another suggests that a

potential messiah lives in every generation, while yet another presents the eerie image of a leprous messiah sitting begging at the gates of Rome while waiting for the moment.

This uncertainty has led to the rise of many false messiahs who won large numbers of followers but eventually failed to reestablish the world order. For Jews who did not like the image of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, someone who better fit their expectations appeared in 132 C.E., Simeon bar Kokhba. His name, which means “son of a star,” was thought to fulfill the prophecy of Numbers 24:17, and his goal to lead the people to freedom and rebuild the Temple led some, including Rabbi Akiba, to proclaim him as the messiah. The other great age of messianic expectations among the Jews was the early modern period, when expulsion and other persecutions led many to believe that God *must* provide relief for his oppressed people. Among the more important claimants is Solomon Molcho (1500–1532), a Spanish *marrano*, one of the many Jews forcibly converted to Christianity, who converted back to Judaism and declared himself to be the messiah; although Charles V had him burned alive, many followers refused to believe he was dead. David Reuveni (d. 1583) mysteriously appeared in Venice in 1523, claiming that he was 400 years old and a royal representative from one of the lost tribes of Israel. Although he did not personally claim to be the messiah, in Portugal he was greeted as herald of the messianic age. The Hasidic leader Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810) also became convinced that he was the messiah.

The most famous of the would-be messiahs of Judaism, though, is Shabbetai Zevi (1626–1676), who declared himself to be the messiah in 1665, sending letters to proclaim himself to the diaspora communities. He generated enormous excitement throughout Europe, including among some Christian millenarians. Longing for a messiah is clear in the persistence of his followers despite all discouragement. Shabbetai himself was soon suppressed by the Ottoman authorities of the Near East—he was arrested in 1666 as a trouble-maker and told to convert to Islam or face execution. Shabbetai then converted. Many of his followers, though, stayed faithful, arguing that his conversion was part of the ongoing battle the messiah had to wage with the forces of evil—and converted to Islam with him. In fact, the last members of the movement have only recently died out.

Christianity separated from Judaism in the belief that the messiah has already come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, a claim Jesus never made for himself. But that did not end the matter, because it became a central article of faith, included in the main creeds of Christianity, that Christ will come a second time to make the world anew and establish his kingdom on earth. There have been many false claimants to the title throughout the history of Christianity, most rele-

gated to passing mentions in history books. Several holy people in the modern era, however, have successfully won large followings with the claim of messiahhood. Ann Lee (1736–1784), founder of the Shakers, claimed to be the second coming of Christ in the form of a holy “mother wisdom.” Another woman who attracted a large number of disciples was the Anglican-Methodist mystic Joanna Southcott (1750–1814), who believed she would give birth to the second Christ, a child to be named Shiloh. Again, longing for a messiah tided many followers through the failure of their hopes; although Southcott suffered a false pregnancy and finally died without bearing the future savior, many of her disciples continued to wait patiently, and there are still Southcottian communities in England. Similar hopes can be seen among the devotees of the Russian Orthodox John of Kronstadt (1829–1908). Popular belief spread that he was the Christ—although he denied it and repeatedly disavowed any messianic pretensions.

Among the recent Christian messiahs, the most interesting are those of Third World countries who have won multitudes of followers in large part because of the ongoing crisis in these societies. In Africa, the most important has been the “black messiah” Simeon Ondeto of Kenya (c. 1910/1917–1991), who claimed to be Jesus reborn. According to one legend, he was found when as a twelve-year-old boy, and the childhood miracles attributed to him—making clay cattle live, for example—replicate those told of the original Jesus in the apocryphal gospels. He was cofounder of Legio Maria, the largest Catholic-based church in Africa.

A similar case of desperate need leading people to choose a messiah appears in the unique development of Rastafarianism as a significant world religion. The black American leader Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), who was himself hailed as messiah by some, prophesied the coming of an emperor in Africa who would be the messiah. One year after the prophecy, in 1930, Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975) came to power in Ethiopia. Soon after his coronation, the Rastafari movement began in Jamaica. Named after Haile Selassie’s name as prince, Ras Tafari, it proclaims the new African leader as either messiah or god (Haile Selassie never accepted this claim). The movement gained strength from its environment of poverty and white oppression and has now spread widely throughout the African diaspora. Similarly, large numbers of Koreans—and then many Americans—were drawn by Sun Myung Moon’s (1920–) claim to be the messiah. Moon proclaims that Jesus’ attempt to restore humanity had been cut short by his execution, so he had to be born again—as Moon—to finish the work.

It is in Shi’i Islam, however, that messiahs have played the most important role in world history. A fundamental teaching of Twelver Shi’ism is that the twelfth imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, who disappeared in 874, did not die. Instead, he

went into hiding (occultation) and will return as the *mahdi*, the “rightly guided” savior who will come just before judgment day to avenge all the injustices the Shi’is have suffered and to establish a kingdom of peace and justice. Those who have claimed to be the mahdi come again (or those for whom their followers make such a claim) have often been violent, leading a *jihad* to reestablish true Islam on earth. Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi (c. 1506–1543), who claimed to be the hidden imam as part of the ideological framework that supported a series of wars against Christian Ethiopia, destroyed churches and forced most of the Christian population in that region to accept Islam. The “mahdi of the Sudan,” Muhammad Ahmad ibn el-Sayed (1844–1885), believed himself called to cleanse the world from corruption, targeting especially the Ottoman Empire after his first public appearance as mahdi in 1881, but eventually also taking on the British Empire. As was often the case with Muslim messiah figures, he created an Islamic state, which lasted for thirteen years until its defeat by the British.

To give just a couple of important further examples, the Indian Muslim Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (c. 1835–1908) declared himself to be both mahdi *and* Christian messiah, as well as the tenth incarnation of Vishnu (!). The Ahmadiyya movement he founded was persecuted, but it still grew. And in recent history, many Iranians believed Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989) to be the mahdi, or at least his forerunner. Religions that have grown out of Islam, such as the Nation of Islam and the Baha’i faith, also rose because of their founders’ claims to be the mahdi. W. D. Fard (c. 1891–?) of the Nation of Islam was believed to be either the mahdi or God in person. And the Bab (1819–1850) claimed to be the mahdi, too, declaring the abrogation of Islamic holy law and the institution of a new world order, thus forming a decisive break from Shi’i Islam. His mission began in A.H. 1260 (1844 C.E.), the thousandth anniversary of the twelfth imam’s disappearance. After the Bab was martyred, his successor, Baha’u’llah (1817–1892), also claimed to be a messianic figure who would usher in a golden age that would fulfill the prophecies of all world religions.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bab, The; Baha’u’llah; Fard, W. D; Garvey, Marcus Moziyah; Haile Selassie; Imams; Jesus; Lee, Ann; Mahdi, al-; Muhammad Ahmad; Nahman of Bratslav; Shabbetai Zevi; Southcott, Joanna; Zoroaster

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Methodius

See Cyril and Methodius

Midewiwin Brotherhood

Native American religious society

The Midewiwin Brotherhood, or Grand Medicine Society, began as a secret religious organization that combined moral teaching, codes of conduct, and knowledge of plants and herbs to heal and prolong life. The Midewiwin followed a set of rituals that transferred knowledge to members and initiates. Tribes influenced by this society by the nineteenth century included the Fox, Iowa, Menominee, Miami, Ojibwa or Chippewa, Ponca, and Winnebago.

To join the society, a candidate had to be recommended by a member. If accepted, they paid a fee and were assigned a teacher. Their instruction included the study of origin traditions, ritual procedures, herbs, medicines, prayers, songs, and moral teachings. The society was divided into several degrees, or orders. Each degree had separate initiation rites, myths, songs, herbal remedies, and medicine bags. The central ceremonies, held annually or semiannually in the spring or fall, lasted for several days depending upon the number of initiates. One important feature of these ceremonies was a ritual “shooting” of the candidate with a small, white shell, which was taken from the medicine bag of a member and placed in a candidate’s mouth. The shell was thought to convey supernatural power that at first might shock the recipient into unconsciousness. The candidate’s revival after the shooting represented spiritual renewal, power, and rebirth. Writings and illustrations on scrolls preserve the history and knowledge of the Midewiwin Brotherhood and serve as a mnemonic device for those who can interpret their meaning. The scrolls were made of birch bark, and the writing was done with a bone stylus and red paint.

Early European-American references to Midewiwin practices among the Ojibwa include those of two Northwest Company traders, who wrote accounts of their 1804 observations. More detailed descriptions of the society appeared later in the nineteenth century. The religion is thought to have spread from the Ojibwa to the other tribes. The power of the Midewiwin was considered so great that members resisted Christian conversion. However, the Midewiwin began to decline at the end of the nineteenth century owing to dispersion of Ojibwa bands, missionary

and government persecution, the cost of initiation and instruction, and the reduced numbers of priests and successors. The Midewiwin has continued in some locations and has seen a revival in recent decades.

—*Timothy E. Williamson*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Miracles; Priests

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Milarepa

(1052–1135 C.E.)

Buddhist hermit

Milarepa, probably the most popular saint in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, was admired for his unwavering commitment to casting aside all worldly aims in the quest for complete awakening. Born in 1052, in his youth Milarepa reportedly did much evil, killing people through sorcery and black magic. Regretting these murders, he turned his mind toward enlightenment and spent the rest of his life meditating in remote mountain regions, where he eventually achieved his goal. His spontaneous songs of realization, offered to disciples and passersby, have remained a most cherished source of inspiration for Tibetan Buddhists throughout the millennium since his passing in 1135.

While Milarepa was still a child his father died. By fraudulent means, his aunt and uncle took possession of Milarepa's inheritance and forced his mother, sister, and Milarepa into a life of poverty and servitude. Seeking revenge, Milarepa learned black magic and eventually killed most of his adversaries through sorcery. Later, while contemplating the principle of karma, he was filled with remorse and decided to practice the Buddhist teachings to purify his sins. He met the renowned master Marpa (1012–1097) and immediately developed a strong bond of fervent devotion. To purify Milarepa from his negative past, and to prepare him for the esoteric teachings, Marpa challenged Milarepa with physical and mental trials before finally offering instruction.

Once Milarepa had received Marpa's teachings, he showed an unflinching resolve to apply their meaning. Throughout his life he remained in the mountains, often meditating in solitude and always focused on Marpa's instructions. Although Milarepa sought seclusion, disciples slowly gathered. To these students, the foremost being Gampopa (1079–1153) and Rechungpa (1084–1161), Milarepa offered his liberating guidance. Milarepa often taught by means of spiri-

tual songs that touched the hearts of his listeners and awakened their minds to the realization of indivisible wisdom and compassion. The penetrating insights and poetic beauty expressed in Milarepa's songs have inspired practitioners from all denominations of Tibetan Buddhism, and to these followers he stands aloft as testimony to the human potential for full awakening within a single life.

—*Andreas Doctor*

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Gampopa; Hermits; Joy; Marpa; Repentance and Holy People

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Miller, William

(1782–1849 C.E.)

Christian millenarian prophet

William Miller was the first millenarian preacher in America to win widespread interest and support. Born in 1782, he spent most of his life in rural Massachusetts. In 1816, he underwent a religious conversion and joined the local Baptist church. After that, he began a course of intensive Bible study. Convinced that the Bible must have a message for ordinary people (he himself was largely self-taught), Miller became increasingly fascinated with the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation. By about 1818, he had decided that the second coming of Christ would take place in or near the year 1843. It was only in 1831, however, that he started publicly proclaiming his belief, and he began publishing pamphlets on the subject in the next year, expressing his conviction that the advent would come sometime between March 1843 and March 1844, based on a series of calculations using the numbers given in the book of Daniel.

Nobody thought Miller a fraud. Even the many people who disagreed with his message described him as a man of transparent goodwill who sincerely believed in what he was teaching. He did not have a particular agenda, except to warn as many people as possible of the coming end of the world; instead of trying to form a church of his own, he visited various denominations, even the Roman Catholics, spreading the message. Miller's rather ineffective preaching only became an organized movement in 1840, when he converted the active and able Joshua Himes to belief in the imminence of Christ's advent. Himes started a periodical, *Signs of the Time*, and soon had set up a very active lecture circuit for the aging and ill Miller. In this way, Miller attracted thousands of



Apocalyptic prophet William Miller, who won thousands of Americans to his belief that Christ would come again in 1843 or 1844. (Hayward Circer, ed., *Dictionary of American Portraits*, 1967)

followers. And then March 1844 passed—and Christ had not come, at least not in a form anybody could recognize.

Miller's followers were resilient, however, and Miller was persuaded to support a specific new date for the arrival of Christ—October 22, 1844. There was an enormous, fervent, final revival. Many of Miller's adherents closed their businesses or stopped harvesting their crops, and thousands gathered to worship on the prophesied day. Some may even have gathered on hillsides, dressed in white robes, ready to be rapt into the heavens, although such accounts may all be attributable to popular ridicule when that date, too, passed without Jesus making an appearance.

Miller's validity as a religious figure ended that day. He was expelled from his own congregation and retired to private life. He lived another five years, still convinced that the coming of Christ was imminent. Miller died in 1849, but his legacy can still be felt through the activities of some followers who survived what became known as the Great Disappointment, who formed the core of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Prophets

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Mipham Rinpoche

(1846–1912 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar

Mipham Rinpoche was a Tibetan Buddhist saint and scholar. Born in mDo Khams, Tibet, in 1846, he was known even in childhood for his compassion and good moral conduct, as well as intellectual brilliance. Ordained as a monk at the age of twelve at mChor Sa-nga Choling (a branch of Zhecen monastery) in the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, he quickly mastered the sciences, mathematics, sutras, and tantras.

His root guru was Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who thought of him as a spiritual son and empowered him as master of the doctrine. He said of Mipham Rinpoche that in the present age there was no one more learned than he. Not only did he have full knowledge of the rituals and tantric texts of Tibetan Buddhism, but he was a practitioner as well, having the highest spiritual accomplishments. He also wrote treatises on sculpture, painting, poetry, and dance. In all, he was the author of more than 300 works. He mastered all four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism as well as the Bon religion. He also practiced medicine. He wrote many ritual texts and prayers. He even wrote a treatise on the art of love, a commentary on the *Kamashastra* (Love's ecstasies).

Mipham Rinpoche's philosophical lineage was Yogacara Madhyamaka. Like Santaraksita in the eighth century, he believed that ultimate reality was beyond conception; relative reality was understood to be mental in nature. Scholars from all four Tibetan lineages rely for interpretation on his commentary on Santaraksita's *Madhyamak Alamkara* (Engaging in the Middle Way). His commentary on the ninth chapter of Santideva's eighth-century *Bodhicaryavatara* (Entering the path of the bodhisattva), on wisdom, in Dzogchen terms resulted in a great deal of debate. He pointed out the connection between Santideva's notion of ultimate reality beyond conception and the immediate perspectival shift that enabled the adept to see all things as inherently enlightened, thus overcoming the division between the gradual and sudden enlightenment schools. Of particular value are his thirty-two treatises, usually called "the Cycles" (not yet translated), which are guides to religious practice.

Mipham Rinpoche died in meditation in 1912. Tents of rainbow light miraculously surrounded his funeral pyre.

—Marie Friquegnon

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Mirabai

(b. c. 1500 C.E.)

Hindu devotee

Mirabai, the sixteenth-century royal devotee recognized for her unshakable love for God in the form of Krishna, is the most popular of the women saints of *bhakti* (devotional) Hinduism. She suffered terribly for her devotion, her life threatened repeatedly because she would not adhere to the restrictions placed on married women of her caste. Undeterred, she eventually became a wandering holy woman. She has come to inspire people of all walks of life, men and women from low to high caste. Songs of love and longing for God attributed to her continue to be sung throughout the Indian subcontinent and beyond, and the compelling story of her life has been told again and again across the centuries in hagiographic literature, epic songs, novels, and comic books and enacted in folk, religious, and dance dramas and film.

According to hagiography, Mirabai was born in Rajasthan in northern India in around 1500. Though devoted to Krishna from childhood, her marriage to a prince of a neighboring kingdom was arranged, by most accounts against her will. She immediately angered her marital family by not behaving as a woman of her status ought to behave. Her devotion would have been acceptable if she had remained within the women's quarters of the palace, but she sang and danced in the public space of the temple and associated with men outside her family, albeit holy men. A series of attempts on her life are recorded, instigated by the ruler, who is most often identified as her husband, though sometimes as her father-in-law or an evil brother-in-law. Poison, a venomous snake, and scorpions were sent to her, but she did not die.

In the end, she left her palace home and traveled to holy cities associated with Krishna. In Vrindavan, she met Jiv Goswami, disciple of Chaitanya. He initially refused to see her because she was a woman, but he welcomed her after she reminded him that all devotees are as women before Lord Krishna. She settled in Dwarka, but priests arrived from her

marital home to bring her back. When she refused to go, they vowed to fast unto death. She relented, but when she entered the temple to take leave of Krishna, she reportedly disappeared, merging with his image.

There are no traditional historical sources to corroborate her life story and no early manuscript traditions that could be used to determine which of the songs attributed to Mirabai might have actually been composed by her. Nevertheless, a composite tradition of hagiography and poetry retells her story in multiple ways. Many people of different social, religious, and cultural backgrounds have contributed to this material and composed songs in her name, drawing on her authority and articulating a similar experience of love and devotion.

Those of low caste see in Mirabai one who voluntarily renounced a life of privilege. Women draw inspiration to step out of the normative roles of wife and mother. And in the twentieth century she became one of Mahatma Gandhi's premier examples of a person who practiced nonviolent resistance. Yet her behavior as a woman continues to challenge traditional notions of how women ought to behave and an ambivalence toward her remains.

—Nancy M. Martin

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Bhakti Saints; Chaitanya, Krishna; Death; Devotion; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Miracles

A miracle is usually defined as an extraordinary event that has been caused by divine intervention, unlike magic, which is a manipulation of the natural world by the power of a practitioner. Throughout the world, and over many centuries, people have *wanted* their holy people to bear witness to divine power through miracles. Sometimes holy people have been credited as miracle workers even when they have emphatically denied it, such as the early sufi Abu Yazid Bis-tami (ninth century). And even when the upper hierarchy of a religion has focused on characteristics other than the ability to channel miracles when defining holiness, popular belief has continued to delight in the miraculous as much-needed signs of the presence of the divine in the world.

Modern Roman Catholicism and its medieval Christian parent have required proof of miracles before formally canonizing a person as a saint; only a miracle (two for martyrs, three for confessors) is *proof* that the person in question really had conformed with God's will. Although less formalized, though, most of the world's religions at least sometimes regard the working of miracles as evidence that a person is holy.

Holy people are renowned for their ability to work miracles during their lifetimes, but often especially after their deaths. This is a major theme in Islam as well as in Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. There is a natural continuum: The saint showed great benevolence and care for people during life, therefore he or she naturally continues that concern after death, when he or she has been confirmed in holiness and enjoys special closeness to God. Indeed, it is their access to God in the afterlife that makes it possible for saints to intercede and ask for miracles. (It should be noted that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam make a firm distinction: Saints can intervene to request miracles, but actually working the miracle is in the power of God alone.)

Judaism regarded the matter differently, with its emphasis on this-worldly rather than next-worldly religiosity, which made posthumous miracles impossible. Living miracle workers were, however, important in Judaism at the beginning of the Common Era, and several early rabbis were credited with miraculous powers. The last great miracle-working rabbi was Hanina ben Dosa (fl. c. 70 C.E.). After that, with the exception of the modern Hasidic movement, the miracle workers were gradually displaced by the image of the sage as the ideal holy person.

Miracles can take many forms. A common type of miracle among ascetics is the miraculous appearance of food, signaling divine approbation of a marginal life beyond normal human communities and giving the ascetic strength to continue. For example, the Indian sufi Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar (1175–1265) made a forty-day retreat hanging upside down in a well; his fasting was rewarded when the nearby pebbles turned into sugar. Several Irish hermits had food come to them miraculously—a doe coming tamely to be milked, a raven supplying bread, an eagle carrying a fish, and so on—or created it themselves with miraculous divisions reminiscent of Jesus dividing loaves and fishes. Saints have not only turned water into wine; the Hindu devotional poet Kamalakanta Bhattacharya (c. 1769–1821) was accused of drunkenness, to which he responded by turning wine into milk. Among the rabbis credited with miraculous powers, there is even a talmudic story of two rabbis able to create a calf each week, in time to serve it up for Sabbath supper. It is not surprising, in subsistence-level economic systems, that people so often delighted in telling of miraculous provision of food.

It is also hardly surprising to find that many holy people have been credited with a miraculous ability to withstand great physical trials. Many early Christian martyrs are described as enduring horrendous tortures without suffering. Hindu saints, too, sometimes appear in the literature so focused on the divine that they do not notice physical pain. This phenomenon also appears in Islam. For example, the sufi Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Rifa'i (1106–1182) was able to sit in a hot oven, and his followers have adopted practices such as snake handling, walking on hot coals, and eating broken glass.

In Eastern religions, supernatural abilities are often regarded as a side effect of enlightenment. It is almost a commonplace that *arahants*, the fully awakened, can hear and understand all the sounds in the universe, can read the thoughts of others, and can remember previous lifetimes. Beyond that, Buddhism recognizes eight standard paranormal abilities in people of outstanding holiness: (1) to project bodily images of one's self, (2) to become invisible, (3) to pass through solid objects, (4) to sink into solid ground, (5) to walk on water, (6) to fly, (7) to touch the sun and moon with one's hand, and (8) to ascend to the home of Brahma in the highest level of heaven. Similarly, Hinduism recognizes supernatural abilities, including mind-reading, clairvoyance, and levitation as a natural result of spiritual development.

But both religions have warned against cultivating or valuing such powers, regarding them as distractions; boasting about special powers is even one of the four traditional grounds for expulsion from the Buddhist *samgha* (monastic community). Mahayana Buddhism is rather more liberal in accepting the value of displaying powers to ordinary people, especially for teaching purposes. An interesting example is the Silla (Korean) Buddhist monk Chajang (590–658), famed as a wonder worker, who helped spread Buddhism throughout the kingdom especially by performing miraculous signs during his lectures. And supernormal powers are often valued in the tantric traditions of both Buddhism and Hinduism as signs of progress in the spiritual life; it is assumed, though, that the practitioner will eventually grow out of this stage. Although miraculous powers may be regarded warily or even despised by the elite, however, they continue to be loved by ordinary people and play a prominent role in legend. Thus the Buddhist philosopher Chandrakirti (c. 580–660) said that things lack essence and proved it by walking through stone columns, milking a picture of a cow to feed the monks, and even riding a stone lion. The first Sikh guru, Nanak, was also a noted miracle worker.

Other Eastern religions accept the basic view that true bonding with the divine allows one to set aside the illusions that govern the workings of the material world, placing the holy person in a state of transcendence. This is interpreted

very realistically by Daoists, who believe that as a Daoist holy figure becomes perfect, his or her body becomes increasingly transparent. The Daoist “immortals” (*xian*) can multi-locate or change their appearance at will. They also apotheose instead of dying, the best of them rising to heaven in daylight in a chariot pulled by dragons and tigers. (Although even this is perhaps not as spectacular as the two Hindu holy women, Antal and Mirabai, who were absorbed into an image of a god.) Some Daoist stories are decidedly more whimsical. Zhang Guolao, one of the Daoist Eight Immortals, for example, had a magic mule that could be folded and put into a small bag when not being ridden. In general, however, the emphasis is on the holy person transcending the normal laws of nature. A similar transcendence was attributed to some of the Neoplatonist philosophers of Greece. Iamblichus (c. 240–325), for example, was credited with the ability to levitate (although he did his best to laugh it off).

Nothing stands in the way of a holy person, and legendary embellishments of miracles that break the laws of nature cross the boundaries of religion, place, and time. It is very common to discover holy people, in ages before extensive bridge-building, able to cross bodies of water—they part water (Moses, and many imitators in Christian hagiography), walk on water (especially common among Buddhist holy people), or float across water perched on a leaf or reed, a topos that extends from the Christian Irish saint Ia (d. 450) crossing the English Channel to the Buddhist Chan founder Bodhidharma (d. c. 530?), who crossed the Yangtze. Fires ignite themselves (or go out, or change their paths) for saints, trees bow to them, and the black stone of the Ka’aba even spoke at the demand of the Shi’i imam Zayn ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn (658–713).

The two greatest miracles of saints, however, are the ability to control the weather and to heal. Many African and Amerindian holy people are venerated for the ability to bring rain, although tales of this vital function can be found in most religions. The central Asian Buddhist monk Fotucheng (232–348 C.E.) was famous for his rainmaking, which won the ruler of China’s support for the spread of Buddhism. The Talmud tells of the Jewish miracle worker Honi ha-Me’aggel (1st century B.C.E.), who successfully prayed for rain in a time of drought. In Hinduism, miracles are often associated with a holy person’s ability to win the god’s favor through song or poetry. In one legend, the early nineteenth-century devotional composer Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775–1835) ended a drought when he and his son performed their music. Throughout the Christian Middle Ages, saints regularly supplied rain on request; even as late a saint as Catarina de San Juan (d. 1685) can count the turning back of a hurricane among her miracles.

Most recorded miracles of holy people, though, are miracles of healing. Hagiography presents a bleak panorama of

human suffering only bearable because of the intervention of saints. Modern theories suggest the great power of the mind to heal the body—holy people have been able to act as important channels throughout history, winning people’s utter conviction that they could indeed be healed. Often such healings take place in highly emotional circumstances, ranging from camp meetings to pilgrimages at the shrine of a saint—and relapses are disappointingly frequent after the excitement has died down. But there is a body of modern scientific evidence that healing miracles *do* happen, which buttresses many centuries of belief in them.

Is the age of miracles over? Miracles have indeed fallen off in modern times in much of the world. Skepticism, “enlightenment” (in the philosophical sense), and the development of science have led the educated elites of many religions to question or even condemn belief in miracles. But a great many people still want and need miracles, and the miracle-working holy person is still alive and well. In the Christian world this has taken two tracks, in Catholicism focusing on the healing power of the Virgin Mary (for example at Lourdes) and in the rapidly growing Pentecostal communities giving full credit to charismatic “faith healers.” Many of the new religions of Asia and the Americas emphasize the miraculous powers of their leaders.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bistami, Abu Yazid; Bodhidharma; Catarina de San Juan; Chajang; Chandrakirti; Dikshitar, Muthuswami; Eight Immortals; Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar; Hanina ben Dosa; Hasidism; Husayn ibn ‘Ali al-; Kamalakanta Bhattacharya; Mary, Virgin; Mirabai; Rifa’i, Ahmad ibn ‘Ali al-

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Miram

(1929 C.E.–)

Hindu renunciant

Miram is one of the few well-known, contemporary woman renunciants within the Hindu tradition. Born in 1929 in the small village of Mehetpur in Punjab, India, Miram was known by her given name, Kamla, until her formal renunciation of worldly life at the age of fifty. Her mother was a traditional, dutiful Hindu wife who managed the domestic and ritual affairs of the household; her father was a merchant whose entrepreneurial successes never left his family for want of material comfort. They were disheartened that Miram, their eighth child, had not been a boy, but they generously supported the Arya Samaj, a Hindu social reform movement that advocated a return to the simple yet traditional Hindu rituals as espoused in the Vedas (revelatory

scripture), the end of caste discrimination, and the improved status of women.

As a young girl, Miram showed academic promise. However, because higher education was not available in her home village, and independent study abroad for most Indian girls of her day was out of the question, Miram received no more than a basic secondary school education. While in her teens, Miram began preaching within her local Arya Samaj chapter, serving the destitute and lower-caste communities. By the age of eighteen, she had resolved, much to the initial disappointment of her family, to remain unmarried and continue undistracted with her religious works.

Miram remained under the guardianship of her father until her late thirties. As she immersed herself more deeply into her spiritual life, she gradually gave away all the gold ornaments and silk saris she had worn as a wealthy man's daughter and adopted instead a simple life of austerity. To purify herself, she would recite the name of God manifold times, read sacred verse from the Vedas, and perform daily *puja* (devotional worship). If ever she felt she had committed a sinful act, such as lying or speaking poorly to anyone, she would strike herself with a cane, resolving to become a master of her own vices. She also became a well-known preacher, lecturing to Arya Samaj groups throughout the Punjab region.

In 1969, Miram convinced her parents to permit her to move from the family home to an Arya Samaj religious ashram in the holy northern Indian city of Hardwar. Unlike many ancient and modern Hindu renunciants, Miram's basic material needs were met through the generosity of her father. Any fees she earned as a preacher she donated to the poor or used to fund the publication of scriptural verses and commentaries. In 1979, she was permitted by her brother, who was by then her guardian, to take formal initiation as a *sannyasini* (female renouncer).

Although Miram is not wholly independent like the many male renunciants in the Hindu tradition, her spiritual life and preachings, as Miram has expressed in her own writings, are significant as a testament of the power of human determination and an inspiration for other women who also yearn for the spiritual life.

—Sujata Ghosh

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Miriam

(13th cent. B.C.E.)

Hebrew prophet

The elder sister of Moses and Aaron, Miriam is cited by name fewer than ten times in the Hebrew scriptures, but those citations indicate that she was a significant leader of the Israelite Exodus from Egypt (cf. Mic. 6:4), notably at a time when her gender would have prevented her participation in civic affairs and assumption of public authority. She is first mentioned as the unnamed sister of Moses when the mother of Moses and Miriam, Yocheved, placed Moses into the river in a basket made of bulrushes (Exod. 2:3–4). The Talmud elaborates the scene to include that as Yocheved placed Moses in the river, the father, Amram, struck Miriam in the head, chiding her for her earlier prophecy that Moses would be the savior of Israel (Mas. Sotah 12b–13a).

Miriam is first mentioned by name in Exodus 15:20, just after the parting of the Red Sea and the drowning of the pharaoh's army as the waters returned to fill the seabed. At the sight of her people safe on dry land, and of the Egyptians lost in the sea, Miriam "the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam sang to them: 'Sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea'" (Exod. 15:20–21). The song of celebration was not in response to the death of the Egyptians but in gratitude for the fulfillment of the prophecy of deliverance from slavery and persecution. Miriam understood that the redemption of her people was authentic, as the splendid might of Yahweh had made manifest, and she also perceived that her trust in her own prophecy had been rewarded. Historically, it was quite usual for the Israelite women to celebrate a victory with dancing and the striking of the timbrel (tambourine), but her victorious song of public thanksgiving implied broader recognition of her elevated position.

Later, however, as the Israelites continued their Exodus in the desert, Miriam seemed to chafe under Moses' presumption of authority. Numbers 12:1–15 implies that the dispute that arose between Miriam and Aaron and their brother Moses was about the fact that he had married (perhaps for a second time) a "Cushite" (north Arabian or Ethiopian) woman; however, their anger toward Moses likely stemmed from resentment over the preferential status he seemed to enjoy in the estimation of Yahweh and the people. They chided Moses, saying, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" (Num.

12:2). Moses was too “meek” to respond to them in kind—so Yahweh spoke for him, summoning Aaron and Miriam to the “tent of meeting” (Num. 12:4). There, as a “pillar of cloud,” Yahweh scolded them, and Miriam was stricken with leprosy (it is of course very curious that Aaron, who had also complained, was not similarly stricken). Midrash accounts suggest that the divine consequence for gossip and jealous slander was commonly an attack of leprosy. Aaron immediately beseeched Moses to remove so terrible a punishment (Num. 12:11–12), and Moses called upon Yahweh to heal his sister. Yahweh would not relent, however, until she had suffered the disease and removal from the camp for seven days. Her people did not resume their journey until she had been returned into the fold, a testimony to her prominence and to the sincere respect with which she was regarded.

Miriam, like Aaron and Moses, would not live to see the Promised Land. She was the first of the three to die, in Kadesh, and was buried there. The exact month and year of her death is not reported.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Aaron; Gender and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Moses; Prophets

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Mirza Hasan Shirazi

(1815–1895 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim scholar

Hajji Mirza Sayyid Muhammad Hasan Shirazi, known as Mirza-yi Shirazi, was the foremost Shi'i scholar of the last part of the nineteenth century, being recognized as the sole *marja' al-taqlid* (focal point for emulation in religious law) for some twenty-five years. He reorganized the teaching of religious jurisprudence and temporarily moved the center of Shi'i scholarship from Najaf to Samarra, both in Iraq.

A descendant of the prophet Muhammad, Mirza-yi Shirazi was born in Shiraz, Iran, in 1815 to a family of merchants and religious scholars. He traveled to Najaf, where he studied under Shaykh Murtada Ansari and other leading scholars. Before Shaykh Murtada died in 1864, he nominated Shirazi to replace him, but it was about 1872 before he became acknowledged as the sole point of reference and emulation in matters of religious law (the sole *marja' al-taqlid*) and even then, there were a few counterclaimants. Strangely enough, Shirazi wrote few works, and none of those he did write achieved any lasting renown. Nevertheless, he is re-

garded as the *mujaddid* (renewer) of Shi'i Islam for the fourteenth Islamic century.

Sharazi did not like his position of leadership, and it is said that it was for this reason, hoping to escape it, that in 1874 he transferred his residence from Najaf to the town of Samarra (the place where the Shi'i twelfth imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, was believed to have gone into occultation in 874). But his students followed him to Samarra and built for him a mosque and religious college there. Thus this town became the international center of Shi'i scholarship until Shirazi's death in 1895, when it reverted to Najaf.

Shirazi is best known for the episode of the Tobacco Regie. When Nasir ad-Din, Shah of Iran, sold a monopoly concession over all aspects of the tobacco trade to a British syndicate in 1890, the whole of Iran was scandalized. A *fatwa* (legal judgment) from Shirazi appeared in 1891 prohibiting the use of tobacco. There was almost universal compliance with this edict, even in the shah's own harem, and the shah was forced to revoke the monopoly to quell public disturbances. Some have said, however, that this fatwa was not actually by Shirazi but forged in his name. Certainly, at no other time in his life did Shirazi involve himself in political issues.

—Moojan Momen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Mahdi, al-; Politics and Holy People

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Misri, Dhu'n-nun al-

(796–861 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Abu'l-Fayd Thawban ibn Ibrahim al-Misri is an important figure of early sufism. He was born in 796 in upper Egypt, where he received his early education with some training in medicine, alchemy, and magic. He traveled to Mecca and Damascus, Syria, where he is reported to have met or come to know of some Christian ascetics. He openly opposed the Mutazilite school of theology (*kalam*) and rejected their doctrine of the “createdness” of the Qur'an. Toward the end of his life, he was imprisoned by the Abbasid rulers but released shortly thereafter by the caliph Mutawakkil. He returned to Egypt and died there in 861.

As a central figure of early sufism, al-Misri is distinguished from his predecessors, such as Harith al-Muhasibi (c. 781–857), Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. c. 875), and Sahl al-Tustari (818–896), by his open advocacy of sufism as an independent path. He had many students and followers, earning him a title as the head of the sufis. Many of his prayers

and sermons were recorded in later sufi sources. Al-Misri is also the first sufi figure to discuss spiritual states (*ahwal*) and wayfaring (*suluk*) in a systematic manner.

Asceticism underlies al-Misri's spiritual vocation. Renunciation of the world, detachment, self-discipline, invocation, and solitariness are among the themes to which al-Misri devotes considerable space. This emphasis can be seen as a reaction to the increasing worldliness of the society in al-Misri's time and its deviation from the path of the prophet Muhammad. The message of spiritual discipline and purification, however, has a timeless aspect to it in sufism as in other mystical traditions. Even though Islam opposes strict individualism, al-Misri emphasized solitude as a way of preventing indulgence in worldly affairs. He is reported to have said, "He who is alone sees nothing but God, and if he sees nothing but God, nothing moves him but the Will of God." This view of al-Misri has been accepted and practiced by many later sufis.

Al-Misri is also known for his teachings on metaphysical knowledge, or gnosis (*ma'rifah*). For the sufis, knowledge functions as a gateway to the mysteries of the divine and, once attained, transforms the soul. Al-Misri's primary interest in knowledge lay not in speculative theology or philosophy but in what may be called spiritual epistemology. In other words, he focused on attaining proximity to the divine in the "here and now" through knowing God. Al-Misri also emphasized love (*hubb*) as the most intimate mode of relationship with God. For him, loving God meant loving everything that God loves and shying away from everything that God detests.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Bistami, Abu Yazid; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Mission

The first large-scale religious mission in world history was that of the Buddhists, who believed that the Buddha's message was universal and therefore to be spread to all peoples. The English word "mission" specifically refers to a person "sent out," implying a central organization to do the sending, especially to convert people to the central body's religious beliefs. In reality, though, until the sixteenth century few Christian missionaries were "sent" by any authority besides their own conviction that they were doing God's work. Perhaps the phenomenon of going to win others to one's religion could better be described as "evangelization"—or spreading

the "good news"—were it not that these terms have such a specifically Christian connotation.

Not all religions engage in missionary work, and not all that do so regard their missionaries as people of unique holiness. An important precondition is belief that other peoples *can* adopt one's own religion. Thus practitioners of tribal religions, including most of the religions of Africa and the Americas and to some extent Judaism, are barred from giving a central role to missionaries. If nobody but a fellow member of the tribe can join, it's hardly worth preaching the religion to others. This attitude seems to have been important in shaping Muslim attitudes toward missionaries as holy people. Although there certainly *were* Muslim missionaries who spent their lives working to convert those of other faiths, they have made little impression on the hagiographical tradition. Islam, when it admires missionaries, has tended to focus on the leaders of *internal* mission, those who deepen the faith of those already within the fold. This is also a side effect of the nature of Islamic expansion, which in its formative period was a massive military expansion, followed only gradually by an effort to convert those who had been integrated into the caliphate. One of the few Muslim holy people, besides the prophet Muhammad himself, whose missionary work has been a central part of his definition as holy person was the sufi Muinuddin Chisti (1141–1236), who played an important role in converting the native populace of India through his piety, teachings, and miracles, including defeating a court magician in a magic contest.

The great missionary saints are for the most part Buddhist and Christian, although it should be noted that the Bahá'í faith also emphasizes missionary efforts, and several of its holy people, including Martha Root (1872–1939) and Enoch Olinga (1926–1979), are most famous as missionaries. Both religions' attitudes toward missionaries as holy people were shaped by the fact that neither was a state religion in its formative period. Both followed the pattern of converting small groups spread out over wide areas, only later encountering the phenomenon of state-sponsored advocacy of conversion. And both religions regard the need to convert others as both good in itself and as a command by their founder. Indeed, Jesus' last command, according to Matthew's gospel, was "Go forth and teach all peoples . . ." (Matt. 28:18), which the apostles proceeded to do in a fashion that attracted a large body of later legend. Even before those stories developed, the earliest known layer of Christianity, the letters of Paul, were written by a man who devoted his life to winning converts to the new religion. In Buddhism, according to legend, sixty of the Buddha's "perfected" disciples were sent all over India to preach.

Nevertheless, Buddhist and Christian holy missionaries have some interesting differences that reflect the early structure of the two religions. Especially noteworthy is that many

of the great missionaries of Buddhism are known for their role in teaching monks rather than the laity. For example, Daoan (312–385) was important in the early spread of Buddhism in China. But his missionary work was of a very erudite sort: He was especially famous for his ability to explicate difficult scriptures; he wrote commentaries; and he changed the principles behind the translation of Indian texts into Chinese. The Japanese monk Gyogi Bosatsu (668–749) stands out for his efforts to spread Buddhism to the common people. After the initial conversion of a monastic population, a second point that marks many Buddhist missionaries is that, rather than being “sent out” to a foreign land to convert others, they are often “sent in” from a marginal land to the heartland of Buddhism, where they study for many years and then take religious knowledge back and spread it in their homeland. A good case is that of the Japanese monk Eisai (1141–1215), who is credited with the establishment of Zen in Japan. Christian missions, by contrast, never focused on creating a religious elite within the host country, except inasmuch as they regarded all Christians as “elite.” Indeed, Christian missionaries have often been criticized in more modern times for their hesitancy in creating a native clergy. And most known Christian missionaries are “sent out,” in the sense of going to foreign lands to preach, rather than natives who return home with a religious message.

The missionaries of both religions were clearly aware that conversion of a king could win them a thousandfold return for their effort, since a convinced ruler could be counted on at least to protect further missionary efforts, if not to add governmental incentives to the process of conversion. Thus, as soon as Buddhists and Christians were in a position to reach royalty, they did so. The first Buddhist Indian king, Ashoka (third century B.C.E.), sent Buddhist missions out, including his own son Mahinda, who led a mission to Ceylon in about 250 B.C.E. Sure enough, Mahinda focused his efforts on the Sinhalese king, converting him and presenting him with a branch of the bodhi tree under which the Shakyamuni Buddha had meditated when he reached enlightenment. In gratitude for his teaching, a meditation hall was built over Mahinda’s remains. Formal missions of religious teaching became a common feature of diplomatic relations, accounting for the early spread of Buddhism to places such as Korea and Japan. The leaders soon became the stuff of legend. The second-century B.C.E. Indian monk Nagasena, known for his discussions on Buddhism with the Indo-Greek king Menander, was believed in legend to have been called onto earth for the specific task of converting the Greek. Similarly, a long line of Christian missionaries, ranging back to the sixth century, focused their efforts on rulers. Augustine of Canterbury (d. c. 604), with his mission to the kingdom of Kent, is just one example.

The great missionary saints, though, have been those whose mission was an expression of their own love of religious truth. Augustine of Canterbury, unwilling victim of Pope Gregory the Great’s missionary zeal, was never a popular saint; Patrick (d. c. 493), drawn to Ireland by, as he put it, the voice of God himself, has caught the imagination of millions of Christians over the centuries. The same is true of Buddhism: Courtier-missionaries such as Nagasena from approximately the second century B.C.E. are overshadowed by figures like the central Asian monk Fotucheng (232–348), who sent himself to the mission field (although with such success that he converted the ruler of China), or Bodhidharma (d. c. 530), an Indian master who traveled to China to spread the teachings of Buddhism, or a series of Indian monks, such as Kamalashila (c. 740–795) or Atisha (982–1054), who made their way to Tibet.

Because of the emphasis in Christianity on “heroic” qualities rather than learning as the prime characteristic of a saint, and especially the great Christian admiration of martyrdom—so much easier to obtain when out preaching to uncooperative natives—missionaries are very prominent in the ranks of the Christian saints, more so than in any other religion. Mission was not consistently emphasized in the Christian tradition until the sixteenth century on, however, when the establishment of missionary orders assured ongoing funding and workers for the missionary field. The apostles and Paul stand out as great missionaries of the early church, but after that the record of missionary work fades until the German encroachment into the Roman Empire. From then until about 850 there was a long series of great missionary saints, ranging from Irish wanderers such as Columbanus (543–615) to practical Anglo-Saxon organizers such as Boniface (c. 675–754). After that, an emphasis on the monastic life as a chief characteristic of holiness de-emphasized the holy credentials of missionaries, unless, like Adalbert of Prague (c. 956–997), they were fortunate enough to be killed in the mission field. What caught the Christian imagination instead was, from the thirteenth century on, the internal mission of preachers, above all followers of Dominic (1170–1223) and Francis (c. 1180–1226), who began preaching to their fellow Christians and soon found themselves engaged in a new external mission.

With the coming of the Reformation movements to sixteenth-century Europe, a new awareness developed especially in the Catholic world that internal and external mission were inextricably connected. Thus Ignatius of Loyola’s (1491–1556) highly successful Society of Jesus (Jesuits) not only sent dramatic secret missionaries to win back Protestant regions within Europe (such as most of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales) but also sponsored highly successful missions to newly explored lands, such as Francis Xavier’s (1506–1552) work in the Far East. The process pro-

duced many martyrs, both at home and abroad, encouraging still others to take to the mission field. The process is not as pronounced among Protestants, who in the formative sixteenth century did not engage in any large-scale missionary work, mostly because Protestant lands were not important in the early history of exploration. By the eighteenth century, however, Protestant missionaries such as John Wesley (1703–1791) were actively competing with their Catholic coreligionists. This process has continued to the present.

At times, missionaries have been regarded as the tools of imperialist powers. In many cases, however, they have been recognized as God-motivated people who have done much to help those to whom they have been sent, especially those who have treated the culture they have entered with respect and understanding. Outsiders, such as the Russian Orthodox Innocent of Alaska (1797–1879), or Nicolas Kassatkin (1836–1912), who created an autonomous Orthodox Church in Japan, have won the respect and veneration of the peoples whom they have converted, and many missionaries in Africa, both native and foreign, are recognized as holy people.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Apostles; Ashoka; Atisha; Augustine of Canterbury; Bodhidharma; Boniface; Chisti, Muinuddin; Columbanus; Daoan; Eisai; England and Wales, Forty Martyrs of; Fotucheng; Gyogi Bosatsu; Kamalashila; Nagasena; Olinga, Enoch; Patrick; Root, Martha Louise; Xavier, Francis

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Mixcoatl

(Early 9th cent. C.E.)

Amerindian ancestor, warrior

Mixcoatl was the legendary warrior ancestor of the seven tribes of Chicomoztoc. These Chichimecs left what is today northern Mexico and the southwestern United States in search of a better life and were successful at many conquests, as the pre-Columbian *Leyenda de los soles* (Legend of the suns) narrates. The fifth Aztec sun was inaugurated in the year Ce Acatl (One Reed), or 843, by the birth of Mixcoatl's son, Quetzalcoatl, after the Chichimec warrior battled Chimalman and impregnated her. (Some confusion exists in the sources; one states that Quetzalcoatl's father died in 835 despite the fact that Quetzalcoatl was not born until 845.)

To validate his reign, Quetzalcoatl had to resurrect the bones of his dead father. The ruler priest of Tollan (or Tula), Quetzalcoatl journeyed to the underworld to retrieve Mix-

coatl's bones. This ritual was also common among the lowland Maya (250–700) and in Teotihuacan, another important ancient city for the Aztec Empire. All Mexica rulers were required to journey into the otherworld with the help of priests, and through the use of auto-sacrificial techniques and hallucinogens, to retrieve the right of succession from the previous ruler—usually their male relative.

Some of the confusion in the sources stems from the fact that Quetzalcoatl and Mixcoatl were perceived as historical figures as well as divinities who were important to many communities. The *Leyenda de los soles* seeks to link the Aztec Empire with the ancient Mesoamerican cities that the empire conquered and to legitimate Aztec power as a divine gift. The figures of Quetzalcoatl and Mixcoatl help the Mexica accomplish this. In fact, the Mexica divinity Huitzilopochtli, the patron of the Aztec Empire and Tezcatlipoca, the figure associated with conquest throughout Mesoamerica, have been linked to the ancestor Mixcoatl in various sources.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Authority of Holy People; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; Rulers as Holy People

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Mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang

See Khedrup Jey

Mnkabayi ka Jama

(d. 1835 C.E.)

Zulu ritual leader, chief

Certain "royal" Zulu women, such as Mnkabayi ka Jama, had significant ritual and religious roles in precolonial Zulu life in various ways and in varying degrees. Such roles were inextricably linked to their other functions in political affairs. Evidence concerning the Zulu "royal" women reveals similar links between ritual, religion, and chiefly power to that of males. The Zulu king had a very important religious role as the intermediary between the people and the ancestors. It is also often assumed that only the male ancestors are significant, but as Henry Callaway (1970 [1885]) pointed out, protection was also sought from women. The Zulu believed that

though ancestors had departed the living world, they were ever present.

Mnkabayi (sister of King Shaka's father, Senzangakhona ka Jama, 1757–1816) demonstrated leadership in both ritual and military affairs. Her influence—and that of other powerful women—extended far beyond the household and was not dependent on men. Mnkabayi assumed leadership following the deaths of Jama (her father), Senzangakhona, and Shaka ka Senzangakhona (1787–1828). She seems to have been a reasonably young woman when she became joint chief of the Zulu with her male cousin Mudli. This casts doubt on claims that postmenopausal ritual cleanliness allowed women political and ritual influence.

The ancestors of previous Zulu rulers—including women—were central to social life and to the legitimacy of the leadership. The women's Nobamba and esiKlebheni *ikhanda* (military establishments) were located near the graves of kings and provided a vital link to Zulu ancestors. This area (Makhosini district) was of great ritual and religious significance where praising of the ancestors and various ceremonies were undertaken. The graves and ancestors of women such as Mnkabayi were also important in rituals, including purification, and as a refuge for those sentenced to execution. The ancestral shade of Mnkabayi was accorded as prominent a place as that of Shaka. She was praised along with kings in a way that recognized both her religious and political authority.

Custodianship of the *inkatha* (grass coil symbolizing the binding together of the “nation”), the sacred symbol of the office of kingship, seems to have been traditionally in the hands of significant women. Senzangakhona is said to have entrusted the *inkatha* to his kinsman Langazana. Because the *inkatha* was kept in the back of the hut, it could be argued that Langazana's custodianship resembles the chief wife's duties in tending to the family ancestors. However, a simple transfer from household to state fails to consider the religious power of royal women. Once again, Langazana's role cannot simply be put down to postmenopausal status or being “permanently ritually clean.”

Other women were also keepers of medicines or played some part in rainmaking rituals. One way in which certain royal women's role in religion and ritual was signified was by their separation from ordinary people and through the processing of medicine in the Zulu *isigodlo* (the king's private enclosure consisting of the huts of his women and children)—sacredness beyond sexual seclusion. Symbolic celibacy was a particular status among royal women. It separated them from ordinary people and was likely held as sacred. Both Shaka and his successor Dingane (r. 1828–1840) seem to have appropriated the symbolic celibacy of significant women. Neither their father nor grandfather before them practiced this. The implications of transfer of gender

have been pinpointed by Harriett Ngubane's (1977) study of the Zulu, which argues that divination is a “woman thing.”

Some male chiefs asked women leaders for their help in combating plagues and making rain. Many women held chiefly positions in southern Africa and demonstrated leadership in both military and ritual affairs. Mjantshi (alias Mjanji, Mochache, Mabelemade), chief of the Venda, was well known for her skill as a rainmaker and in medicines. In 1897, François Coillard also described a woman chief named Nashintu who “exercised power by means of her medicines and her charms. She has a Pandora's box: she dispenses drought and hail, calamities and epidemics, at will.” Ntombazi of the Ndwandwe, in the same period, held some ritual importance, as her hut was deemed sacred. Medicines were kept in her hut, which was also used by chief Zwide to purify himself. Zwide's daughter also held ritual status. She was, according to Bryant (1929), a renowned rainmaker. The activities of these women were exercised publicly and through ritual and their role was not simply ceremonial.

—Jennifer Weir

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Gender and Holy People; Intermediaries; Rulers as Holy People; Shaka ka Senzangakhona

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Models

There are two sorts of holy people in the world's religions: those who are exemplary human beings whose lives provide a model for others, and those who appear to their admirers to live lives of such uniquely god-touched virtue that they cannot be imitated. For example, in Christianity the early Irish saints appear as superhuman, heroic figures who are singled out by God even before their births; their hagiographical tradition does not present them as objects to be imitated, but to be marveled at. Similarly, in early Buddhism the life of early

monks and nuns was considered admirable, but beyond the reach of normal people. Many of the holy people of African and American indigenous religions also are depicted in this strongly heroic light, as something fundamentally inimitable. However, probably the majority of holy people have acted, intentionally or not, as models for other holy people, and sometimes for a much wider population. This has been an important theme in Daoism and Confucianism; recurs periodically in Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism; and appears occasionally in Judaism and Islam.

Even some of the “hero” holy people reached their holy status for characteristics that could be imitated. For example, in Phoenician legend, Dido, the founder of Carthage, was deified for her noble behavior, specifically her decision to kill herself rather than marry against her will and to her people’s detriment. Other holy people have been admired and imitated for a life of virtue rather than for a specific virtuous act. This is especially important in Hasidic Judaism and in Protestant Christianity. In Hasidism, the *tzaddiq*, head of the community, is subject to constant scrutiny by followers who observe the leader’s behavior to see how God can be worshipped in every detail of life. Although less formally, Christian leaders are often similarly watched, and the pattern of canonization for the past century has emphasized for Roman Catholics the sort of virtues to which any good Christian can aspire, specifically enjoining the faithful to imitate the saint. A less formal practice occurs for Protestant holy people; biographies, sermons, and television all hold the individual up as a model for emulation. Christian Scientists regard Jesus himself as a human being who laid the path to salvation by *example*, rather than divinity, and in Orthodoxy to be a saint is to identify oneself fully with Christ. Other holy people have provided role models for later saints, such as Simeon the Stylite (c. 390–459), who inspired a number of pillar-sitting saints; Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), who provided a model for Rose of Lima (1586–1617); or even John Brown (1800–1859), the Christian abolitionist who influenced the more problematic case of the Malawian John Chilembwe (1875–1915) in the latter’s attack on colonial oppression. In Sikhism, Gurus Nanak (1469–1539) and Gobind Singh (1666–1708) are regarded as the most important models for Sikhs to follow in their life and worship; ‘Abdu’l-Baha (1844–1921) has held the same position in the Bahá’i faith.

Sometimes, however, holy people are regarded not so much as models of virtue as they are of fulfillment of human potential. This is particularly true of Daoism. The Daoist immortal and perfected holy people are regarded as people who reached their spiritual state by their own efforts. Any human being can theoretically reach such status; thus the Daoist holy person shows what is *possible* to humankind.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: ‘Abdu’l-Baha; Brown, John; Chilembwe, John; Dido; Gobind Singh; Heroes; Nanak; Rose of Lima; Simeon the Stylite

Moggallana (Pali: Mahamoggallana; Skt.: Maudgalyayana)

(5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist disciple

In the lands of Theravada Buddhism especially, the two figures who merit most reverence (besides the Buddha) are the Buddha’s two chief disciples, Shariputra (Sariputta) and Moggallana. Shariputra, the Buddha’s right-hand disciple, is famed as the one foremost in wisdom, and Moggallana, the Buddha’s left-hand disciple, is renowned as the quintessential yogi, foremost in the supernatural powers that rise out of an advanced meditator’s ability to rapidly enter into deep states of meditative absorption.

These two are recognized as ideal exemplars who kept the first monastic order pure. Shariputra is likened to a mother, in that he best “brings forth” the Buddha’s teaching, while Moggallana is likened to a nurse who best protects the teaching. As such, Moggallana was the main monk charged by the Buddha to look after the welfare of other monks, as well as to inspect and set right the behavior of other disciples. The Buddha repeatedly praised Moggallana for his eloquent sermons. As teachers, the difference between Shariputra and Moggallana is that Shariputra taught by means of clear instruction, whereas Moggallana taught through use of supernatural powers.

It is Moggallana’s mastery of supernatural powers, such as mentally creating various bodies and exercising his skills in clairaudience, mind reading, and clairvoyance, that has most contributed to his reputation as a saintly figure. His most famous display of supernatural power is his extraordinarily mighty defeat of a dangerous snake king whose hood had enveloped the world in darkness. This epic feat is so important as to be a main part of blessing verses recited at almost all Theravada ceremonies.

Moggallana, famous for his visits to various heavens and hells, functions as a shaman of sorts by returning to report about these realms to the denizens of earth. These teachings help reinforce the law of karma, or “action” (Pali: *kamma*), relating to people how they can gain good rebirths as a result of wholesome actions or become reborn in bad destinies because of unwholesome actions. Thus Moggallana can be seen as a key exponent of moral responsibility, a central feature of Buddhist ethics.

Finally, Moggallana was one of the first disciples to realize *nirvana* (Pali: *nibbana*), the “extinguishing” of craving, hatred, and delusion.

—Bradley Clough

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Disciples; Gautama; Miracles; Shariputra

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Mohammed

See **Muhammad**

Monasticism and Holy People

Several of the world's religions, most notably Buddhism and Christianity, have developed the institution of monasticism, the communal life of professional, full-time religious people who support one another in the religious life. The English word "monasticism" derives from a Greek root meaning "alone," specifically "alone with God." In the Christian tradition, this pursuit can take several forms, including especially the eremitical (hermits) and cenobitic (communal) forms. Rather confusingly, though, the term "monasticism" is generally used to describe only the latter form of religion, a practice that will be followed here. Monks are also defined as practitioners of an ascetic life because they give up many of the pleasures of "the world" (most notably sex) in order to devote themselves completely to spiritual development. Especially in Buddhism and medieval and modern Roman Catholic Christianity, the monastic life has traditionally been regarded as the surest spiritual path, so a highly disproportionate number of holy men and women in both traditions have been monks and nuns. Other religious traditions have denounced such renunciation of the world as escapism and even moral cowardice, groups including most Protestant denominations (with the exception of Anglicanism), mainstream Judaism, and the Sikh faith.

Even those religions that reject formal monasticism, though, have often recognized the importance of belonging to a group of like-minded people for support and encouragement in the religious life. Many modern Christian cults, although claiming adherence to the Protestant tradition, separate their members from the "taint" of the world into self-reliant communities of mutual support; thus many modern cult leaders, including figures such as Jim Jones, can be regarded as in an essential sense monastic founders. The ancient Greek Pythagoras (c. 570–497 B.C.E.) similarly founded communities of both men and women who practiced a simple and spiritual communal life. By encouraging one another in a life of asceticism and avoiding the temptations of secular society, such monks and nuns can often

propel one another to a life of true religious devotion. In popular esteem, such figures stand out especially as "other-worldly" in the most literal sense, often described as already "dead to the world" and thus in an important liminal space between humankind and the divine.

As liminal figures, monastics have often been able to have a major impact on the affairs of the world, acting as models of the "true" religious life, at times serving as important missionaries of their religions, interceding with secular authorities, and, most important, interceding with heavenly forces on behalf of more earthbound mortals. Abbots of monastic communities and founders of new monasteries or monastic orders have been especially singled out for status as holy people, in part because of their influence in society as a whole. For example, early Christian authorities such as Athanasius (c. 300–373) worked very hard to win the support of monks as well as hermits against the heretics he opposed, knowing that such figures could sway the populace.

Christian cenobitic monasticism took shape in the fourth century, especially thanks to the leadership of figures such as Antony of the Desert (fl. 300–340), Pachomius (c. 290–c. 346), and Basil the Great of Caesarea (330–379). All three recognized the dangers of isolated religious life, but Basil especially stressed community as in itself an ascetic discipline, encouraging humility. The movement soon spread to Western Europe and came to dominate the religious conscience of the Middle Ages. Thousands of boys and girls were turned over to the monastic life as young children, and many developed in that environment into great mystics, spiritual writers, reformers, and leaders of the Christian community. In the case of Christianity, though, the life of the wandering ascetic was regarded as antithetical to monasticism, and until the early modern period engagement with secular society was frowned upon, thanks to a profound conviction that no normal human being, when confronted with serious temptation, can resist it. Thus monasticism in the Christian tradition has waxed and waned in accordance with the broader beliefs of society over time. Perhaps the greatest transformation of all occurred in the sixteenth century, when a series of great Roman Catholic saints redefined monastic values in favor of outreach to the rest of society. Certainly the number of monastics formally canonized by the Roman Catholic church far outstrips any other category of people in society attaining this honor. In part, this can be attributed to the weight of a full monastic institution being thrown behind the canonization of its own members; in part, it certainly reflects the important role monks and nuns have played in the history of Christianity.

The religions that developed in India stress ascetic practices as essential to holiness and also recognize the commu-

nal structure, in Buddhism the *samgha*, as a nearly indispensable tool to enlightenment. Thus, while Buddhism recognizes that a person can attain spiritual awakening without the assistance of any other human being, without a teacher and without being a member of the *samgha*, this is indeed very rare. Run-of-the-mill holy people require a teacher and a communal structure to guide them along the right path, preventing too much asceticism as well as too little, helping the individual to eliminate the self-will that is the most important impediment to enlightenment. Buddhist monastic discipline, *vinaya*, is seen as so central to a spiritual life that in some Buddhist lands all boys are sent to reside in a monastery for a year or two. Christianity has similarly emphasized the importance of this structured asceticism that is available only in the monastery. Tantric Buddhism gives a larger role to the solitary holy person, and the Pure Land sect that developed in China and Japan turned against the monastic establishment, but they are exceptions in a religion that otherwise is still dominated by a monastic sensibility. Monasticism has had a rockier path in Christianity, in large part because in this religion withdrawal from the world has always existed in uneasy relationship with gospel precepts that order engagement in the world. Thus Protestantism has by and large denounced monasticism as self-centered—a stand belied by the massive growth of Roman Catholic monastic movements in the early modern and modern periods whose members have devoted their whole lives to service in the world, including thousands of teachers, missionaries, and caregivers, many of whom have received canonization as saints.

Hinduism, which also stresses renunciation of the world as necessary for holy people, has included several monastic leaders, such as Shankara (d. 732 C.E.), a leader of the Vedanta school who established four great monastic centers in India. Similarly, the nineteenth-century Hindu reformer Vivekananda started a large monastic movement as a necessary step for the revival of Hinduism. Some branches of Jainism have similarly formed the supports of community for the mendicant renunciants who form the elite of the religion, including a special initiation for ascetics and a system comparable to the Buddhist *samgha*.

Islam in general opposes monasticism, which is held to denigrate the goodness of God's creation with vows that keep monks from enjoying what the world has to offer. Still, Islamic mysticism, sufism, has at times taken on many of the attributes of monasticism. The central early sufi figure Dhu'n-nun al-Misri (796–861) was the first to openly advocate sufism as a personal religious path based on renunciation of the world, solitude, and detachment as necessary conditions for closeness to God—a concept very similar to both Buddhist and Christian monasticism. Sufism devel-

oped as a permanent religious life, separate from the distractions of the world and often led in communities of like-minded individuals. Sufis sometimes even formalized this monastic impulse, living in *khanaqahs*, convents in which members of a sufi order could find support and encouragement from their peers.

In both Buddhism and Christianity, men and women who have supported monasticism are often themselves regarded as saints; a look at any list of saints of the Christian Middle Ages suggests that the surest path to recognition as a saint was to found a monastery. Several lay Buddhists are similarly honored for their support and encouragement of the *samgha*.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ascetics as Holy People; Athanasius; Basil the Great; Hermits; Jones, Jim; Misri, Dhu'n-nun al-; Pachomius; Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism; Shankara; Vivekananda

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Monica

(331–387 C.E.)

Christian holy woman

Monica was the mother of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) and a saint in the Catholic Church in her own right. Nearly all of what we know of Monica comes from her son's writings. She was born in 331 in Thagaste in North Africa and brought up in a Christian household. She married Patricius, an apparently ill-tempered and unfaithful husband who was not a Christian, at an early age and learned how to deal with him by using her wits to avoid being beaten. She had three children, but Augustine, the eldest, was her favored child, though he caused her great distress at his behavior and initial rejection of Christianity. Monica barred her son from her house while he was a Manichaean, seeking advice from her bishop on how best to handle her wayward son. Though pained by her son's religious rebellion, she never lost faith in him and was comforted by dreams that she believed were messages

from God. Monica saw her husband convert before his death, and as a widow she was free to follow Augustine on his journeys, even when he secretly left Africa for Rome. Augustine credited his mother's daily prayers for helping him on his own spiritual journey.

In Milan, where her son had a position as professor of rhetoric, she attended the sermons of Ambrose of Milan and encouraged her son to accompany her. Monica admired Ambrose, certain that he was the kind of educated orator who would appeal to her son. Devoted to Ambrose, she stayed with him in his church when he was besieged by soldiers sent by the Arian empress. She even accepted Ambrose's chastisement for her African Christian practice of holding feasts and drinking wine at the tombs of the martyrs.

Monica's concern about her son's religious beliefs was matched by her desire for an advantageous marriage for Augustine, which she herself eventually arranged, forcing him to abandon his African concubine and mother of his child. The marriage she arranged never took place because the bride-to-be was very young. After Augustine's conversion and baptism by Ambrose in 387, Augustine left his position in Milan for a monastic life of prayer and celibacy, ending Monica's hopes. Monica stayed with her son and lived a monastic life along with her grandson, who had accompanied his father, and a small group of Augustine's friends. Monica fell ill during their return journey to Africa and died in Ostia, the port of Rome, in 387. She was buried in Ostia. A fragment of her epitaph, written by a consul, was accidentally discovered in 1945. The cult of St. Monica only became popular in the thirteenth century when a visiting medieval pilgrim moved some of her relics to France.

—*Maribel Dietz*

See also: Ambrose; Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People

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Moninne

See *Darerca*

Montanus

(d. c. 180 C.E.)

Christian prophet

Montanus founded an early Christian revivalist movement generally referred to as "Montanism," known among his early followers as "the new prophecy." The movement began, probably in the mid-160s, when Montanus began to utter

prophetic oracles in ecstasy in a Phrygian village called Ardabau (in western Asia Minor, exact location unknown). What little is known of him comes from his ecclesiastical detractors, who labeled his movement "the Phrygian heresy."

Four of Montanus's oracles, generally regarded as genuine, are preserved by the heresiologist Epiphanius (315–403). It is reported that Montanus was a recent convert to Christianity, but his brand of Christianity seems to reflect a typically Asian emphasis on prophetic activity and eschatological expectation, influenced by the Johannine writings of the New Testament. Montanus was joined by two women prophets, Maximilla and Priscilla, who became cofounders of the movement. Montanus presumably moved from Ardabau to the vicinity of two other Phrygian villages, Pepouza and Tymion (locations only recently established), and these came to be designated by the leaders of the movement as the parameters of the site of the "New Jerusalem" expected to come down from heaven (Revelation 3:12, 21:2).

The nature of Montanus's prophecy can be gleaned from his oracles: He claimed to be the Lord God Almighty dwelling in man and announced that he had come as "the Lord God the Father." He likened the human to a lyre and himself to the plectrum, saying he was able to awaken people from sleep and change their hearts. He prophesied that the righteous would "shine a hundred times brighter than the sun." Prophetic ecstasy cultivated by Montanus and his followers presumably included glossolalia (tongue-speaking). Members of the movement followed a rigorist lifestyle, including special fasts and abstinence from sex (Maximilla and Priscilla were said to have left their husbands), and martyrdom was encouraged. How Montanus died is not known; the report that he and Maximilla committed suicide in about 180 is probably anti-Montanist gossip. A purported tomb of Montanus and the women at Pepouza was destroyed by Bishop John of Ephesus in the sixth century.

The Montanist movement spread rapidly, especially in rural areas, and soon attracted the attention of ecclesiastical authorities, who tried in vain to stamp it out. By the end of the second century, the movement had spread to the west as far as Gaul and into North Africa. The prolific Christian teacher Tertullian (c. 155/160–after 220) became a Montanist convert. But with the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the power of the state was applied against the movement, culminating under Justinian I (r. 527–565).

—*Birger A. Pearson*

See also: Prophets; Reform and Reaction

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Moon, Sun Myung

(1920 C.E.–)

Founder of the Unification Church

Born in 1920 to Confucian peasant parents in what is now North Korea, Yong Myung Moon joined the Presbyterian Church along with his family in 1930. However, when he was sixteen years old, he had a vision of Jesus Christ that started him on a unique religious path that blended elements of Eastern religion with his own interpretation of Christianity. He eventually founded the Unification Church, which at present has some 2 million followers who recognize him as "Father" and "Lord of the Second Advent." Moon, who changed his name to Sun Myung—"one who has clarified Truth"—teaches that he is the second messiah: Jesus' mission on earth had been to save humankind both spiritually and physically, but it was only half successful, effecting only a spiritual salvation; Moon's task is to finish this divine purpose.

Moon's background is obscure until he made his home in the United States in late 1971. He founded the Broad Sea Church in Pyongyang (North Korea) in 1946 but was imprisoned and expelled from the country, either because of his anti-Communist teachings or his sexual promiscuity, depending on whether the account is by friends or enemies. In 1954, Moon went on to found the Unification Church in Seoul. His teaching was fleshed out in the following years, especially marked by his final marriage (his first marriage had ended in divorce) to Hak Ja Han in 1960, which, according to believers, ushered in the "Cosmic Era." The two were recognized as the True Parents, and their union the completion of Jesus' ministry. The theological argument is that humankind fell from grace because Eve had sexual intercourse with Satan, and that humanity's physical salvation can thus only be accomplished by means of perfect marriages that will beget sinless children, marriages that Moon and his wife have the sole power to bless. This has become a central teaching of the Unification Church, which conducts mass weddings of up to 300,000 couples at a time, the couples often meeting for the first time at the wedding.

Sun Myung Moon has been a very controversial figure in recent religious history because of claims that he "brainwashes" his followers. Current research suggests



South Korean evangelist Sun Myung Moon blessing newlyweds at South Korea's Olympic stadium in Seoul, February 16, 2002. About 3,500 couples exchanged wedding vows on this occasion. (Reuters/Corbis)

that although the Unification Church puts a great emphasis on group conformity, the charge of brainwashing cannot be supported. Moon has also provoked widespread criticism because of his very active fund-raising program and subsequent investment in a wide variety of enterprises, including ownership of the *Washington Times*. Moon himself was charged with tax evasion in 1983 and spent thirteen months in prison in 1984–1985, which he interpreted as persecution caused by antireligious and racist prejudice. In the mid-1990s, Moon shifted his focus to South America, and he has developed a "model community" in Brazil.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Authority of Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Messiahs; Sexuality and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Mopsus

Greek seer

Known as one of the great seers in Greek myth, Mopsus appears to be the name of a historical man, or perhaps a family. One genealogy said he was the son of Apollo and Manto (Prophetess), the daughter of Tiresias. After founding the oracle of Claros on the coast of Asia Minor, he migrated to Cilicia (in modern southern Turkey), where the town Mopsuetia was named after him. His historicity seems confirmed by the phrase “house of Mopsus” that appears in a Phoenician-Luwian inscription found near Cilicia. In myth he was celebrated as the seer on the ship *Argo* that transported Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece. According to the Hellenistic poet of this expedition, Apollonius of Rhodes (third century B.C.E.), Mopsus died in Libya from a snake bite.

The principal story about Mopsus told how in Cilicia he defeated Calchas in a prophecy contest. Calchas asked, “How many figs on that tree?” “Ten thousand,” Mopsus replied, “enough to fill a bushel with one left over.” When Mopsus was proved right, Calchas asked, “How many piglets will that sow give birth to?” “Three, and one female.” Mopsus was right again, and Calchas died of chagrin.

—Barry B. Powell

See also: Greek Prophets; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Prophets; Tiresias

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Mora, Francisco (Ifá Moroté)

(1903–1986 C.E.)

Santería priest

Francisco Mora was a Cuban American who popularized African religious traditions in the United States. He was initiated into the Lucumi religious tradition, known popularly as Santería (Way of the Saints), in Havana, Cuba, in 1944 and was made a priest of Ifá in a line of priests going back to the famous Adechina, who brought wide knowledge of the tradition from Africa. Ifá is a compendium of Yoruba medical and spiritual knowledge that is made available to devotees through a complex oracular system. A priest of Ifá must memorize thousands of verses in the Yoruba language and be able to apply them to life situations as the oracle dictates. Mora became an Ifá master and in 1946 became the first priest to establish a practice in the United States. He settled in New York. In 1964, he organized what is believed to be the first ceremony in the United States involving the sacred *batá* drums that call the African *orisha* spirits.

In the 1970s, Mora presided over a large community of Latino and African American initiates from his home in the Bronx. He was frequently called upon to travel to the Caribbean and South America, where his expertise was required and his generous counsel eagerly sought. By his own estimate, he had more than 6,000 “godchildren” in the Lucumi religious tradition.

—Joseph M. Murphy

See also: Adechina; Contemporary Holy People; Orishas; Priests; Santería

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Moraa

(fl. early 20th cent. C.E.)

Kenyan visionary, healer

Moraa, like the more famous Tanzanian Kinjikitile, was one of the many seers and indigenous doctors who emerged in Kenya during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the aftermath of British colonialism. Partly because of the patriarchal nature of the Gusii community of western Kenya of which she was a member, not much is known about her life. However, it is possible to deduce that she was middle-aged by 1900. Sources identify her as Moraa, wife of Ngiti of Bogeka, subclan of Getutu.

Moraa’s knowledge of medicine helped the Abagusii to win wars against the neighboring Luo and Kipsigis. Moreover, she predicted the coming of British colonialism in Gusii country and its effect on the native population. She foresaw and forewarned her people that the British would take away their land and cattle and conscript their children into forced labor.

Consequently, Moraa encouraged and instigated the Abagusii to resist colonial rule. William Ochieng’ (1974) reports that when a white administrator robbed Otenyo (Omogusii) of two of his best cows, Moraa protested harshly. Not only did she condemn the robbery, she also demanded that the young people of her community take the white man down. Moraa’s persistent exposure of the evils of British colonial domination culminated in the 1908 Gusii uprising. Moraa’s activities did not enchant the British. They branded her a witch doctor who was ignorant of the British civilizing mission. This was clearly a misconception of Moraa’s mission. Unfortunately, owing to patriarchy among the Gusii, Moraa was not accorded the recognition she deserved.

Moraa provided a discourse on the basis of which protest action was undertaken against the British. Like all great

leaders who lead their people in times of crisis, she gave the Abagusii hope and determination in their hour of need. Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Mugo's play *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1977) has many passages that dramatize resistance to colonial rule in different Kenyan communities. The Gusii uprising of 1908 was one of many instances of protest against the British. Ngugi and Micere Mugo see the Mau Mau as the latest among a series of such protests.

—Richard M. Wafula

See also: Gender and Holy People; Kinjikitile Ngwale; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Morality and Holy People

Most holy people in the world religious traditions have taught moral values, often modeling ethical behavior to others or fighting to raise the ethical awareness of the general populace. This is one of the difficulties of defining holy people at all in Judaism—since all Jews are held to a high ethical standard, it is hard to distinguish between a “good” Jew and a “holy” one. The vast majority of people defined as holy would have agreed with the Persian sufi al-Suhrawardi (1145–1234), who stressed proper moral conduct (*abab*), that the physical world is related to the spiritual world, so a person's behavior must match his or her inner state. He especially emphasized the necessity of obeying the law completely as a manifestation of divine order. Indeed, Buddhism regards the *arahant*, the fully awakened person, as actually incapable of certain kinds of moral transgression, essentially equating religious and moral perfection. On the whole, Christians have judged their saints by a higher standard of morality than that used for ordinary mortals, especially emphasizing the “councils of perfection”—poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Nevertheless, ethical conduct has not been regarded as necessary to all holy people. Daoists stand out especially for their amoral notions of what can raise a mortal to the ranks of immortality. For example, the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, a group of Daoist poets, scholars, and musicians believed to have gained immortality in the third century, lived what most would regard a rather decadent life, drinking, making music, and taking drugs. They were mostly interested in longevity techniques, a preoccupation of Daoism that makes it hard to classify the holy people of that religion with holy people of most other parts of the world.

Oddly, however, some people have been regarded as holy *because* they have consciously abandoned the normal rules of ethical behavior. Such people appear in several religions as “holy fools” or “madmen for God's sake.” Although some such people may indeed have been insane, it is clear in several cases that they were performing a profound social commentary, rousing people to awareness of the meaning behind societal rules and precepts. A whole class of Hindu holy persons, the *vamacharis* (followers of “left-handed” conduct), reverse the rules of what is pure and impure as a necessary part of their path to liberation.

In general, the problem has arisen more commonly of what to do when a person of perceived holiness advocates a practice regarded by his or her society as immoral. Islamic theologians debated whether satanic inspiration could be mistaken for the voice of God, and therefore whether divine inspiration should be passed on to others as a guide to ethical conduct. Many tales of Christian saints tell of demonic temptation posing as divine guidance, encouraging the saints to act in immoral ways—only to be foiled by the purity of the saint.

Particularly difficult is the problem of understanding the moral vision of holy people in a multicultural society, since the ethics of different cultures differ considerably. For example, it is hard for a Christian to recognize a polygamist as a saint, or to accept esoteric Daoist sexual practices as a point of connection to the divine. It serves as an important warning that, for all their similarities, we should not forget that holy people are the products of their own cultural systems.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Insanity; Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove; Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin

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More, Thomas

(1478–1535 C.E.)

Roman Catholic scholar, martyr

Thomas More, author of *Utopia* (1516), *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* (1533), written during his imprisonment, and many other works, was chancellor of England under Henry VIII from 1529 to 1532. More was executed on a charge of treason in 1535 for having denied King Henry's Act of Royal Supremacy, which, among other things, rejected the pope's supremacy over the English Catholic Church. Catholics acclaimed More a martyr for his faith.



Portrait of Sir Thomas More, by Hans Holbein the Younger. (Scala/ Art Resource, NY)

Trained as a lawyer, More was also interested in a formal religious life but eventually married and raised a family. His Chelsea home became a center of intellectual pursuits and pious living. When Henry VIII appointed More chancellor, they worked closely early on, especially in their mutual attack on Lutheranism. However, Henry's pursuit of a divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and the king's subsequent attack on the Catholic Church and the power of the pope, strained their relationship. Eventually More resigned his office and retired from public life. More's desire to avoid a public confrontation with Henry was denied him following Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. More refused to swear an oath to the Act of Succession, which declared the king's divorce from Catherine valid. He was arrested on a charge of high treason, along with the bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, who spurned the oath on the same day. During his trial, More acknowledged that although he did not object to the succession, he would not affirm any act that included a repudiation of papal supremacy. More was found guilty and beheaded shortly after Fisher met the same end.

English Catholics' veneration of saints, including More, was driven underground with the establishment of Protestantism in England. Nevertheless, More's hagiography was communicated by a series of sixteenth-century biographies, some written by members of his family. His supporters' versions and the polemics that ensued mirror the struggle be-

tween Catholics and Protestants in England and the Reformation and Catholic Reformation both in England and on the European continent.

Thomas More was beatified in 1886 and canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1935. His feast day is celebrated, along with that of John Fisher, on June 22.

—R. Diane Anderson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fisher, John; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Morèmi

Yoruba legendary heroine

The Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria trace their origin and that of the entire human race to their city of Ile-Ife. According to legend, shortly after creation, the Igbo, who occupied a nearby forest, began repeated attacks against Ife. The invaders appeared as inhuman beings (nicknamed Eluyare), causing such terror that Ife's warriors could not put up any resistance, and each attack resulted in heavy losses in lives and property.

Respite soon came from the heroism of Morèmi, a beautiful woman and the wife of one of Ife's heroes. Fired with patriotism and determined to end the attacks, she resolved to find out what the Igbos really were and how to fight them. She solicited the support of the *orisha* (goddess) of Esinminrin stream and vowed that if she succeeded in her plans, she would offer the greatest sacrifice she could afford. Her strategy was not to flee from another invasion but to be taken captive so that she could learn the secrets of Igbo military superiority.

Soon after this, there was another attack, and Morèmi was captured. Owing to her beauty, she was taken to the palace of the Igbo king along with other war booty. Before long, she rose to become a favorite wife and palace confidante. From her vantage position, she discovered that what gave Igbo soldiers their unearthly and fearful look was their garments made of raffia fiber, bamboo leaves, and visor-like helmets. She also learned that the greatest antidote to this strategy would be to set fire to the raffia garments. With these secrets, Morèmi escaped to Ife and revealed the secret of Igbo war techniques. Not knowing that Ife now had an an-

swer to the invasions, the Igbo launched another attack. However, rather than running away, Ife soldiers fought with lighted torches, setting fire to the garments, and this forced the Igbo to run for their lives.

After the victory, Morèmi went to express her gratitude to Esinminrin. She offered various gifts, such as lambs, goats, rams, and kolanuts, in sacrifice. Esinminrin, however, rejected the gifts but demanded Olúorogbo, Morèmi's only son. All entreaties to the orisha to accept a substitute for the boy failed; hence Morèmi had no option but to sacrifice her son.

Ife's military victory and Morèmi's personal sacrifice are commemorated in the annual Edi festival. In further recognition of Morèmi's contribution, schools and other public places have also been named after her. Modern scholarship, however, has interpreted the episode both as an encounter between the aboriginal inhabitants of the forest and the newcomers led by a chief named Oduduwa and as a clash between rival factions within the town.

—Olatunji Ojo

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Heroes; Orishas

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Moses

(13th cent. B.C.E.)

Hebrew prophet, lawgiver, founder

Above all, Moses was a prophetic redeemer, lawgiver, and founder of Judaism, a religion based on complete monotheism and loyalty to God in a new land of promise (Canaan) and characterized by adherence to the Torah (Law). Israel was to be a holy nation, a model for others. Some consider Abraham the first Jew, but others argue that, although the patriarchs paved the way for the Sinai covenant, Moses first gave the religion its form. According to tradition, the entire Pentateuch was written by Moses, but modern scholarship suggests that the texts that constitute the Pentateuch took their current shape long after the events they describe had occurred; that they incorporate a number of tropes common in other Near Eastern heroic literatures significantly complicates the historicity of the narrative.

Christianity also regards Moses as a central figure, especially in the gospel accounts. Jesus repeatedly adduces Mosaic law, Moses appears as a metonymy for Torah at the transfiguration, he is accounted among the righteous in the book of Hebrews, and his lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness to heal the people foreshadows the crucifixion.



Moses Brings the Torah by Rembrandt van Rijn. (Art Directors)

Similarly, Islam venerates Moses as the lawgiver, commemorating him as a man of purity, an apostle, and a prophet.

Precise dates for Moses are impossible to determine, but the Egyptian pharaoh mentioned in Exodus is likely Ramses II, a member of the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt who reigned from 1304 to 1237 B.C.E. Born into a Levite family in Egypt, Moses' life was threatened by the pharaoh's decree that all newborn male Hebrews be killed. His family hid him for as long as possible, then made a waterproof basket for him and floated him in the Nile, where he was found by the pharaoh's daughter and raised in her household. When he discovered his heritage, Moses became interested in the plight of his people. He killed an Egyptian overseer for beating a Hebrew slave and consequently fled to Midian. There he became a shepherd laboring for Jethro, whose daughter Zipporah he later married.

Having encountered God in the burning bush at Mt. Horeb, Moses returned to Egypt to lead the Hebrew people out from slavery. Assisted by his brother Aaron, Moses interceded with the pharaoh, who consented to let the Hebrews

leave after ten plagues ravaged Egypt. Pharaoh changed his mind and pursued the Hebrews, but his army was drowned in the Reed Sea (or Red Sea), which the Hebrews had successfully crossed.

Moses led the people to Mt. Horeb in the Sinai wilderness (Mt. Sinai), where he received the Ten Commandments from God. He also taught the people an entire legal code (as recorded in the Torah), explained sacrificial practice, gave instructions for the erection of the Tabernacle, and, with the counsel of his father-in-law, Jethro, organized a judicial system for the new nation.

While Moses was on the mountain receiving the law, the people became anxious and persuaded Aaron to construct a golden calf, reminiscent of the Egyptian gods, to serve as a focal point for worship and leadership. When Moses returned, the calf was destroyed and the rebels punished. Disappointed with Israel, God decided to abandon them and begin again to build his chosen people from Moses' family, but Moses dissuaded him from destroying the Hebrews. A new covenant was made between God and the people, though because of their disobedience, another forty years passed before the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land.

While at Sinai, Moses wished to see God but was told that such a vision would destroy him; however, God relented and allowed Moses to see his back as he passed by. Though God was later disappointed with him at Meribah, Moses retained the evidence of his vision throughout his life.

Before his death, Moses appointed Joshua as his successor and in a public address summarized the events of the preceding forty years and the main legislation laid down at Sinai. He blessed the people, gave them guidance for their life in Canaan, and died at the age of 120 in Transjordan. Though the specific location is unknown, Islamic tradition has characteristically identified multiple grave sites; one of the most famous is at Nebi Musa.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Aaron; Abraham; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Miriam; Prophets

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Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides)

(1135/1138–1204 C.E.)

Jewish scholar

Moses ben Maimon, or Maimonides, known in Jewish tradition by the acronym Rambam (for “Rabbi Moses ben Maimon”),

was a physician, scientist, philosopher, communal leader, and by most accounts the greatest religious thinker and rabbinic scholar of postclassical Judaism. He was especially influential among the Jewish communities of the Mediterranean and Muslim east, where his writings were kept alive and his figure celebrated and revered. Born in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) around 1135 during a politically and religiously turbulent age, Maimonides' family sought refuge in North Africa. He eventually made his way to Egypt, where he found a more hospitable society. There, Maimonides lived a hectic but immensely productive life that included serving the sultan as court physician even as he tended to all of his scholarly projects, rabbinic obligations, and Jewish communal duties. His son Abraham and grandson David succeeded him as leaders of the local community and were important scholars in their own right.

Maimonides' principal literary activities embraced Jewish law on the one hand and theology on the other. As a relatively young man, he wrote the *Kitab al-Siraj* (Commentary on the Mishnah), and over the course of his career he drafted hundreds of responsa to queries sent to him from near and far. He also authored *Sefer ha-Mizvoth* (The book of the commandments), which defined each of the 613 biblical commandments. But Maimonides' life's work in the field of Jewish law is represented in the *Mishneh Torah* (The second law), a monumental and comprehensive code of Jewish law, and his only major work written in (rabbinic) Hebrew as opposed to Arabic. In this work intended for the Jewish community worldwide, Maimonides endeavors to systematize, define, and codify the entire body of Jewish law in an accessible, unambiguous Hebrew style. The resultant code would enable many to look up a particular holy law for themselves without recourse to the Babylonian Talmud, subsequent rabbinic discussion and opinion on it, or the guidance of a contemporary scholar. Some authorities thus viewed the project as a dangerous innovation, not a brilliant educational venture and answer to the critical problem of providing wider access to Jewish knowledge.

For Maimonides, the impulse to systematize and define all questions of Jewish law necessarily extended to matters of Jewish belief. *Sefer ha-Mada* (The book of knowledge), the first book of the entire *Mishneh Torah*, thus delineates exactly what a Jew may properly believe about God and creation. For all its accessibility to the common folk, the code's articulation of Jewish belief is unrelentingly rational in its presentation, argumentation, and conclusions. It refuses to tolerate folk beliefs and superstitions as Maimonides understood them and is uncompromising on questions such as God's absolute incorporeality and unity. In many respects, Maimonides' rational approach to Judaism reflects his and the Jews' extended and intimate interaction with the Muslim intellectual milieu.

That cultural encounter is even more apparent in *Moreh Nebukhim* (The guide for the perplexed), Maimonides' major theological work. Unlike *The Book of Knowledge*, *The Guide* was written solely for the intellectual elite in a style that is deliberately elliptical and opaque. On the face of it, *The Guide* is concerned with the problem of theological language and with reading much of the Hebrew Bible allegorically, especially its anthropomorphic representations of God. Several generations of scholars have been debating whether *The Guide* is a philosophic or apologetic-theological work.

Despite his reputation as a supremely elitist religious intellectual, Maimonides' occasional writings, and documents by him found in the Cairo Genizah, reveal a scholar and leader deeply involved in Jewish communal affairs and concerned for the psychological-religious predicament of the common Jew in Egypt and beyond as far as France and Yemen.

—Ross Brann

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Moses ben Nahman; Recognition; Scholars as Holy People

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Moses ben Nahman

(1194–1270 C.E.)

Jewish scholar, mystic

Rabbi Moses ben Nahman of Gerona, or Nahmanides, known in Jewish history by the acronym Ramban (for “Rabbi Moses ben Nahman”), born in 1194, was the most prominent rabbinic scholar, kabbalist, biblical commentator, and Jewish communal authority of thirteenth-century Spain. His contributions to Jewish culture and society embraced every area of Jewish cultural production and are marked by a nearly unmatched originality. Apart from his many literary accomplishments, Nahmanides' learning, leadership, and savvy enabled the Jews of Catalonia to weather temporarily the acute crisis in Jewish-Christian relations that dominated the middle part of the century. Moses also endeavored to adopt a conciliating stance toward internecine intellectual conflict that rocked the Jewish community, namely the so-called Maimonidean Controversy (1232) over the religious status of the writings of the renowned twelfth-century rationalist Moses Maimonides.

Nahmanides' masterful biblical commentary engages various viewpoints and represents a unique synthesis of the work of prevailing grammatical, philosophical, mystical, and midrashic approaches to biblical exegesis. In particular, Nahmanides' commentary engages the work of his eleventh- and twelfth-century French and Spanish predecessors, the homiletically minded Rashi (1040–1105) and the rationally minded Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1164). His canonical commentary was also innovative in the way it reflected and elaborated a highly developed, systematic worldview, with God, the Torah, and the people of Israel at the center. Because of his prestige as the most accomplished talmudic scholar of the age, Nahmanides' kabbalistic, that is, mystical approach to Judaism, was also immensely influential. He did not completely eschew the rationalism of his Iberian predecessors. Rather, Moses used great intellectual sophistication to assail most of the rationalist extreme claims regarding the significance of critical elements of Judaism, such as observing the divine commandments, and the truthfulness of biblical and rabbinic lore. And his seminal work in rabbinical scholarship bridged the religious intellectual world of northern France with that of Provence and Spain.

Nahmanides also represented the Jewish community in the Barcelona Disputation of 1263 at which he defended rabbinic Judaism. Because a learned Dominican friar and former Jew mounted the assault on Judaism, especially on talmudic references to the messiah, and since the disputation was held before King James I, the challenge and stakes were unusually high. Nahmanides' forensic skill supposedly impressed the king and appeared to save the day for the Jews of Catalonia. But in due course, missionary efforts to convert Jews would gain strength in such a way as to identify the 1263 disputation as a turning point in their history.

—Ross Brann

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Moses ben Maimon; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Mubarak, Haji

(1833–c. 1873 C.E.)

Babi disciple

Haji Mubarak, the famed “Ethiopian servant” of the Bab (1819–1850; Sayyid ‘Ali-Muhammad Shirazi, founder of Babism), is celebrated in Baha’i literature for his saintliness and loyalty. Born in 1833, he was a slave sold in Iran at the

age of five to the Bab's uncle, Haji Mirza Abu'l-Qasim, and educated within the uncle's household. In all probability, he had been castrated when taken captive in Africa and was a eunuch.

At the age of nineteen, the Bab—returning to Shiraz after a six-year absence—purchased Mubarak from his uncle for fourteen tumans (about \$28). Mubarak served the Bab and his family for the rest of his life. He was deeply involved in the events surrounding the founding of the Babi religion and was present (in an adjoining room) on May 22, 1844, when the Bab first declared his mission, beginning (for Baha'is) a new era in religious history.

Only two early believers were chosen to accompany the Bab on his subsequent pilgrimage to Mecca (1844–1845), Quddus (Mirza Muhammad-'Ali Barfarushi, the first in rank of the Bab's disciples) and Mubarak. The Bab is recorded to have sacrificed, in accordance with the customs of Islamic pilgrimage, nineteen lambs in Mecca—nine in his own name, seven in the name of Quddus, and three for Mubarak, securing for the latter the full benefits of the *hajj* to Mecca. When the Bab was arrested and exiled to Isfahan, Mubarak remained in Shiraz to serve and protect the Bab's wife (Khadijih Bagum) and mother. After the Bab's execution in 1850, his mother and grandmother were forced to transfer their residence to Karbala in Iraq. Mubarak accompanied them there and died in their service in around 1873 at about the age of forty.

After 1850, to salvage their respectability, members of the Bab's family maintained that the Bab had not been executed but was still alive on an extended business trip to India. Haji Mubarak helped to uphold this public fiction by vowing to sweep the courtyard around the tomb of Imam Husayn b. 'Ali in Karbala every day until his master should return. He performed this pious duty faithfully every morning until his death.

—Anthony A. Lee

See also: Bab, The; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Disciples; Status

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Mugeni, Barngetuny

(d. c. 1885 C.E.)

Kipsigis prophet

Barngetuny Mugeni was a Kipsigis prophet who is still respected by the Kipsigis community. It is popularly believed that he was the messenger of Asis (God). He was of the age

set of Korongoro, which was initiated between 1815 and 1838, and lived where the present-day town of Sotik is located in western Kenya. He was of the Kipkendek clan, and his mother was the daughter of Arap Turugat, from Talai clan, the famous Nandi Orgoiyot.

Mugeni was married to five wives and had five sons and several daughters. He is said to have died approximately four years before the arrival of the first white man to Sotik. The first European to pass Sotik was Fredrick Jackson in 1889. It is therefore likely that Mugeni died in about 1885.

Tradition says that Asis revealed himself to Mugeni on several occasions. These revelations contained instruction on how the Kipsigis people were expected to live a holy life before Asis. Mugeni's visions also foretold future events that were to take place in the Kipsigis country. Among his prophecies was the coming of the white man, the arrival of trains, the development of towns, modern clothing, and the establishment of colonialism and the eventual independence of African nations. Prophecy came to him in visions as he went about his daily activities. These visions could appear while he was talking to friends, when he was at home with his family, or at traditional beer-drinking parties with elders.

One day when Mugeni was drinking beer at a friend's home with the elders, he suddenly stared at the pot of beer as if something were about to emerge from it. Then he said, "Isn't that Mr. Arap Matinyit? And isn't that his wife Tapsabei? What has come of them? Why does Mr. Matinyit look like his wife?" Then the elders asked him, "Mugeni, what are you saying and what does that mean?" He replied, "A time is coming when we are no longer alive, when there will be no difference between male and female."

The Kipsigis community is now seeing the breakdown of traditional gender roles with changes brought about by education and modernity, and many see this as the fulfillment of Mugeni's prophecy, citing the fact that women today have taken roles that were traditionally reserved for men alone, and vice versa.

—Adam K. arap Chepkwony

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Prophets

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Mugo wa Kibiro, Cege

(fl. c. 1890 C.E.)

Kikuyu prophet

Cege Mugo wa Kibiro was the most famous Kikuyu Kenyan prophet in the nineteenth century. The precise dates during

which he lived are not known. From an anecdote told about Chief Njiri wa Karanja, who lived between 1866 and 1974, however, it appears that Mugo wa Kibiro was an adult by 1888. In that year, Njiri was given special food by the prophet as a sign that he would be a chief in his community.

Mugo wa Kibiro foretold that visitors would come from out of the big water to the east. The big water to the east was the Indian Ocean. These visitors, Mugo predicted, would have strange complexions. Besides the fact that their skins resembled those of small white frogs (white, pale-looking people), they would wear clothes that looked like the wings of butterflies. The strangers, Mugo further said, would construct an iron snake (a train) that would spew fire as it crawled its way from the big water to the east (Indian Ocean) to the big water to the west (Lake Victoria). Moreover, Mugo spoke of the destructive weapons that the strangers would carry. Their weapons would be like sticks (guns); but unlike ordinary sticks, they would spit fire. Mugo warned Kikuyu warriors against attacking these strangers with spears and arrows, for the spears would not match the sticks that spat fire. Through this metaphorical language, Cege Mugo wa Kibiro foresaw the coming of European colonialism to Kenya.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in his early novels, especially *The River Between* (1975), uses the prophecy of Cege Mugo wa Kibiro to construct a narrative of loss and subsequent salvation from the yoke of colonialism not only of the Kikuyu but the entire Kenyan population. Mugo advised his people that the most effective way of dealing with the European power would be to learn the ways through which that power was created and sustained. Ngugi expands wa Kibiro's prophecy by pointing out that the basis of the white man's power is his education. Consequently, like the prophet of yore, Ngugi asserts that the best way of fighting against European colonialism is by acquiring Western education.

As a prophetic figure, Cege Mugo wa Kibiro led the Kikuyu to redefine their identity according to the exigencies of their time. Ngugi's early narratives give Mugo the credit for providing the germ of modern nationalism in Kikuyuland and beyond. During Cege Mugo wa Kibiro's lifetime, other seers from other Kenyan communities were voicing similar messages. Mutonyi wa Nabukelembe (Bukusu) and Sakawa (Gusii) also foretold the coming of the white man and its consequences.

—Richard M. Wafula

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Prophets

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Muhammad

(570–632 C.E.)

Muslim founder, prophet

Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah Abu'l-Qasim al-Mustafa, the prophet of Islam, is revered as the messenger of God (*Rasul Allah*), prophet of God (*Nabi Allah*), and beloved of God (*Habib Allah*). Muslims believe that as the "Seal of the Prophets" (*Khatm al-anbiya*), Muhammad culminates the prophetic legacy of Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus. As a prophet (*nabi*), Muhammad stands as the last of 124,000 (by Muhammad's own count) called to relay God's guidance to a community. As messenger (*Rasul*), he is the 313th prophet also designated to perform at least one of these roles: (1) lead a community, (2) bring a revealed book, or (3) introduce a new religion.

The Qur'an describes Muhammad as the "unlettered prophet" (*an-nabi al-ummi*, 7:157), a "mercy to the worlds" (21:107), a shining lamp (33:46), "caring, . . . kind, and merciful" (9:128). Muhammad is, on the one hand, human, the "best of men," a "jewel among men," and the "perfect human being" (*insan al-kamil*). On the other, his essence has been described as the "Light of Muhammad" (*Nur Muhammad*), the primordial cosmic light, the *logos* within all the prophets.

Muhammad's significance centers around two poles: (1) He received the Qur'an as God's speech; and (2) his life is the exemplary precedent (*sunna*) for piety, virtue, and everyday living. Muslims send blessings (*salawat*) and greetings of peace upon the prophet following God and the angels (Qur'an 33:56). Mention of his name is followed with the formula, "God bless him and give him peace" (*Salla Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). The love of the prophet is a cornerstone of Islam, as the prophet said: "Not one of you has faith until I am dearer to him than his son and his father and all men together." Although portraits of the prophet are disallowed, calligraphic ornaments (*hilya*) describing his physical and spiritual beauty contribute to his veneration, as do relics retained throughout the world, such as his cloak, beard hairs, and sword.

The year of Muhammad's birth, 570, the "Year of the Elephant," marked the miraculous reversal of an elephant-driven Abyssinian attack in which the Ka'ba, the sanctuary attributed to Abraham, was spared. Hagiographies describe the light of Muhammad (*nur Muhammad*) radiating from the womb of his mother, Amina, to Syria, Iraq, and Egypt—places where later Islam would first spread. Orphaned of his father at birth, Muhammad was raised by his grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib, who had rediscovered the Ka'ba precinct's Zamzam well, originally discovered by Hagar and Isma'il. A slightly raised oval birthmark between Muhammad's shoulder blades was later identified as his "Seal of Prophethood." The prophet's nursemaid reported that one day, when Muhammad was two years old, two men clothed in white appeared, opened his chest, removed his heart, opened it, and



Because of Islam's ban on representational art, no likenesses of the prophet Muhammad exist. His monument is the Qur'an itself, the text of which forms the main ornament of mosques. This example is from the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, where Muhammad is believed to have set off on his journey to heaven. (Corel Corp)

removed from it a small black clot, then washed his heart and chest with snow and closed it seamlessly.

At age six, Muhammad was adopted by his uncle Abu Talib and taken on a caravan journey to Syria, where the Christian monk Bahira recognized him as the prophet to the Arabs predicted in one of his manuscripts. Muhammad, who had developed a reputation as the "Trustworthy" (*al-Amin*), began to conduct trade for a wealthy widowed businesswoman named Khadija, whom he married in 595. They had two sons (who died in infancy) and four daughters.

For fifteen years, Muhammad would often retreat to the cave of Hira to pray. He also regularly gave food to the poor. In 610, on the "Night of Power" (*Laylat al-Qadr*), the Angel Gabriel appeared and commanded him, "Recite!" Muhammad responded, "I am not a reciter." Gabriel then hugged him tightly. After repeating this sequence three times, the angel again said, "Recite," and Muhammad began to recite the first portion of the Qur'an:

Recite in the name of your Lord who created!
He created man from a clot of blood.
Recite and your Lord is most Generous.

He has taught man by the pen,
Taught man what he did not know. (96:1–5)

With the words written on his heart, Muhammad left the cave and saw the angel everywhere he turned. Muhammad described the ensuing twenty-three years of events, during which he received additional revelation, in three ways: (1) "like the ringing of a bell"; (2) "The Angel comes in the form of a man and I grasp whatever he says"; and (3) "inspirations like dreams become true and bright daylight."

Muhammad's first followers, including Khadija, his cousin 'Ali b. Abi Talib, Zayd (his adopted son), and Abu Bakr (a friend and prosperous merchant), met privately at a wealthy follower's house. Gabriel soon showed Muhammad ritual ablution and the recitation, postures, and movements of *salat*, ritual prayer. After the prophet first preached Islam publicly in 612, his Qurayshi brethren attacked him and Islam virulently, even for a time banning commerce with Muhammad and his earliest followers. In 617, the prophet sent the less well-connected followers to Abyssinia, where they found refuge with the Monophysite king.

In 620, the “Year of Sadness,” both Khadija and Abu Talib, who had protected Muhammad from Qurayshi persecution, died. One night during that same year, when Muhammad was encamped next to the Ka’ba, Gabriel awoke him and brought him on a night journey (*isra’*) to Jerusalem, where Muhammad prayed with Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, among other prophets. Vessels of milk and wine were brought and he rightly chose milk. Then Gabriel accompanied the prophet on his ascension (*mi’raj*) through the seven heavens. At each heaven, Muhammad greeted the prophets: Adam, Jesus and John, Joseph, Idris, Aaron, Moses, and Abraham. Then he passed through paradise and stood before the throne of God, where he found himself “two bows’ lengths or nearer” (53:8–9), and “his eye did not swerve, nor did his gaze overreach” (53:17), a comparison to Moses’ inability to see God.

In 620, six men from Yathrib (later Medina) approached the prophet to invite him to come to Yathrib to serve as the arbiter (*hakim*) of tribal disputes, following a pattern of seeking holy men well known in Christian Syria. In 621, five men took an oath of fealty (*ba’ya*) to Muhammad, the “Pledge of ‘Aqaba”; in 622, seventy-three men and two women took a similar oath. Muhammad accepted their invitation to go to Yathrib.

On July 16, 622, Muhammad and the Muslims of Mecca began the emigration (*hijra*) to Yathrib. Arriving in Medina on September 27, 622, the prophet was greeted with the song (*madh*) that has become the signature song of praise of the prophet in the Islamic world: *Tala’a al-badru alayna* (The full moon has risen upon us). To select a mosque site, the prophet released his camel, Qaswa, to roam until she settled. Muhammad then created a covenant of mutual obligation between the Muslims and Jews of Medina, called the “Constitution of Medina.” Jews were bound to the social contract but not required to accept Muhammad’s prophethood. The prophet also instituted the “Pact of Brotherhood,” pairing each Muslim of Medina, the “helpers” (*ansar*), with a Meccan emigrant (*muhajirun*). The prophet supported the poor, who lived in the mosque and were known as the “People of the Bench.”

Muhammad often took counsel from his companions. Once one of them dreamed that a man in green showed him a call to prayer. The prophet deemed this a true vision and asked the companion to teach this call to Bilal, an Ethiopian, who became the first *muezzin*, the person who calls believers to prayer.

The prophet entered into nine marriages after Khadija’s death, in some cases for the welfare of a widow or to build alliances. At Abu Bakr’s request, he was married at age fifty-three to Abu Bakr’s six-year-old daughter, ‘Aishah, who became his favorite wife after Khadija. In no other wife’s presence did he receive revelation. Each wife kept her own

apartment in the mosque, and the prophet made it his habit to stay with each wife for a day and a night. Muslims point to the prophet’s capacity to sustain a spiritual life as a married man as one of his marks of excellence.

Muslims also honor the prophet’s prudence and prowess in war. The prophet taught that war is the “lesser jihad,” whereas subduing the animal soul is the “greater jihad.” In Medina, he conducted caravan raids to break the sieges and embargoes levied against the city by the Quraysh, but after returning to Mecca he no longer conducted raids. In the battle of Badr in 624, 1,000 Quraysh troops were defeated by 300 Muslims. The prophet ordered that the captives be well treated. In a second battle, at Uhud in 625, 1,000 Muslims were defeated by a Quraysh army of 3,000. The prophet was wounded on the cheek and lost two teeth. In the battle of Khandaq in 627, the prophet accepted the recommendation of Salman al-Farsi, a Zoroastrian-born Persian, to build an impassable trench around the city. While digging, Muhammad struck a stone that released lightning toward Yemen, Syria, and Persia, which the prophet explained as the directions in which Islam would spread.

For Muslims, Muhammad was a model of just leadership. He reportedly endured betrayal by Medina’s Jews, who had spied for the Quraysh. To arbitrate the matter, he chose a Jew, who handed down a decision that the men be slain and the women and children taken captive. When his follower Ibn Ubayy chastised the prophet that it would have been better had he been enthroned as king instead of ruling as a prophet, Muhammad chose to forbear and nurture companionship with him. And in 629, in Khaybar, a widow who had lost her husband, father, and uncle served poisoned lamb to the prophet and his companions. The prophet spat out the first bite, but the effects of the poison contributed directly to his death in 632. Nonetheless, he pardoned the woman.

In Ramadan 627, Muhammad dreamed that he entered the Ka’ba with its key in his hand. The dream turned out to be prophetic. In March 628, he led 1,000 pilgrims to Mecca until they were stopped by the Quraysh at Hudaibiyya. Muhammad first asked his companions to take an oath of fealty (48:1–18) to him, and then he negotiated with the Quraysh. The treaty was a diplomatic victory: The Quraysh accepted him as a political partner. The treaty stipulated ten years of peace. A Bedouin tribe allied to the Quraysh soon broke the treaty, however, and in January 630 Muhammad, with 10,000 pilgrims, entered Mecca triumphantly. Muhammad destroyed all the idols in the Ka’ba but preserved elsewhere the icons of Mary, Jesus, and Abraham.

In 630, the prophet dispatched emissaries to the nearby rulers, Heraclius of Byzantium, the Muqawqis of Alexandria, Khusrau Parwiz of Persia, and Badhan of Yemen, urging them to embrace Islam and submit to his authority. Only Badhan accepted. Muhammad established treaties with Jews and

Christians, thus demonstrating their Qur'anically endorsed status as "People of the Book" and "Protected Peoples" (*dhimmi*).

In March 632, the prophet led a pilgrimage caravan of 30,000 Muslims and gave his Farewell Sermon at 'Arafat, enjoining brotherhood and compassion among Muslims. Eyewitness reports of Muhammad's character and actions emphasize his humility and kindness. Followers described his friendly, sincere attitude. He laughed infrequently but smiled often and spoke with humor. He loved children and loved to play with children, and he loved and protected animals (especially cats). 'A'ishah compared his character to the Qur'anic ideal. Muhammad lived in relative poverty, of which he is famous for saying, "My poverty is my pride."

Muhammad's biographical image includes diverse roles: husband, businessman, prophet, teacher, statesman, warrior-general, and diplomat. His prophetic mantle covers both the intimate details of a very human man and his extraordinary worldly and spiritual achievements.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Attributes of Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Fatima bint Muhammad; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Hagiography; Husayn b. 'Ali; Intermediaries; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Prophets; Rulers as Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Muhammad, Elijah

(1897–1975 C.E.)

Muslim leader

Elijah Muhammad was a disciple of W. D. Fard and leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the United States from 1934 to 1975. Under his leadership, the NOI grew from a few thousand members to several hundred thousand. He helped improve the lives of blacks across the nation, partly through the establishment of dozens of businesses that helped to demonstrate to blacks that they could be self-sufficient and operate independently of white largesse.

Elijah Muhammad was born Elijah Poole in October 1897 in Sandersville, Georgia. Because his father was a preacher, by the time he was fifteen Elijah knew the Bible well. After enduring hard times in the South, Elijah, his wife Clara, and

their two children migrated north to Detroit, Michigan, where he encountered W. D. Fard. Poole began attending Fard's NOI meetings and converted to Islam. His enthusiasm for Islam made him Fard's favorite, and Poole came to believe that Fard was God. Fard gave Poole "Muhammad" for a last name, and when Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934 Elijah became the new leader of the Nation of Islam.

Elijah Muhammad used his leadership skills and familiarity with scripture to prove that Fard had fulfilled biblical prophecy by returning as the *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse). He taught that whites had been created by a mad scientist named Yacub who accomplished this feat by genetically engineering recessive genes from blacks. Muhammad subsequently taught his parishioners that separation from whites represented the only viable solution to the centuries-old race problem. He insisted that blacks establish their own nation inside the United States or abroad. Muhammad also alleged that Christianity had been used to subjugate and oppress blacks while at the same time it enriched whites. Because some blacks saw truth in these allegations, Muhammad's message found thousands eager for a religion that ensured their dignity and self-worth.

Before long, Muhammad opened mosques in Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Washington, D.C., Cleveland, and several other cities where blacks made up large percentages of the population. He increased the organization's business enterprises as well as its membership, overseeing a sprawling network of schools, bakeries, grocery stores, farms, trucking companies, clothing stores, a newspaper, real estate acquisitions, and other moneymaking ventures.

Muhammad recruited excellent ministers to manage his empire. Not least of these was Malcolm X, an ex-felon turned Muslim, who eventually became one of America's most outspoken proponents of justice and equality for all. Elijah Muhammad split with Malcolm over financial discrepancies in the NOI's accounting procedures and Muhammad's desire to keep secret liaisons with young Muslim women. This split represented the beginning of the end for the Muslim leader. Developing diabetes and fighting chronic asthma attacks, Muhammad stepped down from leadership in the early 1970s and moved to Arizona for health reasons. On February 25, 1975, at the age of seventy-seven, he died of heart failure, leaving the NOI to be taken over by his son Wallace D. Muhammad, and later Louis Farrakhan.

—Curtis Austin

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Fard, W. D.; Farrakhan, Louis; Malcolm X; Muhammad (Mohammed), Warith Deen; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets

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Muhammad (Mohammed), Warith Deen

(1933 C.E.–)

Nation of Islam leader

Imam Warith Deen Mohammad was born Wallace Muhammad on October 30, 1933, in Detroit, Michigan, the sixth of Elijah (Poole) Muhammad's seven children with Clara (Evans) Muhammad. Warith Deen became leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI), built and led by his father from 1934 until February 25, 1975, when Elijah died. Today, he is leader of the largest identifiable constituency of Muslim Americans, especially African Americans. He is recognized worldwide as a scholar, a spiritual leader, and an international humanitarian.

Warith Deen Muhammad was the catalyst for the identification of the Nation of Islam with the worldwide Muslim community. He began by encouraging his members to learn to pray in Arabic—not to become Arabs, but to unite in the universal Muslim language of worship. He encouraged them to fast during the month of Ramadan with other Muslims, and in 1977 he led the largest delegation of Muslim Americans, most former NOI members, on *hajj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Warith Deen encouraged his members in this spiritual journey to Muslim identity while at the same time maintaining their African American heritage. He was eventually given the title of *mujeddid* (the reformer) for these initiatives.

Since assuming the leadership of his community, Imam Muhammad has sought to contextualize the meanings of the Qur'an and *sunnah* of the prophet Muhammad for his American followers. He provides a spiritual leadership that seeks to balance their economic, political, and social aspirations within the framework of their Islamic identity. Although members independently operate the various *masajids* (mosques) under his ministry, there is a *shura* (council) of imams that coordinates the group's activities. The *shura* is modeled after the practice of the prophet Muhammad in Medina during the seventh century.

As part of the transformation of the Nation of Islam, Imam Muhammad in 1976 encouraged Muslim Americans to register to vote. His emphasis was on the legacy of the civil rights movement. Muhammad opened up NOI membership to all races of Muslims. He was also the first Muslim invited to deliver the invocation opening the U.S. Senate in Washington, D.C., on February 6, 1992.

Warith Deen Muhammad's publications include *As the Light Shineth from the East* (1980), *Prayer and Al-Islam*

(1982), *Religion on the Line* (1983), *Al-Islam: Unity and Leadership* (1991), and *Islam's Climate for Business Success* (1995).

—Misbahudeen Ahmed-Rufai

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Muhammad, Elijah; Patriotism and Holy People

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Muhammad Ahmad

(1844–1885 C.E.)

Muslim mahdi claimant

Muhammad Ahmad ibn el-Sayed, the *mahdi* (“rightly guided”) of Sudan, was born in the region of Kordofan in 1844. He became interested in religion at quite an early age. It was while attending an Islamic school that his asceticism and devotion to Islamic learning became apparent to his teachers and the local people. He believed strongly in the virtues of prayer and simplicity that are characteristic features of Muslim holy men. He was only too aware of the oppressive Turko-Egyptian rule, with its heavy taxation and its reliance on non-Muslim governors for the administration of Sudan. He yearned for a free Sudan that would be governed according to the precepts of the Qur'an. His message of living one's life according to God's laws in preparation for the eternal life of spiritual fulfillment had a strong appeal for the ordinary Sudanese, who struggled to make a living with difficulty.

In 1881, el-Sayed, a sufi scholar of the Sammaniyya order, declared himself to be the mahdi, the expected one, the messianic figure in Islam associated with ending chaos and anarchy that will accompany the end of time. The mahdi myth has been alive since early Muslim history and has been invoked by those who seek to challenge or overthrow existing forms of government that they consider to be oppressive, unjust, and not truly guided by Islamic teachings. The timing of el-Sayed's messianic call seemed to have been fitting for his period, as there was a growing sense of messianic expectations in the Sudan. The mahdi led his followers on a “withdrawal” (*hijra*) for regrouping. He preached that the rulers were impious and oppressive men who had been overtaken by their love of the things of this world and proclaimed a *jihad* (religious struggle) against the Turks. He quickly won a large following among the people.

The mahdi first called on his followers to refuse paying taxes and to fight the “Turks.” Attempts to arrest the mahdi and quell the uprising did not succeed. By 1883, the mahdi's *Ansar* (followers) had been transformed into a real army after inflicting a number of defeats on the enemy. The mahdist

forces went from victory to victory. The crowning moment of the mahdi victory came in 1885 when his forces seized Khartoum after a long siege, killing the British general Charles Gordon. For the next thirteen years, Sudan was ruled as an Islamic state, first by the mahdi himself (until he died in 1885 of disease) and later by his successor. By 1898, the British had defeated the mahdist forces in the battle of Khartoum, and that meant the end of the mahdist state and the beginning of British colonial rule.

The mahdi unified his people around his own brand of Islam with a social vision rooted in Islamic traditions. He was a remarkable, charismatic force in the shaping of the history of the modern Sudan even when his vast Islamic state was short-lived. The movement that he launched has left an indelible mark on the history of that country. His followers, the Ansar, outlived the mahdist state and went on to constitute the largest single organized group within Sudan. In fact, the last democratically elected president of Sudan, Sadiq al-Mahdi, is a direct descendant of the mahdi.

—*Abdin Chande*

See also: Mahdi, al-; Messiahs; Patriotism and Holy People; Sufism; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Muhammad Ali

See **Ali, Muhammad**

Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ja'far

(c. 738–c. 813 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ja'far, born around 738, is considered the seventh imam by the Nizari Isma'ili Shi'a Muslims. According to Isma'ili tradition, he succeeded his father as imam when he was about twenty-two years old. As was the case with his father, hostile political circumstances forced him to remain hidden from the ruling authorities and therefore the general public. Only a few trusted followers knew of his exact whereabouts. As a result of his concealment he was called by the epithet al-Makhtum, the hidden one. After he had to leave Medina he is thought to have lived initially in southern Iraq and then to have traveled to Persia, to the southwestern region of Khuzistan. He is also stated as having

gone to Farghana in central Asia, to Isfahan in Iran, and to several other cities. 'Abdallah b. Maymun al-Qaddah served as his chief *da'i* (agent) and was used as a front for him when necessary. As a result, there arose a confusion between him and al-Qaddah and so he was also designated as al-Maymun, the fortunate one. From his base in Persia, Muhammad b. Isma'il managed to continue to spread his message, and his *da'is* were sent to various parts of the Islamic world.

In addition to the Isma'ilis other groups were affiliated with him. Some of the non-Isma'ili Shi'a groups regarded him as the seventh imam and considered him to have supreme relevance as the completion of a cycle of spiritual guides. Hence they provide him with cosmic significance. He passed away in Persia in about 813 and was succeeded as imam by his son 'Abdallah, generally referred to as Wafi Ahmad.

—*Habibeh Rahim*

See also: Imams; Politics and Holy People; Wafi Ahmad

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Mu'izz, Abu Tamim Ma'add al-

(d. 975 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam

Abu Tamim Ma'add al-Mu'izz, born in the new Fatimid capital of Mahdiya, became the fourteenth Nizari Isma'ili imam and the fourth Fatimid ruler after his father al-Mansur passed away in 953. He organized his empire with great vision and had a glorious reign, conquering Egypt and founding the city of Cairo (named after the planet Mars, al-Kahira). Travelers such as the poet and philosopher Nasir-i Khusraw (c. 1004–c. 1072) have left glowing accounts of this well-planned city. A few years after its founding, a mosque called the Jamia al-Azhar was constructed, to which was subsequently added a library and a university. Now called Al-Azhar University, it is the oldest university in the world and is still an important center of learning. Al-Mu'izz himself was very learned. He knew several languages besides Arabic, including Nubian, Latin, Spanish, and Slavonic. His libraries were renowned for their rich collection of books. The Fatimid support of all aspects of knowledge led to a new era both in the humanities and the sciences.

Some important texts from al-Mu'izz's era help validate and authenticate the lineage of his family. These include a letter he wrote to Halam (or Jalam) b. Shayban, the chief Isma'ili *da'i* (Shi'ite missionary agent) in Sindh, as well as the writings of the jurist Qadi Nu'man, who had served the Fatimids since the time of al-Mahdi (c. 868–874) and held

great prominence. He conducted “sessions of wisdom” on Fridays after the noon prayer. His juristic and legal writings represent the ideas and philosophy of the Fatimid rulers, especially al-Muʿizz, with whom he worked closely. When he died, al-Muʿizz led the funeral prayers. Though many of his compositions are lost, the few that are extant provide a fascinating glimpse of a dynasty that strove to create a utopian dominion where art, architecture, learning, and culture flourished and where the rights of citizens were regarded. The Court of the Mazalim (victims) was instituted to address the grievances of the public. Al-Muʿizz also ensured that interreligious harmony prevailed. Various communities flourished in his domains, including other Muslim groups as well as Jews and Christians, who were allowed to maintain their own systems of justice and worship.

With all his administrative responsibilities, al-Muʿizz also ensured that the *daʿwa* (spread of Ismaʿili teachings) was not neglected and appointed Jaʿfar bin Mansur as the chief *daʿi* (agent). Since the time of al-Mahdi the *daʿwa* had been spread in various parts of the Indian subcontinent, such as Gujarat and Sindh, where Multan became an important Ismaʿili center. This was in addition to the Ismaʿili centers in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, North Africa, and Iran.

Al-Muʿizz died in 975 and was the first Fatimid ruler to be buried in Egypt. Studious and wise, he is viewed as a brilliant and compassionate ruler, esteemed by his populace.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Mahdi, al-; Rulers as Holy People

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Mukhtar ibn Ahmad, al-

(1729–1811 C.E.)

Muslim leader

Member of a branch of the southern Saharan nomadic tribe called the Kunta, al-Mukhtar ibn Ahmad was born in 1729 in the region of Erg Oralla, a large dune just north of Mabrouk. His father died when he was ten, and he was educated by two of his brothers and his maternal grandfather, Badi b. al-Habib. He also spent time living with and studying among the Kel Inalbash branch of the Kel al-Suq and the Kel Hurma. His principal teacher, however, was Sidi Ali b. al-Najib of Arawan,

a leading shaykh of the Qadiriyya branch of sufism in the region. He spent the years 1754–1757 studying in Morocco and on his return married a distant cousin, a pious and learned woman simply known as al-Shaykha (d. January 14, 1810).

On the death of Sidi Ali, al-Mukhtar succeeded him as a local shaykh of the Qadiriyya and established a religious complex in Azawad, some 250 miles northeast of Timbuktu. From there he exercised his intercessory powers over various intertribal disputes, especially those of his own tribe with the Barabish. Relations with the Kel Antasar, however, deteriorated, and hostility remained between them and the Kunta until the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, al-Mukhtar retained good relations with clerical clans such as the Kel Inukundar. He was also a spiritual adviser to Kawa Ag Amma, the *amenokal* (tribal chief) of the Ullimiden.

In his teaching al-Mukhtar emphasized the role of the shaykh as the exponent of the spiritual way who would lead his disciple from ignorance to knowledge, from covetousness to self-denial, from coarse desire to asceticism, from doubt to certitude, and from a mere glance into divine truth to an acquaintance with it. He said, “Your *shaykh* is he who cleanses your heart so much that it shines with divine knowledge. He it is who leads you, without ever abandoning you, until together you arrive in the Divine Presence, when he says to you: ‘Here you are near your Creator.’”

Al-Mukhtar maintained a wide range of contacts with other Islamic leaders of the region and a network of discipleship that extended from southern Mauritania to Bornu and southward to the forest zones of Ivory Coast and Guinea. Among the celebrated scholars who traced their Qadiriyya initiation through him are Shaykh Uthman b. Muhammad Fodio of Sokoto (1754–1817) and the mid-nineteenth-century Shaykh Ahmad Lobbo of Masina. He was the author of some sixty prose works and about fifty poems. In 1811, he died at the age of eighty-two. Then his son Muhammad, and later his grandson Ahmad al-Bakkay, became his spiritual successors, continuing the promotion of the Qadiriyya tariqa and his teachings of it.

—John Hunwick

See also: Guidance; Islam and Holy People; Uthman dan Fodio

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Mukundadeva

(fl. 1600–1650 C.E.)

Hindu guru

Mukundadeva, a seventeenth-century guru and “perfected master” (*siddha*), was a major figure in the development of

the Hindu tantric traditions known as the Vaishnava Sahajiyas. He forged a synthesis of earlier tantric yoga and the Bengali Vaishnava school of *bhakti* devotionism (also known as the Chaitanya movement), creating a distinctive form of tantric Hinduism.

Historians debate the biography of Mukundadeva. One account holds that he was a wealthy prince who renounced the world to pursue the path of the “innate” (*sahaja*), leading to his leadership of the Vaishnava Sahajiyas. While on this journey he supposedly met the renowned author Krishnadasa Kaviraja, whose *Caitanya Caritamrta* (Pastimes of Chaitanya, c. 1575) outlines the story of the great Bengali god-man Krishna Chaitanya (c. 1486–1533). Krishnadasa became Mukundadeva’s guru, passing on to him the “secret” teachings of Chaitanya, including the beliefs that Chaitanya was the dual incarnation (*avatara*) of the Hindu god Krishna and his consort Radha and that Chaitanya himself was secretly a sahajiya. These claims have been rejected as heretical by orthodox Bengali Vaishnavas for centuries, but there is little doubt that Mukundadeva and his disciples composed numerous texts presenting the Vaishnava Sahajiya synthesis.

Some of the surviving texts attributable to either Mukundadeva or his disciples include *Bhrngaratnavali* (The garland of bees) and *Amrtaratnavali* (The necklace of immortality), both of which may have been composed originally in Sanskrit and then translated into Bengali by disciples. The former work is an esoteric manual on the topics of ritual practices (*sadhana*) and bodily yoga (*dehatattva*) illustrating the integration of tantra and bhakti that is characteristic of Vaishnava Sahajiyas. Mukundadeva transformed Krishna and Radha from a god and his consort into the inner cosmic principles of each man and woman, arguing that Sahajiyas can discover this inner divinity through a range of practices, including ritual sexual intercourse (*rati-sadhana*) and intense forms of yoga. This idea reflects a basic worldview of virtually all Asian tantrism that emphasizes a gendered cosmos that can be realized and unified through sexualized ritual.

The yogic system of Mukundadeva consists of an inner “divine body” (*deva-deha*) composed of four ascending “lotus ponds” (*sarovara*) and a “crooked river” (*bankanadi*), rather than the better-known system of seven “centers” (*cakras*) and “coiled energy” (*kundalini*) of other tantric schools. The goal is a sort of “inverse intercourse”: to draw the male and female sexual fluids upward along the “river” and “ponds” to the elusive realm of cosmic consciousness and bliss within the head. This is a secret place of primordial immortality. Also distinctive are the emphases upon the transformative power of “passion” (*raga*) and the need to change lust (*kama*) into pure love (*prema*)—all adapted from orthodox systems of aesthetics and devotion. Although the medieval teaching lineages of Mukundadeva may have disappeared by the twentieth century, related beliefs and

practices continue today among other Bengali religions such as the Bauls and Karta Bhajas.

—Glen Alexander Hayes

See also: Bauls; Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Mulenga Lubusha

See *Lenshina, Alice*

Mummy Bundles

Incan ancestor worship

Mummification in South America was practiced before and during Inca times. Along the south coast of Peru, the Paracas people developed a subterranean architecture, particularly burial chambers. There, the bodies of the dead, bundled with magnificent weavings and offerings, were buried. These burials ranged from the modest to the very sumptuous, and so did the mummy bundles. More than 429 human mummy bundles have been found in Paracas, as well as bundles containing parrots, foxes, dogs, cats, frogs, and deer. Paracas mummies, which date from around 400 B.C.E., are the most famous, but they are not the only ones in the Andean and coastal regions of South America.

The bodies were put into “mummy bundles” before they were interred in a large underground necropolis, or burial chamber. They were placed in a seated fetal position and bound tightly with cord. Then they were covered with cotton cloth and wrapped with brightly decorated fabric. Finally, the body was placed in a coiled basket and taken to the necropolis. A lower-status person was wrapped in a rough cotton mantle and surrounded by several simple pieces of ceramics. When the person was important in the community, more layers of fabric were used to wrap the body, and as a result the mummy bundle would reach up to seven feet high. Sacred fabrics were also used for important people, who were buried and wrapped in elaborately woven and embroidered mummy bundles that were meant to accompany the wearer to the next world.

Offerings of gold, feathers, animal skins, and imported shells accompanied the body. Food offerings demonstrate a belief that the body needed sustenance in the afterlife and may have described the deceased as a fertile producer. Imported and hard-won prestige items, such as camelid fiber, shells, a pouch with body paint, and human skulls, demonstrate the power and hierarchy of the deceased. Gravesites were located in the coastal dunes, which are the world's driest coastal desert. This was the main reason that Andean textiles were so well preserved, with some dating back to 3000 B.C.E. Many fabrics were also created for ritual sacrifice and were burned as offerings to the sun, considered the highest of the celestial powers.

The Incas believed in an afterlife, and following the death of an emperor his mummified body was treated as though he were still alive. Servants tended to him in his palace, and he was regularly consulted for advice. On special occasions, the mummies were carried in procession on gilded litters. The mummies of the deceased incas (emperors) were kept in Inca temples and exposed and worshipped on special occasions and religious ceremonies. Mummy bundles containing bodies of probable *amautas* and *quipucamayos* (wise men) have been found with *quipos*, knotted strings that record information, and they are being decoded at this moment.

With the arrival of the Spaniards, the Inca mummy bundles were completely destroyed in the Spanish search for gold. However, most of the pre-Inca mummy bundles, such as those from Paracas, remained untouched until the time of World War I and later excavation in the 1920s. In the past decade, pre-Inca mummy bundles containing children's bodies have been found in the central highlands of Peru. The bodies and artifacts in these bundles have been exceptionally preserved owing to the cold weather in the highlands.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Incas; Rulers as Holy People

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Mungo

See **Kentigern**

Murabit

See **Marabout**

Muso Soseki

(1275–1351 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist scholar

Muso Soseki, Zen Buddhist monk, scholar, teacher, poet, and adviser to shoguns and emperors, is revered today as the founder and most representative figure of that quintessential Japanese spiritual creation—the Zen garden.

Born in Ise province in 1275, Muso (whose name means “Dream Window”) began studying Buddhism at the age of six. After some years in Kamakura, the shogun’s capital, Muso returned to Kyoto in 1325 to become abbot of Nanzenji, the powerful head temple of the Rinzaï Zen sect. In 1333, the general Ashikaga Takauji (1305–1358) forced the emperor Go-Daigo out of Kyoto, establishing a rival “northern court” with himself as de facto leader. Muso became Takauji’s chief adviser on matters spiritual and secular, and through their dual influence Rinzaï Zen emerged as the dominant Buddhist sect of the age. Muso himself was responsible for the establishment of thirteen temples and monasteries and is said to have trained more than 13,000 monks and 52 Zen teachers. In order to pay for these ambitious projects, Muso helped to reestablish the lapsed trade link between Japan and China.

For all of his political and institutional accomplishments, Muso is revered today mainly for his contributions to two more subtle and rarefied fields of human activity: poetry and garden design. His poetry, only a small portion of which has been translated into English, is remarkable for its sharp contrasts and pithy elegance (“One grain of dust in the eye will render the three worlds too small to see”). Muso designed gardens at a number of prominent temples in the Kyoto area, including Saihoji (now known as Kokedera) and Tenryuji. His achievement at Saihoji was such a success that the garden became the model for later Zen temples such as Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji. Muso’s gardens were intended not merely to please the eye but as a vehicle toward, as well as a reflection of, Zen enlightenment (*satori*). His goal, as with the later Zen-influenced arts of haiku, Noh drama, and Zen painting, was to evoke a sense of spontaneous naturalness beyond all artifice and to show that there is no distinction between the sacred and the profane worlds.

—James Mark Shields

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People

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Mustansir, Abu Tamim Ma'add al-

(c. 1029–1094 C.E.)

Isma'ili Muslim imam, caliph

Abu Tamim Ma'add al-Mustansir was the eighteenth imam for the Nizari Isma'ili Muslims (nineteenth for the Musta'li Isma'ilis) and the eighth Fatimid ruler. Born around 1029, he became both imam and caliph when he was only about seven years old in 1036. His father, al-Zahir, had freed and married a slave from the Sudan who had belonged to a Jewish trader, Abu Sa'd al-Tustari. After al-Mustansir became ruler, his mother, who had been greatly influenced by her former master, became an important presence at court. This background became the source of much intrigue during al-Mustansir's rule.

The vizier, al-Jarjara'i, attempted to curb the influence of al-Tustari. After the vizier's death in 1044, al-Mustansir's mother appointed Sadaqa b. Yusuf (a Muslim convert from Judaism) as vizier. Sadaqa, however, had al-Tustari, the former master of his patron, assassinated. The queen mother, in turn, soon got the vizier assassinated. Then there were almost two dozen viziers in quick succession. Finally, Badr al-Jamali, the governor of Akka in Syria, was invited to Cairo and made vizier. He emerged as a strong personality and with his son al-Afdal gained formidable power.

Al-Mustansir's reign faced significant challenges. After Badr al-Jamali became vizier, a semblance of order prevailed. However, despite the difficulties, the empire still resonated with splendor, and Cairo, the capital city, was still magnificent. Nasir-i Khusraw, a poet and philosopher from central Asia, visited Cairo during al-Mustansir's reign and provides a glowing account of the palaces, art, culture, and learning in his travelogue, the *Safar-namah* (Book of travels). The most famous *da'i* (agent) of al-Mustansir's time was al-Mu'ayyad fi al-din al-Shirazi, described as a "prolific writer, a poet, as well as a political organizer and a military strategist," who reached Cairo in 1047 and met al-Mustansir shortly afterward. Al-Mustansir had very cordial relationships with Constantine Monomachus, the Byzantine emperor, who even supplied wheat during the famine of 1054.

When al-Mustansir passed away in 1094 after a reign of almost sixty years, the Isma'ili community split over which of his sons would succeed him. Those who accepted his son Nizar as imam are called the Nizari Isma'ili, and those who accepted Musta'li are called the Musta'li Isma'ili.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Muzorewa, Abel Tendekai

(1925 C.E.–)

Methodist bishop

Born into an African Christian family in 1925, Abel Tendekai Muzorewa grew up in a religious household. After teaching grade school, he eventually became an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church. He was one of the first Africans of his denomination to study abroad. Upon his return from the United States, where he received a master's degree in religion and psychology, Muzorewa spent a few years serving as the national youth secretary of the Zimbabwe churches, and in 1968, at the age of thirty-eight, he was elected bishop of the Zimbabwe Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Bishop Muzorewa succeeded a white missionary, Bishop Ralph E. Dodge, who was banned from Zimbabwe for political reasons, making Muzorewa the first black bishop in the denomination. As a gifted and inspiring preacher, Muzorewa was considered a spirit-filled man of God. Further, at a time when most people believed that Christians should avoid involvement in politics, he boldly pursued the national liberation struggle, the first member of the clergy to do so. Muzorewa believed that God wanted his people to be free and productive and committed himself to saving the nation. He was motivated by democratic views influenced by Christian principles of justice, peace, and racial equality. Whites, Asians, and Africans felt that in Muzorewa, Zimbabwe could become independent of the colonial powers. Muzorewa's holiness manifested itself in his courage to preach against racial discrimination in a state that was ruled by colonialists who were not prepared to listen to an African preach the gospel, let alone make a political statement on liberation. Muzorewa's doctrine emphasized temperance, cultural identity, and observance of Christian precepts.

In 1972, when the nation had to make a major political decision, Muzorewa was unanimously elected to lead the nation in a referendum regarding the so-called Pierce Commission. The bishop risked his life by participating in politics at a time when the colonial regime was ruthless and callous. At the same time, Muzorewa's denomination grew by leaps and bounds as adherents were excited to identify with a church that took leadership in the liberation of the oppressed of Zimbabwe.

Elected as the first black prime minister of Zimbabwe in 1979, Muzorewa was revered by all Zimbabweans for his commitment to liberation and religion. Muzorewa published his autobiography, entitled *Rise Up and Walk*, in 1978.

—Gwinyai Muzorewa

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Protestantism and Holy People

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Mysticism and Holy People

A mystic is a person who has experienced a direct union or communion with the divine, or an awakening to realization of the divine, in his or her own lifetime. By definition, such people enjoy a special relationship with divine forces, and therefore, if members of their society accept their claims, they fit automatically into the category of “holy people”—especially if such mystical experiences recur frequently. Mystics are common in many of the world religions, especially if one includes in this category of direct experience with God visions and dreams. Even religions such as Buddhism, in which gods do not play a central role, have saints whose process of “awakening” is similar in many ways to the mysticism of god-based religions. Mystics have not always been accepted, however, especially in religions with a strong institutional structure. Mystics’ claims to direct understanding of the divine, bypassing the normal channels of religious law, priesthood, or sacraments, have sometimes been considered subversive. At times, the leaders of some religions have also regarded mystics as pretentious because they claim a special, unique dispensation from the divine that downplays a sense that god(s) care for everyone equally. Thus several movements in Islam have opposed sufi mysticism, while Protestant Christians have always regarded mystical experience with great suspicion. There have also been significant antimystical currents in Judaism, such as the anti-kabbalistic Hasidic movement.

The great paradox of mysticism in the world religions is that mystics have stressed that their experiences are essentially indescribable and impossible to replicate (in a useful image, a great Zen figure described the experience of awakening as “like a mute who has had a dream”)—but thousands of mystics over the centuries have nevertheless written accounts of their experience and tried to teach others to follow their own spiritual path. Thus a massive body of mystical literature strives at least in part to communicate that which is incommunicable. Mystics have described the touch of the divine using the symbolism of sexuality, or God’s embrace as that of a mother, or a direct vision of light, trying to express an experience for which human language is inadequate. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) called mysticism the

knowledge of God through experience, which works as well as any definition. For Muslim mystics, the central term is *tawhid*, a making one, or union of the human with the divine. Some of the great sufis went as far as an absolute identification, at least briefly, between themselves and God. The “drunk sufi” Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (858–922) said of himself “I am the Truth” in an expression of complete annihilation in God. Hindu mystics have also identified themselves so closely with a god that legend tells of several who were absorbed by cult statues or declared themselves to be *brahman*—the principle of the cosmos. Christianity and Judaism, however, have hedged away from such complete identification, preferring to write in terms of “abiding in” God. Some mystics in those traditions have nonetheless pushed toward an ideal of self-annihilation in God, such as the Christian Mechtild of Hackeborn (1241–c. 1298), who in visions crawled into the heart of Jesus.

The Muslim tradition is perhaps the most brilliant in terms of influence of the mystics, number of works written by mystics, and the sheer number of mystics. Muslim mysticism, a central element of sufism, focuses on closer contact of the worshipper with God. Much of the success of the movement is due to a structure that enables disciples to train themselves for mystical experience. The several orders of sufism teach the need to reach toward contact with God with the help of a sufi leader, who is able to teach the spiritual seeker to purify himself or herself and establish a channel of contact with the divine. In many ways, this practice is similar to Buddhist monasticism’s stress on the need for a teacher who can ease the way to awakening. Islamic mysticism can be said to go back to Muhammad (570–632), who reached the “farthest place” of prayer and enjoyed a special relationship with God. The process of defining and spreading this ideal to a larger population only really appears in the ninth century, however. The early sufi Abu Yazid Bistami (d. c. 875) may have been the one to originate the concept of *fana’*, an annihilation of all individualism in divine union. The first of the sufis to systematize the states of mystical attainment and the stages on the path to union with God was Dhu’n-nun al-Misri (796–861). Sufism had a long and difficult road before reaching general acceptance, though. The ecstatic al-Hallaj was executed as a heretic, as were several other early mystics. It was only in the eleventh century, especially thanks to Abu’l-Qasim al-Qushayri (986–1072), that sufism was associated with Muslim *hadith* and legal theory, winning the movement acceptance as an orthodox practice.

The great golden age of Muslim mysticism was the thirteenth century, when, above all, Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165–1240), Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273), and their disciples expressed in some of the most beautiful language ever crafted the soul’s yearning for God and the triumph of love over reason. The tradition continues to the present, despite

several movements over the centuries to suppress sufism. An important modern example is the Turkish mystical poet Asaf Halet Celebi (1907–1958), an important intermediary between Eastern and Western spiritual traditions.

Suggesting strong currents of intercommunication between the religions of Europe and the Near East, Christianity and Judaism also enjoyed a great efflorescence of mysticism in the thirteenth century. Spain during this time gave birth to the Kabbalah, a reaction to the rationalism and legalism of contemporary Jewish practice. Kabbalists emphasized God as unknowable mystery, and the great leaders of the movement, such as Moses ben Nahman (1194–1270), were great mystics as well as scholars. The mystical route of the Kabbalah continued as an important influence for centuries, producing great mystics such as Isaac Luria (1534–1572) and Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810).

The Christian mystical tradition can be said to originate with Paul (d. c. 65), “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:2). By the sixth century, the author known as Pseudo-Dionysius could systematize mystical understanding, telling how human nature can be “divinized” by a mystical progress that leads from purgation to illumination to eventual union with God. The more sophisticated Eastern churches produced a series of great mystical figures, reaching a height with Simeon the New Theologian (949–1022), the greatest of the Byzantine mystics. It was only in the twelfth century that a comparable line of notable mystics appeared in Western Europe, beginning with Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179). It is of course likely that mystics existed in the West before her, but if they wrote down their experiences their works are no longer extant. The trickle of Western Christian mystics grew to a flood in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries. These people, both men and women, experienced an identification with Christ so deep that a surprising number of them experienced the very wounds of Christ imprinted on their bodies (the stigmata). The Christian mystics, like the sufis, led

much of the Christian population to deeper inner spirituality in manners ranging from propagation of specific devotional practices to Teresa of Avila’s (1515–1582) role in the Catholic Reformation’s emphasis on religion as an interior journey rather than just reciting words.

Although mystics have appeared around the world, special note should be taken of the large number of Hindu mystics who have practiced yoga as a literal “joining” to the divine (as have Daoists). The greatest Hindu mystics are described as ecstasies whose devotions both were grounded in a direct experience of a god and helped perpetuate such a union.

Mysticism can be dangerous in many senses. Loudly proclaimed visions of the divine that disagree with established religious authority are unpopular in any age and religion. The challenge of many mystics has been to make their experience palatable to those with the power to silence them, and the history of mysticism is lined with the corpses of mystics who failed and were killed, persecuted, or condemned as insane. Islam even acknowledges that the shock of divine illumination can overwhelm the human intellect, sometimes with permanent effects.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Bistami, Abu Yazid; Celebi, Asaf Halet; Devotion; Hallaj, Husayn b. Mansur al-; Hasidism; Hildegard of Bingen; Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Insanity; Kabbalah; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Mechtilde of Hackeborn; Misri, Dhu’n-nun al-; Nahman of Bratslav; Paul; Qushayri, Abu’l-Qasim al-; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Simeon the New Theologian; Sufism; Teresa of Avila

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N

Nachman

See **Nahman of Bratslav**

Nadapada

See **Naropa**

Nafisa, Sayyida

(762–824 C.E.)

Muslim holy woman, scholar

Sayyida Nafisa, the great-granddaughter of the prophet Muhammad's grandson Hasan, is credited with great learning as well as the sanctity and piety shared by the prophet's family. Egyptian Muslims believe that she migrated to Egypt from Medina and is buried in Cairo, where she is thought to have died in 824. Her tomb attracts weekly visitations and features the performance of sufi *dhikr* (the ritualized "remembrance" of the names of God) and a *mawlid* (annual commemorative festival) that attracts pilgrims from all over the country.

Nafisa's birth in 762 was accompanied by visions of the prophet foretelling her greatness. She memorized the Qur'an at a young age and became an expert in *hadith* (accounts of what Muhammad said and did, the basis of Islamic law and Qur'an interpretation). She attended study circles with her father, Hasan al-Anwar, and learned law from Malik ibn Anas, founder of the Maliki school of law. She exemplifies the austerity and worship of the early sufi saints, making God the sole focus of all her desire. She married Ishaq, son of the sixth Shi'i imam, Ja'far as-Sadiq.

According to Egyptian tradition, Nafisa came to Egypt with Ishaq and her father, fleeing Abbasid persecution. The Egyptians welcomed them because of their great love for the prophet's family and saw it as a blessing to have his descendants in their midst. Ishaq returned to Medina as governor,

but Nafisa and her father remained in Cairo. Many scholars visited her, including the founders of two of the schools of Islamic law, Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i and Ahmad ibn Hanbal. Al-Shafi'i became a close friend, and she led his funeral prayers, fully veiled. Nafisa mediated between the people and Egypt's ruler and performed miracles to relieve the suffering of Muslims and non-Muslims. Her husband's abandonment and the death of her father grieved her, and she occupied herself with prayer and fasting. She dug her own grave and prayed and recited the Qur'an in it every night. The historian Yusuf Ragib (1976–1977) doubts Nafisa ever existed, noting that none of al-Shafi'i's biographies mention her. He also points out that her name first appears more than 150 years after her death in a Shi'i Fatimid source and that she was not venerated in Egypt until the thirteenth century.

—Valerie J. Hoffman

See also: Death; Gender and Holy People; Hasan b. 'Ali; Intermediaries; Ja'far as-Sadiq; Legendary Holy People; Miracles; Muhammad; Scholars as Holy People

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Nagarjuna

(c. 150–250 C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher

Nagarjuna was a major philosophical figure in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition during the second and third centuries. He founded the Madhyamaka school and was author of *Mulamadhyamaka-karika* (Fundamentals on the Middle Way) and other works. There is no historical mention of the school until the work of Chandrakirti in the seventh century.

According to Buddhist legend, Nagarjuna was born into a brahmin family in southern India in about 150. After a period of renunciant wandering, he decided to become a teacher of Buddhist scriptures. He encountered a great serpent that took pity on him and took him to his palace under the sea. After the serpent gave him scriptures to read and study, Nagarjuna attained the status of a *bodhisattva* (enlightened being), and the serpent sent him to spread the teachings. This tale helps to explain Nagarjuna's name, *naga* (serpent) and *arjuna*, for the tree under which he was born. The subtle and difficult teachings of the Buddha had supposedly been kept secret in the depths of the sea and guarded by the serpent because people were not prepared to hear them; they were finally revealed to humankind via Nagarjuna so that erroneous knowledge could be corrected.

Nagarjuna defined his philosophy as a middle path between two extremes of eternalism and nihilism. He was not advocating that anything like a self or soul could be eternal or enduring; nor was he taking the position that nothing endures. Rather, Nagarjuna suggested that nothing in the world existed absolutely and nothing perished completely. The middle, for Nagarjuna, was not located within the realm of language or concepts; it was transcendental and thus beyond both language and concepts. Nagarjuna's philosophy suggested that no specific philosophical position is ultimate or limitless. Therefore, the ultimate truth is not embodied by a specific philosophical position.

Nagarjuna's path of thought did not lead to a particular type of knowledge. The path that he envisioned represented, rather, the termination of all knowing and therefore all theorizing, which he viewed as the practice of the perfection of wisdom, which is the most important perfection for a bodhisattva because it represents the attainment of enlightenment. The implications of the development of this perfection were evident in his basic distinction between conventional truth and ultimate truth. The former type of truth was useful for everyday life, but when it was pushed too far it became illusory, whereas ultimate truth was a nondual type of knowledge. What Nagarjuna meant was an intuition devoid of content that stood in sharp contrast to the previous level of awareness. This intuition was beyond the state of ordinary knowledge and reason and represented the dissolution of the conceptual function of the human mind. This higher knowledge meant the dawn of freedom and release from the turmoil and ignorance of the world and was equivalent to realizing nirvana, a total transformation of a person's self-awareness and the realization that all distinctions and all entities are empty (*sunyata*).

—Carl Olson

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Nagasaki Martyrs

(d. 1597 C.E.)

Roman Catholic martyrs

In 1862, the Roman Catholic Church canonized the nine regular clergy and seventeen lay members of the church who were crucified in 1597 at Nagasaki by order of the Japanese warlord Hideyoshi. The Nagasaki crucifixions were the first in a series of mass executions of Roman Catholics in Japan after the church's legal proscription in 1587. In part, the persecution was the result of important shifts in political power among Japanese warlords. It also, however, reflected a growing distrust of the Catholic community. The active persecution of Japanese Catholics by the authorities subsided with the death of Hideyoshi in 1599, but the violence was renewed in 1613. By 1640, thousands of Japanese Catholics had been put to death. Although some believers were able to maintain the Christian faith without the benefit of priests or outside contacts until the return of Catholic missionaries in the nineteenth century, the organized church in the kingdom was destroyed by 1640.

The Nagasaki martyrs came from a variety of backgrounds. Among the clergy were six Franciscans of European extraction, Paul Miki (a Japanese Jesuit from an aristocratic family), and two Japanese Jesuit lay brothers. Of the seventeen lay martyrs, one was of Korean extraction while the remainder were Japanese believers. The lay believers were drawn from a variety of occupations, including a soldier, a physician, and three young boys. The method of their execution was particularly resonant to a European audience because of the obvious similarity to the crucifixion of Jesus. Each victim was tied to a cross on the ground, then they were raised up in a long row. Each was then dispatched with a lance by an executioner.

The fate of the Nagasaki martyrs was widely disseminated by the Society of Jesus and the Franciscan order in Europe, and their constancy in the face of persecution was seen as exemplary by contemporaries, but the Catholic Church did not move to formally recognize their holiness through canonization until the nineteenth century. This lack of formal recognition is not surprising, as the Catholic

Reformation church, unlike the early church, canonized few martyrs. The decision to canonize all twenty-six martyrs in 1862 reflected an increased readiness to recognize martyrdom as a holy activity in the nineteenth century. There was also renewed interest in the Catholic Church's mission in Japan following the church's return to the kingdom in 1859 as the result of a treaty between the governments of Japan and France.

—Eric Nelson

See also: Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Nagasena

(c. 2nd cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist monk

An Indian Buddhist monk of approximately the second century B.C.E., Nagasena (Tib.: kLu-yi sDe) is known for his discussions with King Milinda (the Indo-Greek king Menandros/Menander), who ruled from Sagala (Sialkot, Pakistan). According to the *Milindapanha* (Questions of King Milinda), before his birth Nagasena had been a god named Mahasena living in Tavatimsa (Heaven of the Thirty-Three). He is portrayed as an extraordinary monk who was called from these transcendent realms specifically to banish King Milinda's doubts and win him over to Buddhism.

The *Milindapanha* recounts how King Milinda confounded monks and laymen alike in his thirst for philosophical knowledge. Sakka and the *arhats* led by Assagutta approached Nagasena and he agreed to be born as a human so that the principles of religion could be furthered through his bodhisattvic sacrifice. He took birth in the brahmin household of Sonuttara in a village called Kajangala in the Himalayas (Kashmir according to the Chinese text). He entered the Buddhist order under Rohana, then studied under Assagutta at the Vattaniya monastery and attained the first level of enlightenment (*shrotapanna*). Thereafter, he was sent to Pataliputra, where he studied under Dhammarakkhita and attained arhatship. Subsequently, Nagasena went to the Samkheyya monastery in Sagala, where his historic discussion with Milinda took place.

The discourse, as preserved in the *Milindapanha*, is doubtless a crafted compendium of Theravada doctrine laid bare by a master of Buddhist thought. Milinda posed eighty-two dilemmas to Nagasena, who responded to each to the satisfaction of the king. At the end of the conversation, Milinda converted to Buddhism, built a monastery named Milindavihara, and handed it over to Nagasena.

Nothing is known of Nagasena after his lengthy encounter with the king. This seems altogether appropriate, for he had been called into mortal existence for the sake of the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine), and, having performed his task, vanished from the attention of history. Yet he left behind a method of explicating the teachings of Buddha that became the archetype of subsequent elucidation. His subtle blend of metaphysics and ethics, argument and example, produced a model of useful discourse and an encouragement to practice. The *Milindapanha* is unique in being revered by Theravada and Mahayana Buddhists alike. Its depictions of the path and the goal have been relevant to every succeeding generation, for it is, above all, a portrait of the arhat.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Mission

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Nahman of Bratslav (Nachman)

(1772–1810 C.E.)

Jewish leader

Nahman of Bratslav was the great-grandson of the Besht (Ba'al Shem Tov), the eighteenth-century founder of Hasidism. Nahman, born in 1772 at a time when the Hasidic movement was gaining in momentum, became a Hasidic moralist and a charismatic *tzaddiq*, or "righteous holy man." For Nahman's followers—and indeed, eventually in his own mind—he was the fulfillment of the messianic promise. Near the end of his life Rebbe Nahman considered himself to be the one true *tzaddiq* of God on earth.

His early life remains obscure. It is said that young Nahman spent most of his time alone in contemplation and prayer. He was married at the age of thirteen to a young woman named Soshia, yet he continued his contemplative pursuits. It can be assumed that he was a student of both Torah and Talmud, as well as the Lurianic Kabbalah, and it was not long before he was recognized as the leader of a small but fervent group of Hasidim.

Nahman had contentious relationships with other *tzaddikim*. One of his more idiosyncratic tenets was the necessity for his followers to confess their sins to him, a requirement so unusual that members of other Hasidic communities would chide the *hasidim* (followers) of Nahman as *vidduiniks*, “confessors.” In most other respects, however, Reb Nahman preached a familiar Hasidism, although he accorded the divine a degree of transcendence, and therefore distance, from humanity that was not as prevalent in the teachings of other Hasidic leaders—making the leader’s role as intermediary even more important.

In 1798, over the protests of family and community, Rebbe Nahman decided to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Once there, he traveled to various sites sacred to memory and history, including the holy and mystical city of Safed in northern Palestine, a place synonymous with the beloved kabbalist Isaac Luria (1534–1572) and study of the Kabbalah in general.

By the autumn of 1800, Nahman was settled in the Ukrainian town of Zlatopol. His decision to move there has long puzzled scholars, for the town already had a *tzaddiq*. Zlatopol’s rebbe became an intractable and relentless foe, hurling invectives such as “heretic” and “arrogant” at Nahman. In 1802, Nahman left Zlatopol and journeyed west with his family to Bratslav, where for a second time he incurred the wrath of the local *tzaddiq*. Nahman refused to leave Bratslav, although he was becoming more and more isolated from the other *tzaddikim* and was attracting fewer *hasidim* than he had anticipated.

It was at this time that Nahman became convinced that he himself was the desperately awaited messiah. His only son to survive infancy died in 1806, and his wife Soshia died of tuberculosis in June 1807; his despondency became greater when he, too, contracted tuberculosis. Until his death in 1810, Nahman dictated to his disciples homilies and stories, later compiled into the definitive collection *Sippure HaMaasiyot shel Rabbi Nahman MiBratslav* (The tales of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav). The tales are sacred to Bratslav Hasidim and offer Nahman’s most profound reflections on redemption, righteous faithfulness, and the nature of the cosmos, although the stories are enigmatic and decidedly allegorical.

Nahman’s grave at Uman has become a site of pilgrimage for Bratslav Hasidim throughout the world. Nahman’s sons died before him, yet Nahman did not select a successor from his discipleship. Nevertheless, the community remained (and remains) united and committed to the teachings of their beloved rebbe who remains the *tzaddiq* of Bratslav Hasidism.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Ba’al Shem Tov; Hasidism; Judaism and Holy People; Kabbalah; Luria, Isaac ben Solomon; Messiahs; Mysticism and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; *Tzaddiq*

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Nahmanides

See **Moses ben Nahman**

Nakae Tōju

(1608–1648 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

Nakae Tōju is revered as the patriarch of Wang Yangming learning in Japan, even though he only acquired Yangming’s original writings four years before his death, after the basic tendencies of his thought had already been formed. Meiji-period nationalists exalted him as one of Japan’s greatest sages, “the sage of Ōmi,” and he was featured as a model of filial piety in school textbooks until 1945. He has continued to attract much attention in postwar studies of the Japanization of Confucian thought.

Tōju was born to a farming family in present-day Shiga prefecture in 1608. At the age of nine, he was entrusted to his samurai grandfather’s care to be trained as his successor. At seventeen, he first read the Four Books with Neo-Confucian commentaries and resolved to devote himself to Zhu Xi learning. At nineteen, he inherited his grandfather’s position of district magistrate. At twenty-seven, however, he resigned his post to care for his aging and widowed mother. This meant relinquishing his samurai status, a serious crime punishable, in theory, by a sentence of *seppuku* (ritual disembowelment). This courageous act of breaking free from the samurai status system to return to his home village, however, clearly contributed to the growth of the independent spirit for which he later became famous.

Back in Ōmi, he sold his sword and supported his mother by selling sake and making low-interest rice loans to peasants, devoting much time both to his Confucian studies and to instructing young samurai who came to study under him. He also began to produce works on Confucian philosophy. Already he began to focus on the concept of “dwelling in reverence” (Chin.: *jujing*; Jap.: *kyokei*), although it did not agree with contemporary scholarly emphasis.

In *Jikei zusetu* (A diagrammatic explanation of “holding to reverence”), he argues that the essence of “reverence” is “awe.” He explains the need to hold in awe the mandate of heaven, which requires a man to “honor the virtuous nature” within. Although external rules and regulations are to be obeyed, this is not to be done with an attitude of strict ad-

herence to every particular rule. Rather, if the inner attitude of awe and reverence is firmly established, accordance with external norms will follow naturally. To honor the “virtuous nature”—one’s original self—is to yield to it the lordship over all aspects of one’s life. The “heavenly lord” within will then remain permanently at peace.

Tōju’s most famous work, *Okina Mondō* (Dialogues with an old man) was written in Japanese at age thirty-three. Perhaps the most important task of this book is to distinguish Confucianism from Buddhism and Daoism, presenting the Way of Confucius as answering to the same religious concerns as are addressed by Buddhism, but doing so in a more thorough and comprehensive way not requiring the breaking of one’s ethical bonds with society. This spiritual transformation is to be achieved through the reverent practice of filial piety. But filial piety in its essence is not to be understood as a behavioral norm, as something belonging to the realm of “ought.” The practice of filial piety, rather, begins with the illumination of one’s own original mind. The illumination is to be achieved through “using the innate awareness of the good (Chin.: *liangzhi*; Jap.: *ryōchi*) as a mirror while one is in a state of watchful solitude (Chin.: *shendu*; Jap.: *shindoku*)” (Question 104, p. 157).

Tōju’s teachings as a whole can be seen as ultimately rooted in his conception of *on* (debt of gratitude), which consists of two complementary insights: (1) the realization that one’s body and one’s life are not one’s own but have been received as precious gifts through the medium of one’s parents, one’s ancestors, and the divine forces (*kami*) of the natural world from the ultimate source of the universe itself, and (2) the realization of the debt of gratitude one owes to these sources of one’s life. The attitude of love and respect that arises from these insights is in itself the human being’s true original nature and is rooted in the child’s instinctive love for his or her parents.

Perhaps it is not just coincidence that beginning from the same year he wrote *Okina Mondō*, 1640, all families in Japan (except families of Shinto priests) were required to register with a Buddhist temple and undergo an annual scrutiny of religious beliefs to ensure the absence of spiritual contamination by Christianity. This was also the year that Tōju first came into contact with the teachings of Wang Yangming through the writings of his disciple Wang Ji (Wang Longxi, 1498–1583). In the following year, he made a pilgrimage to the imperial shrine at Ise, which led him toward a further reconciliation with Shinto as well, combined with an insight into the folly of strict observance of external rules of ritual, which are bound to particular cultural traditions and thus are not the Way itself.

Tōju’s late teachings, however, were markedly more contemplative in orientation than those of Yangming, lacking his activist determination to bring about the moral transfor-

mation of society. Tōju came to be much loved not only by his disciples but also by the peasants of Ōmi, and his fame gradually spread throughout the nation. Though his teachings gave rise to no widespread organized religious movement, his books were very widely read by scholars and samurai alike.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Wang Yangming

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Nakayama Miki

(1798–1887 C.E.)

Japanese Tenrikyō founder

Nakayama Miki was the shamanistic founder of the Japanese syncretistic religious movement Tenrikyō (Religion of Divine Wisdom) in the nineteenth century. She is venerated by her followers as *oyasama* (lady mother) and regarded as the bodily shrine of the deity Tenri-ō-no-mikoto (God the Parent).

Born as the eldest daughter of a local squire in 1798, Nakayama Miki was married at the age of thirteen to the headman of the village Shōyashiki (part of the present-day town Tenri, Nara prefecture). It is assumed that she developed a strong spiritual consciousness from an early age, first manifest in her devotion to Pure Land Buddhism and her intention to become a Buddhist nun. She agreed to get married only on the condition that she could keep her habit of chanting the *nenbutsu* (invocation of the name of Amida Buddha) after the daily work.

The illness of her first-born son brought further impulse to her spiritual life. Using the services of a *yamabushi* (mountain ascetic), she tried to cure the boy through an exorcist ritual (*yosekaji*). In one of these rituals, Nakayama Miki took over the role of the medium. According to the depiction of the Tenrikyō, the *yamabushi* lost control over her and she was seized by the deity Tenri-ō-no-mikoto. She entered a deep

state of trance and divine possession for three days while the deity spoke through her demanding her as its shrine. Her family finally gave in to the wish of the deity. This event, which occurred in October 1838, is considered the commencement of Tenrikyô.

Thereafter, Nakayama Miki came to be renowned for acts of faith healing and venerated as a living god of safe childbirth by a growing community. In the 1860s, she composed her first book, *Mikagura-uta* (Songs for the service), and she finished her second one, *Ofudesaki* (Tip of the writing brush), in 1882. Both books, together with the *Osashizu* (Divine directions), are venerated as the three holy scriptures of Tenrikyô. After her death in 1887 she was succeeded by Iburi Izô (1833–1907). The deity was thought to speak through Iburi Izô from then on. At present, Nakayama Miki is believed to reside in her sanctuary in the town of Tenri, where food and hot baths are provided for her daily by her followers. The Tenrikyô, with more than 1.75 million followers, is one of the largest of the new religious movements in contemporary Japan.

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Founders of Religions as Holy People; Gods on Earth; Prophets

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Namdev

(c. 1270–c. 1350 C.E.)

Hindu poet

Namdev was a Hindu saint and poet from Maharashtra born in Pandharpur, a city heavily influenced by worship of Vishnu, of low-caste origins in about 1270. His father was a tailor, and he learned his father's trade. As a young man, he allegedly associated with criminals and killed and robbed various victims. This unethical pattern of behavior ended when he became influenced by Jnaneshvara, a regional saint and poet, and he shifted his focus to devotion to the deity Vithoba.

As part of his lifelong devotion to his deity, Namdev composed poetry in Marathi and some in Hindi, although few of these poems have survived. Some of his poems have been incorporated into the Sikh tradition. There is even scholarly debate about whether Namdev represents more than a single figure, and thus his authorship of the poems has been questioned. Besides focusing on the deity Vithoba, many of the poems refer to other saints. His references to God reflect the oneness and omnipresence of God, the importance of realizing the *nirguna* (qualityless) aspect of God, and the necessity of chanting the names of God. Other poems concentrate on the significance of the *guru* (teacher). The major topics reflect features common to the *sant* (poet-saint) tradition.

A member of the southern *sant* tradition, Namdev used the language of Middle Marathi, an archaic form of the language of Maharashtra. Although there is no precise meaning to the term *sant*, it was a term used to refer to poet-saints of northern India who tended to be nonsectarian and advocated devotion to a deity lacking qualities, invisible, and all-pervading. Namdev learned a lesson when he first met his teacher at a temple. Jnaneshvara was reclining with his feet on a statue of Shiva. Namdev told him to remove his feet from the icon, but the teacher replied that Namdev should place the teacher's feet on a spot not pervaded by God.

The *sants* lacked a shared body of doctrine, denied the value of brahmin sacrifices, believed that the notion of ritual pollution was artificially constructed, and did not think that sacred books were necessary for salvation. These convictions were often combined with a strong antibrahminical bias. The positive thrust of their poetry focused on devotion to a single, absolute, transcendent, and ineffable deity who possessed the ability to grant salvation to everyone regardless of social status.

—Carl Olson

See also: Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Jnaneshvara; Ritual

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Nammalvar

(6th–9th cent. C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Nammalvar was perhaps the most important saint of Sri Vaishnavism, a sect of Hinduism found in the Tamil-speaking area of southern India. Sri Vaishnavism was one of many devotional (*bhakti*) movements that flourished in India beginning as early as the sixth century. Characterized by intense, even passionate love for the divine, whether un-

derstood in monotheistic terms as a personal god or in monistic terms as the supreme absolute beyond all qualities, the devotional movement saw the emergence of extraordinary poet-saints, typically expressing sentiments such as the bliss of ecstatic union with God, the pain of a (perceived) separation from God, and a triumphant reunion or communion in God.

The Sri Vaishnava tradition was one of the earliest, if not the first, of the bhakti traditions to emerge in India, and it consequently influenced later regional movements. The twelve Sri Vaishnava poet-saints (*alvars*), the supreme models of devotion for this tradition, lived between the sixth and ninth centuries. They wandered about the region of present-day Tamil Nadu, singing the praises of Vishnu and his beautiful consort Lakshmi (also called Sri, hence, “Sri Vaishnavism,” the tradition of “Vishnu with Sri”). The term “alvar” itself indicates the depth of divine passion; it means “one who is immersed,” that is, in God; the alvars then were God-intoxicated saints of southern India. Their poems, collected in the *Naal ayira Dhivya prabhandham* (Sacred collect of four thousand), are considered sacred, equal or superior to the Vedas, the pan-Indian scriptures of Hinduism; thus the *Collect* has often been called the Tamil Veda to emphasize its value and importance for Sri Vaishnavas. The poems, deeply formative for devotees, convey the most meaningful of human aspirations: the desire to be consumed with love of God. They have been commented upon and used in temple ritual since the tenth century.

Of the alvars, Nammalvar (“Our alvar”; he is also called Shathakopan or Maran) is the most famous, composing nearly half of the poems in the *Sacred Collect* itself. Nammalvar was of low-caste status, indicating that in the Sri Vaishnava tradition, as in other bhakti traditions, spiritual merit or potential transcended traditional caste boundaries. Nammalvar’s most important work, *Tiruvaymoli* (Sacred utterance), is written in ten decads, with signature verses, for a total of 1,102 verses. It contains many wide-ranging themes, including sophisticated theological and didactic elements, affirming both the ineffable nature of Vishnu and his most auspicious form and qualities. Above all, the poetry expresses passionate longing for God, the premier sensibility of all bhakti poetry, and indeed, perhaps of all mystics and saints.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Status

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Nanak

(1469–1539 C.E.)

Sikh guru, founder

Guru Nanak founded the Sikh community in the early sixteenth century. Born into a high-caste Hindu family near Lahore, India, in 1469, Nanak became increasingly disenchanted with the society in which he lived. Eventually, around 1500, he left his householder life to wander the world in search of a better way to live. His twenty years of travel took him far and wide, and the Sikh tradition, as recorded in the *Janam Sakhis* (The life stories of Guru Nanak), has him visiting many religious centers, as far as Mecca to the west, Dhacca to the east, Sri Lanka to the south, and Kashmir to the north. During his travels, he wrote hymns that commented on the current political situation, engaged in ethical and religious debates with other religious figures, and praised God. In the early 1520s, he returned to his home province of Punjab, acquired a piece of land on the Ravi River, collected his hymns into a book, and established a community where he put the previous two decades of meditation and learning into practice. Before his death in 1539, he appointed a successor, Guru Angad, to carry the flame of the guruship.

Nanak identified three key virtues for living a morally righteous life that were essential to the search for liberation from this world—meditation on the divine name (*nam*), charity (*dan*), and purity (*ishnan*). This search for liberation (*moksha* or *mukati*) certainly echoes much of the Indian religious thinking of the time, but Guru Nanak brought a social consciousness to his philosophy that set him apart from other religious thinkers. Although the concepts of *nam* and *ishnan* speak to the personal dimension of this process, the emphasis on *dan*, or charity, puts the search for liberation firmly in the world. The individual is not to seek liberation on his or her own; rather, he or she must actively participate in communal life. Thus the search for liberation and the path that leads to it becomes more collective than personal.

Guru Nanak’s community on the Ravi, named Kartarpur (City of God), reflected these three ideals (*nam*, *dan*, *ishnan*) and their communal orientation. Meditation on the name took on various forms, including individual recitation of hymns to God that Nanak had composed in the early morning, at sunset, and at the end of the day, congregational singing of hymns at the Gurdwara (House of the Guru), and emphasis on hard work as part of a social commitment to

keep the society going. The ideal of charity was institutionalized in the form of *langar*, or the communal meal served to all. Based on the sufi practice of langar, the community at Kartarpur worked to supply food for anyone who wanted to join the meal regardless of social standing or religion. All the food and labor was considered *seva*, or service, presented before God. Finally, the importance of purity extended to eating and drinking habits as well as to personal hygiene issues, such as bathing regularly.

Nanak presented God as the eternally unchanging formless one. God is beyond time, beyond all human description, and beyond human intellect. He is all-powerful, omnipresent, and omniscient. He is the creator of all and will be the ultimate destroyer of all. However, Guru Nanak broke from his fellow spiritual leaders by insisting that his followers develop a relationship, no matter how imperfect it might be, with God. Thus, it is not by personal effort that liberation is achieved, but by God's grace (*nadar*, from the Persian *nazar*, meaning "glance") that one is saved. Only by receiving the "glance" of God can one be released from self-centeredness (*haumai*), and this release is accompanied by an awe-inspiring experience of God and a resulting bliss (*visamad*).

Though personal effort is not enough on its own for liberation, he said, it is still absolutely necessary to the process. Since God is the ultimate cause (*kartar*) of everything, a person's relationship to the world is important. Nanak encouraged his followers to engage the world as it is all God's creation, and even the most mundane parts of life, such as farming or churning the butter, are elevated to spiritual acts. Thus, although God may be ultimately unknowable to the human mind, nevertheless Nanak did attempt to describe him, and that description is often couched in familiar terms. Guru Nanak used language from various avenues of life to describe God: In agrarian language, he is the great farmer (*vadda kisan*); in the language of artisans, he is the potter; and, most significantly, in the language of politics, he is the *patshah*, the great king. Thus, Nanak left a legacy of personal meditation on the Name (*nam*), firm commitment to hard work and service to humanity in the search for liberation, and active participation in worldly affairs such as politics.

It is important to recognize the political dimension of Guru Nanak's life. Although he certainly was a great religious leader, he also had a keen interest in political life. He was insistent on just rule and believed that the right to rule came from moral righteousness, which could only be obtained by following the path set out by God. Even his conception of God was linked to his concern about the legitimacy of rule, as God is called the king of kings and justice is meted out in his divine court.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Founders of Religions as Holy People; Gurus; Politics and Holy People; Ritual; Sikh Religion and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Naram-Sin

(2254–2218 B.C.E.)

Mesopotamian god-king

Naram-Sin, born in 2254 B.C.E., was an early Mesopotamian king (the fourth king of the first dynasty of Akkad), the first to claim to be divine. Unlike the Egyptians, the Mesopotamians did not have a tradition of divine kingship. His claims thus mark a break from Mesopotamian traditions. More typical claims by Mesopotamian kings were of direct communication with the gods. Earlier texts describe kingship as having been granted by the gods, and most Mesopotamian kings were associated with divine favor. Only after Naram-Sin, however, and even then infrequently, were Mesopotamian kings seen as deities themselves.

Evidence of Naram-Sin's association with divinity is provided by the archaeological record. About halfway through his reign, his name appears written with a *dingir* prefix. The *dingir* is a determinative in the Sumerian and Akkadian languages that indicates that the name following is the name of a deity. Furthermore, Naram-Sin is referred to as a god in his titulary. On the Victory Stelae of Naram-Sin, he is depicted wearing a horned headdress; in Mesopotamian art, this headdress is normally worn by a god. And an inscription on a copper statue found in Iraq describes how Naram-Sin became a god. The inscription says that because of his skill in defending the city of Akkad, the inhabitants petitioned a group of gods to make Naram-Sin a god of that city. These people, it is also written, built a temple in which to worship him.

Later traditions of Naram-Sin see the claims of divinity as inherently sacrilegious. Although the first dynasty of Akkad maintained power after the death of Naram-Sin, later Mesopotamian texts attribute the fall of this dynasty to divine retribution against Naram-Sin's blasphemy. From these texts, the Mesopotamian theology of kingship is made clear. The gods had the power to install and remove kings, who in many ways were the intercessors between the human and divine realms. This view seems to have regained prominence after Naram Sin's death in 2218 B.C.E.

—Kevin McGeough

See also: Gods on Earth; Rulers as Holy People

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Naropa

(956–1040 C.E.)

Buddhist master

Naropa, also known as Nadapada, was an Indian tantric Buddhist master whose life and teachings were highly regarded in Tibet. Indeed, he was considered one of the greatest Indian Buddhist spiritual masters of his time. He is particularly important in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, for his lineages of teaching were transmitted to most Tibet schools within a century of his passing. He is well known for his role in the dissemination of numerous Buddhist tantras, such as the Hevajra and Chakrasamvara traditions, as well as for his synthesis of the highest yoga tantras, as exemplified by his six yogas (Tib.: *na ro chos drug*).

In Tibetan literature, Naropa is usually referred to as a "perfectly accomplished one" (Tib.: *grub chen*; Skt.: *mahasiddha*), that is, one who has attained *siddhi*, or tantric accomplishment. Tantric accomplishment may be mundane—the acquisition of such abilities as clairvoyance, telepathy, astral travel, and so forth—or supermundane—the attainment of supreme enlightenment itself. Naropa is counted among the eighty-four Indian Vajrayana mahasiddhas and the chief disciple of the siddha Tilopa (928–1009). Siddhas, including Naropa, were always depicted as highly eccentric, nonconventional, and having great spiritual powers and magical abilities.

The life story of Naropa reveals an ordinary, struggling human being seeking spiritual awakening who undergoes miraculous transformation through devotion to the teacher. Every Tibetan knows by heart the many fantastic stories concerning him.

Born in Bengal to a Buddhist family in 956, he was forced into an arranged marriage and later renounced it, together with his worldly position, to become a monk. Naropa studied with numerous Bengali and then Kashmiri teachers in the early part of his life. He became famous as a scholar and eventually attained the position of abbot at the renowned Indian monastic university of Nalanda. He served as abbot for eight years, achieving widespread fame as a scholar and also as a mentor to many Buddhist scholars of India.

However, during his fortieth year Naropa underwent an encounter that profoundly altered the course of his life. One



Statue of the Indian Buddhist master Naropa. Bihar, India. (Art Directors)

day he was silently studying scriptures when he suddenly noticed a repulsive old woman watching him. The old and ugly woman questioned Naropa, "Do you understand the words or the sense of what you are reading?" Naropa replied, "The words." The old woman laughed and asked, "And do you understand the sense?" Again Naropa replied in the affirmative, whereupon the old ugly woman began to weep and tremble. "Here you are lying," she scolded. Over the following days, the conversation transformed Naropa, and he eventually came to the conclusion that he would have to leave the life of the monastery to search for a tantric teacher, or guru. Thereupon, he gave up his position in the monastery and left in search of a tantric master. After much wandering and many great trials, he encountered Tilopa.

Naropa's search for and then training under Tilopa is a story told in allegorical and mystical language that relates the attitude that an aspirant must generate to properly approach a master teacher. He encounters various people during his search, including a man who is catching and eating lice, a leper woman, and so forth, each offering a new clue on

the spiritual attitude to be cultivated in order to become worthy to meet the tantric guru. Eventually, Tilopa appears to Naropa, and a twelve-year training period follows that results in Naropa's enlightenment.

In the later part of his life, Naropa attracted many disciples from India, Nepal, and Tibet. His teaching lineages spread to all schools of Tibetan Buddhism, but most predominantly the Kagyu (bka' brgyud) school, over the next few centuries.

—James B. Apple

See also: Marpa; Miracles; Teachers as Holy People; Tilopa

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Narsi Mehta

(c. 1414–1480 C.E.)

Hindu poet

Narsi Mehta, a fifteenth-century Vaishnava poet of the Hindu religious tradition, composed devotional *bhajans* (hymns) in Gujarati and Rajasthani, the Indo-Aryan languages spoken in the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan in India. However, he composed his major works in Gujarati; therefore, he is more popular in Gujarat than in Rajasthan. Though he did not create any religious sect, people have constructed a small temple to him close to the Narsino Choroa—a circular platform built in 1808—in Junagadha (Saurashtra region of Gujarat). It is said that Narsi used to preach *bhakti* (devotional Hindu) while sitting on that platform.

Though Narsi is considered one of the greatest poets of the Gujarati language, not much is known about his life and his works. Scholars are divided on his birth year (probably around 1414), birthplace, the nature of his spiritual training, and also on the authorship of many of his works. Interestingly, some of those works are so popular among the people that even the strongest proof falsifying his authorship would not convince them. However, scholars do unanimously agree on certain facts. They include that Narsi was born in a Nagar community, considered the highest in the Hindu caste hierarchy. He lost his parents in childhood and lived with his uncle or brother until he became an adult. He lived in Junagadha, where he was married with two children, a son and a daughter. He was multilingual, knowing Vraja and Marathi in addition to Gujarati. He sang Krishna bhakti with *sakhibhavaa*—a state of mind in which a devotee considers himself a woman and Krishna as the only male in the world. Narsi's writings could be divided into autobiographical poems, long narrative poems, philosophical poems, and Krishna

love poems, although scholars have challenged the authorship of those in the first three categories.

Popular accounts of Narsi's life mention many miracles that he is said to have performed. Though scholars have challenged those accounts, they indicate Narsi's popularity as a holy person. Narsi was also a social reformer. Defying the rules of his community, he went to Harijan—the lowest community in those days—and sang bhajans. Consequently, he was excommunicated.

Narsi enjoys dual respect as a poet. Vaishnavas respect him as a poet of their own sect, while scholars respect him as a secular poet.

—Babu Suthar

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna; Status

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Nasafi, 'Aziz al-Din

(13th cent. C.E.)

Muslim sufi

A prominent member of the Kubrawiyyah sufi order and the disciple of the famous Persian sufi Sa'd al-Din Hamuyah (d. 1252), Aziz al-Din Nasafi is best known for his thirteenth-century work *Kitab Insan-i Kamil* (The universal/perfect man). Written in Persian and in plain language, the book has become one of the most widely circulated handbooks of sufism. The concept of the perfect man goes back to Ibn al-'Arabi (1165–1240) and represents the culmination of the human state as the mirror of divine names and qualities. The school of Ibn al-'Arabi considers creation as a manifestation or theophany of these names. This establishes an ontological link between God and his work of art, that is, the cosmos.

Nasafi likens the world of nature to the chapters (*surah*) of the Qur'an. Human beings, who have been given the unique ability to have an intimate relationship with God, occupy a special place in the great chain of being. Creation of humankind is regarded as the completion of God's design for the world in which humans are guided by revelation and sanctity to find the truth in nature. The universe is thus called the "great human" (*insan-i kabir*) and the individual human being the small universe (*alam-i saghir*). Religiously speaking, the perfect man refers primarily to the prophet Muhammad. The scope of the concept, however, has been ex-

panded to include many saints and spiritual masters in an implicit, if not explicit, way.

In addition to articulating a spiritual metaphysics and cosmology, Nasafi also talks about the practical aspects of spiritual life. Master-disciple relationship, manners of following a particular path, invocation (*dhikr*), and states of ecstasy are among the issues that Nasafi addresses in his works. Nasafi is revered as a spiritual master especially in the Kubrawi tradition.

Nasafi played a significant role in making Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings better known in the Persian-speaking world. By developing an elaborate cosmology of divine names and qualities and addressing the issues of esoteric knowledge and exoteric law, he also influenced a number of later sufis and philosophers, including some Isma'ili thinkers. Nasafi's *Insan-i Kamil* has been translated into several languages. As a central figure of thirteenth-century sufism, Nasafi's work is likely to attract more attention in the near future.

—*Ibrahim Kalin*

See also: Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Nasruddin, Khwaja

(13th cent. C.E.?)

Muslim legendary hero

Hundreds of stories about Khwaja Nasruddin's exploits abound in the region that constituted the Ottoman world and beyond it. What makes these stories so appealing is the fact that they deal with real-life issues, including social injustice, selfishness, ignorance, and deceit. Although the stories are set in thirteenth-century teahouses and marketplaces, Nasruddin's observations about human nature are still applicable today.

Nasruddin's character fits into the hero figure who is a trickster or fool. He teaches by his own mistakes, through which he exposes other people's foolishness. Like Juha before him, Nasruddin is considered to be a legendary figure around whom stories have been woven. Yet there are some who insist that he was a real person who was born in a Turkish village in the thirteenth century. It is, however, his humor that lives on in parabolic stories (retold at parties and family gatherings) in many countries, especially in Turkey, where legend reports he was born and buried.

Considerable variations exist in Nasruddin stories (which were handed down orally) precisely because of the way they have been told through time and space. As a religious scholar

(and given that Islam has no professional priesthood), Nasruddin performed many functions in society, including prayer-leader, mosque preacher, magistrate, schoolmaster, farmer on his small plot of land, and so on. When times were hard and he had no money, he passed his time at the tea-house, plowed his small plot of land, or sold whatever he could find to survive. All in all, despite his ups and downs it was his learning that allowed him to maintain a respectable rank in society. In one anecdote, having failed to read a badly written letter, Nasruddin turns to his questioner, who had criticized him for wearing a scholar's turban under false pretenses, and challenges him to put on the turban and see if he can read the letter for himself. It thus gently suggests that external trappings may not always reflect inward qualities.

—*Abdin Chande*

See also: Hagiography; Islam and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Naths

(fl. 12th–15th cent. C.E.)

Shaivite Hindu yogis

Naths (Hindi for “masters”) are a diverse confederation of Hindu yogis, ranging from ascetics to householders, connected to traditions involving the god Shiva. They are renowned for practicing intensive forms of yoga in their quest for magical powers and bodily immortality. Historically, they were found predominantly in northern and western India and Nepal, although their pilgrimages and itinerant habits have taken them throughout south Asia. The Naths flourished from the twelfth through fifteenth centuries but there are still small communities and individuals active today.

The precise historical origins of the Naths (often called Yogis or Jogis) are difficult to trace, but it is clear that they developed out of heterodox Shaivite traditions, especially the Kanphatas (Split-Eared Ones), Kapalikas (Users of the Skull), and Pasupatas (Followers of the Lord of Beasts). Naths sought physical immortality through a variety of practices, including alchemy, which involved the manipulation of metals and the ingestion of magical pills to transmute the fleshly body into a vehicle of light and power. Naths claim that one of their founders, Gorakhnath (usually placed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries), developed the famous system of hatha yoga (forceful yoga), which includes psychophysical practices such

as bodily stretching, breath control, and the awakening of the mystical energy known as kundalini (coiled power), which then rises through the six “yogic centers” (chakras) of the spiritual body. Some Nathas added practices from tantric yoga, including ritual sexual intercourse and uses of human sexual fluids as “power substances” (White 1996). Such transgressive practices, designed to provide Nathas with access to supernatural powers, also led to their controversial status. In some cases, however, Hindu kings called upon the magical powers of Nathas to establish their kingdoms.

The Nathas have traditionally been linked to a group of legendary demigods known collectively as the *siddhas* (perfected ones), mythical superheroes who fought evil beings and mediated the human and divine realms. However, it is unlikely that the institutionalized orders of Nathas existed prior to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century. These orders claimed descent from another group of legendary (yet quasi-historical) figures known as the Nine Nathas—a shifting list of great masters including Gorakhnath, Adinath, Matsyendranath, and Minanath. With time, emphasis was given to Gorakhnath as the founder of the Nathas. One result of this complex interweaving of the Nathas with the *siddhas* and alchemists has been a rich trove of folklore and mythological traditions, which developed along with classic Nath texts on hatha yoga such as the thirteenth-century *Goraksa Sataka* (Hundred stanzas of Goraksa).

For centuries, Nathas have been visible throughout India as they journeyed on pilgrimages to holy sites and festivals. Some have been easily identified by their large earrings (made of metal, clay, or horn) inserted into the split ear cartilage by their gurus at the final stage of initiation. Some have lived in monastic communities; others have practiced alone in jungles and deserts. With their claims of great spiritual powers, alchemical practices, and connections with hatha yoga, the Nathas represent an important and distinctive type of holy person in the history of south Asian religions.

—Glen Alexander Hayes

See also: Gorakhnath; Hinduism and Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People

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Native Americans and Holy People

See Amerindian Religions and Holy People

Nature

There is no great consistency in the relationship of holy people with nature, whether natural forces or animals. In some religions, the identification of the holy person with nature is extremely close (as in the indigenous religions of America and Africa), in others the defense of the natural takes on a central role (most notably the Jains, and including also Hinduism and Buddhism), while in still other religions, such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, connection to nature is only a secondary theme and often takes the form of dominance over rather than identification with the natural world. Retreat to a natural environment, however, especially for hermits, is a far-reaching theme.

In the indigenous religions of Africa and the Americas there is no clear dividing line between humans and the rest of the animal kingdom. In some legends, such as that of the Maasai, the hero is part wild animal and part human, marking his special powers and liminal status. This idea is widespread in Africa, as can be seen in the belief that the Malawi mythical martyr Mbona can appear as a python. In Amerindian spirituality, “ancestors” can include animals, plants, and even natural phenomena, looking back to a time when all lived together as equals. Thus great holy people, such as the legendary prophet/sage of the Cheyenne, Sweet Medicine, took on different animal forms to escape an attack. In historic times, the Amerindian connection to nature has most often been expressed in terms of care for the environment. For example, an Ottawa holy man called The Trout in 1807 proclaimed a message from God that the people should show respect for animals and never kill more than was necessary for food and clothing—reemphasizing traditional values in the face of the European call for furs for trade and so on. The Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa (1775–1836) also denounced overhunting. The Midewiwin brotherhood was based on communication with animals who had taken human form.

In other religions that have emphasized the kinship of humans and animals, holy people have also been especially identifiable because of their closeness to or protection of animals. For example, the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (c. 570–497 B.C.E.) taught vegetarianism and advocated gentleness between species. If we could identify pre-Christian holy people among the Celtic peoples, it seems likely that they would also be marked for their closeness to nature, to judge from these elements that have lingered especially in Irish Christian legend. In both cases, an important factor seems to have been belief in reincarnation—if all souls are equal and move freely among animal forms, what right does a human have to take life? This concept is most developed in Jainism, which has an acute consciousness of the natural world. Twenty of the Jain *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) are believed to have achieved supreme knowledge on Mt. Sammedacala,



Jain Bird Hospital, Delhi, India. (Art Directors)

and the first tirthankara reached fulfillment on another mountain, reflecting an eremitical tendency as an attribute of holy people. The most certain path to holiness, though, lies in “not-harming,” not killing any animal, no matter how small. Devout Jainas show constant mindfulness about the life around them, carrying whisks to brush away small insects before sitting down, even wearing face masks to avoid inhaling small animals. This theme appears in the lives of their holy people, most strikingly in that of Arihtanemi, the twenty-second tirthankara, who was on his way to be married when he heard the cries of the animals waiting to be butchered for the wedding feast. This so roused his heart that he forswore marriage and became an ascetic.

In all of these religions, it is common for a holy person to “prove” him- or herself by exerting authority over the forces of nature, whether animals, rain, plants, or any other part of the natural world. This theme becomes more significant in Buddhism, which combines a respect for nature with spiritual power over it. For example, the third Chan patriarch in China, Seng-ts’an (d. c. 606), went into hiding for ten years on a mountain to escape persecution. His presence there pacified the tigers that had been terrorizing the district. This is more a matter of spiritual status than command, as can be seen in the case of the Chan master Fa-jung (594–657), who

had such strong emanations after enlightenment that birds would come and offer him flowers.

In Christianity and Islam, the most important thread is that nature itself proves the special status of a holy person by serving or obeying him or her. Thus early Christian hermits of the desert were often portrayed in “unnatural” proximity with animals, the beasts giving up their savage nature in the presence of holiness. Paul the Hermit (c. 235–c. 345) received daily bread deliveries from a crow, and a lion eventually came to dig his grave, and legend tells that Jerome (347–420) removed a thorn from a lion’s foot. These themes are also very important in Celtic hagiography, as mentioned above; *most* Irish saints had animals as part of their monastic community, fetching, carrying, caring for the holy person, and in general manifesting the greatness of the saint with their loyal, tame service. A great love of the natural world is also manifest in legends of both desert and Irish saints. Such a deep empathy with nature is unusual in European Christianity outside of these two traditions, until it emerges unexpectedly in thirteenth-century Italy with Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226), although authority over animals also appears in the lives of Ethiopian saints, such as the fourteenth-century Samuel of Waldebbba. Similarly, tales of Muslim sufis describe how their holiness was manifested by the care of animals. For

example, when Dhu'n-nun al-Misri (796–861) died, birds flocked above the coffin to give it shade. 'Abdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166), according to sufi sources, was able to speak directly to animals, thanks to the purification of his soul—and could tame them at a glance.

No analysis of saints' attitudes toward nature would be complete, though, without some mention of modern "environmentalist saints." Such figures have appeared in several religions, both old and new. For example, the Greek monk Father Amphilochios (d. 970), widely revered as a saint, was an ecologist before environmentalism became fashionable, declaring that "whoever does not love trees, does not love Christ" (Ware 1993, 132). And the founders of many new religions have put a central emphasis on connection to nature, especially in the wiccan movement, which emphasizes a nurturing mother goddess and especially women's power to connect with the forces of the earth.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Desert Saints; Francis of Assisi; Hermits; Jainism and Holy People; Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir; Mbona; Midewiwin Brotherhood; Misri, Dhu'n-nun al-; Samuel of Waldebba; Tenskwatawa

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Nawaz, Khwaja Band

See **Gisudaraz, Muhammad Bandanawaz**

Nayanars

(7th–10th cent. C.E.)

Shaivite Hindu poets

Nayanars were poetic figures who helped to spread Shaiva devotion throughout southern India by singing the praises of their deity Shiva from the seventh through the tenth centuries. Historically, there were sixty-three such singing poets representing a cross-section of Indian culture devoid of distinctions based on caste, age, or sex. The hymns of the sixty-three Nayanars were preserved in the *Tirumurai* (Holy books), an anthology arranged in eleven books. These hymns are used in worship services at the present time in temples throughout southern India. The poetry of three of the earliest and most prominent Shaiva poets, Appar and Campantar from the seventh century and Cuntarar from the ninth, were collected into a work entitled the *Tevaram* (Songs in praise of God) that consists of 796 hymns composed by them.

By means of their itinerant lifestyles, these poet-saints unified many sacred places of southern India and con-

nected many of them directly to their god. In this way, they helped to create a Shaiva sacred geography. The particular locations visited by the saints became associated with the saints and their songs. Therefore, the Nayanars enhanced the prestige of particular locations and contributed to making the temple the center of southern Indian culture. By using the first-person singular voice to express their love of God, these poet-saints gave expression to the personal nature of their experience. If praise of Shiva represented the content of their compositions, it was pilgrimage to various locations that formed the context of their devotional songs. These various saints wanted to visit all the sacred sites of their beloved deity in order to experience his different personas and the different manifestations associated with each location. Hagiographical narratives of these poet-saints were preserved in the *Periya Puranam* (The great tradition), which many scholars date around 1135 C.E. Their poetry broke out of the genre of the classical Cankam poetry with its division into interior and exterior in order to create something less impersonal. Their poetry evoked Tamil culture and promoted a self-conscious affection for this culture and the sacredness of its language and music, while at the same time uniting the population and land in a common religious viewpoint.

These poet-saints were important to the religiosity of ordinary people. The icons of the Nayanars in temples and their use on festive occasions were vivid expressions of their importance. This scenario suggests that these poet-saints became a vital part of temple devotion. They also played a significant role in the ritual performances of temple life with the recitation of their poetry.

—Carl Olson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Status

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Nazaré, Maria

See **Meninha de Gantois, Mãe**

Nehanda Nyakasikana

Zimbabwean ancestral spirit

Nehanda Nyakasikana, an ancestor of unknown historicity, achieved divine status as a *mhondoro* (lion) spirit in Zimbabwe, where her powers as a leader in war and maker of rain are widely acknowledged. According to popularly held belief, the *mhondoro* spirits are the spirits of important ancestors, chiefs, or, in modern terms, political rulers who have passed away and have returned to protect their people. They act through mediums, who can be men or women of that nation, and are closely associated with the welfare of whole communities.

The role of spirit mediums in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the sixteenth century. Since then, they have played a very important role in the daily lives of the peasantry. *Mhondoro* spirits are thought to possess the spirit mediums after residing in the bodies of young lions. The mediums themselves are men and women who lead ordinary lives as members of a village. Their role is to “look after” the welfare of the people. They “protect the crops, protect the wild animals and wild vegetables and send thunder and lightning and the rain. They can cure and as they are the spirits of dead chiefs, they know all there is to know about war” (Lan 1985). The *mhondoro* mediums are thus quite influential in the eyes of the peasantry. However, some mediums over the years have been more divine than others during trying times, particularly times of war and drought. Nehanda, Chaminuka, and Kagubi, the three most important *mhondoro* spirits, achieved fame because of the times in which they were active.

The spirit of Nehanda became famous during the 1896 revolt, when she reportedly led the people in the First Chimurenga, or war of liberation, against the colonial state of Southern Rhodesia. According to one participant, the medium of Nehanda “was doing her command work, directing us in Zimbabwe—she led us in the war of liberation.” The *mhondoro* medium of Nehanda is believed to have had two separate traditions of mediums, one in the Mazoe region near Harare, the capital city, and the other in Dande. It was a medium of the Mazoe Nehanda, a woman named Charwe, who led the First Chimurenga. Nehanda was said to be aided by another *mhondoro* spirit, Kagubi. In about 1971, the spirit of Nehanda is reported to have possessed an old woman named Kunzaruwa in the northeastern part of Zimbabwe.

The career of a *mhondoro* medium includes healing and protecting the people against misfortune. Nehanda’s prominence lay in the fact that she came to represent the awaited victory over the oppressors. Such was her historical importance and influence that when the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (Zanla) discovered Kunzaruwa in their operational zone, they immediately appealed to her to guide them.

Mhondoro Nehanda is known to have possessed the power of war and also the power of rain. Her reputation as a rainmaker in the nineteenth century is widespread. In 1906, a medium of Nehanda in the Mazoe region is referred to in government reports as a “rain spirit” (Lan 1985). Moreover, a government agency in 1963 recorded that “Nehanda is the spiritual rainmaker” of the Korekore people (*ibid.*). Nehanda’s purported rainmaking power was therefore also recognized by the British colonial regime.

Nehanda mediums often speak words of guidance to families or to the nation. Besides rainmaking and victory in battle, the *mhondoro* are attributed powers of prophecy, divination, and healing, and they also function as intermediaries with the high god called Mwari. They perform their duties only as articulators of majority opinion.

During the nineteenth century, another famous *mhondoro*, Chaminuka, became a center of Shona resistance to Ndebele domination. The identity of the historical Chaminuka is uncertain but is believed to go back several hundred years. The Chaminuka spirit appears first to have entered a medium during the early nineteenth century following the arrival of the invading Ndebele people, who were an offshoot of the Zulu people of KwaZulu/Natal in South Africa. The Chaminuka spirit is not known to have possessed another medium until 1903, so it did not figure into the 1896–1897 revolt. Later twentieth-century mediums have revived the Chaminuka cult and restored the spirit’s reputation as a rainmaker.

It is therefore apparent that the extent to which these ancestors are considered divine depended on their roles in protecting the people, bringing them rain, and driving the oppressors away from the land. In the traditional society they therefore hold the same status as any Roman Catholic pope or Anglican archbishop in the West.

—Roderick B. Ngoro

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Intermediaries

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Nemi (Arishtanemi)

Jain tirthankara

According to Jain teachings, Nemi was the twenty-second *tirthankara* (ford-maker) in the current declining half-cycle of time. Jain hagiography tells of how, in an earlier incarnation as a prince named Shankh, he sought to discover the

reason for the strength of his attachment to his wife, which was preventing him from renouncing the world. He asked his father, who was a mendicant, for an explanation. His father informed him that the two of them had been married for six previous births, and that the tie would be broken only in the ninth, when he would become the tirthankara Nemi.

Two births later, he was born as the son of the legendary Queen Shiva Devi and King Samudravijay of Sauripur. Because his mother had happened to see a disc decorated with arishta gems (a black gemstone) in a dream while he was in the womb, he was called Arishtanemi. His paternal first cousin was the Hindu deity Krishna. The entire clan moved from central India to India's west coast, where Krishna founded the city of Dwarka. There, Nemi became betrothed to a princess of Junagadh named Rajimati, who of course had been his spouse in his former lives. When, on the day of the wedding, Nemi was approaching the place where the ceremony was to take place on the back of an elephant, he saw a large enclosure filled with wailing animals. When the elephant driver explained that they were to be slaughtered to feed the wedding guests, the compassionate prince ordered their immediate release. He then renounced his intention to marry and directed the driver to return to Dwarka. The news of these events gave rise to great consternation, and the cancellation of the wedding was a huge blow to his bride-to-be. After a year of giving away his wealth, he became a homeless mendicant, and he ultimately achieved omniscience and began a teaching mission as a tirthankara. Rajimati also renounced the world and, according to Shvetambara tradition, achieved liberation as a result of Nemi's teaching. In the end, Nemi shed his body and achieved liberation at Mount Girnar (in Gujarat).

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Malli; Parshva; Reincarnation; Rishabha; Teachers as Holy People

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Neolin

(Mid-18th cent. C.E.)

Delaware prophet, leader

Neolin, a key figure in Pontiac's Rebellion of 1763–1764, was one of the most important of a succession of American Indian prophets in the eighteenth-century Ohio Valley. His

preachings of spiritual renewal and resistance to British expansion helped unite thousands of Indians into a multiracial confederacy. Neolin claimed to have had his first vision from the "Master of Life" around 1760, and by 1761 he was gaining converts among the Lenape (Delaware) people.

The key messages of Neolin's teachings reflected a desire on the part of American Indians to regain control over their own destiny after decades of ongoing European intrusion and disruption in their lives. Constant warfare between their French and British neighbors, diseases such as smallpox, and alcohol and other assorted manufactured trade goods had all reduced Indian population numbers and weakened traditional cultural mores. Although claiming to be a mediator between the Master of Life and the Indian people, Neolin called on his countrymen to avoid the vices of Europeans by renouncing alcohol, producing their own tools and cloth, reestablishing their traditional moral standards, purging their bodies of evil influences by drinking herbal emetics, and resisting further European encroachment on their lands. His militant message also contained newer ideas apparently borrowed from Europeans, such as belief in a heaven and hell and condemnation of polygyny.

Neolin's teachings spread quickly throughout the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes area and were taken up by other Indian religious leaders. Coinciding with British victory over the French at the end of the Seven Years' War in the early 1760s, Neolin's message was adopted by the Ottawa war chief Pontiac and others as an inducement to fight against the British. The resulting confederacy temporarily stopped British movement west of the Appalachian Mountains and stands as one of the most successful periods of Indian resistance to European invasion.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; Reform and Reaction

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Neri, Philip

(1515–1595 C.E.)

Roman Catholic preacher, spiritual adviser

One of the most interesting of the many sixteenth-century saints of the Roman Catholic Church, Philip Neri, born in

1515, was a holy man in the medieval fashion, combining street preaching with wide popularity (so that during his lifetime he was called “the apostle of Rome”). But in a sense he was also “modern” because he emphasized the role of the laity and the need for individual conversion. He is most famous, in fact, for giving individual counseling to the people of Rome regardless of their social status. His wisdom in this regard can be summed up in his saying: “Once let a little love find entrance to their hearts, and the rest will follow.” He is also noteworthy for shunning the excessive religious bigotry of the Catholic Reformation. His feast day is May 26.

It was a custom at the time that men would cluster around a charismatic leader. Philip had a habit of inviting men to prayer in his room, which they accepted in such great numbers that eventually a larger accommodation had to be built. This room, called “The Oratory,” after the Latin word *orare* (to pray), would eventually give Philip’s community a name, the “Oratorians.” Further, this hall came to host the musical form called the “oratorio,” considered by some the immediate antecedent to modern opera.

Philip Neri was celebrated in his own life for his sense of humor. He often dressed in ridiculous outfits and sometimes shaved only one side of his face. In a telling comment on his attitude toward asceticism, he gave a layman permission to wear a hair shirt, but only if he put it on over his clothes. He once commanded a priest to repeat his moving sermon six times in order to give the faithful the impression that this was the only sermon he had. In fact, a number of Philip’s practical jokes involved humbling, and occasionally humiliating, the Roman clergy; for this reason, he seems to have been esteemed by everyone.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Catholic Reformation Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Joy; Laity; Teachers as Holy People

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Newman, John Henry

(1801–1890 C.E.)

Roman Catholic theologian

The Christian intellectual John Henry Newman may rightly be called one of the most powerful and influential figures in modern times. His career ignited a struggle within Christianity that has never disappeared.

Born in 1801, Newman grew up in the Anglican church, founded in the Renaissance to combat the Roman Catholic pope’s claim to sovereignty, on the one hand, and Protestantism’s radical individualism, on the other. As a result, the church was almost from its inception both ritualistic and



Theologian and Roman Catholic apologist John Henry Newman.
(Library of Congress)

dogmatic and personal and evangelical. Newman, a brilliant student, entered Oxford University at age sixteen and in 1822 was elected as a fellow at Oriel College. Though Oxford had always served the church by providing leading clergy, there was no interest in theological questions until Liberalism, a philosophy that all faiths are equally genuine, broke upon it. Naturally, there was a reaction divided among those who fought to maintain a stable, morally based church, one fully integrated with and supported by the government, and those who emphasized liturgy and mystery. Newman sought a “middle way,” one that preserved the best of the anti-Liberal camps. Through an emphasis on the unbroken history of Christianity, he was able to preserve the privileges of the first group and validate the sacred aspects of the second. In publishing a pamphlet on this solution, he began a reform impetus that is called the Oxford movement.

Naturally, neither group was satisfied with this compromise. Notably, in stressing the continuity of the bishops’ office all the way back to the first disciples of Christ (“apostolic succession”), Newman was accused of implying that the Roman Catholic Church was also a legitimate form of Christianity. He replied that the Catholic Church had strayed, especially in its emphasis on the pope, but this made no one happy. In 1841, Newman published Tract #90, which was read as vindicating the Roman church, and the subsequent

storm forced him to retire. Fighting conversion the whole way, in 1845 he became a Roman Catholic.

This decision did not end his struggle, and Newman's own admitted difficulties were criticized not only by Anglicans but by fellow Roman Catholics. Finally, in 1864, Newman was attacked for lying, and his reply was collected in his most famous work, the *Apologia pro vita sua* (Defense of his life), a triumphant expression of human conscience. This extraordinarily honest and beautifully written memoir is kind but determined. Newman models his approach on Augustine's *Confessions* from about 400, but with a very modern understanding of the power of skepticism; his trials are the trials of spirituality in the modern world.

Newman's other great work is *The Idea of a University* (1852), lectures delivered in Dublin to foster an enlightened higher education, necessary since Catholics had been excluded from English universities.

Newman died on August 11, 1890, having been made a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII the previous year. That act, reversing a history of suspicion on the part of the Vatican and the English Catholic hierarchy, was seen by all Christians, Catholic and Protestant alike, as vindicating a sincere and upright man of God. He was declared venerable by the Roman Catholic Church on January 22, 1991.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Nezahualcoyotl

(d. 1472 C.E.)

Aztec ruler

Nezahualcoyotl, who, like the Mexica ruler Axayacatl, was a Nahua-speaking *tlatoani* (speaker), served as the ruler of an important Mexican city, Tezcoco, during the fifteenth century. In the native-produced sources, Nezahualcoyotl was lauded as a great ruler because of his military prowess, but his poetic texts are also important records of pre-Hispanic thought. The document known as the *Romances de los señores* (Romances of the lords) is a collection of many of the texts attributed to Nezahualcoyotl. Aztec scholar Miguel León-Portilla (1969) describes this ruler as a "poet-king" who muses on the nature of flower and song. However, the texts are directly related to

Mesoamerican sacrificial practice, conquest warfare, and the flowery wars. The flowery wars, which Nezahualcoyotl helped establish, were to produce warrior captives to sacrifice to the sun to assure that it would rise each day. The image of the flower as a sacrifice also metonymically refers to a sacrificial victim.

The fate of this poet-king was foretold early, when Nezahualcoyotl was a child. The pre-Columbian *Anales de Cuauhtitlan* (Annals of Cuauhtitlan) describe the prophecy that marked Nezahualcoyotl as a *tlatoani*. While fleeing a neighboring ruler who had assassinated his father, Ixtlilxochitl, Nezahualcoyotl fell out of a boat that was carrying him to his grandfather Izcoatl, the *tlatoani* of Tenochtitlán. "Sorcerers" lifted the young ruler out of the water and took him to a mountain to "anoint" him with "flood and blaze." "Flood and blaze" is a typical Mesoamerican metaphor for the spirit of warfare, especially conquest warfare. This "unction" would assure Nezahualcoyotl success in conquest. The young ruler reappeared in the water, and his grandfather was very surprised to see him.

Nezahualcoyotl grew quickly and took captives to validate his role as *tlatoani*. Eventually he became one of the most powerful leaders in the region. His poetic texts reflect his adherence to the auto-sacrifices necessary for retaining the right to rule as well as to serving the ancestors who would bless the military campaigns narrated in the texts. In addition, the texts offer many insights into the philosophical nature of Mesoamerican thought.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Axayacatl; Rulers as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Niasse, Ibrahim Kaolack

(1902–1975 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Shaykh Ibrahim Kaolack Niasse, the leader of the Tijaniyyah sufi order in West Africa, was born in Senegal in 1902. He memorized the Qur'an and studied traditional Islamic sciences under his father, Abdullah. Niasse became the Tijaniyyah spiritual leader (*khalifah*) after his father's death in 1922. He was initiated into the order at a very

young age and traveled widely throughout West Africa to spread its teachings.

His visit to Kano, Nigeria, in 1945 on invitation by the emir of Kano was pivotal in the history of Tijaniyyah in West Africa. There, he met new disciples; initiated members, including both men and women; gave lectures; and granted *baraka* (blessings) to many people. Although the visit enhanced the Tijaniyyah movement and contributed to its growth in Nigeria, it also caused a great havoc because of the order's rivalry with the Qadiriyyah order practiced in the Sokoto area of Nigeria.

Niasse strongly encouraged education for both men and women and insisted that both receive solid instruction in Islamic knowledge and modern sciences. He also advised his members to learn foreign languages. Women are initiated into the Tijaniyyah order and a few of them hold leadership positions as *muqaddamah* (women's junior leaders). Both male and female junior spiritual leaders (*muqaddams*) are responsible for spreading the secret prayers (*awrad*) of the Tijaniyyah leaders among the followers.

On his travels, Niasse met many African leaders, including Abd al-Nasir of Egypt, Nkruma of Ghana, and Ahmad Bello of Nigeria, and developed relationships with them based on mutual understanding and interdependence. He received numerous honorary awards for his contributions to Islam. The Tijaniyyah order is less hierarchical than other Islamic orders, and Niasse played an effective role in Senegalese politics as he pressed for social justice and equality for all Senegalese. His followers vote and hold many political positions in the government up to the present. He required them to be devoted, obedient, attached to a spiritual leader, and responsible and accountable for their actions. Many members believe that their *muqaddams* possess special blessings and can perform miracles.

Niasse was well educated and wrote some books on Islam. He and those he appointed as his representatives inducted millions of people into the Tijaniyyah order. Niasse died in July 1975 at Kaolack, which became like Mecca for his disciples. They visit Kaolack to serve their current leaders and earn blessings from them.

—Yushau Sodiq

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Nichiren

(1222–1282 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar, reformer

Within the context of the tumultuous period of the Kamakura era of Japanese history (1192–1333), the prophetic voice of Nichiren could be heard addressing the spiritual issues of his time. Nichiren, born in 1222, came from a family of modest means. His father was likely a manager or official who administered fishing rights in the village. Nichiren received a Buddhist education and was ordained a monk in the Tendai sect. He also learned to chant *nembutsu* (the name of Amida [Amitabha]), although he would reject this religious practice later in his life. His teacher also taught him to revere the Lotus Sutra, which would have a lifetime influence upon him. While he was on a twenty-year pilgrimage to various Buddhist centers of learning, he became convinced that the Lotus Sutra represented the true teachings of Buddhism. During his life, he composed more than 500 works that testify to his wide knowledge of not only Buddhist thought but also Confucian classics.

On April 28, 1253, Nichiren spoke to a group of monks about focusing on the Lotus Sutra. There is no evidence that he thought at this time that he was establishing a new doctrine or sect, though he may have believed that he was reforming the Tendai school. A political leader tried to have him arrested for causing dissension, but he escaped with the assistance of his former teacher. Returning to the area eleven years later, he was almost killed in an ambush. This attack did not deter him from attracting followers of the Tendai sect and middle- and lower-ranking samurai warriors. Although his thinking was undeveloped at this point in his career, he began to recommend chanting the title of the Lotus Sutra, which was called *daimoku*. Nichiren was the first person to define *daimoku* as an exclusive practice and to give it a doctrinal foundation.

After arriving in Kamakura in 1254, Nichiren witnessed various natural and social calamities, and he came to the conclusion that Honen's pernicious teaching of the chanting of Amida's name was the root cause of the various problems. His vehement criticism triggered a strong response that motivated a mob to attack him. He was arrested finally and exiled to the Izu peninsula for his outspoken criticism. This forced exile enabled him to define more fully his religious path.

On February 22, 1263, Nichiren was pardoned from his exile. After a period of travel, he returned to Kamakura in 1268 at a time when Japan was being threatened by an invasion by

the Mongol Empire in China. Nichiren and his community were emboldened by his prior prophecy about a foreign invasion that now appeared imminent. Now, he began to challenge political officials and major temples. On September 12, 1271, his enemies responded by having him arrested and exiled on the island of Sado in the Japan Sea, where he experienced many hardships that he interpreted as karmic retribution for previous transgressions. He compared himself to a figure in chapter twenty of the Lotus Sutra named Bodhisattva Never Despising, who was mocked and tormented when he preached a message of universal buddhahood.

The selection of this bodhisattva suggested that Nichiren viewed himself as the messenger of the Buddha sent to propagate the Lotus Sutra in the final age. Nichiren also began to identify his efforts with the Bodhisattva Superior Conduct from chapter fifteen of the Lotus Sutra. This figure was entrusted with preaching the text in the age after the enlightenment of the Buddha.

On February 14, 1274, Nichiren was pardoned and returned to Kamakura. Authorities asked him when the Mongol attack might occur, and he replied that it would happen within a year. Moreover, he preached that only reliance upon the Lotus Sutra could forestall the disaster. After two months, he left Kamakura for the final time to become a solitary pilgrim. In this last stage of his life, he trained disciples and continued to write during a sojourn of almost nine years near Mount Minobu. He fell ill in 1282 and died en route to the hot springs of Hitachi.

—Carl Olson

See also: Amitabha; Buddhism and Holy People; Honen; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Prophets; Reform and Reaction; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Nicholas

(Mid-4th cent. C.E.)

Christian bishop

The bishop of Myra in Asia Minor in the mid-fourth century, Nicholas has accumulated copious legends and has been transformed many times through the centuries. One of the most popular saints in both Western Europe and the Byzantine East throughout the Middle Ages, the metamorphoses of the early Christian bishop Nicholas into the modern "Santa Claus" is a fascinating study in the continued attraction of holy figures as well as the urge to refashion and update them for various purposes.

Very few actual facts are known about Nicholas's life except that he was a bishop of Myra who died in about 342, but his cult appears to have been well established already by the sixth century, when the Byzantine emperor Justinian is said to have founded a chapel partially in his honor in Constantinople. The earliest Greek texts concerning his life date to this same time period, and he became a prominent figure in Greek hagiography thereafter. Legends concerning Nicholas were known in the West by the eighth century at least and continued to be augmented and expanded in both Byzantine and Western hagiographic texts throughout the medieval period. Some of these tales also represent conflation from the life of another Nicholas, cofounder of the monastery of Sion, who lived in the sixth century. Dedication to St. Nicholas by both Western and Byzantine rulers promoted his cult and status greatly, and various miracles were added to his legend in the West, especially after the translation of his relics to Bari in southern Italy in 1087. His shrine at Bari was an important center of pilgrimage throughout the rest of the Middle Ages and was especially famous for the sweet smell of myrrh emitted by his relics.

Among the numerous deeds and miracles credited to Nicholas, several episodes especially stand out: his miraculous intervention in calming a storm at sea and saving three sailors from drowning off the coast of Turkey; his appearance to the fourth-century emperor Constantine to save three army officers who had been unjustly condemned to death; his ability to bring three youths back to life after they had been murdered, cut to pieces, and placed in a brine-tub by an innkeeper; and his gift of gold (coins or golden balls) to the three daughters of a poor man to provide their dowries and prevent them from becoming prostitutes. These charitable and miraculous deeds attributed to Nicholas eventually combined with various European folklore traditions to transform him into the gift-bearing "Father Christmas" or "Santa Claus" of the present day.

During the medieval and Renaissance periods especially, St. Nicholas was one of the most frequently represented saints in art, and narrative cycles of his life are widespread in both Western and Byzantine art. He is also recognizable as an independent figure by his attributes: bishop's garb, crozier, and miter; he is often shown holding a book, a cross, three golden balls, or an anchor. His feast day is December 6.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Miracles

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Nicholas of Flüe

(1417–1487 C.E.)

Christian hermit

Nicholas of Flüe, also known as “Bruder Klaus,” was an ascetic and a hermit who became renowned as a spiritual adviser. He was born near Sachseln in Unterwalden, Switzerland, in 1417 to a middle-class family in the Melchthal. The family was affiliated with the Friends of God (Gottesfreunde), a lay movement scattered across Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands in the fifteenth century. Members aspired to enter into closer friendship with God through strict ascetic practices and meditation on the passion of Christ. Members could live together in community, dispersed in secular society, or alone as hermits. In his twenties, Nicholas pursued a career as a builder and also served in the local government and militia. With his wife, Dorothea Wyss, he had ten children.

Nicholas became increasingly involved in the Friends of God and joined a circle of mystics at the monastery of Engelberg. In 1467, he resigned his offices, took leave of his wife and family, and became a wandering ascetic. He eventually settled near Ranft, a village in the Melchthal, where the townspeople built him a small hut with a chapel attached. Nicholas lived there nineteen years, praying from midnight to midday and in the afternoon engaging visitors in religious conversation, offering them his spiritual advice. He is said to have consumed only the eucharist for nourishment. His fame as a mystic and wise counselor for all sorts of religious and political problems spread. Prominent visitors reported favorably on his ascetic life. Such was the renown of his counsel that representatives from the Council of Stans, engaged in difficult negotiations between feuding Swiss cantons, went to Bruder Klaus for advice in 1481. A Swiss chronicler reports that within an hour of hearing Nicholas’s response the council unanimously reached an agreement.

Nicholas died on March 21, 1487. Immediately he was honored throughout Switzerland as a patriot and a saint. The pope first sanctioned this veneration in 1669 and canonized Bruder Klaus in 1947. Nicholas’s feast is celebrated in Switzerland on September 25. He is considered the only Swiss mystic saint and the last mystic of the Middle Ages, and he is patron saint of Switzerland.

—David J. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Hermits; Mysticism and Holy People

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Nicodemus

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian saint

A prominent Jewish Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus was an important witness of Christ’s passion. According to the Gospel of John (3:1–21; 7:50, 19:39–40), Nicodemus recognized Jesus as “the master” after talking with him, although he is described as being somewhat distant from fear of persecution. His participation in taking down and burying Christ’s body, with the help of Joseph of Aramathea, would restore Nicodemus’s position among Jesus’ followers.

After the burial of Christ, Nicodemus’s life becomes enigmatic. He may have lived with Gamaliel near Jerusalem, but some accounts have him journeying to Rome, where he reportedly tried to save the relics of Petronilla and then was tortured and martyred by drowning in the Tiber. Legendary episodes developed very early around Nicodemus. Between the second and fifth centuries, an anonymous author integrated Nicodemus into an account of Christ’s trial, the Acts



Deposition from the Cross, by Benedetto Antelami, 1178. Nicodemus stands on a ladder, removing the nails from Jesus’ hands, while Joseph of Arimathea supports his body. (David Lees/Corbis)

of Pilate. The section of the text devoted to Nicodemus, in which Nicodemus was made a mediator close to Pilate, would later appear as an autonomous account entitled the Gospel of Nicodemus. This work would become the most widely disseminated apocryphal text of the Middle Ages, and the thirteenth-century Vincent of Beauvais and Jacobus de Voragine drew from it.

As he was a witness of the crucifixion, the legend developed that Nicodemus, aided by an angel, carved three crucifixes in the likeness of Christ on the cross. Each crucifix, or *Volto Santo*, was subsequently thrown into the sea and ran aground between the end of the eleventh century and the middle of the twelfth, one at Lucca (Italy), one at Dives, and the third at Rue (both in northern France); there exist several variations on this legendary account. Recognized as miraculous, each *Volto Santo* became the object of a significant pilgrimage.

The cultus of Nicodemus achieved its high point in the late Middle Ages. From the thirteenth century, Nicodemus became more and more apparent in the final scenes of Christ's passion. He was most often represented in the descent from the cross and the entombment with his attributes, the four nails and pincers, and also sometimes carving his crucifixes, assisted by the angel in conformity with the legend, which undoubtedly explains why Nicodemus would long be associated with the sculptor's profession. He was also considered a protector of pigs. St. Nicodemus developed a considerable cult in Brittany, where many chapels were dedicated to him, including those of Pluméliau and Saint-Guénin. In the Roman calendar, the feast of St. Nicodemus is celebrated on August 3, the date of the discovery of his relics.

—*Claire Labrecque*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Death; Jesus; Joseph of Arimathea; Veneration of Holy People

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Nikon

(1605–1681 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox patriarch

Nikon was a seventeenth-century peasant who rose to power in the Russian Orthodox Church. His spirituality was rooted in his conviction that the church ought to be unified, and the

reforms he promulgated aimed to accomplish just that. Nikon's supporters believed in the integrity of his office and admired his faithfulness to his vocation.

Nikon was born of peasant background in 1605 in Vel'demanov. He entered a monastery at age twelve but left—without taking vows—when his father died eight years later. He married, became a deacon, and then was ordained as a priest, receiving a parish in Lyskov. He was quickly transferred to Moscow, for debated reasons, and once there caught the attention of the young, pious tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich. He became a friend and spiritual mentor to the tsar, gradually rising in rank until he became the sixth patriarch of Moscow in 1652. Shortly thereafter, Nikon began to institute his reforms. Archpriest Avvakum led a resistance movement against the reforms and saw them as perversions inspired by Satan. Nikon's supporters affirmed his reforms and believed they were theologically sound and traditionally accurate. Nikon was exiled in 1666, however, for political reasons, and he died in 1681.

Nikon argued that the Russian church deviated from a purer Orthodoxy that the Greek church preserved. His reforms were designed to align the Russian church with the Greek church, for it was the Greeks, after all, who had introduced Orthodoxy to Russia in the tenth century. His reforms included changes in church music, clerical dress, the liturgical and prayer books, and ritual. Most notably, he changed the manner in which one would cross oneself, from two fingers to three, emphasizing the Trinity (three fingers) over the dual nature of Christ (two fingers).

Nikon assumed the doctrine of the Third Rome, which argued that Moscow was the final and true sacred center of Christendom. It followed that since the kingdom of heaven was superior to the kingdom of earth, the church ranked above the state. Tsar Alexei supported Nikon and his mission at first, but later he saw Nikon's religio-political ambitions as a threat, particularly because of Nikon's personality. Nikon could be stubborn, authoritarian, and prideful, though he could also be compassionate and good-natured at times.

—*Nathan S. Carlin*

See also: Avvakum; Orthodoxy and Saints; Reform and Reaction; Ritual

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Nilus of Rossano (Nilus the Younger)

(c. 905–1005 C.E.)

Christian hermit

A treasury official from a noble family of Rossano, Calabria, Italy, born in about 905, Nilus underwent a profound religious conversion after the death of his wife (or mistress) and daughter. He had also just recovered from serious illness. He first joined a community of Greek monks following the Rule of St. Basil, but seeking greater asceticism, he left his monastery to become a hermit in a secluded cave in imitation of the desert hermits. A series of Saracen attacks forced him to give up his ascetic way of life and seek refuge at the monastery of San Adriano in Calabria near his birthplace. While abbot of San Adriano, he was offered an archbishopric but refused the position. When Saracens again invaded Calabria around 981, he and his monks sought refuge first at Monte Cassino and then on land donated to them nearby at Velluccio, where they lived for fifteen years.

The “greatest ascetic teacher of his age” (Hamilton 1965, 285), he was also known for his virtues and theological learning. Fluent in Latin and Greek, he sought to unite the rules of St. Basil and St. Benedict. Despite supporting Pope Gregory V against the antipope John XVI, he pleaded in vain that the antipope be spared and reproached both Pope Gregory and Emperor Otto III after John was tortured and mutilated in 998. After refusing Otto III’s offer to rebuild the monastery of San Adriano, he moved his community to Grottaferrata in 1004, shortly before his death near Frascati, Italy, on December 29, 1005. Although Nilus died before the monastery was built and the community established there, he is considered to be the first abbot of Grottaferrata, a center of Greek monasticism in Italy even today. His feast day is September 26.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Basil the Great; Benedict of Nursia; Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Politics and Holy People

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Nilus of Sora

(1433–1508 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox hermit, writer

A major religious figure of late fifteenth-century Russia, Nilus of Sora was a renowned hermit and writer who advocated the contemplative form of monasticism.

Born in 1433, Nilus was of peasant background. His monastic career began at Russia’s Kirillov Monastery on the White Lake. After some time at Kirillov, Nilus traveled

to Mt. Athos, where he became more familiar with patristic literature. Returning to Russia, he settled along the Sora River in a marshy region near the White Lake and, along with a few students, set up a *skete* community. In a skete, a few disciples live under one roof with a spiritual father, working and holding property in common, and at most having similar small groups of monastics in the surrounding region. Nilus and his disciples did not follow any specific Orthodox monastic rule but read Greek texts and practiced a contemplative life.

Traditional historiography of the Russian Orthodox Church pits Nilus of Sora against Joseph of Volotsk over the issue of monastic landholding (the “possessor” versus “non-possessor” argument). The crux of the matter was considered at a 1503 church council, where these two monastic leaders and writers supposedly had a confrontation. However, recent scholarship has questioned that church property was an issue in 1503. It appears more likely that the two disputed degrees of monastic property and communal life, Nilus believing the contemplative life was more salutary to the soul, and Joseph convinced that a community bonded by a rule, obedience, humility, and work was the most appropriate form of monasticism.

Nilus’s writings consist of his “Predanie” (Tradition) the “Ustav” or monastic regulations, “Zaveshchanie” (Testament), and a corpus of letters. Though the first three works have been described as versions of monastic instructions, they are more correctly viewed as composites of monastic thought. Among them one finds a creed; discourses on church decoration, profit, the practice of manual labor, and cell prayer; and cogitations on Orthodoxy, passions, wicked thoughts, and the gift of tears. Nilus’s “Testament” is a witness to his ascetic life. These texts show Nilus’s understanding of Orthodox patristic writings as well as his experiential spirituality. Though he shares similarities in content and sources with Joseph of Volotsk, Nilus remained dedicated to skete life. His supporters, such as Vassian Patrikeev (d. 1532), are largely responsible for crafting history’s interpretation of Nilus. Nilus is remembered on May 7.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Joseph of Volotsk; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Tolerance and Intolerance; Wealth and Poverty

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Ninian

(5th cent. C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Ninian, also known as Nynia, was a British bishop of the fifth century and one of the first missionaries in Scotland. Very little is known about him, but several later legends survive.

The earliest source is Bede (673–735), who relates that Ninian had converted the southern Picts to Christianity long before Columba started his mission to the northern Picts in the sixth century. Ninian also founded an episcopal see and a church dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, modern Whithorn (then known as Candida Casa, or "White House," because of its white paint). Bede also claimed that Ninian had been trained in Rome. Scholars have not reached an

agreement about the veracity of Bede's testimony, but modern archaeology has revealed the ruins of a church whose stones were painted white, giving credence to the fact that there was such a church, whether it was associated with Ninian or not. There are also inscribed stones indicating a monastery near the site.

Among the other sources for Ninian are an eighth-century poem and a twelfth-century Life by Aelred of Rievaulx.

—James B. Tschenn Emmons

See also: Aelred of Rievaulx; Bede; Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Ruin of Ninian's chapel, Whithorn, Scotland. (Art Directors)

Nizami, Khwaja Hasan

(1878–1955 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Khwaja Hasan Nizami was born in 1878 into the tight inner circle of families who were hereditary custodians of the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya (1239–1325) in Delhi. His ancestors were said to have come long before from Bukhara. Nizami was given a traditional education in the area around the shrine in Delhi and later at a madrasa. From his childhood he was in close association with prominent sufi teachers of that era. Eventually he became a disciple of Mihr 'Ali Shah (d. 1938), and ultimately he was appointed one of his spiritual successors (*khalifas*).

Mihr 'Ali Shah would seem in some ways to be an unusual choice of *murshid* (spiritual teacher) for the young Hasan Nizami. Although a Chishti in the Nizami line, Mihr 'Ali Shah was not the usual ecstatic who remained withdrawn from political controversy. He was, rather, an intellectual and literary figure writing in the fields of Islamic polemic, traditional commentary, and poetry. It seems that the teacher kindled similar interests in the disciple, for in his career Nizami was to follow both literary and political pursuits. Nizami spent the majority of his life pursuing literary and journalistic activities. He frequented intellectual and Muslim political circles and also had many spiritual disciples.

Among his political activities was a campaign to promote essential Islamic knowledge among ordinary Muslims. In this regard, he made a simple translation of the Qur'an and wrote articles on basic Islamic topics. His most famous literary works were historical novels and a long-running serial diary, *Roznamcha* (Diary), in which he recounted the interesting personages with whom he came into contact and the events of his age, a turbulent one in the history of the Indian subcontinent.

Nizami is significant for understanding the transformations in concepts of holiness in the modern period. He traveled widely, and the emergence of print media allowed him to reach thousands of disciples who could take initiation through mail-in forms placed in the back of his publications. In the later years of his life, Khwaja Hasan Nizami was afflicted with weakening health and loss of eyesight. He lived through the difficult times of partition and in his old age seems to have felt embattled by the political and ideological conflicts raging around him. Nizami died in 1955. His spiritual successor is his son, Khwaja Hasan Nizami Thani (the second) who is also a literary figure and a popular representative of the Indian Muslims.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja; Reform and Reaction

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Nizamuddin Auliya, Khwaja (Muhammad ibn Ahmed 'Ali Bada'uni)

(1239–1325 C.E.)

Muslim scholar, sufi

Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya is also known as Mahbub-ilahi, "the beloved of God." His Turkish ancestors were said to have come from Bukhara, and he became the disciple of Baba Farid Ganj-i Shakar in 1257.

Born in 1239, Nizamuddin was from the Indian city of Bada'un and was said to be a descendant of Muhammad. As a young man he exhibited an ascetic and scholarly temperament. Nizamuddin was learned in the Islamic sciences. In one anecdote about his training under Baba Farid, he comments negatively on the quality of a manuscript from which the shaykh is teaching. After being rebuked for this criticism, Nizamuddin was so distraught that he departed in shame and desolation, but Baba Farid's son brought him back to the *khanqah* (sufi hostel).

Nizamuddin never married, and the hereditary custodians of his shrine today are descendants of two orphaned nephews whom he raised. His *khanqah* at Ghiyathpur, then on the outskirts of Delhi, became frequented by spiritual aspirants as well as court and literary figures. He and his disciples wore four-cornered conical caps (*kulah*) often of a yellow or saffron color. He lived at a turbulent time and outlived seven kings. Like the other Chishti sufis, he preferred to keep his distance from the rulers. A famous anecdote tells that the sultan Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq disliked the saint and threatened to execute him after returning from a campaign in 1325. Nizamuddin cryptically said, "Delhi is still far off." Shortly after, a roof collapsed, killing the ruler.

Nizamuddin's disciple Amir Hasan ibn Ala Sijzi (1275–1336) kept a record of his audiences, or *malfuzat*, between 1307 and 1321, entitled *Fawa'id al-Fu'ad* (Morals for the heart). Amir Khusrau (1254–1325), the best-known poet of the early Muslim period in India, was Nizamuddin's close disciple. Some of Khusrau's rhymes in honor of the shaykh are still sung in Qawwali sessions. Nizamuddin's tomb is located in the shrine complex near that of his spiritual master in Delhi.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Khusrau, Amir; Scholars as Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Nogi Maresuke and Shizuko

(1849–1912; 1859–1912 C.E.)

Shinto kami

Nogi Maresuke (1849–1912) was famed for his military exploits, but he gained a unique place in the history of Shinto when he and his wife, Shizuko (1859–1912), committed suicide on the day of the funeral of the Meiji emperor (1852–1912). In 1923, a Shinto shrine dedicated to their spirits was established next to their former residence in Tokyo, where the double suicide took place.

After fighting for the imperial cause in the Meiji Restoration of 1867, Nogi became an officer in Japan's new, modern army. In 1877, during a civil war, he lost his regimental flag in battle and contemplated suicide. The following year, he married Shizuko, who soon bore him two sons. Subsequently, he spent a year studying in Germany, was promoted to general, and proved an effective leader in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). He was less successful as governor general of Taiwan and resigned in 1898 after serving for less than two years. He was again a leader in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), winning key victories but only at great cost. In 1907, he was named director of the Peers' school (Gakushūin), which numbered the future emperor Hirohito among its pupils. When Nogi committed suicide, he left a note referring to the regimental flag he had lost many years earlier.

Japanese response to the suicide was mixed. Some were critical of his decision to die with his lord, a "feudal" practice that already had been banned in 1663 and seemed completely out of touch with the spirit of modern Japan. Others, however, were deeply touched by his loyalty, and Shinto shrines were established at three sites where he had lived, plus one at the tomb of Emperor Meiji. Today, his former home in Tokyo is opened to the public every year on the anniversary of his death. The clothing he and his wife wore when they killed themselves, along with mementos of their lives, are displayed here. Meanwhile, the shrine's wedding hall does a flourishing business. Although some postwar critics complain that Nogi was an inept general whose victories reflect only his willingness to sacrifice the lives of his soldiers, among them his two sons, others continue to revere his memory.

—Robert Borgen

See also: Apotheosis; Morality and Holy People; Shinto and Holy People

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Nongqawuse

(1841–1898 C.E.)

Xhosa prophet, millenarian

Nongqawuse, born in 1841, was a Xhosa (South African) prophetess who precipitated a millenarian movement known as the "Great Cattle Killing." In April 1856, she reported that two strangers had come to tell her that Xhosa cattle were rotten and bewitched and must be slaughtered and that Xhosa crops and bewitching materials must be destroyed. Dead ancestors would then rise and help the Xhosa win back their land from colonial invaders, restore tradition, and halt the cattle lung-sickness afflicting their herds. New cattle herds would appear, grain bins would overflow, and sickness and death, poverty, and witchcraft would cease. The paramount Xhosa chief, Sarhili, slaughtered his herds and ordered subordinate chiefs to do likewise.

When nothing occurred on the three separate days of resurrection that Nongqawuse had specified, the entire affair collapsed. The results, however, were catastrophic. More than 400,000 cattle had been slaughtered. In the aftermath, 40,000 Xhosa died of hunger and 150,000 were displaced. The Xhosa lost two-thirds of their land, and their independence.

Jeff Peires (1989) sees this millenarian movement arising from colonial pressure, Christian and Xhosa resurrection and regeneration beliefs, and the preexisting lung-sickness epidemic. He gives much agency to Nongqawuse's uncle, the chiefs, and to subsequent actions by the colonial governor for the event's extreme consequences. Helen Bradford (1996) critically challenges this "androcentric" interpretation, arguing that issues over gender, women's rights, and Xhosa male sexual misconduct led to Nongqawuse's prophecies.

—Roger B. Beck

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Prophets

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Norbert of Xanten

(c. 1080–1134 C.E.)

Christian monk, order founder, archbishop

The son of the count of Gennep, Norbert, born in about 1080, became a canon at Xanten (Germany) and later served at the courts of Archbishop Frederick of Cologne and Emperor Henry IV, his mother's cousin. Norbert accompanied Henry V to Rome, where he was an unwitting accomplice to Henry's attack on Pope Paschal II in 1111. Although he repented his role in Henry's attack, he stayed with the emperor until 1115, when he retired to a cell near Xanten.

Norbert spent three years in this cell living a life of penance and was certainly influenced by the pious hermit Liudolf. After being ordained a priest, he made an unsuccessful attempt to reform the canons of Xanten, resigned his canonry, and assumed a life of apostolic poverty and preaching. Norbert responded to Rupert of Deutz's censure for unauthorized preaching in 1118 by walking barefoot to Saint-Gilles, where Pope Gelasius II licensed him to preach throughout Christendom. He then began a preaching tour of Brabant, Hainault, and northern France. His charismatic preaching quickly attracted a large number of followers, and with the support of Bishop Bartholomew of Laon, Norbert founded a monastery near Laon in the isolated valley of Prémontré in 1120. He participated in the condemnation of Peter Abelard at the Council of Soissons in 1121. With the foundation of a second house at Floreffe near Namur, Norbert decided that his communities should adopt the Rule of St. Augustine, as he and many of his followers had previously been secular canons following that rule. As one scholar writing on monasticism has pointed out, "It was thus a matter of chance rather than of design that Prémontré became canonical and not monastic or eremitical" (Leyser 1984, 92).

Pope Honorius II confirmed the Premonstratensian order in 1125, but Norbert continued to preach throughout France and Germany. At the Diet of Speyer in 1126, he preached a sermon on loyalty and obedience that won him the support of King Lothar III, who was at the time defending his throne against the Hohenstaufens. In Lothar's presence, the canons of Magdeburg cathedral chose Norbert to become archbishop of Magdeburg, a position Norbert accepted only after pressure from Lothar and the papal legates. The still-barefoot Norbert entered Magdeburg in July 1126 and was consecrated archbishop, but his attempts to reform the archdiocese and recover the church's alienated lands led to rebellion and discontent; likewise, the order he had founded was undergoing a leadership crisis. This problem was settled after

Norbert summoned the Premonstratensian canons to Magdeburg and bade them select Hugh of Fosse as his successor, but Norbert's attempts to reform Magdeburg by introducing Premonstratensian canons led only to several assassination attempts and temporary exile.

Norbert also supported Innocent II in the schism of 1130, accompanied Lothar to Italy, and joined Bernard of Clairvaux in a vain attempt to persuade the antipope Anacletus II to stand aside. Fever forced his return to Magdeburg, where he died in 1134. He was buried at the Premonstratensian church in Magdeburg until his remains were translated to Strahov, near Prague, in 1627. Norbert's feast day is June 6, but it is celebrated within the Premonstratensian order on June 11.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People

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Ntsikana

(c. 1760–1821 C.E.)

Christian prophet, hymn writer

Ntsikana, born in about 1760, was a Xhosa (South African) prophet who became the first Xhosa Christian convert. He proceeded to become a noted hymn writer. Xhosa oral tradition relates that in about 1815 Ntsikana had a mystical experience before having any significant contact with Christian missionaries. Soon thereafter, he learned Christian concepts and spread Christianity among the Xhosa. He is always paired with another Xhosa prophet, Nxele, who turned away from Christianity in favor of a more militant brand of Xhosa nationalism. Although also a Xhosa nationalist, Ntsikana called for nonviolence and gradual change.

Ntsikana wrote the famous hymn "He, the Great God in Heaven," the first Christian hymn in Xhosa set to the tune of a traditional Xhosa song. He preached the sovereignty of God, submission before God, and an apocalyptic vision that included the "Broad-Chested One," a strong messiah figure who would bring peace to the Xhosa people. Ntsikana never joined a mission, never took a Christian name, and continued to reside as an itinerant preacher among his people. His

following was never large, but his role in preparing the Xhosa people for Christianity is significant. He and Nxele also ideally represent the two choices (nonviolence or militancy) facing Africans in their response to European invasion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

—Roger B. Beck

See also: Mission

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Nuri, Abu al-Husayn al-

(c. 840–907 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Abu al-Husayn al-Nuri was an important mystic from Baghdad, where he was born in about 840. He was called Nuri, meaning "light" or "luminous," because he apparently radiated light when he spoke. Nuri was considered a very pious man. Very austere, he strove for self-denial and declared that true sufism was the abandonment of all physical pleasures. Accordingly, he believed that the true seeker of God relied on God alone. Nuri was one of the disciples of Sari al-Saqati.

Nuri is celebrated for his notions regarding human love for the Transcendent Lord. He referred to himself as the lover (*'ashiq*) of God who sought to tear the veils of separation. For him, it is the emotion of love centered in the heart that connects the human to the divine. In his *Maqamat al-qulub* (The stations of the hearts), he provides a metaphorical analysis of the psychological aspects of love. The heart is ruled by a king called Certitude with two ministers called Fear and Hope. Ten other ministers depicting the obligations of a devout Muslim also govern this domain of the heart. Elsewhere, he described the heart as a garden that receives rain from God. While the gentle rain of mercy falls on those who are good, such as those who repent, ascetics, lovers, and gnostics, the harsh rain of retribution falls on those who are

wicked, such as the idolators, hypocrites, oppressors, and transgressors of spiritual laws. Nuri foreshadows the later frequent practice of using nature imagery to describe spiritual and mystical experiences. Although these views on the mystical path, especially on the importance of love, made him cherished by the mystics, they incurred the hostility of the dogmatic scholars of tradition. In his own circle, he was criticized for his excessive exuberance and extraordinary disclosures regarding his gnostic and spiritual experiences.

In addition to divinely oriented spiritual love, Nuri considered love for fellow humans an important aspect of the spiritual quest. Indeed, he himself could be regarded as a paragon of this altruistic love. This brotherly empathy was the quality of *ithar*, or sacrifice for the sake of others. In an incident in 877, the authorities of Baghdad charged the sufis with wrongdoing. Nuri sought to free his fellow mystics from any consequences by offering his life for their safety. The caliph who investigated the case was touched by this selfless gesture and excused all of the other sufis of his circle. After all, a group with such compassion for fellow human beings should be in line with the spirit of the message of Islam.

Nuri constantly tried to elevate his soul and banish negative emotions in creative ways. Thus, because he was afraid of lions, he went to the forests near the Tigris River where they roamed. His end was in conformity with his life of ecstatic involvement with God. One day in 907, "enraptured" when he heard a particular verse, he started to run. In his frenzy, he ran into a reed-bed with freshly cut reeds. The razor-sharp reed edges cut his feet, but in his condition of rapture he did not feel any pain. He soon died from his injuries. When Nuri died, one of his contemporaries, Junaid, stated, "Half of sufism is gone."

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Devotion; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Nyabingi

(fl. 1750–1800 C.E.)

Ndorwa princess, rainmaker, goddess

Tutsi, Hutu, and Kiga folklore asserts that Nyabingi, whose name means "possessing many things," was a princess of Ndorwa in the northern part of present-day Rwanda. She was a renowned rainmaker, also known as Nogukuru, "grandmother"; Biheko, "she who carries us on her back"; and Muyaga, "the wind." Her real name was Kitami, but she was apotheosized as the spirit Nyabingi. Nyabingi became

famous in the great lakes region of East Africa between 1750 and 1800. After she died, a strong cult developed around her.

Nyabingi appears as a female spirit who speaks through the living, interceding for the people to Ruhanga, the creator. She lives in the socioreligious memory of the cultivators and pastoral groups of the region. Her mediums, called *bagirwa*, have exclusive power to invoke her presence and interpret her will to the people. The *bagirwa* invoke supernatural forces to punish those who anger Nyabingi or fail to give offerings and acknowledge her powers. The ascendancy of Nyabingi over other cults lay in the ability of the *bagirwa* to organize the cult into a hierarchical power structure, with them wielding power as her representative.

Followers believe that it is through the curses of the *bagirwa* that Nyabingi demonstrates her power to bring misfortunes upon wrongdoers. In her diverse manifestations, Nyabingi has been concerned with grievances more than solidarity, mediating social disputes arising from demographic imbalance, scarcity of resources, external aggressors, and family tensions. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when herders and agriculturalists were

in fierce competition for land, she intervened to ensure social harmony. The cultivating villagers of the region summoned her spirit to intervene when they encountered the ravages of European colonialism and domination.

During colonial times, Christian missionaries considered the cult to be a satanic force in competition for the souls of the Africans. The missionaries did not allow people who were members of the cult into the churches. Consequently, the Africans continued to practice privately, ensuring that worship of Nyabingi continued. African Christians have now accepted Nyabingi mediumship in their churches, reworking the institutions of the *bagirwa* into a more Christian form.

—*Hannington Ochwada*

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Prophets

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O

Obatala

(c. 1000 C.E.)

Yoruba ruler, god

Obatala is one of the first known kings of the West African Yoruba people (from c. 1000) and is a deified god (*orisha*). The Yoruba traditionally inhabit southeastern Nigeria and parts of Benin and Togo. They consider their city of Ile-Ife to be the birthplace of humankind. Oral history explains that Obatala was one of the original settlers of Ile-Ife. However, he decided to leave Ile-Ife because his power to communicate God's divine words (*ase*) was not fully appreciated by the other settlers. Obatala then left and founded his own kingdom (*oba* means "king"). Numerous Yoruba and Igbo kingdoms recognize Obatala as their patron deity; however, the sacred scriptures of the Yoruba traditional religion (the "Ifa Corpus") note that the Ifon-Orolu kingdom is the home of Obatala's lineage.

Obatala worshipped the god Orisa'Nla (Great God). Once deified, he retained Orisa'Nla's attributes, which include social peace, moral purity, and the ability to create life. Obatala eventually became synonymous with Orisa'Nla and is now also known by this name. Obatala/Orisa'Nla is currently one of the most widely worshipped of the Yoruba orishas and has millions of followers in Africa, Europe, South America, the Caribbean, and North America. Known as the deity who sculpted human beings and gave them the breath of life (*ase*), this orisha is considered guardian of the handicapped. Obatala/Orisa'Nla is usually depicted as an old man or woman because long life is one of the orisha's attributes. The orisha is associated with all things white because it symbolizes purity.

—Natalie A. Washington

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Oduduwa; Orishas

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Odile

(c. 660–720 C.E.?)

Christian abbess

Although there is doubt that St. Odile existed at all, her story continues to be very popular. Also known as Odilia, Ottilia, Othilia, and Adilia, Odile was the eldest child of Adalric, the duke of Alsace, and his wife Bereswinde. Odile was born in perhaps 660 with two things against her—she was not a boy, and she was born blind. Angered over this situation, her father wished to get rid of the infant; however, her mother pleaded her case, and Odile was spared—but sent away, first given to a servant and then placed in a Christian convent in Palma. It was in this convent that Odile was baptized at the age of twelve (waiting until children were older to have them baptized was not unusual for the time). St. Erhard of Regensburg performed the sacrament. During the ceremony, the blind Odile's sight was miraculously restored.

Following this miracle, many of the nuns became jealous of Odile, and she contacted her brother Hugh. He told her to come home, but when she arrived and met her father, he flew into a rage and killed his son, blaming the boy for Odile's return. He was instantly repentant. Although a marriage was arranged for Odile, she refused to marry and instead

founded a convent in Hohenberg, her family castle; later she founded a second monastery at Niedermunster. She was joined in the cloistered life by three nieces, Eugénie, Attale, and Gundelinde, and Odile remained abbess until her death in possibly 720.

One revelation credited to Odile was the divine assurance that her prayers and good works were able to redeem her father after his death. Her grave is in a chapel near the convent's church, where water that flows beneath her monastery is said to cure eye problems. Her feast day is December 13. She is the patron of the blind and the patron saint of Alsace; consequently, in art she is represented with a book topped with two eyes.

Odile's convent was granted immunity by Charlemagne, and it was later confirmed by Louis the Pious on March 9, 837. Mont Sainte-Odile, at an elevation of 2,496 feet, is one of the most visited sites in Alsace.

There is thought to have been an eighth-century vita of Odile, but it has been lost. The earliest Life that survives is from the tenth century. There is also a shorter text that survives in an eleventh-century manuscript.

—*Kelly A. O'Connor-Salomon*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Miracles; Suffering and Holy People

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Odilo of Cluny

(962–1049 C.E.)

Christian abbot, reformer

Odilo, fifth abbot of the French monastery of Cluny, was born in Auvergne, France, in 962; he died at the Italian abbey of Souvigny on January 1, 1049. In 991, not even a year after joining the celebrated reform abbey of Cluny, he was appointed coadjutor to Abbot Majolus—whose biography he later wrote—and he was made acting abbot in 994. His fifty-year reign as abbot (999–1049) was marked by the dynamic expansion of Cluniac daughter houses, demonstrating his leadership and talent for organization. The formation of this great monastic confederation was a direct consequence of the exemption from aristocratic and episcopal control granted to Cluny by Pope John XI during the reign of Odo, Cluny's second abbot, and confirmed by Popes Gregory V in 998 or 999 and John XIX in 1027. Odilo and the Cluniac monastic reform were instrumental in spreading papal authority and reform—especially the monastic-led fight against simony, the buying and selling of ecclesiastical offices, and clerical marriage.

Odilo was responsible for the commemoration of All Souls' Day at Cluny and its dependencies, and this special day of prayer for all the Christian dead soon spread throughout Western Christendom. Active in the Peace of God movement, he also was especially concerned with the fate of the poor, selling Cluny's treasures to feed those affected by the great famine of 1033. Twice offered the archbishopric of Lyons, he was called the "archangel of the monks" by Fulbert of Chartres because of his reforming zeal.

Odilo was also known for his diplomacy. He served as a counselor to Emperor Henry II from 1002 onward, mediated the dispute between Emperor Conrad II and King Robert II of France in 1025, and was present at the coronation of Emperor Henry III in Rome in 1046. His eleventh-century biographer Jotsaldus stressed his charity, sense of justice, and selfless conduct on behalf of others. Odilo was canonized in 1063, and his feast is celebrated April 29.

—*J. M. B. Porter*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Henry II; Monasticism and Holy People; Odo of Cluny; Reform and Reaction

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Odo of Cluny

(c. 879–942 C.E.)

Christian abbot, reformer, writer

Odo of Cluny, second abbot of the French monastery of Cluny, was born in Aquitaine in about 879. The son of a noble couple, Odo studied first at the court of Duke William of Aquitaine and then in Tours and Paris under Remigius of Auxerre. Tonsured at the age of nineteen, he became a canon at St. Martin of Tours, to whom his father had dedicated him. Under the influence of Berno, first abbot of Cluny, he later transferred to Berno's monastery at Baume, becoming the master of the abbey school by the age of thirty. Ordained a priest by Berno, he was elected his successor as abbot of Cluny in 927.

It was during Odo's tenure as abbot that Pope John XI granted Cluny exemption from aristocratic and episcopal control and authorized him to expand the Cluniac monastic reforms across France and Italy. Called "the restorer of monasteries," Odo established the Cluniac observance, which became one of the most important models for Benedictine monasti-

cism for more than a century. He made several visits to Italy, where he founded or reformed several monasteries (most notably Subiaco and Monte Cassino). He was also entrusted by Pope Leo VI in 936 and 939 and Pope Stephen VIII in 941 with negotiations for a peace settlement between Prince Alberic of Rome and the Italian king Hugh of Provence. Odo was known for his humility; the biography written by his disciple John of Salerno also stresses his patience, his restoration of monasteries, and his perfect observance of rules. In the end, he is “the specimen of all virtues” (John of Salerno, 49).

Odo's important literary works include vitae (most notably of Gerald of Aurillac from c. 855–909), poetry (including the *Occupatio*, a meditation on sacred history in seven books), and several hymns (four in honor of St. Martin); his *Collationes* (PL 133:517–638) clearly shows the influence of St. Augustine. Odo died in Tours on November 18, 942. His feast is celebrated April 29.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Martin of Tours; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Oduduwa

(c. 1000 C.E.)

Yoruba king, god

Oduduwa is regarded as the original ancestor of the West African Yoruba people and is a deified god (*orisha*). The Yoruba people traditionally inhabit southeastern Nigeria and parts of Benin and Togo. Yoruba history explains that Oduduwa, whose name means “Odu exists,” settled in Ile-Ife with others and became the city's first king. This city is considered by its inhabitants as the birthplace of humankind. Being a descendant of Oduduwa was customarily the identifying marker of a “Yoruba” person—at times, more so than speaking the Yoruba language. Yoruba kingdoms were considered “legitimate” if they could claim ancestry to Oduduwa and Ile-Ife. However, many Dahomeans (of modern Benin) also declared that they descended from Oduduwa, while certain Yoruba groups did not claim Oduduwa as an ancestor or Ile-Ife as a place of origin.

Although Oduduwa is considered the progenitor of the Yoruba, archaeological evidence supports the idea that soci-

eties have inhabited Ile-Ife since 1000 B.C.E., which was before the time of Oduduwa. Most likely Oduduwa is regarded as the Yoruba's original ancestor because he federated the local population. Oduduwa established or embodied the start of a new dynasty in which traditional religion became the guiding force for the various Yoruba kingdoms, hence “divine kingships.”

Divine kingships had many parallels across Yorubaland. For instance, traditional high priests (*babalawos*), experts in *odu* (sacred verses), were top advisers to the king. Oduduwa also licensed Yoruba kings to wear the beaded crown because beads were considered symbolic of the divine covenant between humanity and God. Kings and Yoruba descendants around the world still claim connection to Oduduwa. He is recognized as an orisha, although he is not commonly worshipped. His shrine can still be found in Ile-Ife today.

—Natalie A. Washington

See also: Ancestors; Orishas; Rulers as Holy People

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Oedipus

Ancient Greek hero

Oedipus was a hero of Thebes and the focus of a hero cult that developed in ancient Greece. The early record describes Oedipus as an angry hero who was venerated so that his spirit would refrain from cursing other locales as it had cursed the city of Thebes. In the form of the legend composed by the fifth-century B.C.E. dramatist Sophocles, however, especially in the late play *Oedipus at Colonus*, the aged Oedipus has taken on a strong element of purification through suffering, and his mysterious death brings blessings to the place that receives his body.

There is no evidence of a historic Oedipus, son of Laius and Jocasta (in earlier legends Epicaste). He first appears in *Iliad* 23.679, which mentions Oedipus's funeral games. But the *Odyssey* already relates the horrible tale of how the hero killed his own father and married his mother. The mother committed suicide when their relationship was discovered; Oedipus himself is more negatively described as finishing out his “evil days” in Thebes. At least two epics were written about Oedipus, the *Oidipodia* and the *Thebais*, fragments of

which show Oedipus as a heroic figure defeating the monstrous sphinx in a riddle contest—and as a powerful figure who cursed his sons, praying that they would fight over their inheritance and kill each other.

Oedipus proved an immensely popular figure for the classical dramatists of Athens. Aeschylus wrote a set of plays on the Oedipus theme in 467, of which the play *Seven against Thebes*, telling of his sons' fratricidal war, survives. Euripides also wrote an *Oedipus*. The full tale, however, comes from the pen of Sophocles, who wrote at least two cycles of plays on the theme, of which three plays survive: *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*. These explore the theme of human pride (*hubris*) and how it leads to tragic fall. In this developed legend, Oedipus is exposed as an infant by his father Laius because of a prophecy that the infant will grow up to kill his father and marry his mother. It is this attempt to evade prophecy that leads to the whole tragic unfolding of events. The baby is taken in and raised. As an adult, he meets a rude and violent man at a crossroads, whom he kills. He then goes on to Thebes and marries the widowed queen—his mother Jocasta. Oedipus proves to be a model ruler, intelligent and concerned for the welfare of his people, a model hero of the city founder type. It is his concern for his city that leads him to seek advice from the gods when pestilence breaks out, only to be told that the land is failing because of *his* sin—killing his father and marrying his mother, unwittingly fulfilling the prophecy. Upon hearing this revelation, Jocasta hangs herself and Oedipus tears out his own eyes with his mother's broach.

If the story ended there, it would be hard to see why Oedipus should have received veneration as a hero, which he did at least at Athens and Colonus. But an element of redemption and growing mystical insight was added in the play *Oedipus at Colonus*, written late in Sophocles' life and telling of the careworn Oedipus, the ceaseless wanderer, who has redeemed himself by suffering and won spiritual power unparalleled in Greek legend. Oedipus's son Polynices and Jocasta's uncle Creon try to bring Oedipus back to Thebes to serve their own selfish purposes—and are comprehensively and effectively cursed, as the play *Antigone* makes plain. Oedipus himself feels the coming of death and decides its time and place, on the lands of King Theseus, who has treated the stranger in his land with kindness. The play ends with Oedipus's mysterious death, apparently swallowed by the earth in Colonus at a spot only Theseus knows, and the promise that Oedipus's spirit will protect Athens from attack by the Thebans, Oedipus's own people, whose protection he has forsworn thanks to their evil treatment of him.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Death; Hero Cult, Greek

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Ogún

Yoruba orisha

Ogún, one of the most important Yoruba *orishas* (deities), is the deity of iron and war. His symbols are anything made of iron and the cudgel or machete, and young palm fronds are used to demarcate his shrine. His worship is universal among the Yoruba and their descendants in other areas of West Africa and the New World. Though he is sometimes depicted as a deified ancestor, Ogún is one of the primordial *orishas*, that is, one of the sixteen *orishas* born from the womb of Yemojá—divinity of the waters.

Ogún is the patron deity of all those whose professions involve the use of iron or metal. He protects the blacksmith, the soldier, the hunter, and the butcher, and in modern society, he also watches over the surgeon, the airplane pilot, mechanics, taxi drivers, and all whose profession brings them into contact with his element and metals in general. In Cuba, the train, the railroad, and the sugarcane they were used to transport also become important symbols associated with Ogún. This *orisha* is also associated with responsibility and hard work. In a myth recounted in Cuba, Ogún cursed himself to work twenty-four hours a day for the benefit of humankind. He thus marks the progression of humankind and its advancement through time. Without Ogún's element, civilization would not have evolved as it has, for the discovery of iron is one of the most important ancestors of modern technological development and accomplishment.

Ogún was given the title of Oshìn Imalè—chief among the divinities—in appreciation for his role in paving the way for the entrance of the other deities to earth. Yoruba mythology recounts that after the creation of the solid earth, when all the *orishas* came to inhabit the world, Ogún used his cudgel to clear the way through the heavy brush and the land upon which the deities built their houses. In addition, Ogún hunted to provide food for their sustenance, and eventually that of the humans who would later inhabit the earth. The deities and all human beings are therefore indebted to Ogún and must reciprocate with reverence, devotion, and sacrifice.

Though he may be one of the most beloved deities, Ogún's character is respected and feared, as he is believed to be very fiery and explosive. The wicked have no place in his world, and he assures that they receive their due punishment. Ogún is considered a strong symbol of respect, morality, and absolute justice and is often called upon to witness a covenant or pact. Followers of traditional Yoruba religion who testify in modern Nigerian courts may be sworn in with their hand resting upon a piece of iron instead of on the Bible or Qur'an.



Grove of Ogún, god of iron and war, Nigeria. (Art Directors)

Anyone who breaks a covenant or commits perjury will undoubtedly encounter Ogún's ire. In a Yoruba saying, "To know Ogún and be dishonest is an impossibility" (Awolalú 1996, 33; King in Hallgren 1991, 36, 52).

—Miguel W. Ramos

See also: Gods on Earth; Orishas; Sages

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Ōjin

(Late 4th–early 5th cent. C.E.)

Japanese emperor, *kami*

Ōjin was the fifteenth emperor (*tennō*) of Japan according to the traditional calculation given in the earliest Japanese chronicles, the *Kojiki* (Records of ancient matters, 712) and

the *Nihonshoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720). He was posthumously identified with the popular Shinto deity Hachiman, who is worshipped up to the present day in numerous shrines (*hachimangū*) throughout Japan.

According to the *Nihonshoki*, where he is also referred to by the name Homuda or Homuta, Ōjin was supposedly born in 201 as the fourth son of Emperor Chūai and Empress Jingū. His reign is accounted to have lasted from 270 until 310, but scholars generally agree that Ōjin must have reigned at a later time, conceivably in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Consensus is also established to the fact that Ōjin can be considered as the first of the emperors depicted by the chronicles who was an actual historical figure. Features of his reign are supposed to include the reclamation of farmland on a large scale, the arrival of immigrants from the continent who introduced new cultural acquisitions and technology to Japan, the spread of iron weapons and agricultural tools, and the growth of imperial power and influence in general. Upon his death, Ōjin is said to have been buried in a *kofun* (keyhole-shaped tomb mound). The *kofun* associated with Ōjin is situated in the city of Habikino in present-day Ōsaka prefecture and, with its length of more than 400 meters, is the second-largest *kofun* in Japan.

The origins of the identification of the spirit of the departed Ōjin with the Shinto deity Hachiman, traditionally

considered the god of war and archery, are ambiguous. However, one possible foundation of this identification can be found in the myths concerning the birth of Ōjin. The two characters forming the name Hachiman, literally meaning “eight” and “banner,” can be interpreted as a reference to the legend that at the birth of Ōjin eight banners came down from heaven on the birthplace. Further, it is handed down that at the end of the sixth century the deity Hachiman revealed himself as a manifestation of the spirit of Ōjin, but the identification of Ōjin with Hachiman probably did not occur until the Heian period (794–1192). Hachiman is usually thought to be constituted of either the apotheosized Ōjin alone or of the collective deified spirits of Ōjin himself; his wife, Nakatsuhime; and his mother, Empress Jingū, who is credited by the chronicles with a successful invasion of the Korean peninsula.

The veneration of Ōjin as Hachiman is marked to a great extent by its syncretism, embracing elements of Shinto and Buddhism. The worship of Hachiman is assumed to have originated in the veneration of the deity of the Usa clan in Kyūshū from where it expanded to a widespread belief. Since the late eighth century, when an oracle at the shrine Usa Hachimangū disclosed the intention of Hachiman to support the construction of the Daibutsu (Great Buddha) in Nara, Hachiman came also to be venerated as *daibosatsu* (great bodhisattva) and protector of Buddhism.

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Rulers as Holy People; Shinto and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Olaf of Norway

(995–1030 C.E.)

Christian ruler, martyr

Olaf, king of Norway (r. 1015–1028), is known mainly from the *Heimskringla* (History of the kings of Norway) by Snorri Sturluson, composed nearly 200 years after Olaf’s death. Snorri’s biography is in many ways similar to Notker’s *Life of Charlemagne*, which was also written years following the death of its subject. Indeed, Olaf was supposed to have taken Charlemagne as his model of a Christian statesman, and sections of Snorri’s writing (especially his description of Olaf’s

physical appearance) are reminiscent of Notker’s account. He is patron saint of Norway.

Olaf was born in 995. He left Norway as a boy to visit England, France, and Normandy and on reaching adulthood fought on behalf of both Richard of Normandy and Æthelred II of England. According to Snorri, Olaf was feared as especially violent and bloodthirsty in battle. It was during this time that he converted to Christianity; although Snorri claims Olaf was baptized in 998 in Norway, it is more likely that he was baptized in Rouen, France, in c. 1010 by Archbishop Robert. He turned the focus of his zeal from war for the sake of power to war for the sake of Christ, and returned to Norway. After becoming king in 1015, he set himself the task of converting the populace and imposing Christianity as the official religion of the kingdom. Olaf worked to eliminate non-Christian beliefs and customs, often turning violence and bribery, skills learned during years as a Viking raider, into tools of conversion.

In addition to creating a Christian Norway, Olaf was also keenly interested in uniting the country, traditionally a federation of counties under strong local control. Many Norwegian nobles, upset with Olaf’s leadership, supported King Cnut of England and Denmark as overlord. Eventually these powerful factions, with assistance from Cnut, expelled Olaf, and Cnut was made king in his stead.

In 1030, after two years of exile in Novgorod (Russia), Olaf returned to reclaim his kingdom, waging battle against the rebellious factions. Olaf was killed in battle at Stiklestad, and although he did not die in an overtly religious battle, he is counted as a martyr. After his death miracles were attributed to him, and a year later he was removed from his grave and reinterred at the church of St. Clement in Nidaros (now Trondheim). His cult became popular throughout northern Europe, particularly in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

—Dorothy Carr Porter

See also: Charlemagne; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rulers as Holy People

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Olga

(c. 879–969 C.E.)

Christian princess

Princess Olga, the wife of Great Kievan Prince Igor, is first mentioned in Russia’s *Primary Chronicle* in 903. The first royal Russian figure to accept Christianity, she converted during her visit to Byzantium in 955. The *Chronicle* relates an

entertaining but most likely apocryphal story about how Olga avoided the subjugation of Rus' to Byzantium yet managed to preserve the political alliance with the Byzantine Empire. The legend has it that the Byzantine emperor wanted to marry Olga, a widow at the time of her visit, in the hope of joining the territories of Rus' to the empire. The clever Russian princess resolved the dilemma by confessing her desire to be baptized and asking the emperor to be her godfather—an honor that the emperor could not refuse. Thus Olga is famous for her shrewdness.

In real life, Olga was an able and often ruthless politician. She started her rule with the execution of a cruel and elaborate revenge on the Dreveliane, the tribe that was responsible for killing her husband, Igor. Olga restored internal order in the Russian territories through a system of laws and taxation and brought them back under the control of Kiev. The princess sought, although unsuccessfully, to consolidate the alliance of Rus' with Constantinople and establish new alliances with the German Empire. She visited Constantinople twice and Germany once during her rule.

The Primary Chronicle describes Olga's manner of life, after her son Sviatoslav replaced her as the ruler, as virtuous and pious. In her old age, Olga led a humble existence and requested to be buried according to the Christian rite. In recognition of Olga's role in the Christianization of Russia, the Russian Orthodox Church venerates her as a saint. Olga died in 969 at the age of about ninety. Her feast day is July 11.

—Margarita D. Yanson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Orthodoxy and Saints; Rulers as Holy People

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Olinga, Enoch

(1926–1979 C.E.)

Baha'i missionary

Enoch Olinga was one of the outstanding twentieth-century African believers of the Baha'i faith, a religion based on the principles of the oneness of humanity and the oneness of God. He was born on June 24, 1926, in the Teso region of northeastern Uganda. His parents were devout Christians

and members of the Native Anglican Church of Uganda. The youthful Olinga received his early education in Mbale, Uganda, and later he joined the British Army Education Corps in Nairobi, Kenya. After that tour of duty, he returned to Uganda with a position in government service.

Olinga came into contact with the Baha'i faith in 1951. He was impressed with the new religion. The sincerity and warmth of its believers in East Africa greatly attracted him, and he declared his belief in Baha'u'llah (1817–1892), prophet-founder of the Baha'i faith. An independent world religion, the Baha'i faith was founded in Iran in 1844 and has as its guiding principle the fundamental belief that the purpose of religion is to promote harmony among the peoples of the world. According to Baha'is, in order to attain such a level of social and spiritual oneness, humanity must accept such tenets as the elimination of racism and other social prejudices, the equality of women and men, compulsory education for all children, and the eradication of extremes of wealth and poverty.

Enoch Olinga was responsible for the phenomenally rapid conversion of many Ugandans to the new religion. In 1953, he was asked to relocate to what was then British Cameroon in West Africa to “open up new territories” to the new faith. He traveled extensively throughout the Cameroons and eastern Nigeria for ten years teaching the new religion, converting and transforming entire villages through the force of his own spiritual and social charisma. As an eloquent and dignified “pioneer”—a person who travels to another region or country in order to teach the Baha'i faith—Olinga had the distinction of being the first African Baha'i to introduce the faith into West Africa. Shoghi Effendi (1897–1957), guardian of the Baha'i faith, thus made Olinga a Knight of Baha'u'llah and elevated him to the rank of a Hand of the Cause of God in 1957. The Baha'i faith places emphasis on group leadership as opposed to individual power. There were, however, distinct individuals among the Baha'is who during the twentieth century were recognized for their spiritual capacity, whose personal and public charisma were essential to the holiness attributed to them. The Hands of the Cause of God were the “chief custodians” of the Baha'i faith.

Olinga traveled extensively internationally, meeting heads of state and dignitaries as well as humble individuals, as he proclaimed and put into action the principles of the Baha'i faith. Caught in the midst of political upheaval and a civil war in Uganda, Olinga, his wife, and three of their children were murdered in Kampala, Uganda, on September 17, 1979.

—Angelita D. Reyes

See also: Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Mission; Shoghi Effendi

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Ollantay

(Mid–15th cent. C.E.)

Inca general

Ollantay is the name of one of the most famous generals of the ninth *inca* (ruler), Pachacutec. The oral tradition told the story of the tragic love of Ollantay and Cusi Coyllur, daughter of the *inca*, who was destined to marry one of her brothers or remain chaste the rest of her life. A play entitled *Ollantay*, performed for the first time in 1780 in Lima, retells the drama of this impossible love. The anonymous play may have been recorded in *quipus*, knotted strings on which Incas stored information, and then orally transmitted by a quipukeeper (*quipucamayoc*) to a friar, who elaborated the written version. In any case, it had pre-Hispanic roots dated at least to the mid–fifteenth century. The play was so successful that it was translated into English and French during the nineteenth century.

According to the legend, Pachacutec would not allow a marriage between Cusi Coyllur and Ollantay because Ollantay did not belong to the high Inca nobility; his daughter was expected to marry one of her kind. The angry *inca* reproached Ollantay for having raised his eyes to his daughter and reminded him that, although he was a good warrior, he was not a noble. But it was too late, since Ollantay and Cusi Coyllur had already produced a child. The *inca* confined Cusi Coyllur in El Templo de las Vírgenes del Sol, the temple for chaste women. Ollantay started a rebellion in the Antisuyu, one of the four regions of the Tawantinsuyu, the Inca Empire, and fought against Pachacutec in a lengthy war.

Ten years passed, and many things changed. Pachacutec had died, and his son, Tupac Yupanqui, had become the new ruler. Ollantay was defeated by trickery and taken alive in the presence of the young *inca*, who finally forgave Ollantay. At that moment, Ima Sumac, the daughter of Ollantay and Cusi Coyllur who had been enclosed at the temple with her mother, entered the room and asked the *inca* for help for her suffering mother. Tupac Yupanqui asked to see the mother of Ima Sumac, realized that she was his sister, and let Ollantay and Cusi Coyllur marry.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People

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Ondeto, Simeo

(c. 1910/1917–1991 C.E.)

Christian Legio Maria founder

Simeo Ondeto, a Luo of Kenya, was spiritual cofounder of Legio Maria, the largest African-instituted church (AIC) to grow out of Roman Catholic influence in Africa. Estimates vary but put total membership in the church today as high as 250,000 to 1.5 million. Conventional history dates Ondeto's birth at around 1910 or 1917, but many Legios believe in a "biomythography" of complex chronology. They believe that the "third secret" of the Fatima Marian apparitions of 1917 in Portugal pertained to the coming of Legio and African independence. Rome's failure to disclose this secret in 1960, as had been promised, allegedly moved the Virgin Mary to tell her son Jesus that they had to bring the message to Africa in person, and they did so, entering into different African eras.

Mary and her son, colorless in heaven, say Legios, came to Africa on a rainbow. Mary slid off, fell into Lake Victoria, and emerged from it as the old, black, miracle-working woman in the deep past of Luo oral narratives. Jesus fell onto land at Angoro village, Kano location, Kisumu District, sometime between 1900 and 1917, when he was born to Ombimbo Misumba, a poor Watombori farmer, and his wife, Margaret Aduwo (Oduor). In other versions, the farmer and his wife foster-parented him after finding him as a lost twelve-year-old boy. Legios say Ondeto performed several childhood miracles, such as turning clay cattle into real ones, or praying to God and receiving food in his hands so the children he was with would have enough to eat. He grew up with three brothers and a sister.

From that point on, non-Legio and Legio biographical accounts concur. In his teens, Ondeto left Angoro to work at a variety of menial jobs (herder, sisal/sugar cane worker, house servant, watchman). Work took him elsewhere in Kisumu District, to the neighboring Rift Valley province, and as far off as south Nyanza and Tanzania. He was employed by Luo, other Africans, and Europeans. Historical records indicate Ondeto was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church in 1952. He joined the Catholic lay apostolate, the Legion of Mary, and became an auxiliary catechist. With only four years of formal education, he could go no higher, however, though he wanted to. He began teaching, preaching, and healing, against church rules. Missionaries repudiated his activities, and he left the Catholic Church.

Legios say that between 1961 and 1963, when living near Mount Kwer, south Nyanza, Ondeto found his "real mother," Mary, who had moved from the past of oral narratives to more recent times and had been searching for her son. She was still old, black, and Luo. Her acknowledgment that he was her son gave Ondeto validation. Legios have maintained that they accept the divinity of the Black Christ and Black Mary because they saw angels bowing before them, experi-

enced other “signs and miracles,” such as healings, in person or in dreams, and received further disclosures from the Holy Spirit. They call Ondeto Baba Messias (Father Messiah). Legios and Ondeto promoted other titles that pointed to divine status, including Melkio/Melchizadek, Immanuel, and Agwenykamery (The one who twists harm away, from Mary’s place). For Legios, Ondeto’s stammer and chronic cough indicated that he was the Son of Man as well as divine.

For some Legios, “signs and miracles” meant Ondeto could be placed at any historical event where issues of political-religious freedom and embattlement commingled. He was placed in the forest with Kenya Land Freedom Army (KLFA/Mau Mau) freedom fighters; identified with KLFA leader Dedan Kimathi; and is said to have instructed Tom Mboya, G. E. M. Argwings-Kodhek, Masinde Muliro, and Oginga Odinga at meetings where they sought Kenyan freedom via political negotiations. He was cited as the one who had energized Elijah Masinde, whose combination of religion, nationalism, economic rights discourse, and support for African practices such as polygyny crystallized in *Dini ya Msambwa* (Religion of the ancestral spirits/Church adapted to African tradition). Ondeto was even sent into Kahawa barracks, where the Kenyan military plotted the abortive 1982 coup against Daniel arap Moi’s oppressive regime. He was placed at religious confrontations in France, England, and elsewhere. Etymologizing on Ondeto’s Luo name drew out other possible meanings for Legios. According to one analysis, “He says that he was called Ondeto, the son of Ombimbo, who chewed (*ndeto*) on the meanings of all religions.” Biomythography could have a universalizing impetus: “Jesus has appeared in the world at different times; at places he’s Melchizadek, Mohammed, and Buddha” (Schwartz 1994, 147–148).

Legio is a highly charismatic religion that is rooted in Catholicism. Legios maintain that wherever they were physically in Kenya, Ondeto and Mary could speak through a Legio to other Legios. Their “return to heaven,” in 1966 for Mary and 1991 for Ondeto, only changed the site from which they could speak. Legio has weathered the deaths of its two holy persons and continues today as a thriving religion.

—Nancy Schwartz

See also: Abiodun Akinsowon, Christiana; Compassion and Holy People; Mary/Mama; Messiahs; Prophets

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Onuphrios

(c. 400 C.E.?)

Christian hermit

Purportedly of fifth-century origin, the tales about the early Christian Egyptian hermit Onuphrios place his legend firmly within the traditions of extreme asceticism attributed to a number of other Egyptian “desert fathers” and “desert mothers.” Wishing to lead a life of severe abstinence, rigorous self-denial, and intense spirituality, Onuphrios (a monk or former prince—details vary) withdrew from the world and spent seventy years living alone in the Egyptian desert. Suffering many temptations, harsh weather conditions, and near starvation, he survived primarily on dates that God caused to grow on a palm tree near his rough desert shelter (or, in some versions, food brought by a raven).

Toward the end of his life, Onuphrios was discovered by an abbot named Paphnutius who had journeyed into the desert to meet local hermits and learn more about the ascetic life, as he was considering becoming a hermit himself. He found the emaciated Onuphrios covered in fur like an animal (in some versions, walking on all fours), wearing a loincloth of palm fronds, and otherwise covered only with his long hair and beard. Although initially extremely alarmed by the sight, Paphnutius spent the evening conversing with the holy man and sharing a simple meal miraculously provided by God. Onuphrios died the next morning and Paphnutius buried him in a rock cleft, as the hermit had instructed with his last words. The cleft quickly closed upon the holy man and disappeared along with the date palm near his hermit’s abode. Paphnutius, understanding that he was to remain there no longer, returned to his monastery and recounted the tale of his encounter.

Certain motifs and biblical references in the stories of Onuphrios are shared in other accounts of early Christian desert ascetics’ withdrawal from the world and chosen subjection to physical pain and sufferings in order to lead a purely spiritual life.

Onuphrios appears especially in Byzantine medieval art and is easily recognizable by his long hair and beard and his wild and emaciated appearance. Some medieval cloth-making guilds and weavers are said to have adopted Onuphrios as their patron saint, perhaps owing to his “clothing” of matted hair and beard and woven palm fronds. His feast day is June 12.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints

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Origen

(c. 185–c. 254 C.E.)

Christian philosopher

Origen was born of Christian parents, most probably in Alexandria, Egypt, in about 185. His father, Leonidas, was martyred in 202 or 203, and Origen himself survived because his mother hid his clothes so he could not leave the house. After his father's death, Origen supported himself and his family by teaching. At the age of eighteen, he became head of the Alexandrian catechetical school. He had many devoted students, who were attracted not only by his teaching but also by his way of life. During his life he made many friends, but also he had many enemies. After his death in about 254, his enemies and critics encouraged a legend that Origen had castrated himself. Origen learned Hebrew in order to study the Old Testament; later a great deal of his work was devoted to very careful, critical study of the Bible. He also made himself familiar with the non-Christian philosophy of his time. He attended lectures of the famous Neoplatonist Amonius Saccas, teacher of Plotinus.

Origen was the first great teacher and truly speculative intellectual in the long history of the Christian church. In his work *De Principiis* (On first principles), he produced the first synthesis of Christian philosophy and theology. In that sense, the book was a forerunner to such works as Thomas Aquinas's thirteenth-century *Summa Theologiae* (Summary of theology). Origen's main apologetic work was *Contra Celsum* (Against Celsus), a famous treatise dedicated to detailed polemic against Celsus, the well-known Greek philosopher (and doctrinal enemy of Christianity). Origen wrote a great many exegetical works and commentaries about almost all the books of the Old and New Testament, and also some texts that are dedicated to practical aspects of Christian life and worship. His allegorical method of interpreting scripture was well known and highly influential among his successors.

Origen's Christianity is highly speculative, greatly influenced by Neoplatonic ontology, freely intellectual, and deeply authentic. In the Christian East, there was a great controversy about Origen and his doctrinal and spiritual legacy. Disputes that are known as "Origenistic Controversies" started in about 300. Finally in a council at Constantinople in 543, under the emperor Justinian I, Origen's teachings were condemned in the form of fifteen well-known anathemas. Despite this condemnation, he was an inspiration for a great many of the later Christian fathers. The most famous among them were Athanasius of Alexandria, Didimus, Evagrius, the Cappadocian fathers, and Maximus the Confessor.

—Peter Jevremovic

See also: Athanasius; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory of Nyssa; Maximus Confessor; Scholars as Holy People

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Orimolade Tunolase, Moses

(1879–1933 C.E.)

Christian sect founder

Moses Orimolade Tunolase was a Christian evangelist in colonial Nigeria who toward the end of his life was involved in founding the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) indigenous African churches. Through his sermons and actions, Orimolade demonstrated the ways in which Yoruba traditional religious values and forms of worship could be integrated with Christian beliefs in order to serve the needs of early converts. In addition to the miraculous events attributed to him, he was renowned for his biblical knowledge, his effective sermons, and the healing power of his prayers. Although his death soon after the founding of the C&S resulted in a schism in the church, he is regarded as the patron saint of all C&S denominations.

Orimolade was born in Ikare, Ondo State, Nigeria, in 1879 to the family of Tunolase, an Ifa diviner. He allegedly spoke to his mother from the womb advising her how to carry a load of wood. Following this event, Orimolade's parents consulted the Ifa oracle and were told that their child would be a saint who would spread the gospel of the Christian God and his son Jesus Christ. When Orimolade was born, he attempted to walk from the delivery bed. The midwife held him down and his father uttered incantations to stop him, resulting in a physical handicap that would affect Orimolade throughout his life.

Orimolade converted to Christianity in his early childhood and worked with the mission church in Ikare. He soon became frustrated by the lack of response to Christianity. He prayed to God for guidance and received a vision in which an angel appeared and presented him with three objects: a rod, a royal insignia, and a crown. This vision served as a confirmation for Orimolade to persist in his evangelical mission.

Orimolade became an itinerant preacher, traveling throughout Nigeria to spread the gospel. He arrived in Lagos around 1924 and associated with the Holy Trinity Anglican Church. His preaching during this period set the model from which C&S practices would emerge: faith in Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the use of prayers for healing purposes.

In 1925, a group of Orimolade's followers founded the C&S society based on a vision received by Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon. The C&S started first as a prayer group associated with a mission church, which later broke away

owing to conflicts with the church administration. Orimolade died in Lagos on September 14, 1933.

—Vicki L. Brennan

See also: Abiodun Akinsowon, Christiana; Mission; Prophets

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Orishas

West African god-heroess

In the African-derived religions of Santería in Cuba, in Vodun, Vodou, or Voodoo in Haiti, and in Candomblé in Brazil, the *orishas* are the divine entities that preside over the earth created by the supreme being Olorun (or Olodumare). Orisha literally means "god" or "goddess." In West Africa and Cuba, it is believed that the orishas were human beings who passed on and returned as divinities in disguise who displayed godly powers over certain forces of the universe. Believers consider the orishas to be the holiest members of the pantheon of saints in Santería and other African faiths. Members of the Santería religion are known as *santeros*.

At feasts given by the santero to honor a particular orisha, known as *bembé* or *tambor*, the orisha is praised, saluted, offered food in the form of animal sacrifice, and invited to join the feast by taking possession of one of the priests or priestesses in attendance. During a *bembé*, male and female santeros wear white pants, shirts, and shoes. Orishas favor the color white because of its strong positive power, known as *ashé* or *aché*. Santeros also wear jewelry, bracelets, and *col-lares* (seashell necklaces strung in a particular pattern identified with each orisha). Drums, known as *batá*, play an important role in this festivity, and artistic altars are also built for orisha worship. They are usually adorned according to the orisha's favorite food, flowers, beads, fruit, fabrics, and other items associated with the deity.

Since Santería has borrowed many aspects of the Catholic faith, all orishas are identified with a Christian saint. The main orishas in the Santería pantheon are:

- Eshu, Elegba, or Elegua:* The divine messenger between the orishas and Olodumare, the orisha of crossroads, associated with the Holy Child of Atocha and St. Antony of Padua.
- Shangó or Changó:* The most popular of all orishas and god of thunder, fire, drums, and masculinity, associated with St. Barbara.
- Obatalá:* The oldest and purest of all orishas, creator of the human body, associated with Our Lady of Las Mercedes.

Yemayá: The mother figure of all orishas and goddess of the seas and peace at home, associated with the Virgin of Regla.

Oshun or Ochún: The orisha of love and fresh waters, associated with Our Lady of Charity, patron saint of Cuba.

Babaloo, Babaluaye, or Babalú Ayé: The orisha of infectious disease and healing, associated with St. Lazarus.

Ogún: The orisha of war, associated with Sts. Peter and James.

Osain or Osanyin: The orisha of the power of nature, associated with St. Joseph.

Ibeji: The Divine Twins (Taiwo and Kainde) and protector of children, associated with Sts. Cosmas and Damian.

Oshosi or Ochosi: The orisha of hunting and justice, associated with St. Norbert.

Orula or Orúnmila: The orisha of wisdom and destiny, associated with St. Francis of Assisi.

Followers believe that each orisha holds a special *ashé* or power that is imperative to purify the ritual atmosphere and induce trance in a devotee. Devotees must fit the *ashé* of a particular orisha in order to obtain what they desire. It is usually accomplished by praise and through offering animal sacrifices to the orisha. Each orisha has a favorite animal for sacrifice, and the blood of the sacrificed animal increases the orisha's *ashé* so that favors may be granted to devotees.

Orishas also represent compassionate divinities who provide santeros with advice and spiritual and physical healing in times of adversity.

—Francisco Melara

See also: Babalú Ayé; Morèmi; Obatala; Oduduwa; Ogún; Oyá

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Orpheus and Orphism

Greek hero and cult

Orpheus, the musician of Greek myth, is celebrated in literature and art for the compelling power of his song. Through his music, Orpheus can summon humans, animals, trees, and even rocks. This skill in itself implies his close connection to the divine; often he is identified as a son of the lyre-playing god Apollo and a muse, though he is associated also with Thrace, and sometimes his father is said to be a river god of that region.

Every part of Orpheus's mythology revolves around his musical prowess. He sails with Jason and the Argonauts as a



Hooded and masked egunguns are present at a Voodoo festival in Benin, 1993. Egunguns are spirits, usually the ghosts of ancestors, who are believed to visit earth at certain times of the year by possessing living people. (Caroline Penn/Corbis)

lyre-player to provide the rhythm for the rowers and to overpower the songs of the Sirens so that the Argonauts may pass by safely. The story of his love for Eurydice turns upon his ability to persuade the gods of the underworld through his music; Eurydice dies of a snakebite, Orpheus descends to the underworld to bring her back, and the gods of the underworld are so enchanted by his song that they allow her to return with him so long as he does not look back at her as she follows him. He cannot resist, however, and when he looks back he loses Eurydice forever. Myths of the end of his life describe his violent death at the hands of Thracian women. Some versions present the women as angry because he wants no other woman's company; in others they are Bassarids, Thracian women who follow Dionysos, who punish him for neglecting their god, as he has worshipped only the sun (whom he identifies with Apollo) since his return from the underworld. The power of his song remains immortal; his head continues to sing even after severed from his body.

The name of this powerful musician with intimate knowledge of the underworld was used to give authority to poetry dating from the sixth century B.C.E. until late antiquity. Among the works called "orphyic" are theogonies, poems about eschatology, hymns to various gods, and spells and incantations. Some of these poems' titles refer to the traditional myths of Orpheus's descent to Hades or his travels with the Argonauts. These myths serve as a basis for explanations of the physical world or revelations of the fate of souls after death. Most influential is the orphyic account, preserved most fully in the works of Neoplatonists, of Dionysos's double birth and the birth of humankind. Dionysos is born first to Zeus and Persephone. The Titans consume him, they are destroyed by Zeus, and from their ashes the first human being is born. Zeus rescues part of the remains of Dionysos and together with Semele gives birth to Dionysos once again. This myth, in its fullest development, was used to explain the nature of humanity, wicked in connection to the Titans, but with an inherent divine element, since mingled with the Titans' ashes was the god they had consumed.

Orpheus's name came to be associated also with mystery cults that named him as founder as well as author of the sacred texts. The modern title "orphyism" groups together diverse rites and beliefs from various times and places; one thing they share is a use of written texts, which stands in contrast to traditional Greek religion. Thanks to archaeological excavation, gold leaves and bone plates from sites as widespread as southern Italy, Crete, Thessaly, and the Black Sea region now provide tantalizing glimpses of initiates' hopes for a special afterlife, with the help of Dionysos. Scratched on one, a bone plate from Olbia, is "Life, death, life. Truth. Dio(nysos), Orphyic." Such a spare text, but including

the name of Orpheus suggests that the name alone preserves some of the power of the mythic musician's song.

—Rebecca H. Sinos

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Ecstatic Cults; Heroes

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Orthodoxy and Saints

The fundamental theoretical and practical idea of Orthodox Christianity is based on the dogma of incarnation: that God, in the second person of the Trinity, became a man. He took on himself sinful and mortal flesh to make it possible for human beings to become deified. Thanks to the mystery of incarnation there is a possibility of transformation and transfiguration for the mortal and sinful human nature. Deification is an absolute imperative of Orthodoxy. For Orthodoxy, to become deified means to become not just God in some kind of abstract sense. On the contrary, deification means to become a child of God, God-human. To be deified means to start a new kind of life, life in Christ. To start a new life in Christ means to be deeply ontologically identified with Christ himself. The life in mortal and sinful flesh should be radically changed for the life in immortal and nonsinful Christ. The fundamental imperative is, following famous discourse of St. Paul, to become a new creature (Gal. 6:15).

It is not just an imitation of a high ideal (that is, not just *imitatio Christi*, "imitation of Christ"), it is identification with Christ that matters. In the words of Nicholas Cabasilas (1974), a prominent Orthodox theorist, to be identified with Christ means to live your own personal life in Christ. The Orthodox idea of incarnation implies a special kind of highly sublimated realism, a personal realism. There is no abstract category of sainthood. Also, sainthood is not a juridical category. Incarnation, as identification, is a fundamentally personal category. The same could be said for sainthood. In other words, to be or not to be in accordance with this highly valued christological ideal is a personal decision. The personal question needs a personal answer. An individual must decide whether or not to be a saint.

For the Orthodox, the saints are a special kind of highly valued people who (even during their earthly and mortal

life) succeeded in becoming very much identified with Christ himself. They are citizens of heaven who lived on the earth. In the liturgical and axiological context of the Christian community, they function as the living ideals and mediators between common people and the kingdom of heaven. They are spiritual fathers and mothers of all Christians. Their fame is great, their cults survive for centuries. They are represented on holy icons. Their role is charismatic, their place of high importance for the Christian community. Their fame could be local, but in some cases it could be spread around the Christian world. They can heal, they can protect. Their devoted prayer is something mortals desperately seek. During their lifetime, saints provide their community with a paradigmatic ideal of life and religious conduct. They have their festal days and ceremonies. There is a lot of folklore connected with their cults. Even their relics have healing and mystical power.

Historically speaking, the function of saints in Orthodoxy is analogous to the function of heroes in pre-Christian Europe. The saints are, of course, human, but at the same time they are not just ordinary humans. Their idealization is absolute. They are deified. In them is incarnated Christ himself. In the first centuries of Christianity, almost all of them were martyrs; later they were usually highly respected anchorites and ascetics, vocations which made them nearer to God than is possible for other mortals. Active participation in deity made their lives special.

In Orthodoxy there is no really abstract, formal, or administrative regulation of sainthood. On the contrary, somebody can be admitted and celebrated as a saint only if there is a cult among ordinary people who are dedicated to him or her. Deep in its essence, the category of saint has an element of real transcendence. The hagiographic tradition and literature is full of stories about the miracles that were done by saints during their earthly lives or after death. There is a belief that the saint's body is incorruptible, that death cannot destroy it. The Orthodox believe that there is a very fine, mystical scent of holy relics. For them it is a sign of the saint's corruptible body in incorruptibility.

For the Orthodox churches, there is no human institution that could be in charge of assessing and evaluating somebody's sainthood. There is only one real arbiter of possible sainthood among humans: the Holy Spirit. Practically speaking, this means that a cult must spread among believing people (the Holy Spirit is seen as the agent of that spread) for an individual saint to gain recognition. Of course, throughout history there were some dynastic attempts to make sainthood politically useful, and these attempts were more or less explicit during more or less turbulent times. The list of the saints will never be finished up to the last days. There are saints who lived in ancient times, as well as in our times.

Among the most famous saints in Orthodoxy are John Chrysostom (c. 349–407), Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833), Nicholas (mid-fourth century), Sabas the Great (439–532), two saints named Parasceva (second and eleventh centuries), Nectarius (d. 397), Kosmas (1714–1779), and Silouan (1866–1938).

—Peter Jevremovic

See also: Christianity and Holy People; John Chrysostom; Miracles; Models; Nicholas; Parasceva; Patriotism and Holy People; Priests; Sabas the Goth; Seraphim of Sarov; Sexuality and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Ōshio Heihachirō

(1793–1837 C.E.)

Confucian philosopher, rebel

Ōshio Heihachirō (Ōshio Chūsai) is remembered in Japanese history as a famous follower of the Wang Yangming school of Confucianism (Jap.: Yōmeigaku) whose philosophical praxis led to a fiery rebellion against the government of Osaka in 1837. He has also been regarded as a precursor of the mode of imperial-loyalist faith and nationalist activism that characterized the anti-Tokugawa movement that culminated in the Meiji Restoration.

Ōshio was born (or possibly adopted) in 1793 into a samurai family with the hereditary position of city police captain (*machi yoriki*) in the Osaka town-magistrate's office, a position that carried considerable authority but relatively low status. His discovery at age fifteen that he had a heroic ancestor led to shame at "being a petty document writer in the company of jailers and municipal officials," motivating him to take up Neo-Confucian learning. At twenty-four, he chanced to read a book of moral maxims by the Chinese philosopher Lü Kun (1536–1618) that convinced him that his whole approach to learning—seeking moral principles externally—had been misguided. Finding that Lü had been deeply influenced by Wang Yangming (1472–1529), he began his lifelong study of the teachings of Wang and his followers.

Ōshio later won great fame through his resolute prosecution of three difficult legal cases, but in 1830, disturbed over the attention these cases had brought him (and by his patron's retirement), he suddenly resigned his position, hoping to devote himself full-time to teaching Yōmeigaku at the private academy (the Senshindō) that he had set up in his residence. In 1833, he privately published his most famous philosophical work, *Senshindō sakki* (Reading notes from the cave of mind cleansing), which focuses on the intertwined spiritual practices of "returning to the Great Vacuity" (*ki Taikyō*) and "extending the inborn knowledge of the good" (to one's outward activities), while enjoining officials to devote themselves wholeheartedly to the welfare of the people.

In the same year, the country was struck by a severe famine, and though Ōshio repeatedly proffered policy advice to the new magistrate through his adopted son, his advice was angrily rejected. Burning with indignation, Ōshio distributed a fiery call-to-arms addressed to "the village headmen, elders, peasants, and tenant farmers in every village," calling for a righteous rebellion against the government he had once served. The mass support he expected did not materialize, and his band was soon defeated. Ōshio went into hiding; in 1837, when he was discovered, he committed suicide with his adopted son. In a time when resentment against the Tokugawa government was growing in many quarters, he lived on in the popular mind as a rebel hero, and his ideas, as well as his tactical errors, were carefully studied by those who led the anti-Tokugawa movement of the late 1850s and 1860s.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Wang Yangming

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Osho

(1931–1990 C.E.)

Indian contemporary religious founder

Osho, also known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and Acharya Rajneesh, was the central figure of a contemporary religious movement. His followers were referred to as Rajneeshes and later as Oshos.

Osho was born on December 11, 1931, in Kuchwada, Madhya Pradesh, India; his birth name was Chandra Mohan Jain. He received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Jabalpur University in 1955 and a master's degree in 1957 from the University of Saugar. He returned to Jabalpur

University as a professor of philosophy, where he taught until 1966. When a small group of followers began to revere him as a divinely inspired teacher, he began to devote himself solely to teaching spiritual matters. He assumed the name Acharya Rajneesh, combining the Sanskrit term for revered teacher, *acarya*, and a nickname given to him in his youth, Rajneesh. His teachings took on an increasingly syncretic character, combining ideas from Hinduism, Jainism, Zen Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity, ancient Greek and contemporary Western philosophy, European romantic poetry, humanistic psychology, and popular psychology. In Madhya Pradesh, Osho also invented "dynamic meditation," the central practice of his followers. Dynamic meditation consists of five stages of activity: breathing rapidly; dancing "madly"; jumping and yelling "hoo!" as a mantra; standing completely still and "observing"; and finally, celebrating.

In 1968, Osho moved to Bombay, changing his name to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. His circle of followers increased, particularly among foreign travelers to India, who were perhaps attracted by his emphasis on the spiritual merits of self-indulgence, sexual freedom, and individual advancement. In 1974, Osho and his followers (called *sannyasins*) moved to the nearby city of Pune to establish an ashram. In 1981, ostensibly to seek medical treatment, Osho and his followers relocated to the United States, settling in central Oregon near the town of Antelope. There, while Osho sank into a vow of silence and solitude, his followers built a commune around him that they called "Rajneeshpuram" or "Rancho Rajneesh." During this period, Osho acquired great wealth, demonstrated by his vast collection of women's watches and some fifty-five Rolls Royce vehicles.

The members of the commune and its governmental structure soon came into conflict with the nearby residents of Antelope, where reports of threats and poisonings by Rajneesh and his followers grew. Eventually, the U.S. government expelled Osho and his followers after charges of immigration fraud and tax evasion were brought against the organization. Osho sought asylum outside the United States. Twenty-one countries rejected him before he finally returned to India and resettled the commune in Pune in 1986/1987. Upon his return to India, Osho cast off the name "Rajneesh" and adopted his final name, Osho. From 1987 until 1990, the year his followers say he "left the body," Osho reconstituted the ashram in Pune. Following his death, the Osho Commune International, as the ashram is called, has flourished as a "meditation resort" and a place of spiritual education.

—Christian Lee Novetzke

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Sexuality and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Oswald of Worcester

(c. 925–992 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, reformer

Oswald, Benedictine monk, bishop of Worcester, and archbishop of York, was a leader of the reform movement that revived monasticism and renewed the spiritual life of the church in England during the tenth century. Sts. Dunstan and Æthelwold were also prominent in this movement. Oswald's vita, written by Byrhtferth of Ramsey within ten years of his death, describes him as a model monk and bishop who was committed to the reformation of monastic houses in strict accordance with the Benedictine Rule and the ideal of clerical celibacy.

Born of Danish parents in about 925, Oswald was educated by his uncle Oda, the archbishop of Canterbury. After a brief tenure as head of a monastic house in Winchester, where he was dismayed by the lax discipline of the inhabitants, Oswald entered the monastery of Fleury, drawn, perhaps, by its extensive library and the relics of St. Benedict. Oswald was recalled to England by his uncle in 958; by 961, he had been elected bishop of Worcester. In 971, he also became archbishop of York, an office he held while still retaining the bishopric of Worcester.

By the tenth century, most English monastic houses had come under the control of laymen and housed secular priests rather than monks, a situation that King Edgar was determined to rectify with the aid of his reforming bishops. As bishop of Worcester, Oswald established several monastic foundations in his diocese, including Westbury-on-Trym, Winchcombe, and Ramsey, and effected the transformation of Worcester cathedral, where a monastic community eventually supplanted the secular canons.

Oswald was regarded as a saint from the time of his death in 992, and miracles were associated with his relics, including his chasuble and the water used to wash his body in preparation for burial. The translation of the relics to a shrine in Worcester cathedral in 1002 was marked by an increase in miracles. Although King John was especially devoted to St. Oswald and his successor, St. Wulfstan, his cult remained primarily local. He was venerated at Worcester cathedral, where the monks saw him as their special patron, and at Evesham, which boasted an arm-reliquary containing one of his bones. His cult retained a significant local following until the Reformation.

—Mary Lynn Rampolla

See also: Æthelwold; Christianity and Holy People; Dunstan; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Otto of Bamberg

(c. 1060–1139 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

For the modern scholar Stephen Jaeger (1985), Otto of Bamberg epitomized the virtues of the courtier-bishops, a group of churchmen who served the medieval German emperors in their attempt to create and administer a more civilized society. Otto's intellect, his modesty, his ability to befriend even his enemies, and his eloquence all paved his way within the intertwined circles of royal court and highest church office. As did other courtier-bishops, Otto used political means to achieve the ecclesiastical goal of a peaceful society through lawmaking, conflict resolution, and diplomacy.

After he finished his education in Germany, Otto served in the court of Wladislaw, duke of Poland. Chief among Otto's diplomatic missions was facilitating a marriage between Wladislaw and Judith, sister of Emperor Henry IV of Germany (r. 1056–1106). Otto was invited to the imperial court in 1090 and achieved the office of chancellor by 1101. The whole course of Otto's career fell during the so-called Investitures Contest, the rancorous struggle between emperor and pope over the right to appoint bishops. Here Otto took a determinedly moderate position, retaining the alliance (if not always the goodwill) of both emperor and pope. Otto's mediation between the two parties was instrumental in formulating the Concordat of Worms (1122) that brought an end to the dispute.

Although Otto's service as courtier-bishop was exemplary, his piety and pastoral activities in his own diocese of Bamberg and abroad made him a saint. He led a modest, even apostolic, life. He applied his administrative experience as chancellor to consolidate the holdings of his see, to finish building the cathedral, and to reform the cathedral school. Otto founded some twenty monasteries, turning the wealth of his office to spiritual use. He used his skills as a diplomat in a mission to convert Pomerania in 1124–1125 and again in 1128, consciously departing from the military methods of conversion so common in the Middle Ages. Otto instead sought to convert using the peaceful means of preaching, charity, education, and the example of his own holy life. Legend records many miracles during his mission, and even more at his tomb in the monastery of St. Michael in Bamberg following his death in 1139. Pope Clement III canonized Otto

in 1189. His feast day is July 2 or September 30 in Germany and October 1 in Pomerania.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Politics and Holy People

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Oyá

Yoruba orisha

Oyá is the Yoruba goddess of the wind and storms and is associated with lightning, tornadoes, and the *harmattan* (wind). She is considered the source of the Niger River, also known as Odó Oyá (Oyá's river), and the *orisha* (deity) of the marketplace. In addition, Oyá has important relationships with other orishas, such as Ikú (death), Egún (deceased ancestors), and Araorún (spirits). She accompanies the soul to *orún* (heaven), and in Cuba, the Lucumi insist that Oyá's presence is indispensable in Egún rituals, as she accompanies the dead to the doors of the cemetery. Most of all, Oyá represents change, transformation, and renovation. She is a harbinger of destruction and death but ensures that human life perseveres by clearing the way for rebirth. Like many other orishas, Oyá is believed to have been a human heroine in the distant past. Some sources say that she was from the town of Irá, but in Cuba, the Lucumi associate her with Tapá (Nupé), the birthplace of her husband, Shangó.

Most *olorishas* (priests or priestesses) insist that Oyá is a very severe and ruthless deity. In fact, although Oyá is a champion of women's causes, she is the least motherly of the female orishas. One devotee refers to her as a "patron of feminine leadership" (Gleason 1987, 1). The Lucumi say that she

prefers to dedicate her time to the battlefield and not waste it rearing children. Many *olorishas* fear Oyá for her relationship with death. This is highlighted by one source's affirmation that Oyá's "face is so terrible that none dare behold it, her wrath so devastating that it must be absolutely avoided" (Idowu 1994, 91). Like a menacing tornado, Oyá is very temperamental, and her wrath is devastating. Afefé (the wind) is one of her servants, and she commands it in whichever way she considers best.

Oyá is also a war deity, feared because of her skillfulness in battle and her fiery and bellicose disposition. Though she does not possess the sensual beauty of her cowife and rival Oshún, she appeals to Shangó by virtue of her incredible likeness to him. Oshún inspires him sexually, but Oyá brings out the unbridled essence of the warrior within him. As such, Shangó taught her how to ride a horse so she would lead his cavalry into war. Nature emulates Oyá's and Shangó's everlasting relationship: At the onset of a battle or storm, Oyá (lightning) will always precede Shangó (thunder). In fact, she works for Shangó when disbursing justice as he sends her to strike the home of the wicked with bolts of lightning. On the battleground, Oyá is defiant and indefatigable. She mounts Shangó's horse, puts on his trousers and the *mariwó* that she obtained from her first husband, Ogún, and turns into an indomitable Amazon who endures the most exhausting battle. As brawny as any man, in the battlefield Oyá can bear the harshest conditions and come out victorious.

Oyá's symbols are the machete and the *iruké* (switch). The first, Ogún's symbol, she acquired while she was married to the god of iron. He taught her how to fashion it from the iron in his forge and how to handle it in war. Egún gave her the *iruké*, with which she guides the soul to heaven. In possession, she uses either or both to cleanse the path of her devotees and strike out against evil and injustice.

—*Miguel W. Ramos*

See also: Ogún; Orishas; Shangó; War, Peace, and Holy People

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P

Pachomius

(c. 290–c. 346)

Christian abbot

Pachomius, founder of cenobitic monasticism, was born into a non-Christian family in upper Egypt in about 290. He was about twenty years old when he was conscripted into the army of Constantine during the emperor's war against his rival Maxentius. Impressed with the kindness and humility of the Christians he encountered in Thebes while still in the army, Pachomius converted to Christianity upon his discharge. He determined to live the life of an ascetic monk and went to live as a hermit at Tabennisi on the Nile River in Upper Egypt under the direction of the anchorite Palemon.

For several years, the two hermits led lives of piety and devotion. Pachomius then experienced a vision prompting him to found a monastic community at Tabennisi. In the vision, it is said, an angel attired in the robes of a monk assured Pachomius that he would not lack for companions when he established his community. Pachomius built a cell, but at first his only other companion was his elder brother John; soon, many other men joined Pachomius and his brother. Initially, those new companions sought salvation through a commitment to the eremitical, as opposed to communal, life. Thus, Pachomius initially proposed only slight modifications to their solitary manner of living, such as a general agreement to common meals. Nonetheless, the number of those wishing to live according to the cenobitical rule Pachomius developed soon began to increase. The monastery at Tabennisi was continually enlarged until there was need for a second, which was established at Pabau, and a third, at Chenoboskion. By the time of his death in approximately 346, Pachomius had founded at least eight or nine monasteries for men, and two for women. His order lasted in the Eastern church until the eleventh century.

Pachomius designed his monasteries as a group of buildings surrounded by a wall. Each building, or house, would hold about forty monks, and each monastery would contain

thirty to forty houses. Each house would be assigned a specific task, such as carpentry or farming, and all offices and spiritual exercises during the week would occur within each house. All monks met as a community on Sundays for mass.

The rule Pachomius devised would have a great influence on Basil the Great (330–379) and Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 547), later founders of Eastern and Western monasticism. The Rule of Pachomius was based upon moderation in all observances: Each monk was free to proceed according to his strength and zeal. Thus, for example, although the rule encouraged monks to eat twice a day (except for fast days), each monk could determine for himself whether he wished to eat two full meals daily within the community, or subsist merely upon bread, salt, and water in the solitude of his cell. Pachomius's feast day is May 9.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Basil the Great; Benedict of Nursia; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; Monasticism and Holy People

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Padmasambhava

(8th/9th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist master

Padmasambhava was an Indian Buddhist master credited with introducing tantric Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth

and ninth centuries. According to Tibetan hagiographies, he was invited to Tibet by King Trisong de Tsen (740–798) to pacify demonic obstacle-makers preventing the establishment of Buddhism in his realm. Padmasambhava is known for his enlightened wisdom, supernatural abilities, and power to control gods and demons. He occupies a central role on the Tibetan religious scene, where he is portrayed as the founder of Samye, Tibet's first monastery, and the main force behind the official Tibetan adoption of tantric Buddhism. In later Tibetan tradition, Padmasambhava is venerated as "a second Buddha" and appropriated in meditation as the embodiment of the fruition of the tantric path.

Padmasambhava was born in the ancient country of Oddiyana (Swat Valley, Afghanistan). Accounts vary as to his mode of birth. Early hagiographies describe his birth from a lady of that country, but later spiritually revealed Tibetan descriptions credit him with miraculous birth from a lotus—hence his name Padmasambhava (Lotus-Born). Hagiographies describing his existence in India prior to his Tibetan sojourn credit Padmasambhava with a life span of many centuries during which he wandered the Indian subcontinent leading the life of a tantric practitioner (*siddha*). After pacifying demons in Tibet at the request of King Trisong de Tsen, he reportedly remained for a number of years in Tibet and continued as the driving force in propagating tantric Buddhism there. Although little historical data exist to verify these claims, the historicity of his visit to Tibet is no longer questioned.

Beginning in the eleventh century, the importance of Padmasambhava gradually increased as the followers of the Ancient School (*rnying ma*) revealed spiritual practices and hagiographies centering on him. Such revelations describe Padmasambhava concealing spiritual instructions (hidden in the mind of his disciples as well as physical locations) to be revealed in subsequent centuries. Such revelations, called "treasure literature" (*gter ma*), over time became a major literary genre in Tibet. The claims of the treasure teachings to originate with Padmasambhava periodically met with criticism from the members of skeptical communities in Tibet who questioned their veracity. However, in spite of such criticism, Padmasambhava and his legacy have remained of major significance to Tibetan Buddhist consciousness, where his contribution to the conversion of Tibet, as it is cast in his many hagiographies, continues to enjoy the universal respect and appreciation of all Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

—*Andreas Doctor*

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Recognition; Reincarnation; Teachers as Holy People; Trisong de Tsen

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Pandurangshastri Athavale-Dada

(1920 C.E.–)

Hindu/syncretist teacher

Pandurangshastri Vajinath Athavale, popularly known as Dada (elder brother), is a teacher of *swadhyaya* (understanding self)—a strain of thought that strives to make people conscious of the sanctity of the self and the other in the realization of a commonality. Though he neither proselytizes nor cultivates any particular creedal constituency, he is perhaps the most influential visionary in postindependence India.

Pandurangshastri Athavale was born in Roha, a village in western India, on October 19, 1920. He went through rigorous nonformal education in many fields for eighteen years and educated himself at the Asiatic Society Library in Mumbai. Though Dada's roots in India's scholastic tradition is manifest, his critique of tradition and philosophical accommodations makes him willing to adopt elements of other traditions. His philosophy is based on total and absolute faith in the creator and God's presence in human beings and in all other created things in the universe. The focus of his teaching is that once the idea of an indwelling God is internalized, the level of self-esteem and dignity of the other is raised regardless of economic or social status. *Swadhyaya* is a process of social transformation through self-transformation.

Today, *Swadhyaya* has reached nearly 100,000 villages, towns, and cities, affecting the lives of nearly 20 million people. The religion does not have a structured organization; rather, it is called by its members the "Swadhyaya family." Dada has transformed the understanding of *bhakti* (devotion) into a reason-based, selfless offering of time and creative efficiency by *swadhyayees*, who engage in various experiments of purposive collective action as an expression of their love and gratitude to God. The experiments cover such diverse areas as farming, forestry, dairy farming, vocational training, social hygiene, education, environmental protection, disaster relief, and the like, cutting across traditional caste and regional barriers.

Dada's ecumenical approach has won him worldwide recognition and appreciation. *Swadhyaya* is a major fellow-

ship not only in India but also among Indian expatriates on other continents. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has recently noted that Swadhyaya communities are indeed more developed economically than traditional Indian villages. Dada received the Ramon Magasaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1996, the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1997, and the second-highest Indian civil award, the Padma Vibhushan, in 1999.

—Raj K. Srivastava

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Status

Pantaleon

(d. early 4th cent. C.E.)

Christian physician, martyr

Legends recount that the Christian martyr Pantaleon (or Panteleimon), whose name means “all merciful” or “all compassionate,” was a physician at the court of Caesar Galerius at Nicomedia in the late third century. Although raised as a Christian by his devout mother, he succumbed to the temptations and excesses of the lavish court life and renounced his faith until he was shown the error of his ways by a Christian friend. His reconversion and renewed dedication to the Christian faith thereafter inspired him in great acts of charity to Christians and non-Christians alike. He gave away his possessions, treated the sick without accepting payment, and performed a number of miracles. During the persecution of Christians by the emperor Diocletian, Pantaleon was tortured in a number of grotesque manners (by burning, attack by wild beasts, and immersion in liquid lead, for example) and eventually was decapitated in perhaps 305. Milk, instead of blood, poured forth from his wounds, and the olive tree to which he had been tied suddenly bore fruit.

Pantaleon’s cult developed initially in the Byzantine Empire; in the sixth century, the emperor Justinian rebuilt a church in his honor in Nicomedia. Pantaleon became very popular in the West during the Middle Ages, and he is included among the Fourteen Holy Helpers. He is the patron saint of doctors and the medical profession generally. Pantaleon appears in art most often with the attributes of his profession, such as vials and ointments.

Relics of his dried blood are located at several shrines, including Madrid and Ravello, and are reported to liquefy on his feast day, which is July 27.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Fourteen Holy Helpers; Martyrdom and Persecution; Miracles

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Parasceva

Orthodox saint(s)

There are three Orthodox saints named Parasceva who are often confused with one another: (1) Parasceva of either Iconium or Rome, from the second century, martyred by torture in a time of anti-Christian persecution, remembered on October 28; (2) Parasceva of Bulgaria, often called Parasceva of Trnovo or Parasceva of Serbia, a famous recluse dating from the late tenth to the early eleventh centuries, revered in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and Russia on October 14 (whose remains are now in Jassy, Romania); (3) Parasceva of Polotsk, a Russian princess and nun who died in 1239, a less well-known saint often, though not conclusively, identified with Efrosinia of Polotsk. All three saints are known as Parasceva-Petka or Parasceva-Piatnitsa, but the latter name is more often associated with the second Parasceva.

The first Parasceva, often called Petka, was tortured repeatedly and finally beheaded, but it is unclear whether Parasceva of Iconium visited Rome or is a separate person from Parasceva of Rome. References to a single individual as well as two women can be found in Orthodox literature. A long vita for the second-century saint is included in the Great Menology of Makarii, Metropolitan of Moscow, on October 28. Parasceva of Trnovo was particularly popular in Russia as the patron of household tasks, spinning, and needlework, and of traders. Her association with trade made her cult popular in the Russian Hanseatic town of Novgorod. A vita for this saint was also included in the Great Menology of Makarii, but on October 14. She rejected marriage in order to live a life devoted to God. Her alternate name of Piatnitsa means “Friday” and originally referred to Good Friday, the day of Christ’s passion.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Gender and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Veneration of Holy People

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Pariacaca

Peruvian god-hero

Pariacaca was a pre-Hispanic divine hero known through the myths that were collected and written by Father Francisco de Avila in Huarochirí, Peru (1598). These myths were written down in sixteenth-century Quechua so priests would

have the necessary information to fight against the so-called “Indian idolatries” that Christian fathers found in Peru. Therefore, they offer a unique account, in Indian language, of the pre-Hispanic world vision in the Americas.

Pariacaca seems to be a creator or an organizer of the world in difficult times. The myth gives information about ancient daily practices related to the sacred. It is set in an ancient time when men’s only occupation was war, and the most courageous and wealthy among them became chieftains (*curacas*). One day, on Condorcoto Mountain, Pariacaca and his brothers were “born” in the shape of five eggs. A poor man, Huatiacuri, actually Pariacaca’s son, witnessed this birth. At the same time, Tamtañamca, a man who faked being a powerful and wise god among his people, fell ill, and nobody was able to heal him. Huatiacuri came to the village of Tamtañamca and offered to heal him if Tamtañamca would allow him to marry his daughter. Tamtañamca accepted, and Huatiacuri revealed to the chieftain that his disease was due to the infidelity of his wife and his hypocrisy. Once healed, Tamtañamca gave his daughter to Huatiacuri.

However, another son-in-law of Tamtañamca, a wealthy warrior, defied Huatiacuri because he could not bear to become related to such a poor man. Huatiacuri had to go through several tests; Pariacaca, still in his egg shape, gave Huatiacuri specific advice on how to meet each challenge. Huatiacuri succeeded, and the wealthy warrior was turned into a deer. After this, Pariacaca and his brothers went out from the five eggs and became five falcons. The falcons became men, started to walk, then took the shape of rain and became a flood, destroying Tamtañamca’s village. After this, Pariacaca went back to the mountain and remained there.

—*Rocío Quispe-Agnoli*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Apotheosis; Heroes

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Parshva

(9th cent. B.C.E.)

Jain *tirthankara*

According to Jain teachings, Parshva was the twenty-third of the twenty-four *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) of the current declining half-cycle of time. Although his dating is uncertain, he was almost certainly a historical figure who probably lived in Banaras in the ninth century B.C.E.

Jain hagiography traces Parshva’s history to an earlier birth as a brahmin named Marubhuti. Marubhuti’s disreputable and envious elder brother, Kamatha, seduced Marubhuti’s wife, and was exiled as punishment. When Marubhuti approached Kamatha to make amends, Kamatha killed him with a blow of a stone to his head. The story then follows Marubhuti through a series of successive rebirths in which he is pursued, harassed, and killed by the ever-enraged Kamatha, himself reborn in a variety of different lethal forms.

In his final birth, Marubhuti was conceived in the womb of Vama Devi, wife of King Ashvasena of Banaras. Having become a handsome and virtuous prince, Parshva, as he was then named, one day noticed a crowd passing by. Upon inquiry, he learned that they were on their way to pay obeisance to an ascetic—in fact his old foe, Kamatha—who was performing the five-fire penance (that is, surrounded by four fires and the blazing sun overhead). When Parshva went there, his special powers enabled him to see two snakes being burnt alive in the firewood. He remonstrated with the ascetic and ordered his attendants to rescue the dying snakes. In their next births, the snakes became the snake god Dharnendra and his consort Padmavati, who are Parshva’s attendant deities. Inspired by some pictures of the life of Nemi, Parshva gave away his wealth and became a homeless mendicant. His final encounter with Kamatha occurred when he was deep in meditation. Having failed to disturb him by other means, Kamatha created a great rainstorm and flood, but even when the water rose to Parshva’s nose, he did not cease his meditation. Then Dharnendra and Padmavati arrived on the scene, lifted him up, and sheltered him from the downpour with their hoods. Faced with this final defeat, Kamatha begged Parshva’s forgiveness.

Parshva achieved omniscience at a garden in Banaras. After thirty years of teaching, at the age of 100, he shed his body and attained liberation at Mount Sammeta (in what is now Jharkhand).

—*Lawrence A. Babb*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Malli, Meditation and Holy People; Nemi; Reincarnation; Rishabha

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Pasenadi

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist king, follower of the Buddha

Pasenadi, an Indian king, was a contemporary of the Buddha in the fifth century B.C.E. He was the son of Mahakoshala and was educated at Takshashila. His father was so impressed with his qualities that he seems to have abdicated in Pase-

nadi's favor. As king, Pasenadi enjoyed the company of wise men. Quite early in the Buddha's ministry, Pasenadi became his follower and close friend, and his devotion to the Buddha lasted till his death. He is said to have guarded the reputation of the Buddha and the *samgha* (monastic community) very zealously. As a true Buddhist, he also extended his favors to other religious orders. It is said that his alms-halls were always kept open to everyone desiring food or drink.

Pasenadi once tried to seduce a married woman by ordering her husband out of the town. The king had a sleepless night and was advised by the brahmins to order an animal sacrifice, but he abandoned the idea on the advice of the Buddha. His devotion to the Buddha has formed the basis of many legends. The Chinese records say that when the Buddha went to Tavatisma, Pasenadi made an image of him in sandalwood so that he could honor him. He is credited with having built monasteries for the Buddha, Prajapati Gautami, and his teacher Bavari. He organized the celebrated almsgiving called *Asadisadana* (incomparable) and gave four priceless gifts to the Buddha: a white parasol, a couch, a stand, and a footstool. A Buddha is said to receive such gifts only once in his lifetime. Three *Jatakas* (Birth stories of the Buddha)—*Aditta*, *Dasabrahmana*, and *Sivi*—were preached in reference to Asadisadana.

Pasenadi died under tragic circumstances at the gates of Rajagriha, waiting for help from Ajatashatru against his son Vidudabha, who had captured the throne by deceit. Later, Ajatashatru performed the funeral rites over the king's body with great pomp. The "Kosala Samyutta" (Kosala chapter) of the *Samyutta Nikaya* (Connected discourses), consisting of twenty-five anecdotes, is devoted to him. The *Anagatavamsa* declared Pasenadi a *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) who would be the fourth Buddha.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Rulers as Holy People

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Patanjali

(3rd cent. C.E.)

Hindu philosopher

Patanjali is the reputed author of the third-century Hindu text called the Yoga Sutra. Although little is known about

Patanjali himself (the name also refers to a famous Indian grammarian of the second century), the Yoga Sutra is unquestionably one of the most important texts in Indian philosophy and spirituality. The terse collection of aphorisms systematizes the theory and practice of yoga, a mental and bodily discipline with a history extending back hundreds of years before the Common Era. The term *yoga* (discipline) comes from the Sanskrit root *yuj* (unite) and is cognate to the English word "yoke." In this sense, yoga is the process by which one "unites" or "yokes" oneself to the divine.

The ethics, bodily postures, breathing practices, and meditation of classical yoga are all conducive of an integration or unification of spirit. However, the yoga school operates from a dualistic metaphysics based on the eternal principles of matter and spirit. Matter (or nature) is fundamentally inert and unconscious, though constantly evolving and, over vast cycles of time, devolving finally into a primordial etheric matrix. Spirit (or soul, and in this system there is an infinite number of souls), in a manner that is neither well explained nor persuasive, becomes trapped in the material matrix and is thereby implicated in physical bodies. The human entity is thus a "mind-body complex," fundamentally operating from the principle of consciousness, the soul or spirit.

But a problem emerges that demands not only the yogic program of "uniting" oneself to the divine but also "dis-uniting" oneself; that is, detaching oneself from all that is not one's truest self. And this includes both the mind and the body. Mind, according to this system, is material, inert, and unconscious, yet it "borrows," as it were, consciousness from the soul. The mind then generates egocentric conceptualizations to establish individual identity (for example, I am a man, I am a citizen, I am a professional, I am happy, sad, smart, ignorant, and so on). However, all identifications lead to suffering, owing to the fact of impermanence. So Patanjali, in words that echo the famous First Noble Truth of the Buddha, writes: "All is suffering for the sage."

Addressing the problem of suffering from the Hindu perspective, Patanjali posits that if everything is suffering precisely because of impermanence, then we should seek the one thing that is permanent, complete in itself, and peaceful: the divine self. The method for doing this is yoga, which, through a hyperintense program of concentration, clears the stream of mental fluctuations, allowing the adept to be transparent before the transcendent. Much as cloudy water clears and settles, so, through yoga, one's mind clears, allowing for a direct perception and a felt experience of the divine self, one's true nature.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Patrick

(d. c. 493 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Patrick of Ireland is one of the most beloved Christian saints of the English-speaking world. Or at least his legend is beloved; little is known about the historic figure who lies behind the legends. The few historic facts known beyond dispute about Patrick can be summed up briefly. Magonus Succatus Patricius, anglicized to Patrick, was born somewhere on the west coast of Britain in the early fifth century. When he was sixteen, Irish raiders captured him and took him to Ireland, where for six years he was enslaved, set to work herding flocks. As Patrick describes the situation himself in his short *Confession*, during that period he had a deep religious conversion, which culminated in what he viewed as a miraculous escape from captivity. He made his way to Gaul, where he received some formal religious training, and had another divine encounter, this time a command to return to Ireland and convert the population of the island. Patrick was consecrated as a missionary bishop somewhere in either Gaul or Britain, then returned to Ireland to work in the missionary field for the rest of his life. He enjoyed considerable success, apparently working for the most part in Ulster in the north.

It is a pious exaggeration, though, to suggest that Patrick “converted the Irish.” There were already Christian clerics in Ireland before he arrived there, and a substantial Christian population; moreover, Patrick’s own mission apparently never reached the southern part of the island. His work seems to have been barely tolerated by the established church hierarchy of Britain. Late in his career, Patrick was so bitter at criticism of his methods and lack of learning, and gossip about some undisclosed youthful sin he had committed, that he wrote his *Confession* to justify himself and save himself from being barred from exercise of his office. He does, however, stand out in the history of the early Middle Ages as a missionary who felt himself to be sent by God, rather than being dispatched by an ecclesiastical authority, and his bravery in going alone to a non-Christian country without even the protection of a sympathetic ruler at the beginning marks him out as singular in any age.

Patrick’s cult began to spread in the seventh century as his foundation at Armagh sought to bolster its own authority by emphasizing the importance of its founder. By about 670, his cult had reached Gaul along with Irish missionaries. A legendary Patrick was created, able to defeat druids in

magical contests, so stubborn in his support of the Irish that he fasted for forty days until God granted them a series of great benefits for his sake, and able to resurrect ancient heroes and win them to Christianity. A still later legendary layer tells how Patrick expelled the snakes from Ireland (for geological reasons, Ireland has never had snakes; this legend probably began with an earlier heroic account of Patrick destroying a monster). By the early modern period, he had become a figure of practical benevolence, teaching the doctrine of the Trinity with the aid of a shamrock. Patrick’s feast day is celebrated on March 17.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Mission

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Patriotism and Holy People

Especially in the past two centuries, many widely acknowledged holy people have played leadership roles in nationalist or patriotic movements, their status as religious leaders helping them win broad support to effect change, especially against European colonial powers. The phenomenon of the “holy patriot” is by no means new, however. Whenever the consciousness of a people is closely identified with their religious beliefs, the possibility exists for holy people to lead political movements of resistance and liberation. This is true not only of living saints; the memory and veneration of holy people of the past can also help rally nationalist sentiment. The cult of Juan Diego of Mexico (1474–1548), for example, provides comfort and encouragement to the indigenous population of the region.

The earliest well-attested nationalist religious revolt is the rebellion of the Jews against the Greek ruler Antiochus IV in the second century B.C.E. The process created clearly defined holy people—not the leaders of the revolt, but the martyrs who inspired it. The so-called “Maccabean martyrs,” seven brothers and their mother, all killed for refusing to betray their faith, are the earliest known case of martyrdom consciously employed to inspire a national movement. Martyrdom also helped to unify the Jews as a people in their unsuccessful wars of independence against the Romans. Rabbi Akiba may have supported Simeon b. Kochba’s rebellion in the early second century, and he certainly taught Torah in



Monumental statue of Patrick of Ireland in County Down, Northern Ireland, commemorating the 1,500th anniversary of the beginning of his missionary work in Ireland. (Geray Sweeney/Corbis)

public after the rebellion, thus defying Roman edicts. His martyrdom for the cause of continuing the essence of Judaism has resonated over many centuries.

Also deserving of recognition as saints venerated especially for their patriotic qualities are those Christian missionaries who made the religion accessible in the native language of various regions and worked to create autonomous churches free of intrusive cultural influence. An important example of this sort is the Armenian Isaac the Great (c. 338–439), who created written Armenian and translated Christian works and the liturgy, in this way playing a vital role in maintaining Armenian independence. King Stephen of Hungary (c. 975–1038) gave his realm a national church along with its first national identity, resisting German influence while at the same time linking his people to a Europe-wide Christianity.

Other holy people have led movements against the encroachment of foreign religious influence. Two great figures of the thirteenth century exemplify this process: the Buddhist Nichiren (1222–1282) and the Hindu Ramanand (1299–1410?). Ramanand, part of a religious world reeling from the impact of the Muslim conquest of northern India, revived the *bhakti* (devotional) movement to focus Hindus on their own faith rather than leaving them susceptible to Islam. Nichiren's aspirations were even higher. He founded the Buddhist Nichiren school in Japan as part of a deeply felt desire to bring internal peace to Japan and make Japan the world center of authentic Buddhism. As part of his program, Nichiren was extreme in his criticism of all other Buddhist schools. He came to see himself as the savior of the state, the incarnation of two *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings). His influence can still be felt in Japanese Buddhism today, and his example may also have inspired the work of Kitabake Chikafusa (1293–1354), the leading advocate of Shinto revival, who argued for the uniqueness of Japanese religions and advocated Shinto as superior to invading foreign religions.

Some of the greatest holy people of later medieval Christianity rose to greatness because they opposed military invasions of their land. Sergius of Radonezh (1314–1392) became a national symbol of Russian and Orthodox Christian unity because he drew the Russians together to fight the Mongols. He played a leading role in halting the invasion of 1380, a victory that established an independent Russia. His cult inspired the expulsion of the Mongols from conquered areas of Russia, and his tomb at Sergiev Posad near Moscow became a place of national pilgrimage; it is still the residence of the Russian Orthodox patriarch. More flamboyantly, the youthful Joan of Arc (1412–1431) believed herself specially called by God to save France from the English who were rapidly conquering it, and in her meteoric career she may have turned the tide for French reconquest of their country. Indeed, the clearly political execution of Joan by the English

authorities as a relapsed heretic probably did more to rally people to the king of France than Joan had done during her life. Only a few years before that, Jan Hus of Bohemia (1372/1373–1415), one of the great forerunners of the Protestant Reformation, rallied his people not just in the cause of religious reform but in their resistance to the foreign domination of the Holy Roman emperor. In Hus's case, nationalist impulse was clearer after his death, when his name became a rallying cry, not just in the fifteenth century but in the twentieth.

The early modern period produced two very different sorts of nationalist holy people: the Protestant reformers of various European states, who created “national churches” through their break with Rome, and more purely political figures who created strongly self-conscious states. Notable in the European history of national identity is the towering figure of Martin Luther (1483–1546)—who translated the Bible into German, encouraged the power of princes against that of the Holy Roman emperor, and articulated a very German model of religious life. Similarly, the history of Switzerland has been shaped by John Calvin (1509–1564), Scotland by John Knox (c. 1514–1572), and England by such great reform leaders as Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556). On the other side of the world, notable patriotic saints included Guru Nanak (1469–1539), creator of the Sikh state in the Punjab, and the Japanese Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), who reunified Japan after a century of war and is revered as a kami. A similarly patriotic veneration of holy people is strongly evident in modern Japan, where the great restoring emperor Meiji (1852–1912) and the thousands of kamikaze who sacrificed their lives for the state in World War II are also revered as particularly holy.

The rising tide of European colonialism from the sixteenth century on threatened to destroy indigenous religions, besides its other effects. An important early rising against colonialism was the Pueblo Revolt of the late seventeenth century, led by the charismatic holy man Popé (c. 1630–c. 1690). His effort to save his people from Spanish religion and control was the most successful Amerindian fight ever waged against the European intrusion, driving the Spaniards away for twelve years. A few decades later, the Lenape prophet Neolin incited Pontiac's Rebellion (1763–1764) as part of a spiritual renewal intended to resist British expansion in northeastern America. Neolin united thousands who were attracted by his visions into multitribal confederations. The eighteenth century also saw Kimpa Vita (Dona Beatriz) of Congo (d. 1706), who received a series of revelations intended to restore the kingdom in the face of foreign influence. She won an immense following with her regular mystical experiences (she was said to die each Friday, go to heaven to dine with God and plead the cause of the Africans, then rise again). Foreign missionaries, however, turned the king of Congo against Kimpa Vita, and she and her

husband were both burned to death. Nyabingi (fl. 1750–1800), the princess of Ndorwa in present-day Rwanda, enjoyed posthumous success against foreign intrusion. After she was murdered by her foreign husband, her spirit became associated with resistance to foreign intrusion and dominance.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, strongly anti-colonial holy people appeared in much of the world, combining religious and nationalist ideology to end imperialism. In Africa, these charismatic leaders were members of several religions. Some, such as Muhammad Ahmad ibn el-Sayed, the *mahdi* (would-be forerunner of the apocalypse) of Sudan (1844–1885), were Muslim. El-Sayed declared jihad first against oppressive Turkish rule and then against the British—and succeeded for thirteen years in creating an Islamic state. Similarly, sufi leader Muhammad Abdullah Hassan (1856–1920) led Somali resistance to the British. Shaykh Ahmad Bamba (1850–1927) roused Senegal against French colonial power, despite being exiled several times. Celebrations of Bamba's return from exile are still held at his tomb, drawing some 500,000 people annually. Later in the twentieth century, Methodist bishop Abel Muzorewa (1925–) played a major role in the anticolonial movement of Zimbabwe and became the first prime minister of the free state he helped create.

Other notable Christian patriot-saints of Africa are John Chilembwe (1875–1915) of Malawi, Kipchomber arap Koilegen (d. 1916) of Kenya, and the West African James Johnson (c. 1836–1917). The indigenous Kikuyu leader Waiyaki wa Hinga (d. 1892) fought the British invaders of his land after they had broken their agreement with his people. A decade later, the Tanzanian prophet Kinjikitile (d. 1905) led the Maji Maji rebellion (1905–1907), preaching the message that the ancestors will return again and Africans must resist foreign exploitation. Although Kinjikitile himself was quickly arrested and hanged, his influence remained strong in East Africa. Important indigenous prophets also rose in West Africa. Alinesitoué Diatta (1920–1944) is one example; Joseph Ayo Babalola (1904–1959), who created a syncretized African form of Christianity, is another.

The modern Islamic world has produced many people widely regarded as martyrs to the ideal of an Islamic nation. Some of these, such as Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989), who forged Iran into a Muslim state, have been leaders. But to many Muslims, every suicide bomber is a martyr of the faith, striving to save his or her state from a cultural imperialism regarded as even more dangerous than the physical invasion of colonialism.

In Asia, especially the Fiji Islands, a surprising number of millenarian prophets reacted to the colonial occupation of their lands. The movements they created are called by the generic name “cargo cults” because several prophesied the miraculous coming of shiploads of Western goods that

would be distributed to the people. The focus of their movements, though, were matters of leadership and authority. The Philippines have also been marked by messianic anti-imperialist leaders. A number of Filipino religious movements regard José Rial y Mercado (d. 1896) as a new messiah. After the Spaniards executed this intellectual, nationalist physician, who was not even particularly religious, in the Philippine revolution, he won acclaim as a national martyr and symbol of Filipino independence. It is India, however, where a holy man played the most astonishing role in liberating a state from European imperialists. Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) picked up where the anticolonial Hindu Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950) left off when Ghose retired from political business after getting a taste of the British prison system in 1908. Gandhi crafted the most successful anticolonial program in the world, based on the Hindu principles of *satyagraha* (holding fast to truth) and *ahimsa* (non-injury), reaching the final accolade of martyrdom at the hands of one of his own coreligionists, who thought he was carrying fairness too far in his dealings with the Muslims of India.

The long defeat of the North American Indians at the hands of U.S. expansion also produced a series of holy people who even in defeat helped preserve their culture. In the early nineteenth century, several Creek prophets preached a militant anti-American, antiwhite rebellion. Handsome Lake of the Iroquois (1735–1815) taught that, rather than rebellion, the Iroquois needed to be responsible for their own spiritual and cultural well-being. The Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa (1775–1836) similarly advocated a return to traditional lifestyles against white encroachment. A series of other movements throughout the nineteenth century tried to save the Amerindian heritage, most notably in the 1870s through the 1890s. Prophets such as Wovoka (c. 1858–1932) preached salvation to a world gone mad, teaching rituals that would restore contact to the ancestors—and eliminate the white people and their ways.

In a more ambiguous position are the other great nationalist holy people of North America—the black nationalists, who have preached black improvement and sometimes the creation of a state within the United States. One can include here the Muslim/syncretist prophet François Makandal (d. 1758), who led a major resistance movement in Haiti, bringing together escaped slaves against white rule and apparently attempting to create an independent black state in Haiti. In the nineteenth century, black Christian theologian Martin Delany (1812–1885) created a theology of racial destiny, including a call for American blacks to return to Africa and create their own state. The Jamaican Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) advocated rebuilding a black homeland in Africa to bring about a complete separation of blacks from whites; he posthumously inspired the Rastafarian movement. Even



Woman standing before mural of two saints, surmounted by the Trinity. Sergiev Posad, Russia. Revival of the veneration of saints in Russia has been a powerful tool in regaining national identity and pride. (Art Directors)

more radically, the creators of the Nation of Islam, W. D. Fard (c. 1891–?) and Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975), taught not only that blacks need to separate from whites, but that the white race had been an evil creation designed to oppress the blacks. Although none of these movements has indeed succeeded in creating an independent state or winning liberation, these leaders led many thousands of African Americans to develop a split identity as both Americans and members of a resisting nation within a nation.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Akiba ben Joseph; Alinesitoué Diatta; Arap Koilegen, Kipchomber; Babalola, Joseph Ayo; Bamba, Ahmad; Calvin, John; Cranmer, Thomas; Delany, Martin; Fard, W. D.; Garvey, Marcus Mozhiah; Handsome Lake; Hassan, Sayyid Muhammad ‘Abdullah; Isaac of Armenia; Joan of Arc; Johnson, James; Juan Diego; Kamikaze of World War II; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi;

Kinjikitile Ngwale; Luther, Martin; Maccabees; Makandal, François; Meiji Tennô; Muhammad, Elijah; Muhammad Ahmad; Muzorewa, Abel Tendekai; Nanak; Neolin; Nichiren; Nyabingi; Popé; Ramanand; Sergius of Radonezh; Stephen of Hungary; Tenskwtawa; Toyotomi Hideyoshi; Waiyaki wa Hinga; Wovoka

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Paul

(d. c. 65 C.E.)

Christian missionary, writer

Paul, the most significant figure in early Christianity after Jesus, was largely responsible for focusing the legacy of Jesus in such a way that Christianity penetrated the Roman world. According to the New Testament, he was born at Tarsus in Asia Minor (Acts 22:3) and inherited Roman citizenship (Acts 22:26–28). Paul claims that he was raised in a pious family and distinguished himself as a Jew and particularly as a member of the Pharisaic party (Phil. 3:5–6). His Jewish name was Saul, but as a Roman citizen he also bore the name Paul.

According to Acts, which offers three accounts of his conversion to Christianity (9:1–19; 22:3–21; 26:9–23), Paul regarded the early Christian movement a dangerous and heretical sect within Judaism and determined to stamp it out. On the road to Damascus, however, he had a mystical encounter with the risen Christ and became convinced of the truth of the Christian message.

After his conversion, Paul preached to the Jews of Damascus and then spent some years in seclusion (Acts 9). Beginning in about 45 C.E., he undertook three missionary journeys to Asia Minor and Greece (Acts 13–21), which resulted in the conversion of both Jews and Greco-Roman polytheists. He founded churches in major cities (Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth, for example), confident that from these urban centers the gospel would penetrate to the countryside.

The question of non-Jewish converts sparked debate within the Jewish-Christian community. Many thought that non-Jews should be compelled to convert to Judaism before becoming Christians. Paul held the opposite view, believing that in Christ all could be included in the Covenant. At the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), Paul’s position won the day, and he considered himself the apostle to the gentiles (Gal. 2:7–8).

At the conclusion of his third journey, Paul was arrested and tried on various charges, found innocent, and then, at his request, sent to Rome to have his case heard before the emperor. At this point in his life the New Testament account



The Italian artist Caravaggio (1573–1610) has captured the drama of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, depicting him stricken blind and fallen from his horse. (Scala/Art Resource, NY)

falls silent. Later Christian tradition holds that he also traveled to Spain and that eventually he was martyred in Rome, perhaps under Nero (r. 54–68).

Thirteen letters in the New Testament are ascribed to Paul. Modern scholarship has cast doubt on the Pauline authorship of many of them, especially Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus, but several others, such as Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Galatians, are unquestionably of Pauline authorship.

Paul's theology is complex and can only be touched upon here. He argued that all human beings, Jews and polytheists alike, "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Unable to save themselves, human beings have been saved by God, who sent his son to suffer and die in their place. Paul believed that by his resurrection Christ proved himself victorious over death, a victory that can be appropriated vicariously by human beings. All that is required is that human beings in faith accept what God has done in Christ. "A person is justified not by works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16). Once slaves to sin, human beings can experience radical freedom and transformation that leads to mystical union with Christ. He urged Christians to avoid conformity to the world and be transformed in Christ (Rom. 12:1–2), claiming: "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

Paul came to the conclusion that God was especially present in Jesus Christ, that Christ was somehow a preexistent being, the creator (Col. 1:16–17), the image of the invisible God (2 Cor. 4:4). But Christ was also human, more particularly ideally human. Christ was the second Adam, Adam as he should have been (1 Cor. 15:45–49). Paul believed that after his resurrection Jesus ascended to heaven to occupy a place at the right hand of God the Father (Phil. 2:5–11).

Paul considered himself a practicing Jew and struggled to reconcile Judaism with his faith in Christ. He noted that Abraham, the founder of the Jewish people, had lived hundreds of years before the Mosaic law was given, that Abraham believed God, and "the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Rom. 4:3). Paul therefore argued that it had always been God's procedure to grant salvation to those who believe (Gal. 3:6–9). This allowed him to write that "A person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart" (Rom. 2:28–29).

The complexity of Paul's thought has led to furious debates and unfortunate schism throughout the history of Christianity. Yet his theology of radical freedom and transformation is central to the Christian message and the life of the church.

—David Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; Mission; Mysticism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Paul of the Cross

(1694–1775 C.E.)

Roman Catholic monk, preacher

Recognized not only for his extensive preaching but also for his desire to endure the harshest of monastic lifestyles, Paul Danei modeled his life on the example of the early Christian saints. He was born in 1694 at Ovada near Genoa. Brought up in a devout and noble family, Paul received his early education from a priest who kept a school for boys in Cremolino, Lombardy. He made great progress in his studies, spent much time in prayer, heard daily mass, and frequently received the sacraments.

Paul refused both a rich inheritance and an advantageous marriage and spent a year in the Venetian army defending the republic against the encroaching Turks, undoubtedly inspired by the ideals of crusading. After spending several more years in prayer and contemplation, he was finally ordained priest in Rome. In response to a vision, he and his brother John Baptiste founded a new congregation at Monte Argentario in 1727. The monastic rule, drawn up according to the plan made known to him in the vision, combined a severe penitential regime with intense devotion to the passion of Christ.

The first general chapter of the Passionist Congregation (as the group became known) was held at the Retreat of the Presentation on Monte Argentario on April 10, 1747. At this chapter, Paul, against his wishes, was unanimously elected first superior general, an office that he held until his death in 1775. After 1769, he remained in Rome at the Basilica of Sts. John and Paul, which Pope Clement XIV had given the Passionists on the death of John Baptiste. Paul also founded a convent of enclosed Passionist nuns at Corneto in 1771.

The Passionists preached, converted, and cared for the sick and dying. Their ministry was so successful that they were soon in demand all over Italy and began to creep into the rest of Europe. By 1747, three houses had been founded. But the Passionist Rule was so severe that many novices ended up departing, and the papacy insisted that some of the harshest features be mitigated.

Paul himself was renowned for his effective preaching, especially regarding the passion of Christ. Numerous miracles, mainly concerned with the conversion of hardened and hopeless sinners, attested to his sanctity, and he also claimed the gifts of prophecy and healing. Constant personal union with the cross and passion was the prominent feature of Paul's devotion. He became a model of virtue and discipline to his companions.

Much of Paul's written work is concerned with ascetical and mystical theology. He was especially interested in the reconciliation of Rome to England, an aim pursued forcefully in the nineteenth century by his disciples, particularly the Passionist Dominic Barberi, who received John Henry Newman into the Roman Catholic Church. Paul was canonized in 1867 and his body lies in the Basilica of Sts. John and Paul in Rome.

—*Eleanor Pridgeon*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Devotion; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People

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Paul the Hermit

(c. 235–c. 345 C.E.)

Christian hermit

Though a monastery purporting to have been founded by Paul of Thebes exists in the mountains of the Arabian Desert in east-central Egypt, some 30 kilometers southeast of a monastery founded by Antony, the only real evidence of this saint is found in Jerome's *Life of Saint Paul of Thebes*. This work, composed around 375, describes Paul as a wealthy orphan of Thebes (on the lower Nile) born in about 235 who escaped the persecutions of Decius (r. 249–251) and Valerian (r. 253–260). Menaced by a greedy brother-in-law, the fugitive fifteen-year-old discovered a hidden cell in the desert, where he spent the next ninety-eight years of his life. There he was sustained by a spring, a massive date palm, and—for the last sixty years—bread, delivered each day in half-loaves by an obliging crow. Paul's palm tree has given rise to the charming legend that it provided the rationale for the introit of the mass for a confessor saint: "Justus ut palma" (Psalm 92). He is presumed to have died after 345, and his feast day is celebrated January 15.

Jerome claims that Paul originated the monastic life and uses Antony himself and Antony's disciples Amathas and Macarius as witnesses. The entire narrative is subsumed, in fact, in Antony's realization that Paul's radical eremitism represents the perfect monasticism, and a series of scenes in which Antony is rightly humiliated for his worldliness. It may well be that Jerome had become critical of what he saw as a corruption of monasticism in Egypt, where monasteries were being erected close to population centers. Monks had begun to accept food donations, and Jerome may have felt that this compromised their original prayerful isolation.

Paul the Hermit makes a surprise cameo appearance in the anonymous *Navigatio sancti Brendani* (Voyage of Saint Brendan the Navigator, eighth century), though in that work the hermit has been a disciple of Patrick and now subsists on nothing. Although shards of Jerome's Latin remain, the author seems consciously to reverse Jerome's message: Brendan complains that his life is nothing like the hermit's, but Paul contradicts him, pronouncing Brendan's particular care of his monastic *familia* to be the more blessed calling. It almost seems as if the author of the *Navigatio* were attempting to champion a native Irish community of monks over the eremitic ideal.

—*Kevin Roddy*

See also: Antony of the Desert; Ascetics as Holy People; Brendan the Navigator; Christianity and Holy People; Desert Saints; Jerome

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Paula

(347–404 C.E.)

Christian pilgrim, patron

Paula, born in 347, was a Christian holy widow, a pilgrim, a patroness, and a student of Jerome, whose writings are the primary source about Paula and her life. Paula was married to a polytheist, but she raised all five of their children as Christians. Upon the death of her husband, she adopted an ascetic life and Jerome became her spiritual adviser. Two of her daughters, Blesilla and Eustochium, joined her in the pursuit of monastic life. Blesilla died suddenly in 384, and some in Rome blamed her death on the austere life that Jerome had convinced her to lead. Jerome was forced to leave Rome during the scandal, but a few months later, Paula and

her daughter Eustochium decided to follow Jerome on a journey to the East. Paula faced much opposition to this decision, primarily from her surviving family members. Her young son, Toxotius, and remaining daughters, Paulina and Rufina, tried in vain to convince her to stay.

Paula and Eustochium's voyage centered around visiting monks and monastic centers. Before arriving in Palestine they went to Egypt to visit monks in Nitria. By 386, they had settled in Bethlehem, where Paula established four monasteries and a large guesthouse catering to the needs of travelers. Paula viewed herself as a permanent sojourner, primarily concerned with visiting and meeting holy people and offering them gifts. The exchange of money, through donations to the monks, was a physical manifestation of the connection between Paula's spiritual experience and those of the monks.

Paula died in Bethlehem in 404, and monks from all over the region attended her funeral. Her legacy continued with her daughter Eustochium, who remained in Bethlehem to run the monastery built by her mother. Even Paula's son Toxotius eventually permitted his own daughter, Paula the younger, to travel to Bethlehem to be raised in a monastic life by her aunt Eustochium.

—Maribel Dietz

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Jerome; Wealth and Poverty

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Paulinus of Nola

(c. 354–431 C.E.)

Christian bishop, poet

Born into a patrician Roman family at Bordeaux, Gaul, in about 354, Pontius Meropius Anicius Paulinus was the son of the praetorian prefect of Gaul. His aristocratic family was wealthy, and his father provided an exceptional education for him, after which he practiced law. Paulinus was appointed Roman consul in 379, and in 380–381 he served as consular governor of Campania.

During his tenure, the first stirrings of piety began to animate the young Roman lawyer and writer. Nola, Campania, was the site of the tomb of the third-century martyr Felix,

and Paulinus observed the steady stream of pilgrims who claimed to have been healed at the saint's tomb, which aroused more than curiosity in his mind. Paulinus was also inspired by the religious revival pervasive throughout southern Gaul, and by the passionate spirituality of such luminaries as Martin of Tours and Ambrose, bishop of Milan. He soon married Therasia, a devoutly Christian Spanish noblewoman, and thereupon found himself more and more unwilling to abandon his emerging spirituality. There is some suggestion that the unexpected death of an infant son sent Paulinus into a period of spiritual discernment, for in 393 he was baptized a Christian by Bishop Delphinus of Bordeaux. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained. Paulinus and Therasia (having taken vows of celibacy) thereupon gave all their worldly possessions to the poor and determined to live lives of Christian piety, devotional asceticism, and true austerity.

By 395, they were helping to finance building projects for the church, such as the basilicas at Nola and Fondi, and a hospital for the destitute near the tomb of St. Felix. In 409/410, Paulinus was consecrated bishop of Nola. For the next two decades, he performed his ecclesiastical and ministerial obligations with charity, grace, and dignity. At his death in 431, he was interred in the basilica at Nola. In the late tenth century, Emperor Otto III disinterred and moved the body of Paulinus to Rome; however, in 1908, Pius X returned Paulinus to his beloved Nola.

Apart from his achievement as a prelate, Paulinus is perhaps best known for his poetry, which, along with that of his Spanish contemporary Prudentius, ushered the genre of Christian lyric poetry into the West. Paulinus's poetry is not full of theological complexities; rather, he took what he had learned from the rhetorician Ausonius about stylistic details and gracefulness of form and adapted those characteristics to matters of the Christian faith. Paulinus composed poems not in honor of warriors or civic leaders but commemorating saints and martyrs or exploring the meaning and emotion of holy festivals. Paulinus has as well the distinction of having composed the first Christian elegy ("Carmen XXXI"), a lament at the death of the youth Celsus. The Christian elegy differed from earlier elegies in that the sorrow for the departed was evenly tempered with a belief in everlasting life.

Paulinus of Nola combined the charming gifts of a poetic heart with the authentic piety of a faithful spirit. In the unfolding of his life and in the composition of his stylized and passionately devout writings, Paulinus offers to the modern world a symbol for the complex era that witnessed the reluctant dying away of one civilization and the robust dawning of a new world. His feast day is June 22.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Ambrose; Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Martin of Tours; Wealth and Poverty

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Peace Pilgrim*(1908–1981 C.E.)**Christian peace activist, folk hero*

Peace Pilgrim was a twentieth-century peace activist, a folk hero known for walking across America and speaking out for peace on college campuses and in churches in many states. Her original name is unknown, and her spirituality was nondenominational (though she was insistent that Christians live up to their own teachings). She became a familiar presence, almost like a family member, to many people who welcomed her arrival in their towns. Through walking long distances and speaking her spiritual message of peace, and through the charisma of her friendly personality, Peace Pilgrim called attention to serious problems and possible solutions in situations of human conflict.

Peace Pilgrim was born to a poor family on a small farm in an eastern state in 1908. Her family was not religious, which in her Yankee individualist spiritual outlook meant (as she said) “less to undo later.” She valued the woods and creek of her childhood and appreciated inspiration from within. While still young, repeating the question, “What is God?” she heard a still small voice inside and realized that “there is a creative force beyond us . . . a sustaining power” that gives trees life and planets order, and causes change; she recognized it as love, goodness, and all-pervading spirit. She took from this a new understanding, “You are within God, God is within you” (Peace Pilgrim 1992, 2). As a young woman, she chose freedom from smoking and drinking. Money did not seem important to her. She came to believe that “if you want to make peace, you must be peaceful” (ibid., 3).

A turning point in Peace Pilgrim’s life came during an all-night vigil in the woods when she walked until she felt ready to dedicate her life to God and service. Aware of the suffering in the world, she prayed, “Please use me” (ibid., 7), and experienced a state of peace. Blessed with good health, she wanted to work for peace on all levels—in the world, in groups, and for inner peace. She said that at that time she experienced a conversion from a self-centered existence to a life devoted to inner peace. She began to live with the sole purpose of giving what she could to the world.

According to Peace Pilgrim, the path to peace involves four steps. First, a person who is seeking peace must make preparations, including developing right attitudes toward

life and solving problems in accord with the highest light. Second, he or she must bring his or her life into harmony with the laws of the universe: “Evil can only be overcome by good” (ibid., 10). Third, the seeker of peace develops the insight that, like every other individual, he or she has a special place in the world and work to accomplish, and the understanding that guidance will come. Fourth, the individual must simplify his or her life by following a series of purifications that enable the individual to reach freedom, “relinquishments” of problematic desires and compulsions. Peace Pilgrim followed various practices to overcome the fear, anger, and worry that block inner peace. Like Mahatma Gandhi, she developed her own dietary philosophy, choosing to be a vegetarian.

In 1953, Peace Pilgrim vowed to be a wanderer until humanity learned the way of peace. She envisioned a map of the United States with cities marked and a zigzag line across it. She explained, “A pilgrim is a wanderer with purpose. . . . In the middle ages pilgrims went out as the disciples were sent out—without money, without food, without adequate clothing—and I know that tradition. I have no money. I do not accept any money on my pilgrimage. I belong to no organization. . . . There is nothing to tie me down. . . . I own only what I wear and carry. . . . I am as free as a bird soaring in the sky. . . . I walk until given shelter, fast until given food. . . . This is my way of peace—overcome evil with good and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love” (ibid., 25–26). By 1964, Peace Pilgrim had walked 25,000 miles. After that she continued to walk, but speaking became more of a priority. She made seven cross-country trips in all. In 1976, she took her message to Alaska and Hawaii. She also walked 1,000 miles in Canada, and visited Mexico as well.

Sensing that her own harmony was the source of her usefulness, she taught that when people are in harmony with the “Life Pattern,” they can find sustenance in the source of universal energy. Her walks gave her the opportunity to talk with fellow Americans. She considered walking a prayer for peace, an embodiment of the heart of the world, which she felt was pleading for peace. This gentle woman with a radiant smile, grandmotherly white hair, and a blue tunic died in 1981 near Knox, Indiana. People inspired by her example keep her memory alive through publication of her teachings.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Contemporary Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Pemalingpa

(1450–1521 C.E.)

Buddhist terton

Tertons, or revealers of esoteric texts and holy objects (*terma*), are considered to be reincarnations of disciples of Padmasambhava, an Indian Buddhist master of the eighth and ninth centuries. Padmasambhava, it is said, entrusted his disciples with the discovery and propagation of his teachings in future generations, when the Buddha's doctrine would be in decline. Thus Padmasambhava's teachings were encoded in symbolic scripts and hidden—typically inside of caves, temple walls, or under water—but also in the subconscious minds of his disciples, where the teachings reside until their memory awakens in a future life. Pemalingpa (1450–1521), a native of the south Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, was one of Tibetan Buddhism's greatest tertons. Considered the reincarnation of Longchenpa (1308–1363), he was a prolific discoverer of esoteric texts and other sacred objects, such as statues and medicines. Though other Buddhists initially doubted his authenticity, Pemalingpa was later revered by the greatest Tibetan masters of his age, including the fifth dalai lama (Losang Gyatso, 1617–1682).

Pemalingpa's life and writings are remarkable, all the more so for his humble origins and lack of formal education. Born into a family of blacksmiths, Pemalingpa was an unruly youth but an excellent craftsman. In his twenties, he began to have visions and dreams of Padmasambhava and received prophecies of hidden treasures that were his to reveal. Following one of these, he went with some friends to the Mebartso (Burning Lake) gorge. Pemalingpa plunged naked under the cold water and swam into a large cave. There, the protectress of the doctrine, Ekajati, reportedly appeared to Pemalingpa as a cyclops-woman who presented him with a wooden casket. Much to the amazement of his friends, Pemalingpa suddenly appeared next to them, standing above the sheer walls of the gorge. Inside the casket were scrolls of yellow paper containing symbolic script and a decipherment key. Eventually Pemalingpa was able to decode the script and dictate the text to a scribe. Many of his later discoveries were also made in unusual ways: for example, from the side of a high, inaccessible cliff, beneath a stone marked by a naturally occurring swastika.

After his first discovery, the local governor threatened Pemalingpa with punishment unless he could demonstrate some proof of authenticity. Pemalingpa returned to the Mebartso gorge with the governor and a large crowd of people. Shouting "may I perish if I am not genuine," he jumped into the swiftly moving water holding a burning lamp. Then, as before, Pemalingpa emerged miraculously, with a casket, a statue, and the still-burning lamp.

After this incident, Pemalingpa's reputation and career flourished. No less august a personage than Chodrak Gyatso

(1454–1506), the seventh Karmapa, requested Pemalingpa's teachings and became his disciple. Today Pemalingpa's treasures are still current among hundreds of thousands of Tibetan Buddhists.

—John Whitney Pettit

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Losang Gyatso; Padmasambhava; Reincarnation

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Perpetua and Felicity

(c. 181–203 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

The Christian martyrs Perpetua and Felicity are most remarkable for having their passion recorded in the personal account of Perpetua herself. Another introduces the core narrative and appends a description of their deaths in 203, but Perpetua's calm, straightforward presentation makes it one of the truly moving testimonies to courage and faith.

Perpetua, born around 181, was a young mother in the city of Carthage, perhaps widowed, who had been trained in the liberal arts and was especially loved by her father. At the time of her arrest, she was nursing a son; she had apparently defied her family in seeking to become a Christian and had been arrested in the sporadic persecutions of the early Roman Empire. With her were a number of Christians, including her instructor, Saturus, and two fellow catechumens—initiates, not yet baptized—one of whom was a pregnant slave named Felicity.

Perpetua suffered from her father's reproaches, his begging, and finally his own humiliation as the Roman procurator had him beaten for his daughter's stubbornness. Perpetua had been able to give her son to her family, and, to her mind by God's will, the child survived and she herself did not become feverish from his sudden weaning. In time, Felicity safely gave birth to her child, and she then was able to give the baby to her sister.

While in prison, Perpetua experienced three dreams that enormously comforted her fellow condemned. In the first, Saturus climbs a ladder to heaven and beckons for Perpetua to follow, but attached to the sides of the ladder are weapons, blades, and hooks that Perpetua must climb through. And to even begin the climb, she must step on the

head of a huge serpent, which she does, boldly, in the name of Christ. At the top, she is greeted by a distinguished man, milking sheep, who gives her sweet curd. In the second dream, she sees her younger brother, Dinocrates, who died without baptism, across a gulf. He emerges from darkness, hot and thirsty, filthily dressed, and disfigured with the same ulcers on his face that had killed him. There is a fountain above him, but he cannot reach the water. Perpetua awoke and began to pray for her brother and then dreamed of him clean, beautifully clothed, drinking from the font, and then running off to play. The third dream is the most striking. In it, Perpetua finds herself transformed into a male wrestler. She successfully defeats a terrifying Egyptian for the prize, which is a bough with golden apples, and entrance into the Gate of Life.

Perpetua and Felicity and the others were brought out into the amphitheater, where they were ridiculed and mauled by wild animals before their throats were cut.

Perpetua's narrative proved to be enormously popular, in part because it demonstrates a human capacity to overcome concentrated terror—the apparatus of the Roman Empire, senseless evil, and grief. Perpetua's dreams represent not only achievements of spirituality, but more than that, a victory of sanity over evil. The feast day for Perpetua and Felicity is March 7.

—Kevin Roddy

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hagiography; Martyrdom and Persecution; Prophets

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Peter

(d. c. 64 C.E.)

Christian follower of Jesus, martyr

Peter, a leader of the apostles, was the brother of Andrew and a native of Bethsaida. He was a married man and a fisherman by profession on Lake Genesareth near the Sea of Galilee. Andrew introduced him to Jesus, who then renamed him Kephias, Aramaic for “rock”; the Greek equivalent translates into “Peter” in English. Peter is especially known for his three-time denial of Christ just before the crucifixion, his return to faith after the resurrection, and his leadership in the

early church. He died as a martyr, according to tradition hung upside down on a cross.

After Peter acknowledged Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16), Jesus stated that Peter would be the rock on which his church would be built and conferred upon him “the keys of the kingdom of heaven: Whatever you bind on earth will be considered bound in heaven” (Matt. 16:18). The power of “binding and loosing” would also be extended to the other apostles. On the basis of these statements, and on Peter as the first pope, Roman Catholics have maintained the primacy of the papacy.

Peter was present when Jesus performed the first miracle at Cana and during many other miracles, such as when Jesus cured Peter's mother-in-law at Capernaum. Peter was also present with James and John at the transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:1–13; Mark 9:1–13). He played a prominent role at the Last Supper, where Jesus predicted his denial (Matt. 26:31–35 and parallels). Peter was among the first to see the risen Christ (after Mary Magdalene and other women). In the Gospel of John, Jesus reinstates Peter (because of his denial) and reiterates Peter's responsibilities to feed the sheep of Christ's flock (John 21:15–19). After the Ascension, Peter designated Judas's successor, preached at Pentecost, worked miracles, admitted gentiles into the church (with Cornelius, Acts 10), converted many with his preaching, and took a leading role at Jerusalem in the council.

The New Testament provides substantial information about Peter; however, his imprisonment in the year 43 by Herod Agrippa and his escape through divine intervention (Acts 12:5–19) is the last mention of him in the New Testament. Early tradition traces Peter to Rome and his subsequent martyrdom under Emperor Nero in 64. Peter was crucified, head downward at his own request, according to Origen, writing more than a century later. Peter's martyrdom by Nero is not questioned; however, his death in Rome remains suspect even though early Christian authors such as Irenaeus, Clement of Rome, and Ignatius of Antioch place him in that city. What also lends credibility to Rome as his place of death, however, is that no city other than Rome ever made the same claim. Catholic tradition further implies that Peter was Rome's first bishop and instituted episcopal succession. As to his burial in St. Peter's Basilica, his tomb below the high altar is most likely authentic, though recent excavations do not prove conclusively that the relics belong to Peter. Most agree today that Peter's relics were originally buried on the Vatican Hill but were moved afterward, allegedly to the catacombs in 258.

Peter's cult spread early and rapidly. He was a universal saint, the heavenly doorkeeper, and patron of the papacy and the church. Many English monasteries were dedicated to him, including Canterbury, Lindisfarne, Malmesbury, and Westminster; cathedral dedications include York and Worcester.

Peter is traditionally attributed authorship of two epistles in the New Testament. No valid reason exists to question Peter's authorship of the first New Testament epistle bearing his name. The book of 2 Peter, however, was likely written much later than Peter's death. Writings that recognize the influence of Peter include the Gospel of Mark, which is generally accepted as representative of Peter's teachings. The Preaching of St. Peter, the Gospel of St. Peter, and the Apocalypse of St. Peter date to the second century and later. Popular but also apocryphal is the Acts of Peter, which tells of his flight from persecution in Rome. In this account, Peter meets Jesus on the road and asks, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answers, "I am coming to be crucified again," whereupon Peter returns to Rome and goes through with his martyrdom. Although apocryphal, the stories illustrate the immense significance of Peter in the early church.

In art, St. Peter is often portrayed as square-faced with a curly beard and a tonsured head. He is symbolized by two crossed keys. Artistic representations also show him with fish or a ship, or, in memory of his denial of Jesus, a cock. His portrayal is varied but constant: as a bishop or a pope, or dressed in a toga, or wearing a tiara or miter, or crucified upside down. He was a popular subject in England during the Middle Ages and appears in stained-glass windows, as statuary, in screen paintings, and on frescoes (for example, those at the Carmine church at Florence painted by Masaccio in the early fifteenth century). Peter's life experiences in the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles provide ample artistic subject matter. His feast day is June 29.

—Loretta Reed

See also: Andrew; Christianity and Holy People; Clement; Disciples; Jesus; Origen; Pope-Saints

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Peter II of Tarentaise

(1102–1174 C.E.)

Christian bishop, diplomat, reformer

This Peter of Tarentaise should not be confused with an earlier Peter, archbishop of Tarentaise from 1126 to 1140. A third Peter of Tarentaise became Pope Innocent V in 1276.

Peter II of Tarentaise, born in 1102, was archbishop of Tarentaise from 1140 or 1141 until his death in 1174. He was a member of the Cistercian order, new at the time, which emphasized contemplation, simplicity of life, and withdrawal from the upheavals of the secular world. In an ironic twist shared with other members of his order, Peter was drawn out of the monastery into ecclesiastical administration. Cistercian monastic virtues informed his policies as archbishop, made him an effective mediator in the political upheavals of his time, and inspired others to work for reform of the church.

Peter first entered the monastery of Bonnevaux, and in 1132 he became the superior of a new house at Tamié. There, he exhibited the powerful combination of administrative genius and charitable impulses that would mark his later career as archbishop. He built a hospice, installed an innovative irrigation system to increase the yield of the abbey's lands, and established a system of storehouses that fed not only his monks but also people in the surrounding countryside.

After he was elected archbishop of Tarentaise, Peter undertook his new duties with characteristic administrative effectiveness, reorganizing the cathedral and parish clergy, repairing and building churches, and reclaiming church lands from the local nobility. He established a hospice at the Little Saint Bernard Pass between Switzerland and Italy, and he devised a scheme for distributing food, the "May Bread," to feed people whose stores ran out before the next harvest. This practice continued in France down to the time of the Revolution.

Peter's rare blend of holiness and practicality made him a prized arbiter in many of the most intractable political disputes of his day, where he always worked for the peace and unity of Christendom. Peter's reputed ability to work miracles verified for his contemporaries the spiritual goals of his arbitrations. Petitions for Peter's canonization began within days of his death in 1174. These came not only from his fellow Cistercians but also from the clergy of his diocese and the king of France. Such a broad constituency testifies to his evident holiness. Peter's sanctity is also evident in his mentoring of other holy men, especially St. Hugh of Lincoln and St. Anthelme of Belley. Peter was canonized in 1191. His feast day is May 8.

—Elaine M. Beretz

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Peter Damian

(1007–1072 C.E.)

Christian abbot, reformer, cardinal

An ardent supporter of the papacy, Peter Damian was deeply involved in the eleventh-century movement to reform Western European Christianity, campaigning against simony (the practice of buying and selling church offices) and in favor of a celibate clergy. His feast day is February 21.

Peter was born in Ravenna in 1007. He studied the liberal arts in Faenza and Parma and began a career as a teacher of rhetoric in Ravenna. In 1035/1036 he left Ravenna and entered the eremitical monastic community at Fonte Avellana. Around the same time he was also ordained a priest. In the early 1140s, he traveled throughout Italy, but he returned to Fonte Avellana by 1143, when he was elected prior of that community. As prior, Peter expanded the monastery, drew up a set of constitutions for the brothers, and reformed several monastic communities associated with Fonte Avellana.

In the mid-1140s, Peter became involved with the cause of ecclesiastical reform. As a reformer, he was an early proponent of clerical poverty and an advocate of clerical celibacy. He held a moderate position on simony, arguing that while simoniacs should be punished, the sacraments they performed were valid. He took part in synods held by Popes Clement II and Leo IX, and he corresponded with Emperor Henry III. With the support of Hildebrand (later Pope Gregory VII), Peter was made cardinal bishop of Ostia around 1057. In 1059, he was sent to Milan as papal legate to help settle disputes in that city over simoniacal and married clergy. He proved an able mediator and was also able to promote the primacy of Rome in the religious affairs of Milan. In 1063, Pope Alexander II sent Peter to Cluny to extend papal patronage to that monastery. In 1066–1067, Peter undertook a mission to Florence, and in 1071, he was sent as a legate to Ravenna. He died in 1072 on the return journey to Rome.

During his lifetime, Peter was renowned for his powerful preaching and writing. Many of his writings survive, including sermons, poems, hymns, several saints' lives, a collection of letters, and a number of theological and ascetic treatises. Among his most important works are *De divina omnipotentia* (On divine omnipotence); the *Liber gratissimus* (The most gratuitous book), a discussion of simony; and the *Liber Gomorrhianus* (Book of Gomorrah), a condemnation of homosexuality.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gregory VII; Hermits; Reform and Reaction

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Pharaohs of Egypt

The pharaoh, as the ultimate head of all aspects of the religion and state of ancient Egypt, was regarded as embodying both divine and human elements. While exercising the duties of the office of pharaoh, he was considered to be divine. He also had important roles to perform as a human, serving as the ultimate priest of Egypt and maintaining the cults of the gods. The pharaoh was portrayed in titulary and iconography both as a god and also as the son of a god. (This could be a literal reference—royal conception stories detail the pharaoh's birth as resulting from a god impregnating the pharaoh's mother.) Upon his death, the pharaoh was seen as wholly divine.

According to Egyptian legend, the state of Egypt was always ruled over by a single king. In the earliest times, according to myth, this king was one of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon. In different legends, Re and Osiris are said to have ruled over Egypt. One of the more prominent Egyptian legends, the tale of Horus and Seth, details the struggle between two gods over the kingship. Seth, the brother of Osiris, coveted his brother's position as king and schemed to have it for himself. The matter was settled with kingship being granted to Horus, the son of Osiris. The outcome of the contentions explained the hereditary nature of Egyptian kingship, with the office passing from father to son.

As a god, the king was recognized as a divine being himself (especially true after death) but also had strong associations with specific gods. One of the strongest divine associations that the pharaoh had was his association with the sun god, in particular Re. As early as Dynasty IV (2575–2465 B.C.E.), the titulary of the pharaoh reflects that he was considered to be the son of Re. The king was also considered to be an incarnation of the falcon-headed god Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis. The goddess Ma'at and the king had a unique relationship. Ma'at represented order and stability; while the king was never portrayed as Ma'at, offering to her and keeping her satisfied was a vital component of Egyptian kingship.

Naturally the extensive duties for which the Egyptian pharaoh was responsible would have stretched him beyond

what was possible physically. His religious, political, and military responsibilities were all-inclusive; as would be expected, much of the actual burden of maintaining the state fell to his officials. Priests maintained the day-to-day cults, bureaucrats oversaw the administration, and the pharaoh was always depicted as having military success.

Egyptian kingship was not seen as completely flawless but at times as a more human institution. During the Middle Kingdom (2040–1782 B.C.E.), the Egyptian state had just recovered from the First Intermediate Period, wherein the Egyptian state had fragmented beyond the control of a single ruler. Subsequently, art and literature portrays the Middle Kingdom pharaoh as more human. In art historically, Middle Kingdom pharaohs are shown with a very characteristic tired look: Heavy bags under their eyes and drooping cheeks contribute to a very fallible look. One particular literary legend alludes to the pharaoh (perhaps Pepi II) having illicit, after-hours relations with one of his male generals.

The New Kingdom is the period during which the ideology of the pharaoh became its most productive and malleable. The most graphic portrayals of the divine birth date from this period. Pharaohs such as Hatshepsut (r. 1473–1458 B.C.E.) depicted themselves arrayed like the sun god. One interesting, albeit anomalous, situation is found during the reign of Amenhotep III (r. 1390–1352 B.C.E.). From depictions in his mortuary temple, it seems that Amenhotep III was actually considered to be completely deified while still alive. Equally anomalous, it was his son Amenhotep IV (r. 1352–1336 B.C.E.) who later changed his name to Akhenaten and briefly revolutionized Egyptian religion, focusing it on the cult of the god Aten and setting himself up as the exclusive intermediary who controlled all worship of the Aten. Some pharaohs, such as Ramses II (r. 1279–1213 B.C.E.), would stress their appointment as pharaoh rather than their divine conception to add credence to their claim to the throne and disguise their military (rather than royal) lineage.

Egyptian funerary books such as the Pyramid Texts detail what the pharaoh expected to happen after death and provided the pharaoh with in-depth directions. After a lengthy journey, the pharaoh would become a star in the sky and take his place as a divinity. On earth, the tomb of the pharaoh doubled as a cult center for his extended worship. Priests maintained the cult of the dead pharaoh as they would the cult of a god, through daily rituals. It is possible that the Pyramid Texts, recorded inside the pyramids of pharaohs of the Old Kingdom (2686–2181 B.C.E.), may have been used in part as ritual incantations during the worship of the deceased pharaoh.

After the pharaoh had successfully completed the journey to the afterworld and was among the gods, the pharaoh could be worshipped among the pantheon of traditional Egyptian gods. The extent of the worship of these deceased god-

pharaohs varied greatly. Some pharaohs, such as Snefru (r. 2613–2589 B.C.E.) of Dynasty III, became important local deities (in this instance, a mining god in the Sinai). Other pharaohs were given a more public role. For example, Amenhotep I (r. 1525–1504 B.C.E.) was worshipped as the patron deity of the town of Deir el-Medina, where extensive records preserve evidence of his worship. He was particularly noted for his oracular abilities and could be consulted by townspeople to give answers similar to legal verdicts. More unusually, mortal nonpharaonic individuals were occasionally deified after their death. Perhaps the best known of these is Imhotep (twenty-seventh century B.C.E.), who was credited as the architect of Djoser's step pyramid at Saqqara (the first pyramid). Imhotep was noted for his scribal and medical abilities and was later associated with the Greek god Asklepios.

The term “pharaoh” derives from the Egyptian phrase *pr a'a*, and literally means “great house.” In early Egyptian history, it was used exclusively to refer to the palace where the king lived. By the New Kingdom (1570–1070 B.C.E.), it became synonymous with not just the house but also the person of the king. The Egyptians were also careful to use different words to signify the person of the pharaoh versus the office of the pharaoh. This distinction was noticeable in the standard titulary assigned to the king: Each pharaoh had five names, only one of which (the “son of Re” name, or the *nomen*) was received at birth. The other names were the Horus name, which was received upon coronation; the Two Ladies name, after the two goddesses Wadjet and Nekhbet; the Horus of Gold name; and the “King of Upper and Lower Egypt” name (*nsw bjty* in Egyptian, or the *praenomen*). The praenomen was the name used to refer to the pharaoh in his office of king. The praenomen and the nomen were the names encircled in a cartouche.

—Theresa Musacchio

See also: Akhenaten; Apotheosis; Asklepios; Gods on Earth; Politics and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Philip of Moscow

(1506/1507–1569 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox metropolitan, martyr

Philip was metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia from 1566 to 1568. There are two extant vitae for Philip and three miracle tales.

Born Fedor Stepanovich Kolychev to a Novgorod military-service family in 1506 or 1507, Philip became a monk at age thirty and left Moscow in search of a spiritual life. He first served a poor shepherd before making his way to the Solovki Monastery. Philip served as a novice at Solovki for many years before his tonsure, and sometime later he retired to the woods to live as a hermit for ten years. His written Life emphasizes his hard work, virtue, and humility, especially in light of his privileged birth. Philip was consecrated permanently as superior of Solovki around 1548. His legacy was one of hard work and administration. He supervised the acquisition of large donations of land and funds as well as the construction of three stone churches, a refectory, an intricate system of canals that remains in use today, and the beginnings of fortress walls.

Philip became metropolitan of Russia in 1566. His vita indicates conflicts with Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) over Ivan's ruthless treatment of his subjects between 1565 and 1572 during the so-called Oprichnina (when the tsar ruled from a private domain under his direct control). Thanks to the heroic moral speeches that appear in his vitae and his incarceration—and strangulation—by the tsar in the Otroch' Monastery, Philip has become a symbol of ecclesiastic righteousness and martyrdom. He died at Otroch' Monastery in 1569, and his remains were transferred to Solovki in 1591. His vitae remain testaments to monastic concerns for the humility, virtue, hard work, and heroic morality expected of a saint in opposition to corrupt temporal power.

There are no theological texts by Philip, but he is credited with having written twelve miracles in the cycle of Sts. Zosima and Savatii of Solovki, and a few of his orders to the Solovki Monastery are extant in manuscript “copy books” or publications. Philip's remains were transferred to Solovki in 1591, but no significant cult developed there. As late as 1640, the donations made at Philip's tomb were minuscule compared to donations made to other local saints. In 1648, metropolitan designate Nikon transferred Philip's remains to the Moscow Kremlin. Philip has since become a symbol of religious and moral opposition to immoral secular leadership. He was first recognized as a saint between 1647 and 1649 and is remembered January 9 and July 3.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Orthodoxy and Saints; Politics and Holy People

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Phyogs-kyi glan-po

See **Dignaga**

Pio of Pietrelcina (Francesco Forgione)

(1887–1968 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, miracle worker

The man known to most as “Padre Pio” was born Francesco Forgione on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, near Benevento in southern Italy. He was born into a modest family and from early childhood felt a calling for the priesthood. He reported having visions of both God and the devil, and he was known to inflict harsh penances on himself. He began studying at the rather late age of ten because his family needed him to work in the fields from an early age. Five years later, he entered the Capuchin convent at nearby Morcone and finished his studies there. He was ordained a priest when he was twenty-three years old. Owing to his fragile health, he was permitted to live outside the convent, where medical care could be more readily obtained in cases of necessity. At age twenty-nine, he was transferred to the Capuchin house of San Giovanni Rotondo, in the Gargano area of Italy's Adriatic coast. Two years after his arrival, while in prayer before a crucifix on September 20, 1918, he received the stigmata, which remained with him until his death on September 23, 1968, at the age of eighty-one, although they gradually faded over time and completely disappeared when he died.

Throughout his life Padre Pio founded prayer groups and a local hospital; he also took particular care in his offices of confession and the celebration of mass. He was known to hear confessions for many hours on end, and his celebration of the eucharist drew such huge throngs that there was pressure put on him to limit his celebrations to very early morning hours. These crowds grew even larger as Padre Pio's fame as a miracle worker increased. Because of his thaumaturgical reputation Padre Pio became one of the most revered religious figures in Italy today, particularly in the southern part of the country; there, statues and images of him are common, particularly in and around medical centers.

After clearing some initial hurdles, the diocesan process for his canonization began in 1983. He was declared “venerable” in 1997 and beatified in 1999. In near record time (at least by modern standards), St. Pio of Pietrelcina was

canonized by Pope John Paul II on June 16, 2002. His feast day is September 23. An enormous church, designed by Renzo Piano, is being built to better handle the crowds of pilgrims visiting the small town of San Giovanni Rotondo.

—George Ferzoco

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Imitation of Christ; Miracles; Suffering and Holy People

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Pir Sultan Abdal

(16th cent. C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim spiritual poet

The Turkish poet Pir Sultan Abdal was born in Sivas, Turkey, in the sixteenth century. Despite, or perhaps because of, his extreme popularity, very little is known about his life except what has been preserved in his poems, hagiographical sources of much later periods, and folk legends. “Pir Sultan Abdal” is a pen name; his real name remains unknown to this day, though it may have been Haydar (one of the names of ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, the prophet Muhammad’s cousin, son-in-law, and the first imam of Shi’ism). The pen name is a collection of titles: *Pir* means “sage” or “wise person”; a *sultan* is a spiritual leader or master; and *abdal* (lit., “substitute saint”) is the term for a dervish-troubadour. It is commonly believed that he lived during the reigns of the Ottoman sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) and the Safavid ruler Shah Tahmasb (r. 1524–1578), as there are references to these rulers in his poems.

As a prominent poet of the Alawi-Baktashi tradition, Pir Sultan has come to symbolize a number of themes in Turkish culture. His political struggle against Hizir Pasha, the governor of Sivas at the time representing the Sunni-Ottoman authority in central Anatolia, is well known. Along with his powerful poetical imagery and simplicity, perhaps what made Pir Sultan a household name in Turkish culture is his execution for allegedly provoking people against the Ottoman sultan in support of the Safavid state in Iran founded by Shah Ismail (r. 1501–1524), himself a Turk from Anatolia. The precise nature of his relationship with the Safavids, however, remains a mystery and leaves much room for speculation. For instance, Pir Sultan uses the word *shah*, a title given to Persian kings, profusely as well as vaguely in

his poems, but it is never clear if he means actual Safavid rulers such as Shah Ismail or Shah Tahmasb or a spiritual master in the metaphorical sense of the term. In either case, however, Pir Sultan’s work is a synthesis of chivalry and social activism, on the one hand, and sober spirituality, on the other.

Pir Sultan was a folk singer, and his poetry reflects the qualities of Turkish folk music. It combines many elements of traditional sufi Alawi-Baktashi literature, such as love, companionship, communal bonds, spiritual masters, and love for the prophet, his family, and the Shi’ite imams. An epic quality permeates his poetry, which expresses a gallant opposition to injustice and wrongdoing. Considering the fact that the sixteenth century was imbued with communal and tribal difficulties in central Anatolia, partly on account of the rapid expansion of the Ottoman Empire and its westward march toward the Balkans and Europe, it is only natural that Pir Sultan became the spokesman for the discontent of many Turkish groups and nomadic Turkomans.

Along with Yunus Emre (c. 1241–1320/1321), Pir Sultan is celebrated for expressing dense esoteric and spiritual matters in simple, straightforward language. His work highlights the stark contrast between the “external,” or exoteric (*zahir*), and the “internal,” or esoteric (*batin*). Although this dichotomy goes back much earlier in Islamic history and points to a long-standing tension between spiritual teachers and doctors of law, Pir Sultan adds meaning to the controversy by interpreting the basic teachings of Islamic-Alawi spirituality in the larger context of his political struggle. Against blindly following the rituals of the religion, Pir Sultan emphasizes such spiritual qualities as sincerity and love. In modern history, some Alawi groups have tended to disregard the religious dimension in Pir Sultan’s legacy, considering him a social(ist) activist and/or proto-Communist. The spiritual message of Pir Sultan’s work, however, has much in common with the sufi tradition.

—Ibrahim Kalin

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Yunus Emre

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Pirmin

(d. 753 C.E.)

Christian monk, missionary

An eighth-century Visigothic monk who came to the Frankish court from southern Gaul, Pirmin was sent to Alemannia by Charles Martel, de facto ruler of Francia. Like many saints of this period, Pirmin was an itinerant monk whose sanctity was closely linked to his missionary activities. He was con-

secrated a bishop, but as was common for missionary monks of this period, he was not assigned to a permanent diocese. With the support of Charles Martel, Pirmin founded a monastery at Reichenau in 724. In doing so, he strengthened Christian and Frankish influence in a region that had been slow to relinquish its old customs and religions. Pirmin served as abbot at Reichenau until 727, when he once again departed to continue his missionary work, spreading the Rule of Benedict in Alsace and the Pfalz. It was around this time that he founded monasteries at Murbach (726/728) and Gegenbach (c. 748), and finally at Hornbach. He was reportedly summoned to Hornbach by the noble Frankish count Wanharius to establish a monastery there. At Hornbach, as at Reichenau, he dedicated the church to the mother of God and to Peter, leader of the apostles.

There is no documentation for the canonization of Pirmin, but within fifty years of his death in 753, he was recognized as a saint in a martyrologium from Metz, the diocese of the monastery at Hornbach, and in a manuscript from Reichenau, the most powerful of his foundations. Reichenau grew to become a major educational and artistic center during the Carolingian and later the Ottonian period—a century after the monastery's founding, its library contained more than 400 codices. Pirmin's saintly status is derived both from the works achieved in his lifetime and from the miracles that occurred at his grave following his death. This perhaps speaks as much to monastic practice during the eighth and ninth centuries as to the miracles of St. Pirmin—it was a common goal during this period for monks to attempt to trace the origin of their foundation back to a saint, thus increasing the worthiness of their institution.

—Kristen M. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Monasticism and Holy People

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Plato

(427–347 B.C.E.)

Greek philosopher

Plato, the famous Athenian philosopher, was a follower of Socrates, founder of the Academy, and the founding figure of

the later philosophical and religious movements of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism. Set forth with eloquent and sophisticated style in his dialogues, Plato's philosophy encompasses a great many subjects, among them the metaphysical dualism of the perfect, eternal, divine realm of Being and the imperfect, ever-changing physical world (or, in terms of human makeup, dualism of soul and body). The physical world is patterned after the eternal Forms. Philosophy permits access to the divine realm, and in so doing makes possible the good life.

Plato was born into an aristocratic Athenian family in 427 B.C.E. Around the age of twenty, he began to spend time in the company of Socrates and his group of followers. Later Plato would memorialize in his dialogues Socrates' trial (in *Apology*), death (in *Phaedo*), and many details of his character and teachings. The effect on Plato of his charismatic teacher was clearly formative and enduring. When a jury sentenced Socrates to death in 399, Plato's disgust with Athenian democracy moved him to withdraw from public life. He spent about the next twelve years traveling to southern Italy and elsewhere, including an influential stay with Pythagorean philosophers. After returning to Athens in about 387, Plato opened a school near the grove sacred to the hero Akademos. He spent the rest of his life teaching and writing, establishing the Academy as an important center of philosophical and mathematical learning.

Plato wrote primarily in the genre of the dialogue, thus mimicking as closely as possible the dialectical teaching style of Socrates. About twenty-five dialogues survive; they can be grouped roughly into three general categories. The Socratic dialogues, such as *Euthyphro* and *Apology*, seem to portray Socrates relatively authentically. It is often assumed that they are Plato's earlier works. The so-called "middle" or "middle-period" dialogues include *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and *Republic*. Socrates is the spokesman for significant new ideas, such as the theory of Forms. In the late dialogues, which include *Timaeus* and *Laws*, Plato expounds on such subjects as cosmology and political theory.

Plato taught that human beings could gain access to the divine through philosophy. His doctrine of dualism posits that the physical world, imperfect and constantly in process of becoming, is patterned after the nonphysical, perfect, eternal and unchanging Forms or Ideas, which are of the divine realm of Being. For example, triangles exist only due to the idea of triangle. By coming to know the Forms through abstract thought, the philosopher is able to live based in truth as opposed to mere opinion.

Dualism also informs Plato's view of the human condition. The soul is immortal, of the realm of Being, but it is tarnished through association with the body. To return home, the soul must attain purification. In the meantime, it undergoes reincarnation (or transmigration) from one

body to another. Plato's theory of knowledge also follows from this: The soul "recollects" the truths it learned through knowing the Forms before becoming encumbered by a body.

Purification of the soul depends on a life of virtue. Plato posits a correlation between various virtues and three parts of the soul: the intellectual (wisdom), the spirited (courage), and the appetitive (self-control). The harmonious operation of the soul, achieved through philosophy, amounts to a fourth virtue, justice. These became known as the four cardinal virtues (and in the Christian Middle Ages as the four natural virtues, to which were added the three supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and love).

Plato's influence has determined the course of Western philosophy down to the present. His most famous student, Aristotle, studied at the Academy for twenty years and then founded his own school in 335 B.C.E. The Academy continued to elaborate upon Plato's philosophy until it was closed by the emperor Justinian in 529 C.E. During this period, individuals and schools who regarded themselves as followers of Plato combined to make up the loosely defined movements of Middle Platonism (beginning in the first century B.C.E.) and then Neoplatonism, commenced by Plotinus (204/205–270 C.E.). Such Platonism is marked by syncretism, incorporating the influence of Aristotle and the Stoics, but Plato's dialogues remained the foundational source, so much so that Plato acquired a general reputation as revealer of divine truth. He also was held in favor by several important Christian church fathers, culminating in Augustine of Hippo (354–430 C.E.), whose works are pervaded with Plato's philosophy.

—Jeffrey Brodd

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Greek Philosophers; Hagiography; Plotinus; Purity and Pollution; Reincarnation; Scholars as Holy People; Socrates; Teachers as Holy People

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Plotinus

(204/205–270 C.E.)

Greek philosopher, holy man, ascetic

Father of Neoplatonism, the dominant philosophy of the later Roman Empire, and one of the last great and original thinkers before the conquest of Christianity, Plotinus is

known as a holy man of extraordinary spiritual qualities who practiced extreme asceticism and claimed to have experienced a mystical union with the supreme God ("the One" or "the Good") in his life. Born in Egypt in 204 or 205 C.E., Plotinus studied under Ammonius before settling in Rome and starting a philosophical school. His student Porphyry edited his lectures into six sets of nine treatises called the *Enneads*, which analyzed various philosophical topics.

Plotinus was influenced by Plato, but Aristotle and other Greek thinkers also left their mark on his thought, which evolved from Middle Platonism, a more dogmatic interpretation of Plato than that of the earlier Academy. His philosophy posited a hierarchy of being in the hypostases of: (1) the One or the Good, the supreme unifying principle of reality incapable of being grasped by thought; (2) intellect, unchanging intelligible reality, of which sensible things are imperfect images; (3) soul, including the world soul and individual souls. By contemplating the Good, purifying the soul, becoming like God, and detaching oneself from the passions and external things of this world, union with the One, though not permanent in this life, is possible. The goal of life for Plotinus was thus to return to the One from whom all life emanates.

In *The Life of Plotinus* written by Porphyry, Plotinus is depicted as a godlike man who always raised himself to the Transcendent God (23). His motto was "to bring back the god in you to the divine in the All!" (2). Because he was continuously in thought, he was present at once to himself and to others (8). According to Porphyry, Plotinus was a mystic who experienced union with God in this life. By separating the soul from passions and carnal desires, he ascended to the infinite love of the One (or God) and became temporarily united with the supreme unifying principle of reality in an experience that transcended intelligence and was impossible to describe. The return to the divine intellect from which all reality came was always a possibility. After he died in 270, an oracle proclaimed that his soul went to heaven, not to be judged by the gods, but to be their companion.

Plotinus's mystical theology profoundly influenced Western thought, especially Christian spirituality, and his philosophy impacted Islamic and Byzantine as well as Western European medieval, Renaissance, and Enlightenment intellectual traditions.

—Michael Bland Simmons

See also: Greek Philosophers; Mysticism and Holy People; Plato; Scholars as Holy People

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Plunket, Oliver (Plunkett)

(1629–1681 C.E.)

Roman Catholic archbishop, martyr

As a Roman Catholic priest, the Irishman Oliver Plunket worked with the poor in Rome before becoming a professor of theology and being named primate of Ireland in 1669. Plunket worked against the persecution of Catholics by the English government under Oliver Cromwell and Charles II until his execution in 1681.

After his ordination into the priesthood in 1654, Plunket served with the Fathers of Charity in Rome, earned degrees in canon and civil law at the Roman College, and worked as a professor of theology and apologetics until being named archbishop of Armagh in 1669. Plunket's return to Ireland after an absence of almost twenty-five years came at a time of great disorganization of the church in Ireland, a condition exacerbated by the hostile attitude the English government had toward Catholics. Plunket spent much of his time fighting anti-Catholic laws and ministering to his people. Within three months of arriving in Ireland, he had confirmed 10,000 people; by December 1673, the number rose to 48,655. Many of these believers received the sacrament secretly. In addition, during his first years in Ireland Plunket worked to bring education to Irish youth, and he opened a Catholic high school in Drogheda that was later taken over by the Jesuits.

With the passage of the Test Act of 1673, requiring that government officials prove their Anglican religious convictions, increased persecution of Catholics led to the scattering of Irish schools, the closing of chapels, and the dispersion of priests, friars, and monks into the countryside. Masses had to be conducted secretly, and Catholics were eventually forbidden to enter Dublin. Persecutions culminated in 1678 with the Titus Oates plot, which falsely accused Catholics of a plot to violently overthrow the government. On December 6, 1679, Plunket was arrested and imprisoned in Dublin Castle on the charges of remaining in the kingdom despite the edict of expulsion and of plotting to bring a French army into Ireland for the purpose of revolution. Although he was given a trial at Dundalk the following July, the witnesses perjured themselves and a case was established against him. He was sentenced to death at Tyburn, where he was hanged,

drawn, and quartered in 1681. After his sentencing, he reportedly responded "*Deo Gratias*" (Thanks be to God), and his dying speech was a testimony of his faith. His body is buried at Downside Abbey near Bath, England, and his head is preserved at Drogheda. Plunket was beatified by Benedict XV in 1920 and canonized by Paul VI on October 12, 1975. His feast day is July 11.

—Michelle Ruggaber Dougherty

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Reform and Reaction

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Politics and Holy People

Can a person win popular esteem as "holy" who is engaged in the political world, or does the interaction of church and state inevitably lead to compromises and corruption of ideals? People in most times, places, and religions have seen no essential divide between "church" and "state," and indeed many people have been regarded as holy *because* rather than in spite of an active voice in the political world. The form that political interaction has taken has, however, varied greatly depending on time and place, and to some extent on religion. Confucianism more than any other system has stressed the *need* for a good person to be involved in the life of the state. Islam, especially Shi'a Islam, has also stressed the interconnectedness of government and the will of God in a way that encourages social engagement by saints. Christianity has reached a series of compromises with Jesus' statement, "My kingdom is not of this world," especially focusing on the need of people of goodwill (especially Christian rulers) to work to provide peace so that lesser people have a good environment for their religious practices. Indeed, almost all religions hail as holy certain people who have set themselves against a government that is perceived as wrong or evil. Finally, the goals of religion and politics are often so interconnected (as, for example, when a ruler works to impose a religion or even simple order on his or her state) that Christianity, especially, has a whole category of political martyrs—rulers killed by enemies for political reasons, but nonetheless regarded as in some sort defenders of the faith.

In some religions, or branches of religions, a single leader can serve as political as well as religious ruler. This was especially true of ancient Egyptian and Inca religion,

but elements can be found in any region with a concept of divine or divinely inspired kingship. The best-known modern example is the fourteenth dalai lama, Tenzin Gyatso (1933–), the political and religious leader of Tibet. At other times, prophetic figures have claimed secular leadership. The most famous example of this is Muhammad (570–632), the prophet of Islam, but the first Sikh guru, Nanak (1469–1539), also combined the functions of prophet and territorial lord. Whether the secular leader should also hold religious authority was at the heart of the great schism between Sunni and Shi'a Islam: The partisans of Muhammad's kinsman 'Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661), the Shi'a, believe that the imams, descended from the prophet, had not just the right but the fundamental duty to rule the Islamic world. This caused an ongoing problem for the early Sunni caliphs, who feared the imams as a political rallying point against their rule, forcing them to keep imams such as al-Hasan al-'Askari (c. 846–c. 874) under close supervision their entire lives. His successor, Muhammad al-Mahdi (c. 868–874?), went so far as to go into a hiding from which he has yet to emerge—and will only do so to usher in a new age of the world. Islamic history has been enlivened by a number of holy figures who have claimed to be the twelfth imam come again, and who have launched revolutionary movements on the basis of the political position inherent in that claim. In another branch of Shi'a Islam, the Isma'ili imams for centuries ruled a state centered on Alamut in northern Iran. And through history a number of Islamic states have been established by religious leaders demanding political authority to enforce the teachings of Islam, ranging from the Almohad and Almoravid states of medieval North Africa and southern Spain to the Islamic state of modern Iran, established largely through the efforts of a Muslim ayatollah, Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989).

Many more holy people have served a wide array of rulers, recognizing them, as the sufi al-Suhrawardi (1145–1234) did his caliph, as the representatives of God on earth. This very common belief led to theories that it is morally wrong to rebel against even an unjust ruler in Islam, Christianity, and Confucianism, to name only the strongest examples. As noted, support of government is central to Confucianism. Confucians have been actively involved in politics, including many who can be regarded as “holy” for their teachings and way of life. An interesting case is the Japanese Confucian Kumazawa Banzan (1619–1691), who served as adviser to a provincial governor. Banzan was so dedicated to good government that he caused much jealousy and even plots against him by administrators of less integrity, but the governor recognized his quality and continued to trust him. From its beginning, Confucianism perceived the need for educated, good men to bring the rulers to greater morality and benevolence. Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) himself wandered

China giving advice to rulers (which they ignored) before settling down as a minor functionary; the great Confucian philosopher Mengzi (c. 372–289 B.C.E.) also traveled to many of the Chinese kingdoms urging rulers to rule morally. The ideal of Confucian scholarship is that it is an absolute duty for those who are able to ensure good governance to do so. This explains why Confucianism has no eremitical holy people—although some deeply moral Confucians at times withdrew to solitude in the view that the state was impossibly corrupt, instead of being praised they were condemned for not *trying* to effect a change within the political system.

Both Buddhism and Christianity grew up separate from a political system, and both developed an ecclesiology that emphasized the independence of the clergy from the state. Monks and other members of the religious elite of both religions had good success in freeing themselves from secular taxes; indeed, the Chinese Pure Land patriarch Huiyuan (334–416 C.E.) took the basic stand that “monks don't pay obeisance to kings,” eventually freeing monks from political duties to the state. Both Christian and Buddhist holy people sometimes found themselves in difficulties for refusing political loyalty to the ruler; for example, in England Anselm (1033–1109) was exiled twice for giving more loyalty to the pope than to the king, a problem that also led to the murder of Thomas Becket (c. 1120–1170). Fear that adherence to Christianity would lead to political disloyalty, combined with the tensions of aggressive European imperialism, led to mass executions of Christians in Japan, Korea, China, Uganda, and other places in the early modern and modern periods.

In reality, though, many Buddhist and Christian holy people were politically active, attaining holy status despite or sometimes because of their engagement with secular rulers. Perhaps the most fruitful alliance in the history of Christianity is that of the Anglo-Saxon missionary Boniface (c. 675–754) with the rulers of the kingdom of the Franks, which led to a strong state, large-scale conversions, and the organization of a strong ecclesiastical structure in the state. The Silla (Korean) Buddhist monk Chajang (590–658) both spread his religion and helped his country by convincing his queen to adopt Chinese customs. Successful alliances of church and state can also be seen in Islam, for example in the case of the Persian Safavid dynasty of the sixteenth century, which declared Shi'ism to be the state religion and encouraged Shi'i leaders to resettle in Iran, where they taught loyalty to the state and served the state along with more traditional religious functions.

More holy people than can easily be counted have served as tutors of young rulers, mediated in disputes between states, advised rulers, and sometimes even saved their states from periods of great danger. Sometimes this appears to have been a conscious manipulation by secular authorities, creating a holiness by association through their dealings

with people of recognized holiness. This took an interesting twist in Christianity in the later Middle Ages, when “political canonization” became a tool of government—winning canonization of a holy family member or supporter enabled the ruler to bask in the reflected glory. It was good to have a saint in the family, as the descendants of King Louis IX (1214–1270) of France recognized, and the fifteenth-century Hapsburgs clearly engineered or at least encouraged the cult of Leopold III of Austria (1073–1136). Emperor Charlemagne (742–814) was canonized in 1165 as part of the fight between his successor, Emperor Frederick I, and Pope Alexander III. And Celestine V (c. 1210–1296), pope for only six months (July 5–December 13, 1294), was canonized in 1313 as part of a defamation campaign against his own successor, the anti-French Pope Boniface VIII (pope 1294–1303).

Can a holy person become engaged in politics to fight corruption? In general, the historic answer has been yes, although sometimes after much soul-searching. Many Christian bishops, after Christianity was established as the state religion of Rome in the fourth century, suffered exile for fighting against imperial and later royal religious policies, and often only their visible holiness saved them from worse, as in the case of Caesarius of Arles (c. 470–542). It is a simple fact that rulers do not care to be criticized, even when their rule is strong enough that they do not have to fear rebellion. Thus, at times *only* a saint has been able to offer a political critique. For example, the Muslim al-Hasan al-Basri (642–728) could get away with open criticism of the Umayyad caliphs because of his known sincerity and upright life. The German Rupert Mayer (1876–1945), an active opponent of the Nazis, survived World War II (under house arrest) because the German government did not want to make him a martyr in the eyes of the people. Other holy people were less fortunate, adding the crown of martyrdom to their other holy attributes.

The great Shi’i poet Pir Sultan Abdal (sixteenth century) was executed for provoking people against the injustice of the Ottoman sultan, a case exacerbated by the fact that he was Shi’a and the sultan was Sunni. Similarly, the English and Irish Catholic martyrs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were executed as traitors for their resistance to the authority of the Protestant ruler in religious affairs. In a more exclusively political case, Stanislas of Cracow (c. 1040–1079) rebuked his king’s cruelty and oppression and was killed for it. And sometimes one holy man could be endured and another couldn’t. Two extremely brave men protested Ivan the Terrible’s bloodshed and injustice in Russia during the sixteenth century. The metropolitan Philip of Moscow (1506/1507–1569) rebuked the tsar to his face during a public celebration of the liturgy—he was imprisoned and soon strangled. But Basil the Blessed (1469–1552) also criticized Ivan and survived the experience because he was a

recognized “fool in Christ,” touched by God and not subject to the normal courtesies of political exchange.

In the twentieth century, a new phenomenon has arisen: holy leaders taking a role in democratic politics to advocate reform. The modern Hindu Swami Agnivesh (1939–) is a very strong proponent of social justice and established his own political party, Arya Sabha, to spread his vision. Similarly, the sufi shaykh Ibrahim Niassé of Senegal (1902–1975) was active in Senegal politics, advocating social justice and equality; his followers still hold many political positions. Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1931–) of South Africa has been very active in the struggle against apartheid and the new social ills caused by its end, both from the pulpit and in the political arena. Other important figures are Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), and Nelson Mandela (1918–).

In lands unresponsive to democratic processes, often still the only way for a holy person to fight an unjust political system is to publicly witness against it. Martyrs are still being created in a ruthless political world, ranging from the self-immolation of Vietnamese Buddhist monks to the martyrdom of Archbishops Janani Jakaliya Luwum (1922–1977) of Uganda and Oscar Romero (1917–1980) of El Salvador, who both dared to denounce the injustice and atrocities of their governments, and who have perhaps served their cause better as martyrs than they were able to during their lives.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Agnivesh; Anselm of Canterbury; Basri, al-Hasan, al-; Boniface; Caesarius of Arles; Celestine V; Chajang; Charlemagne; Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Hasan al-’Askari, al-; Huiyuan; Incas; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Kumazawa Banzan; Leopold III of Austria; Louis IX; Luwum, Janani Jakaliya; Mahdi, Muhammad al-; Mandela, Nelson Rolihlahla; Mayer, Rupert; Mengzi; Muhammad; Nanak; Pharaohs of Egypt; Philip of Moscow; Pir Sultan Abdal; Romero, Oscar; Rulers as Holy People; Stanislas of Cracow; Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin; Tenzin Gyatso; Thomas Becket

Polycarp

(c. 69–c. 155 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Polycarp, perhaps the most important Christian leader in western Asia during the second century, was a Christian martyr and bishop of Smyrna (modern Izmir). Born in about 69, he belonged to the first generation of Christians after the apostolic age and exercised considerable influence in shaping the early church. He is known for a letter he wrote to the Christians at Philippi. An account of his martyrdom written by members of the church at Smyrna shortly after his death, a letter written to Polycarp by his friend Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (d. c. 107), and details

furnished by other early Christian writers also shed light on this important figure.

Irenaeus (c. 135–200), a native of Smyrna who became bishop of Lyons, claimed to have known Polycarp as a child and said that he had been instructed by St. John and “others who had seen the Lord” and passed down their teachings (Eusebius 4.14, 5.20). The fourth-century church historian Eusebius records that Polycarp once came face to face with the heterodox Christian teacher Marcion, whom he rejected as the “firstborn of Satan,” and describes how he once visited Rome in order to discuss with its bishop, Anicetus (c. 154–c. 166), the conflict between the Eastern and Western churches over the proper date for the observance of Easter (Eusebius 4.14). It was not long after his return to Smyrna that the bishop, then eighty-six years old, was arrested and executed by Roman authorities. The traditional date for his death is February 23, in the year 155 or 156, but Eusebius’s claim that it occurred during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161–180) makes it uncertain.

Polycarp is said to have written letters to several churches, but only his Letter to the Philippians survives. Occasioned in part by the misbehavior of one of the presbyters of Philippi, it warns against the love of money and against listening to Docetists, who denied the reality of Christ’s physical nature, and establishes moral standards for both the laity and clergy.

More important for an understanding of early Christian piety is the account of his death by members of the church at Smyrna, the first Christian text devoted entirely to the suffering and death of a believer who died for the faith and the first to use the word *martyr* (witness) in this sense. Meant to inspire courage in its readers, it relates how Polycarp’s calmness and cheerfulness astonished his captors and how a heavenly voice encouraged the elderly bishop by reminding him that he was not alone as he entered the arena. The account describes Polycarp as joyful in the face of death, and the fire set to burn him alive as unwilling to touch him. Death came only with a dagger thrust that released a dove (the symbol of a Christian soul) and a rush of blood that miraculously extinguished the flames. The account became the model for later martyrologies and contains evidence of beliefs and practices that were standard features of the cult of martyrs by the third century, in particular the veneration of the relics of martyrs and the conviction that in the midst of their suffering they were already in the company of Christ and beginning to experience the bliss of heaven.

—Bradley P. Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Irenaeus; Marcion; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Popé

(c. 1630–c. 1690 C.E.)

Pueblo religious leader, rebel

Popé was a Pueblo Indian religious leader who led the Pueblo Revolt against the Spanish in 1680 in what is now New Mexico. The details of his early life are hard to come by. Born in about 1630, he was a Tewa Indian living in one of the numerous Indian pueblos of the Rio Grande River Valley. He enters the historical record as a traditional Pueblo Indian religious leader who resisted Spanish efforts to overturn Pueblo Indian religion and culture in the late seventeenth century.

Spain had entered New Mexico to stay in 1598; settlers under Juan de Oñate established a colony among the pueblos and made Santa Fe their capital in 1610. The Spanish forced the various Indian communities to supply them with food and labor or risk military attack. In addition, Catholic priests and other officials erected churches in native villages and worked to convert the Pueblo peoples to Christianity. Conversion also involved the destruction of native religious icons, suppression of their rituals, and efforts to discredit native religious leaders such as Popé. Religious and cultural tensions grew to a head by 1675 when Spanish officials arrested forty-seven Pueblo leaders for “sorcery.” The real issue was Spanish inability to convert significant numbers of Pueblo Indians to Christianity, and the Spanish blamed native leaders for their lack of success. The Spanish hanged four of the detainees and whipped the rest, including Popé.

In the aftermath of his 1675 arrest and the continued overbearing actions by the Spanish, Popé and other Pueblo Indian leaders began organizing open resistance to the Spanish. By 1680, the plans had been made, and runners carried the call for an armed uprising to nearly all of the Pueblo Indian communities. Spanish officials caught wind of the plan and nearly quashed it before it began, but the uprising started on August 10, 1680. The principal targets of Popé and the Indians were the churches and priests in their villages. They killed Catholic representatives, tore down churches, and destroyed Catholic ritual objects. They then laid siege to Santa Fe, where the Spanish survivors had all taken refuge, and managed to cut off the settlement’s water supply. The Spanish, their resolve weakened, fled back to Mexico City, not to return to New Mexico for twelve years.

The 1680 Pueblo Revolt stands as the most successful American Indian resistance action against the European intrusion. Recognition of its religious dimension and the role

of its primary organizer, Popé, demonstrates the importance of traditional religion among Indians and their resistance to forced cultural change. When the Spanish returned in 1692, they dramatically lessened their insistence that Pueblo Indians convert to Christianity, and they sought more cooperation with Indian peoples in order to build a new multicultural community. Popé assumed a major leadership position among the Pueblos in the 1680s, but he lost that position before the Spanish returned. There is no record of his eventual circumstances. He may have died in about 1690.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Patriotism and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Pope-Saints

Christianity

Of the 262 men who have been bishops of Rome (by the fourth century usually called “popes”), seventy-eight are regarded as saints by the Roman Catholic Church. The majority of these pope-saints reigned during the first through the ninth centuries, including forty-eight of the first fifty popes. By comparison, between the tenth and twentieth centuries there are only five pope-saints. In addition, ten popes have been beatified (the step before formal canonization). Two antipopes, men whose claims to the papacy are considered illegitimate by the church, are also celebrated as saints: Hippolytus (217–235) and Felix II (355–365).

Since the late second or early third century, Western Christians have regarded St. Peter (d. c. 64) as the first bishop of Rome, but whether he actually held this position, either alone or in conjunction with St. Paul, is a matter of conjecture. Very little reliable information is known about the earliest popes beyond their names. Even the order of succession is confused: The traditional list of the early popes, compiled around 180, has Peter followed by Linus (c. 66–c. 78) and Anacletus (c. 79–c. 91), but other early writers claim that Clement I (c. 91–c. 100) was the second pope. Clement left behind an important letter to the Corinthians, but no other early papal writings survive. The early Roman episcopate was a very fluid institution, and as a result nothing certain can be said about most of the first- and early second-century popes—Evaristus (c. 100–c. 109), Alexander I (c. 109–c.

116), Sixtus I (c. 116–c. 125), Telesphorus (c. 125–c. 136), and Hygenius (c. 138–c. 142). Of these early popes, only Peter and Telesphorus can reliably be identified as martyrs.

Starting with the papacy of Pius I (c. 142–c. 155), more reliable information is known about the various popes. Anicetus (c. 155–c. 166) established a shrine to St. Peter on Vatican Hill. Soter (c. 166–c. 174) established a firm date for the celebration of Easter in Rome. Under St. Eleutherius (c. 174–189), a canonical list of the earliest popes was established. Victor I (189–198) attempted to establish the Roman date for Easter as the standard for the entire church. Zephyrinus (198/199–217) was confronted with debates in Rome over the divinity of Christ. These debates continued into the reign of Callistus I (217–222), who also had to deal with the first antipope, Hippolytus. The church appears to have enjoyed a time of relative peace under Urban I (222–230). Pontian (230–235) abdicated the throne after being exiled by the Roman emperor to Sardinia during renewed persecution of Christians, a persecution that also marked the term of his successor Anterus (235–236). Fabian (236–250) reorganized the administration of the church in Rome and died a martyr during the Decian persecution. During his papacy, Cornelius (251–253) was faced with the difficult question of what to do with those who had lapsed during the persecution. Lucius I (253–254) spent most of his papacy in exile.

In the course of bitter debates over the rebaptism of heretics, Stephen I (254–257) was one of the first popes to claim primacy in doctrinal matters as the successor to St. Peter. Sixtus II (257–258) was beheaded while saying mass and became one of the most renowned martyrs of the early church. Dionysius (260–268) restored the organization of the Roman church after the persecutions and took the lead in doctrinal debates over the nature of the Trinity. Popes Felix I (269–274), Eutychian (275–283), and Caius (283–296) lived during a time of peace and prosperity for Christians in Rome, and very little is known about their activities. Marcellinus (296–304) reportedly handed over church goods and sacrificed to the gods during Diocletian's persecution, and for this may have been deposed. Marcellus (306–308) was banished from Rome as a disturber of the peace because of the hard line he took against those who had strayed during the persecution. His immediate successor, Eusebius (310), suffered the same fate. Under Melchiodorus (311–314), properties confiscated from the church during the persecution were returned and Christianity enjoyed the beginnings of imperial favor.

Although the papacy of Silvester I (314–335) saw the church gain unprecedented wealth and prestige, little is known about his activities or those of his immediate successor, Mark (336). Julius I (337–352) was an outspoken supporter of the decisions of the Council of Nicaea and an op-

ponent of the Arians. Damasus I (366–384) took office amid violence and bloodshed but proved an able pope, enjoying the favor of the Roman aristocracy and actively promoting the idea of papal primacy. Siricius (384–399) was the first pope to issue decretals, rulings based on the style of the imperial chancery and theoretically binding on all Christians. Anastasius I (399–401) took part in the efforts to condemn the writings of the Greek theologian Origen. Innocent I (401–417), Anastasius's son, made substantial claims for the primacy of the pope's authority over the churches in Western Europe. The short reign of Zosimus (417–418) saw conflicts with the church in Africa, most of which were smoothed over by his successor, Boniface I (418–422). Celestine I (422–432) claimed unprecedented authority over the church in both the East and the West and became involved in the Eastern christological debates sparked by the teachings of Nestorius. Sixtus III (432–440) undertook a major rebuilding program in Rome to restore damage done during the Visigothic invasion of 410. Leo I, "the Great" (440–461), was one of the strongest of the late antique popes, claiming wide authority in religious matters and partially filling the power vacuum created by a series of weak emperors in the West. Hilarius (461–468) and Simplicius (468–483) intervened frequently in the ecclesiastical affairs of Gaul and Spain and attempted to hold the Western church together in the face of imperial collapse.

As the popes gained power in the West, they increasingly came into conflict with the church in the East. Felix III/II (483–492) excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople and started a schism that continued through the reigns of Gelasius (492–496), Symmachus (498–514), and Hormisdas (514–523). John I (523–526) visited Constantinople at the behest of the Gothic king Theodoric, and his successor, Felix IV/III (526–530), also enjoyed the patronage of the Gothic court. Agapitus I (535–536) and Silverius (536–537) were caught up in the struggles between the Goths in Italy and the Roman emperors in Constantinople, and the latter was even forced to abdicate by imperial forces. The papacy was considerably weakened for the latter part of the sixth century, until the ascension of Gregory I, "the Great" (590–604), who became in effect the civil as well as religious leader of much of Italy.

The seventh century was a time of hardship for the papacy. Boniface IV (608–615) and Deusdedit/Adeodatus I (615–618) had to contend with plagues and famines, and later popes faced controversies with Constantinople over theological issues. One pope, Martin I (649–653) was even arrested, tried, and beaten at the behest of the emperor and died in exile, becoming the last pope to be recognized as a martyr. Eugenius I (654–657) would have probably suffered the same treatment except for his early death. Vitalian (657–672) was able to restore good relations with the em-

peror but still proclaimed Roman orthodoxy, an orthodoxy that did not become standard in the East until the reign of Agatho (678–681) and Leo II (682–683).

After this time, popes were more likely to be considered saints because of their personal piety than because of their suffering or activities on behalf of theological orthodoxy. They also gradually separated themselves from the influence of the Eastern emperors. Benedict II (684–685) convinced the emperor to allow his viceroy in Italy to ratify papal elections. Sergius I (687–701) resisted the orders of Emperor Justinian II and was supported by the imperial forces in Italy. Gregory II (715–731) was concerned with missionary work in England and Germany, and Gregory III (731–741) was the first pope to seek protection from the Franks and not Constantinople. The drift away from the East increased after the papacy of Zacharias (741–752), the last Greek pope. At about this time as well, the popes became more heavily involved with civil government, and by the time of Paul I (757–767), the early Papal States had begun to evolve. Both tendencies were noticeable in Leo III's (795–816) coronation of the Frankish king Charlemagne as emperor.

After the beginning of the ninth century, the number of pope-saints drops dramatically. One of them, Paschal I (817–824), has not been considered an official saint since 1963. Leo IV (847–855) defended Rome and Italy against Saracen invaders. Nicholas I (858–864) tried to assert his authority over the Eastern church, but the resulting schism never completely healed. Hadrian II (867–874) tried to end the schism but failed. By the tenth century, the papacy had fallen on hard times, with the papal throne becoming first a plaything in Roman politics and later falling under the influence of the German emperors. This changed in the eleventh century with the advent of the reform papacy. Two reforming popes, Leo IX (1049–1054) and Gregory VII (1073–1085), are considered saints, and another two, Victor III (1086–1087) and Urban II (1088–1099), have been beatified. After the eleventh century, however, there are only three pope-saints: Celestine V (1294), whose personal holiness is unquestioned but who proved ineffectual as pope and eventually resigned; Pius V (1566–1572), whose political astuteness helped to firmly establish the Catholic Reformation; and Pius X (1903–1914), who reformed church law and took a strong stand against modernism and democracy. During this period, there were also several beatified popes: Eugene III (1145–1153), Gregory X (1271–1276), Innocent V (1276), Benedict XI (1303–1304), Urban V (1362–1370), and Innocent XI (1676–1689).

In September 2000, Pope John Paul II beatified two of his predecessors, Pius IX (1846–1878) and John XXIII (1958–1963). Plans to beatify Pius XII (1939–1958), however, drew criticism from some Jewish groups concerned about his perceived inaction in the face of Nazism and the

Holocaust, and his beatification proceedings appear to have been suspended indefinitely.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Bishop-Saints; Celestine V; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Gregory VII; John XXIII; Leo the Great; Peter; Reform and Reaction; Rulers as Holy People

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Priests

In anthropological terms, a “priest” is anyone specially trained to conduct rituals that create contact with the supernatural world, so a Protestant pastor is a priest as well as those figures more typically given the actual title “priest” in English. All priests have a certain institutional holiness; they are mediators between the broader populace and the divine. In general, a priest is more likely to be recognized as holy than a layperson is, but the correlation is far from perfect, and it has often been debated whether being a priest can be a help or a hindrance to becoming truly holy. Indeed, holy people have dealt in different ways with the issue of a professional priesthood. Perhaps the religion that focuses most on the priests and priestesses as individual holy people is the Yoruba religion of West Africa and its offshoots in the Americas. In particular, the high expectations placed upon priests in many religions encourages disappointment when they fall from the standards imposed upon them, opening the door to charismatic holy people who as individuals transcend the institutional, impersonal holiness of the priests.

Few priests of the ancient Mediterranean won status as holy people, perhaps because expectations were so low: Most priestesses and priests were laypeople who had a priestly function as a part-time job, otherwise leading normal lives in the community. In Rome, the Vestal Virgins, who performed central rituals to keep Rome at peace with the gods, were a great exception to this rule. They lived lives of ritual segregation that set them aside from the rest of the Roman

population. As a result, some Vestals won high esteem for their personal holiness—and those who broke their vows of chastity were buried alive. The situation was also different in the eastern Mediterranean, where the Jewish high priests were held to a high standard of ritual purity that made them visible as personally holy in their daily lives rather than just their office. Aaron, the first high priest, was regarded as a model of a priesthood that at times could focus very much on the individual. Even after the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem and the end of the high priesthood, the Jews of Israel had a hereditary patriarch (*nasi*) who was already halfway to being an individual holy person; some, like Judah ha-Nasi (c. 200 C.E.), combined the roles of individual and institutional holy person in popular esteem. Cohens and Levites still have a special role in synagogues and traditionally have abided by ritual restrictions that have tended to put them on the path to personal holiness. Even after the late antique period, rabbis performed some of the functions of priests, through their wisdom enlightening the path to the divine for others. But a real return to the idea of intermediary priests only came in the eighteenth century with the Hasidic movement, which emphasized the transcendent nature of God and therefore the need for spiritual masters who could lead and guide the mass of the population to contact with the divine.

Rural response tends to emphasize the holiness of the priest. For example, rural Thai Buddhist priests are regarded as committed to the highest standard of truth and goodness and are believed to live completely in response to the teachings of the Buddha. The same phenomenon can be found in several branches of Christianity, whether Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Protestant in modern terms. Members of the clergy are often seen as nearly perfect Christians, living up to a high moral standard in their personal lives and to some extent embodying the teachings of Jesus. This societal expectation can be seen most clearly in the very strong outrage when clerics fall from their pedestals. Indeed, the response has often been the odd phenomenon of anticlerical movements founded by charismatic holy people, such as the Chilean Pentecostal founder Willis Hoover (1858–1937), or many of the Christian mystics.

In traditional Christianity and, since the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, in Roman Catholicism, a disproportionate number of priests are listed among the saints. In part, this certainly reflects historic reality; for example, in the early persecutions Roman authorities usually targeted the Christian clergy. But this imbalance between clerical and lay saints also reflects the prejudice of the religious authorities who declared people to be saints, and the resources of religious organizations to win canonization for their fellows. There also appears to be a common assumption that the professional priesthood (including, speaking broadly, nuns and

monks) is a proper stepping-stone to holiness. People of particular piety have tended to present themselves for ordination, and those who live up to the high moral expectations of Christian priesthood have a good foundation upon which they can build to achieve official recognition as holy individuals. As Ignatius of Antioch said, early in the second century, “The bishop of each church presides in place of God.” Although Augustine established the idea of the priest as a conduit of the divine rather than a personally holy person, one has often led to the other.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Aaron; Christianity and Holy People; Cohen and Levite; Hasidism; Hoover, Willis Collin; Judah ha-Nasi; Laity; Vestal Virgins

Proclus

(c. 410/412–485 C.E.)

Greek philosopher, miracle worker

Philosopher, theurgist, mathematician, and poet, Proclus was one of the last Greek Neoplatonists. He was born in Constantinople in about 410 and began his studies in Alexandria. He later went to Athens, where he became the pupil of Syrianus, whom he succeeded as the head of the Academy. He was the author of many commentaries on Euclid’s and Plato’s works; his other works include the *Platonic Theology*, the *Elements of Theology*, the *Chrestomaty*, and *Hymns*, a collection of prayers in honor of Greco-Roman deities.

Proclus’s biographer, Marinus, who portrayed him as a model of holiness and piety, spoke of his numerous fasts and his fervent prayers. The tradition credits him with miraculous cures and prophetic dreams. His piety reportedly earned him the favor of Rhea, the “Mother of the gods to whom he always prayed and in whom he always rejoiced” (Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, 33), and Rhea was said to have appeared to him several times.

It was after a revelation of Athena that Proclus decided to adopt the philosophical way of life. In addition to the Platonic tradition, he was interested in religious teachings, particularly the Chaldean oracles, to the point where, according to Marinus, the goddess Hecate herself came to discuss these oracles with him. He was also initiated into orphism and the mysteries of Eleusis. Proclus believed that a true philosopher should honor the gods of all nations in order to become “the priest of the entire universe”—although he was always very opposed to Christianity.

Proclus considered that the unification of blessed souls and the intermediate beings (*daimons*) with the gods, who represent the Good, cannot be achieved through knowledge, which can only be imperfect, but only by means of divine faith (*pistis*), that is, a complete abandonment of self in the divine light.

—Serge Cazelais

See also: Devotion; Greek Philosophers; Miracles; Plato; Scholars as Holy People

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Prophet, Elizabeth Clare

(1940 C.E.–)

Christian denomination leader

Elizabeth Clare Wulf, born in New Jersey in 1940, began having visionary experiences during her childhood, which she understood as a remembering of earlier lifetimes. This personal religious journey became public after she met Mark L. Prophet, her future husband, in 1961. He had already founded the Summit Lighthouse, an organization to publish the works of the “ascended masters.” These masters are spiritual adepts of earlier ages, especially earlier mystics, who the Prophets came to believe are actively guiding the course of the earth today.

When Mark Prophet died in 1973, Elizabeth took leadership of the organization they had begun to form, establishing the Church Universal and Triumphant in 1974. Prophet has taken a central, indeed vital role in this organization as the sole intermediary between the members of the movement and the ascended masters, who now include her dead husband. Dozens of ascended masters are believed to have spoken through her on a total of more than 2,000 occasions. Her followers call her “Mother” or “Guru Ma” and compare her to the prophets of Hebrew scripture.

The messages of the ascended masters became increasingly dark over the ensuing decades, leading Prophet to prophesy the coming of a nuclear holocaust in March 1990. The authority of this vision led the Church Universal and Triumphant to move from their headquarters in Malibu, California, to a large parcel of land near Yellowstone National Park in Montana. There they constructed and provisioned massive bomb shelters and waited for the end, which failed to come.

That was the high point of Elizabeth Clare Prophet’s career as millenarian visionary. After the nuclear holocaust failed to rain down upon the earth, there was widespread disillusionment, and the number of her followers began declining. Prophet herself attracted considerable criticism of her personal life, most notably the fact that three of her marriages following Mark Prophet’s death have ended in divorce. She now suffers from Alzheimer’s disease and lives in semi-seclusion.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Intermediaries; Prophets

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Prophets

The Greek-derived word “prophet” means literally “one who speaks for”—in normal usage a person who speaks for a god. Most often, prophecy includes at least an element of foretelling the future, although prophets can also reveal divine teachings (for example, Moses or Muhammad). Prophets form a significant strain in most world religions, except those, like Confucianism or Buddhism, that do not give an important role to deities. Elsewhere, however, founders of religions are typically credited with the gift of prophecy, already visible in Zoroastrianism, the oldest prophetic religion, whose prophet Zoroaster lived in approximately 1400 B.C.E. For those religions that have a god or gods at center stage, prophets are essential links to the divine (although this role has been deemphasized among the holy people of mainstream Christianity). A later Muslim tradition asserts that God sent prophets to every people—124,000 of them—culminating in Muhammad (570–632). And not just Muhammad is claimed as the final prophet; this distinction is claimed for such diverse people as Mani (216–274/277), Baha’u’llah (1817–1892), and Ann Lee (1736–1784).

Some holy people are marked as prophets from birth, some have prophecy thrust upon them (the classic case is the Jew Jonah), and some have made themselves prophets through a process of spiritual preparation. Greek legend reports that the most famous prophet, Tiresias, gained his special insight by spending seven years as a woman, thanks to an accidental encounter with two snakes. The Sioux holy man Sitting Bull (c. 1831–1890) underwent a long process of exploring mysteries and steeping himself in rituals and devotions to become a holy man able to foretell events. Normally, it is the deity who chooses out a prophet, an individual who in some way is particularly open to the divine influence, or the deity may simply send the prophet out from heaven—the early Diola prophets of Senegal were believed to have been sent by God, then carried back to the heavens when their work was done. Most commonly, the gift of prophecy is “found” when a person has been placed in a position of great dependence on God, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. This could be effected by periods of withdrawal. Muhammad’s years of retreats to the desert, for example, set the stage for his revelations. Or there could be a crisis in the holy person’s life, such as a period of isolation in

prison. This was the experience of the Liberian William Wade Harris (c. 1850–1929), who believed that the angel Gabriel came to him when he was in prison to anoint him as a prophet. Even more commonly, a grievous illness leading even to death and resurrection has placed the prophet in a special liminal status, a theme that appears in many religions and emphasizes the role of prophet as intermediary between human and divine. Then again, a person may simply start having visions, sometimes at a young age. The Mormon prophet Joseph Smith (1805–1844) began his visionary life at the age of fourteen. Sometimes this can take the intense form of a coma-like state in which the soul supposedly leaves the body and goes up to heaven to receive the god’s word (such as in the case of Taiping founder Hong Xiuquan [1814–1864]).

A variant that casts doubt on the personal holy status of the prophet is the case of possession, whereby the god simply uses a human body as an instrument through which to speak. This concept lowers the significance of the holy person in favor of the power of the god. Some Jewish prophets, such as Amos and Micah, exhibited visible signs of God-possession, going into trances and speaking ecstatically, but in Jewish thought there was a shift from the notion of a God-possessed prophet to a belief in the prophet as a person brave enough to deliver God’s messages to an unwilling people. There is very strong evidence for God-possession in the traditional religions of Africa, which see it as a skill that can be enhanced with special training, and sometimes induced with drugs or rituals. The same can be said of the traditional religions of the Americas and East Asia; for example, in Fiji traditional priests would sit in a ritual space, drink kava, become possessed by a god, and utter prophecy. But few of these figures engendered posthumous reputations as holy people; it is more a matter of institutionalized holy office. Possession is a more personal matter in several of the modern religions of Japan. For example, the founder of the Tenrikyo sect, Nakayama Miki (1798–1887), was possessed by a *kami* (Shinto deity) in 1838 while nursing her sick son. The spirit taught Nakayama over the next years and chose her to spread heavenly truth. Similarly, Deguchi Nao (1836–1918), who founded the religion Omoto-kyo, was possessed by a deity and inspired to preach a radically millenarian message.

Until recent times, most prophets have been male, because acceptable forms of female piety have not normally included roles that take them outside of the home and family. The most important exceptions come from the Greco-Roman world and early Japan. In both of these regions, women could take on a liminal status that made them more acceptable to the gods than males. Thus there is evidence of female shamans at the heart of early Japanese religion, while the ancient Mediterranean heard its prophecies above all

through the medium of oracles such as those at Delphi and the sibyls—all of whom were women. The early Jewish woman Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, appears as a prophet, but with the settlement of the Jews in Israel a strongly patriarchal society emerged that discouraged women in leadership roles. Similarly, early Christianity was relatively accepting of female leadership, but as the Christian community was established, women as prophets were increasingly frowned upon—a major issue in criticism of the second-century Christian leader Montanus, who worked with two prophetesses. Indeed, Christianity soon looked with suspicion on any new prophecy at all, whether by males or females. In the Middle Ages, church authorities often looked with suspicion especially at female mystics when they claimed a prophetic voice. Islam went one step further: Not only did prophecy end with Muhammad, but the closest thing Islam has to a female prophet is the Virgin Mary.

Prophets have foretold a wide variety of events, and some have continued to prophesy posthumously. The Roman state for centuries consulted the “Sibylline books,” a collection of early prophecies, whenever there was a crisis. And the work of the Persian mystical poet Muhammad Shamsuddin Hafiz (c. 1320–c. 1388) is still used as an oracle, opened at random to reveal the answer to particular questions. In general, less reliance is placed on prophecy in the modern world, at least among the educated. One can get a taste of how prophets must have once dominated religious life in many parts of the world by looking at the recent religious history of Africa, where prophecy has retained a central role to the present. In part, this is a reflection of traditional African religion, but it has been given a greater impulse than ever because of the important role of the prophet as a person who can validate the grievances of afflicted people and give a religious sanction to opposition to tyranny. A series of prophets in much of Africa are credited with foretelling the coming of white colonial powers and helping to prepare the way for them or launch opposition to them (much as a series of Amerindian prophets rose in response to “white ways”). Prophets breed well in times of crisis, which has not been lacking in lands taken over by the European colonial powers. A particularly interesting example of this phenomenon is the hundreds of prophets of Melanesia over the past century, launchers of so-called “cargo cults,” who foretold an imminent return of the ancestors bringing a new era of human fulfillment and equality. Nor is it surprising that black prophets have arisen in America, including Nation of Islam founder Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) and a number of Pentecostal revivalists who have preached a message of hope to the spiritually desperate.

The ultimate test of a prophet is if the prophecies come true. The Irish, with their gift for religious irony, told how the sixth-century prophetess Íte (d. c. 570/577) sometimes fore-

told the future—only to have the people concerned die before the prophecies could be fulfilled. So she resurrected them so that her prophecies could come to pass. Most holy people, however, have not had that option, and the pages of the history books are littered with false prophets who have been discredited by their followers—such as the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa (1775–1836), who mistakenly foretold an Indian victory at the battle of Tippecanoe. Hope springs eternal in at least some human breasts, though, and the followers of many prophets have been willing to suspend their disillusionment in the face of all evidence that a prophecy has simply been wrong. This, more than anything, suggests how much many humans long for an “authentic” voice from the divine.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Baha’u’llah; Diola Prophets; Hafiz, Muhammad Shamsuddin; Harris, William Wade; Hong Xiuquan; Íte; Lee, Ann; Mani; Miriam; Montanus; Moses; Muhammad; Muhammad, Elijah; Nakayama Miki; Pythia; Sitting Bull; Smith, Joseph; Tenskwatawa; Tiresias; Zoroaster

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Protestant Protomartyrs

See **Voes, Hendrik, and Johannes van Esschen**

Protestantism and Holy People

The cult of saints is typically considered one of the most pronounced differences between Protestants (who allegedly reject it) and Roman Catholics and Greek and Russian Orthodox (who maintain it). This principle must be examined case by case, as some Protestants maintained connections to pre-Reformation views of the saints and rather than rejecting saintly piety, redefined saints’ roles to exclude their veneration. Criticism of the cult of saints was a component of Lollardy, a late medieval reform movement that termed veneration “near akin to idolatry” in 1395. Humanists, too, became skeptical of the cult; Erasmus criticized it in 1509 in *Moriae Encomium* (In praise of folly).

Martin Luther’s 95 Theses on Indulgences (1517) embodied the fundamental elements of the Reformation critique of the cult of saints, although he was not the first to criticize indulgences; Jan Hus provided a political critique in sermons against the antipope John XXIII’s crusade indulgence in

1411. Indulgences rested on assumptions about saints' activities and rewards for their veneration: Freedom from time in purgatory via indulgences originated in the treasury of merit, a storehouse for the "extra" merit earned and not used by Christ and the saints. Indulgences granted access to this treasury and were associated not only with monetary exchange or crusades but with numerous regional and local traditions. Saintry relics and miraculous objects visible in Mainz under Albrecht of Brandenburg provided 39 million years of remission of temporal punishment; the septennial Aachen pilgrimage permitted glimpses of the Virgin's cloak and the cloth that had held John the Baptist's severed head. In Regensburg, indulgences were granted for visits to the site of a Marian apparition that occurred after townspeople destroyed a synagogue, expelling local Jews, but Protestantism reduced visitors from approximately 115,000 in 1519 to a trickle; the pilgrimage was suppressed by 1537.

A further Reformation attack on saints came with iconoclasm, which included not only violent destruction of images termed idolatrous but also their removal from churches or the general refusal to house visual art there. Violent iconoclasm was largely a lower-class phenomenon, intriguing in light of the centrality of images to illiterates; hence, historians frequently read iconoclasm as evidence of lower-class sympathy for Reformation ideas. Because wealthy people donated religious images as acts of charity, religious sentiments were possibly not the only ones operative in iconoclasm. The pre-Reformation cult of saints and the pursuit of indulgences were not merely occasions for the collection of charity; they also provided sociability and entertainment for all, so that lower-class iconoclasm must be interpreted in comparison to the varying fortunes of popular pilgrimages and devotions throughout Reformation and Catholic Reformation Europe. Poor relief reflected veneration of the patron saints of corporate bodies and had to be reorganized. The results of Protestant attempts to suppress the cult can be glimpsed in visitation or legal records, which suggest that resistance to the attack on this piety varied widely between Germany (low) and England (high). Consistory (courts of church discipline) records also bear witness to the reception of the abolition of the cult of saints. Genevan records suggest that pregnant women continued to call upon the saints in liminal moments.

Reactions may be distinguished according to the type of piety impacted. Organized veneration such as pilgrimages were easier to extinguish—sometimes, by destroying collections of relics, as did Saxon elector Frederick the Wise in the 1520s. Personal manifestations, such as the lighting of wax candles or silent intercessions, were less noticeable and harder to eliminate. Even in Reformation heartlands, Saxon and Bohemian miners continued to invoke patron saints during mine collapses. Protestant authorities most success-

fully controlled manifestations intersecting with official administration, so that naming children according to the saint's day (when the name was recorded in parish registers) disappeared in favor of Old Testament names, especially in Calvinist areas. Vestiges survive in Protestant Europe in church and place-names, as well as in the popular calendar; Church of England British hope for sun on St. Swithin's Day (July 15), and no German Protestant eats asparagus after Johannistag (June 24, the feast of St. John the Baptist), when the beds are put to rest. This example demonstrates one Reformation objection to saints' festivals; Johannistag (which marked the beginning of haymaking in the Baltic) coincides with the summer solstice, demonstrating the conflation of the cult with natural and pre-Christian phenomena as well as agricultural custom. Worldwide, Masonic commemorations also mark St. John's Day.

Theologically, the earliest Protestant attack on the cult of saints came from Martin Bucer, who forbade saints' festivals as early as 1524, partially because of the accompanying wild celebrations. Luther's thinking became increasingly stringent. First, he included brotherly exchange of divine gifts with the saints as part of his explanation of the creedal "communion of saints"; later, he termed invoking the saints superfluous but tolerated continued reliance on this practice as individual weakness; finally, he rejected the practice entirely as distracting from prayers to Christ. Luther, along with Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin, preserved saints' days named in the New Testament. Article XXI of the Augsburg Confession (1530) embodied the moderate evangelical position that saints should be remembered as worthy examples, but not invoked for (useless) intercessions. One intended consequence was the reduction of festivals and their transposition to Sundays, but contemporary sermons show that in communities where daily services persisted, pastors still referred to the saints' festivals. Protestant correspondents dated letters with festival names (in contrast to the French Revolution prohibition on Christian names and dating). Protestant congregations continued to celebrate All Saints' Day (November 1), which even previously included the commemoration of saints only remembered by God. Article XXII of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England forbids veneration or invocation of a saint as non-scriptural, but the 1559 Book of Common Prayer exemplifies the diversity of attitudes. It provided in its lectionary a list of Sundays and major festivals, as well as a reduced list of minor festivals associated with a specific collect and scripture reading; however, saints' days not honored with a reading or collect persisted in the calendar following the lectionary. In fact, some (Agnes, Boniface, Catherine) were reintroduced that had been omitted in the 1549 edition, published by the stricter Reformers under Edward VI; the 1559 edition reflected Elizabeth I's more pragmatic leanings.

Protestants came to consider all Christians saints, a notion represented in hymns such as Anglican bishop William How's "For All the Saints" (nineteenth century) and Danish pastor Hans Brorson's eighteenth-century "Den store hvide Flok vi se" ("Who Is This Host Arrayed in White?"). Puritan insistence on "visible sainthood" in this vein engendered intensive church discipline, encouraging saintly behavior on earth, but even Puritan and Congregationalist hostility to Catholic sainthood did not preclude the popularity of John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (final edition, 1583), a compendium of martyr stories that became the second most common book in Puritan homes. So-called radical Protestants maintained a martyrological tradition in Thielemans van Braght's *Martyrs' Mirror* (1660), historical tales intended to revive memories of the persecution of early Anabaptists in a prosperous age, which remains a traditional Mennonite or Amish wedding gift. Other Protestant martyrologies (those of Crespin, Pantaleone, van Haemstede, and Rabus) gradually faded from Protestant awareness. Charges that Lutherans regard Luther as their patron saint are sometimes justified but frequently exaggerated, despite the likelihood of statues of Luther to be displayed in churches decorated during the Kulturkampf (c. 1870–1890). In the mid-nineteenth century, Wilhelm Loehe urged reinstatement of a Protestant saints' calendar, although despite Prussian efforts to institute Ferdinand Piper's calendar, such projects remained unpopular.

Modern Protestant attitudes reflect this diverse heritage of attitudes and practices. The origin of the expression "red-letter day" is found in the Anglican practice of denoting lesser festivals in red letters in the Book of Common Prayer, while noting days of commemoration in black. No Protestant body developed an institution comparable to the Catholic Congregation of Rites, and all use the word "saint" to designate any individual saved by Christ. Some bodies, such as the Independent Church of the Philippines (1947), Protestant in sacramental definition, maintain saintly veneration as long as it does not prevent direct worship of Christ. Others, such as Baptists, reject such a practice as papist. Among formal bodies maintaining a commemorative tradition, liturgical committees determine the figures based on historical tradition and evidence that individuals demonstrated faith in their lives and actions, allowing the inclusion of hymn composers, modern figures (Martin Luther King, Jr., Chief Seattle) as well as Christian scientists and philosophers (Copernicus, Kierkegaard). Such practice, particularly associated with churches of the Anglican communion (including the Episcopal Church, which most recently published a calendar of "Lesser Feasts and Fasts" in 1991), did not reach American Lutherans until the publication of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978), but is not accepted by all Lutherans. The Australian Uniting Church (a conglomeration of Congregationalist, Methodist, and Pres-

byterian congregations) published a similar calendar in its *Uniting in Worship* (1988). In the United States, churches following the Methodist *Book of Discipline* (1808) reject the cult of saints according to Article XIV, but some members have argued for the institution of a calendar of remembrance in the United Methodist Church owing to Methodist material culture commemoration of worthy individuals. Approximately one hundred names are common to the German Catholic and Lutheran calendars of commemorated individuals. An observable tendency toward conflation of the festivals exists in American Protestant churches observing both All Saints' and Reformation Day.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Calvin, John; Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Laity; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Luther, Martin; Models; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Patriotism and Holy People; Priests; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction; Spiritual Guardians; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Ptolemaic Ruler Cult

After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.E., the Macedonian Ptolemy family that stepped in to rule over Egypt was forced to reconcile native Egyptian traditions with Greek beliefs and heritage. The multiplicity of customs that they were balancing became quite evident in their treatment of the office of kingship. The Greeks had a long-standing tradition of humanity possessing the ability to gain access to the divine realm, while in the Egyptian tradition it was only the pharaoh who was divine, and then only while he was exercising the duties of pharaoh or after his death. In

light of these traditions, the Ptolemies instituted a cult for the divine pharaoh while he was still living.

Alexander, who laid the foundation for Ptolemaic kingship, considered himself to have had three fathers: Philip of Macedonia (his birth father), the Egyptian god Amun, and the Egyptian pharaoh Nectanebo II. By having an Egyptian god and pharaoh as his father, he established both his physical and divine right to the throne and paved the way for easy acceptance of the Ptolemaic rulers. Similarly, the Ptolemaic rulers belied their Greek origins by being careful to portray themselves conforming to Egyptian conventions, artistically and socially. They engaged in an Egyptian coronation and maintained both Egyptian state cults and Greek priesthoods.

Ptolemy I, “Soter,” created an eponymous priesthood dedicated to the cult of Alexander, raising him to the level of a state god. This priesthood was exclusively Greek and was the highest priesthood in the land. During the reign of Ptolemy II, “Philadelphos,” Ptolemy II incorporated his parents (his father Ptolemy I and his mother Berenike) and eventually himself and his sister/wife Arsinoe into the cult. The cult was maintained, in part, by taxation. This set the official precedent for living deification, and the remaining Ptolemies had simply to add their own names to this growing cult in order to achieve deification.

Living deification changed the Greek perception from that of an earned rulership to a hereditary one and replaced the Egyptian duality of the pharaoh (man/god) with exclusive divinity.

—Theresa Musacchio

See also: Alexander the Great; Cleopatra VII; Greek Ruler Cult; Macedonian Ruler Cult; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Pharaohs of Egypt; Rulers as Holy People

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Purandaradasa

(1485–1565 C.E.)

Hindu devotional saint

Purandaradasa’s songs of devotion to Vishnu have enjoyed popularity in Karnataka and Maharashtra for five centuries, making him one of the best-loved Hindu devotional composers of southern India. Purandaradasa was born in 1485; legends say he lived for twelve years in Pandharpur, Maha-

rashtira, and the rest of his life in Karnataka. His life is one of dramatic conversion and inspired devotion. As one of the great Haridasa voices at the height of southern India’s great Vijayanagara Empire, Purandaradasa is celebrated as a spreader of devotion. His songs are still sung at festivals held in his honor.

In one song, Purandaradasa praises his wife: “May my wife’s family increase a thousandfold—because of her I’ve come to hold the pilgrim’s staff” (Jackson 1998, 70). Legends picture Purandaradasa as learning his deepest lessons in experiences having to do with jewelry and women. The first pictures him as a wealthy but miserly jeweler whose attachment to worldly wealth hardened his heart. When he refused to give a worthy but poor brahmin the wherewithal for a thread ceremony for his son, the poor man implored the gem-dealer’s wife, and she gave him her nose-gem. The brahmin tried to sell it to the jeweler, who recognized the gem and angrily confronted his wife, asking her where her nose-ring was. She could not deny her act, and her husband’s fury made her decide to drink poison. By divine intervention, the story goes, she found the gem in her poison cup and handed it over to her husband. This changed his heart, and a new life began.

Purandaradasa spent time with his guru, Vyasaraya, who lived in the capital city, Hampi. In one composition, Purandaradasa says, “I don’t know how, but thanks to the merit of many previous lifetimes, I found Vyasaraya’s lotus feet. I became a member of the holy order, worshipping God” (ibid., 71). Encouraged by his guru, Purandaradasa composed songs promoting spiritual values and sang them in towns and villages. A composition by Vyasaraya praises Purandaradasa. In the refrain of this song Vyasaraya says, “If you want to see true devotion, watch Purandaradasa” (ibid., 71).

Purandaradasa in one of his songs mentions composing 475,000 songs, saying that his guru Vyasaraya inspired this prolific output. The specific huge number is probably meant to indicate a large number. About 1,500 Purandaradasa songs have survived.

The Dasakuta was a forum of *dasas*, a school of “servants” of Vishnu, organized by Vyasaraya. *Dasas* memorized, taught, compiled, and kept Purandaradasa’s songs intact. Purandaradasa for some time was a central point of this forum. In the Dasakuta forum, his songs were sung again and again, and in this fashion Purandaradasa remained popular, even after he passed away, as wandering *dasas* circulated songs in towns and villages. Singing easy-on-the-ear colloquial lyrics, he mocked hypocrisy, encouraging the highest Hindu ideals. He cried out soulful questions, such as “Pilgrim, why are you snoring away your life today? Your role is to walk the long road, not just to dream your life away!”

The king gave Purandaradasa a stone pavilion, which still stands by the Tungabhadra River. There, the composer

taught his songs to others. Purandaradasa has been called “Grandfather of Karnataka music” for many generations. His songs spread throughout rural areas and became performance pieces and illustrations for the greatest musicians and theorists of classical music in southern India.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hagiography; Hinduism and Holy People; Vyasarayya; Wealth and Poverty

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Purity and Pollution

Most holy people are known for living lives of personal purity in accordance with the rules of their religion, except for a small class of “holy fools” or “mad saints” who break traditional moral codes as part of a severance from the mundane. The more important the saint, in general, the greater the emphasis on personal purity—so, for example, the Virgin Mary is regarded as of necessity free of all pollution, since she was the vessel that contained God. Personal ritual purity is regarded as an important stepping stone to true contact with the divine in cases as widely separated as the Vestal Virgins of ancient Rome and Hindu brahmins. Plato (427–347 B.C.E.) exemplifies this attitude; he taught the need to purify the immortal soul, which has been tarnished by contact with the body, before it can return to pure Being.

There is a stratum of holy people in many world religions who won their reputation for holiness especially because of their efforts to spread their own moral standards to the society around them. These holy people have especially appeared to reform religion that is perceived as “fallen away” from an ethical standard of earlier times. This is the great theme of the Hebrew prophets—return to the covenant with God or suffer destruction. One of the few non-Christian Romans whose reputation makes his inclusion as a “holy” person logical is Cato the Younger (95–46 B.C.E.), who was deeply admired for his old Roman virtues—and his attacks on the corruption of his time. In general, it is those cultures with sophisticated luxuries that tend to emphasize the pollution of the world and the need to force society, willing or not, into conformity with an ideal of purity. Purity can also be a central message of missionaries—who may urge people to turn away from old impurities to embrace the new message. In this form, especially Christian holy people of Africa have stood out as advocates of purity, although some religious leaders in Africa, the Americas, and East Asia have also

taught that the true purity is to abandon the newfangled ways and goods that have been brought by imperialist powers, returning to simpler traditional life.

The quest for higher ethical standards, often accompanied by deep aversion to many things of the world, has led to a variety of religious movements, some far-reaching in consequence. The twelfth- and thirteenth-century Jewish German pietist movement tried to raise the ethical level of the Jewish community, several of its leaders winning the title “the pious,” such as Judah the Pious (c. 1150–1217). They stood out from the main Jewish tradition by advocating physical penances for sin, in effect driving the sin from the body. This seems to have arisen as a response to traditional Jewish emphasis on scholarship, in large part as a response to growing anti-Semitism in Europe.

In Islam, holy men were more likely to respond to the luxuries of society. For example, the prophet Muhammad’s (570–632) close companion Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (d. 652/653) has a modern cult following among Muslim reformers for his personal piety and far-reaching condemnation of the wealthy pleasure-lovers—he even argued before the caliph that the great and wealthy should be forced to give up their riches. But among the Muslims, too, puritanical holy people could arise in response to catastrophe. A series of fundamentalist movements developed following the Mongol invasions, the greatest led by Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328), a learned man of Damascus, who pled for a return to the pure teachings of Muhammad and the rightly guided caliphs. Although Taymiyyah died in prison, he was loved by the common people. For the modern world, the most influential Muslim puritanical/fundamentalist movement was that of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1787), who argued the need to meet governmental crisis with a return to the Qur’an and *sunna* (traditions), rejecting all later innovations. His effort to recreate the Muslim community of the seventh century led him to declare the Ottoman sultans to be apostates and to establish an independent state in central Arabia and the Persian Gulf. Wahhabism is still the accepted form of Islam in modern Saudi Arabia.

These examples, however, pale in comparison with purity and pollution as an obsession and central theme of holy people through most of Christian history. Christian hagiography shows an unrelenting quest for purification by saints, who struggle to suppress the body’s urges for food, rest, comfort, sex, and the like in favor of the soul. Many later Christian leaders have emulated John the Baptist’s cry of “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand!” Every monastic founder was trying to create a refuge of purity away from the filth of the world, some going to extremes, such as Theodore the Studite (d. 826), who even banned female animals from monastic property. The two great movements that led holy people to emphasize purification of the lay population, though, are the

reformations of the sixteenth century and the rise of Pentecostalism in the nineteenth and twentieth. The friar Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498) was an early crusader to cleanse the populace, in this case the city of Florence, with his bonfires of sinful luxuries, denunciation of the corruption of the papal court, and advocacy for a return to the primitive church. Savonarola, perhaps too bold too early, was executed, but several of the Protestant reformers, most notably John Calvin (1509–1564), stripped away the outward beauty of the church as pollution and advocated a moral reform of all members of his community. This led, in time, to an emphasis in several branches of Protestantism on living as “visible saints” striving for purity. Several of the great leaders of the Pentecostal movement, such as Willis Hoover (1858–1937), also turned strongly against the lures of the world, in Hoover’s case by trying to wean his followers from dancing, movies, and sport.

It is pleasant, though, to be able to report *anti*-purity movements led by the world’s holy people. Such a movement appears as a reaction against formalized, ritual notions of purification and pollution. Thus Jesus can be seen as a great crusader against what he perceived as worn-out formalism, and many Protestant reformers—advocating such practices as marriage of clergy—were also fighting what they saw as false teachings about ritual pollution. This theme is most important in India, where many holy people from at least the sixth century B.C.E. have reacted against ritual purity and fear of pollution. A famous case is the holy man Ramanand (1299–c. 1410). He was originally a disciple of Ramanuja but was offended when he returned to the community after years of preaching only to be shunned by his fellow disciples, who feared he might have been polluted by eating with others during his journeys. In his own sect, Ramanand preached against the religious laws of caste, denouncing the notion that association with the wrong people could pollute. Indeed, two of the world’s great religions, Buddhism and Sikhism, broke away from Hinduism at least in part because of the parent religion’s obsession with ritual purity.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Calvin, John; Hoover, Willis Collin; Insanity; Jesus; Judah the Pious; Mary, Virgin; Morality and Holy People; Plato; Ramanand; Reform and Reaction; Savonarola, Girolamo; Theodore the Studite; Vestal Virgins

Purnaprajna

See Madhva

Pythagoras and Neopythagoreanism

Pythagoras (c. 570–497 B.C.E.), one of the most influential philosophical and religious thinkers of all time, remains a

shadowy figure. Later biographies (such as those by Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus) are from nearly a thousand years after Pythagoras’s birth, and so virtually all evidence of his thought is “Neopythagorean” (a term coined later still), in connection with either (1) famous Pythagoreans before Plato; (2) Plato himself, especially in the *Timaeus*; (3) Aristotle, in his fragment “On Philosophy” about Plato’s “Unwritten doctrines,” and other testimonies in Aristotle (his treatise on Pythagorean beliefs no longer survives, however); (4) the revival of Pythagoreanism from the first century B.C.E. to the first century C.E. (known today as Neopythagoreanism proper), attested to by Latin writers such as Cicero, Ovid, and Seneca, and represented by, among others, Moderatus of Gades and Nicomachus of Gerasa; or (5) Pythagorean elements developed by the Neoplatonists in the third through the sixth centuries C.E.

Pythagoras is a model of the holy person or spiritual guide in antiquity, a mediator between the divine and the human, a magical prophet and healer connected with both Orpheus and Apollo. He leads by his own example and is the discoverer, in some sense, that everything in the universe either is, depends upon, or possesses intelligibility because of number and form. A sacred kinship and universal sympathy binds everything together in friendship—gods, humans, and animals (hence, among other things, Pythagoras’s emphasis on vegetarianism and gentleness between species). Like Empedocles, Pythagoras appears as a divine, shaman-like figure who descends into the world to remind souls of their origin and brings health and craft for the sick from another world.

Born in Samos, Pythagoras traveled extensively in the early part of his life and experienced the ritual wisdom and initiations of Crete, Phoenicia, Babylonia, and Egypt. Perhaps to escape Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, he emigrated to Croton in southern Italy, where he founded communities of both men and women (his wife, Theano, was also revered) who practiced a simple, “holy,” communal life. These communities came to wield considerable political influence, and after a “Pythagorean revolt,” during which many Pythagoreans were killed or exiled, Pythagoras moved to Metapontum, where he died.

The rules of Pythagoras (*akousmata*) were orally transmitted; they were short, pithy sayings (taboos, precepts, and the like) that acted as secret passwords and also riddles or symbolic “texts” to be interpreted or conjured into living reality. Like the Chinese Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.), Pythagoras saw philosophy as a path or way of life. For Pythagoras, this path was represented by the letter upsilon, the initial letter of the word *hugieia*, health or salvation. He claimed superhuman powers and mastery over animals and nature and taught reincarnation. Aelian reports that Pythagoras

wore white clothing, a golden crown, and trousers, an indication of Iranian-Scythian influence that suggests that he was “the hierophant of Great Mother mysteries with an Anatolian stamp” (Burkert 1972, 165). The legend that he was the Hyperborean Apollo—with a golden thigh to prove it—supports this larger heritage of esoteric wisdom. He was the first to call the world a *cosmos* and himself a “lover of wisdom” (*philosophos*) rather than “wise man” (*sophos*), that is, a receiver and a seeker of wisdom. He is also associated with number mysticism (like Neo-Confucianism in China) and with the recognition that the principles of mathematics, geometry, astronomy, and music are in some sense the principles of everything. Pythagoras was reputed to have discovered the mathematical basis for music, and he was also reputedly the one who first advanced the theory that the courses of the circling planets sounded a music of the spheres.

Cicero associated the revival of Pythagorean thought in the form of Neopythagoreanism with a learned Roman, Nigidius Figulus (98–45 B.C.E.). Hagiology and wonder-working accounts remain prominent, as is evident in Philostratus’s *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, a Neopythagorean of the first century C.E. Plato’s *Timaeus* becomes more important during this era. A notable commentator, Eudorus of Alexandria of the first century B.C.E., who followed the Pythagorean ideal of “becoming like god” and developed Plato’s unwritten doctrines, posited a Supreme One beyond the Monad and the Dyad from which numbers and the physical world emerge. Other Neopythagoreans developed an elaborate theology. Numenius of Apamea (Syria) gives the clearest sense of the mystical vision of the Good as the source of the practice of what is holy. In his theory, humans cannot grasp the Good except by removing themselves from sense-objects “to be in company alone with the Good alone,” where the Good rides “in peace, benevolence, tranquility, and sovereignty gently upon the surface of Being.” This removal is not easy, but there is need of a “divine *method* . . . to develop by practice [*ekmeletêsai*] the learning which is being” (Numenius, fragment 2).

This interpenetration of insight and praxis anticipates the many Pythagorean elements in Plotinus’s thought and the use of Pythagorean symbolism especially in Iamblichus, but also in Proclus. It culminated in the development of a sacred geometry, a geometrical imagination to link the indivisible and the divisible (in Proclus), and a mathematical theology as a form of dialectic, which both goes beyond and yet adapts theologizing mathematics.

—Kevin Corrigan

See also: Apollonius of Tyana; Empedocles; Greek Philosophers; Greek Prophets; Iamblichus; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Plato; Plotinus; Proclus; Reincarnation; Scholars as Holy People

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Pythia

(8th cent. B.C.E.–3rd cent. C.E.)

Greek prophets

The Pythia was the prophetess of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, the most important oracular site in ancient Greece. Both individuals and delegations from Greek city-states, beginning in the eighth century B.C.E., came to the temple at Delphi, thought to be the center of the world, to consult the prophetess. The practice continued into the first centuries of the Roman Empire. The Pythia, an adult woman dressed as a girl, was devoted to her position for life. The title is connected with the old name for Delphi, Pytho, where, according to mythology, Apollo killed the dragon Python with a hundred arrows.

Ancient custom prescribed the ritual process climaxing in the prophecy spoken by the Pythia under Apollo’s inspiration. First, the Pythia bathed in the Castalian spring. A goat was then sacrificed, and she entered the temple, where barley meal and laurel leaves burned on a *hestia*. Descending into the sunken area (Adyton) at the end of the temple, the Pythia, crowned with a laurel, sat upon a tripod situated over a chasm and waved a bay branch. (The *omphalos*, a stone in the Adyton, marked the center of the world because Zeus had released two eagles in opposite directions, and they met at Delphi.) Male temple personnel called prophets received the questions from the inquirer(s) and submitted them to the prophetess, whereupon she became ecstatically possessed by Apollo and began to utter prophecy probably from a self-induced trance. Her prophecies were thought to be the word of the god, important because the Greeks did not have a written scripture. Oracles were recorded by the prophets, polished into hexameter verse.

The prophecies were often intentionally ambiguous, and from a cultic perspective, very conservative, thus leav-

ing to the inquirer(s) the responsibility for the correct interpretation and application, and ensuring the continued success of the oracle. It is also recorded that the Pythia received bribes.

The Delphic Amphictionic Council controlled the oracle and supervised the temple finances and the pan-Hellenic Pythian Games. The Pythia had far-reaching authority in the classical Mediterranean world, approving the establishment of shrines, temples, sacrifices, and other forms of cult for gods, *daimons* (spiritual beings), and heroes. For about a millennium, Pythian oracles gave advice on personal, social, political, commercial, military, and cultural issues and played a significant role in founding Greek colonies. With the failure of traditional polytheism and the conquest of Christianity, Delphi was in sharp decline by the third century C.E.

—*Michael Bland Simmons*

See also: Gender and Holy People; Greek Prophets; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Prophets

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Q

Qasim, Muhammad b. ‘Abdallah al-

(r. 934–946 C.E.)

Isma‘ili Muslim imam, caliph

Muhammad b. ‘Abdallah al-Qasim was the twelfth Isma‘ili Nizari imam (thirteenth imam for the Musta‘li Isma‘ilis) and the second Fatimid ruler. He was born in Salamiya while his father, al-Mahdi, was still living in secrecy to escape Abbasid persecution. His name was similar to that of his ancestor the prophet Muhammad (Muhammad b. ‘Abdallah Abu’l-Qasim al-Mustafa). Since Babylonian times, the number twelve has been of great significance in the traditions of the Near and Middle East. For many, it is no coincidence that there are twelve signs of the zodiac, twelve months of the year, twelve tribes of Israel, and twelve disciples of Jesus. The Ithna Ash‘ari Shi‘as have a total of twelve imams. Thus, al-Qasim’s position as twelfth imam is of great significance in Islam.

Al-Qasim actively participated in the governing of his father’s domains. Toward this end he helped subdue the Berber uprisings and twice attempted to capture Egypt. During his reign he concentrated on his naval strength, which became a formidable Mediterranean power, and made successful raids on the ports of Sardinia, Genoa, and Circassa, among others. Al-Qasim’s reign also ushered in an era of great challenges for the Fatimid dynasty. For several years, his reign was plagued by the Kharijite opposition led by Abu Yazid, who belonged to the Zanata tribe. Al-Qasim was engaged in subduing this rebellion until his death in 946. The rebellion was finally subdued after the succession of al-Mansur, his son, who ruled for seven years. Al-Qasim passed away after twelve years of rule both as imam and as ruler, and he was buried in the capital city of Mahdiyya.

—*Habibeh Rahim*

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Mansur, al-; Rulers as Holy People

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Qonawi

See **Kunawi, Sadr al-Din al-**

Quddus, Ruh al-

(1821–1849 C.E.)

Babi disciple, martyr

Ruh al-Quddus (the Holy One) was the last of those who joined the ranks of the Bab’s Letters of the Living, the earliest and highest-ranking group of the Bab’s disciples, but the Bab ranked him first spiritually. He led the Babis at the Shaykh Tabarsi upheaval in 1848. The Bab (1819–1850), founder of the Babi faith in Iran, established a following that eventually developed into the Baha’i faith.

Mulla Muhammad ‘Ali Barfurushi, later given the name Ruh al-Quddus by the Bab, was born in Barfurush (Babul in northern Iran) to a farming family in 1821. During the course of his education in Barfurush and Mashhad, he became a shaykh. He set off in about 1837 for Karbala to study under Sayyid Kazim Rashti and returned to Barfurush in 1843. He arrived in Shiraz and accepted the Bab in 1844, becoming the last of the Letters of the Living. He accompanied the Bab on his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1844–1845. Quddus and two other Babis were arrested in Shiraz in 1845 because they had changed the Islamic call to prayer in accordance with the Bab’s instructions. Their captors burned their beards and pierced their noses and paraded them through the streets. After his release, Quddus traveled on to Yazd, Kirman, Isfahan, and Tehran, finally returning to Barfurush. At each place he announced the Bab’s claims.

In early 1848, Quddus joined Mulla Husayn Bushru'i in Mashhad and the two preached the new religion at that shrine city. Later that year, Quddus was one of the main participants at the Conference of Badasht, at which the Bab's inauguration of the new religious dispensation was made clear to all. After this conference, Quddus was arrested and confined in the house of the senior cleric of Sari but was soon freed. He joined the Babis besieged there. Up to this time, Mulla Husayn had been regarded as the foremost disciple of the Bab, but at this time, he showed the other Babis that, following the guidance given him by the Bab, they were to regard Quddus as his spiritual superior. When Mulla Husayn was killed in fighting, Quddus led the Babi forces alone. Eventually, the prince leading the royal army swore on the Qur'an to allow free passage out of the fort to the Babis. Once they emerged, however, he seized and killed all of them. Quddus was handed over to the senior religious leader of Barfurush, who, on May 16, 1849, paraded him through the streets, tortured and killed him, and then instigated the mob to tear him to pieces. He was twenty-eight.

The few writings of Quddus that remain display a close similarity to that of the Bab in both form and content. It is clear that the Bab and Baha'u'llah (1817–1892, the Bab's successor) regarded Quddus as second only to the Bab in importance in the Babi religion. The Bab and Baha'u'llah identified him as “The Last,” a name of God, and Baha'u'llah also referred to him as “The Last Point”—as distinct from the Bab, who was “The First Point.” ‘Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921, Baha'u'llah's son) states that Quddus and the Bab were the two witnesses prophesied in the Book of Revelation (11:6–12; Shoghi Effendi 1974, 49).

—*Moojan Momen and B. Todd Lawson*

See also: ‘Abdu'l-Baha; Bab, The; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Husayn Bushru'i

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Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin

(843–895 C.E.)

Amerindian god-hero

Though Quetzalcoatl (Feathered Serpent) is an important divinity in the Mesoamerican pantheon, according to Aztec history he also existed in human form as the ruler of the ancient city of Tollan or Tula in the Mexican highlands. Ce Acatl Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin was born in the year One Reed (Ce Acatl), the equivalent of 843 C.E. His father, Mixcoatl, was a valiant warrior who defeated the female warrior Chimalman

before impregnating her. She died during Quetzalcoatl's birth. In 873, the Toltecs sought Quetzalcoatl to make him their ruler and their priest, according to the pre-Columbian *Anales de Cuauhtitlan* (Annals of Cuauhtitlan). To validate his role as ruler of Tollan, Quetzalcoatl sought the bones of his deceased father, an act that reflected the practice of receiving a divine and inherited right to rule from the ancestors. When he retrieved the bones, Quetzalcoatl performed an auto-sacrifice of blood from his genitals to revive the departed warrior. In the pre-Columbian *Leyenda de los Soles* (Legend of the suns), Quetzalcoatl conquered many cities as ruler of Tollan.

During his rule, Quetzalcoatl reportedly eliminated the practice of human sacrifice and presided over the flourishing of Toltec culture. Under his reign, a cultivation of the arts, including poetry, feather-working, painting, music, and other *toltec* or civilized activities, gained prestige. By eliminating human sacrifice, Quetzalcoatl also greatly decreased the need for the military complex, which had provided human sacrifices for the city. The military complex was devoted to the divinity Tezcatlipoca, Quetzalcoatl's divine opposition. The warrior classes became dissatisfied with the ruler's choices and sent representatives to end Quetzalcoatl's rule.

Quetzalcoatl, tricked by Tezcatlipoca's magic obsidian mirror into thinking he was ugly, imbibed *pulque*, an intoxicant made from the maguey cactus. This caused him to seduce his sister, Quetzalpetatl (Feathered Mat). Upon awakening the next morning, the *tlatoani* (speaker) was so ashamed of his actions that he left Tollan. As a result of this flight, the historical Quetzalcoatl established a link between the Maya and the Mexican highland cultures and became a key figure in the encounter between the Aztec ruler Moctecuzoma Xocoyotzin and the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés. Archaeological evidence supports a connection between the Mexican culture at Tollan and the Maya presence in the Yucatan and Chiapas. Textual references in the Quiche Maya creation story, the *Popol vuh*, explain the arrival of the Quiche from the west, and many of their practices also reflect those of the Mexican groups.

In the *Anales de Cuauhtitlan*, the ruler fled to the sea (the Gulf Coast), where he set himself on fire to become the morning star (Venus) and the Lord of the Dawn. Quetzalcoatl died in the year Ce Acatl, that is, 895—fifty-two years after his birth. His life span thus corresponded to the fifty-two-year cycle of the Mesoamerican calendar. Because of this coincidence, Ce Acatl became an auspicious date; in some accounts, the ruler vowed to return in the year Ce Acatl at some point in the future.

Ce Acatl occurred in 1519—the same year that the Europeans arrived on the coast of Mexico. When Cortés landed on the Gulf Coast, Montezuma reportedly wondered if the



Carving of Quetzalcoatl, Mexico. Quetzalcoatl rose from heroic status to become one of the most important gods in the Aztec pantheon. (Corel Corp)

Spaniard was the returning Quetzalcoatl. Although much has been made of the perception that Cortés, as Quetzalcoatl, was “divine,” in Mesoamerican philosophy, so, too, was Montezuma as a *tlaotoni* of the Aztec Empire. In that sense, he would have seen Cortés as someone of equal stature with himself and treated him accordingly. He sent Quetzalcoatl’s accoutrements to Cortés to see if the Spaniard would accept them.

In postconquest times, the missionary priests and the natives who became Christians celebrated Quetzalcoatl as an aspect of Jesus. In some representations of the crucifixion, native artisans included an image of Quetzalcoatl inside the body of Christ. The poetic texts that also celebrated Axayacatl and Montezuma were adapted; they now narrated the offering of flowers to the Christian “*tlaotoni*.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints supports a connection between Christ and Quetzalcoatl.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Axayacatl; Chimalman; Gods on Earth; Huitzilopochtli; Mixcoatl; Nezahualcoyotl; Rulers as Holy People; Tezcatlipoca

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Quipocamayos

Inca record-keepers

From Middle Horizon times (600–1000 C.E.) onward, Andean peoples kept records on devices of knotted cords of cotton or (rarely) alpaca wool. These are called *quipus* in Quechua. A quipu consists, minimally, of a main cord from which pendant cords hang. (Pendants of pendants are called subsidiaries.) Knots tied in the pendant cords and other modifications of the pendant are the commonest data-bearing or significant features. Inca functionaries used cord records for censuses, inventories, tribute records, and documents about transactions. The quipukeepers were called *quipocamayos*. Since the organizing principle of the empire

was “balance” (*tinkuy*), the quipocamayos’ function was to assure that balance was achieved in every endeavor. More than mere “accountants,” their work was regarded as vital to both spiritual and socioeconomic aspects of Inca life. Spanish courts also accepted quipus as documents of record in early colonial times.

Knots upon the lowest part of the pendant represent units, and successive knot clusters ascending toward the main cord register tens, hundreds, and thousands. The principle is a true decimal system, although it has no explicit symbol matching the zero of Arabic numbers. Some cords contain totals or other arithmetical derivatives of pendant cord numbers. Additional significant properties, such as cord color and the “S” or “Z” directions of twist and knotting, recorded additional variables. In the quipu, the color of the cords was also significant in that it represented the item that was being counted. The color depended upon the nature of the object: yellow for gold, red for the army, and white for peace. As the colors were limited, some colors had different meanings depending on the general purpose of the quipu in question. Objects that people were unable to distinguish by color were ranked according to quality. For example, in a quipu of weaponry inventory, a lance would be first, as it was considered the most honorable weapon by the Inca, then the arrows, bows, axes, and so on.

Many European chroniclers and indigenous writers have compared the quipus with alphabetic writing and statistics. The Andean chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala offers drawings of both quipus and quipucamayos in his chronicle of 1615. The quipucamayos were responsible for the encoding and decoding of quipus upon the Inca ruler’s request. Well-informed early colonial writers insisted that not all quipus were of this statistical kind. Some reportedly encoded histories or poems. The relation between language and such nonstandard quipus remains controversial and constitutes a research frontier. The use of the quipus changed somewhat during the colonial period, when the Incas used them to record their sins as an aid to confession. During the government of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo in the second half of the sixteenth century, most quipus were destroyed because they were considered the equivalent of idolatrous books.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Scholars as Holy People

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Qushayri, Abu'l-Qasim al-

(986–1072 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Abu-'l-Qasim 'Abd al-Karim b. Hawazin al-Qushayri, described by his contemporary 'Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri as “a wonder,” was one of the earliest sufi masters to successfully establish sufism (*tasawwuf*) as both a valid expression of Islamic piety and a legitimate Islamic discipline (*'ilm at-tasawwuf*).

Al-Qushayri was at once an influential scholar of hadith and jurisprudence, a sufi master, and a Qur'an commentator. Among the first teachers of sufism in the emerging tenth-century *madrasas* (schools) of Nishapur, al-Qushayri contributed to the confluence of Shafi'i law, Ash'arite theology, and sufi reflection. By associating sufism with hadith and Shafi'i legal theory, al-Qushayri vested sufism with the legitimacy of the prophet Muhammad's exemplary precedent (*sunna*). By applying al-Ashari's (873–935) antirationalist theology, al-Qushayri championed sufism's emphasis on divine mystery and transcendence.

In his *al-Risala fi 'ilm al-tasawwuf* (Epistle on the knowledge of sufism), al-Qushayri defended sufism based on the fundamental principles (*usul*) of Qur'an and sunna. In this way he represented sufi theory and practice as consistent



Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri, the great legitimizer of sufism. (Art Directors)

with the *shari'a* (Islamic law and guidance). Al-Qushayri asserted the importance of the directing shaykh (*shaykh al-tarbiyya*), who, because he directly supervises disciples' practice, also maintains their adherence to shari'a.

Al-Qushayri was disciple (*murid*), son-in-law, and successor to the sufi shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Daqqaq (d. 1015) and also studied under Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman as-Sulami (937–1021), the author of both a comprehensive biographical history of the sufis and a significant sufi Qur'an commentary. Al-Qushayri succeeded al-Daqqaq at his madrasa in Nishapur, where he led assemblies of divine remembrance (*majalis al-tadhkir*).

Al-Qushayri's *Risala*, frequently cited in later sufi writings, has been one of the most widely used manuals of sufi practice. It features biographies of early sufis and a sensitive treatment of forty-five stations (*maqam*) and states (*hal*) on the sufi path. Al-Qushayri expresses the stations as "earnings" and the states as "gifts." His Qur'an commentary, *Lata'if al-Isharat* (The subtleties of the allusions), composed sometime before 1019, continued the sufi hermeneutic of interpreting the Qur'an according to the exegete's own mystical experience.

When a minister of the first Saljuq ruler, Tughril Beg (1038–1063), instigated a campaign against both "rene-

gades" (*rawafid*), that is, Shi'is and "innovators" (Ash'arites), al-Qushayri issued a *fatwa* (authoritative judgment) in 1044, and an open letter in 1054, in which he defended the orthodoxy of Ash'arite theology and protested the persecutions. The letter triggered his arrest and imprisonment. He was released following an assault on the citadel led by the Shafi'is. After fleeing Nishapur in 1056, al-Qushayri was commissioned by Caliph al-Qa'im bi Amrillah to teach hadith in the palace in Baghdad. At the age of seventy-nine, al-Qushayri returned to Nishapur, where he lived until his death in 1072.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Hagiography; Hujwiri, 'Ali ibn Uthman al-; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism; Sulami, Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman

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R

Rabbenu Tam

(c. 1100–1171 C.E.)

Jewish scholar

Jacob ben Meir Tam (Our Perfect Master), or Rabbenu Tam, was a French *tosafist* (commentator on the Talmud). Born in about 1100, he was a grandson of the talmudic commentator Rashi, the son of Meir ben Samuel (Rashi's son-in-law), and a brother of Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam). After crusaders destroyed his home in Ramerupt in 1147, he settled in Troyes, where he organized the first conference of French rabbis in 1160.

A wealthy grape-grower and money lender in Ramerupt, he frequently clashed with the local nobility and Christian authorities. But he also had disputes with fellow Jews, insisting that his decisions become authoritative in Germany and Provence and alienating many of his contemporaries, including the great Jewish philosopher Rabad (Abraham ibn David, c. 1110–1180). He ignored customs with which he disagreed but otherwise attempted to reconcile French practice with the Talmud.

Thoroughly abrasive to his opponents, he was nevertheless brilliant—indeed, the leading French scholar of his day. He is best known for his explanations (*tosafot*) and discussions of the Talmud and is considered by many to be one of the boldest and most ingenious of interpreters. Many of his *tosafot* and *responsa* were collected in his *Sepher ha-Yashur* (Book of the upright), which explained apparent textual corruptions in the Talmud. His work is often extremely detailed. In addition to biblical interpretation, he composed liturgical poetry and wrote on grammar, taking part in the famous Hebrew verb debate.

Rabbenu Tam disagreed with his grandfather Rashi regarding the order of the verses inscribed in the *tefillin* (phylacteries); to this day, some Orthodox Jews alternately wear two pairs of *tefillin* to ensure correct usage, one according to Rashi and one according to Rabbenu Tam.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Judaism and Holy People; Rashi; Scholars as Holy People

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Rabi'a al-Adawiyya

(c. 717–801 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Rabi'a al-Adawiyya from the eighth century is the most famous woman saint in Islam and a central figure in the early development of the Islamic mystical tradition known as *sufism*. A former slave who devoted her life to the worship and love of God, Rabi'a came to be known primarily for her love mysticism and teachings on sincere devotion, although some biographers also portray her as a prominent scholar. Besides the poems and teachings attributed to her hundreds of years after her death, no works by Rabi'a have been preserved, making her life and legacy the object of both pious and scholarly debate.

One of the earliest extant biographies of Rabi'a was composed by Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman Sulami (936–1021 C.E.) as the first entry in his work on *sufi* women. Here Rabi'a appears as an important scholar, spiritual teacher, and legislator, one to whom even the foremost male authorities would bring their questions. Sulami's biography introduces the trope that later became a hallmark of Rabi'a's legacy, the idea that sincere love of God leaves no room for the desire or love of anyone or anything else.

The Persian *Tadhkirat* (Memorial of the friends of God) by Farid al-Din 'Attar (c. 1117–c. 1230 C.E.) contains the most extensive account of Rabi'a's life and sayings. 'Attar claims that Rabi'a's exalted spiritual status allowed her to transcend the supposed limitations of her sex. His account describes

what he considers to be the key aspects of Rabi'a's hagiography: her humble birth, her early years as a slave, her reputation for receiving divinely sent graces and miracles, her rigorous religious devotions, her critical remarks directed to both colleagues and the divinity, and her blessed status in the afterlife. In addition to the theme of sincere devotion, 'Attar associates the themes of poverty and complete trust in God with the life and sayings of this remarkable Muslim woman saint.

—Frederick S. Colby

See also: 'Attar, Farid al-Din; Devotion; Gender and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism; Sulami, Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman

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Radegund

(c. 520–587 C.E.)

Christian queen

Radegund was a sixth-century Frankish queen and religious founder. In addition to establishing the double monastery of Our Lady of Poitiers, Radegund is probably best known for bringing a relic of the True Cross from Constantinople to Poitiers and is also famous for the great feats of self-mortification and the numerous miracles to which her vitae attest.

According to contemporary accounts, Radegund, born in about 520, was the daughter of Berthaire, or Berengarius, king of Thuringia. Radegund's father was killed by his own brother, who in turn was killed by the Frankish kings for reneging on an agreement. In 531, Radegund was taken as spoils of war by Clothar, youngest son of Clovis. She was raised as a Christian at Clothar's court at Athies and became one of his several wives when she reached maturity. Radegund continued to live a pious Christian life as Clothar's wife until the murder of her brother precipitated her retreat to religious life. She fled the royal court and was veiled as a deaconess by Bishop Medard of Noyon.

Radegund began her religious vocation by running a hospital out of her country house in Saix. A dramatic late-medieval addition to her life recounts how Clothar, in an attempt to get Radegund back, had her pursued from Saix to Poitiers. She asked a farmer sowing oats to tell any men who were chasing her that he had not seen her since he planted

his crop. The oats grew immediately; thus the farmer aided the saint in her escape without lying to Clothar's men. Finally, in about 553, Radegund was released from her marriage with the aid of Bishop Germanus of Paris, enabling her to settle in Poitiers to establish her religious community. Although she was, by choice, never abbess of the community, Radegund was clearly involved in making all major decisions, including the 567 adoption of the Caesarian Rule, which enforced strict enclosure. Radegund died in 587; her feast day is August 13.

The events of Radegund's life were recorded by no fewer than three of her contemporaries: her friend and bishop of Poitiers, Venantius Fortunatus; Baudonivia, one of the women of her community; and Gregory of Tours, who visited her community, conducted her funeral, and included her in his *History of the Franks*, *The Glory of the Martyrs*, and *The Glory of the Confessors*. In the twentieth century, Julia O'Faolain fictionalized Radegund's life in her novel *Women in the Wall* (1975).

—Christina M. Carlson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Germanus of Paris

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Radharaman Charan Das Dev

(1853–1905 C.E.)

Hindu composer, ecstatic

Radharaman Charan Das Dev, or Boro Baba (Big Father), as he was known to his disciples, was a Hindu saint belonging to the Chaitanya tradition of Bengal. His frequent ecstasies and spontaneous composition of songs earned him a wide following among the Bengalis of his time and his community is still a powerful force in Chaitanya Vaishnavism today.

Boro Baba was born as Raicharan Ghosh into a well-to-do family of *zamindars* (landlords) in the district of Yasohar (now Bangladesh) in 1853. He lost his father at the age of five and three of his brothers over the following four years. As a young man he took over the family occupation. His honesty and trustworthiness brought him to the attention of another, more powerful landlord, who hired him to manage his estates. When he was forced to put down a peasant revolt cruelly, he lost his desire for worldly involvement and decided to

renounce the world. Shortly thereafter he left home and walked to the Kali temple in Bhavanipur (Bagura). During a solar eclipse, the goddess appeared to him there and ordered him to go to the banks of the Sarayu, where he would find his hoped-for teacher. He followed her order and met his perfected guru, Shankararanya Puri. He stayed with his guru for a while and received instruction. Then his teacher ordered him to travel from country to country, town to town, and sing the names of Krishna. He followed his teacher's order, and a core of disciples began to gather around him. He soon began to experience ecstasies and trances, in one of which the instructive song was revealed: (*bhaja nitai-gaur radhe shyam, (japa) hare krishna hare ram*, which translates as "(worship) Nitai and Gaura and Radha and Shyama; (chant) 'hare krishna hare ram.'" This became the theme song of his followers.

Boro Baba taught the importance of congregational singing of the names of Krishna, that one can only attain the favor of Chaitanya by serving his associate Nityananda, and that one can only attain the company of Radha and Krishna by the grace of Chaitanya.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Radwan, Ahmad

(1895–1967 C.E.)

Muslim shaykh

Ahmad Radwan, one of the most venerated saints of Upper (southern) Egypt in the twentieth century, was an influential sufi shaykh (teacher of mystical Islam) who lived in al-Baghdadi, a village near Luxor. He was a descendant of the prophet Muhammad, a status that carries both respect and an expectation of piety.

Born in 1895, Ahmad Radwan grew up doing the work of a peasant and devoting himself to religious study and worship. He was famous for his compassion and generosity. During an epidemic of malaria and typhoid in 1944, he visited the homes of the sick, bringing food and medicine. He learned sufism from his father, a shaykh of the Samaniyya order, and from two shaykhs of the Khalwatiyya order, becoming deeply attached to Shaykh Muhammad al-Ramli. Radwan's early mystical opening was marked by occasional *gazz* (*jadhba*), when the shock of divine illumina-

tion overwhelms the intellect. During this time, he was known to generate such heat that he could not bear to wear clothes and walked naked, unaware of himself. While invoking the names of God, he heard the name of God come from inanimate rocks. Although Radwan resumed sober spirituality, his oral teachings were often thought to be conducted under divine inspiration. Radwan did not establish or lead a named sufi order, but he built a retreat center in al-Baghdadi, with large tables that could feed a hundred people at a time. He was famous for his miracles, especially knowledge of the unseen, and thousands thronged to him. His spirituality was strongly focused on devotion to the prophet Muhammad.

Radwan's most famous admirer was Gamal Abdul Nasser, president of Egypt from 1954 to 1970. Nasser was a socialist who imposed rigid controls on the religious establishment, but he hailed from Upper Egypt, where respect for sufi holy people is deeply ingrained. He built a train station in al-Baghdadi and a mosque in Radwan's retreat center. Sufis say Radwan warned Nasser not to go to war with Israel in June 1967; Nasserites claim Radwan encouraged him to go to war. Radwan died, allegedly from grief, just before the catastrophic Six-Day War ended on June 11, 1967. Thousands attend his *mawlid* (annual commemorative festival) in al-Baghdadi on the anniversary of his death.

—Valerie J. Hoffman

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Miracles; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Ragot, Mariam

(c. 1900/1910–? C.E.)

Christian church founder

Mariam Ragot, a Luo born in South Nyanza, Kenya, sometime around 1900–1910, established Dini ya Mariam, an African-instituted church (AIC) that has been seen as a precursor to Legio Maria, sub-Saharan Africa's largest Roman Catholic-influenced AIC. Ragot started her church in 1952; Legio began in 1962–1963. One narrative strand states that Ragot started Dini ya Mariam (Swahili for "Religion of Mary") after witnessing a Marian apparition. Another strand states that Mary came to Ragot embodied as an old African woman in poor health. Ragot was by herself, as her husband was off herding, and she treated Mary hospitably.

Mary rewarded Ragot with a house-church that appeared “as a miracle” beside Ragot’s marital home. Mary made holy water, prayed at its altar, and provided a model for Ragot to go and baptize as a priest.

In the 1950s, Kenya’s colonial government faced opposition from Mumboism, an anti-Christian, antiwhite, politico-religious movement guided by beliefs surrounding an indigenous rainbow-snake spirit. It also faced Mau Mau freedom fighters. Ragot reportedly prayed for Mau Mau detainees. David Barrett, a writer on African religions, contended that Ragot condemned “the white race” (1968, 11). Most Luo, however, portray Ragot as antimissionary, not antiwhite. Ragot promoted using rosaries made with *Melia azedarach* (Persian lilac) seeds. She asserted that Mary disliked Roman Catholic clergy charging Africans for baptismal cards. Ragot’s idea that a woman could perform priestly duties did not find favor with male missionary priests or colonial authorities. During her missionizing for Dini ya Mariam, Ragot spoke in tongues.

Ragot and her husband, Paul Adita, were finally arrested for creating disturbances. Ragot’s claims about Mary performing miracles at her home were labeled “delusions,” and her glossolalia was taken as another sign of mental illness. Between 1954 and 1960, Ragot and her husband were jailed, detained, removed from the district where they were living, and placed under house arrest and restriction. During her period in jail, Ragot reportedly received injections that were supposed to treat her “mental instability.” Some narratives portray Ragot’s spirit and sanity as being broken by years of official harassment, making her eventual freedom to move about the smallest of victories.

However, after her release in 1960 Ragot continued religious work. Although she had been an early member of the Roman Catholic lay organization the Legion of Mary and had founded a Catholic AIC, her focus now seemed to change. Ragot preached to congregations of Dini ya Roho Musalaba (Spirit Cross Church), Kendu Roho Mission, and another Spirit-infused Protestant AIC. Ragot’s appeal drew new members to these churches. One rationale offered for her turn toward Protestant AICs was that it was pragmatic. Challenges to the Roman Catholic Church were noticeable in a colony that had hardly faced any controversy before Ragot’s Dini ya Mariam.

Ragot retained a core of women followers who were attracted to her as a person. Sources disagree as to whether she and her husband finally joined Legio when it started, bringing these followers with them. They may have instead joined one of the Protestant AICs. It is her status as a spiritual woman who sought to expand women’s roles and to challenge missionaries that remains memorable to Kenyans who recall Ragot.

—Nancy Schwartz

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Insanity; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Rahner, Karl

(1904–1984 C.E.)

Roman Catholic theologian

Called the father of the Catholic Church in the twentieth century, Karl Rahner was born to a middle-class family of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Germany, in 1904. Although a diffident student, at best, he decided after his secondary school graduation to follow in the footsteps of his elder brother and become a Jesuit. He studied philosophy and Ignatian spirituality in Austria and Germany. Rahner completed his scholasticate in 1927, having studied deeply the works of Immanuel Kant and the Jesuit Thomist Joseph Marechal. From Marechal especially, Rahner was able to begin the formulations of his own theology, based on his youthful assent to Marechal’s insistence on the dynamism of the human mind that has its source in God—that is, the idea that every thought, every desire, and every act of comprehension have their beginning in God.

While studying at Valkenberg, Netherlands, Karl Rahner was ordained a priest, but in 1934 he was sent to the University of Freiburg to complete a doctorate in philosophy. However, his mentor, the Thomist theologian Martin Honecker, eventually rejected Rahner’s dissertation, *Geist im Welt* (Spirit in the world), because Honecker deemed it “not Catholic enough,” or perhaps too daring an attempt to wed traditional Thomist theology with modern German philosophy. Although the dissertation was never approved for Rahner’s doctorate in philosophy, it was published some years later and has been through several editions in many languages. The text reveals Rahner’s essential understanding of how humans “think about” and “know” God: God is the “mystery,” a reality “known” only indirectly as the pull of the human spirit inexorably moves toward that reality. Humans as spiritual beings “know” God in the only way humans can, by being in the world; thus, God is best understood as a personal reality active in human time, an activity that occurs through “uncreated grace,” free and loving.

After finally receiving his doctorate of theology in 1936, Rahner became an instructor of theology at Innsbruck and

quickly gained a reputation as a creative and deeply philosophical theologian. In 1939, the Nazis demanded the closing of the department of theology; Rahner and his brother Jesuits persisted in teaching theology at their residence until those meetings were also forbidden, and the Jesuit theologians expelled. Nevertheless, Karl Rahner made his final profession as a Jesuit on August 15, 1939, and was invited to teach in Vienna. The Gestapo continued to harass him until he was forced to leave Vienna in 1944 and went to the Bavarian village of Mariakirchen to serve the Catholic community there. Rahner was also part of the rescue and relief organization in Munich after the devastation at the end of World War II.

By 1948, Rahner was again in Innsbruck, where he taught until 1964. Yet, at this time, Rahner also became involved in a nascent ecumenical movement emerging from Germany. Rahner also participated in conferences that explored the relationship(s) between science and religion, especially the increasingly difficult problem of the potential conflict between modern technology and articles of faith. Again, such activity on the part of the Jesuit Rahner was viewed disapprovingly by church authorities, accustomed as they were to maintaining religion as a separate (and superior) arena of human experience and discourse.

Rahner's written work was voluminous, concerning topics in theology as distinct as pastoral pragmatics and systematic "investigations." In 1955, Rahner was asked to become the editor of *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (Lexicon for theology and the church), a compendium of Roman Catholic theological and ecclesiastical teachings that was intended for the theological education of ordained clergy. From 1957 until 1965, Rahner edited ten volumes of the *Lexikon*, which included nearly 30,000 articles by prominent Catholic and Protestant theologians and clergy. In his own work, Rahner was particularly concerned with the status of his beloved church in the twentieth century, and he addressed such contemporary issues as ecumenism, technology, and diversity. At times, his efforts met strong resistance, even direct condemnation. For example, his critique of modern Roman Catholic Mariology as potentially excessive and perhaps misdirected in its biological emphasis caused grave concern within the Vatican, which promptly added him to a list of scholars who needed the censor's approval before publication.

Rahner's problematic status notwithstanding, Pope John XXIII appointed him to be among the chief theologians at Vatican II. Rahner was very hopeful that his position at Vatican II could help to persuade more traditional members of the council to accept the need for a less purely Western, and more universal and tolerant, "world" church.

After Vatican II, Rahner resumed his academic career, teaching at the University of Munich (1964–1967) and thereafter at the University of Munster (1967–1971). The

time after his retirement in 1971 was notable for a more reflective, more meditative spirituality that seemed to be emerging in his writings: Among his final books were *The Courage to Pray* (1981) and *The Love of Jesus and the Love of Neighbor* (1983). In his later years, Rahner's theological reflections were often centered on the cross and the suffering Jesus endured for his people, as well as on the mystical and marvelous dynamism of the Holy Spirit in the world.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Rahula

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist follower

Rahula, the only son of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, was born on the day that his father left home in the fifth century B.C.E. (the word *rahula* means "bond" or "obstruction"). When the Buddha visited Kapilavastu for the first time following his enlightenment, Rahula's mother sent him to the Buddha to ask for his inheritance. The Buddha gave him no answer, but Rahula followed him everywhere until the Buddha asked Shariputra, his chief disciple, to ordain him. When the Buddha's father, King Suddhodana, who had helped to raise Rahula and needed an heir, heard of this, he protested to the Buddha and persuaded him to make a rule that no child should be ordained without the consent of his parents or guardian. Afterward, Rahula went on begging rounds in the company of the Buddha and Shariputra.

Immediately after Rahula's ordination, the Buddha preached many discourses to him for his guidance. Buddhist literature is full of stories that speak of Rahula as a quintessential example of obedience and extreme conscientiousness. Legend tells that when Rahula arrived at Kosambi one evening, he was told that a new rule had been formulated: No novice should sleep under the same roof as a fully ordained monk. Unable to find any suitable place, he spent the night in the Buddha's outhouse. On another occasion when he could not find a sleeping-place for himself, he spent the night in

the open. This was eight years after he became an *arahant* (fully enlightened). Some *Jatakas* (stories of the birth of the Buddha) show how even in his previous births Rahula had been known for his obedience. In the *Udana* (Inspired utterances), his name is included among the eleven who were found particularly praiseworthy by the Buddha.

When at the age of eighteen Rahula noticed that he harbored carnal thoughts and was fascinated by his own physical beauty and that of his father, the Buddha preached the Maha Rahulovada Sutra to him. Later, Rahula became an arahant after the Buddha preached the Cula Rahulovada Sutra. Rahula, known to his friends as Rahulabhadrā (Rahula the Lucky), declared that the title was appropriate because he had been twice lucky—in being the son of the Buddha, and in becoming an arahant. The Buddha declared Rahula foremost among those of his disciples who were anxious for training.

In Buddhist lore, Rahula was also associated with the buddhas of earlier ages of the world. In the time of Padumuttara Buddha, Rahula was a rich householder of Hamsavati who gave away all his wealth to the poor. Four verses uttered by Rahula are included in the Theragatha, and the Milindapanha also contains several stanzas attributed to him. In numerous *Jatakas*, Rahula is mentioned as having been the bodhisattva's son. According to the commentary *Digha Nikaya* (Collection of long discourses), for twelve years he never slept on a bed. Rahula predeceased the Buddha. Ashoka built a *stupa* (shrine) in honor of Rahula, and he is especially worshipped by novices.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Ashoka; Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Hereditary Holiness; Spiritual Guardians; Veneration of Holy People

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Raidas

See **Ravidas**

Rajcandra, Shrimad (Raychandbhai Mehta)

(1867–1901 C.E.)

Jain lay teacher, mystic

A Jain lay teacher who was a jeweler by profession, Shrimad Rajcandra founded an intersectarian lay Jain mystical

movement in the nineteenth century that was similar to the Adhyatmika (Inner Self) movement, which is associated with the Digambara Jain mystical poet Banarsidas (1586–1643). Shrimad Rajcandra was cited by his contemporary Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) as a major influence. Gandhi regarded Shrimad Rajcandra as a personal friend and spiritual guide and credited him with resolving his doubts about Hinduism.

Born in 1867, Shrimad Rajcandra claimed Hindu as well as Jain heritage. His mother was a Sthanakvasi (aniconic) Jain, but his grandfather worshipped the Hindu god Vishnu. The ashrams (retreats) established by the movement preserve the ecumenical spirit of their founder. In these ashrams, located in the northern Indian state of Gujarat (Koba and Agas), and overseas in East Africa, Britain, and North America, people of all faiths are welcomed. Generally, texts acceptable to all Jains are read, for example, the Tattvartha Sutra (That which is), along with Shrimad Rajcandra's extensive correspondence with his disciples and popular mystical texts by the Digambara philosopher Kundakunda (c. second and third centuries). Shrimad Rajcandra's followers attend their own temples, where they may worship images or not, according to custom. They have no monks of their own, although in recent years some ashrams have instituted lineages of lay gurus. Shrimad Rajcandra's photograph, taken just before his death in 1901 and showing him emaciated from fasting, is venerated at his ashrams, signifying the spiritual elevation of laity in his movement.

Shrimad Rajcandra's philosophy was heavily influenced by Hindu systems, especially nondualistic Vedanta. In his early writings, he claimed to be a second Mahavira (the historical refounder of Jainism traditionally dated from 599 to 527 B.C.E.) and compared himself to Rama and other Hindu deities. For an Orthodox Jain, this is inappropriate, but for nondualistic Vedanta, such language is appropriate to describe a mystical experience of union with God. Shrimad Rajcandra's views were similar, in many respects, to those of the Digambara mystic Banarsidas, for whom advanced stages of consciousness are not limited to the past but are attainable in the present age. He compared himself to an omniscient sage, without quite proclaiming himself omniscient, which would not conform to Jain orthodoxy.

Shrimad Rajcandra never seems fully to have resolved the tension between his Hindu and Jain heritage, although a gradual movement toward a more orthodox Jainism is discernible. Early in life, he felt that being a family man was the greatest spiritual challenge; toward the end of his life, however, he was preparing for renunciation, as prescribed by Jain scripture. He died at age thirty-three, before he could take initiation as a mendicant. His followers generally believe that he was reborn and will be liberated after his current life.

—Jerome Bauer

See also: Banarsidas; Contemporary Holy People; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Hinduism and Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Laity; Violence and Nonviolence

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Rajneesh

See **Osho**

Rama (Ram)

Hindu hero, avatar

Rama is the hero of the *Ramayana*, one of the two great Indian epics. This epic is best known in its classical Sanskrit version. In the form available today, the text dates to approximately the third century C.E. Besides the classical version, a multitude of popular texts in regional languages and a great variety of folkloristic versions exist.

The basic story of the *Ramayana* tells that King Dasharatha of Ayodhya had three wives and four sons. The wife named Kausalya gave birth to Rama—the eldest and most brilliant son. Kaikeyi became the mother of Bharata, and Sumitra bore Lakshmana (Rama’s devoted brother) and Shatrughna, who is not very prominent in the story. The king wished to install Rama on the throne as his successor, but Kaikeyi intervened and demanded that the king install her son, Bharata, as his successor, and that Rama be banned from Ayodhya and sent to live in the forests for fourteen years. The king had formerly granted two wishes to Kaikeyi and was now bound by his promise. So Rama departed, accompanied by his half brother Lakshmana and his devoted wife, Sita, who understood it as the duty of a wife to accompany her husband. They went to the forest and set up an eremitical life. In the meantime, in Ayodhya, Bharata refused to take his brother’s place as the king; instead, he installed Rama’s sandals on the throne until his brother could come back to take his rightful place after fourteen years of exile.

In the forest, Rama and his companions went through many adventures, meeting a number of *Rakshasas* (demons)—including, among others, the demoness Shurpanakha. She fell in love with Rama and tried to seduce him, but he resisted. When the demoness threatened to kill Rama’s wife, Sita, Lakshmana engaged in a fight with Shurpanakha and mutilated her, cutting off her ears and her nose. Shurpanakha then went to Lanka, the kingdom of her

brother, the demon Ravana, and complained to him, asking him to take revenge for her mutilation. Ravana immediately traveled to Rama’s forest and succeeded in abducting Sita, Rama’s wife. Rama and Lakshmana roamed through the forests in search of Sita.

They braved a number of adventures and befriended animals of the forest (which are depicted with human characteristics). Sugriva, the leader of a group of monkeys, decided to help Rama if Rama would first help him to subdue his brother and rival Valin. Rama did so and killed Valin—one of the most controversial points of the epic, since Rama, the incarnation of morals and justice, should not kill without a good reason. Now, Hanuman, one of the generals of the monkeys, set out to help Rama, and in fact became Rama’s most devoted friend. Hanuman found Sita in Lanka and was very instrumental in the war that ensued between Rama and Ravana, ruler of Lanka. Finally, Lanka was set on fire, Rama killed Ravana, and Sita was rescued. They all returned to Ayodhya, and Rama was installed as the king. The story has a sequel: Rama banned Sita, since her chastity during her imprisonment in Lanka was questioned—another much-debated point of this epic that has led to criticism of Rama’s character.

Rama, along with Krishna, is perhaps the most venerated deity of Hinduism, at least in the northern half of India. Both of these gods are considered to be *avatars* (incarnations) of Vishnu, one member of the great trinity of Hindu gods (Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma). Rama and Krishna are both objects of the *bhakti* way of worship, in which the devotee approaches the deity with a feeling of loving devotion. *Bhakti* has been expressed in poetry and songs that are, in fact, love-lyrics, often with a clear erotic aspect. The devotee (regardless of whether male or female) sees himself or herself in the role of the loving girl and the deity in the role of the lover.

The religious cult of Rama has recently acquired a strongly political dimension owing to modern political developments in India. In the early 1990s, Hindu fundamentalist groups claimed a certain place in the city of Ayodhya, on which a Muslim mosque currently stands, as Rama’s birthplace. The controversies reached their peak with the demolition of the mosque in 1992 and ensuing fights between Hindus and Muslims throughout India that claimed many lives. Since 1992, it has become impossible to mention the story of Rama in India without hinting at its misuse by fanatic politicians.

—Ulrike Niklas

See also: Demons and Monsters; Devotion; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna; Tulsidas

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Ramadas of Bhadrachalam

(1620–1680 C.E.)

Hindu composer, devotee

Ramadas is remembered as a seventeenth-century Hindu saint, a fervent devotee of Lord Rama, and an inspired composer of many devotional songs in the Telugu language. His songs are still sung all over southern India, and stories of his life of wholehearted faith and dedication still inspire and offer examples of high ideals to people today.

Muslim rulers in southern India employed some Hindus as officials in the seventeenth century. A brahmin official in the Nawab of Hyderabad's court, Madanna, had a sister named Kamamba who was married to Linganna Mantri. Kamamba's son, born in 1620, was named Gopanna. Because of his devotion to Lord Rama, the *avatar* (incarnation) of Vishnu whom Hindus revere as the perfect ruler, Gopanna became known as Ramadas, meaning "servant of Rama."

Ramadas supported performers (*bhagavatars*) who sang and told stories of Vishnu's glory and sought a way to earn more money to encourage these religious entertainments. His uncle helped him find a position as a revenue collector of a town named Bhadrachalam. When Ramadas saw that the famous Rama shrine in Bhadrachalam needed repairs, he spent tax money he had collected to pay for repairs and buy new jewels for the image of Rama enshrined there. This offense against the ruler soon brought officials to arrest Ramadas and put him in Golconda prison. Some of his lyrics describe his years in this prison, his ill treatment by guards, and his turning to Rama for consolation and protection. Some lines call to Sita, Rama's consort, to intervene, and others celebrate Rama's greatness.

The most famous episode in the traditional stories about his life describes how Rama and Lakshmana, disguised as two of Ramadas's assistants, appeared to Tani Shah and paid him Ramadas's tax money, getting a receipt. The ruler, astonished by the duo's unusual splendor, marveled even more as he watched them vanish. Wonderstruck, he felt he had seen Rama and Lakshmana and went to the jail cell to tell Ramadas what had happened. Ramadas envied the ruler's good fortune, remarking that the Muslim ruler had seen Rama, while he, the fervent devotee, had not. Tani Shah is said to have given Ramadas gold and released him, dispatching a palanquin to carry him to Bhadrachalam. Ramadas sang a song commemorating how Rama and Lakshmana protected him on the journey. Eventually, Lord Rama appeared to Ramadas to fulfill his wish.

Ramadas wrote Telugu songs that influenced later saintly composers such as Tyagaraja (1767–1847). Indeed, Ramadas's songs are still sung in southern India. He also wrote numerous verses, which are collected in *Dasharatha Shataka*, and a prose poem entitled *Ramayana Churnika*. Verses from one song reflect Ramadas's happiness at seeing Rama: "Today I saw my Rama, I was able to find him today! I saw today the harvest of devotees' austerities! Presiding on the crest of Bhadragiri mountain the master archer Rama holding court, along with Sita his beautiful dear partner. I saw today my Rama! I was able to find him today!" (Ramadasa 1967, 225). This song expresses the culmination of years of hope and faith, an exaltation over Ramadas's vision of his beloved Lord Rama.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rama

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Ramakrishna Paramahansa

(1836–1886 C.E.)

Hindu "mad saint," visionary

Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a Bengali Shakta temple priest who became famous as a "mad saint," that is, an ecstatic visionary, during the nineteenth century. He was also a Vedantin universalist. He was the inspiration for the Ramakrishna Math, a Hindu religious order and social service organization with many schools and medical clinics.

Ramakrishna was born at Kamarpukur, a small village in West Bengal, to brahmin parents in 1836. They named him Gadadhara Chatterji. He was a dramatic child who enjoyed acting and dressing up, and he would memorize religious poems and songs. At the age of seven, he fell into his first trance, at the sight of cranes. When he was seventeen, he moved to Calcutta to study and become a priest. He was soon appointed as priest of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar, which had been built by Rani Rasmani, a low-caste widow who had a hard time finding priests to work for her. Ramakrishna thus began his spiritual practices.

Initiated into a Kali mantra by a Shakta guru, Ramakrishna worshipped in a cluster of five sacred trees. He would fast and cry for long periods of time, meditated on the goddess, and sang hymns to her. Soon, however, he started performing actions that violated traditional Hindu purity rules, such as eating the leftovers of jackals, sharing food



Ramakrishna Paramahansa, one of the most important Hindu spiritual leaders of the nineteenth century. (Library of Congress)

with dogs, and cleaning outhouses. He felt burning and paralysis and had hallucinations. At one point, in despair at his inability to see the goddess, he decided to commit suicide. When he held up his sword, the goddess revealed herself as a great ocean of consciousness and bliss.

Ramakrishna identified himself with the goddess, wearing flowers and sandalwood paste. He saw Kali's statue as alive and would laugh and joke and dance with it. He also roamed around naked and threw money into the Ganges River. Local observers thought he was mad. However, attempts at Ayurvedic healing and ritual exorcism did not cure him. His parents thought his celibacy had caused him to go insane and arranged a marriage for him in the effort to cure him. He chose the six-year-old Sarada Devi to be his bride (he was twenty-three years old at the time), left her with her parents, and went back to the Dakshineswar temple, where his symptoms returned. He later took instruction from Bhairavi Brahmani, a tantric holy woman. She declared that his madness was really *mahabhava*, or religious ecstasy, and convened a group of religious scholars to examine him. They also declared that he was not mad, but ecstatic.

Ramakrishna identified with various mythic characters: He became a handmaiden of the goddess Kali, Radha longing for the god Krishna, and the mother of Ramalala (a small statue). When the *sadhu* or holy man Totapuri came to visit, he initiated Ramakrishna as a *sannyasi*, or renunciant, and Ramakrishna had an experience of *brahman* (ultimate reality). Ramakrishna also practiced Christian and Muslim prayer as well as meditation in several forms of Hinduism. Through all of this, he remained a priest of the goddess Kali, whom he worshipped as the mother of the universe. He died in 1886 of throat cancer.

Ramakrishna came to be recognized as a *siddha*, or perfected being, during his lifetime, and disciples came to learn from him and follow him as a teacher (*guru*). One of his major disciples was Vivekananda, who became a force behind the Ramakrishna order after the death of his guru. Vivekananda emphasized Vedanta philosophy rather than the Shaktism or goddess worship of his teacher, and the order followed this emphasis.

During his lifetime, Ramakrishna was understood to be a saint by many of his followers. After his death, and until the present day, there have been followers who claimed to sense his presence, and they say that he comes to them in dreams and visions as a spiritual guide. There have been many books written about him by disciples, and there are also several psychobiographies.

—June McDaniel

See also: Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Insanity; Krishna; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Vivekananda

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Ramanand

(1299–1410? C.E.)

Hindu guru

The Hindu saint Ramanand was probably born in the city of Allahabad (Prayag) to a brahmin family in 1299. His sainthood is predicated upon several factors: his connection with the southern Indian Sri Vaishnava sect, his service as guru to several prominent northern Indian devotional (*bhakti*) saints, and his founding of the Ramanandi, or Ramavat, sect

of the Vaishnava branch of Hindu tradition, which flourishes throughout much of northern India as well as among Hindus of the South Asian diaspora globally. Followers of this sect worship the great god Vishnu in his various incarnations and revere the divine couple, Rama and Sita, as their main deities.

Contemporary scholarship, however, has cast significant doubt upon the claims of Ramanand's association with the prominent Sri Vaishnava sect. Moreover, there is little evidence for the coterie of disciples attributed to Ramanand in the *Bhaktamal* (Garland of devotees), a text by Nabhadass dating from about 1600, which includes the names of several famous northern Indian bhakti saints, such as Kabir (c. 1450–1518) and Raidas, or Ravidas (c. 1450–1520). The spiritual genealogies appear to have been constructed to enhance Ramanand's status and that of the order he founded by linking him with the Vaishnava sect. The contemporaneity of all the saints named cannot be established on the basis of any reliable historical chronology. The Ramanandi sect, however, remains a vibrant part of the Indian religious landscape.

—Joseph Schaller

See also: Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Rama; Ramanuja; Ravidas

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Ramanuja

(1017–1137 C.E.)

Hindu theologian

Ramanuja, born in 1017, was the great medieval theologian of the Sri Vaishnava tradition, a southern Indian Hindu sect devoted to the god Vishnu. He championed a particular form of theistic devotionalism by giving it systematic philosophical formulation, a project masterfully done in his magnum opus, the *Sri Bhasya* (True commentary), a commentary on the Brahma Sutra, one of the cardinal texts of the Vedanta school of philosophy. The extraordinary combination of Ramanuja's philosophical genius and his own deeply felt devotionalism recalls similar giants in Western religious traditions, such as Thomas Aquinas or Martin Luther in Christianity, Moses Maimonides in Judaism, and Ibn al-'Arabi or al-Ghazali in Islam.

Ramanuja opposed the nondualism of Advaita, a competing school of Vedanta championed by the eighth-century

thinker Shankara. Shankara argued that *brahman*, the Absolute, alone was real and that all phenomenal differences are ultimately illusory. Thus, apparent differences and distinct entities, such as "souls," "persons," or even "god," must be finally canceled out in the economy of liberation. Devotion, while useful as a purifying process, must finally be superseded by knowledge of the supreme Self (*atman*).

Ramanuja rejected Shankara's philosophy. Criticizing, on various grounds, radical nondualism as incoherent (for example, if reality is one, then the principle of illusion, ignorance, and evil is internal to brahman, which is absurd; if it is "outside" brahman, then reality is plural, not nondual), Ramanuja instead argued that reality is one, unified by the presence of the divine in all beings, but that it is not homogeneous. As a unified whole, reality is nonetheless internally differentiated, just as the body is one, though differentiated by different members or parts, and above all by the presence of the soul, which animates the body. Thus Ramanuja's philosophy is called Visistadvaita Vedanta, the school of qualified nondualism. It posits that though people are ontologically and spiritually dependent on the divine, they also have their own unique personalities or natures. Such a philosophy preserves the fervent devotionalism of the great poet-saints of Sri Vaishnavism as the very pinnacle of religious life, for it includes right knowledge—especially the proper understanding of the soul and God—and the intellectual and emotional surrender that follows from such knowledge.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Moses ben Maimon; Scholars as Holy People; Shankara; Thomas Aquinas

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Ramdass

(1534–1581 C.E.)

Sikh guru

In 1574, Guru Amardas nominated his son-in-law, Guru Ramdass (Jeth Chand, born in 1534), as the fourth Sikh guru. In doing so, he passed over his own two sons, Mohan and Mohri. To avoid any opposition, the center of the community was moved from Goindval to a new site given the name Ramdasapur. At the center of the township was a bathing place filled with "the nectar of immortality" (*amritsar*). The name and location of this new center is significant to Sikh

history. For the first time, the central site was not named after God (as in Kartarpur and Goindval) but after the guru himself. Thus the political dimension of Sikhism was highlighted. As for the location, Ramdaspur was built away from the main highway from Delhi to Lahore, indicating the Sikh community's effort to stay away from direct Mughal sight. In addition, Guru Ramdas was the first guru to grow up in the Sikh tradition—he was not a convert like his predecessors. Before his death, Guru Ramdas upheld the principle of nomination and bestowed the guruship to his youngest son, Arjan.

Ramdas, following the tradition of the first three gurus, added his hymns to the growing corpus of sacred Sikh literature. Three main themes run through his writings: the care taken to clearly distinguish Sikhs from dissenters within the community and to repel challenges from without, the emphasis on equality among castes, and the sacred nature of the guru and his community. By 1580, the development of the Sikh community, now a half-century old, was significant, and factions began to develop, prompting the center to clarify and reinforce itself. Furthermore, the community's growing economic and political power also began to attract the attention and ire of the Mughal authorities. Thus, Ramdas wrote about the *manmukh* (the self-oriented one who does not follow the guru), the *bemukh* (literally, "without a face," or one who has turned away from God, most likely referring to dissenters within the community), and the *nindak* (one who opposes the guru, whether dissenting Sikhs or any others) in order to affirm a distinct Sikh identity.

Guru Ramdas's writings also emphasize equality as something sanctified by God. For example, he wrote of the equality before the sanctuary of the holy for all castes, including the most untouchable of the untouchables, and mentions the likes of the saintly Ravidas, the low-caste leather worker, and Kabir, the weaver, among others. It is clear that the Sikh community at this time was made up of many farmers, artisans, traders, and shopkeepers, and the role of women was also highlighted. Guru Ramdas insisted that only the guru had the moral right to rule, however, and that this right was given by God, thus affirming the sacred nature of the guru and his community. To even meet at *gursikh* (a follower of the guru) was considered a fortunate event for anyone. The word of the guru (*gurbani*) was likewise revered as the only truth.

—Daniel Michon

See also: Amardas; Arjan; Gurus; Kabir; Ravidas; Rulers as Holy People; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Ramprasad Sen

(c. 1718–1775 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Ramprasad Sen is considered the best Hindu poet-saint in Bengal to write poetry to the goddesses Kali and Uma. In spite of the awe in which he is held, however, very little is known about him. Born around 1718, he lived in Halisahar, a village north of Calcutta, and after 1758 became the protégé of the most important contemporary popularizer of goddess worship and patron of the arts in Bengal, Raja Krishnacandra Ray. Beyond this, only legends survive. They tell how he impressed his employers with his poetic talent and came to the notice of Krishnacandra and the Mughal governor; how the goddess Kali appeared to him as his daughter to help him fix his garden fence; how he humbled detractors who criticized him for his tantric practices; and how he drowned with the image of Kali as it was being immersed at the conclusion of her annual festival in 1775.

Standardizing Ramprasad's literary corpus is extremely difficult. Current anthologies list about 350 poems, almost five times the number in the first collections from 1855, already nearly a century after his death. Most of his compositions focus on Kali, whom he describes, praises, supplicates, teases, and berates, and whom he exhorts himself to love. His Kali is compassionate, in general, but not always to him; both beautiful and fearful; and capable of saving him from worldly attachments, if she pleases. This recognition of her dual nature—delusive and liberative—is a hallmark of Ramprasad's poetry.

Ramprasad's greatest contribution to the history of Bengali goddess worship is his domestication, maternalization, and softening of a once dread deity. For before Ramprasad's beautiful songs, almost no one had looked upon Kali as a mother goddess to whom one could flee for mercy.

—Rachel Fell McDermott

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Death; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People

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Ransom-Kehler, Keith

(1876–1933 C.E.)

Baha'i missionary, martyr

Keith Ransom-Kehler, a wealthy member of the Baha'i faith in the United States, was the first woman to be named Hand

of the Cause of God. The title was bestowed upon her shortly after her death in 1933. She died of smallpox while on a mission to alleviate the oppression of the Baha'i community in Iran and is considered the first Baha'i martyr from the United States.

Ransom-Kehler, born in 1876, grew up in Kentucky and Michigan. In 1898, she graduated from Vassar College and decided to pursue graduate studies. She attended several colleges, eventually earning a master's degree. She married her first husband in 1901. They had two children, but only one lived. Ransom-Kehler taught French and English literature at Albion College. Widowed, she moved to Chicago and married a second time in 1910. The family moved to New York City, and through her husband she entered the world of socialites. In 1911, Ransom-Kehler met 'Abdu'l-Baha in London, an event that was pivotal in her spiritual transformation.

Trained as a Christian minister, Ransom-Kehler became a leader in the Chicago liberal Christian community and was active in social reform movements. She affiliated herself as a Baha'i in 1921. Again widowed in 1923, she was able to dedicate more time to her new religion and rapidly became a leading figure in the U.S. Baha'i community. She met the guardian, Shoghi Effendi, during her two pilgrimages to the Baha'i holy shrines in Palestine in 1926 and 1932. Her work to propagate and consolidate Baha'i communities greatly expanded in 1929. She traveled to the West Indies and visited almost all the Baha'i communities with Spiritual Assemblies in the United States. Following this, she left to pursue international missions, never returning to her homeland.

Ransom-Kehler visited and spread the Baha'i message in Japan, China, New Zealand, Australia, and India. While she was in India, Shoghi Effendi called her to Haifa, Palestine, the Baha'i World Center, to propose a special mission to Iran. He personally prepared her for the arduous task of trying to convince the Iranian government to allow the Baha'is to publish and distribute Baha'i books in their country. Ransom-Kehler spent the last year of her life in an exhausting but futile series of meetings with government officials as she attempted to accomplish what turned out to be an impossible goal. At the same time, she traveled around Iran to meet with Baha'i communities, extend support from their Baha'i brothers and sisters in the United States, and help them propagate Baha'i teachings. Her efforts weakened her and she succumbed to smallpox in Isfahan, where she is buried. Shoghi Effendi, in a rare act, requested that a delegation of Persian Baha'is from different cities in Iran go on a pilgrimage to her gravesite on his behalf. The tomb constructed for her serves as a shrine. The year following her death, Shoghi Effendi again asked a delegation of Persian Baha'is to perform a pilgrimage to her shrine on his behalf.

—Loni Bramson

See also: 'Abdu'l-Baha; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Mission; Recognition; Shoghi Effendi

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Ras Tafari

See **Haile Selassie**

Rashi

(1040–1105 C.E.)

Jewish scholar

Rabbi Solomon b. Isaac of Troyes, known by the acronym Rashi and also as “the commentator,” is regarded as the greatest biblical exegete and talmudic commentator of medieval Judaism. During his lifetime, the material and sociopolitical conditions for the Jews of northern France were generally good. Because he demonstrated exceptional intelligence, Rashi, born in 1040, was sent at a young age to study with the great Ashkenazi scholars of the generation, “the sages of Mainz,” in a worldly community of Jewish intelligentsia, merchants, and travelers. Eventually he returned to France to establish his own talmudic academy, earning a living as a vintner to support his family. Almost 400 extant rabbinic responsa testify to Rashi's involvement in public affairs and his understanding attitude when dealing with people's personal and economic problems. Near the end of his life, Rashi and the Jews of northern France were shaken by the crusaders' devastating attacks on the nearby Jewish communities of the Rhineland. A few of Rashi's comments on the Book of Psalms seem to reflect those events.

Both of Rashi's commentaries on the classical works of biblical and rabbinic Judaism certainly became canonical texts in Jewish tradition. Subsequent scholars, especially in Franco-German Jewish communities, could not conceive of either biblical or talmudic study without Rashi's works as a starting point. That is, they would take Rashi's notes, comments, and suggestions as the basis for further reflection on the text. Even some Christian exegetes of the Middle Ages viewed Rashi's commentaries as essential to a proper understanding of scripture. And it is interesting to note that methodologically Rashi's exegetical approach reflects an intellectual milieu similar to that of the Christian exegetes in northern France.

The two poles of Rashi's biblical commentary signal a keen interest in the plain sense of the text based on grammatical and lexical analysis, on the one hand, and a profound concern for the intertextual relationship between the Hebrew Bible and the classical rabbinic interpretation of it, the



This painting, *Great Jewish Scholars, assembles great rabbis from different periods, including Moses ben Maimon and Rashi.* (Art Directors)

midrash halakhah (derivation of ritual and legal norms) and *midrash aggadah* (homiletic literature), on the other. Most remarkable, however, is his characteristically concise and exceptionally clear style, which guided students of diverse intellectual ability in the study of scripture. Rashi's commentary on the Babylonian Talmud presents the student with a study guide, asking questions to lead the reader through the difficult dialectics of the rabbinic discourse. It was even more significant and influential than the Bible commentary, for it provided access for generations of Jews, learned and not so learned, to this document of classical rabbinic Jewish law and lore. Advanced study of Rashi's talmudic commentary was taken up by the "Tosafist school" (supplementary commentators). Rashi's grandsons were especially prominent in establishing and developing this important group of rabbinic scholars in northern France, thereby adding to their grandfather's legacy.

—Ross Brann

See also: Guidance; Rabbenu Tam; Recognition; Scholars as Holy People

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Ravidas (Raidas)

(c. 1450–1520 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Ravidas, a poet-saint in the devotional (*bhakti*) tradition of Hinduism, is widely worshipped by Hindus and Sikhs throughout northern India. His worship has spread globally via the South Asian diaspora, and Ravidas temples are found in England and North America. He belongs to that group of Indian holy people termed *sants* who worship a nonrepresentational form of God devoid of anthropomorphic attributes. Born in about 1450, Ravidas belonged to the untouchable Chamar caste and earned his livelihood as a cobbler based upon this caste's traditional occupation of leatherworking.

Within Hindu tradition, there is no systematic process for recognizing saints owing to the lack of any centralized religious authority. In the family of saints of devotional Hinduism, however, Ravidas's place is affirmed by several sources. The first is the inclusion of forty of his earliest poems in the *Adi Granth*, the primary scripture of the Sikh religion. The compilation of this text in 1604 is attributed to Guru Arjun, the fifth in the lineage of the ten Sikh gurus.

Ravidas's name is also included among the disciples of the brahmin guru Ramanand. This list is given in Nabhdas's *Bhaktamal* (c. 1600), an important anthology of bhakti saints. Recent scholarship has cast doubt on this guru-disciple relationship, as Ramanand's likely period of activity is a century or more earlier than Ravidas's. Nevertheless, the purported relationship demonstrates that in Hinduism claims to sainthood are often legitimated via initiation by a recognized guru belonging to an established spiritual lineage.

As a saint, Ravidas is both a subversive and an ecumenical figure. In Hindu soteriology, the path of devotion ideally creates an egalitarian religious space in which the usual social markers of gender, caste, and the like are leveled in God's presence. Additionally, people from one religious community will often cross such boundaries in worshipping Ravidas and other bhakti saints. Thus, these saints serve an ecumenical function in uniting the disparate traditions and communities that make up the Indian religious mosaic.

—Joseph Schaller

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Ramanand; Recognition; Status

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Raychandbhai Mehta

See **Rajcandra, Shrimad**

Raymund of Peñafort

(1180–1275 C.E.)

Christian friar, canon lawyer

A noted canon lawyer and administrator, Raymund of Peñafort helped to form the Dominican order and systematized the canon law of the medieval church. Born in Catalonia in 1180 to a family related to the king of Aragon, Raymund attended the University of Bologna, where he received doctorates in civil and canon law. Afterward, he taught as a master at Bologna. In 1222, while already a priest and archdeacon of Barcelona, he joined the new Dominican order.

His *Summa de casibus Poenitentialibus* (Summa on penitential matters), a guide for confessors, was popular throughout the Middle Ages. In 1230, he was appointed a papal chaplain and began to compile the *Decretals of Gregory*

IX, as the collection of papal pronouncements was usually known. The *Decretals* became the basis of all canon law education, and the *Summa* was one of the five texts that all Dominican students were required to master. His edition of the *Decretals* remained part of canon law until 1917, and his Dominican Constitutions were in use until 1924.

In 1238, Raymund became the third master-general of the Dominicans. After only two years, he resigned this position for health reasons. Aside from Dominic, Raymund was the only early master-general to be canonized as a saint. His canonization did not take place until 1601. Raymund maintained Dominic's strict discipline and emphasis on advanced education at a time when some called for reform in these matters.

The remainder of his life was devoted to legal writing and establishing Arabic and Hebrew language schools to aid in the conversion of Jews and Muslims in Spain and Africa. He played a role in the establishment of the Inquisition in Aragon. Raymund quotes Matthew 10:34 in his writings: "I have come to bring not peace but the sword." In his actions, Raymund was not afraid of the conflict brought about by preaching if the reward was more conversions. He lamented how his works kept him from prayer: "Living, as I do, in the whirlwind of the court, I am hardly ever able to reach, or, to be quite honest, even to see from afar, the tranquility of contemplation" (Tugwell 409).

For Raymund, as with Dominic, publishing and preaching were important spiritual work. He believed that education, in the pulpit and the confessional, was the highest calling for any priest. The influence of Raymund's work in spreading this message across medieval Europe should not be underestimated.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Dominic; Lawgivers as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Rebbetzin

Rebbetzin, a Jewish honorific term for a rabbi's wife, derives from Yiddish and probably originated in medieval Europe. Although no such title exists in ancient Judaism, its emergence in the vernacular language of Central and East European Jewry indicates that rabbis' wives frequently assumed important if unofficial religious roles in Jewish communities. Rabbis tended to marry women from elite families

whose daughters received Jewish educations far superior to those of most women. Many learned rebbetzins led prayers in the women's section of the synagogue and undertook a variety of female community endeavors, including bridal arrangements, burial preparations, and dispensing of charity. Some rebbetzins were regarded as reliable witnesses of their husbands' rulings on ritual matters, particularly related to Jewish dietary laws, and might be consulted for legal opinions. In a social context that honored scholarship above economic success, the rebbetzin frequently supported her family financially by running a business while her husband devoted himself to study. In East European communities, the rebbetzin often had a monopoly on the sale of yeast; she might also cater refreshments following religious events at which her husband officiated.

In North America, the rebbetzin in all denominations of Judaism was expected to fulfill a number of social, communal, and educational functions within her husband's congregation. Prior to the introduction of female ordination in non-Orthodox forms of Judaism beginning in the 1970s, some women who become rebbetzins built on their husbands' positions to achieve their own leadership roles as teachers and representatives of Jewish life within their communities and the larger non-Jewish world. With changing social mores and increased professional opportunities for Jewish women in many fields, it is less common for early twenty-first-century rabbis' spouses to follow these patterns. However, within the Orthodox Jewish community, most rebbetzins continue to fulfill traditional expectations, serving as domestic hostesses to their husbands' congregations and as teachers and counselors to female congregants.

—Judith R. Baskin

See also: Gender and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Priests; Scholars as Holy People

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Recognition

The authority of a holy person ultimately comes from his or her connection to the divine. Various religions and regions have, however, come up with specific ways to certify that a person is indeed holy. The most highly developed authenti-

cation process is Roman Catholic canonization, which has its roots in the religious hierarchy of later medieval European Christianity. Orthodox Christianity and the Anglican communion have some regulation to recognize a person as a saint, although the process is not as formal as with Catholicism. The Baha'i faith's guardians have also declared the holiness of great martyrs and missionaries. The Chan patriarchs of China designated their successors, the position being of such importance that it carried veneration as a holy person almost automatically. Designation was also an important element in the Sikh religion, as the gurus were named by their predecessors and assumed their mantle of religious authority.

Often the state has taken the most important role in recognizing holiness, especially by granting special names and/or titles to reflect holy status. This is very common in Hinduism, occasional in Buddhism and Islam, and rare in Christianity, but the most important condition is that the ruler have a say in the national religious life. This is a very important theme in China, no matter what religion is represented. Many Chinese emperors sponsored great religious figures, inviting them to court and giving them special authority and titles. The Buddhist monk Jizang (549–623) was appointed as one of ten eminent monks in charge of monastic order; the monk Dushun (557–640) received the honorific "Royal Heart" and lectured at court; Chan patriarch Shenxiu (605–706) was known as the "National Teacher of Three Emperors"; the list could be continued for several pages. The same honor was shown to Confucian and Daoist sages. The Japanese emperors played a similar role in establishing the authority of holy people, receiving noted holy people with special honors and giving them titles such as *bosatsu* (great priest, first given to Gyogi [668–749]). Also influenced by Chinese practice, Korean rulers did the same, as in the case of the Buddhist monk Chajang (590–658), who was given the rank "Supreme National Cleric" with authority to regulate all Buddhist monasteries.

Similar regulatory power was sometimes given as a sign of spiritual prowess in Christianity. For example, holy men appointed to bishoprics gained considerable authority, as did monastic figures such as Benedict of Aniane (c. 750–821) or Odo of Cluny (c. 879–942) who were charged with regulating several monasteries. The Jain spiritual leader Hiravijayasuri (1527–1595) instructed the Mughal emperor Akbar in Jainism, receiving in return both decrees in favor of the Jain community and the title *jaadguru* (world teacher). The Asian title with the greatest long-term significance is that given by Mongol leader Altan Khan to the Tibetan holy man Sonam Gyatso (1542–1588)—he was so impressed that he gave him the title *ta le*, "ocean," to signify that Sonam Gyatso was an ocean of wisdom. This title is given to all of Sonam Gyatso's successors, the dalai lamas. A ruler's recognition

that perhaps counted for even more at the time was accorded to the Shi'i teacher Sayyid Kazim Rashti (1798–1844)—the Ottomans had a general massacre in Karbala, but out of respect for the holy man they declared Rashti's home to be a place of sanctuary.

When church and state are separated, such overt recognition of religious excellence is not to be expected. Several awards in the modern world, however, seem to be given especially to people who in earlier times would simply be designated as “holy.” One example is the Presidential Medal of Freedom in the United States. The bold fighters for human rights and dignity who win the award, such as the Cherokee leader Wilma Mankiller (1945–), who was awarded the medal in 1998, are very often recognized as holy people by their own communities. The Templeton Prize is often regarded as a “Nobel Prize for religion.” And the Nobel Peace Prize itself has more often than not been awarded to a person of spiritual stature who has won veneration by a significant population as a holy person. Notable examples are archbishop of Sweden Nathan Söderblom (1930), missionary doctor Albert Schweitzer (1952), Martin Luther King, Jr.

(1964), Zulu chief Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli (1961), Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Capetown (1984), the fourteenth dalai lama (1989), and Nelson Mandela (1993).

Ultimately, however, public recognition of a person as holy stems from a belief that a god has marked someone out. This can especially be seen in miracles, a key element of Roman Catholic canonization. But more informal recognition is also based on miracles in life or after death in many cases. Above all, recognition of a person as holy is based on the belief of a community, either the community in which that individual lived, a specific religious tradition, or some other community of people who have assumed the holy person as a founder or significant contributor after death. Although there are assuredly some saints known to God alone, generally it is only those who have won public recognition who are held up as models in religious practice and other sectors of the public arena.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Benedict of Aniane; Canonization; Chajang; Dushun; Gyogi Bosatsu; Hiravijayasuri; Jizang; Kazim Rashti, Sayyid; Mankiller, Wilma; Odo of Cluny; Shenxiu; Sonam Gyatso



Martin Luther King, Jr., commemorated as a martyr at Westminster Abbey, London, England. (Art Directors)

Red Sticks

(1811–1814 C.E.)

Creek religious revival, rebellion

A militant group of Creek Indians (located in present-day Alabama), the Red Sticks led a religious revitalization movement and violent rebellion against other Creek Indians and the United States in 1811–1814.

By the beginning of the second decade of the nineteenth century, several Creek Indian prophets, such as High Head Jim, Josiah Francis, and Hillis Hadjo, had begun preaching a militant message of anti-Americanism and anti-accommodation to white ways. Although they did not preach a complete rejection of all Euro-American wares (guns, for example, remained especially useful), they opposed any cultural adaptation to American customs. They acquired the label Red Sticks for the willingness of some of them to go into battle with only traditional weapons such as red warclubs, red being the color of war. Their message was more spiritual and political, however, than material. They accused Creeks who had accommodated to white ways of witchcraft and sought their destruction.

Constant land encroachment by Americans, selling of Creek lands by chiefs, and adoption of notions of private property and cash-crop farming by many elite Creeks encouraged those of more nativist and traditional beliefs to rebel by the early 1800s. The development of a strong nativist strain among the Creeks coincided with the growing pan-Indian movement under the guidance of the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa and his brother Tecumseh. Their

mother was Creek, and Tecumseh visited the villages of her people in 1811 to recruit them for the new multiracial movement. Scores of Creek warriors joined the Shawnee militants at Prophetstown in the Ohio Valley, while others employed the militant nativist message in their own villages.

Initially, Red Stick animosity was directed at accommodationist Creeks, with several murders committed by both sides in 1811 and 1812. A civil war had exploded in Creek country at the same time that the United States was beginning a war against Britain and Tecumseh's Indian confederacy in the north. In August 1813, the Red Sticks attacked Fort Mims near Mobile, Alabama, killing about 250 whites. Andrew Jackson then organized a force of 15,000 Americans and anti-Red Stick Indians that conquered the 3,000 or so Red Sticks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend on the Tallapoosa River in March 1814, killing nearly 900 Red Sticks. Red Stick survivors carried on the fight by joining their Seminole brethren in central Florida and helping them to resist American encroachment for several more decades.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; Tenskwatawa; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Reform and Reaction

Shi'i Muslims believe that each Islamic century has a *mujaddid*, a renewer of religious life. The longing to reform seems to be a hazard of all religions that have a written scripture, and many holy people have taken on the role of reformer as the original message of a religion has over time become tainted with other beliefs, has accommodated to local customs, or has simply been forgotten. The need to "reform"—return to the original—is particularly central to the message of holy people who live in times of crisis in world history. But when looked at closely, "reform" is not always as simple as it appears at first glance. Many of the world's reformers have used the label of reform to introduce what in truth have been innovatory beliefs and practices. And not all holy people can be defined by reform; many people have won holiness in the eyes of a broad populace for their resistance to what they perceive as unwarranted innovations in religion, a reaction

that is often as strong as the reform tendency. Thus both reformers and reactionaries may exist simultaneously with equal claims to holiness.

Sometimes the case for reform is clear. Sometimes religious institutions are, quite simply, corrupt according to the accepted standards of their own time and place, and holy people have tried, sometimes at the cost of their lives, to end openly dissolute practices. This was the case with the Italian Christian reformer Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), who protested the vice of the papal court (the pope of the time lived openly with his mistress, not to mention other abuses) and was eventually executed for it—but many people continued to regard him as a saint, and the Roman Catholic Church is now considering the case for his canonization. "Holy fools," radical, marginal figures who break the established rules of society and are viewed in many religions as touched by God, sometimes show up hypocrisy and point to needed reform. The Zen monk Ikkyu (1394–1481), who exposed the falseness of much monastic life of his time, is a case in point. And sometimes religious institutions are not so much corrupt as in disarray or even missing, thanks to a disaster such as foreign invasion. Thus the Russian reformer Sergius of Radonezh (1314–1392) was central in reviving Russian religious life after the Mongol incursion. And Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) saw his role as restoration of the ways of the ancient sages in a China torn by internal war and competition.

In other cases, a holy person's call to reform may be based on a new revelation or a personal interpretation of the accepted scripture. An interesting case of this is Mani (216–274/277 C.E.), the prophetic founder of Manichaeism. He accepted the teachings of Jesus and Paul but believed that third-century Christianity had been corrupted, and that he had been sent by God to restore its purity. His contemporary, the Zoroastrian priest Kartir, reformed Zoroastrianism, imposing an intolerant orthodoxy and winning himself the title "soul savior" from the king of Persia; he also succeeded in having Mani killed. In this case, the lines between reform and reaction are very blurred. Was Kartir a reformer, or a reactionary against the reforms of Mani (who claimed that his message incorporated Zoroastrianism)?

Reforming zeal has often led to intolerance. The organizer of Daoism, K'ou Chien-chih (c. 365–c. 448 C.E.), received visions of Laozi urging him to cleanse Daoism. He saw Buddhism as competition, and much of his work was persuading the ruler to have Buddhist monasteries and temples closed. Perhaps harder to condone are the reformers who have fought against the sincere religious interpretations of their coreligionists, a phenomenon that has occurred in all scripture-based religions. Would-be reformers have been condemned as heretics, or, when they have triumphed, followers of tradition have received similar condemnation, sometimes

to the point of violence or death. An example is the Japanese Buddhist Nichiren (1222–1282), who taught a new focus on the Lotus Sutra in religious life, apparently regarding this innovation as a reform of the Tendai school. He was nearly arrested as a dissident, and nearly killed in an ambush.

The eleventh and twelfth centuries saw a new flavor of reformers in both Christianity and Islam as innovators tried to impose a new moral standard in the name of return to an idealized past, and were willing to use political mechanisms to support their goals. In Latin Christianity, this was the period when the papacy successfully claimed leadership over the Western Christian world, claiming sweeping secular authority besides religious on the premise that papal independence must be safeguarded from the influence of corrupt secular leaders. A large number of Christian saints of this period, such as John Gualbert, Romuald of Ravenna, and above all Pope Gregory VII, won their reputation for sanctity by fighting simony, the buying and selling of holy offices (a cause that had a clear scriptural foundation), and the marriage of clergy (a cause difficult to support from scriptural sources). North African Islam in the same period saw a series of reform movements with striking parallels. First the Almoravid movement, begun in the first half of the eleventh century by Abdullah b. Yasin, and then the Almohads, under the reformer Ibn Tumart (1107–1130), set out to reform especially the morals of the Muslim population. Both movements regarded force as necessary and even praiseworthy means of obtaining their reforming goals; Ibn Tumart even preached jihad against other Muslims—much as Pope Gregory VII (c. 1020–1085) preached civil disobedience and war against the German emperor Henry IV.

The next great period of reforming holy people in world history began in the fifteenth century. It was a time of rapid change, the beginning of an age of exploration—and exploitation by foreign powers. Also vital in shaping the character of the reformers of this era was the invention of the printing press in approximately 1450 and its rapid dissemination, putting the scriptures of various religions in the hands of a much broader spectrum of the population. This made it possible for movements to become international and for reformers to debate the whole structure of religious hierarchies that had been put in place to mediate between the populace and a scarce scripture. In many cases, what Protestant reformers such as Martin Luther (1483–1546), Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556), or John Calvin (1509–1564) were preaching was a clear return to practices of the early Christian communities; in other cases, their proposed “reforms”—and even more the radical reforms of men such as Jan of Leyden (1509–1536)—were innovations, as they confronted the problem that the Bible simply did not provide complete guidance on how to run a large Christian community over time. It is not surprising that traditional practices

and beliefs found their supporters, ranging from antireform martyrs such as Thomas More (1478–1535) and John Fisher (1469–1535) to avid missionaries of a new reform, the Catholic Reformation, such as Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), who remained closer to the established practices of Christianity than did the Protestants.

It is harder to understand why the sixteenth century was also a reforming period outside of Western Europe. But the Hindu Vallabhacarya (c. 1479–1533) preached the role of grace in salvation and the need for personal revelation. The North African scholar al-Maghili (active c. 1500) militantly urged the purging from Islam of all later accretions, perhaps influenced by the establishment of a Muslim orthodoxy in the Ottoman Empire. And the Russian church was split for twenty years in the early sixteenth century by both the reformer Nilus of Sora’s (1433–1508) campaign to end monastic ownership of land and Joseph of Volotsk’s (1439/1440–1515) vehement defense of the social role of monasticism.

The sixteenth century marks an increase in the complexity of scriptural religions to the point that there has been an almost constant stream of reformers—and reactionaries—throughout the world since that time. The great themes of reformers have been access of the populace to the core areas of faith and a return to scriptural purity without the accretions of time and foreign influence. A series of movements have advocated greater involvement of the laity in religion, ranging from the Hindu reformer Tulsidas (c. 1532–1623), who reformulated devotional piety to the god Rama, to his English contemporary George Fox (1624–1691), who founded the Society of Friends (Quakers). The Jain reformer Acharya Bhikshu (1726–1803) argued that the professional ascetics had created a divide between the people and the divine that was contradictory to the true teaching of Mahavira. Like Fox, Acharya Bhikshu was rejected and persecuted, but he gradually became a spiritual teacher of a reforming sect. Similar in rejecting a religious elite, the eighteenth-century Jewish reform movement led by the Ba’al Shem Tov (1698/1700–1760), Hasidism, was an antirabbinic movement with deep roots in Jewish history, including the Karaite sect founded by Anan ben David in the 760s. Instead, it advocated a more personal religiosity of the laity. One can also see a move to make religion accessible in the work of the Russian Orthodox Filaret of Moscow (1782–1867), who worked to free the church from domination by the state and supported the translation of the scriptures and works of the fathers into modern Russian. A number of other reformers have worked to increase the role of the laity in Christianity, even in religions that strongly support a firm religious hierarchy, such as Roman Catholicism. Pope John XXIII’s (1881–1963) effort to make his church relevant, including adoption of vernacular languages, decentralization of church authority, and diminishment of the cult of the papacy, were all based on a

firm belief that the conditions of the modern world called for reforms that were both innovatory and a return to origins.

The Roman Catholic Church is still split over the process of reform instituted by John XXIII at the Second Vatican Council. Was it reform to an earlier Christianity, or a great giving-in to the pressures of modern secular society? Was it an effort to wipe away accretions to Roman Catholicism, or simply the addition of another layer of compromise with the world? These questions apply to many religions today and form part of the matrix of the modern movement of fundamentalism and antifundamentalism. What is the “original” of a language, and can it be regained in a world in which circumstances are very different from those of the founder? Many of the recognized holy people of the twentieth century have been regarded as holy particularly because they have advocated a return to the “fundamentals” of their religion, a stripping away of later additions, an end to compromise with other religions. The process began in the nineteenth century, especially in areas suffering the shocks of colonialism. The Hindu Dayananda Sarasvati (1824–1883) taught that the Vedas, the earliest scriptures, were infallible and that all later additions were corruptions, proclaiming as his goal the need to lead India back to pure Vedic religion. In his case, the movement was socially progressive, rejecting the later caste system, emphasizing social service, and advocating the equality of women. Similarly, the modern Hindu Agnivesh (1939–) argues that untouchability and widow-burning are contrary to the true Hindu tradition. Several African holy people have also advocated a return to ancestral religions as the cure for society’s ills.

In the twentieth century, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam have all produced religious leaders whose reputation as holy people is based on the need to return to untainted original religion. Often they have bravely suffered persecution for their beliefs, such as Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966), the founder of Sunni fundamentalism who was imprisoned and eventually executed for his proclamations of the religious duty to overthrow the secularizing government of Egypt. The fundamentalist Shi’i leader Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989) was persecuted and exiled only to return to Iran to create an Islamic state with the overthrow of the secular government. The numbers of fundamentalist leaders, often willing to resort to holy war to win their goals, seem to be on the increase.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Agnivesh; Ba’al Shem Tov; Bhikshu, Acharya; Calvin, John; Confucius; Cranmer, Thomas; Fisher, John; Fox, George; Gregory VII; Ignatius of Loyola; Ikkyu; Jan of Leyden; John XXIII; John Gualbert; Joseph of Volotsk; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Luther, Martin; Mani; More, Thomas; Nichiren; Nilus of Sora; Protestantism and Holy People; Romuald of Ravenna; Savonarola, Girolamo; Sergius of Radonezh; Tulsidas

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Reincarnation

The theory of reincarnation, the belief that people undergo a cycle of rebirths, developed in India in the sixth century B.C.E. In Eastern religions, it is thought that one’s conduct in the present lifetime decides the conditions of his or her next rebirth. A central quest of Indian religiosity is to end the cycle of rebirths, which is perceived as a tedious and pointless repetition of suffering. The fully enlightened holy person will attain *nirvana*, escaping from the cycle of reincarnation. Some of the greatest holy people, such as the Jain *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) or the Shakyamuni Buddha (Gautama), are believed to have won their liberation in this way.

Eastern theories of holiness soon moved beyond this model of ultimate holiness, focused as it is on individual attainment, to embrace the idea of the holy person as someone who *could* end the cycle of reincarnation but *chooses* to be reborn out of compassion for the rest of humankind. Many early Buddhists especially came to regard the idea of the *arahant*, the fully enlightened person who would not be reborn, as ultimately selfish. Thus developed the idea of the *bodhisattva*, the perfected, liberated soul who chooses to be reborn to help others reach this state. This is a key principle in Mahayana Buddhism, which conceived of the historic Buddha and many other bodhisattvas as constantly reborn through the ages. Mahayana Buddhism even has a place for a bodhisattva vow, a commitment made by a spiritually advanced practitioner to work for enlightenment and then to accept rebirth to teach others. Hinduism also has the concept of *ishvarakoti*, a free, perfect soul reborn on earth to help the rest of humankind understand spiritual truths.

Thus Buddhism and Hinduism both have a number of holy people who are believed to be reincarnations of earlier holy people, committed to the spread of Buddhist teachings through the cycles of rebirth. This belief is especially prominent in Tibetan Buddhism, which includes a large number of *tulku*, reincarnations of advanced religious practitioners. These figures, almost always lamas, sometimes appear as individuals who defend a theological stand they had taught in an earlier incarnation. For example, Chandrakirti (c. 580–c. 650) is regarded as a reincarnation of Buddhapalita (c. 470–c. 540). The Tibetan *tertons* provide an interesting variant on this belief. They are finders of texts that the great sage

Padmasambhava hid away in the eighth and ninth centuries to be rediscovered at times when Buddhist doctrine is in decline. Some of these texts are physically hidden, but some were set into the subconscious minds of his disciples, only to awaken to consciousness in a future incarnation of that disciple. Starting in the twelfth century, Tibetans have also recognized reincarnating lineages, whole series of holy leaders who are actually the same great originator, a bodhisattva reincarnated to take the same role again and again. The oldest reincarnating lineage, the Karmapa, have been heads of the Karma Kagyu school through sixteen incarnations; followers believe that the dying leader leaves signs to indicate the location of his next birth. Many of the reincarnating lineages remain today despite the disruptions of Chinese invasion and persecution. Tenzin Gyatso (1933–), the current incarnation of the dalai lama, is one such example.

Hindus also recognize that some holy people are reincarnations of earlier great religious leaders, a belief that seems to be on the upswing in modern times, suggesting a call on traditional authority to buttress religious authority in troubled times. The Hindu Prabhu Jagadbandu Sundar (1871–1921) claimed to be a reincarnation of the sixteenth-century god-saint Chaitanya. The modern charismatic Sathya Sai Baba (1926–) is even more sweeping in his incarnational claims: He is the reincarnation of Sai Baba of Sirdi, who died in 1918, and also an *avatara* (divine manifestation) of two gods, Shiva and Shakti. He has taught his millions of followers that there will be one more reincarnation after he dies.

Although belief in reincarnation is mostly associated with India, it has appeared in legends of holy people of other parts of the world. An interesting Chinese tradition reports that the sage Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.) traveled to the West, where he was transformed into a pomegranate. Centuries later, he was eaten by an Iranian queen in that guise; she became pregnant as a result and gave birth to the prophet Mani (216–274/277 C.E.). This tale has tantalizing parallels to legends in Celtic folklore, although in the extant Celtic evidence reincarnation is not given as a characteristic of any specifically holy person. In Greece, the Pythagoreans beginning in the sixth century B.C.E. taught belief in reincarnation, a belief adopted by Plato (427–347 B.C.E.). In more modern cases, reincarnation has become connected to holy people in populations that have been exposed to the Eastern teaching. In Judaism, reincarnation is linked especially to Shabbetai Zevi (1626–1676), the most notorious of the would-be messiahs of the early modern period. Thus Nathan of Gaza (1643–1680), a kabbalist and later leader of the Shabbatean movement, claimed to be a prophet of Zevi, and his students believed he was a reincarnation of the kabbalist Isaac Luria (1534–1572). A century later, Jacob Frank (1726–1791) claimed to be a reincarnation of Zevi himself (and also to be the second person of the Trinity). Perhaps most unusual,

though, because alien to the tradition from which he came, is the Senegalese Muslim Limamou Laye (1843–1909), who declared himself *mahdi* (the forerunner of the apocalypse). One tradition says that he also declared himself to be a reincarnation of the prophet Muhammad (570–632). He was succeeded by his son, who in his turn proclaimed himself as a reincarnation of Jesus.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Bodhisattva; Buddhapalita; Chandrakirti; Gautama; Jagadbandu Sundar, Prabhu; Karmapa Reincarnation Lineage; Lamas; Laozi; Limamou Laye, Seydina; Mani; Plato; Sathya Sai Baba; Tenzin Gyatso

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Remigius of Rheims (Rémi)

(c. 437–533 C.E.)

Christian missionary, bishop

Remigius of Rheims, also known as the apostle to the Franks, was born to an aristocratic Gallo-Roman family from northern France in about 437. He became bishop of Rheims at age twenty-two and, in 498 or 499, following the battle of Tolbiacum (Tolbiac, near Cologne), baptized King Clovis, the king of the Franks, as a Catholic Christian. Although the exact date and location of the king's conversion are not known for sure, most historians agree that it took place in the last years of the fifth century, most probably at Rheims.

When Remigius died at age ninety-six in 533, he was buried in a small chapel outside the city wall, but already in 570 this church was known as St.-Rémi. The saint himself was regarded as the patron saint of Rheims and was credited with numerous miracles, including stopping a plague, extinguishing a fire, refilling empty wine jars, expelling demons, and restoring sight to a blind man. His popularity as a healer was such that his name was popularized as Saint Remedius for his "remedies." His cult flourished in France, Italy, Germany, and Austria. The local liturgy of the monks at his church was the first to argue that Remigius had baptized Clovis using miraculous oil that was brought from heaven by the Holy Spirit.

The Carolingian kings developed a dynastic affinity with St. Remigius, and King Louis the Pious became the first French king anointed at Rheims in 816. Remigius's fame increased when Bishop Hincmar of Rheims transferred his relics to a new reliquary, rebuilt the church (854), and compiled the saint's Life (878). Hincmar, more than any other person, was responsible for the identification of Clovis's baptism with his consecration. Hincmar also invented the tradition according to which all French kings should be conse-

crated by the bishop of that city, and using oil from the miraculous ampoule that had served for the baptism of the first French king. Following Hincmar, the alliance between Clovis and Remigius became a model for the relations between the French kingdom and the church, and the bishop of Rheims acquired a unique position within the Gallican church. His anointing of the king, using the sacred oil, legitimized the royal family, associating it with David and Samuel as well as with Clovis and Remigius. It was, however, only in 1027, with Henry I, that the consecration took place in the city of Rheims itself. This tradition continued (with only two exceptions) until 1825.

—Moshe Sluhovsky

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Veneration of Holy People

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Rennyō

(1415–1499 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, reformer

Although it was on the basis of the works of Shinran (1173–1262) that the Japanese True Pure Land Buddhism (Jodo-shin-shu) was founded, it was not until Rennyō (1415–1499) appeared that the True Pure Land Buddhism was interpreted in such a manner that the ordinary people of Japan could participate in its practice. This is not to say that during Shinran’s time there were no lay practitioners of Jodo-shin-shu, but rather that it was Rennyō who made Shinran’s teachings available in colloquial Japanese so that they could be understood by the ordinary people. It is in this sense that Rennyō has been lauded in the Jodo-shin-shu tradition as the restorer of the Jodo-shin-shu piety. He is known as Chuku Shonin (the master who restored [the tradition] in midcourse) or Gosaiko no Shonin (the master who was the restorer [of the tradition]). As a restorer of Shinran’s teaching, Rennyō explained how a follower could practice the single-minded faith of Jodo-shin-shu by giving up all other practices.

In a sense, Rennyō was also a reformer of the True Pure Land Buddhist tradition. Scattered throughout his letters one can find encouragement to continue the practice of reciting the six-letter name of Amida Buddha (*Rokuji no Myōgo*), procedures for giving up practices that are not conducive to generating a single-minded faith in Amida Buddha

(*Shinjin Ketsujo*), and caution against slandering other religious traditions.

Much of what is known about Rennyō has been derived from memoirs written by his disciples and followers, the letters that he wrote, and writings by others concerning the doctrine and history of Shinran’s teachings. Among the memoirs, the best-known of the collections is the *Goichidaiki Kikigaki* (Record of words and deeds). The most important source for the reinterpretation of the full expression of Shinran’s life of *nembutsu* (gratitude) lies in Rennyō’s letters, many of which were compiled by Rennyō’s grandson, Ennyō (1491–1521), into a collection known as *Ofumi* (Letters), which has become better known within the Nishi-Honganji system as the *Gobunsho* (another word for “Letters”).

—Leslie S. Kawamura

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Intermediaries; Laity; Shinran

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Repentance and Holy People

Many holy people, at least according to popular legend, have been virtually sinless. Some religions, however, have also venerated men and women guilty sometimes of great sins and tragic flaws who have repented their actions. Sometimes it appears that a penitent is holier than a person without fault—as the Japanese Buddhist Shinran (1173–1262) proclaimed: Wicked people are more likely to be reborn in the heaven-like Pure Land because they are more likely than more complacent, ordinary people to throw themselves entirely on divine mercy. A necessary background concept to the idea of penitent as holy person is a clear concept of sin—specific actions or thoughts that make a god angry. It is only Christianity, however, in which saints have been believed to make a specialty of repentance, devoting their entire lives to penitential practices to expiate what sometimes appear to outside observers to be quite small faults.

Sometimes, as in the case of Shinran, holy people have not been repentant sinners themselves but have set their mark on a society by facilitating repentance among the common people. Zhang Daoling (34–156), founder of an important Daoist school, emphasized the connection between sin and human suffering. He introduced repentance and healing ceremonies, attentions so appreciated that when he died it is believed that he ascended visibly to heaven. In Christianity, Zhang’s near-contemporary John the Baptist preached a similar message of repentance and cleansing.

Several great holy people of Buddhism caught the popular imagination because their conversion from a sinful life was so spectacular. For example, legend tells of the Buddhist Ajatashatru, a contemporary of Gautama the Buddha in approximately the fifth century B.C.E., who murdered several people, including his own father. Brought to repentance by the Buddha, Ajatashatru reformed his ways and became a notable supporter of the young Buddhist community. Some tales tell that Ajatashatru spent time in hell to expiate his sins, but Mahayana Buddhists believe that he was reborn among the gods. The need to cleanse one's karma, a longer process than the simple act of repentance, also appears in the legend of the Tibetan Milarepa (1052–1135). He, before becoming a monk, had practiced black magic to win revenge for his dispossessed family (according to his legend). The spell he cast killed many people, which led him to remorse. Afraid of the amount of bad karma he had generated, he sought a teacher to help save him from suffering in his next life. In time, he became a disciple of Marpa (1012–1097), who made Milarepa perform a number of painful and humiliating tasks to wipe the spiritual slate clean. Thus, despite his negative karma, he was able to reach enlightenment. More often, however, Buddhist legend recounts just the fact of conversion from an evil life rather than ongoing penitential practices, even if that conversion was inspired by fear of hell. Thus the Zen Buddhist Hakuin (c. 1685–1768), who as a child took fiendish pleasure in killing and torturing animals, repented when he heard a sermon about hell, became a monk, and afterward lived a normal monastic life. The most famous example of a former sinner among Buddhist holy people is probably the Indian emperor Ashoka, who lived in the third century B.C.E. He himself tells in his inscriptions that he turned to Buddhism after being moved to contrition by all the suffering he had caused in a war. Later legend created a much more lurid past for him, though, saying he committed mass fratricide and that he burned his wives alive after they laughed at his ugliness. But there is little sense that Ashoka's life after becoming a Buddhist was in any way an expiation for his former misdeeds.

It was Christianity that made a specialty of repentance as a category of ongoing behavior for holy people. The gospels specifically assure heaven to the repentant sinner: Jesus told the repentant thief crucified with him: "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). This man, given the name Dismas in Christian legend, served along with the repentant prostitute Mary Magdalene as proof that repentant sinners can be specially blessed. Indeed, this concept was a hallmark of Christianity, and early Christians won ridicule from their detractors because they accepted notorious sinners in their midst.

Perhaps because of this very openness, Christianity later came to emphasize through much of its history the

need not only for repentance but for a period of penitence. Penitential practices became the norm as part of a system of repentance and confession (normally in private to a priest by the eighth century). Underlying this development was the belief that God is merciful but also just, willing to forgive all who turn to him but still exacting the penalties of sin; also important was the idea of penitence as medicine, correcting particular sins by a theory of opposites (for example, "curing" gluttony with a period of fasting). By the twelfth century, when the concept of purgatory was firmly defined as a place where repentant sinners were consigned to finish paying off their penitential accounts before reaching heaven, it was normally assumed that each sin required a *lot* of penitential exercise to clean the slate. In such an environment, in which practically everyone frequently performed at least small penances, a mark of particular holiness lay in overabundance: Naturally, somebody who performed a great deal of very difficult penance was holier than someone who didn't. Legends developed of early saints who repented their misspent youths and spent the rest of their lives expiating their evil deeds. A famous example is Mary of Egypt of the fifth century, whom legend made a repentant prostitute who spent forty-seven years alone in the desert as a hermit, clothed only in her hair, winning through her death-defying asceticism God's forgiveness. Contemporary holy people of the late Middle Ages also spent their lives in penance, sometimes for no known sin. It is not a coincidence that most of the great women saints of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had short lives: Their penitential ascetic practices were often so rigorous that they could not survive the experience for many years.

The modern branches of Christianity, especially the Protestant churches, have disavowed much of this penitential rigor, and saints are no longer canonized specifically for their penitential lives. A strong sense of the ongoing sinfulness of humankind, and therefore, the need for individuals to repent, remains important, however, in Christian belief and devotion.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Ajatashatru; Ashoka; Dismas; Hakuin; John the Baptist; Marpa; Mary Magdalene; Mary of Egypt; Milarepa; Shinran; Zhang Daoling

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Rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen
See Gyeltsap Darma Rinchen

Ridley, Nicholas

(c. 1503–1555 C.E.)

Anglican theologian, martyr

Like so many sixteenth-century holy people, Englishman Nicholas Ridley, born in about 1503, was largely shaped by the tensions between Roman Catholic and Protestant ideologies. His adherents perceived his holiness in his advocacy and promotion of reform and in his eventual martyrdom for the Protestant cause. A learned Latin and Greek scholar, he became an adherent of the teachings of church reform while a student at Cambridge and the Sorbonne (Paris) in the 1520s. He was an earnest student of the scriptures, and through his beliefs and arguments Cambridge University came to the conclusion that the bishop of Rome had no more authority and jurisdiction from God than any foreign bishop in the kingdom of England.

An active and rising political figure, Ridley became private chaplain first to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, his great friend, and then to Henry VIII in 1540. The king also presented him with a prebendal stall (for preaching or private prayer) in Canterbury Cathedral. While here, Ridley employed his many talents to expose the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church. Charges were brought against him for these acts, but as the king and Cranmer were his patrons, the charges were never pressed.

Ridley became bishop of Rochester in 1547 and gradually continued to strengthen the reform teachings at Cambridge and other places of learning. He was even part of the committee that drew up the first English Book of Common Prayer during the reign of Edward VI. In 1550, he succeeded Edmund Bonner as bishop of London and did much to improve the condition of the poor, not only by providing food and clothing, but also by preaching these social injustices before the king. He also insisted that the altars in the churches of his diocese should be removed and replaced by simple tables.

Ridley supported Lady Jane Grey's claims to the crown, and in 1553, shortly after the accession of the Catholic Mary Tudor to the throne, he was imprisoned for openly denouncing both the queen and her religion. With Cranmer and Hugh Latimer he took part in the Oxford disputations against a group of Catholic theologians and refused to recant his Protestant faith. He was arrested, tried, and then burned at Oxford on October 16, 1555. By 1559, John Foxe listed him as a martyr for the Protestant church in his famous *Book of Martyrs*.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Cranmer, Thomas; Latimer, Hugh; Martyrdom and Persecution; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Rifa'i, Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-

(1106–1182 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Rifa'i was born in 1106 in a small town in the marshes of southern Iraq; his father died before his birth or when he was a child, according to some authors. It is said that his maternal uncle, Shaykh Mansur, was the head of a sufi order and sponsored his education. Al-Rifa'i was learned in Shafi'i law as well as sufism. In 1145/1146, his uncle bequeathed the leadership of the *tariqa* (order) to him rather than to his own son.

Although some hagiographies report that al-Rifa'i had huge numbers of disciples, this seems unlikely as he lived in a rural and isolated part of southern Iraq. He is not known as an author, although some of his successors wrote books about him. He is said to have taught poverty, abstinence, and the cultivation of resistance to injury. The practices of his followers became associated with miraculous abilities to undergo physical trials—for example, sitting in hot ovens or riding lions. For this reason, the sufi order bearing his name, the Rifa'iyya, is known in the Middle East and India for espousing practices such as snake handling, walking on hot coals, and eating broken glass. Due to their loud *dhikr* (litany) they are also called the “howling dervishes.”

This order spread to Egypt, Syria, and Turkey and was one of the best-dispersed sufi movements into the fifteenth century. Ibn Batuta, a famous traveler, visited al-Rifa'i's shrine in Umm 'Ubayda, Iraq, in 1327. Devotion to this tariqa is widespread in Egypt. The great mosque of al-Rifa'i near the Cairo citadel was built in the late nineteenth century.

—Marcia Hermansen

See also: Miracles; Mysticism and Holy People

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Rishabha

Jain tirthankara

According to Jain teachings, Rishabha was the first of the twenty-four *tirthankaras* (ford-makers) of the current

declining half-cycle of time. He is also known as Adinatha, “the first lord.”

Jains believe that Rishabha was born at Ayodhya as the son of a chieftain named Nabha. While still a prince, he married two women; by one he had one hundred sons, and by the other a son and a daughter. His birth occurred at a point in the half-cycle at which magical, wish-fulfilling trees, which until then had provided for all human needs, were beginning to run down. In order to make the continuation of human life possible, he invented the arts and institutions of civilization: agriculture, mathematics, writing, the fine arts, and much else. His own marriage was the first such union of our half-cycle. His father nominated him to become the first king of the half-cycle, and as king Rishabha organized society into groups and created the social classes of *kshatriya* (warrior), *vaishya* (trader), and *shudra* (the serving class).

After a long and creative reign, he divided his kingdom among his sons and became a homeless Jain mendicant, the first of the current half-cycle. When he sought alms of food and water, he was initially unsuccessful. People had no idea how to treat him and in their ignorance tried to give him the sort of valuable gifts one might give to a king. After he had wandered about without food for a year, his grandson, Shreyamsa, saw him and immediately went into a meditative state in which he remembered, from a previous birth, the proper method by which laity were to present food and water to mendicants. He offered Rishabha sugarcane juice and Rishabha broke his year-long fast, thus reestablishing the tradition of almsgiving. After 1,000 years of ascetic practice, Rishabha attained the omniscient state and began his teaching mission. At the end of his extremely long and fruitful teaching career, it is said, he shed his body and attained liberation at Mount Kailasa in the Himalayas.

—Lawrence A. Babb

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Mahavira; Malli; Nemi; Parshva; Reincarnation; Sages

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Rishis

Hindu legendary holy men, poets

Rishis, generally speaking, are holy men regarded as patriarchal saints of Hinduism. Their number, names, and characteristics have changed over the course of time and with the development of the Hindu religion and its literature.

The original seven rishis (seers) were the inspired poets who sang the hymns of the Rigveda, the oldest layer of ancient Indian literature (also called Vedic literature), dating back to approximately 1500 B.C.E. Their names (Gritsamada, Bharadvaja, Vishvamisra, Vamadeva, Vasishtha, Kashyapa, and Atri) are first mentioned in early Vedic prose, for example, in the Shatapatha-Brahmana and the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad (c. 800–500 B.C.E.). These texts, moreover, identify the rishis with the seven stars of the constellation of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major). According to the legends, they “saw” the Vedic hymns in very ancient times and brought the eternal texts to the human world by rendering them into human speech. They are consequently regarded as the forefathers of seven families of Vedic singers.

The identity and number of the rishis appear changed in epic literature. In the *Mahabharata*, the greatest of the Indian epics (the form available today dates to approximately the fourth century C.E.), ten rishis are known (Marici, Atri, Angiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya, Vasishtha, Pracetas, Bhrgu, and Narada). They are regarded as ancient holy men who possess great superhuman powers gained through ascetic exercises and meditation. Rishis are generally connected with magic. In the *Ramayana* (the other great Indian epic, which is slightly earlier than the *Mahabharata*, dating from about the third century C.E.), a great number of rishis together with their disciples are said to have visited Rama at his court in Ayodhya after he had returned from his exile.

As their number increased over time, the rishis were grouped into different categories. There are *devarishis*, holy men who reside in the realm of the gods; *brahmarishis*, thought to be of brahminic descent and characteristics; and *rajarishis*, who are of royal origin and are thus thought to possess the qualities of *kshatriyas* (warriors).

Puranic texts (that is, texts that tell “stories of old” and form important sources for mythology and iconography) mention a multitude of rishis spread in groups over different parts of India. One of the remarkable figures among these “later” rishis is Agastya from the south. Regarded as the first teacher of many scientific disciplines, including grammar and medicine, he is a highly venerated saint in Tamil tradition, too.

The common iconography of the rishis in postepic times is that of ascetics wearing the yellow garb and the holy thread, holding in their hands a stick and either a book or a water-vessel.

—Ulrike Niklas

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Prophets; Rama; Sages

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Ritual

In general, the individual, charismatic holy people of the world, whatever their religion, have deemphasized ritual in favor of teaching themselves and others a more personal mode of conduct with the divine. Some, however, have introduced new rituals, usually in an effort to win the broader populace over to a life of closer contact with divine forces.

The earliest known antiritual movement was that led by the Persian prophet Zoroaster, perhaps as early as 1400 B.C.E. He was a priest who was apparently discontent with “empty ritual” and emphasized human existence as a much more personal and active struggle between good and evil. What Zoroaster reacted against was an Indo-European emphasis on ritual that spread throughout the vast area of Indo-European culture, provoking many responses over many centuries. A great Hindu antiritual movement began in the sixth century B.C.E. with the rise of a class of wandering mendicants, the *shramanas*, who challenged traditional belief in the value of sacrifice and instead focused on individual responsibility. The power of ritual practice can be seen especially clearly in India, though, as reformer after reformer continued to rise against many of the same rituals. For example, the *sants*, poet-saints of northern India, denied the value of brahmin sacrifices and found traditional notions of pollution and purity artificial. So did twelfth-century reformers such as Basava, who found that caste and ritual impeded religious progress. So did the *bhakti* (devotional Hindu) movement of the later medieval period. Even in the twentieth century, religious reformers continued to urge a deritualization of Indian society, most notably trying to break down all or part of the caste system.

Other religions originating in the Indian subcontinent also owe their start to antiritual teaching. For example, the first Sikh guru, Nanak (1469–1539), purposely broke traditional rituals and rules of conduct. A tale is told that when he visited Mecca (Sikhism’s other mother religion is Islam), he lay with his feet toward a *mihrab* (niche that marks the direction of Mecca). When rebuked, Nanak asked the man who had criticized him to drag his feet toward a place where God was *not*—making a clear case against consecrated ritual space. Buddhism, too, growing out of the Indian shramana movement, turned strongly against ritual as the way to holiness. In Buddhism, clinging to rules and rituals in the belief that they are sufficient to bring about holiness is one of the four kinds of clinging to existence, one of the ten fetters that bind a person to the cycle of rebirth. Buddhism soon developed its own rituals, and later reformers came to strip them away as useless. Thus the southern Indian Bodhidharma (d.

c. 530?), according to legend, came to China to bring the teaching that rituals, texts, and practices are useless and the true path to holiness is spontaneous enlightenment. This was the beginning of the Chan school, and Bodhidharma’s successors continued this deritualization, one, for example, going so far as to chop up a Buddha image to make a fire. In China, the strong ritual component of Confucianism and Daoism also drew a negative response. For example, Lo Ching (1443–1527), who founded an eclectic religion in China, attacked the emptiness of ritual and prayer—and one branch of his school has brought back a ritual element. Huineng (638–713), who founded Chogye Buddhism in Korea, stripped away most of the formal elements in favor of emphasis on the spiritual life.

Christianity and Judaism, both originally defined in mostly nonritual terms, have also both developed complex systems of ritual that then provoked a reaction by charismatic holy people. Christianity, like Buddhism, owes much of its spread in the Greco-Roman world to the conventional emphasis on sacrifices and rituals rather than personal contact with the divine. In its origins, like other Jewish reform movements at the beginning of the Common Era, Christianity emphasized individual responsibility. But direct contact with God is a frightening thing, and a body of rituals developed to mediate. This, in turn, provoked late medieval responses, culminating in the reformation movements of sixteenth-century Europe. Reformers such as Martin Luther (1483–1546) and John Calvin (1509–1564) condemned “empty” and “useless” ritual in favor of personal, inner change.

Reformers have thus tended to treat ritual in very black-and-white terms, often seeing it as an impediment to personal faith, and tending to ignore that rituals have come into existence in the first place as a channel to the divine. Often reformers have had their way because the *particular* ritual no longer satisfied the need it was created to fill, but the general populace—and sometimes holy people themselves—sometimes still feel the need for a new, better ritual suited to their own needs. This is the other side of the coin: Although many holy people have condemned ritual, many others have been regarded as holy because they have provided rituals esteemed as beneficial in the quest for the divine. There is no clear breakdown between different religions. Although African and Amerindian indigenous religions put more stress, at least in surviving evidence, on the great creators of ritual, new ritual specialists have grown up in most of the world religions, when time or place has made them necessary.

In Amerindian and African religions, the gods have often helped humankind by providing a specific ritual through the medium of the holy person. For example, the Lakota Sioux have seven sacred rites, given to the people long ago, it is believed, by the ancestral figure White Buffalo Woman. At other

times, the ritual has been more specific—as, for example, in the ritual that God supposedly taught the Senegalese prophet Alinesitoué Diatta (1920–1944) to carry out to avert drought. Perhaps the furthest-reaching case of a ritual taught by a holy person, though, comes from Japan, with several variants of a movement sometimes called “Amidism.” Amida Buddha, in essence, promised salvation to all who chanted his name. Holy men such as Ippen (1239–1289) and Honen (1133–1212) developed this into a full ritual structure. Ippen taught people to chant the name of Amida Buddha while dancing in a circle beating drums and ringing bells.

Although Amidism was a popular movement, intellectual holy people have also argued for the efficacy of ritual. The Neoplatonist philosopher Iamblichus (c. 240–325) argued that philosophy alone cannot save the human soul; to do that, one needs specific rituals. The Japanese Zen teacher Bankei Eitaku (1622–1693), founder of the Rinzaï school, taught his disciples to transcend preoccupation by means of ritual. Similarly, the sufi Baha’ ud-din Zakariyya (1183–1262) concentrated on ritual prayer, the *salat*, as a means to attain union with God, like many other sufis who stressed the need to internalize religious ritual, not to do away with it. Some holy people have even found ritual worth dying for. Many of the early modern Catholic Christian martyrs died in defense of traditional Christian ritual practices at the hands of Protestants. And the Russian patriarch Nikon (1605–1681) launched a massive campaign to purify ritual, making it conform to “correct” Greek usage. He was willing to kill to achieve his goals, and the head of the “Old Believer” resistance, Avvakum (1620/1621–1682), was ultimately willing to die at the stake rather than give up the established rituals of his religion.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Alinesitoué Diatta; Avvakum; Basavanna; Bodhidharma; Calvin, John; Honen; Iamblichus; Ippen; Luther, Martin; Nanak; Nikon; Priests; Shramanas; Zakariyya, Baha’ ud-din; Zoroaster

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Robert of Arbrissel

(c. 1047–1117 C.E.)

Christian preacher, reformer

Robert of Arbrissel was a Breton hermit, an itinerant preacher, a church reformer, and the founder of the abbey of Fontevrault. The abbey was remarkable as an early “double” monastery of men and women.

Born in Brittany in about 1047, Robert studied at Paris then became archdeacon of Rennes. Deeply dedicated to the contemporary movement to reform clerical life, he engen-

dered the hostility of the clergy and in 1093 fled to the forest of Craon, there taking up a rigorous ascetic life in company with a remarkable group of hermits that included Bernard of Tiron and Vitalis of Mortain, both later monastic reformers. He attracted many followers, for whom he founded at La Roé in 1096 a house of “regular canons,” a newer, more flexible style of monastic community than others existing at the time.

Not satisfied with monastic seclusion, Robert took up the commission of Pope Urban II and embarked upon a career as a popular preacher against clerical marriage, purchase of clerical offices, and corruption. Attired in hair shirt and threadbare cloak, his feet unshod, sporting a long, unkempt beard, Robert cut a figure reminiscent of John the Baptist and inspired a contemporary chronicler to quip that he lacked only a club to complete the outfit of a wild madman. His virulent preaching attracted particular admiration among the poor, and he devoted special attention to lepers and prostitutes. He preached reform of life and personal asceticism while at the same time criticizing clerical corruption. These activities earned the hostility of clergy throughout western France. In these respects, commentators have noted, he was difficult to distinguish from other radical preachers of the day whose doctrines and conflict with bishops earned them condemnation and persecution as heretics.

Robert sent many of his followers to take up monastic life, but these provoked the disapproval of the canons at La Roé. Robert consequently resigned as abbot and established a new monastery at Fontevrault to embody his ascetic and reforming ideals. Robert was one of the earliest monastic founders to include women fully into the design of his community, and Fontevrault was one of the earliest “double” monasteries of the high Middle Ages, consisting of two communities, one of women and one of men, governed by the abbess of the women’s community. The pattern was imitated by other orders, most notably that of Gilbert of Sempringham in the twelfth century, and survived until the French Revolution. A community of teaching sisters, some of whom had been members of the old Fontevrault, reconstituted itself in the early 1800s but never included men.

—Patrick J. Nugent

See also: Gilbert of Sempringham; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Roch

(c. 1293–c. 1327 C.E.)

Christian caregiver

Montpellier, France, honors its local saint, Roch, who was born there in about 1293. After going on a pilgrimage to Rome and traveling throughout Italy, where he cared for people stricken with the plague, Roch returned home and died there under unusual circumstances in approximately 1327.

Roch's parents died when he was twenty years old. Before setting out on the pilgrimage, Roch distributed two-thirds of his inheritance to the poor and gave the rest to his uncle, the governor. When he returned home several years later, Montpellier was involved in a civil war. Mistaken for an insurgent, he was taken to the governor, who, not recognizing his nephew, condemned him to prison. He died there five years later. Upon his death, his uncle identified him by the cross-shaped birthmark on his chest. Roch incarnates the biblical type who suffers in secret.

Through the ages, painters and sculptors, such as Rubens, Tintoretto, and Louis David, have helped to popularize his



Roch, displaying the plague sore on his leg, accompanied by his faithful dog. Salisbury Cathedral, England, fifteenth century. (Art Directors)

image. Represented as a pilgrim with a staff, generally pointing to a wound on his thigh, he is accompanied by a dog, the faithful friend who took food to him in the forest near Piacenza where he was affected by the plague.

Known as the saint of pestilence, Roch is also the patron of travelers and pilgrims.

European cities that consider him their patron, including Patrica, Italy, celebrate his feast day on August 16, the day after the Feast of the Assumption. People who have left home to return to celebrate the last summer holidays, and the Feast of St. Roch is part of this late-summer celebration. Families reunite and renew ties of kinship. As a sign of communal solidarity, they join old friends and neighbors at festivities that underline social cohesion.

In 1925, a group of immigrants from Patrica, Italy, organized the festivities for the Feast of St. Roch, or San Rocco, as he is called in Italy, in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. Today, the feast lasts for three days. It begins with a mass at St. Titus Roman Catholic Church, which is followed by a procession through the streets of a designated section of town. The procession aims to invoke the blessings of God for a good harvest, as in the past, or for good health and fortune. Besides the religious representatives, the procession includes the statue of the saint, the festival band playing religious and folk songs, and princesses representing various Italian American religious and social clubs. Hometown sports heroes, political dignitaries, and people from other professions who have returned for the celebration might also join the procession. In addition to the parish dinner, there are dances and organized sports. Booths are set up at the park, where people may sample local culinary delicacies or play games of chance. The highlight of the last day is the doll dance, which recalls non-Christian rituals. A fireworks display marks the end of the public celebration of the holiday.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Rolle, Richard

(c. 1300–1349 C.E.)

Christian mystic, author

Richard Rolle of Hampole, a Christian mystic, author, and lay hermit, was the first of a group known as the four-

teenth-century English mystics. He is notable for the enormous influence he exerted over popular piety in the next two centuries. Rolle represents those late medieval mystics important for their desire to communicate their experiences in the vernacular as well as in Latin, their preference for the solitary life, and their affective, emotional piety centered on love and on devotion to the humanity and sufferings of Christ and to his holy name. He was part of a new trend in medieval spirituality in which it appeared possible for people living in the world to achieve the highest spiritual perfection, and that revealed itself in the enormous amount of literature produced in this period for spiritual and ethical instruction of laypeople as well as clerics. Rolle and others were concerned with the juxtaposition of the contemplative life with the active life in the world.

Little is known concerning the life of Rolle, who spent some thirty-one years living as a hermit. Originally from Thornton in the diocese of York, where he was born in about 1300, Rolle attended Oxford for a number of years but left at nineteen to become a hermit in a forest near home, fashioning a makeshift hermit's costume from two of his sister's tunics. After his abandonment of a cell within the house of a local squire, there is little evidence for the movements of Rolle until shortly before his death. He died in 1349, possibly of the plague, at the convent of Cistercian nuns at Hampole. He is buried in their graveyard.

Richard Rolle was a prolific author in both Latin and the vernacular and in a number of genres, including scriptural commentaries, mystical treatises, and poetry. These works were written for instruction and spiritual guidance. *Emendatio Vitae* (The mending of life) calls for adoption of the eremitical life and articulates the value of such practices as poverty, prayer, and meditation in leading one to contemplation and the love of God. It also describes the three stages of love: insuperable, inseparable, and singular. It is the love of Christ, an affective piety, a desire for an intimate union between Jesus and the soul that consumes Rolle, a love articulated in the *Incendium Amoris* (Fire of love), which describes his spiritual progress first as the opening of heaven's door and then in terms of receiving the gifts of heat, sweetness, and song (*calor, dulcor, canor*), a characteristic terminology for the author that results in a mystical ecstasy constituting a foretaste of the vision of God to be realized in heaven, the true homeland of the soul.

Rolle also wrote influential works in English. These include commentaries on the Psalms, letters written for women, such as *The Form of Perfect Living*, and meditations on the passion that concentrate affectively and quite graphically on the sufferings of Jesus in order to stimulate the reader to meditation and penance.

—Robert W. Zajkowski

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Devotion; Hermits; Mysticism and Holy People

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Romanos the Melodist

(c. 490–c. 560 C.E.)

Christian hymn writer

Called the preeminent and most original of the Byzantine hymn writers and religious poets of the Eastern church, Romanos was a Syrian of Jewish origin, born in about 490, who served as a deacon in Beirut before arriving in Constantinople during the reign of Anastasius I (r. 491–518). He is credited with writing more than 1,000 hymns during his lifetime, of which approximately eighty have survived to the present day, none with music. According to legend, the Virgin Mary visited Romanos in a dream one Christmas Eve and gave him a scroll to eat that gave him the ability to write poetry, which he immediately used to write and sing his most famous work, *On the Nativity I*. His authorship of the monumental *Akathistos* (The "not sitting") hymn has been suggested but is questionable.

Romanos used and developed the *kontakion*, a complex verse form of twenty-four stanzas, each a perfect imitation of the first. The metrical system is based on stress-accent closely tied to the text. A short prefatory stanza called the *koukoulion*, which was independent both metrically and melodically from the rest of the poem, often preceded the *kontakion*. Romanos's use of the Greek language throughout his works helped to standardize its usage and vocabulary for centuries to come.

Kontakions were sung after the reading of the gospel in the morning office, and their use as verse sermons influenced their themes and functions in the Greek liturgy. Themes from the Old Testament, deeds of martyrs and saints, and the life and ministry of Christ are often woven together by Romanos in his poetry. Romanos brought the direct and indirect influence of his Syrian background into his lyrics, and this had a considerable influence on the Greek

language and those hymnodists who followed him. Some scholars regard Romanos as the greatest religious poet of all time. His feast day is celebrated on October 1.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Prophets

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Romanovs

(d. 1918 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox rulers

The last rulers of Russia—Nicholas and Alexandra—and their five children (Olga, Tatiana, Maria, Anastasia, and Alexis) were murdered on July 17, 1918, in Ekaterinburg, Russia, on orders from the local Bolshevik party authority, and ultimately on orders from Vladimir I. Lenin himself. They were unofficially venerated in Russia and among émigrés for decades before the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad canonized them in 1981. The Moscow patriarchate followed in 2000. Categorized as “royal martyrs” by the Church Abroad and as “passion-bearers” by the Moscow church, the Romanovs occupy a special category of saints venerated less for the way they lived than the way they died.

Like the first saints in Russian history—Boris and Gleb, who died in 1015—Nicholas and Alexandra were admired for the Christlike way that they lived after their abdication in March 1917. Their letters, diaries, and servants’ testimony all speak of their calm acceptance of their fate. Their “fatalism” appeared even before the Revolution. Many observers felt that when faced with revolutionary strife in his capital and across Russia in 1905 and 1917, Nicholas failed to respond constructively out of his conviction that Russia’s fate, and his own, were ordained by God alone. This essentially mystical approach to rulership, unique in Europe in the twentieth century, probably began at Nicholas’s coronation. Sources from the time, including the tsar’s own reflections on the event, suggest that he viewed his coronation as a sacrament, and that from that moment on he thought his rule was a sacred trust from heaven.

Similarly, the last empress of Russia had a markedly mystical, some even claim hysterical, approach to Orthodox worship and practice. Born a Lutheran, Alexandra (née Alix) converted to Orthodoxy in 1894 and, by all accounts, embraced her new religion zealously, attending services regularly, fasting, and following a stringent prayer regimen. Both

Alexandra and Nicholas became even more devout after the birth in 1904 of their son, Alexis, who was afflicted with hemophilia. This turned disastrous for the royal couple and for Russia when the search for a cure led them to seek out “holy people”—some no more than charlatans—to find a cure for their heir. Both consented to give audiences to healers of various sorts, and even to hold séances. Their obsession with Alexis’s hemophilia best accounts for the appearance of Grigorii Rasputin to the inner circle of the imperial family. His apparent ability to control Alexis’s bleeding episodes—perhaps through hypnosis, perhaps by advising the empress not to permit aspirin to be administered to the boy to relieve the pain during his bouts with the disease (aspirin’s blood-thinning qualities being unknown at the time)—secured his place at court and the empress’s (and to a point, the emperor’s) protection, despite his debauched lifestyle and meddling influence on domestic policies, especially during World War I when Nicholas was away at the front.

Though controversial both as rulers and as “saints,” most observers agreed that their piety was sincere and that, regardless of how poorly the emperor ruled, his and his wife’s behavior after their abdication was dignified and charitable. Even their guards noted their kindness. Their quiet acceptance of imprisonment appears to have been born of Orthodox notions of humility and spirituality; indeed, it seems modeled upon it. Ridiculed as a ruler for his weakness and anachronism, Nicholas II was a modern model of the kind of humility and sacrifice rare for royalty. In this sense, the recent recognition of the royal family as passion-bearers and martyrs seems less a political decision by a Russian church keen to help Russia exonerate itself from its bloody past than an appropriate designation of the Romanovs into a legitimate and ancient category of Orthodox saints.

Other Romanovs were massacred between February 1918 and January 1919 and are likewise regarded as martyrs. Among these is Grand Duchess Elizabeth, Empress Alexandra’s sister. She had become a nun when widowed in 1905 and had founded an order of nuns devoted to charity and social work. Her body was recovered and today is interred at St. Mary Magdalene’s Convent on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. One of the first new churches constructed in Russia after the fall of Soviet power was dedicated to the Royal Martyr Elizabeth.

—Russell E. Martin

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Orthodoxy and Saints; Rulers as Holy People

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Romero, Oscar

(1917–1980 C.E.)

Roman Catholic archbishop, martyr

Oscar Romero, the Roman Catholic archbishop of San Salvador who was assassinated in 1980 while celebrating mass, was born on August 15, 1917, in eastern El Salvador. He attended the town school until the age of twelve or thirteen, when he became a carpenter's apprentice. However, the course of his life was changed when he decided that he wanted to be a priest. He was ordained in Rome in 1942. Early in his ecclesiastical career, Romero became famous for his preaching. He was quickly promoted, receiving the title "monsignor" in 1967. He was named auxiliary bishop of San Salvador in 1970 and became bishop of Santiago de María in 1974. Romero became archbishop of San Salvador on February 14, 1977. That same year, in a blatantly fraudulent election, General Carlos Humberto Romero came into power. General Romero was one of a long line of dictators who had ruled El Salvador since 1932, when a popular insurrection had been suppressed by military force.

Before becoming archbishop, Romero had been unwilling to address government-imposed oppression and violence publicly. However, several acts of violence that occurred between his nomination and General Romero's ascendancy on July 1 seem to have been a turning point for him. Most significant was the March 13 shooting of his friend, the Jesuit Rutilio Grande, along with an elderly man and a young boy, while on his way to say mass. In his first act of public protest, the archbishop did not attend the general's inauguration. He explained in a homily that his absence was intended to indicate that the church was open to dialogue but only under certain conditions of governmental openness and sincerity. He followed his protest with a second pastoral letter after the general's inaugural address. As repression and acts of violence continued through 1979, Oscar Romero became known for his support of human rights in his country. On May 8, soldiers fired into a demonstration in front of the cathedral, leaving twenty-five people dead. On May 22 at a demonstration at the Venezuelan embassy, a similar shooting left fourteen dead. It was events such as these that led Archbishop Romero to address violence in his fourth pastoral letter.

In 1979, the government of Humberto Romero was overthrown, and the new regime took the level of oppression to new heights. In response, Romero became increasingly outspoken, calling on the government to put a stop to the injustice. He even wrote a letter to U.S. President Jimmy Carter requesting that the United States cease sending arms to El Salvador. On March 23, he gave a homily in which he ordered the government to "stop the repression." This homily is often considered the catalyst for his assassination, which occurred the next day, March 24, 1980, in a hospital chapel in San Salvador. Almost immediately after his death, the archbishop was hailed a saint by the local people and by many others throughout the world.

—Melissa L. Smeltzer and Todd M. Goodson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People

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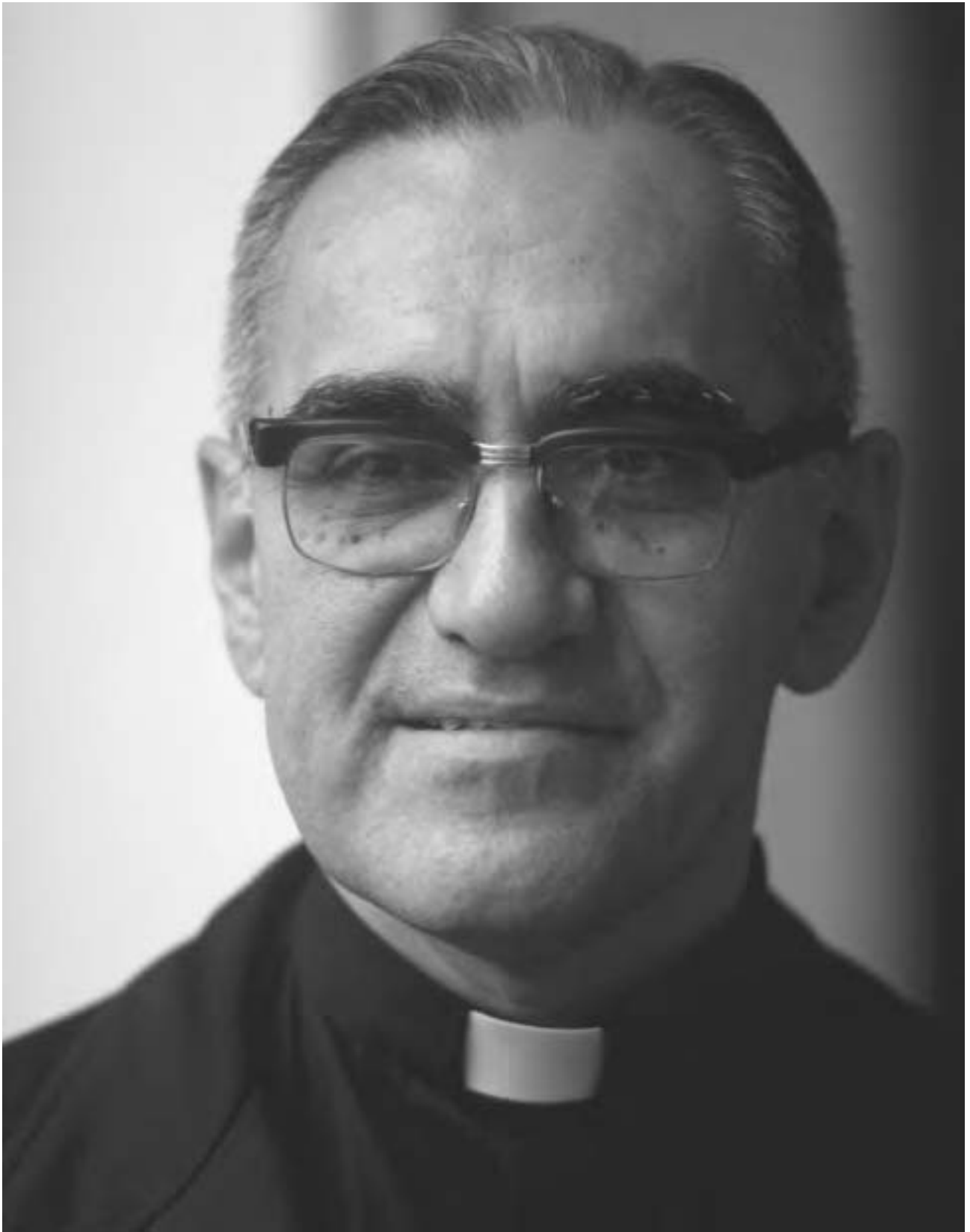
Romuald of Ravenna

(c. 951–1027 C.E.)

Christian hermit, reformer

Romuald, who was called "the father of reasonable hermits who live under a rule" by his first biographer, Peter Damian, in the eleventh century, was born to a noble family in the northern Italian city of Ravenna in about 951. Because he was present when his father killed his uncle in a duel, he entered the newly reformed monastery of Sant' Apollinare in Classe in 973 to perform the statutory forty-day penance for participating in homicide. Repeated visions of St. Apollinare compelled him to stay and become a monk.

Romuald embraced the monastic life with fervor, repeatedly criticizing the lax observation of the rule during his novitiate at Sant' Apollinare; after three years, he requested (and was granted) leave to join the cluster of hermits who had gathered around Marinus in the Veneto, an ascetic who followed neither rule nor master in the eremitical life. Romuald spent four years with Marinus and his followers as a wandering hermit in central and northern Italy until, in 978, on the invitation of Abbot Guarinus of Cuxa, they left Italy for a hermitage outside Guarinus's monastery in the Pyrenees. Romuald and Marinus were accompanied on their



Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated in 1980 because of his crusade for human rights in El Salvador. (Corbis)

journey by Peter Orseolo (who had resigned as doge of Venice to enter the religious life) and two Venetian noblemen. In their small hermitage, they led a life of exceptional asceticism, engaging in fasting, manual labor, and agriculture. Romuald devoted himself to the study of the early monastic authors, especially John Cassian (c. 360–c. 433), and from this devised what he saw as the perfect eremitical fast.

Ten years later, Romuald returned to Italy to prevent his father from leaving his monastery. He then took up a peripatetic career as a monastic reformer fighting abuses in existing monasteries and establishing a large number of new hermitages and monasteries. As Romuald traveled, he gathered disciples together and either lived with them for a while as hermits or built a monastery for them while leading a reclusive life himself. According to Peter Damian, Romuald “burned to do good so that he was never content with what he had done and while at work on some project would soon be rushing off to something different, so that it looked as if he wanted to turn the whole world into a hermitage” (ch. 37). In the late 990s, Romuald returned to St. Apollinare as abbot, a position he accepted only after pressure from Emperor Otto III. The uncompromisingly strict way of life that he imposed at St. Apollinare made him unpopular with the community—his *vita* records the complaints about the appalling conditions he expected his followers to live in—and he soon resigned. The *Sacro Eremo* (Holy Hermitage) of Camaldoli was founded around 1023 on land where Romuald reportedly had a vision of his white-clad disciples climbing a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, where they were received by Christ. This community eventually became the center of the reform movement he inspired, although there is no evidence to suggest that he or his contemporaries saw Camaldoli as more important than the other houses he founded or reformed.

Although Romuald left no rule of his own, he laid the foundation for the establishment of a new kind of eremitism, one with definite rules and that could easily become institutionalized into a monastic community without losing its austere and eremitical character. The eremitic monastic communities he founded were eventually united into a congregation by Pope Alexander II in 1072. Romuald’s feast day is now celebrated June 19; it was previously celebrated February 7.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; John Cassian; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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See **John XXIII**

Root, Martha Louise

(1872–1939 C.E.)

Baha’i missionary

In 1939, soon after her death, Martha Root was called by the guardian of the Baha’i faith the foremost Hand of the Cause of God, the highest spiritual station a Baha’i can attain. Years before, the guardian, Shoghi Effendi, had heralded her as a unique apostle of Baha’u’llah (1817–1892). Although she was no longer young, had limited financial means, had cancer, and was afraid, lonely, and physically frail, she traveled several times around the world during eight lengthy trips to disseminate the Baha’i faith in as many parts of the globe as possible. She is primarily remembered for her intrepid, pioneering, audacious, and persevering spirit.

Martha Root, born in 1872, was raised in Pennsylvania and attended Oberlin College, but she eventually graduated from the University of Chicago in 1895. Her professional career began as a teacher, principal, and then a lecturer. However, in 1900 she was able to establish herself as a journalist. She became a Baha’i in 1909 and met ‘Abdu’l-Baha in 1912. This was a pivotal experience in her spiritual development. In 1915, supporting herself as a journalist supplying stories to U.S. newspapers and magazines, she departed on her first trip for the Baha’i faith, traveling to Europe, Egypt, Asia, and Hawaii. In Egypt, she served as an early foreign correspondent, reporting on the displacement of the Jews from Palestine by the Ottoman Empire. In 1919, she left for South America, the Caribbean, and the southern coast of the United States. After some short travels in Canada and the United States, in 1921 she traveled to Mexico and Guatemala. When her mother died, she remained at home to care for her father. When her father died in 1922, she was free to dedicate herself to traveling to spread her religion, barely supporting herself through journalism and odd jobs.

Root started with a cross-country trip through the United States, and then from 1923 to 1925 went to Australia and New Zealand, Asia, and Africa. During the next four years, she traveled in Palestine, Europe, and Turkey. In Palestine she completed a pilgrimage to the Baha’i holy shrines and

met Shoghi Effendi. From the end of 1929 to 1931, starting with Egypt, she crisscrossed the Middle East, Asia, and Hawaii. During this time she was again able to meet Shoghi Effendi. While in Iran, she gathered material and wrote the first book ever published on Tahirih (1817–1852). After spending one year traveling in the United States, from 1932 to 1936 she roamed Europe, including the Balkans, and the European part of Turkey. After a ten-month semi-rest from traveling, which she spent in the United States, the following two years saw her return to Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. Martha Root, soaring in what she called “spiritual skylarking,” braved through strikes, epidemics, illness, extreme fatigue, revolutions, civil strife, bombing, war, and rigorous forms of transportation, including an icy crossing of the Andes by mule, to accomplish her goal of disseminating the Baha’i teachings. She finally succumbed to cancer and died in Hawaii, where a monument was erected in her honor.

—Loni Bramson

See also: ‘Abdu’l-Baha; Baha’i Faith and Holy People; Baha’u’llah; Mission; Shoghi Effendi; Tahirih

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Rose of Lima

(1586–1617 C.E.)

Roman Catholic visionary, ascetic

Isabella de Flores, known as Rose of Lima, patron saint of the Americas and the Philippines, was the first canonized saint of the New World. Born as one of eleven (or thirteen) children to Caspar del Flores and Maria del Oliva in Lima, Peru, in 1586, Isabella evidenced, at a very young age, a deep and passionate spirituality that was sometimes manifested by intense mortification of the flesh. Although raised in a household of traditional middle-class values, Isabella rejected the social expectations of her parents and the materialism of her Spanish community in Lima and devoted herself instead to continual prayer, deep contemplation, and works. She had a special devotion to the infant Jesus and the Virgin Mary. Isabella’s family fell into economic ruin, and to alleviate their burden, Isabella toiled at sewing and garden work. However, for ten years she refused their urgent request that she marry, insisting that she be allowed to live a life of purity and devotion. She was emboldened in her request by her professed admiration of the life of Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), who would remain her role model for her entire life, and by her mystical visions.

Finally relenting, her parents permitted Isabella to enter the Third Order of St. Dominic as “Rose of St. Mary” when she was twenty years old. Rose remained at her parents’ home (as had Catherine of Siena), living in a garden hut, and

continued to help support her family with her exquisite needlework and with her gardening, growing and selling flowers of great beauty. She discovered herbal remedies from the lore of folk medicine and went about the streets of Lima distributing such medicines to the poor, or welcomed the poor to her “infirmary” in the garden. Rose continued to live a pious life, however, submitting herself to grave acts of penance and deep prayer that might last up to three hours a day. She experienced frequent visions and ecstatic revelations, during which she presented her acts of penance as offerings for the salvation of the souls in Purgatory.

Rose devoted herself to the native Peruvian Indians, whose conversion she sought but not at the expense of their physical and emotional well-being; nevertheless, she was constantly countered in her attempts by the Spanish land barons who continued to exploit and persecute the native peoples. By 1614, however, Rose began to suffer greatly from asthma and severe arthritis, and she also began to be haunted by strange and disturbing nightmares. Her only source of comfort came from her close alliance with another Peruvian saint, the Dominican Martin de Porres, who ministered to her spiritual concerns. She died, at age thirty-one, in 1617 after a trying bout of fever and paralysis. She was canonized in 1671, and her feast day is August 23.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Catherine of Siena; Christianity and Holy People; Martin de Porres; Models; Prophets; Repentance and Holy People

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Rúhíyyih Khánum

(1910–2000 C.E.)

Baha’i leader, missionary

Rúhíyyih Khánum, or Mary Sutherland Maxwell Rabbani, born in 1910, was the last link to Baha’u’llah’s holy family. Her full married name, given to her by her husband, Shoghi Effendi, guardian of the Baha’i faith, was Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum. Her parents held eminent positions within the Baha’i community. Her mother, May Bolles Maxwell, played a pivotal role in introducing the Baha’i faith to Europe and Canada. William Sutherland Maxwell, her father, was a well-known architect. In 1951, he was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God, the highest spiritual station that a Baha’i can attain. Popular Baha’i history recounts that Rúhíyyih Khánum’s parents were able to conceive her through a miraculous intervention by ‘Abdu’l-Baha. Amatu’l-Bahá’s formal schooling was erratic; she was primarily educated by her parents to serve the Baha’i faith. In 1923–1924, May Maxwell took her daughter on a year-long trip, making

two lengthy pilgrimages to the Baha'i holy shrines in Palestine. These were Rúhíyyih Khánúm's first meetings with Shoghi Effendi. Two years later, she accompanied two of her mother's closest friends on another pilgrimage, again meeting the guardian.

These trips galvanized her into becoming a dynamic Baha'i youth. She began what became a lifelong effort working for peace, and at fifteen years old she was elected treasurer of the executive committee of the Fellowship of Canadian Youth for Peace. By 1928, she was actively involved in interracial activities. This developed into a lifelong passion; Rúhíyyih Khánúm was a tireless champion of the rights of indigenous peoples. By the time she was nineteen, she was an experienced public speaker. She continued to speak to audiences on the Baha'i faith throughout her life, becoming one of the religion's most prominent spokespersons.

From her adolescence, Rúhíyyih Khánúm was trained by her mother to travel with the goal of disseminating the Baha'i faith. In 1935, she began her first major trip to propagate the faith, traveling to Germany with cousins for two years. Eventually, she traveled around the world to teach the Baha'i faith. Her father also had an important impact on her education, especially because she accompanied him when he attended official functions. Eventually, she became the Baha'i faith's premier official representative and met with royalty and rulers around the world. Rúhíyyih Khánúm also fulfilled her lifelong dream of becoming an author and wrote poetry and other works. In 1937, she and her mother were invited by Shoghi Effendi for another pilgrimage. It was during this visit that her marriage to Shoghi Effendi was arranged. Rúhíyyih Khánúm quickly became the guardian's main support and assistant. In 1952, he appointed her a Hand of the Cause of God and began to send her around the world as his personal representative.

In 1957, when Shoghi Effendi and Rúhíyyih Khánúm were in London, the guardian died with no successor and no will and testament. Rúhíyyih Khánúm played a crucial role in maintaining the unity of the Baha'i faith during the years that followed. In 1963, when the Universal House of Justice was elected, she felt free to begin traveling around the world to again propagate the Baha'i faith and consolidate Baha'i communities. She traveled to more than 180 countries. Three of her most memorable trips were those to India in 1964, to Africa from 1969 to 1973, and to the Amazon Basin and the Andes in 1975.

—Loni Bramson

See also: Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Gender and Holy People; Mission; Shoghi Effendi

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Rulers as Holy People

Throughout the premodern world and in many countries today, the ruler of a territory has often played a decisive role in religion. Subjects have sometimes worshipped kings or queens as gods, for example, acknowledged all of their rulers as mediators to the holy, or recognized only certain rulers as holy owing to particular virtues—or, more often, because of their services in aiding the spread of the religion that they follow. It is often the ruler who has “made things happen,” enabling right religious practice. Thus, Hinduism accepts the idea of a *cakravartin*, a “wheel turner”—a universal and ideal ruler who in his or her own person creates a union between heaven and earth. This concept was expanded in Buddhism and Jainism to include the ethical sovereign, who is less universal but still makes the practice of right religion possible—figures such as the Indian Buddhist emperor Ashoka in the third century B.C.E. Rulers are also often regarded as the figures who have raised humankind above the beasts in the first place. The sage-emperors of China fit into this category, as does the legendary Hindu Prithu, said to be the first rightful monarch on earth and the one who introduced agriculture. The role of the ruler is central to Confucius's teaching: If a ruler is righteous, the subjects will be also. Indeed, many societies have believed with the Confucians that for harmony in the world society *must* be hierarchical, with a single ruler at the top.

Several societies have been ruled by god-kings. The ancient Greeks developed a strong ruler cult. It is hard to know how much the average person regarded them as gods in actuality, but certainly the cult helped these rulers to operate in the political sphere at least from the time of Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.). This practice was borrowed by Roman emperors, who received prayers and were regarded as important protectors and intermediaries for the Roman people. These were holy people by fiat, people who claimed the throne and took divine trappings as part of the regalia of office. Greater evidence that typical people did indeed regard rulers as divine in some way comes from regions with a strong pattern of hereditary kingship. In ancient Egypt, for example, the pharaohs were both the direct descendants of the previous ruler and specially begotten by a god. The rulers of Japan are said to be direct descendants of the sun goddess Amaterasu—the current emperor, Akihito (r. 1989–) is the 124th in the line. But he himself is (or was, until 1946, when his father, Emperor Hirohito [r. 1926–1989] forswore his divinity) a “manifest kami,” a part of the realm of the divine.

The Khmer rulers of what is now Cambodia included god-kings such as Suryavarman II (r. 1112–1150), who built the great temple complex of Angkor Wat as his tomb. It should be noted, though, that these are cases of *corporate* holiness, rather than individual holiness, that is, deriving from a special function held in society rather than personal attributes.

Much more commonly, rulers have authority by right of divine descent. For example, the Inca rulers were believed to be offspring of the sun god, as are the emperors of Japan. Such kinship puts rulers in a special mediatory position, able to intercede between heaven and earth, or between the people and the ancestors, as with Zulu kings and their kinship group. Such rulers often take on the attributes of priest as well as king. For example, this pattern appears in the Amerindian Mississippian cultures of the southeastern United States. As told in eighteenth-century accounts of the Natchez Indians, these groups were ruled by a priest-king called “the great sun” who was the most important access the population had to the gods; the collapse of the great chiefdoms with the Spanish invasion thus caused a spiritual crisis beside which the political crisis of these people paled. Mesoamerican rulers joined their priests in practicing auto-sacrifice in imitation of the gods.

In such cases, it is usually impossible to tell whether the religious or the ruling function came first; most likely, the distinction between the two is a false one in many societies. In more recent cases, however, religious rulers, either as individuals or as part of a lineage, have assumed political power, creating theocracies. The first ruler of this sort and sometimes all his successors are regarded to be particularly holy people. Three examples show the range of this idea: the Shi’a imams, the dalai lamas, and the Christian popes. Shi’a imams claim their religious and political authority by right of descent from Muhammad (570–632); all imams are figures of particular holiness, and all have special rights to decide matters of doctrine. Even when they haven’t actually ruled, they have claimed the *right* to rule by hereditary descent. This has held true even when the imam seemed to reject the tenets of his own religion. Thus, when the Nazari Isma’ili imam Jalal al-Din Hasan III (1166–1221) of northern Iran proclaimed his adherence to Sunni rather than Shi’i Islam, his people accepted this as a religious dissimulation by their infallible imam. The Buddhist dalai lamas of Tibet have also been secular as well as religious leaders since the time of Losang Gyatso (1617–1682), the “Great Fifth.” In this case, the religious leader moved into a political vacuum, with Mongol help uniting the three provinces of Tibet, and proved able to perpetuate political authority by right of religious authority, at least until the Chinese invasion, and even now in the Tibetan diaspora. The popes, bishops of Rome, similarly moved to fill a political vacuum as the Roman Empire disintegrated in the fifth century, controlling a small but vital area

of central Italy, the Papal State, until the late nineteenth century. In this case, the popes usually fought for their rights as ruler of an independent state to preserve their freedom of action, subordinating the needs of the Papal State to their much more central religious role of spiritual authority over a much broader Christian world.

Sometimes, according to popular belief, a god or gods may appoint particular rulers as divine instruments for specific purposes. This is an important theme in early Judaism, including not only the ancient judges—temporary leaders appointed by God to deal with a particular threat—but also the kings and even the sixth-century B.C.E. Persian ruler Cyrus the Great, whom Isaiah calls “messiah” and recognizes as the instrument of God. Such rulers *become* holy upon divine election—as, for example, when the spirit of God came upon David when he was anointed (1 Sam. 16:13). Sassanian and Abbasid rulers of the Middle East were recognized as the “shadow of God on earth.” But this concept is most developed in China, where the emperor was believed to have special approval of heaven. This “mandate of heaven,” however, could be lost if the ruler fell from a high standard of virtue, just as Israelite rulers could win God’s displeasure. Less critical was the idea of the “divine right of kings” as it developed in Christian Europe. Rulers were anointed by God for their office, and nobody had a right to remove them but God alone, said this doctrine. Thus, even such a thoroughly incompetent ruler as Charles I (r. 1625–1649) of England could be venerated as a martyr after his own subjects rebelled and eventually executed him, because he had been ruling by the will of God. The even more disastrous last rulers of Russia, Nicholas and Alexandra (r. 1895–1917; d. 1918) of the Romanov family, were canonized for a combination of belief that rule was a trust from God and for their Christlike life after the abdication, when they calmly accepted their fate.

The easiest way for a ruler to be recognized as a holy person was and still is to support a particular religion. Examples can be found around the world, ranging from Chinese emperors such as Hui-tsung (1082–1135), a very strong supporter of Daoism throughout his realm, to the founder of the Songhay Empire in West Africa, Sonni ‘Ali Ber (r. 1464–1492). The latter figure is regarded as a charismatic holy man by Muslims, even though he remained syncretist in his beliefs and rose to the throne through “magical” powers. Such matters can be overlooked in the broader picture of religious support.

Buddhism from its beginning recognized as holy rulers who supported the *samgha* (monastic community). The list of Buddhist holy people includes no fewer than three Indian kings who supported the Buddha himself. Emperor Ashoka of the third century B.C.E. is a model of enlightened rule, both for his personal qualities and for his support of the spread of

Buddhism, including sending out missionaries to other realms. The theme of the holy king who spreads the faith is very important in Tibet, which venerates a number of “religious kings,” including Sengsten Gampo (c. 617–698), who converted to Buddhism, founded many holy sites, and spread Buddhist teaching. Success isn’t even required for veneration; the third religious king, Relbachen (r. 815–836), supported Buddhism in his state, causing such widespread resentment that in time he was murdered by two of his ministers, and his successor started persecution of Buddhists. Shotoku of Japan (573–621) is regarded as a *bodhisattva* (enlightened being): While regent of Japan, he established a purer form of Buddhism, sending priests to study in China and sponsoring temples. Similarly, Emperor Shōmu (701–756) made Buddhism a state religion and gave lavishly to the Buddhist establishment. His achievements include the great monastery of Todai-ji, which has a main hall that is recognized as the largest wooden building in the world, and a sixteen-meter-tall gilt statue of the buddha Birushana. Special holy status is even granted to rulers who were in other ways brutal and not particularly virtuous, as long as they helped in the spread of the faith, such as the controversial Empress Wu (623–705) of China, who used Buddhism to strengthen and legitimize her rule.

Similarly, in Christianity about the holiest thing a ruler can do is to support and protect the “true faith.” Thus Constantine (c. 272–337), who legalized Christianity in the Roman Empire, is regarded as a saint even though his personal life was not particularly virtuous and he had his own son murdered. Kings Ezana (c. 303–c. 350) and Caleb (early sixth century) of Ethiopia are both lauded as great saints for similar protection of Christians. Indeed, this is a major theme in Ethiopian hagiography, which also includes King Lalibela (d. c. 1225), who has a double claim to sanctity—as patron of religion and because he eventually abdicated to become a hermit. Helping in the Christianization of new lands was an extension of such protective and donative functions, and Christianity has a long list of holy rulers who helped spread the faith, including the ruthless and cruel Duchess Olga of Kiev (c. 879–969), her more successful grandson Vladimir (d. 1015), Stephen of Hungary (c. 975–1038), and Olaf of Norway (995–1030). Such a concentration of saintly missionary kings right around the turn of the first millennium emphasizes the political capital that many of these rulers could make from support of Christianity, by which they won international recognition from a strengthening papacy and a strong German state and preserved the independence of their lands from potential invaders who would use the need to evangelize as a justification for attack.

Some rulers, regarded as saints because of particular virtue, have been especially admired in a world that repeatedly shows the truth of the maxim that “absolute power

tends to corrupt absolutely.” In Christianity, an important role of royal wives acclaimed as saints has indeed been to pray for their less-than-holy husbands. Ashoka turned from a life of violence and conquest (exaggerated in Buddhist legend to make him an absolute monster) to generosity, compassion, and vegetarianism when he became a Buddhist. The Hindu Ahalya Bai (1735–1795) became ruler of the Indian state of Indore after her husband was killed in battle and won her people’s belief that she was an *avatara* (a god in human form) through her piety, charity, and righteousness. Ladislav of Hungary (c. 1040–1095) was an ideal Christian knight who both supported the church and gave his land relative peace. Sometimes rulers have been so virtuous that they have not ruled well. Louis IX of France (1214–1270) abandoned his country to go off crusading, although when at home he was an embodiment of Christian virtues; his case is paralleled by the Hindu Gangamata Goswami of eighteenth-century Bengal, who delegated his rule to others and spent his own time on pilgrimages. The Buddhist An Shigao (second century B.C.E.) left the succession to an uncle and himself became a monk and important translator of Buddhist texts into Chinese. Duke Wenceslas (907–929) of Bohemia, says legend, had all the gallows in his land destroyed, but he was eventually killed by his own brother. And royal saints reputed to live in chastity, such as Henry II (973–1024) and Kunigunde (d. 1033) of Germany and Edward the Confessor (c. 1005–1066) of England, did their lands no favor if they did indeed willfully refuse to produce legitimate successors—but an asexual life was a prime mark of holiness in medieval Europe.

It must be admitted, however, that sometimes the veneration of a ruler as a holy person has had more to do with the propagandistic claims of successors than with the actual holiness of the individual involved. It cannot be denied that it is a good thing to have a saint in the family, and rulers for many centuries have capitalized on the veneration of their ancestors. To give just a few examples, when Eric IX (c. 1120–1160) of Sweden was killed in battle, his son promoted his cult as a martyr, and descendants used Eric’s purported holiness to establish a line of hereditary succession, a holy bloodline of descent from a saint.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Alexander the Great; An Shigao; Ashoka; Caleb; Charles I; Confucian Culture Heroes; Confucius; Constantine; Edward the Confessor; Eric IX Jedvardsson of Sweden; Ezana; Gangamata Goswami; Gods on Earth; Henry II; Hereditary Holiness; Imams; Jalal al-Din Hasan III; Kunigunde; Ladislav; Lamas; Losang Gyatso; Mandate of Heaven; Olaf of Norway; Olga; Pope-Saints; Romanovs; Sengsten Gampo; Shōmu; Stephen of Hungary; Vladimir; Wenceslas; Wu Zhao

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Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin

(1207–1273 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, poet

Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi is one of the most widely read and quoted poets in the Islamic world as well as in America. Known in the West as “Rumi,” he is known among Persian speakers as “Mawlawi” and among Turks as “Mevlana.” The name “Rumi” signifies that he lived in Anatolia (*Rum*, Roman Anatolia); his titles “Mawlawi” or “Mevlana” mean “our master”; and the title “Khudavendigâr” (lord) is often used to express his preeminence. Many have followed Jami (1414–1492) in calling Rumi’s magnum opus, *Masnavi-i Ma’ana* (Couplets of spiritual meaning), “the Qur’an in Persian.”

Rumi was born on September 30, 1207, in Balkh (modern Afghanistan). His father Bahauddin Valad, a scholar and sufi shaykh, moved the family in 1208 to Samarqand following a dispute with the local qazi (legal administrator). Anticipating the encroaching Mongols, they continued to Baghdad, Mecca, Damascus, and Anatolia. At the invitation of the Seljuk sultan Alauddin Kaykubad, Bahauddin settled in Konya by 1229 and prepared Rumi to succeed him as a teacher. Since Rumi was only twenty-four when Bahauddin died in 1231, he asked one of his father’s students, Burhanuddin, to serve as his spiritual director. After studying Qur’an, hadith, Hanafi law, and theology in Aleppo and Damascus, Rumi returned to Konya in 1237 and taught in Konya’s seminaries (*madrasas*).

Rumi was transformed by his relationship with Shamsuddin Tabrizi (whose name means “sun of the faith from Tabriz”), who became Rumi’s spiritual guide, intimate friend, and poetic muse. Often represented as an antinomian dervish, Shams was a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), logic, math, and astronomy. Eccentric and iconoclastic, Shams emphasized that following (*mutabi’at*) the prophet Muhammad’s exemplary precedent (*sunna*) meant sharing his mystical experiences, including the heavenly ascension (*mi’raj*).

On November 29, 1244, Shams approached Rumi in the market in Konya and asked who was greater, the prophet Muhammad or the sufi saint Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. c. 864). Citing Abu Yazid’s ecstatic utterance, “Glory be to Me; How great am I,” Shams asked Rumi why, in comparison, the prophet Muhammad had only said, “Glory be to You; we have not known You in truth as You should be known.” Hearing this question, Rumi felt as if the heavens had opened and crashed to earth, setting his mind ablaze. Rumi answered that while Abu Yazid had quenched his thirst in a single cup, the prophet Muhammad’s limitless thirst reflected his greater spiritual station.



Seventeenth-century Turkish manuscript illustration, showing the great mystic poet Rumi (standing) meeting the high Muslim official Samseddin. (Art Directors)

According to another account of their first meeting, Shams came to Rumi in his library, pointed to his books, and asked, “What are these?” Rumi answered, “You wouldn’t understand.” As the books blazed into flames, Rumi asked, “What’s this?” Shams replied, “You wouldn’t understand.” From their first “meeting of the two seas” (*marj al-bahrayn*), they entered together into prolonged seclusion for spiritual companionship and conversation (*sohbet*).

Rumi’s passionate love for Shams transformed him from a scholarly shaykh into an ecstatic poet of passionate love (*ishq*). Rumi experienced Shams as the perfect human being and divine beloved; Shams regarded Rumi as a spiritual guide worthy of sainthood. Either in response to the jealousy of Rumi’s disciples, or as part of their training together, Shams left for Syria in 1246. Though returning briefly in 1247, Shams again disappeared, initiating Rumi’s poetry of intense longing for reunion. In his *Divan-i Shams* (The poems of Shams), Rumi used Shams’s name as his signature (*takhallus*), signifying that Shams lived within and wrote through him. Although hagiographic accounts narrate that seven of Rumi’s jealous disciples murdered Shams in 1247, textual and historical evidence suggests that Shams might have died while returning to Tabriz.

Shams taught Rumi a form of “whirling” meditation (*sama*, “listening,” or *devra*, “turning”) using poetry, music, and movement to reach ecstasy (*wajd*), which became for Rumi the perfect expression of love for God. Rumi composed and dictated poetry while engaging in this ecstatic activity, and as he did so the poetry was written down by his scribes, Salahuddin Zarkub (d. 1258) and Husam al-Din Celebi (d. 1284), his successor. From 1260 to 1273, Celebi served as the muse and scribe of Rumi’s six-volume, 24,660-couplet masterpiece, the *Masnavi* (Poem in rhyming couplets), in which Rumi weaves stories from the Qur’an with commentary, hadith, and popular literature to reflect an intimate and interior sense of their meaning.

In 70,000 lines of verse and a volume of discourses, Rumi evoked the beauty and power of passionate love (*ishq*) over reason, the heart over intellect, and silence over words. His famous allegory of the reed flute (*ney*) conveys the soul’s yearning to return to God, the Beloved Friend (*Dost*), realized through loving the pivotal saint of the age (*qutb*) in a relationship that accelerates the soul’s progress.

When Rumi died on December 17, 1273, Jews, Greek and Armenian Christians, and Turkish and Arab Muslims followed his funeral procession and honored Rumi in a display of ecumenical spirit that still surrounds Rumi and his order. Husamuddin, along with Rumi’s son Sultan Walad, developed the Mevlevi order. Its center (*tekke*), the site of Rumi’s mausoleum (*mazar*), the “Green Dome” in Konya, attracts more than 500,000 visitors every year.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Baha’uddin Walad; Bistami, Abu Yazid; Celebi, Husam al-Din; Muhammad; Mysticism and Holy People; Recognition; Shams-i Tabrizi; Sufism

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Rupa Goswami

(c. 1470–1558 C.E.)

Hindu poet, scholar

Rupa Goswami was a major disciple of the Hindu god-saint Chaitanya of Bengal and a younger brother of the saint Sanatana Goswami. He was the finest poet of the Chaitanya tradition and its foremost thinker on the subject of sacred

rapture (*bhakti-rasa*). He adapted the insights of Sanskrit aesthetics, centered around the aesthetic experience called *rasa*, to the elucidation of religious experience.

Rupa was born in about 1470 in what is now Bangladesh and was well educated in all traditional areas of Sanskrit learning, especially literary criticism and literature. He was employed along with Sanatana at the court of the king of Bengal, Nawab Husain Shah. He first met Chaitanya in 1515 in the village of Ramkeli and decided to leave the service of the Nawab and follow the saint. Later, when he heard that the saint was leaving Puri for pilgrimage to Vrindavana, he closed up his affairs, sold his property, gave his money away, and hurried off to try to catch up with him. He met Chaitanya at Prayaga on his way back from Vrindavana and stayed with him for ten days receiving instruction. Chaitanya sent him on to Vrindavana to rediscover the lost sites of Krishna’s divine sports and to describe those sports in works of literature.

Rupa is credited with writing twelve Sanskrit works, including three plays, two poems, and treatises on drama-turgy, theology, and sacred aesthetics. His poetry is intended to evoke the experience of sacred rapture in pious listeners. His masterpiece is the *Ujjvala-nilamani* (Blazing sapphire), in which he describes and illustrates various aspects and stages of the love for Krishna that is regarded as the highest form of love in the Chaitanya tradition, the “sweet” love in which Krishna becomes the object of erotic attraction.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Jiva Goswamin; Krishna; Krishna; Sanatana Goswami

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Rupert of Salzburg (Rupbrecht)

(d. c. 710–720 C.E.)

Christian missionary, bishop

Rupert of Salzburg was a bishop of Worms and Salzburg during the late seventh and early eighth centuries and either the brother or the uncle of Ermentrude, abbess of Nonnberg (founded by Rupert). Rupert is believed to have been either Irish or Frankish. He is considered the patron

saint of salt-miners and also the patron saint of the diocese of Salzburg.

Called from Worms in 696, where he was renowned for his piety and holiness, he traveled to Regensburg at the request of Theodo II, duke of Bavaria. He was later to baptize Theodo and to spend the remainder of his documented career Christianizing Bavaria. It was on one such journey to the area around Juvavum (Salzburg) that he first visited the city in which he would be based for the rest of his life. Granted the old Roman city of Juvavum by Theodo, he set about the successful restructuring of its buildings and economy. It was here that he founded the first of Salzburg's many churches, the monastery of St. Peter's, which still survives. He placed it and the nunnery at Nonnberg under the Benedictine Rule. Rupert was also responsible for giving the city its new name. This resulted from his development of the salt mines in and around the city, which in turn gave him his attribute in iconography. He died in Salzburg between 710 and 720 and was interred in St. Peter's until 774, when his relics were translated to the cathedral in Salzburg (consecrated to Sts. Virgil and Rupert) at the behest of his successor Bishop Virgil (745–784).

The oldest representation of Rupert is believed to be the half-length portrait in the vestibule of the nunnery at Nonnberg, which dates to perhaps the eighth or the tenth century. The fully vested cleric, usually shown as a bishop, was to be frequently represented in the twelfth century, especially in Bavaria and Salzburg. He is less frequently represented in the later medieval period. One of the best-known images of this venerable saint is found, along with that of Virgil, over the baptismal font in which Mozart was baptized in the cathedral in Salzburg.

Rupert's feast days are March 27 (Roman calendar) and September 24 (Austria).

—Colum Hourihane

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Ryonin

(1072–1132 C.E.)

Buddhist sect founder

Ryonin, born in 1072, was a Buddhist priest of the Tendai sect who began the first Japanese Amidist sect. His contributions to Buddhism include the building of two temples in the Ohara district, the restoration of the practice of chanting, and the conversion of Emperor Toba in 1124. He is most famous for his popularization of the *yuzu-nembutsu*, or “circulating *nembutsu*,” the chanting of the name of Amida Buddha (Amitabha). In 1117, Ryonin had a vision in which Amida Buddha said, “One person is all people, all people are one person; one practice is all practices, all practices are one practice” (Kashiwahara and Sonoda 1968, 262). Through this vision, Ryonin realized that when one chants the *nembutsu*, all people benefit from the resulting merit.

Ryonin studied Tendai on Mount Hiei and was most interested in chanting and music. There, he had another vision. Amida Buddha appeared to him when he was chanting and told him to gain greater merit by teaching the *nembutsu* to others. After this experience, Ryonin began to create ways to spread the *nembutsu* to others on a larger scale. He gathered assemblies where the *nembutsu* was chanted, later developing chants that became widely popularized.

Although he was of the Tendai order, Ryonin was schooled in Shingon and was thoroughly familiar with the Lotus Sutra and the Flower Wreath Sutra. The doctrine that he molded into *yuzu nembutsu* is a compilation of these other Buddhist traditions. The adaptation of the *nembutsu* that followed was mainly practiced during Ryonin's lifetime; it later faded into obscurity, only to be revived later under Honen (1133–1212).

—Noel Helgesen

See also: Amitabha; Buddhism and Holy People; Honen; Intermediaries; Laity; Ritual

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S

Sa chen kun dga' snying po

See **Kunga Nyimpö**

Sabas the Goth

(d. 372 C.E.)

Christian martyr

Sabas, a Goth soldier in the fourth century, was converted to Christianity in his youth by prisoners whom he was guarding. Sabas became a church lector for a priest named Sansala and later became a priest himself in Targoviste in modern Romania. During a series of persecutions by non-Christian Goths, Sabas refused to eat food sacrificed to the gods. He was released unharmed during this first persecution, even though he publicly professed his beliefs, because he was dismissed as insignificant, as one “who can do us neither good nor harm” (Attwater 1986, 291).

During a later persecution, in 372, Sabas was arrested along with Sansala and tortured by the same group of pagan Goths. He was dragged naked through thorns and beaten, but, miraculously, he was unharmed. He was then placed on the wheel to be stretched. Although a woman released him, he refused to leave. He was further tortured, to no avail, until he insulted Atharidus, the leader of the soldiers, who then ordered him to be drowned. Once more, Sabas was offered freedom, this time by the soldiers ordered to execute him, but he chose martyrdom and was tied to a pole and drowned in the Mussovo (Buzau) River along with approximately fifty other Christians in 372. His martyrdom is recorded in a letter written shortly after his death, which declares that “this death by wood and water was an exact symbol of man’s salvation,” in that it recalled both the baptism and crucifixion of Christ (Attwater 1986, 291–292). St. Basil ordered his body to be taken to Caesarea in Cappadocia, and consequently he came to be venerated in the East. Unlike many other Christian saints, Sabas was not a great scholar, ascetic, warrior, or

church ruler, but rather, it seems, an ordinary man who became extraordinary through finding the strength to openly proclaim his belief in the face of persecution.

—Asa Simon Mittman

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Models

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Sadashiva Brahmendra

(b. c. 1675 C.E.)

Hindu writer, renunciant

The Hindu saint Sadashiva Brahmendra is considered to have been liberated from the cycles of birth and death while still alive, a rarity in Hinduism. Self-realization, attaining experiential awareness of the nature of pure infinite consciousness, set him apart from ordinary conventions, and Hindus in southern India remember him for his deep states of meditation, his miraculous powers, and his wisdom and poetic eloquence. His followers preserved his philosophical writings and musical compositions, celebrating him as a great saint of unique attainments.

Sadashiva Brahmendra was born in around 1675. His brahmin father, Moksham Somasundara, was a native of Tiruvisanallur in Tamil Nadu in southern India, though he had been born even farther south, in Madurai. Sadashiva Brahmendra was called Bhikshu Guptan (gift of God) at birth. He married young but did not remain married for long. At the feast held in celebration of his wife’s attainment of puberty, he grew hungry and flew into a rage at having to wait for his wife to serve him. Reflecting on this disturbance caused him to become a renunciant to find peace. He left

home and studied with a teacher named Ayyaval, and then with the head of the Kumbakonam *math* (monastery), who initiated him into the renunciant's life.

During his years of wandering, Sadashiva Brahmendra composed songs to Shiva, Rama, and Krishna and also philosophical verses. An *avadhuta* (discarder of worldly attachments), he roamed without belongings, naked. He is usually pictured as a full male figure in silhouette, and he is called “the ghost” or “the shadow.” People remember him for his childlike purity and as one who enjoyed the state of transcendent consciousness as an experience more real than his physical life in the material world. He took a vow of silence when his guru criticized him for displaying cleverness in debates. A number of miracle stories are told in Tamil Nadu today about the powers of this follower of the path of spiritual oneness (*advaita*).

Sadashiva Brahmendra is described as sitting in *samadhi* for weeks, so deep in meditation that a shifting riverbed covered him with sand without disturbing him. When King Sarabhoji (r. 1712–1729) sought his blessing to have children, the sage gave the king a book of Vedanta, and soon thereafter the king's wife became a mother. A number of miracle stories depict him as able to face violent attacks, emerging unharmed.

One story depicts an encounter in Tiruchirapalli, where village officials were gathered to collect taxes. Fuel was being heaped up to cook food for them. When the naked, silent holy man passed nearby, officials mistook him for an outcast and made him carry a bundle of firewood on his head. When he arrived at the kitchen and dropped the wood, it burst into flames, damaging goods, terrifying people, and causing the tax men to regret their presumption. In other stories, the saint is pictured as the favorite visitor of little children, whom he fed and entertained with wonders, such as treating them to an instant trip to Madurai and back. He is said to have revived a dead bride, and to have taught a ruler, Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman, the meaning of the Dakshinamurti mantra by writing it in the sand. The ruler kept the sand in a golden casket and venerated it as a sacred souvenir. Sadashiva Brahmendra's Sanskrit poem *Atmavidyavilasa* (Play of spiritual wisdom of the self) describes the spiritually enlightened man's life. A painting of Sadashiva Brahmendra in a Kaveri river delta shrine shows him with bearded face and a tigerskin over his shoulder.

His *Atmavidyavilasa* contains verses describing the sage as shining with light, silent and placid, with the ground under the tree as his resting place. His palm is his begging bowl. He wears no clothes but is adorned only with the jewel of nonattachment. The great recluse who has awakened to the state of perfect Being-Awareness-Bliss is said to rest in his “house”—the wild-growing bush on the riverbank—reclining on a very luxurious “bed” of soft sands. Further

verses picture the “king of ascetics” pleasantly surrounded by the flowing river, enjoying the enchanting southern breeze gently blowing, beyond the cares of this world.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Hinduism and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People; Miracles

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Sadhus

Hindu or Jaina ascetics

Sadhu (Sanskrit for “one who has accomplished the goal”) is a general term used throughout South Asia to refer to a holy man or ascetic, typically associated with Hinduism or Jainism. Sadhus (feminine, *sadhvi*) are renowned for their renunciation of materialism and ordinary household life. They spend years practicing arduous yogic austerities and meditation. Through these practices (*sadhana*), they are said to develop a range of magical and spiritual powers (*siddhi*), which they use to attain the final “goal” of cosmic liberation and consciousness (*mukti*, *moksha*, *samadhi*). Some are even said to have accomplished “living liberation” (*jivan-mukti*). Although sadhus traditionally belong to one of various teaching lineages (*parampara*) headed by a realized master (*guru*) and live at hermitages (*ashramas*), many are completely independent. Some have proven to be impostors.

In South Asia, the ascetic and mystical traditions followed by sadhus may be traced back to the time of the Vedas (c. 1500 B.C.E.), but some scholars, such as Mircea Eliade (1969), believe that such practices go back even further, to ancient techniques of shamanism. Despite this uncertainty regarding their origins, early references to different types of ascetics can be found in the Vedas. These types include the *kesins* (long-hairs) and *munis* (silent ones), who seemed to enter ecstatic states, take possible hallucinogens, and travel about naked. However, it is with the emergence of the many *shramana* (one who quests) movements, beginning as early as the ninth century B.C.E., that the ascetic sadhu lifestyle truly spread throughout India. Although many of the ancient shramana traditions—like sadhus today—were loosely organized, some grew to become grand, institutionalized religions like Buddhism and Jainism. It is likely that these different streams of asceticism (Vedic, non-Vedic, shramana), especially those involving Shiva, Vishnu, and Devi, came together with the rise of the great Indian traditions of theism by the fourth century C.E.



A Hindu sadhu, bearing a trident. Jaipur, India. (Art Directors)

In India today, many sadhus belonging to various orders of Shaivism are dedicated to the worship of the Hindu god Shiva and his consort Shakti. In the mythological traditions of Hinduism, Shiva is the master yogin and ascetic, performing austerities in the mountains and cremation grounds. One order, known as the Aghoris (not-terrible ones), requires the sadhu to be initiated by a guru using a powerful Sanskrit phrase (*mantra*), after which he uses a human skull in rituals as he lives and practices in cremation grounds. Aghori sadhus embrace such transgressive practices (including drinking wine and eating flesh—even human flesh) as a means of finding purity and holiness amidst impure and polluting things. The Aghoris evolved from the Kapalikas, who were known for their uses of human skulls and ritual sexual intercourse. Other Shaiva sadhus, however, follow the more conservative traditions established by the philosopher Shankara (c. 800 C.E.), typically living in monastic communities in temple complexes such as that at Kanchi in southern India. Within Vaishnava Hinduism, sadhus are usually worshippers of the god Krishna, and their devotional practices include dancing and singing songs regarding Krishna and his consort Radha. Within Jaina traditions,

sadhus are ascetics who adhere to rigorous disciplines and live within temple complexes.

—Glen Alexander Hayes

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Devotion; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Shankara; Teachers as Holy People

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Sages

A sage is a person noted for particularly deep wisdom, rather than merely someone who has acquired much knowledge. Among the ranks of holy people, sages are normally male, and those called sages in English are usually not people of superior scholarly attainment. Instead, the sages appear in the earliest layers of legends of peoples as human beings

specially inspired by the gods to provide for the essential needs of human life, such as agriculture, or the arts of civilization, such as writing. Other, more historically traceable holy people of great wisdom are sometimes also called sages (especially the early rabbis of Judaism in the first two centuries of the Common Era, the *hakham*, who played a heroic role saving the Jewish faith despite the loss of the Temple). A legendary early Hindu king was offered a choice of entering heaven with one hundred fools or hell with one sage—he chose hell, saying that “with the help of a sage I can easily turn hell into heaven, but a hundred fools will make even heaven into hell” (Fischer-Schreiber et al. 1994, 27). The term “sage” is sometimes restricted, however, to the early legendary creative geniuses who made human existence itself possible. It is interesting to note that this role is often played by mortals inspired by gods, rather than gods come to earth, although sages tend in legend to enjoy surprising longevity and sometimes win immortality.

The earliest account of sages as agents of civilization comes from ancient Mesopotamia, where it was believed that the god Ea sent seven sages to the early cities to teach the skills of urban life. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, it is these sages who lay the foundations of the city of Uruk. They are not quite typically human—their leader, Oannes-Adapa, was a fish-man who rose from the sea—but clearly they are not gods either.

The religions of China believe that great sage-emperors also appeared at the dawn of civilized life, dating their reigns to early in the third millennium B.C.E. These six enlightened rulers established order in the world. For example, Huangdi, the “Yellow Emperor,” is credited with creating the humanities, writing, the compass, the pottery wheel, and the Chinese social order in about 2000 B.C.E. Yu the Great is credited both with controlling the flooding of the Yellow River (making agriculture possible) and with beginning the practice of hereditary rule at a slightly earlier time. Like the Mesopotamian sages, these figures are regarded as human, but at the same time they transcend humanity. The first of the group, Fu Hsi, who taught the use of the fishing net, domestication of animals, music, and casting oracles, was human—but had the body of a snake. Similarly, Huangdi was human—but came into being spontaneously, and attained immortality at the age of one hundred, ascending to heaven on a dragon’s back.

As Confucianism and Daoism developed in China, both religions accepted the sage-emperors as founding “culture heroes.” They also found a place in their cosmologies for a very few more historical “perfected sages” who shaped religion and right human behavior. Most notable of these are Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), Mengzi (c. 372–289 B.C.E.), and Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.). Confucianism taught that the ultimate goal of self-cultivation was to become a perfected sage and that the cosmos can only be perfected with the help

of such figures. Confucius was recognized in the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) as the king of sages, the “teacher of 10,000 generations,” and attained nearly divine status early in the Common Era. Mengzi after his death came to be called the “second sage,” taking a role next to that of Confucius in temples. In a rather different category is the Daoist Laozi, who may never have had a historical existence. Like the early sages (and to a lesser extent Confucius and Mengzi), he is credited with giving humankind vital information to improve human existence, in his case the *Daode jing* (Classic of the way and its power), which teaches the fundamental truths of Daoism. Daoism has also produced other holy figures whose position is usually translated as “sage” in English, people who have attained the Dao, the well-spring of creative power that runs the universe. Not necessarily scholars, they have charismatic power and bring harmony to society. It should also be noted that, while the Confucian would-be sage is a scholar, rising to the heights of sagehood requires more than learning. Also essential are self-discipline and, above all, *jen*, humaneness. Like Daoist sages, such people can restore the harmony between earth and heaven. They are rare.

The idea of the sage is particularly important in Chinese religions, but it does appear elsewhere. The Muslim legendary prophet Idris appears in the Qur’an as the first person who wrote with a pen, and also the first person to sew, gifts he gave to the rest of humankind. Although called a prophet, he transcends his human nature through his own wisdom in a manner typical of a Chinese sage, tricking the angel of death and thus winning immortality. Jain legend tells of the first *tirthankara* (ford-maker), Rishabha, back at the beginning of this cycle of the world, who lived at a time when the magical wish-fulfilling trees were dying down. Rishabha made it possible for human life to continue by inventing the arts of civilization, including agriculture, math, writing, the fine arts, and the caste system. The Hindu legendary sage Agastya, who lived in about 10,000 B.C.E., is credited with the gifts of both religion and language—he introduced the Vedic religion to southern India and was also author of the first grammar of the Tamil language. The ten Hindu Prajapatis gave the arts of civilization, including laws and the art of astronomy. Perhaps the most important was Atharvan, the eldest son of Brahma, who was the first to bring fire from heaven, offer *soma* (an undefined hallucinogenic plant), and recite mantras. The seven rishis, the patriarchal saints of Hinduism, fulfill many of the same roles as Chinese sages. Their name means “seers,” and they were the inspired poets who wrote the Vedas. They are credited in legend with great superhuman powers, gained through asceticism, and some are “first teachers” of human arts. In the version of the great flood story told in the *Mahabharata*,

Manu was told to build a ship, on which he was to keep safe all the different seeds of the earth—and the seven sages.

Although the Asian legends may go back to a common root, it is hard to explain the similarities of Asian sages to those found in Amerindian and African belief systems. The legendary Cheyenne holy man Sweet Medicine brought all good things from the creator god, teaching people how to hunt buffalo, tan skins, make clothes, and so on. And in a surprising juxtaposition of beliefs from far-removed regions, Sweet Medicine also transcended normal human existence, living four lifetimes. The West African *orisha* (deity) Ogún also, according to legend, cursed himself to work twenty-four hours a day for the benefit of humankind, especially serving as the bringer of ironworking skill to the people.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Confucian Culture Heroes; Confucius; Hakham; Huangdi; Laozi; Mengzi; Ogún; Rishabha; Rishis; Sweet Medicine; Yu the Great

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Saichō

(767–822 C.E.)

Buddhist sect founder

Saichō (posthumously called Dengyō Daishi) was the founder of the Japanese Tendai school of Buddhism. Tendai originated from Chinese Tiantai as a branch of Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) Buddhism, and its central scripture is the Lotus Sutra (Skt.: *Saddharmapundarika*). In his doctrine, Saichō focused on the all-embracing concept of Buddhist salvation—a concept expounded by Shakyamuni Buddha in the Lotus Sutra—meaning that all sentient beings possess buddha-nature and can become enlightened by realizing this inherent nature within themselves.

Born in 767 in Furuchi-gō, Ōmi province, Saichō entered the Ōmi *kokubun-ji* (provincial monastery of Ōmi) at the age of eleven and received his *tokudo* (initiation as a “novice”) two years later. He was bestowed his *jukai* (full ordination) at Tōdai-ji in 785. Disenchanted with the corruption of the monasteries in Nara, he moved to Mount Hiei, where he sought enlightenment by undergoing austere meditation.

Emperor Kanmu (r. 781–806), who wanted to curtail the power of the monastic community in Nara because their practices were aimed only at securing material benefits for the state and their aristocratic patrons without any concern for spiritual enlightenment, strongly supported Saichō’s Tendai school. In 804, the emperor sent Saichō on an impe-

rial embassy to China so that he could study Tendai at its source, Mount Tiantai, and bring back various Chinese Buddhist texts to Japan. According to Saichō, without such a formal transmission, Tendai would carry little authority in Japan.

When Saichō returned to Japan in 805, he established the Tendai headquarters, Enryaku-ji, on Mount Hiei northeast of present-day Kyoto. Following his return, he had close contact with Kūkai, the founder of Japanese Shingon (True Word) Buddhism, who had been on the same embassy to China as Saichō in order to bring back esoteric Shingon doctrines to Japan. Kūkai insisted that Shingon was the only “true word” of the Buddha, and that Saichō should give himself up to its study exclusively, while Saichō held to the Tendai understanding that alongside esoteric practices it was also necessary to study meditation and exoteric practices and Buddhist scriptures such as the Lotus Sutra. This rivalry between them made them go separate ways, resulting in the emergence of the distinctive Shingon and Tendai schools. Saichō’s Tendai Buddhist doctrine is syncretic, synthesizing the various doctrines of Buddhism into a unified system, and has been hospitable to new schools of Buddhist thought. Tendai, far more than Shingon, has proven to be fertile ground for the development of later schools.

—Monika Dix

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Sakawa

(fl. mid-19th cent. C.E.)

African prophet

Sakawa was the most outstanding and perhaps the only sage of the Abagusii of western Kenya, where he was a seer and teacher during the mid-nineteenth century. He was of the Bogeka subclan of the larger Getutu/Kitutu clan; the other Gusii clans were the Nyaribari, the Bobasi, the Bonchari, the South and North Mugirango, the Bomachoge, and the Bogisero.

The Abagusii believed that the sun manifested Engoro—the creator and provider—and that their ancestors (*chisokoro*) had a strong interest and influence in the lives of the living. In Sakawa’s time they were also concerned about their survival, given the turmoil they had endured in their migrations from distant Misri (Egypt) and the constant interethnic conflicts with their Luo, Kipsigis, and Maasai neighbors, mainly over livestock and land boundaries.

Sakawa was respected and attracted large gatherings because of his wide knowledge and wisdom. He shared in the

traditions of the Abagusii and foresaw and foretold of the coming of the Europeans, likening them to *amandegere*, a tiny white variety of mushroom. Sorting out this variety of mushroom requires patience and is time consuming. This was to be the case in the interaction between the Abagusii and the Europeans. Sakawa warned that the Europeans would arrive with lightning-like weapons (guns) and that it would be futile to stage any resistance against them. Indeed, not even the strongest of warriors and the best of strategic measures could withstand the guns of the Europeans. The Abagusii suffered massacres in 1904–1905 and 1908 at the hands of the British.

Sakawa's meetings were held in present-day Kisii Town, the administrative headquarters of Gusiiland. Sakawa had indicated that with the coming of the Europeans the area would see a transformation, new buildings, and changes in the way people lived. He talked of police lines, offices, hospitals, and churches that would greatly impact the lives of the people. In 1911 and 1912, respectively, the Roman Catholics and the Seventh-day Adventists arrived in Gusiiland. Long before this, during the 1904 and 1908 massacres, Abagusii had witnessed the British police force in action and had seen conventional medicine being administered to the injured soldiers.

Sakawa still holds a prominent place in the history of the Abagusii. He is reputed to have been an *omobani* (prophet/seer) and an *omogambi* (a wise leader), one who transmitted the history of the Abagusii and sounded a warning of the impending coming of the Europeans and its impact on the society. The Abagusii revere him as one who had special power bestowed upon him by the divine.

—*Mary Getui*

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Prophets

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Sakya Pandita

(1182–1251 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar, mystic, political leader

Sakya Pandita, also known as Kungo Gyalsthen (Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan), born in 1182, was a founder of the Sakya lineage, one of the four major branches of Tibetan Buddhism, and a renowned Tibetan scholar, mystic, and political leader. During the Mongolian domination of Asia in the thirteenth century, he was able to convince the Mongol ruler, Kodon Khan, not to invade Tibet. He also inspired the khan's devotion to him. With the khan's support, Sakya Pandita was entrusted as the supreme ruling authority of Tibet, combining

monastic ordination with political governance. This political positioning initiated a lasting theocratic tradition in Tibet. The Sakya lineage's attainment of political domination lasted until the fall of the Mongol empire in the middle of the fourteenth century, when the Kagyu and Geluk lineages successively became the controlling religious and political powers in Tibet.

Traditional Sakyapa accounts of Sakya Pandita regard him as an emanation of Manjushri, the god of wisdom. His body was believed to have numerous physical marks of a buddha. Furthermore, according to tradition, his linguistic abilities were evident at a very early age: He was reportedly able to speak Sanskrit and write its alphabet with sticks on the ground before being formally taught the language.

Among Sakya Pandita's most famous compositions are *sDom gsum rab dbye* (The discrimination of the three vows), a clarification of what constitutes virtuous conduct within Buddhist spiritual careers; *Legs parbshad po rin po che'i gter* (A treasury of aphoristic jewels), a collection of moral maxims in verse; *Thub-pa'i dGongs-gsal* (Elucidating the thought of the sage), a presentation of the stages of the path to enlightenment; and *Tschad ma rigs pa'i gter* (Treasury of knowledge concerning valid cognition), an influential work on logic and epistemology.

—*Garth Copenhaver*

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Gods on Earth; Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Salif Taal, Cerno Bokar

(c. 1880–1940 C.E.)

Muslim spiritual leader

Cerno Bokar Salif Taal was born in Segou, Mali, in about 1880 and began his study of the Qur'an with Abdullah Jire, a former student of his maternal grandfather. After Cerno Bokar's father left Segou to escape the French conquest of 1892, and the French installed Agibou, son of al-Hajj Umar, in 1893, Abdullah Jire persuaded Cerno Bokar's mother to take him and his siblings to Bandiagara. Little is known of his teachers after this point, but one of them, Amadu Tafsir Ba, his sufi mentor, was certainly very influential.

Because he had been born into the leading Tijaniyya family of the area, Cerno Bokar was formally appointed a *muqaddam* (authorized sufi shaykh) through the spiritual line of the Marka shaykh al-Hajj Salmoye of Jenne, though probably not

by him personally. Later he received renewals in the 'Umarian spiritual line through the sharif Nyaaro Karamoko, and also through members of his own clan: Muntaqo, the muqaddam of Segu, and Seydou Nourou Taal, the "grand marabout" of Dakar, both grandsons of the celebrated Tijaniyya shaykh al-Hajj Umar. By the 1920s, Cerno Bokar was regarded as a leading muqaddam of the Tijaniyya in the area. In 1937, he formally took Hamallah, leader of a Tijaniyya branch *tariqah* (sufi order), as his shaykh during a visit to Nioro. French suspicion of "Hamallisme" forced Cerno Bokar to renounce this association, but he continued privately to be an adept, eventually retiring to the seclusion of his compound, where he remained until his death in February 1940.

Cerno Bokar's teachings were spiritual and liberal. He sought cooperation between Muslims and those of other religions seen as spiritual "ancestors" of Islam, that is, Jews and Christians. He also preached against killing non-Muslims through jihad, which he described as "the mutual killing to which the sons of Adam submit in the name of a God whom they pretend to love, but whom they adore poorly by destroying a part of His work," asserting that every human being has been endowed with "a particle of the spirit of God." He came to this conclusion partly because of the many killings that had taken place through jihads in nineteenth-century West Africa. In his spiritual development, he was said to have been "opened" by God, that is, given the ability to comprehend the hidden esoteric "reality" or "truth" (*haqiqah*) that underlies the manifest, exoteric world of sensual perception.

Cerno Bokar's teachings, given in Fulfulde, were written up in French by his disciple Ahmadou Hampaté Ba, a Malian who served in the French colonial administration.

—John Hunwick

See also: Islam and Holy People; Marabout; Sufism; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Salman al-Farisi

(d. c. 650 C.E.)

Muslim convert

Salman al-Farisi, or Salman the Persian, was a contemporary of the prophet Muhammad in the seventh century. An early convert to Islam, in all likelihood of Persian extraction (although his name is of Semitic, not Persian, origin), Salman is a popular figure of legends functioning as an exemplar of Persian conversion to Islam. His search for religious truth, which led him from his supposed Persian ancestral religion of Zoroastrianism via Christianity to Islam, is retold in many versions in early Muslim legend. His con-

tribution to early Muslim defensive military strategy at the Battle of the Trench in 627 is also celebrated in early Muslim historiography.

Salman was born, according to Muslim tradition, the son of either Persian nobility or a Zoroastrian priest, possibly in the vicinity of Isfahan in Persia. Having grown up Zoroastrian, Salman is said to have become attracted to Christianity after passing by a Christian church during a worship service. Against the wishes of his father, he left his hometown and attached himself to a Christian hermit. Studying subsequently under several Christian monks, he made his way to Syria, where he is said to have heard prophecies of a new prophet arising in Arab lands to renew the original religion of Abraham. During his travels in the Arabian peninsula, Salman was enslaved and sold to a Jewish master in the city of Yathrib, which later became Medina. After Muhammad's migration to Medina in the year 622, the two men are said to have met. Salman converted to Islam, and, securing his freedom from slavery with the help of Muhammad, he became a dedicated Muslim. During the siege of Medina in the year 627, Salman is said to have suggested digging a trench around parts of Medina as a defensive measure against the advancing Meccan enemy; the successful defensive measure endeared Salman even more to Muhammad.

Purportedly Muhammad counted Salman as a member of his own household, the *ahl al-bayt*, which makes Salman a prominent figure in Persian Shi'a discourse. Salman's ascetic lifestyle also renders him a prominent figure in sufi traditions. According to some traditions, Salman became governor of Mada'in, Iraq, where he died in the 640s or 650s. According to some traditionalists, his tomb is located in al-Mada'in; other traditions locate his tomb in Isfahan, Iran, Jerusalem, and elsewhere.

—Alfons Teipen

See also: Disciples; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Samantabhadra (Chin.: Bu-xian, P'u-hsien p'usa; Jap.: Fu-gen)

Buddhist bodhisattva

Samantabhadra's name means "He who is all-pervadingly good" or "He whose beneficence is everywhere"; it also translates to "Universal sage" or "Universal kindness." One of the most important *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings) of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, Samantabhadra is the ideal in devotion and action. In the Lotus Sutra, he is described as

the protector of those who preach the Buddhist teachings. He is also seen as the embodiment of wisdom (*prajña*).

Iconographically, Samantabhadra is often depicted riding on a white elephant with six tusks. The elephant symbolizes the power of wisdom to overcome all obstacles, and its tusks represent the six senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and intuition). In China and Japan, he is commonly shown in a triad with Manjushri and Shakyamuni. He often carries a blue lotus, a *cintamani* (wish-fulfilling jewel), or a scroll on which his meditation text is written. He is highly venerated in China as one of the four great bodhisattvas corresponding to the buddha Vairocana and the four elements. Mount Emei in the province of Sichuan is the legendary sacred mountain where he settled after traveling from India to China on his white elephant.

In the Vajrayana tradition, he is also seen as the embodiment of truth (*dharmakaya*). This tradition represents him as dark blue in color (symbolic of emptiness, *sunyata*), and sometimes in sexual union (*yabyum*) with his female consort. Typical of bodhisattvas, he wears a prince's crown, jewelry, and garments. Samantabhadra is said to have revealed the meditative teachings of the *mahamudra* (great seal) to the Vajrayana tradition.

In Japan, he is mainly venerated by the Tendai, Shingon, and Nichiren sects. Practitioners of Hokkésammai (ecstatic meditation) claim Samantabhadra as their divine patron. Japanese images often present him seated on a square base with twenty arms or seated on four white elephants.

—Kelly Quirk

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Scholars as Holy People; Vairocana

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Samson of Dol

(d. 565 C.E.)

Christian missionary, ascetic

Born in south Wales during the late fifth or early sixth century, the Christian saint Samson of Dol is one of the best-known British missionaries to the continent and a prime example of the Celtic *peregrinus* (pilgrim), a monk who forsook home and people to seek God and very often to convert non-Christians. His father, Amon, was from Dyfed, and his mother was from Gwynedd. There are several extant Lives. The earli-

est, that of Mabillon, dating possibly from the seventh century, claims to contain information about the saint provided by contemporaries. Some scholars believe that another, lengthier Life may be even older, but there is no consensus, as the earliest existing manuscript was produced in the eleventh century. The account, however, while it contains much that is miraculous, has information that scholars believe to be credible. For example, it seems very likely that as a boy Samson was sent to St. Illtud at Llanwit (in south Glamorgan, Wales), where he was educated and eventually became a priest. His precocious sanctity became a subject of jealousy for his fellow monks, so he left Llanwit, lived for a time as a hermit by the river Severn, and then became the abbot of a monastery on the island of Caldy. Samson is said to have reformed an Irish monastery and traveled in Cornwall before leaving permanently for Brittany. He was consecrated bishop by St. Dubric, bishop of Llandaff, before leaving Britain.

Samson landed in Dol, Brittany, and there founded his principal monastery. Though Dol was not an official see until the ninth century, Samson exercised episcopal authority. In addition to Dol, various locations in England and France are associated with Samson, including Padstow and St. Kew in England, and Pental in Normandy, France. He is also believed to be the same man who signed the acts of the Council of Paris in 557 as *Samson peccator episcopus* (Samson, sinner and bishop). St. Samson remains a popular saint in England, Wales, and Brittany. His feast day is July 28.

—James B. Tschen Emmons

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Samthann

(d. 739 C.E.)

Christian abbess, reformer

Samthann, one of very few post-seventh-century Irish saints with extant medieval hagiography, is the only medieval Irish Christian holy woman whose Life does not credit her with founding a monastery. She is also the only one who was married before entering the religious life, albeit only for a day; according to her Life, she prayed to God that she might preserve her virginity, and with the help of miraculous fire both her foster-father and her husband were persuaded to agree to her vocation. She first entered Urney (County Tyrone), where she faithfully served as storekeeper for a year. She then became abbess of Clonbroney (County Longford) and immediately began developing it. She built an oratory, to which

she later added several buildings and further repairs, and provided for the needs of her workers with angelic assistance and miraculous meals.

Samthann is portrayed as exemplifying charity and compassion, but above all protecting and promoting the needs of her monastery. One man who tried to cheat her community over timber was beaten into submission by her in his dreams; the next day he humbly and remorsefully offered himself to her service. When a cleric tried to seduce one of her nuns, he was soon visited by an enormous eel that affixed itself to his loins; it remained until he begged and received the saint's forgiveness and promised never to bother her community again.

Her Life assures her faithful of her assistance even if their opponents were demons, a king, or another saint. It tells of her delivering from hell a warrior who had sought her blessing before every battle, but neglected to do so before the one in which he died. She did not abandon her devotee but at the hour of his death gathered her sisters together and, after a short time of intensive prayer, delivered him from torment. Though kings refused her request to release hostages, Samthann was able to outwit them or otherwise miraculously ensure the hostages' liberation. When two nuns came to her with a son, whom they feared to raise at their home near St. Cainnech's monastery, Samthann provided him with such an excellent upbringing that he later became abbot of the very monastery from which the nuns had fled in fear.

She was co-opted by the Céli Dé, the most significant movement in the eighth- and ninth-century Irish church, which emphasized extreme austerity, and her community, Clonbroney, remained one of the most prominent female monasteries for several centuries.

—Maeve B. Callan

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Monasticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Samuel of Waldebbba

(fl. 14th cent. C.E.)

Christian monk, hermit

Samuel of Waldebbba, active during the fourteenth century, is one of the most popular saints of Ethiopia. According to his

hagiography, he was born in Aksum (northeastern Tigray) to a wealthy family. As a boy, he was consecrated a deacon. His mother, Amata Maryam, embraced monastic life, and when Samuel heard that his father wanted him to marry, he left home and joined the monastery Dabra Bankwal, where he received the monastic habit from Madhanina Egzi, the abbot. Samuel astonished the monks with his asceticism. When his father also became a monk, both moved to another monastery called Wayna. There his father died, and Samuel entered the desert and became a hermit. One day, after a long fast, it came upon him that God had given him authority over the "animals of the desert"; after this, snakes, leopards, lions, and elephants allegedly saluted him and submitted to him. During this time, several disciples gathered around him.

Samuel roamed the desert until he and his disciples reached Wali (Waldebbba) and settled there. Many other saints and monks came to admire his purity and speak to him, and he worked numerous miracles. Animals, especially lions, followed him (a motif often reflected in Ethiopian traditional painting) and took care of him, and he also took care of them. Once he attended a lioness in labor; another time he pulled out a splinter of wood from a lion's paw. On another occasion, Jesus asked him in a vision to celebrate the eucharist, and the eucharistic bread and wine descended to him from heaven. Once he was captured by non-Christians, who, aware of his sanctity, didn't want to let him go, but he was carried away from them on a cloud. It was also on a cloud that, according to his vita, the saint made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he visited the Coptic patriarch Mathew (1378–1408). King Dawit (r. 1382–1412/1413) revered Samuel and sought his blessing and intercession. Samuel died of illness at the age of one hundred in the presence of many prominent monks and hermits who came to bid him a last farewell. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church commemorates Samuel on 12 Tahsas (December 21/22).

The center of Samuel's cult is Waldebbba, a remote hot lowland in northern Ethiopia southwest of Aksum on the southern bank of the Takkaze. In it is a unique area where Ethiopian monasticism is represented by a number of forms. Among them, the eremitical tradition is particularly ancient, dating back to times long before Samuel. The monks of the largest Waldebban monastery, Dabra Abrentant, hold that Samuel reorganized their community in the fourteenth century when it was in decline. The monks of Dabra Abbey (on the northern side of the Takkaze, in Shire) consider Samuel to be the founder of their monastery and claim to possess his relics. Samuel is also honored in other Waldebban monastic communities. His fame and veneration spread beyond the limits of Waldebbba already in the fifteenth century. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Samuel became a symbol of the Ethiopian monastic movement and its spirituality.

—Denis Nonsitsin

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Hermits; Miracles; Nature

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San Trance Dancers

Southern African shamans

One of the most culturally distinctive features of the hunting-gathering San (or Bushmen) of southern Africa is the curing dance. The performer of this elaborate and dramatic ritual is a shaman-like figure who enters trance through the exertion induced by a night-long dance around a fire and a circle of chanting and clapping women. The effects of the trance on the dancers, as explained by them, are varied, ranging from physiological to mystical. As regards the former, practitioners believe that the experience of trance brings a healing potency that is located in the dancer's stomach, which they say comes to a boiling state. Boiling, or *n/om*, as the !Kung call this potency, is said to enable the dancer to heal people by applying their perspiration, the effusion of *n/om*, to the body of the individual in need of healing. The mystical effects are transformation into an animal or out-of-body travel. Transformed into either a dangerous feline or a life force-charged eland antelope, the trance dancer becomes either fearsome or beneficent. Soul travel occurs after the trance dancer has collapsed and his spirit leaves his inert body to enter the spirit domain in order to engage capricious spirits to secure health for the treated person.

The experience of trance and the physical and spiritual task of curing are considered to be painful and dangerous undertakings. They require physical stamina and spiritual strength, and people appreciate the spirit-steeped "men of God" who risk it because of the service they provide to the community. A dancer is usually drawn to his career at an early age through an intense encounter with a spirit, frequently in the context of a serious illness he suffered and survived. Highly skilled and experienced trance dancers are esteemed and enjoy a reputation that may survive their deaths. However, in accord with the egalitarian organization and ethos of San band society, most dancers, despite their ritual importance to the community, are not full-time ritual specialists. Their lack of status differentiation renders them accessible to members of the community.

During times of social stress, such as acculturation through settler pressures, social and cultural disintegration, oppression,

disease, and poverty, the status of trance dancers may be enhanced. As practitioners of a culturally distinctive ritual that embodies San cultural identity and marshals spiritual power, trance dancers and their dance may come to be seen by their people as a "key to liberating change" (Katz et al. 1997, 136).

—*Mathias Guenther*

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Intermediaries; Miracles; Shamans; Suffering and Holy People

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Sana'i, Abu al-Majd Majdud

(d. c. 1131 C.E.)

Muslim poet

Abu al-Majd Majdud Sana'i of Ghazna (in modern Afghanistan), a prolific twelfth-century writer, has been celebrated for his religious poetry. He was apparently the son of a *mu'allim* (religious scholar), which may explain the themes of his later work. Sana'i began his vocation as poet by writing *qasidas*, poems in praise of the rulers or patrons who supported his literary compositions, both in Ghazna and during his travels. Subsequently, he changed his poetic orientation and wrote mystical, ascetic, and devotional verses suited for a cross-section of people, ranging from commoners to scholars, rulers, and other elites.

Sana'i's lengthy didactic poem *Hadiqat al-haqiqa wa shar'i'at tariqa* (The garden of the truth and the law of the path) had a tremendous impact on subsequent Persian versification. Both Farid al-Din 'Attar (c. 1117–c. 1231) and Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273) were influenced by his style. Their adaptations, in turn, were emulated by later generations. This poem is in the genre of a *mathnawi* (spiritual couplet) and is dedicated to a Ghaznavid king, Sultan Bahramshah. It has ten chapters and deals with a variety of spiritual subjects, including didactic morality and sacred lore. With enthusiasm and simplicity, Sana'i delineates his views on God and the spiritual path. Views on the transcendent are juxtaposed with discussions on piety and ethics. Sana'i also criticizes pretenders and hypocrites. His plentiful anecdotes and stories are often adapted from popular sufi tales and stories, many apparently derived from Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri's (986–1072) *Risalah* (Epistle) and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's (1058–1111) *Ihya' ulum al-din* (The revival of the religious sciences). Though Sana'i was from the eastern part

of the Islamic world, his inclusion of these stories from the western sphere show the uniformity and spread of various significant texts to different parts of the Islamic diaspora.

The goal of spiritual edification is also evident in another poetic composition, entitled *Sayr al-'ibad ila'l-ma'ad* (The journey of the servants toward the place of return). Here the author presents mystical theories of the return of the soul to the place of its origination as it exists through different stages of human life. A smaller mathnawi, entitled *Karnamah-i Balkh*, is more satirical and has a secular tone. In it Sana'i lists his patrons, with their characteristics, descriptions, and ranks.

Sana'i considered the Qur'an the eternal word of God and hence the ultimate source of human happiness and guidance. He states that the first and last letters of the sacred text spell *bas*, "enough," thereby indicating that the Qur'an is enough, or sufficient for all times. Sana'i was ambivalent about women. Though he has praise for pious women, he is not very positive toward females in general. Thus he expressed the opinion that "a single pious woman is better than a thousand bad men," but he also stated that "daughters are better on a bier than alive."

Sana'i had a close relationship with the scholar and preacher Muhammad b. Mansur, known as Sayf al-Haqq, "the sword of the truth," who resided in Sarakhs. Muhammad b. Mansur was a protector as well as a spiritual guide for Sana'i, and Sana'i praised him profusely in the *Sayr al-ibad*. His mathnawis and other poems are collected in a *divan* (collection) that includes *qasidas* (praise poems), *zuhdiyyats* (ascetic poems), *qalandariyyats* (antinomian poems), and *ghazzaliats* (lyrics).

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; 'Attar, Farid al-Din; Islam and Holy People; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin

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Sanapia

(1895–1984 C.E.)

Comanche medicine woman

Sanapia was a Comanche medicine woman, or "eagle doctor," born in a teepee in 1895 outside Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Her

mother was a traditionally oriented Comanche-Arapaho medicine woman, while her Comanche father embraced Christianity and white culture.

Sanapia's maternal grandmother, who stressed the importance of learning and tribal customs, raised her. She attended a mission school in southern Oklahoma for seven years until the age of fourteen, when she returned home. During the summer before her last year of school, her mother and maternal grandmother persuaded her to begin training to become an eagle doctor, a medicine person spiritually assisted by the eagle. During her training under her mother and maternal uncle, she learned the identification, usage, and rituals associated with medicinal plants, how to diagnose and treat illnesses, and the proper conduct of doctors. At seventeen, she completed her training as an eagle doctor, and her mother transferred her own healing power to Sanapia in a series of ceremonies.

Sanapia began practicing her medicine when she passed menopause and her culture allowed it. Her practice included treatment of "ghost sickness," which was believed to come from contact with ghosts. Her healing rituals combined psychiatry, herbal medicine, peyote, songs, and prayers to call upon spirits and her spirit helper, the eagle.

By the 1960s, Sanapia was the last surviving eagle doctor. Anthropologist David E. Jones, whom she adopted as a son, wrote an account of her life to preserve her medical knowledge and practices. The book, *Sanapia: Comanche Medicine Woman*, was published in 1972.

—Timothy E. Williamson

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Miracles

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Sanatana Goswami

(c. 1465–1555 C.E.)

Hindu devotee, scholar

Sanatana Goswami, disciple of the Hindu god-saint Chaitanya of Bengal, was a founding luminary of a learned circle known as the Six Goswami of Vrindavana, which created the foundations of the Chaitanya tradition's theological and devotional literature.

Sanatana was born in what is now Bangladesh in about 1465. As a boy, he dreamed that a brahmin gave him a copy of the Bhagavata Purana. The next day, he met the same brahmin and was indeed given the book. From that time

forth he became an ardent student of the Bhagavata and a devotee of Krishna, the deity described therein. He later became a minister of the Nawab Husain Shah, ruler of Bengal. Sometime around 1510, Sanatana began writing letters to Chaitanya, who was living in Orissa, asking the saint for deliverance. When Chaitanya stopped at a nearby town in 1515, Sanatana and his two younger brothers secretly met with him. Impressed, they made plans to leave their positions to follow the saint. Sanatana was imprisoned by the Nawab for failing to execute his duties, but he managed to bribe the guard and escape. He traveled incognito to Varanasi, where he met with Chaitanya. Chaitanya then sent him to Vrindavana to write books and rediscover the places in which Krishna performed his divine acts. Except for a brief stay in Orissa, Sanatana spent the rest of his life in Vrindavana. He died in 1555.

Sanatana wrote four works. The most important of these was the *Brihad-bhagavatamrita* (The larger ambrosia of the Bhagavata), a fictional work modeled on the Puranas, in which he presents the cream of the teachings of the Bhagavata Purana and other devotional texts. He recognizes there the passionate, self-sacrificing love for Krishna of the cowherd women of Vrindavana as the highest form of love for God. In a second part of the text, Sanatana traces the progress of a fictional devotee, Gopa Kumara (probably Sanatana himself), from the beginnings of spiritual cultivation until the culminating revelation in which Krishna shows himself and his eternal abode to his devotee.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Disciples; Jiva Gosvamin; Krishna; Rupa Goswami

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Santaraksita

(fl. 8th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist monk, philosopher

The philosopher Santaraksita, born in Bengal, was the son of a king but renounced worldly honors to become a monk. Eagerly pursuing knowledge, he became the greatest Buddhist philosopher of the eighth century and a great saint. As professor of philosophy at the famous university of Nalanda in northern India, he analyzed and refuted all the important tenets of Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools other than his own. He is also credited with introducing philosophical Buddhism into Tibet. Upon meeting the king of Tibet, and being

asked the nature of his doctrine, he said, “To follow what is in accordance with reason, and to reject what is not.”

Santaraksita asserted that nothing is true on the absolute level. But on the relative level, he claimed, all of reality is nothing other than mind. His view resembles the critical idealism of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). He arrived at his philosophical position by reasoning that there are two possible candidates for the nature of reality—material and mental. If reality is material, it must be made of parts. The smallest of these are said to be atoms. But if they are the smallest, they must be indivisible. However, if they are indivisible, they can have no extension (for the only number that is indivisible is zero). Nor can they have sides to attach to one another, for if they had sides, they would be divisible into those sides. So they cannot combine to make up larger objects.

So it would seem that the only alternative is that reality is mental. It is, after all, impossible to deny awareness without utilizing awareness. But there are problems with the concept of mind and its relation to an object. Mind is either one or many, a unity or a plurality, one with its object or different. If mind is one with its object, that is, the same as its object, there is no way one mind could become aware of a changing world. If it is distinct from its object, the following problems arise: (1) If one and unified, how could a single mental state perceive an entire flowered cup while catching the diversity of its differently colored flowers? (2) But if mind is compounded, other problems arise. How could a diversified mind perceive diversity in a single instant and recognize the different aspects of the cup to be the same? (3) And if the perceptions are a result of sequential and very rapid impressions, as with a torch whirled around, forming a circle of light, then one perceives what is not really there. Further, if mind is claimed to be real, we must ask how we know it. To know one’s mind, we would need a mind to know it, and a mind to know that mind, and so on, generating an infinite regress. The mind cannot be an independent entity, or it would never change. It is dependent on causes to experience a changing world.

Like Nagarjuna (c. 150–250), Santaraksita questioned the coherence of causality. A cause is either the same as an effect or different. If the same, it would lead to the absurd conclusion that when one ate food one would be eating excrement, since food is the cause of excrement. But if the cause precedes the effect when the cause is present, the effect is not, so they cannot contact each other. So the concept of causality is hopelessly paradoxical. This observation leads to the conclusion that, on the absolute level, reality is beyond conception: It is emptiness. In spite of this, Santaraksita was not a nihilist. He believed that through nonconceptual meditation, one could have direct awareness of reality. This experience resulted in great spiritual bliss. It was enlightenment itself.

Santaraksita was also a great tantric master. He believed that certain practices on the relative level, especially sexual

ones that were performed with wisdom, compassion, and mantra, could lead to enlightenment because the special causal conditions led to a special effect. He is revered by Tibetan Buddhists as an emanation of Buddha Varjrapani.

—Marie Friquegnon

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Nagarjuna; Sexuality and Holy People

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Santería

Santería is a religion derived from West Africa that is practiced mainly in Cuba and other coastal areas of Latin America. It promises to its followers divinity, longevity, good health, love, and immortality and is mainly a syncretism of traditional Yoruban beliefs and Roman Catholicism. The term Santería (Way of the Saints) comes from the Spanish word *santo*, which means “holy.” Santería followers are known as *santeros*. “Santería” was originally a derogatory term first applied by the Spanish settlers to the religious practices of the slaves. Although it is not offensive to any further extent, believers of this devotion prefer the less controversial name of Lucumi, which means “friend” in the Yoruba language.

The Yoruba peoples of the West African nations of Benin, Togo, and Nigeria were brought to the American continent as slaves between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Upon their arrival, they were forced to practice Catholicism. They were baptized according to Catholic ritual and forbidden from practicing their traditional religious way of life. However, slaves continued to exercise their religious faith by hiding their divinities behind images of Catholic saints. Traditional Santería thus focuses on the worship of deities called *orishas* who mediate between the Supreme Being and creator of the universe, Olorun (or Olodumare). In the Yoruba language, Olodumare's name means “owner of the sky,” and he is regarded as the center and main source of life and the wielder of the power (*ashé*) that stimulates and maintains the world.

Lucumis believe that particular orishas protect people. During initiation rites in Santería, the new member chooses a *padrino* (godfather) or *madrina* (godmother). These are Spanish terms that are titles of respect. A *babalawo* or *babalao*, a high priest or priestess, initiates the new member and determines the identity of his or her orisha.

Lucumis believe that after Olodumare created the universe, he passed on the responsibilities of governing the earth to the orishas. Each orisha in the Santería pantheon is considered holy, and each has a specific duty. The main ones are: Eshu, Elegba, or Eleggua, the divine messenger and link between the orishas and the creator; Shangó, or Changó, the orisha of fire and human energy; Obatalá, who organizes the human body and society; Yemayá, the mother goddess of the orishas who rules over maternity; Oshun, or Ochún, the goddess of fertility and love who keeps order over rivers and waters; Babaloo, or Babalú Ayé, the orisha of illness and disease; Ogún, the deity of war; Osain, or Osanyin, the orisha with power over nature and herbs; Ibeji, the divine twins, protectors of children and messengers of joy; Oshosi, or Ochosi, who rules over hunting and justice; Oyá, gatekeeper of the cemetery; and Orula, or Orúnmila, the orisha of wisdom and destiny.

There are also some 200 minor deities who are part of this highly complicated system, which is known as Ifá in traditional Afro-Cuban Santería. It is characterized for its hereditary richness, rituals, iconography, and fascination with magic and intangible divine beings. Santería followers believe that these particular orishas protect everyone in the world, a concept similar to the notion of having a “guardian angel” in the Catholic faith. Orishas, however, need food in the form of animal sacrifices, music, prepared dishes, and human praise and tribute in order to remain effective. *Botánicas* are stores where santeros can purchase their Santería supplies, such as herbs, charms, musical instruments, animals destined for sacrifices, and potions. Santería is not limited to believers of African ancestry only; people of all races and walks of life freely practice it throughout Cuba and Latin America.

—Francisco Melara

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Babalú Ayé; Ogún; Orishas; Oyá; Shangó

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Sarada Devi

(1853–1920 C.E.)

Hindu holy woman, goddess

Sarada Devi is best known as the devoted wife of the Bengali saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, India.

However, she was also considered to be a holy woman in her own right and was worshipped as the mother of the universe by Ramakrishna's disciples after his death in 1886. She is respected today as a guiding force and inspiration in the development of the Ramakrishna Math, a devotional and social-service order based on the teachings of Ramakrishna and his disciple Vivekananda.

Sarada Devi was born in the village of Jayrambati in West Bengal in 1853. Her parents were brahmin and named her Saradamani Mukherji. She was a submissive and obedient child, by all accounts. In 1859, when she was six years old, she was chosen to be the wife of Gadadhara Chatterji, later known as Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who at that time was twenty-three years old. They were betrothed (in those days, child marriage was an accepted practice), and he went back to the temple at Dakshineswar, where he was a priest. In such marriages, the child bride would often continue to live with her parents until she attained puberty, at which time she would live with her husband. However, when Sarada reached thirteen years old, her husband did not send for her. Rumors came to her village that he was a madman.

She waited for him for many years. When she was nineteen years old, she decided to go and visit him. He accepted her as his wife but insisted on a celibate marriage—he felt that sexuality with a human woman would distract him from his meditative focus upon the goddess Kali. Sarada agreed to this arrangement and lived alternately with Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar and in her home village. They were poor, and her husband would fall into trance states and ignore her for days and weeks on end. Yet at one point he stated that she was really an incarnation of a form of the goddess Kali, and he ritually worshipped her as a goddess. He gave her gifts and mantras and offered her the fruits of his austerities as well as everything that was his. He told his disciples to worship her also, and they called her “the divine mother.” She was understood to share in the spiritual results of Ramakrishna's yoga and meditation because of her submission and helpfulness to him.

During Ramakrishna's life, Sarada would help him in his spiritual practices, chant mantras to bring him out of certain states, and dress him as a woman when he identified with being a handmaiden of the goddess. She also did the cooking for him, his disciples, and his visitors, and she cared for his mother. She performed chanting and meditation daily.

After Ramakrishna's death from throat cancer, Sarada went on pilgrimages, had visions, and performed ascetic practices to show her grief at widowhood. These included the “five fires” rite (when a person sits in the midst of four fires, and the hot sun above is the fifth fire). However, she was brought out of this state of grief and chaos through caring for Ramakrishna's disciples. They continued to call her mother, and she cooked and cared for them and began to initiate peo-

ple in Ramakrishna's name. His disciples offered flowers at her feet, calling her goddess, and they wrote hymns of praise to her. Some disciples said that they preferred her to Ramakrishna, saying that Mother was kinder than Father (Ramakrishna himself had been more erratic toward his disciples and often rejected them for trivial offenses).

As Holy Mother, Sarada gained the respect and worship of a growing number of spiritual practitioners who later became organized into a group known as the Ramakrishna Math, or the Ramakrishna order. However, difficulties with relatives caused Sarada much tension in her later life. She was frequently ill, and she died in 1920.

—June McDaniel

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Vivekananda

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Sari al-Saqati, Abu al-Hasan

(772–867 C.E.)

Muslim mystic

Abu al-Hasan Sari al-Saqati is an important early spiritual sage from Baghdad. Born in 772, he came from a humble background and was the son of a peddler. He followed his father's mercantile interests and with his honesty managed to become a respected wholesale trader. He seems to have had the comfort and the interest to devote himself to the study of religious ideas, specifically the hadith literature. He experienced a major spiritual turning point at the age of about forty when he met the mystic teacher Ma'ruf al-Kharki. He then relinquished his profitable trading ventures and sought a life of intense spiritual quest, traveling in search of spiritual guidance and encountering several enlightened teachers.

Among other places, his travels took him to historical cities such as Damascus, Ramla, Jerusalem, and Tarsus. He finally returned to Baghdad about twenty years later, in 833. With this return, the third and most influential period of his life began. His eloquence and wisdom attracted students from far and wide. Students from Iraq, Khorasan, and Syria joined the local students to listen to him. He apparently stopped teaching publicly after one listener made the rude remark, “Abu al-Hasan, you have become the resting place of the idlers.” So ended his public sessions, and the fourth and final phase of his life began. He withdrew from public gaze and spent his time in spiritual contemplation or conversation with a few selected individuals. Among his prominent

disciples were his nephew Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd and Abu al-Husayn al-Nuri.

Sari al-Saqati has an important position in the history of Muslim mysticism. He was evidently the first sufi to delineate and describe the mystical states. He was very pious and ethical, constantly concerned with his actions and motives, even fearing that his nose might turn black because of his sins. He believed that mystical love is an essential aspect of the spiritual quest. His opinion, however, that mystical love is “real mutual love between man and God” caused uneasiness with the religious scholars, who regarded the human “love of God” as obedience and sincere servitude. According to a citation from ‘Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri, an eleventh-century exponent of mysticism, it was Sari’s intense longing for God that made him accept suffering. Thus, Sari prayed: “We deem all torments more desirable than to be veiled from Thee. When Thy beauty is revealed to our heart, we take no thought of affliction.”

Sari believed that it is essential to be caring and helpful toward others. Ethics and good manners complement faith and prayers. Knowledge was only useful if it provided the basis for some good work. Austerity and sincerity of motive was essential, while hypocrisy was to be avoided at all costs. He was extremely mindful of the source of his worldly possessions, especially with regard to the food he consumed. He avoided eating anything that might “burden him before God” or “render him indebted to any creature.” He also considered that continuous lamentation in the presence of the Lord is salubrious for the spiritual quest. Tribulations and afflictions he regarded as a sign of divine grace, for God tests his devotees by the hardest possible means. Further, he believed that on the spiritual quest one must have “fear of God alone, hope in God alone, love of God alone, shame before God alone, and intimacy with God alone.”

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Sariputta

See **Shariputra**

Sarraj, Abu Nasr al-

(d. 988 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, writer

‘Abd Allah b. ‘Ali b. Muhammad b. Yahya Abu Nasr al-Sarraj al-Tusi was the author of the *Kitab al-luma’ fi tasawwuf* (Book of flashes), a noted defense of sufism. Born in Tus in

Khorasan, Persia, he traveled extensively and returned to Tus before his death in 988.

Little is known about Sarraj’s life from the biographical literature. His reported teachers were Ja’far al-Khuldi (d. 960), Abu Bakr Muhammad al-Duqqi (d. c. 961), and Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Salim (d. 967). From the direct citations in *Kitab al-luma’*, it is known that Sarraj traveled extensively, but he probably spent extended periods in Baghdad under the guidance of Khuldi, in Damascus under Duqqi, and in Basra under Ibn Salim. Sarraj’s shaykhs were themselves companions of some of the greatest shaykhs of early sufism. Sarraj was reported to go into ecstatic states and to enjoy the ability to fast continuously. Sulami reports that Sarraj was descended from a family known for abstinence (*zuhd*). He was recognized for his chivalry (*futuwwa*) and his knowledge of the technical language of the sufis (*lisan al-qawm*), supported by knowledge of Islamic law.

The *Kitab al-luma’* is Sarraj’s only surviving work. Like other treatises and manuals of its type, it demarcates normative sufism out of a more diverse tradition. The text represents the majority position of the early sufis, who saw their path as the science of the inward *sunna* (tradition). It contains definitions of technical terminology covering the doctrines, practices, and character traits of the sufis, with quotations demonstrating the different positions acceptable to the norm. Sarraj’s own opinion is present in the organization and explanation of the materials—especially valuable in his exposition of the ecstatic and enigmatic sayings—and he is not shy to criticize sufis whose speech he nevertheless defends as normative. The text is also valuable for his descriptions of sufis’ “errors,” thus giving insight into those perspectives marginalized by the boundaries of normative sufism in the tenth century.

—Laury Silvers-Alario

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism

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Sathya Sai Baba

(1926 C.E.–)

Hindu god-saint

Sathya Sai Baba, considered by millions of followers to be the premier “deity-saint” of India, is an advocate of interreligious

harmony, education in many forums, monotheistic devotion, and service to humanity. Best known for his many miracles and his manifestation of sacred ash for his disciples, he has mobilized many educational and medical programs around India. He repeatedly calls on his disciples to “love all, serve all,” to follow their own religions, and to be respectful of other traditions.

Sathya Sai Baba was born into a Hindu family on November 23, 1926, in the village of Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh, in southern India. His original name was Sathyanarayana. Hagiographies speak of the many miracles that attended his birth and childhood. When he was thirteen, he is said to have manifested signs of divinity. A skeptical family brought in exorcists to cure him, but Sathyanarayana announced his divine identity, claiming to be an incarnation of another holy man, Sai Baba of Shirdi (b. mid-eighteenth century, d. 1918) from the state of Maharashtra, India. He is also considered to be the incarnation of several Hindu gods and goddesses, especially Shiva and Shakti. The name Sathya Sai Baba incorporates a part of his original first name as well as the name of the famous saint of Shirdi in his public appellation. Sathya Sai Baba has predicted that he will live for ninety-six years and after his death will be born again as a person called Prema Sai Baba in Mandya district, Karnataka. Sathya Sai Baba is well known for his miracles. He is said to manifest sacred ash, a symbol of the Hindu god Shiva, as well as watches and jewelry for his devotees. Disciples across the world also claim that the sacred ash sometimes falls miraculously from his pictures.

The Sai organization is divided into three wings: education, service, and devotion, following the main paths outlined in the Hindu holy text, the Bhagavad Gita. The Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust has set up several free educational institutions, including a school of music in Puttaparthi. Feeding the hungry and visiting hospitals and nursing homes are two of the many recommended service projects. Devotees have also set up methods of supplying clean drinking water to about 750 villages in India. Most of his followers gather together at least once a week to sing *bhajans* (popular devotional songs). The songs are addressed to the many Hindu deities as well as to Sathya Sai Baba. However, as with many other popular gurus in India, Sathya Sai Baba has also been the object of accusations and controversies.

Sathya Sai Baba spends most of his time traveling between the towns of Puttaparthi, Bangalore, and Kodaikanal in India. The official Sathya Sai website, as well hundreds of other cyber locations, radio stations, and videos, keep devotees informed of his activities and discourses as well as the service projects.

—*Vasudha Narayanan*

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Reincarnation

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Savatii of Solovki

See **Zosima and Savatti of Solovki**

Savonarola, Girolamo

(1452–1498 C.E.)

Christian preacher, reformer

Girolamo Savonarola was one of the most important Christian religious and political reformers of fifteenth-century Italy. Born September 21, 1452, Savonarola entered the Dominican order in 1475 and became a charismatic preacher.

Savonarola aimed to reform monastic life, a feat he achieved mostly by his own example: He lived in a very small cell, ate little, and wore hair shirts. Under his watch as vicar-general, the Dominican convent at San Marco grew from fifty monks to 238. Throughout his life Savonarola never really established good relations with the governments of Italy. He denounced the Medici, and he had constant battles with the Florentine government. Nevertheless, he is noted as one of the most important of the Florentine lawmakers. He was the inspiration for George Eliot's *Romola* and continues to be regarded as one of the most important Dominicans in the history of the order.

Savonarola was opposed to the corrupt papal court of Alexander VI, was not afraid to speak out on the topic, supported Charles VII's French invasion of Italy, and was subsequently excommunicated by Alexander on May 13, 1497. Nevertheless, he continued preaching, and Savonarola's native Florence was split in support and devotion to him. Indeed, Savonarola railed against the excesses of the papacy, referring to the Vatican as “a house of prostitution where harlots sit upon the throne of Solomon and signal to passersby: Whoever can pay enters and does what he wishes” (Manchester 1992, 43). Believing he had God on his side—indeed that he had the ear of God—Savonarola undertook a reform of Florentine life. In the infamous “bonfire of the vanities” of 1498, Savonarola asked the people of Florence to bring their paintings, books, jewelry, soaps, and a myriad of other artifacts of vanity and burn them in a great fire. Savonarola encouraged a new morality, one that was clearly a throwback to the days of the primitive church where devotion to God was the primary function of a human being.

Not surprisingly, Savonarola's ascetic spirituality was very popular in Florence, and his legacy grew to martyrdom when he was burned for heresy on May 23, 1498. The



Statue of the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola in his home town of Ferrara, Italy. Savonarola is shown standing on a pyre, symbolizing his execution and the burning of his body in 1498. (Art Directors)

Savonarolian influence was felt far and wide. In Florence, of course, the influence was most clearly felt for the hundred or so years after his death. Some credit Savonarola as an important influence on the young Machiavelli. But the influence is clearer in spiritual circles, where Savonarola's followers abandoned those "vanities" Savonarola had railed against and took up devotional reading and practice in a more serious way. Few English translations exist of his famous sermons, but perhaps the most important was "On the Renovation of the Church" delivered in the Duomo of Florence in 1495. It is in this sermon that Savonarola summarizes, as he put it, "everything that we have been saying and preaching in Florence these past years about the renovation of the Church, which, to be sure, will soon take place" (Savonarola 1969, 4).

—David A. Salomon

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction

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Sayadaw, Mahasi

(1904–1982 C.E.)

Theravadan Buddhist teacher

Burmese master Mahasi Sayadaw, widely considered an *arahant* (liberated person), was the most important leader in the great twentieth-century revival of meditation practice in the Theravada Buddhist world. From his main center in Rangoon, Mahasi spread the technique variously known as the Mindfulness, New Burmese, or Bare Insight Method throughout Burma, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. In his career he guided more than 20,000 students, and these students in turn taught at least 200,000 others.

Following the lessons of his teacher, U Narada (1868–1955), and challenging mainstream Theravada tradition, Mahasi thought necessary only one of the two commonly taught meditation methods for attaining *nirvana* (Pali: *nibbana*). Eschewing the preliminary method of tranquillity meditation, Mahasi advocated the sole practice of insight meditation. While acknowledging that a pacified, focused mind is needed for progress in practice, Mahasi argued that insight meditation alone not only produces calm concentration but also frees one from mistaken craving for and attachment to the transient things of this world that only cause suffering because they inevitably pass away. It does this by enabling the meditator to mindfully place non-judgmental, nonreactive, and thus bare attention on his or her ever-changing physical and mental processes.

Mahasi, based on certain statements in the Theravada canon and personal experience, taught that through immediate, vigorous engagement in this Bare Insight Method, which leads one to the liberative awareness that one should not futilely seek permanence in a world characterized by complete impermanence, one can achieve nirvana in this very life. This conviction, a radical break from the standard belief that nirvana is, for most, many lifetimes away, has been a popular one that has garnered multitudes of followers. The inclusivist Mahasi also diverged from tradition and

created great interest by teaching that insight meditation is not, as is commonly held, a difficult endeavor only suited to monks under proper supervision, but is rather a simple technique, easily learned by monks and the laity alike.

To this day, the number of those practicing insight meditation, promoted most successfully by the clear, straightforward teachings of this great master, continues to rapidly grow.

—Bradley Clough

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Laity; Meditation and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Scholars as Holy People

Some religions have regarded their great theologians and philosophers as particularly close to the divine, engaged in a profound effort to plumb the mind of God or to reach a special insight denied to the unlearned. But on the issue of scholarship and intellectual attainments more generally, the religions of the world are strongly divided. There are, of course, some religions that have no written tradition. Others have emphasized an emotional connection that holy people have with the divine rather than a connection with its starting point in the intellect. Still other religions have at least at times had strong anti-intellectual movements; the leaders of these reforms often win a great reputation as charismatic holy people. This is a surprisingly common phenomenon, including such diverse movements as Pure Land Buddhism, Jewish Hasidism, Pentecostal Christianity, and a wide array of fundamentalist movements. Much depends on whether a culture itself values intellectuals, a valuation that often waxes and wanes over time. Thus scholarly attainment has been one of the most defining characteristics of holy people in Judaism for two millennia, and it took a central role in Buddhism from an early stage in the development of that religion; in Confucianism it is hard to imagine a holy person who is *not* a scholar. Islam has often honored its great religious scholars as “holy,” but charismatic, emotive qualities have won more popular veneration. Hinduism and Christianity exist at an even more distant point along this continuum, sometimes honoring scholars as saints but much more often venerating charismatic, devotional holy people or those who play an active role in society at large. Intellectuals,

however, rarely win widespread popular veneration; their cult is propagated and institutionalized by fellow intellectuals. Indeed, the number of acknowledged holy people who were scholars is a useful marker of how strongly the elite of a given religion has controlled the process of making saints.

Perhaps the most balanced position on intellectuals as holy people has been that of the ancient Greeks, who recognized great philosophers and other writers as in some special way inspired by the divine. Plato argued that philosophy allows access to the divine realm; thus, a philosopher will be closer to the gods than anyone else. Not only philosophers such as Socrates and Plato, but literary figures like Sophocles were recognized as divinely inspired heroes. This belief in the power of the mind induced reactions in Greek society in the form of mystery religions, the Neoplatonist blend of philosophy and religion, and most notably, a very strong anti-philosophical thread within early Christianity.

Jewish scholarship, unlike that of the Greeks, was connected to a specific body of divinely inspired scripture, preeminently the Torah. To a great extent it is still the case today that Jewish spirituality emphasizes Torah study as the best pathway to personal holiness. This accounts for the very small number of holy women in Judaism, since women did not usually have access to formal education. What is striking, though, is that scholarship was by no means central to early Judaism. The early holy people of the religion—Moses, Abraham, the matriarchs, the kings, the prophets—were emphatically *not* scholars; they are more notable for their ordinariness than for any hint that they were beloved by God for any intellectual qualities. The transition began with the Jewish diaspora, giving a central role to those—scholars of Torah—who were able to maintain the people’s connection to their ancestral religion even in faraway lands. This turn toward the scholar as the essential transmitter of the faith became central with the catastrophic upheaval of Judaism in the first century C.E. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., rabbis such as Yohanan ben Zakkai saw the key to survival of the religion itself as the transmission of learning. The Jews soon learned to respect scholars as caretakers and protectors of the faith. This emphasis can be seen in a legend about the great second-century scholar Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph. According to tradition, he was illiterate until he reached the age of forty. Then, the woman he desired as his bride absolutely refused to marry him unless he became an educated man. Akiba went off for twenty-four years to study, becoming a great Torah scholar—and then came back to marry his betrothed.

In Judaism, religious scholarship soon developed to the point that laypeople had to depend on the rabbis for understanding of scripture. Thus it is said of Akiba that even Moses could not understand his exposition of the Law. Akiba’s main rival, Ishmael ben Elisha, taught that the Torah

is in human language and sought literal meanings that were accessible to all, but in general, Akiba's more obscure interpretations won more esteem. The separation of a scholarly elite took another great stride forward with the compilation of the Talmud, an enormous and often highly erudite commentary on Torah. Few people could hope to encompass its depths; thus lifelong study of the Talmud became an important marker of a "truly religious" person. Although the scholar Anan ben David in the eighth century encouraged people to study for themselves rather than relying on authorities, his was a minority opinion. Throughout the Middle Ages, scholars were regarded as the truly great men of their communities. They included such figures as Gershom ben Judah (c. 960–c. 1030), the talmudic scholar who won renown as the "light of the exile"; his grave in Mainz is still visited by the pious. Similarly, the exegetes and commentators Rashi (1040–1105), Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1164), and Moses ben Maimon (1135/1138–1204) were greatly revered by later generations. It should be noted, though, that until relatively modern times, even the greatest Jewish scholars normally supported themselves through some sort of secular employment; Rashi, for example, was a vintner.

In Judaism, scholarship alone did not make a person holy, but constant study of the divine will was believed to mold people and make it much more likely that they would indeed become holy people. A "true" scholar would be pure in thought and action, able, like Eleazar of Worms (c. 1165–c. 1230), even to forgive the crusaders who murdered his wife and children. Many rabbis thus became models of behavior to community members who could not hope to approach them in erudition. Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg (c. 1220–1293), for example, was a leading talmudic scholar whose disciples also diligently studied his lifestyle as guidance for their own behavior.

Inasmuch as Confucianism is a religion rather than a philosophy, it, too, is based on a deep belief in the essential union of scholarship and virtue. Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) would not have recognized the possibility of a true scholar who was not also benevolent and a "gentleman" in the highest sense of right behavior toward all. Indeed, it is hard to find evidence that an uneducated person could be regarded as holy at all in the Confucian system. Even when Confucians had a missionary role, it was through the pen. Thus, Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714), the great popularizer of Confucianism in Japan, wrote more than 150 works explaining the precepts of this worldview to other members of his learned elite.

It was a similar elitism, both intellectual and ritual, that provoked a series of anti-intellectual movements in Hinduism. The brahmins put a considerable emphasis on erudition from an early stage. For example, the great grammarian Panini of the sixth century B.C.E. has been revered as a sage since ancient times, and his work is considered one of the

greatest accomplishments of the human mind. Brahminical learning remained important, but both Buddhism and Jainism broke from it, at first with a strong anti-intellectual flavor. Similarly, remaining within Hinduism, the devotional movement was the side of holiness that really won the hearts and minds of the people. The philosophers who won popular veneration were those who combined scholarship with devotionism, such as Ramanuja (1017–1137), or who rejected learning completely, such as the great god-saint Chaitanya (d. 1533).

Early Buddhism was in its early centuries predominantly an ascetic movement, with little emphasis on scholarship. As monks began to settle in long-term communities and established a body of scriptures, however, this situation began to change. By the beginning of the Common Era, most of the great Buddhist holy people were scholars. The first great impetus toward intellectual attainments as a central trait of holy people came from the missionary nature of Buddhism. As Buddhism spread to other lands, there was a strongly felt need to translate Buddhist texts into host languages to facilitate the adoption of Buddhist teachings. The translators are often described as living truly heroic lives that focused on translation—they went to distant lands to learn languages or to collect texts, often at great personal risk, combining a very high degree of missionary zeal to their scholarly attainments. For example, Kumarajiva (344–413), one of the great translators from Sanskrit into Chinese, was a central Asian who was captured by the Chinese. He then studied their language until he was liberated, afterward settling in the city of Chang-an to become a long-venerated model of the scholarly monk. Kumarajiva so caught the imagination of his time that, according to legend, he had thousands of monks as assistants and won imperial support, along with the title "teacher of the nation." His genius played an important role in adapting Buddhism to Chinese beliefs and structures. Faxian (c. 337–c. 422), the first Chinese monk successfully to fetch Buddhist texts from India, endured enormous hardship in his travels, which culminated in the translation of four works. Sometimes translation was in itself regarded as a task specially sanctioned by the divine. Thus Vairotsana (eighth century), Tibet's greatest translator, was a child prodigy marked for great things nearly from birth. The translator-saints provide an important category of holy people throughout the Buddhist world.

Buddhism usually discouraged philosophy as vain speculation, but the same was not true of scholarly inquiry into the spiritual. By the third century, a central feature of many monasteries was study of the Buddhist scriptures as the monks strove to understand the nature of their religion. Buddhist scholars are divided into dualistic and nondualistic camps, depending on whether they believe that the *budha*-nature is separate from existence more generally, or that

buddha-nature and existence are equivalent. As the focus of scholarship became more esoteric, the scholars who could comprehend such questions became an elite within the elite of the *samgha* (monastic community). It is not surprising that the legend developed that some Buddhist teachings were so difficult that they were hidden deep in the sea, guarded by a serpent until people were ready to comprehend them. Legend tells that the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna (c. 150–250) was taught by a serpent and taken to the palace beneath the sea to read the hidden teachings—such was the esteem in which his learning was held. He seems to have been among the first to systematize the body of canonical writings, a process that reached a high point with the great harmonizer of tradition Buddhaghosa (fifth century), who systematized Theravadan Buddhism. By the sixth century, Buddhist philosophers were dividing into subgroups that advocated the centrality of particular sutras or particular approaches to awakening; thus it is impossible to tell if the Chinese Buddhist philosopher Zhiyi (538–597) was venerated as a scholar or as a meditation master.

Buddhism defined intellectual attainment, like progress on the road to awakening, very much as part of a lineage that transmitted teachings from one generation to the next. Thus Dignana, Dharmapala, and Dharmakirti formed a lineage of great monk-scholars in the seventh century. Access to such learning was available only in the monastic order. Therefore, such scholarly emphasis made it nearly impossible for a layperson—or any woman—to win regard as a holy person. There are exceptions, such as the Tibetan Machig Labdron (1031–1126), a brilliant female philosopher, but they only appear in extraordinary circumstances. Tibet in general emphasized holy scholars, conceiving of ever-higher credentials for great intellectual monks in particular lineages. Several leading philosophers, such as Losang Drukpa (d. 1419), were thought to be able to accomplish as much as they did because they were manifestations of Manjushri, the buddha of wisdom. In the golden age of Tibetan Buddhism, great scholars were believed to be reincarnations of great scholars of the past—sometimes even of several at the same time, such as Khedrup Jey (1385–1419). The Buddhist emphasis on learning has continued to the present. The Tibetan Jamgon Kongtrul (1813–1899) was a polymath who won fame as a *terton* (treasure finder), an uncoverer of old teachings, which he decoded and transmitted to the Buddhist community. And a recent Theravadan holy man, the monk Buddhadasa (1906–1993), produced the largest body of writing of any Theravadan monk in history.

The need to interpret holy writings also led to an important role for Muslim theologians and philosophers. Especially problematic were the *hadith*, the sayings attributed to Muhammad and his circle of followers, which called for considerable erudition to categorize and evaluate. Muslims were

aided by falling heir to Greek philosophy, leading to centuries of brilliant theologians and philosophers, who sometimes fell foul of religious authorities as heretics, but often won great acclaim as people specially attuned to God's will. Thus the great theologian and philosopher Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (1149–1209) attracted many students with his efforts to reconcile theology and philosophy but was still forced into exile, believed by some to be a traitor to Islam; he may have had his life cut short by poison. A more successful example of a synthesizer who won veneration as a holy person was the Shi'a Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa'i (1753–1826), who combined all the threads of Muslim mysticism and philosophy into a single system. Great mystical philosophers such as Ibn al-Arabi (1165–1240) are still venerated throughout much of the Muslim world.

Christianity has had several periods of great scholar-saints during eras when the definition and exposition of right doctrine was rendered necessary because of some sort of competition. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Christian scholars—some of the highest caliber, such as Augustine of Hippo (354–430)—defined “true” Christianity against both heresy and Greco-Roman polytheism. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the enemies were again heretics—and the revived interest in Greek philosophy. A massive growth in the institutional authority of the church also required its own justification. The last great age of Christian scholars was provoked by the Reformation movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As the leaders of Protestantism strove to define and justify their vision of Christianity, Roman Catholics mustered to repel what they perceived as attacks on their faith.

In general, though, scholars do not play a great role among the holy people of Christianity. In the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, a certain number have been canonized—but they are for the most part arid, intellectual saints who have never won notable popular veneration. Indeed, Christian history has been much more deeply marked by suspicion of scholarship than by veneration of scholars. Unlike Buddhism, Christianity has only a few saints who won their reputation as translators of holy texts—most notably Cyril (826–869), Methodius (815–885), Jerome (347–420), and Martin Luther (1483–1546). Western European Christianity, in particular, emphasized the essential holiness of scriptures above a need to understand them, instead focusing on ritual as the prime religious tool of the populace. Early Christianity was largely antagonistic to Greek philosophy, greeting such great philosophers as Origen (c. 185–c. 254) with suspicion and eventually condemnation. The tendency continued with later synthesizers of religion and philosophy, with even major saints such as Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) suspected at times of heresy. Eastern Christianity always had greater enthusiasm

for theological speculation than did the West, leading, for example, to the raging controversy over hesychasm in the fourteenth century. But in Western Christianity, even many of the saints who have won the title “doctor of the church,” such as Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) and Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), are much better characterized as spiritual guides or mystics than as scholars. In modern times, several theologians, such as Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and James H. Cone (1938–), have won a level of influence that has gone beyond a small circle of Christian scholars. Such cases are exceptional in Christianity, however.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Abraham; Abraham ibn Ezra; Ahmad al-Ahsa'i, Shaykh; Akiba ben Joseph; Anan ben David; Augustine of Hippo; Buddhadasa; Catherine of Siena; Chaitanya, Krishna; Cone, James H.; Confucianism and Holy People; Confucius; Cyril and Methodius; Faxian; Heroes; Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Jamgon Kongtrul; Jerome; Kaibara Ekiken; Khedrup Jey; Kings; Kumarajiva; Luther, Martin; Manjushri; Matriarchs, Hebrew; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Meir of Rothenburg; Moses; Moses ben Maimon; Nagarjuna; Origen; Plato; Ramanuja; Rashi; Socrates; Teresa of Avila; Thomas Aquinas; Tillich, Paul; Vairotsana; Zhiyi

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Sebaste, Forty Martyrs of

(d. c. 320 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste were Christian soldiers of various nationalities who served in the Roman army (Legion XII, the “Thundering Legion”) in Asia Minor in the early fourth century. These heroic and dedicated Christians met their fate in about 320 when the eastern Roman emperor Licinius gave the order that all soldiers in the Roman army were to offer sacrifices to and worship the Roman gods. The forty refused to do so. After making several attempts to sway them from their faith, the local governor of Sebaste (present day Sivas, Turkey) left them to die of exposure on a frozen lake, where they were forced to remain naked all night. In an effort to further test their faith and perseverance, the governor ordered that they be tempted by comforts—a bath of hot water and a fire on the lake shore. Only one man defected, but he was replaced by a soldier who had been inspired by the faith of the others, keeping their number at forty. The few soldiers who did not freeze to death were executed the next day.

While the martyrs were awaiting their sentencing by the governor, they composed a document containing their last messages to their families and friends. This text, known as *The Testament of the Forty Martyrs of Christ*, is cautiously but generally accepted as roughly contemporary if not actually an authentic historical document. Veneration of these stoic and steadfast martyrs was especially popular in the

Byzantine East throughout the Middle Ages. They were praised in sermons by a number of later fourth-century Greek church fathers, including Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa. Their relics were translated to Constantinople by the empress Pulcheria in the early fifth century (as well as to Caesarea).

The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste feature as a subject in Byzantine icons and ivories, where they are shown as a group of nude or seminude male figures huddled together in contorted poses on the frozen lake. Christ and angels appear above them, waiting to welcome their souls into heaven. Their feast day is March 10 in the Roman Catholic Church and March 9 in Greek Orthodoxy.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Seishō

See **Kodōjin**

Sengsten Gampo

(c. 617–698 C.E.)

Buddhist ruler

The earliest credible Tibetan history begins in the late sixth century of the Common Era with Namri Sengsten (c. 570–619) of the Yarlung Valley, a chieftain ruling part of Tibet. His son, Sengsten Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po), born in 617 and later worshipped as an incarnation of the Buddhist deity Lokeshvara, was crowned king in 629. Sengsten Gampo sought to expand Tibetan territory by threatening China's western border during the 630s. His conquests included annexing the Bonpo kingdom of Shanshung in west Tibet, invading northern India, and subjugating Nepal. In an attempt to appease the Tibetans, Emperor Taizong (626–649) of the Tang dynasty (618–907) betrothed his own daughter, Princess Wencheng, to Sengsten Gampo. Both of Sengsten Gampo's chief empresses, Bhirkuti, princess of Nepal, and Wencheng, were later worshipped as incarnations of the Buddhist deity Tara.

Sengsten Gampo was considered the first *chogyal*, or “religious king,” of Tibet. He was influenced to take up Buddhism through his marriages and is revered for founding multiple holy sites, including Jokhang and Ramoche, which became the most significant temples of Tibet. Under Sengsten Gampo's rule, the Tibetan alphabet was formed by his minister Thonmi Sambhota based on an Indian script, further helping to spread Buddhist teachings in Tibet.

Lay Buddhists of Tibet adhere to two categories of elementary precepts, the “five precepts” and the “ten virtuous

deeds.” Both of these were promulgated in Tibet as common law by Sengsten Gampo.

King Sengsten Gampo’s reign is significant for Tibetan imperialism. Although it is disputed whether Buddhism was actually officially adopted under Sengsten Gampo, there is clear evidence that Buddhism did in fact have a presence in Tibet at this time. In legend as well as in religious lore, Sengsten Gampo has become a Tibetan Buddhist symbol of power and sovereignty.

—Max Clark

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Serah bat Asher

(c. 1300 B.C.E.)

Jewish legendary witness

First mentioned in the genealogies of those who went down to Egypt during Jacob’s lifetime (Gen. 46:17), Serah bat Asher is also the only woman mentioned in the roll of Israelites who left Egypt at the time of the Exodus, a lapse of several centuries (Num. 26:46). Legend holds that she was the adopted daughter of Asher, son of the patriarch Jacob. Rabbinic tradition therefore includes her among those who never died and entered living into paradise, like Elijah.

Legend suggests that Serah told Jacob that Joseph was still alive in Egypt and that her immortality resulted from his blessing. Another legend tells how she received “the secret of redemption,” the ability to identify the one chosen to lead the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt. Not only did she identify Moses, according to several Midrashim, she helped him find the bones of Joseph, without which they would not have been able to leave Egypt: a simple task, since she had been present at his burial centuries before.

The sages believed that Serah bat Asher was also the wise woman who negotiated with King David’s troop commander Jo’av and so saved the town of Avel by coming forward as “one of those who are peaceful and faithful in Israel” (2 Sam. 20:19). Based on her eyewitness testimony, she later corrected various rabbinic misconceptions regarding the Exodus (*Pesikta de Rav Kahana* 11.13; *Shemot Rabbah* 5.13). The mystical work called the Zohar assigns Serah pride of place in paradise, where she teaches righteous women Torah.

Some feminist scholars see in her authority as witness and in the legends regarding her continuing life and appearances a role parallel to that of Elijah, who is said to appear

when rabbis teach students Talmud. Further, just as Serah bat Asher instructed the Israelites how to recognize the redeemer, Moses, so Elijah will announce the final redemption in the coming of the messiah.

A tradition among the Jews of Persia was that Serah bat Asher had lived among them until she died in a synagogue fire in the twelfth century. Her purported burial site became an important pilgrimage destination for Eastern Jews.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Death; Elijah (Judaism); Gender and Holy People; Jacob; Legendary Holy People

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Seraphim of Sarov

(1759–1833 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox monk, hermit, visionary

Seraphim was a saint and miracle-working monk of the Sarov hermitage in Russia. He was officially recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1903.

Born in Kursk, south of Moscow, in 1759, Seraphim was named at birth Prokhor Isidorovich Moshnin. His vita tells that he experienced healing miracles as a child. At age eighteen, he entered a monastery at Sarov, south of Nizhni-Novgorod. As a novice, he zealously practiced an ascetic life, and during an illness he was cured following a vision of the Theotokos (mother of God). Prokhor received tonsure as Seraphim after several years, became a deacon, and finally was consecrated as a monastic priest (*hieromonk*) at age thirty-four. His devotion to the contemplative life was manifested through his repetition of the Jesus prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”) and his reading of great Christian texts, including those by ascetic writers such as Basil the Great (330–379) and John Climacus (c. 570–c. 649) and by Russian fathers such as Nilus of Sora (1433–1508) and Demetrius of Rostov (1651–1709). Eventually, he asked the father superior for permission to withdraw to a hermit’s hut, and his request was granted. Seraphim named the hill on which his hut was located Mt. Athos and dedicated his humble quarters to the Theotokos, whom he was to see in visions a total of twelve times.

As a hermit, Seraphim fasted rigorously and submitted himself to the suffering of sleeplessness and complete silence in the tradition of the desert fathers. His third vision of the Theotokos occurred in 1804 in the monastery hospital after he had been badly beaten by robbers. After spending approximately sixteen years as a hermit, Seraphim returned

to the monastery in 1810 in obedience to his superior, but he continued to exercise the life of a hermit within his cell, maintaining complete silence for another ten years, and afterward still confined himself to his cell. In 1825, Seraphim experienced another vision of the Theotokos, who gave him permission to end his confinement. From this point he held the rank of *starets* (elder, spiritual father) and divided his time between monastery and hermitage. In his remaining years, Seraphim served as spiritual father to members of the nearby Deviyev Convent and to many other people who came to visit him for healing and guidance. N. A. Motovilov left behind a record of his conversation with the holy man.

Seraphim was credited with curing illness through his prayers and was associated with a healing spring that issued near the Sarovka River. Some reported seeing Seraphim in a state of levitation or with a brightly illuminated visage. Thus, Seraphim is credited with miraculous powers in his lifetime as well as after his death. Posthumous miracles include curing the monastic priest of Mt. Athos, Seraphim Sviatogorets. Seraphim's ascetic deeds, including his years of silence, his visions, his study of heroic monastic fathers, and his reputation for miraculous encounters, place him in the company of Russia's great hermit saints and spiritual fathers. He inspired many Orthodox in the nineteenth century who were searching for new meaning within the church. He is remembered on January 2 and July 19.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Guidance; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Prophets

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Sergius and Bacchus

(d. c. 305 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

Sergius and Bacchus were Christian martyrs, apparently lovers, who died in about 305. No information about their early lives is available, though their actual martyrdom has been historically documented. Both men served in the Roman army, initially as members of the frontier force,

eventually as officers in one of the elite imperial bodyguard units known as the *schola gentilium*. Emperor Galerius Maximianus (r. 305–311) held both in high favor and became furious when their allegiance to Christianity was uncovered. After being humiliated by being dressed in women's clothes and paraded through the streets, Sergius and Bacchus were shipped off to Resapha, Mesopotamia, then governed by Antiochus, a former friend of Sergius. Upon arrival, the two men were stripped and tortured. Following a severe beating, Bacchus died. Sergius lived on to endure more tortures, including being forced to run for eighteen miles in shoes that had nails pounded through the soles, and then was beheaded.

The two saints were widely venerated throughout the Christian Roman Empire, particularly in the eastern portion of the realm. Justinian (r. 527–565) had an enormous Byzantine church and monastery dedicated to the saints built in 527 in Constantinople. The church remained a center of Orthodox spirituality until it was converted into a mosque sometime between 1506 and 1512.

Today the Roman Catholic Church celebrates the feast of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus on October 7. However, most of the interest in the Sergius and Bacchus legend today is provoked by their apparent homosexual relationship. Many gay Catholics—and gay Christians in general—view these two martyrs as crucial pieces in the historical understanding of homosexuality in the Christian world. The claim is that if the church has venerated a homosexual couple for centuries, then it has no right to persecute gays today.

—Michelle M. Sauer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Sergius of Radonezh

(1314–1392 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox ascetic, abbot

Sergius, an ascetic, abbot, and founder of Holy Trinity, is an eminent Orthodox saint. Born in 1314 near Rostov, Russia, he was the second son of Rostov boyars Cyril and Maria, who were moved by the Muscovite prince Ivan Kalita to the village of Radonezh. His birth name was Bartholomew. After the death of his parents, the twenty-three-year-old Bartholomew and his widowed older brother, Stephan, settled to live as hermits in a nearby forest, where next to their

cell they built a chapel, later blessed by Metropolitan Pheognost in the name of the Holy Trinity. When, discouraged by the hardships of eremitical life, Stephan left for the Muscovite Bogoyavlenski monastery, his brother remained in solitude for two more years, taking in the meantime the name Sergius together with monastic vows.

The fame of his virtues soon drew disciples eager for a life of prayer, labor, and fasting. With the apostolic number of twelve brothers, the community surrounded their hermitage with a palisade. This was the beginning of the Troitse-Sergievski monastery and soon the center of the renaissance of Russian Christianity. Although Sergius acted as abbot of the community from 1344 on, he did not hold himself worthy of priesthood and took the post officially, together with priestly orders, only ten years later. The cloister, where Sergius remained until his death in 1392, served as a model of common ascetic life, following Sergius's new monastic rule, and laid the foundations for the religious renewal of Rus'. It gave rise to a network of monasteries covering the whole of northeastern Rus', integrated with the administrative and clerical center in Moscow.

By implementing monastic reform, propagating asceticism, charity, hard labor, and obedience, and inspiring deepest humility, love, and staunch faith, the saint restored to fourteenth-century Russia the spiritual life stifled by the chaos accompanying Tartar rule. Equally important was his presence in the events of the epoch. The internal strife and bloodshed among Russian princes encouraged continuous attacks by the neighboring Tartars that resulted in the political and material subservience of the people. The saint's voice, calling for love, agreement, and oneness, united the people behind Prince Dimitri Donskoi, who defeated the invading Tartar troops in 1380 and established an independent Rus'. After Sergius's death, the community of the Holy Trinity continued to serve throughout the ages as one of the chief centers of Russian spiritual and religious life. His relics, open to pilgrims since 1422, are venerated at the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra. His feast is held on October 8 (September 25 according to the church calendar) and July 18 (July 5).

—Ewa Słojka

See also: Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Patriotism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Seton, Elizabeth

(1774–1821 C.E.)

Roman Catholic abbess, order founder, educator

Elizabeth Seton founded the American Sisters of Charity and the Catholic school system in the United States. She was the first American-born saint. Born Elizabeth Ann Bayley on August 28, 1774, in New York, she was the second of three daughters of Richard and Catherine Bayley, an Episcopalian couple. She married William Magee Seton in 1794, and they had five children before William's health began to deteriorate. He died in Italy in 1803 while on a trip there—with Elizabeth and their eldest, Anna Maria—to recover his health. At this time, Elizabeth was introduced to Roman Catholicism by William's friends, the Filicchi brothers, and their wives. Back in New York, Elizabeth converted to Catholicism on March 14, 1805. Although she was ostracized for her new faith, she accepted the invitation of Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore to move there and found a girls' school, which, in 1808, became the first Catholic school in the United States. Elizabeth took vows as a nun on March 25, 1809, and founded the order that would receive approval in 1812 as the Sisters of Charity. Later that year, she moved the school and the order to Emmitsburg, Maryland, where she died on January 4, 1821.

From childhood, Elizabeth felt a reliance on God. After her mother died in 1777 and her father remarried, Elizabeth and her one surviving sister were sent to live with their uncle in New Rochelle, New York. There Elizabeth dealt with her feelings of abandonment by turning to God and the Bible for solace. During the early years of her marriage, she began her charitable works by helping to found the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children in New York. Her arduous decision to convert, and the subsequent conversion of her sister-in-law, alienated her from those New Yorkers who had helped to support her and her children, but she never lost her belief that God would provide for her. By founding a new order based on the French order of the Sisters of Charity, she continued her efforts to help others. Before her death, she had expanded the order by sending sisters to Philadelphia and New York. Despite the deaths of two sisters-in-law and two daughters who joined her in Emmitsburg, Elizabeth never lost her faith in God's plan.

Elizabeth Ann Seton was beatified on March 17, 1963, after healing miracles were attributed to her intercession, and canonized on September 14, 1975. Her feast day is January 4.

—Elizabeth Brownell



Elizabeth Seton, founder of the Roman Catholic school system in America, at the time of her marriage in 1794. (Library of Congress)

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People

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Setuuma

(d. 1975 C.E.)

Native American shaman

A Guajiro shaman from the Pushaina clan of the Peccary, Setuuma lived in Upper Guajira on the Guajira Peninsula of Colombia during the twentieth century. The Guajiro make up one of the largest ethnic groups in the South American lowlands and are dedicated to livestock breeding, especially sheep, goats, horses, and mules, as well as to weaving. Guajiro weavers produce hammocks and bags that they sell to buy food and supplies in the cities, especially Maracaibo, Venezuela.

Setuuma spoke with the ethnographer Michel Perrin about Guajiro practices of ethnopharmacology and the process of becoming a shaman. Perrin recorded his conversations with the shaman in his work (Perrin 1987, 1992). According to Perrin, when Setuuma spoke of the voices of spirits who taught him the names of the healing plants, he referred to himself as “we” or “he.” Setuuma told Perrin about a variety of tobacco that allows the shaman to “see beyond one’s eyes” to aid in the curing of illnesses, explaining that he could raise a dead man to life by rubbing the juice of the plant on the body. In Perrin’s collection of Guajiro elders’ texts, Setuuma narrates a myth that warns against the improper use of the tobacco, declaring that a man who has chewed it feels his arm falling asleep and commenting that this is what happens to shamans. The tobacco protects the shaman from a female divinity who would try to capture him. Other Guajiro called Setuuma “Wise Grandfather” because of his talents.

Setuuma was murdered in 1975 for reasons related to his position as shaman. Shamanic and healing practices are common throughout the Americas.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Intermediaries; Shamans

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Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove

(3rd cent. C.E.)

Daoist sages

The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove (*Zhulin qixian*) were a group of poets, scholar-officials, and musicians associated with various Daoist practices during the third century in the vicinity of the city of Jiankang, modern day Nanjing, in China. They were Xi Kang (223–262), Ruan Ji (210–263), Shan Tao (205–283), Wang Rong (234–305), Ruan Xian (234–305), Xiang Xiu (c. 221–300), and Liu Ling (d. c. 265).

The Seven Sages lived during the breakup of the Chinese empire after the Three Kingdoms period (221–277). Disillusioned with the chaotic social and political life of the time, they began a practice of philosophical debate known as “pure talk” (*pingdan*). This technique was associated with a Neo-Daoist movement occurring during the same period as the self-cultivation practices of Daoism experienced a rise in popularity. In essence, Neo-Daoism attempted to make a philosophical synthesis of Daoism and Confucianism. The

Seven Sages were exemplars of the School of Mystery Learning, or School of Mystery (Xuanxue), a philosophical movement that sought understanding of the supreme reality and questioned social conventions. The members of the Mystery Learning group were interested in the spiritual freedom taught in the Daoist texts, primarily those of Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.) and Zhuangzi (c. 369–286 B.C.E.), along with those of the *Yijing* (Book of changes).

Although the Seven Sages were all Daoist devotees, there was nothing religious in their thought, as they were primarily interested in longevity techniques. They wrote escapist poetry that emphasized ecstasy and withdrawal from society to create a counter society in which everything induces a temporary forgetfulness through drinking, drugs, singing, and music. Through drunkenness they claimed to achieve a feeling of being outside and above the things of the world. With their metaphysical tendency, something new to China, they speculated on “being” and “nonbeing.”

Xi Kang and Ruan Ji were both master musicians of the Chinese zither, or *qin*, and the banjo-like instrument called the *ruan*, respectively. Ruan Ji wrote of his Daoist philosophies in the *Daren xiansheng zhuan* (Biography of Master Great Man) and in his collected poems, entitled *Yonghuai shi* (Poems of innermost thoughts). Liu Ling wrote his idea of the “Great Man” in his *Jiude song* (In praise of the virtue of wine). Xi Kang wrote a series entitled *Jiuhui* (Wine gatherings). The sages were known to wander as a group in a little grove of bamboo, periodically stopping to drink, then resuming their walk; finally, when they were drunk, they would talk and compose poems. Later these seven were considered Daoist immortals.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Death; Morality and Holy People

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Seven Sleepers of Ephesus

Legendary Christian and Muslim saints

The legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, in both Christian and Islamic tradition, involves powerful, universal symbolism in its themes of sleep/death, rebirth/awakening, the power of the divine, and the strength of faith. Of fifth-century Greek or Syriac origin, the first Latin version, by Gregory of Tours in the sixth century, contributed to the rapid and wide diffusion of this popular tale and its many later

variants. The story is an esteemed narrative in Islamic tradition also; indeed, Sura 18 of the Qur’an is devoted to a commentary on the Seven Sleepers.

The core narrative involves seven young Christian men of Ephesus who, taking refuge from religious persecution, were sealed in a cave by order of the emperor Decius in the mid-third century. They would have starved to death in this prison had God not caused them to fall asleep. They slept for approximately 200 years, and when they emerged from their cave during the reign of Theodosius II in the fifth century, they discovered that their city had become Christian. After their miraculous reawakening was made known to the awestruck citizens of Ephesus, the seven men died. They were then venerated as saints, and their cave quickly became a site of pilgrimage (which is popular to this day.)

The story of the death-like sleep of the seven youths and their rebirth after several centuries inspired Christian commentators on the tale to concentrate on the themes of resurrection and the immortality of the soul. In Islamic interpretations, the emphasis is on the necessary submission to the will of God. This virtue is represented by the passive heroes, who triumph in fully abandoning themselves to God’s will.

In Western tradition, the Seven Sleepers are named Maximilian, Malchus, Marcian, John, Denis, Serapion, and Constantine; in Eastern tradition they are called Maximilian, Jamblichus, Martin, John, Dionysius, Antonius, and Constantine. Their feast day is July 27 in the Roman Catholic Church and August 2/4 or October 22/23 in Greek Orthodoxy.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Islam and Holy People; Legendary Holy People

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Sexuality and Holy People

Is it possible for a person to enjoy an active sexual life and still be regarded as holy? The position of the world religions is strongly divided on this point: Religions such as Christianity and Buddhism that have a strong ascetic element tend to answer no, while religions that focus on the goodness of creation tend to answer yes. The situation is by no means completely clear-cut, however, as ascetic movements within religions such as Islam and Hinduism have emphasized celibacy, while important branches of both Christianity and Buddhism have advocated marriage and procreation as part of a balanced spiritual life. With only one possible exception,

the Christian saints Sergius and Bacchus (d. c. 305), who have been adopted as unofficial patron saints of the Roman Catholic gay community, sexual expression has been limited among the ranks of the holy to members of the opposite sex.

Among the monotheistic religions, Judaism is most consistent in its attitude toward sexuality: Every man is required to marry to fulfill a God-given duty of procreation, including even the holiest rabbi. This has been understood not as a negative “giving in to the weakness of the flesh” but as part of the covenant with God. With the exception of the Essenes, who lived a celibate life otherwise alien to their religion, every major Jewish holy person was married. Islam has remained closer to Judaism than to Christianity on this matter, regarding celibacy as well-nigh blasphemous against a God who created a beautiful world, intending his creations to enjoy it. The prophet Muhammad had ten wives, a point that has often been mocked by Christian polemicists as insatiable lack of self-control. But the prophet’s polygamy was really caused by a combination of lack of sexual puritanism in Islam, Muhammad’s specific need to marry to make alliances, and several unions that he made specifically to care for a needy widow. For Muslims, Muhammad modeled the union of married and spiritual life, which is regarded as one of the marks of Muhammad’s special excellence. Some sufis have remained celibate, for example Nasiruddin Chiragh-i Dihli (1276/1277–1356), who was celibate in imitation of his own shaykh and to allow him to focus completely on the life of the spirit, but such a course is unusual in Islam and many regard it as reprehensible.

Christianity is strongly divided on the spiritual pitfalls or benefits of sexuality. From the beginning of the Christian movement, its advocates offered a moral system that focused especially on self-control, above all in sexual matters, turning strongly against Greco-Roman cultural norms on the subjects of divorce, remarriage, abortion, and general fornication. By the third century, sexual renunciation was lauded as nearly a *sine qua non* for a devout Christian; by giving up sex a Christian could focus more completely on God. This stand was elevated into a central premise of female spirituality, and a large genre of tales of virgin martyrs, such as Agnes and Agatha, reinforced the higher calling of marriage to Christ. In both these cases, as in many others, the virgin Christian (always young and beautiful) refuses a very advantageous marriage for God’s sake, and, at least in legend, is martyred in a manner that is very highly sexually charged—Agatha had her breasts chopped off, and Agnes was at first sentenced to a brothel. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) tells in poignant detail about his final steps before conversion—believing, but not able to tear himself from a sexual life, a step he regarded as essential before he would be a true Christian. Such an attitude was only strengthened in the Western church by the development of the doctrine of original sin,

which holds that the primal sin of Adam and Eve’s disobedience against God is transmitted by sexual intercourse. The appeal of virgin martyrdom has continued to the present day, as in the case of the child martyr Maria Goretti (1890–1902), who, at the age of twelve, died of injuries received while fighting off a would-be rapist. Important Protestant leaders have also advocated celibacy, such as Father Divine (d. 1965), the African American founder of the Peace Mission, or Ann Lee (1736–1784), the founder of the Shakers, who argued that the original human sin was sex.

Very few formally declared Christian saints have been married and sexually active. Some medieval married saints were added to the ranks of the holy on the ground that the couple involved lived in chastity—a necessary addition to present the saint as ascetic, even when almost certainly untrue, as in the case of Henry II (973–1024) of Germany and his empress Kunigunde (d. 1039). In the Roman Catholic tradition, Elizabeth of Hungary (1207–1231) is one of the rare examples of a married, sexually active saint. In fact, in the Christian tradition it has been difficult for a layperson in general to be canonized. Since in the Western medieval and Roman Catholic tradition bishops and (since the eleventh century) priests have been ordered to live celibately, while in the Orthodox tradition bishops and monks (although not priests) are also required to be celibate, almost all saints in these traditions lived lives of sexual renunciation.

It was only with the Protestant Reformation in Europe that a large number of religious leaders came to marry and procreate, often marrying, as in the case of Martin Luther (1483–1546), specifically as an act of disobedience against what they perceived to be an unjustifiable prohibition by the ecclesiastical authorities. Such acts of disobedience often put early reformers in serious danger, as was the case with the Anglican leader Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556). In these Protestant cases, sexual reintegration was part of a larger anti-ascetic movement that did indeed produce holy people, but on the grounds of their teaching or their services to society, rather than because of a state of ascetic “otherness.” Among the sects that have branched off of Christianity, Sun Myung Moon’s Unification Church (“Moonies”) is one that stands out for *encouraging* marriage rather than just allowing it. The centerpiece of Moon’s message is that Jesus Christ could only give redemption to the spirit and not the body, because he was killed before he could marry. Members of the Unification Church believe that Moon himself is now finishing the work of redemption by taking it into the physical realm. The children of marriages blessed by the True Parents (Moon and his wife) are regarded as free from the taint of original sin, a belief that has led Moon to organize mass weddings for his followers.

The religions that rose in India, whether advocating celibacy or not, in general have a more moderate attitude

toward sexual desire and intercourse, often renouncing it as detrimental to spiritual progress but rarely with the loathing of the Christian tradition. Perhaps this stems from the fact that almost all Hindu gods are married; moreover, in Hinduism children are regarded as a blessing, a link between the living and the dead. Although Hinduism has had an ascetic tradition from an early age, the standard rule is that one should only retire as a renunciant after seeing the birth of a grandson; the life of a *grihastha* (householder) is recognized as the second normal life-stage of a Hindu. Even super-renunciants such as Gautama the Buddha only gave up everything to start the path to enlightenment on the day his son was born. Many Hindu devotional saints are devoted to the divine pair Krishna and Radha, many describing the love between the two in highly erotic terms, such as Hit Harivansh (c. 1502–c. 1552). Harivansh is one of many examples of a *bhakti* (devotional) saint who lived a normal married life—he was married three times and fathered several children; his descendants still tend his tomb in Vrindaban. There are cases of ascetic Hindu saints, such as Mirabai (sixteenth century), who refused to accept a husband, saying that Krishna was her true bridegroom. Nonetheless, she married—only to scandalize people again when she refused to commit *sati* (widow suicide) after her husband's death. The only Indian tradition that really condemns sexual behavior is Jainism, which believes that sexual acts by renunciants are simply bad, a single act of ejaculation being paramount to the murder of hundreds of millions of sperm. The Jain attitude can best be summed up in the legend of the nineteenth *tirthankara* (ford-maker) Malli, according to one Jain sect a woman. She was a beautiful princess, much bothered by suitors. So she had a hollow statue of herself made, every day putting a handful of her food in it. Finally, her suitors were shown the image: Entranced by its outward form, they were then repelled by its inner putrescence. This case can be compared to that of the Buddha's follower Ambapali, a courtesan who gradually reached awakening by contemplating the aging of her own body.

In general, Buddhist holy people have been monks vowed to a celibate life. Several great Buddhist leaders have, however, renounced celibacy in a way that parallels the Protestant reformers of Christianity. This was especially true in Japan, where Shinran (1173–1262) abandoned the practice of celibacy as of no use in attaining awakening. Similarly, the Zen monk Ikkyu (1394–1481) openly followed the teaching that the link between man and woman is natural and that no sexual desire is unnatural—he kept a mistress, with whom he had a son. And then there was the Tibetan holy fool Drukpa Kunley (1455–1529), who loved wine and women and was reputed to have had 5,000 lovers.

Besides the ascetic branches of Eastern religions, there are the tantric practitioners, whose special rituals often in-

clude sexuality as a tool to spiritual advancement. These rituals, in both Hinduism and Buddhism, can include not only erotic imagery but sexual intercourse. For example, the medieval Hindu yogis known as Naths included tantric yoga practices, including ritual sex and the use of human sexual fluids, to focus their own spiritual power. Similarly, the itinerant mystics called the Bauls rejected celibacy, regarding the human body and its sexuality as a tool to reach the divine. They brought an appreciation of sexuality up to a very high pitch, believing that the union of male and female could lead to a cosmic unity such as was seen before creation. It is important to point out, though, that this was not just sex for the sake of sex. There were careful rules for such sexual practice, and to be effective it had to be based on devotion and divine love rather than on the pleasures of this world. The Hindu guru Mukundadeva (d. 1650) was a major developer of Hindu tantra, teaching the discovery of inner divinity through a range of practices, including ritual sexual intercourse. Similarly, tantric Buddhism, practiced above all in Tibet, includes both sexual practices and symbolism, focusing all of one's physical as well as spiritual being on inner awakening. Thus, many Tibetan lamas have been married, without in this way jeopardizing their spiritual attainments.

Next to Judaism, the religion that has been most consistent in a positive attitude toward sex has been Daoism. Some Daoist schools encourage special sexual techniques to help reach a state of greater self-fulfillment, or even the highest of Daoist aims, immortality. The legend of the Yellow Emperor Huangdi (c. 2000 B.C.E.) tells that he had sexual relations with 1,200 concubines—not only without damaging his health, but as a positive aid to help him reach immortality—because he knew the correct Daoist sexual techniques, combining the yin and yang in a harmonious fashion.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Agatha; Agnes; Ascetics as Holy People; Augustine of Hippo; Bauls; Chiragh-i Dihli, Nasiruddin; Cranmer, Thomas; Drukpa Kunley; Elizabeth of Hungary; Gautama; Goretta, Maria; Harivansh, Hit; Henry II; Huangdi; Ikkyu; Kunigunde; Lee, Ann; Luther, Martin; Malli; Mirabai; Moon, Sun Myung; Muhammad; Mukundadeva; Naths; Sergius and Bacchus; Shinran

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Shabbetai Zevi

(1626–1676 C.E.)

Jewish messiah claimant

Shabbetai Zevi, the most successful false messiah in Jewish history, was born in 1626 in the Ottoman city of Izmir. His messianic career began in 1665 and was greeted with unprecedented waves of enthusiasm. Imprisoned by the Ottomans, in 1666 he was given the choice of execution or conversion to Islam. Despite his choice of apostasy, many of his followers remained loyal to him even after his death in 1676.

Even in his youth, Shabbetai was noted both for his learning and piety and for his aberrant and occasionally antinomian behavior. The latter ultimately led to his banishment from Izmir by the rabbis of the community. He was subsequently banished from Salonika and from Istanbul for the same reasons. He later settled in Jerusalem.

Shabbetai was apparently disturbed by his periodic fits of melancholy and his breaking of the law. In 1665, on his return from a mission to collect funds for the Jews of Jerusalem in Egypt, he stopped in Gaza to consult a kabbalist, Nathan of Gaza, possibly seeking help for his condition. Nathan had a vision in which it was revealed to him that Shabbetai was the messiah. Jews as far away as Germany began to sell their possessions to be ready to travel to Jerusalem in response to the messianic age that they believed had dawned.

A few months later, on his way to Istanbul to convert the sultan, Shabbetai was arrested by the Ottomans, who hoped to quell the social upheavals caused by the movement. He continued to hold court for some months while in prison. Ultimately, in 1666, he was offered the choice between death and conversion. He chose apostasy and spent the rest of his life as a minor functionary at the sultan's court. He died in 1676.

Shabbetai himself justified his apostasy as God's will. His followers responded in various ways. Some returned to their normative Jewish lives. Others, more directly influenced by Shabbetai's message, attempted to explain it away either as an impenetrable mystery (the approach of Nathan of Gaza) or as a slander. Others said that Shabbetai had been occluded. The most radical response was the choice of some of his followers to follow him into Islam. These sabbatean converts were known as the Donmeh, and their descendants existed in Turkey until recently.

Many attempts have been made to account for the response to Shabbetai. Some attribute it to the suffering of Jews in various communities, most often to the aftermath of the massacres that occurred in Poland in 1648. These expla-

nations are not entirely satisfactory given the broad scope of the response, encompassing almost the entire Jewish world. Local events perhaps contributed to the movement, but it also drew on an underlying current of messianic thought in Judaism and in particular on the Lurianic Kabbalah, which gave individuals a role in the reunification of the Godhead through the proper performance of the commandments and infused Kabbalah with messianic aspirations.

—Elka Klein

See also: Kabbalah; Messiahs; Recognition; Reincarnation

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Shabistari, Mahmud ash-

(d. after 1340 C.E.)

Muslim sufi poet

Sa'd al-Din Mahmud ibn 'Abd al-Karim Yahya ash-Shabistari, a celebrated Muslim sufi poet of Persia during the fourteenth century, is famed mainly for his 1,000-line poem *Gulshan-i raz* (Garden of mystery). Composed in highly symbolic language, and drawing upon the lexicon of several centuries of Persian symbolic poetry, the poem sets forth the *dicta* of the sufis on a variety of themes, such as thought (*fikr*), the soul (*nafs*), knowledge (*ma'rifat*), the multiplicity and unity of the realms of being, the hierarchical levels of being, the spiritual voyage (*sayr*), methodical progression on the sufi path (*suluk*), nearness (*qurb*) and distance from God (*bu'd*), and the evolution of the soul. It was one of the most frequently commented upon works in all of Persian sufi literature; by the middle of the sixteenth century, close to thirty commentaries had been written on it by a number of Persian mystics, both renowned and obscure, the most important of these being the *Mafatih al-i'jaz fi sharh-i Gulshan-i raz* (Commentary on the garden of mystery) by Muhammad Lahiji (d. 1507).

The poem was first brought to the attention of Western orientalist by the French travelers Jean Chardin and François Bernier, who visited Persia in the seventeenth century and reported the poem's reputation in learned circles there as a *somme théologique* (summation of theology). A précis of the poem was subsequently translated into Latin in 1821 by August Tholuck in his *Sufismus*, to be followed in 1825 by his translation into German of a third of the poem,

published as “Blumensammlung aus der Morgenländischen Mystik” (Bouquet of Eastern mysticism). The *Gulshan-i raz* entered into the mainstream of Islamic studies in the West when the Persian text was published in 1838 with a German verse translation by J. von Hammer-Purgstall. In 1880, this text was revised and collated, with several manuscripts omitted by Hammer, and republished in England accompanied by an English translation by E. H. Whinfield. It has since been translated into English several times, although few of these translations have added anything substantial to Whinfield’s rendition.

Shabistari’s only other sufi poetic epic was the *Sa’adat-nama* (Book of felicity), a work largely devoted to the deliberate poetization of subjects that properly belong to the science of *kalam*, Islamic scholastic theology. He also composed one prose theosophical treatise, the *Haqq al-yaqin* (Truth of certainty). Neither of these works is translated into any European language.

All of Shabistari’s work shows a peerless flair for metaphysical penetration combined with an aphoristic skill in synthesizing intricate dilemmas of Islamic theological and theosophical thought. He is unrivaled by any other medieval Persian sufi poet in brevity of output and profundity of content. While in the *Gulshan-i raz* Shabistari embraces without reservation the teachings of Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165–1240), in the *Sa’adat-nama* he is more cautious and raises certain objections to him, relying mainly on the “politically correct” Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058–1111). His religious orientation reflected that of the Kubrawi sufi order, to which he was probably connected. The philosophical tradition he followed, advocated by Muslim sufi mystics, theologians, and philosophers alike, emphasized attainment of knowledge through: (1) revelation (*wahy*), (2) reason (*‘aql*), and (3) visionary unveiling (*kashf*). These three methods correspond to theology, philosophy, and sufism, respectively.

—Leonard Lewisohn

See also: Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-; Ibn al-‘Arabi, Muhyi al-Din; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism

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Shaka ka Senzangakhona

(1787–1828 C.E.)

Zulu ruler

King Shaka ka Senzangakhona, born in 1787, was one of several chiefs to call on the ancestors through dreams, claim protection for the people through sorcery, treat the army

during battle, and perform rainmaking rituals in southeastern Africa during the nineteenth century. These were well-established features of chieftainship among large and small groups in the region. Many early writers believed that Shaka’s position resembled divine kingship. However, Shaka was not deified or worshipped.

Henry Fynn described Shaka as “given to dreams and necromancy” (Fynn 1969 [1950], 31–32). Eileen Krige suggested that one of the king’s roles was that of “tribal medicine man,” but at the same time she said that “the king has a right to be a sorcerer” (Krige 1963, 243). Sorcery, however, was the secret and unlawful use of medicines. The use of medicines by chiefs, including Shaka, features strongly in oral traditions for curing ills, protection, and influencing nature. Chiefs used medicines for both offense (to overcome an enemy) and defense (to protect oneself, army, or community), and recognition as one possessing *umlingo* (miraculous power, awe-inspiring magical performance) was important.

There were rules governing the materials, knowledge, and methods of application. The king prepared the medicines himself, and apparently no one was allowed to disturb him when this was being done. Stirring could be done by others, but strict rules applied. To break them would be criminal. Some medicines were for the general population, while others were considered so powerful that they could only be used or possessed by diviners/doctors and chiefs—the chief first and foremost. Chiefs were believed to have the ability to “feel” the presence of “great” medicines being unlawfully possessed, and they had the right to demand the surrender of such substances for the good of all. Possession of powerful medicine could cause a person to “fall down.” Henry Callaway’s evidence indicates that the vessel of the chief (most likely a symbol or relic of chiefship) and the medicine mixed in it was thought to protect the chief and give him foresight and influence; “his vessel is a diviner to him” (Callaway, 1970 [1870], 342).

There are many reports of Shaka’s use of special medicines. He treated the father of one of James Stuart’s informants when he was injured. Another described an incident following a battle in which two of Shaka’s men were wounded and the king treated them in his own home. Callaway’s informant mentioned Shaka’s prominence in rainmaking practices. J. Weir (2000) argued that a great many recorded wars were marked by struggles for control of ritual power, special medicines, and important practitioners of the rites of rainmaking and divination.

—Jennifer Weir

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Miracles; Rulers as Holy People

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Shakra (Indra)

Hindu hero, god; Buddhist devotee

Shakra (Sakka in Pali), also known by the name Indra, is the king of the *devas* (gods) in Hinduism and Buddhism. Indra was the most prominent deity in the Vedic pantheon, a great warrior god who wields the thunderbolt, leads devas into battle against demons, and rules gods and humans. He came to be incorporated into Buddhism as Shakra, a benevolent sovereign of the heavens, where he resides in a celestial palace and observes all happenings on earth.

The story of Shakra's conversion to Buddhism is told in the Pali scriptures, when he questions the Buddha and is won over by his moral and religious teachings. Thereafter, while Shakra retains the glory and emblems of divine kingship in Buddhist art and legend, he becomes a faithful and gentle devotee of the Buddha. He is often depicted in art with an elaborate regal headdress, mounted atop his royal elephant Airavata, and making a gesture of homage and service to the Buddha. He is known across Asia as a model of kingship and a guardian deity of Buddhism. In certain periods, kings and emperors in Southeast Asia and elsewhere have claimed identity with him in order to confer divine sanction and eminence on their rule.

Shakra witnessed many of the crucial moments of the Buddha's career. In some biographies of the Buddha, Shakra was present at the birth of Siddhartha Gautama. Siddhartha's mother, Queen Maya, gave birth standing up and leaning against a tree. As the baby emerged from Maya's side, he was received into Shakra's outstretched arms onto a piece of cloth. At Siddhartha's great renunciation, he cut off his hair and the topknot flew into the sky. Shakra caught it and placed it in a jeweled casket in his heaven, thus presiding over the first cult of relics. He was present at the night of Gautama's enlightenment, at his first sermon, and at his final passing away.

As recounted in the *Jatakas* (Birth stories of the Buddha), Shakra frequently appears as a main character in stories of the Buddha's previous lives. He stands as divine witness to the great deeds of the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) and registers astonishment and admiration at his noble acts.

Sometimes he appears on earth in various guises in order to test the bodhisattva's resolve or to play an indispensable role in the plot. According to legend, when a great person does something extraordinary, Shakra's divine throne heats up, prompting him to investigate the matter out of fear that someone may be vying for his position.

Shakra, like all devas, is not immortal, though he does live for thousands of years. When he dies he passes on to another birth and is succeeded by someone of great merit. The bodhisattva himself once reportedly obtained birth as Shakra, and in that lifetime he exemplified righteous kingship and glorious valor as a warrior. The story takes a Buddhist turn when, owing to his great tenderness of heart, the bodhisattva turns back from battle in order to keep from crushing a nest of baby birds.

Some Mahayana texts employ a metaphor, called "Indra's net," to portray the Buddhist truth of the mutual interdependence of all things. The net has jewels at the knots, and each jewel reflects the image of every other jewel in an infinite matrix of reflections.

—*Maria Heim*

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gautama; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People

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Shaku Sōen

(1859–1919 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist abbot, scholar

Shaku Sōen (also known as Shaku Soyen and Kōgaku Sōen), a monk and abbot of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism, was born in Takahama, Japan (in present-day Fukui prefecture) in 1859. One of the first generation of academic religious scholars in modern Japan, Sōen took advantage of the open intellectual climate of the Meiji era (1868–1912) to supplement his youthful Zen training at Myōshinji and Engakuji temples with a modern course of study at the newly established, Western-style Keio University in 1884. A disciple of the progressive abbot Imakita Kōsen, Sōen was permitted to travel abroad in 1887 to cultivate relations with monastic communities in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and India. Returning to Japan in 1891, Sōen became the abbot of Engakuji temple in Kamakura a year later.

In 1893, Sōen was invited to participate in the World Congress of Religions at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Against the wishes of his monks, he went to the United States

and delivered a paper called “The Law of Cause and Effect, as Taught by the Buddha.” The paper, translated by lay disciple D. T. Suzuki, was among the first formal presentations of the Buddhist doctrine in the West, and its framing of the Buddhist notion of causality in such Western-friendly terms as “natural law” helped pave the way for the sympathetic introduction of Mahayana Buddhism into the newly emerging stream of “world religion.” An enthusiastic modernizer, Sōen emphasized the need to reconcile religious tradition with modern philosophical and scientific truths. Befriending editor Paul Carus of *The Monist*, Sōen agreed to send Suzuki to Illinois to help Carus translate a series of books on Eastern religions.

Sōen served as a chaplain in the 1894–1895 Sino-Japanese War and returned to the United States for a speaking tour in 1905, holding the first American *zazen* (sitting meditation) session in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Russell of San Francisco. Sōen spent the remainder of his life as abbot general of Engakuji and died in 1919. Several of Sōen’s translated essays have been published in English as *Zen for Americans* (1987), and his Japanese writings are collected in the *Shaku Sōen Zenshū* (Complete works of Shaku Sōen).

—Eric Cunningham

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Suzuki, Daisetz Teitarō; Teachers as Holy People

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Shakyamuni Buddha

See **Gautama**

Shamans

Shamans are ritual specialists, found in a number of nonindustrialized societies worldwide, whose principal task is ritual curing and whose modus operandi is trance. Shamans also restore luck at hunting and divine to find lost objects or to identify witches, taboo transgressions, and transgressors. Trance, expressed in various culturally mediated forms and degrees of intensity, is usually induced through drumming (on a flat, round or oval shaman’s drum), fasting, and other forms of sensory deprivation. Incense or tobacco, as well as psychotropic substances—especially among Central and South American shamans—may be used to induce an altered state of consciousness (ASC). A shaman has clear recollection of his spirit’s travels and travails in the trance state and may provide detailed narratives of his exploits to the assembled group (or the ethnographer) following his exit from an altered state.

The “classic” or “pure” paradigmatic forms of shamanism are found among circumpolar hunter-gatherers and reindeer herders; indeed, the term is usually said to derive from the Tungus (Evenki) *saman*, which means “to know” (Kehoe 2002, 8; for other glosses see Townsend 1997, 430–431). Whether other shamanic traditions—including Western “urban” or “neo-shamanism,” which has become popular among Western middle-class urbanite New Agers seeking self-actualization—should be linked to the circumpolar pattern on either historical or structural grounds is a matter of intense debate among religious scholars.

Shamans are men—or, more rarely, women—who claim to have a special closeness to spirits. These they contact and engage, either by summoning them to the site of the shamanic séance or through extra-body journeys to the spirits’ own world, when they are in their trance or trance-like state, in order to restore health to the person treated by the shaman. An experienced shaman knows and understands the spirits, both the good and the evil ones. Especially difficult to handle are the spirits who are morally ambiguous, that is, both beneficent and destructive. Such spirits are unpredictable and capricious—for instance, the Spirit Keepers of the Animals may give or withhold game animals from humans, bringing them either feast or famine, or may bring disease by “keeping lost souls.” The latter is a widespread mystical cause for sickness. Versed in the geography of the spirit world and in the capricious powers of its denizens, the shaman is said to be well qualified to journey to that world, retrieve a lost soul, and lead it back to the world of the living. Another, similar task is to lead someone in the opposite direction, that is, to act as a guide or escort for the souls of recently deceased persons, often over a river, a bridge, or some other barrier, to the world of the dead. The shaman thus sees to the soul’s safe departure from this world and arrival in what would otherwise be a bewildering and dangerous terra incognita.

The shaman is very much a traveler, a mediator between the “middle world” of the here-and-now and the upper and lower worlds, the abode of the many spirits. The shaman shuttles back and forth between these tiers of the shamanic universe, sometimes by moving up and down the mountain, tree, or tube—an *axis mundi*—that connects them. He may spiritually transform into the shapes of his animal familiars—becoming a bear or deer, lion or antelope—to become more connected to the spirits that inform nature laterally, the animals, plants, inanimate objects, and stones. He is thus both human and nonhuman, in and of this world and not of this world, through his powers of trance, soul travel, and transformation.

The shaman usually undergoes an initiation that confirms or formalizes his role. This usually follows his calling to the shaman’s vocation, which takes place through an intense spirit encounter, typically during the course of a protracted illness or through a vision or recurrent dream—

both psychological experiences on which a shaman will draw throughout his life for mystical and spiritual inspiration or guidance. Central to the shaman's initiation is his symbolic and spiritual death and rebirth. His death includes his own dismemberment, as spirits—among the Inuit—consume his flesh and reduce him to a skeleton. His rebirth consists of his reembodiment, with new organs (which may be made of crystals). So reborn and remade, he returns to the world of the humans after having ascended the top of the cosmos to merge with the sun.

The shaman's calling, conveyed by "divine stroke" through direct contact with the spirits, links this religious figure to the mystic and surrounds him with an aura of danger and holiness. It is underscored by his frequently searching solitude and isolation, or going off on pilgrimages to holy places, both actions that consolidate and intensify his contact with the spirit world. People hold the shaman in awe and fear; a certain kind of negative charisma attaches to him that is mitigated and gains positive values through the people's appreciation of the shaman's invaluable role as curer, diviner, and spirit mediator in the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-endangering service.

What also adds to the shaman's charisma, along with renown, prestige, and status, is the dramatic spectacle of his ritual performances. A widespread performance element in "classic" shamanism is ventriloquism, through which the shaman projects the voices of different spirits to different places in the darkened yurt. Among the subarctic American Algonkians, the shaman secludes himself in a loosely built tent or lodge and summons the spirits who speak to him. According to the Algonkians, the spirits sit on the lodge's poles and induce it to shake in accordance with the shaking of the cosmos. The fact that the shaman is tied up with a rope heightens the drama of the shaking tent, all the more so as, at the conclusion of the séance, he has freed himself from his bonds, Houdini-style. Shamans have a special affinity for fire and heat—powerful symbols of shamanism worldwide. Fire is what changes the shaman into a spirit—and as "master of fire" a shaman can endure both internal and external heat, for instance by handling or walking over burning embers and glowing coals. Also laden with symbolic and cosmological import is the shaman's fringed leather costume, which is be-decked with arcane embroidered figures and designs. Hanging from it are animal bones and parts, stuffed small animals, mirrors, and metal plates to ward off or attract spirits. Another highly dramatic spectacle is the shamans' contest, consisting of two shamans in ritual combat who hurl magical objects (crystals, porcupine quills, dirt) at each other.

Yet, for all his special trancing and spirit powers, his status, awe, and charisma, the shaman is also a common mortal. He is married and has children and kin; his shamanic activities are his "work," which he may perform more or less full-time while fellow band members hunt or gather food or herd rein-

deer. He is of normal disposition; the notion of the shaman as psychotic and unstable is now largely discredited as an instance of Western evolutionist, romanticist, and rationalistic distortion and projection onto non-Western "primitive" religion of the "tribal Other." As the "wounded healer," who, having healed himself, heals others of the same illnesses that afflict him, he is existentially linked with normal humans. More than anything else, what makes the shaman human is that his ritual services are directed toward the community to deal with afflictions that beset his fellow humans. Unlike the Western, urban, New Age "neo-shaman," who seeks *self-fulfillment* through the "shaman's path," the indigenous shaman works for the benefit of the members of his band or village.

The shaman thus shares with other holy people the quality of being at once human and spirit, of this world and set apart. People seek and get help from him when they are afflicted; this is his work. That work also renders him more than human, as it takes him, through trance, into the world of spirits, who see him as one of their own. So do the people, on whose behalf he engages the spirits through flamboyant, highly public ritual performances that bring the spirits palpably close to mortals and make the geography of their world real to the people. Through him, their physical lives gain security and their spiritual lives are given contours and content. He is the catalyst in humans' attunement to the divine.

—Mathias Guenther

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Ethnopharmacology; Hermits; Intermediaries; Suffering and Holy People

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Shams-i Tabrizi

(c. 1180–c. 1247 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Shamsuddin (Shams-i) Tabrizi, the "Sun of Faith from Tabriz," born in about 1180, was the spiritual mentor of Mevlana

Jelaluddin Rumi, who catalyzed Rumi's transformation from distinguished scholar-shaykh to impassioned poet-lover. Frequently playing on the meaning of Shams's name, Rumi described Shams—his perfect beloved, *zia al-haqq* (light of reality), and *khworshid-e lotf* (sun of grace)—as the divine presence in human form. Although depicted as a wild, antinomian, *qalandar* dervish, Shams was described by Rumi's son, Sultan Walad (1284–1312) as a man of “knowledge and learning” and “an eloquent author.” While staunchly challenging blind imitation, Shams also studied Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), mathematics, and astronomy. Shams's writings, the *Maqalat* (Discourses), were compiled from students' notes.

Shams studied under five sufi shaykhs during extensive travels and in Damascus. His wide travel gained him the sobriquet Shams-i Perende (flying sun). Shams considered his teachers limited in their experience of truth and sought one whose “heart was inspired by God,” that is, who knew truth for himself. He claimed *Uwaysi* initiation, that is, investiture with the cloak of spiritual companionship by the prophet Muhammad during a dream.

Shams advocated radical adherence to the prophet Muhammad's example (*sunna*), demanding not just imitation but exact emulation of his spiritual attainment, making Muhammad the ultimate measure: “The meaning of the Book of God is not the text, it is the man who guides. He is the Book of God; he is its verses; he is scripture.” By “following the Prophet” (*mutaba'at an-nabi*), Shams meant even achieving one's own heavenly ascension (*mi'raj*).

Heeding a dream, Shams approached Rumi in Konya on November 29, 1244, and asked who was greater, the prophet Muhammad or the sufi saint Abu Yazid al-Bistami (d. c. 864). Citing al-Bistami's utterance, “Glory be to Me; How great is My Majesty,” Shams asked Rumi why the prophet Muhammad had only said, “Glory be to You; we have not known You in truth as You should be known.” Hearing this, Rumi felt his mind set ablaze and answered that while Abu Yazid had quenched his thirst in a cup, the prophet's limitless thirst reflected his superior station.

In another account, Shams appeared in Rumi's library and asked, “What are these?” Rumi answered, “You wouldn't understand.” As the books blazed into flames, Rumi asked, “What's this?” Shams replied, “You wouldn't understand.” From this first “meeting of the two seas” (*marj al-bahrayn*), they entered together into prolonged seclusion for spiritual companionship (*sohbet*). Their relationship later became the virtual icon and archetype of *sohbet*. Shams esteemed Rumi as worthy of sainthood and one to whom he had “pledged [his] head.” In addition to inaugurating Rumi's poetic expressions of transforming love, Shams taught Rumi the *sema*, the “whirling” contemplation of the heart turning toward God accompanied by music, poetry, and *zikr* (repetition of God's names).

Their companionship led to jealousy among Rumi's disciples, however, and Shams left for Syria on March 11, 1246. Rumi's son Sultan Walad returned with Shams in April or May 1247. Shams then married Rumi's daughter Kimiya, who died a month later, reportedly after leaving the house without informing Shams. After Shams disappeared again, Rumi and his closest disciples searched throughout Damascus, but they returned unsuccessful. By 1250, Rumi stopped searching altogether. Although later accounts narrate that seven of Rumi's disciples murdered Shams on December 5, 1247, textual and historical evidence suggests that Shams might have died while returning to Tabriz. A tomb for Shams rests inside a mosque in Konya.

Sultan Walad compared the companionship of inner gnosis (*'ilm ladduni*) between Shams and Rumi to that between Moses and Khidr (Qur'an 18:60–83). Evoking Moses' separation, Rumi wrote on Shams's door in Damascus: “This is the station of the Beloved of Khidr.” As Rumi abandoned his external search, he realized: “I am who I search for and he is me.” In his *Divan-i Shams* (The poems of Shams-i Tabrizi), Rumi used Shams's name as his signature (*takhallus*), signifying that Shams lived within and wrote through him.

Rumi once expressed the “entire account” of his own life as, “I was raw, I was cooked, I was burned [matured].” In Shams's presence, Rumi was “cooked”; in Shams's absence, he was “burned,” blazing with verses that have continued to captivate readers and seekers everywhere.

—Hugh Talat Halman

See also: Bistami, Abu Yazid; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Sufism; Teachers as Holy People

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Shangó

Yoruba orisha

Shangó, the Yoruba *orisha* (deity) of thunder and fire, was the fourth *alafin* (ruler) of ancient Oyo, a powerful Yoruba kingdom that was devastated around the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Some myths describe him as the son of Oranyán, possibly the first *alafin* of Oyo. Shangó became the patron *orisha* of Oyo, and his importance in this state was

paramount. The alafin ruled in his name and claimed direct descent from him and his father Oranyán, founder of the kingdom. Most sources agree that Shangó was not Yoruba by birth, but Tapá, the name given by the Yoruba to the Nupe, northern neighbors of Oyo. He was the grandchild of the *el-empé*, ruler of Nupe. This belief survives in Cuba, where Lucumi *súyeres* (chants) allude to Shangó's relationship with Tapá.

After his tragic death, Shangó was deified to the status of an orisha, and he appropriated the status and roles associated with an earlier deity called Jakutá—the stone thrower. One myth states that while tampering with magic charms, Shangó accidentally burned his palace with his family and entourage inside. The embarrassment led him to hang himself. Another myth affirms that Shangó ruled as a tyrant. He betrayed two of his most prized generals and this treason turned against him. His people revolted and deserted him, and he fled to the forest where he committed suicide. Most *olorishas* (priests or priestesses) deny this version and strike their mouth with their hand as they exclaim *Obá Kosó*—the king did not hang.

Though Shangó is one of the most popular and beloved of the orishas, devotees greatly fear his wrath. Shangó punishes lies and deception and the abuse of ritual power. He hurls his *edún ará* (thunderstones) and directs his wife, Oyá, to send thunderbolts from heaven to castigate the wicked, striking them dead or burning their houses and earthly possessions. Thunderstones are important symbols of the orisha that devotees use in his worship. In addition to lightning, Shangó also punishes with fire. A myth associated with the Ifá oracle describes Shangó as a massive ball of fire in the sky that awaits the command of Olodumare (the Supreme Being) to descend to earth.

Shangó's most important symbol is the double-headed axe, which alludes to his energy and dexterity in battle. Shangó dances to the *batá* drums, a set of three double-headed drums that greatly resemble the form of his axe. These drums continue to resonate in Cuba, where they are indispensable for Lucumi *wemileres* (ritual celebrations). Another important symbol associated with this orisha is the horse. Oyo's territorial expansion in the nineteenth century was due in large part to the horse, and many of the Catholic saints who parallel Shangó in the New World are depicted on horseback. In fact, in Cuba Shangó's association with the horse extends to St. Barbara, patron saint of Spanish artillerymen. This correlation led to the creation of an image of the Christian martyr that depicts her seated on a horse with a basket of red apples, a stalk of bananas, and a red rooster, all symbols that the Lucumi associate with Shangó.

In the African diaspora, Shangó is famed for his virility, seductive powers, and incredible ability as a dancer. Many myths portray him as a passionate womanizer. His three

wives are Oba, Oshún, and Oyá. His relationship with Oba is poor, but not with his other two wives. Oyá, whom he took from his brother Ogún, is almost his equal in terms of strength and dexterity in battle. She seduces him with her versatile and ardent character. Oyá brings out the best in Shangó when they go to battle, and she leads his armies so that he may enter and conquer. She accompanied him to his sad end. His relationship with the passionate Oshún, whom he stole from Erinle (orisha of fishermen), is completely different. Oshún is Shangó's favorite wife. She is the lady par excellence, the very essence of femininity and sensuality. When Shangó sees Oshún, her beauty mesmerizes him as he falls prey to the hypnotic movements of her waist, which she flirtatiously sways from side to side. She enralls the roaring thunder, which bows at her feet and accedes to her every wish.

—Miguel W. Ramos

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Apotheosis; Orishas; Oyá; Santería

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Shankara

(7th–8th cent. C.E.)

Hindu philosopher

Shankara, or Shankaracarya, who lived in the seventh and eighth centuries, was one of the most influential saint-philosophers in the history of Hinduism. In his short life of thirty-two years, he laid the textual foundations for a major form of Vedanta known as Advaita Vedanta, or nondualistic Vedanta. Nearly all later Hindu philosophers have had to take the thought of Shankara into account.

Shankara was born in the village of Kaladi (now in the state of Kerala in southern India) and lost his father while still a young child. He left home at an early age to lead the religious life of a wandering renunciant. During his wanderings, he met with the saint-scholar Govinda on the banks of the Narmada River and became his disciple. Govinda sent him to the ancient city of Varanasi, where he began to teach and attract disciples. He is said to have traveled to Badarinath, the source of the Ganges, in the Himalayas, where he composed his major works. He then began a tour of India and established four seminal monasteries in the four corners

of India, all of which are still active today. His biographies say that his life ended in the Himalayas.

Hundreds of works are attributed to Shankara, but scholars have recognized only a few as genuinely his. His commentaries on the Brahma Sutra, the Bhagavad Gita, and several of the major Upanishads, as well as an independent work called the *Upadeshasahasri* (A thousand instructions), are accepted as authentic. Shankara's main teaching is that *brahman*, that is, undifferentiated, distinctionless consciousness, is the only true and irrefutable reality. Living beings, being nondifferent from brahman, are also real, but in their qualified forms they are false, the result of unreal adjuncts superimposed on a real substrate. Suffering arises from ignorantly mistaking what is not real for what is real, for example, thinking a rope to be a snake. When ignorance is destroyed by discriminating knowledge, the living beings discover their true identity as brahman.

—Neal Delmonico

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Shariputra (Pali: Sariputta)

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Buddhist disciple

Shariputra, also known as Upatissa, was the chief disciple of the Buddha in approximately the fifth century B.C.E. His father, Vanganta, and his mother, Rupashari, were brahmins. It was because of his mother's name that he came to be called Shariputra (Son of Shari). Along with his childhood friend Maudgalyayana (Moggallana), he renounced the world and became a disciple of Sanjaya. But when they saw the Buddha, he immediately declared them to be his principal disciples and they began to follow him. Shariputra attained arahantship a fortnight after his ordination.

Pali canon mentions Shariputra as a *dhammasenapati* (chief of doctrine). Shariputra's special proficiency was in the *abhidharma* (higher doctrine). He condemned all magical practices, defeated many heretics, and converted them to the dharma. As a realized master, Shariputra possessed abundant supernatural power and was a charismatic reference point for the other disciples. The *Udana* (Solemn utterances) mentions him as an energetic person who avoided society, needed little, and liked meditation. He was meticulous about the rules laid down by the Buddha, and in the

Anupada Sutra of the *Majjhima Nikaya* (Middle-length discourses), the Buddha mentions him as the best example of the perfect disciple.

The Buddha considered Shariputra inferior only to himself in wisdom. By virtue of his position as the Buddha's chief disciple, Shariputra considered it his duty to care for the integrity of the *samgha* (monastic community) and its members. He was well known for his compassion for the poor and care of the sick. Many stories and legends in Buddhist literature tell about his qualities of gratitude and willingness to learn even from those who were far below his status. He was also known for his patience, which is shown by the story of a brahmin who struck him as he entered a settlement for alms.

Shariputra died at Nalagamaka (the place of his birth) some months before the Buddha died. His body was cremated, and the disciple Cunda took Shariputra's relics, begging bowl, and outer robe to Shravasti. Xuanzang (602–664) saw the *stupa* (shrine) erected over the relics of Shariputra in the town of Kalapinaka.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Moggallana; Veneration of Holy People

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Sharqawi al-Khalafi, Ahmad, and Abu 'I-Wafa' al-Sharqawi

(1814–1899; 1879–1961 C.E.)

Muslim sufis, reformers, scholars

Ahmad Sharqawi al-Khalafi (1814–1899) and his son Abu 'I-Wafa' al-Sharqawi (1879–1961) were reformist Khalwati sufi shaykhs and scholars of Upper (southern) Egypt.

Ahmad Sharqawi was one of three great shaykhs responsible for the dissemination of the Khalwati sufi order in Upper Egypt. He was nicknamed Abu 'I-Ma'arif, "master of mystical knowledge." Abu 'I-Ma'arif established a retreat center called Dayr al-Sa'ada in Naj' Hammadi, Qina province, which became a center of Islamic learning. Shaykhs of the Khalwati order tend to be better educated than those of many orders; Abu 'I-Ma'arif was educated at al-Azhar University in Cairo and attracted prominent scholars as disciples, including Muhammad Hasanayn Makhluḥ (d. 1936), son of a former shaykh al-Azhar and grand mufti of Egypt, and Muhammad ibn Hamid al-Maraghi (d. 1948), a historian. He insisted on the close af-

filiation of sufism with mainstream Islam and was considered by some to be the “renewer” of Islam for his age and a reviver of the *sunna* (following the practice of the prophet Muhammad). He deemed popular religion at the time to be deviant and full of superstitions. Nonetheless, he defended traditional sufi belief in the intercession of the prophets and saints against the denunciations of the Wahhabis. Although the famous reformer Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905) denounced aspects of traditional sufism, he admired Abu ‘l-Ma’arif, who likewise supported ‘Abduh’s proposed reforms at al-Azhar. Abu ‘l-Ma’arif also had close ties with the ruling class. His published works include poems on theology, sufism, and praise of the prophet. During his lifetime, children in local schools memorized his poetic prayers.

Abu ‘l-Ma’arif had three sons. One of them, Abu ‘l-Majid (1893–1929), achieved great renown for his fantastic miracles and remained all his life in a state of *gazzb* (*jadhba*), a mental impairment said to result from excessive divine illumination. It was Abu ‘l-Wafa’ who followed in his father’s footsteps as an intellectual and reformist sufi. At the age of twenty, when his father died, he inherited his father’s position as sufi shaykh as well as his contacts with the political and religious elite. He at first wrote on sufi subjects for his disciples but stopped teaching during World War I because he felt that society was not receptive to the sufi method. Nonetheless, he remained one of the most notable religious personalities of Upper Egypt. He participated in the struggle for Egyptian independence during the British protectorate, and his relationship with the leader of the national movement, Sa’d Zaghlul, is well known. Nonetheless, Abu ‘l-Wafa’ opposed the idea of a secular nation-state and retired from politics after Egypt gained formal independence in 1922. By nature he was somewhat reclusive, but he meticulously observed the rules of etiquette and was loved for his humble, respectful demeanor. His son, Ahmad al-Sharqawi, continues to reside in Dayr al-Sa’ada.

—Valerie J. Hoffman

See also: Hereditary Holiness; Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism

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Shastri, Shyama

(1762–1827 C.E.)

Hindu composer

Shyama Shastri was one of three great Hindu composers living in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He

was a contemporary of Tyagaraja and of Muthuswami Dikshitar, the two other important Hindu composers of his time. Shyama Shastri was born in Tiruvarur, India, in 1762 and moved with his family to Tanjavur in 1781. He did not come from an especially musical family, but he had a melodious voice and a good ear and quickly learned the basics of music from an uncle. He learned Telugu and Sanskrit from his father. When his father invited a *sannyasin* (renunciant), Sanguita Swami, a former Andhra brahmin, to his home, the musician was impressed when he heard the boy sing and taught him the theory and practice of the *raga* and *tala* musical systems. In fact, he remained for four months and taught the boy many features of the music of southern India. He also gave him music treatises. In due time, the youth made impressive strides and was told to listen to the best musicians. He also learned from a brahmin teacher named Adiyappayya who was very learned in music.

Shyama Shastri composed devotional music with Telugu lyrics devoted to the Goddess, Shiva’s consort. His main inspiration was Goddess Bangaru Kamakshi, the deity of the temple at Tanjavur. He also sang to Minakshi in the Madurai temple. He was a highly creative artist, known for rare ragas and rhythmic innovations. Very pious, he sang the relationship of the child calling to the mother. Legends say Kamakshi appeared to him and blessed him several times. While praying on Fridays and other sacred days, Shyama Shastri would weep and lose ordinary consciousness; when inspired, he sang extemporaneous melodious songs. He married, and one of his sons also became a well-known musician. Shyama Shastri died in 1827.

Proverbially, Tyagaraja’s songs are said to be like grapes, with flavor that is immediately enjoyable. Shyama Shastri’s songs, in contrast, are like plaintains—they must be peeled before they are tasted. And the music of Muthuswami Dikshitar is like a coconut—it needs to be cracked open and gradually chewed. Together these composers are known as “the Trinity of South Indian Music.”

—William J. Jackson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Dikshitar, Muthuswami; Hinduism and Holy People; Tyagaraja

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Shawnee Prophet

See Tenskwatawa

Shembe, Isaiah

(1867–1935 C.E.)

Syncretist prophet, visionary

Isaiah Shembe was the founder of one of the largest indigenous churches in South Africa. His claims for magical powers and visions are believed to have begun in his youth. They culminated in his prophetic role when he founded the AmaNazeretha Church in 1910.

His first contact with Christianity was through the African Baptist Church. He was baptized and ordained to preach by William M. Leshega. Shembe eventually left the Baptist Church and his four wives to found the AmaNazeretha Church because he was convinced that Saturday and not Sunday was the proper day of worship, as advocated in the Hebrew Bible. He also advocated more focus on Zulu tradition. In 1913, he established Inhlangakazi as his new church's holy city. It is on this mountain that Shembe gathered his followers every January for two weeks to honor the royal Zulu ancestors and the supreme deity. Later, he established Ekuphakameni near Durban as the movement's holy city. This is where the church celebrates its first fruit ceremonies every year in July. Both ceremonies are marked with dancing and singing with a focus on Zulu religion and practices. Also, Shembe composed significant hymns that are distinctively Zulu.

Shembe's movement kept most of the practices of Zulu religion, some of which are enacted on Mt. Nhlankakazi. Here both the Zulu religion and Christianity are brought together in a cohesive harmony. As a representative of the Zulu religion, Shembe was recognized as both king and diviner. As king, he forms an important link with the supernatural world, making contacts with the royal ancestral spirits. He also became a symbol in Zulu society as the personification of law and representative of the royal ancestors and thus the center of all ritual, a high honor. Just as the king's regalia and sacred articles of the tribe are kept in the royal *kraal* (compound), Isaiah Shembe's articles are kept in his house at Ekuphakameni. As a diviner, Shembe is believed to have had vivid self-revelations of the ancestral spirits who endowed him with the power to understand mysteries beyond the conception of ordinary mortals. Dreams and visions were constant occurrences in his life. After Shembe's death in 1935, his sons took over the leadership of the AmaNazeretha Church.

—Samuel K. Elolia

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Ancestors; Contemporary Holy People; Prophets

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Shenxiu (Shen-hsiu; Jap.: Jinshu)

(605–706 C.E.)

Chan Buddhist patriarch

Shenxiu was the founder of the northern school of Chan/Zen Buddhism and successor to Hongren, the fifth patriarch of Chan in China. He was born in 605, and as a young man he studied Buddhism and the Daoist philosophy of Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.) and Zhuangzi (c. 369–286 B.C.E.). In 625, at age twenty, he entered the priesthood at Lo-yang monastery. Some thirty years later, he was to meet his master, Hongren, and start on the practice of seated meditation.

Much has been written about the schism that occurred between the Shenxiu's northern school and Huineng's better-known southern school. Shenxiu and Huineng shared the same master but had different teaching ideologies. Tradition has it that there was a competition to see whose insight was deep enough to secure the position of sixth patriarch. Although Huineng was given that honor and his lineage was eventually more successful, Shenxiu's lineage was successful, too, albeit more short lived.

In 675, after Hongren's death, Shenxiu moved to Danyang Mountain in Jiangling. Thus began the real start of his popularity. As word spread, Shenxiu accrued a massive following, and Empress Wu invited him to teach the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) to her and her court. Emperors Zhong Zong and Rui Zong also became his students, and he was known as the "National Teacher of Three Emperors."

Shenxiu's dharma was in line with the teachings of Bodhidharma (the first patriarch of Chinese Chan during the sixth century). Shenxiu taught that the unfettered mind is to be experienced with a sudden awakening through gradual exercises based upon the Lankavatara Sutra. In other words, one sees this unfettered mind through a labyrinth of gradual processes wrought by strenuous work and meditational practices. Huineng advocated a more sudden form of awakening. Shenxiu died in 706.

—Jeff Flowers

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Bodhidharma; Buddhism and Holy People; Hongren; Huineng; Recognition; Wu Zhao

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Shinran

(1173–1262 C.E.)

Buddhist sect founder

Shinran was a close disciple of Honen, the founder of the Jodo (Pure Land) sect of Japanese Buddhism. The son of a low-level Kyoto aristocrat, Shinran was born in 1173 and received a thorough education in the Buddhist classics. He joined the Tendai school as a young man but, tormented by sexual impulses, became distressed over his fate in the next life. In 1201, despairing of ever achieving salvation by following the Tendai path, he renounced monastic life. He then converted to Honen's Pure Land teachings. Between 1204 and 1207, he got married and started a family. He adopted the pejorative title "Bald-head," a term that referred to monks who had broken the precepts without any sense of remorse.

Like his mentor Honen, Shinran was influenced by the doctrine that the Buddha's teachings were in decline. He believed that in the degenerate age in which he lived it was impossible for a person to perform a single good deed. He arrived at this conclusion because it seemed that good deeds were self-centered and involved passion. No one, he decided, could perform an act that could bring salvation; if a person attempted to win salvation, he or she must have an ulterior motive, such as a desire to be saved. Within this context, one must throw oneself on the mercy of Amida Buddha (Amitabha) and rely solely on the power of his saving grace.

Unlike Honen, Shinran did not consider the continual invocation of Amida's name to be a useful practice because it suggested that one could do something to win salvation and even that one could rely on one's own power. Shinran argued that a single, sincere invocation of Amida's name was sufficient. Any additional invocations were merely expressions of thanksgiving. Shinran radicalized his religious position by claiming that a wicked person might have a better chance to be reborn in the Pure Land than a good person. He reasoned that a wicked person would be more inclined to throw himself entirely on the mercy of Amida, whereas a good person might be tempted to think that his chance of salvation could be improved by his good deeds. Shinran wanted to be provocative in order to stress the importance of faith. If a person invoked the name of Amida without faith, this was not a genuine practice.

Shinran isolated three elements of faith: a sincere mind, trustfulness, and a desire for rebirth into the Pure Land. The active cause of faith was the name of Amida, whereas the passive cause was the light of Amida, which was equivalent to wisdom and a religious experience of being illumined. In the final analysis, faith was a gift from Amida, a product of his mind implanted in the believer. For Shinran, faith was the achievement of the buddha-nature, which he defined as a state of egolessness. This state involved an awareness of one's evil nature

and the need for Amida's grace. Wherever faith existed for Shinran, buddhahood was imminent and truly assured. Once this state was reached, there was no retrogression, because faith represented an indestructible state of mind.

—Carl Olson

See also: Amitabha; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Honen; Intermediaries; Ippen; Repentance and Holy People; Ritual; Sexuality and Holy People

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Shinto and Holy People

The term "Shinto" is commonly used to refer to all forms of ritual practice that focus on Japan's native deities, the *kami*. It is in this sense that the term is used in modern Japanese. It reflects the contemporary situation where Shinto manifests itself as an independent religion, clearly separate from other Japanese religions. Historically speaking, however, this is a very recent development. As a concept, "Shinto" emerged first in the fourteenth century. Institutionally, it did not become established as an independent religion before the nineteenth century.

The concept of Shinto emerged first among Buddhist monks as a specialization within the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine). It took the form of series of initiations (called *shintô kanjô*, in which *kanjô* translates the Sanskrit *abhiseka*) into the tantric Buddhist worship of kami. The notion that the worship of kami constitutes a self-contained "way" equal or even superior to Buddhism arose first in the fifteenth century. Its pioneers were the Yoshida, a house of kami ritualists connected to the imperial court. In spite of their insistence on the non-Buddhist nature of Shinto, however, the ritual formats they used were closely patterned after tantric examples. Their bid for independence took the form of a shift of terminology and symbolism. By exchanging tantric and otherwise Buddhist terms and ritual objects for autochthonous, Yin-Yang, and Confucian equivalents, they designed a new ritual tradition that they called Shinto. They stressed the native origin of this Shinto and claimed that both Chinese learning and Buddhism were ultimately derived from it.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Japanese religion developed from a fluid body of intermingling schools and lineages into a series of clearly defined sects. In this process, Shinto, too, gained recognition as a sect of its own. As a first step toward institutionalization, shrine priests were placed under the supervision of the imperial court, mostly through the offices of the Yoshida. This had the important effect of linking the court tradition of kami ritual directly to

popular practice. This linkage turned Shinto (in the Yoshida definition) from an imperial into a national tradition. The idea of Shinto as an ancient national cult was elaborated further by Confucian and nativist scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the influence of all this on popular practice was negligible. As in previous periods, kami continued to be worshipped mainly within combined temple-shrine complexes, most commonly led by Buddhist monks.

In the nineteenth century, two forces combined to push Shinto to the forefront of national life: a renewed search for a national identity, and the creation of a new state that was to be governed directly by the emperor. Both were triggered by the encroachment of the West, which brought an end to Japan's relative isolation. Shinto was held high as Japan's national tradition and was led by the emperor as the high priest of the kami. Institutionally, Shinto shrines were dissociated from Buddhist temples in an attempt to restore a "pure" Shinto, as reconstructed by nativist scholars. Shrine rituals were transformed into state ceremonies performed by state-appointed priests in the emperor's name. Shinto became shorthand for the divine essence of the Japanese state, embodied in its unbroken imperial dynasty. This notion was superimposed on popular shrine cults, and attempts were made to use shrines as a channel for instilling loyalty to the emperor and the state in the population.

Shinto, then, arose as an institutionally independent religion in the process of state-building in the nineteenth century. Its direct roots can be traced back to medieval specialists of kami ritual, first tantric ritualists based at temple-shrine complexes, later court ritualists. Indirectly, however, its origins are older. In their turn, these ritualists drew on a classical tradition of kami myth and ritual that was developed at the imperial court from the seventh century onward. At this time, the court set up a nationwide system of regular offerings to kami of selected localities and clans throughout the land. By assuming the prerogative of making offerings to such deities, the court established its right to raise taxes on the crops that depended on the deities' life-giving powers. Also, a mythology of national origins was compiled. These works, *Kojiki* (Record of ancient matters) and *Nihon shoki* (Chronicle of Japan), were compiled in 712 and 720, respectively. Here, the emperor and his retainers appear as the descendants of heavenly deities sent to Japan to pacify its unruly earthly deities and govern the land eternally.

This ritual and mythological system was not at the time known as Shinto but can be regarded as a precursor to it. It was organized under the highest organ of the court bureaucracy, the Jingikan, or Ministry of Heavenly and Earthly Deities. It was clearly distinguished from Buddhism in the early ninth century, when kami law (*jingiryō*) isolated a few

major imperial rituals and ritual sites from all contact with Buddhism. At the same time, however, Buddhist rituals were used on a much wider scale to "edify" kami by exposing them to the dharma. This laid the foundation for the later integration of kami shrines in temple-shrine complexes.

Kami ritual, then, constituted a ritual category of its own since classical times, at least within the narrow confines of the court. Shinto developed when this court tradition withered away in the medieval period, and courtly kami ritual spilled out into the provinces. When tantric Shinto schools became a prominent part of the religious landscape, court ritualists from the Yoshida house made a successful attempt at reviving the court tradition, now under the name of Shinto, as an independent, non-Buddhist ritual system. With this, they opened the way for Shinto to develop into Japan's "indigenous religion."

Where are the "holy people" in this history? Can we identify a typically Shinto notion of holiness in people? Clearly, such a notion will contain many layers: from the classical kami cult of the court to (tantric) Buddhism and a variety of Chinese and nativist elements. Yet, in all its variety, the premises for its development were rooted in ritual practice at kami shrines. Shrines are places where priests invoke and interact with the spirits of the kami who inhabit those places. In this setting, holiness may be attributed either to the priests or to the kami. In the first case, people are regarded as holy during their lifetime; in the second case, holy people become a subcategory of kami: deified spirits of the dead.

Priests as Holy People

Holiness in kami traditions is not based on universal principles or moral perfection but defined as a special relationship with specific kami. This relationship is usually hereditary. It has been handed down by a kami to its descendants, or established in an ancient transaction and transmitted within a priestly lineage.

A prime example of such a relationship is that between the Japanese emperors, as heads of the imperial clan, and their ancestor, the sun goddess Amaterasu. In myth, Amaterasu granted her descendants everlasting rule over Japan. In ritual, imperial offerings to Amaterasu in the name of the nation demonstrated the emperor's special relationship with this powerful deity in the present. The same function was performed by sacred objects in the possession of the emperor: a mirror, a sword, and jewels Amaterasu gave to her grandson when he first descended from heaven to rule the land. Myths, rituals, and sacred objects were employed in similar ways by other clans. Court histories record that clan leaders presented their "kami-treasures" to the emperor as a symbol of their submission. "Narrators" (*kataribe*) from all corners of the land recited clan myths at imperial accession ceremonies, and these myths were incorporated in a court

mythology that stressed the centrality of the imperial clan deity Amaterasu.

Since ritualists were conceived as the intendants of kami, it was only a small step to treating them as kami themselves. In imperial edicts (*senmyō*), the emperor referred to himself as a “manifest kami” (*aki-tsu-mikami*) who ruled in a “kami-like” (*kannagara*) fashion; this rhetoric was echoed in court poetry. The daily life of the emperor was permeated with ritual taboos and concerns for purity similar to those pertaining to kami worship. State rituals, both from the kami tradition and Buddhist ones, focused on the person of the emperor as the embodiment of the state and sought to solve or forestall national problems through rituals of healing and reinvigoration of the imperial body.

It was not the person of the emperor that was holy, but emperorship itself. When an emperor retired, all taboos were lifted and he became free to take part in the struggle for political influence. The emperor was kami-like because of his role in worshipping the kami and representing their will on earth, not because of his personal merits or achievements. In this sense, the role of the emperor has been described as that of a “holy container” for the “imperial spirit” (*tennōrei*). It was his function, not his person, that was treated as holy.

When the kami cult of the court and its clans was dispersed, kami acquired new roles. From protectors of clan-controlled localities, they developed into dispensers of benefits, often under the control of temples. It was in this setting that tantric Buddhist models came to be applied to kami worship, leading to the creation of tantric Shinto. The basic pattern of this tantric worship was *kaji* (Sanskrit: *adhishthāna*), a technique to activate the powers embodied by a deity through the use of mudras, mantras, and visualization. In initiations, the initiand learns how to summon and manifest a deity in a mandala, how to visualize himself as the deity and attain union with it, and how to unleash the deity’s powers, both in order to realize his own innate enlightenment and to produce worldly results. Monks of great achievement could “become” the deity they invoked; for Kakuban (1095–1144), for example, it is told that when his temple was attacked, he faced his enemies in the fierce guise of the Wisdom King Fudō Myōō.

In normal tantric practice, the initiand received the rank of *ajari* (“master,” from the Sanskrit *ācārya*) by undergoing an initiation in which he attained union with the cosmic buddha Dainichi (“Great Sun,” in Sanskrit Mahāvairocana). In tantric Shinto, the rank of emperor was granted in an initiation that involved attaining union with Amaterasu. As proof, the initiated received copies of the three treasures that symbolized imperial authority: Amaterasu’s mirror, sword, and jewels. In this tradition, then, the title of emperor had lost its clan-specificity and had become an equivalent to the tantric *ajari*.

The notion that one can become a kami by attaining union with a kami in ritual was adopted and adapted by the Yoshida when they designed their non-Buddhist Shinto. Drawing on earlier attempts at explaining kami ritual in Confucian terms, Yoshida doctrine posited that it was possible to “return” to the “Deity of Great Origin” (Taigen Sonshin) by becoming one with the “deity of one’s own heart/mind.” This mind-deity was seen as an emanation of the Deity of Great Origin, who in turn was derived from the account of the cosmogony in *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. The way to this state of union was purification. Purification was a traditional element of kami ritual, but it was now given a new meaning as a mental (“inner”) as well as a physical (“outer”) practice. By purifying the mind, one could return to primeval unity, which was equated with the Confucian concept of union with “the way.”

The emperor was “holy” as a container for the imperial spirit, rather than as a morally superior person. In Yoshida practice, too, it was the spirit contained in one’s mind that was a kami, not the person containing that spirit. As part of their practice of inner purification, the Yoshida introduced a cult in which each practitioner worshipped his own mind-deity in front of a small, personal shrine (*reisha*). This cult spread among Confucianists as a Shinto equivalent to the Confucian way of becoming a “sage.”

In the same period, a less scholarly type of holy person emerged in popular practice. From the late Middle Ages onward, mountain ascetics (*shugenja* and other terms) established networks of “confraternities” (*kō*) with members who were united by faith in the deities of a sacred mountain or religious complex. By undergoing ascetic training, shugenja acquired the ability to mediate the powers of the deities and to invite, perform, and interpret oracles. As “containers” of deities and mediators of their power and knowledge, these ascetics were often treated as living deities themselves. In some places (for example, at Mount Ontake), they were thought to return to the mountain after death and worshipped by their confraternities as divine spirits (*reishin*).

When Shinto was employed to pull court ritual and popular practice together, this created a tension between imperial and popular notions of holy people. Nativist Shinto, especially, stressed the sacred nature of imperial rule rather than a kami-nature inherent in all humans. Nativists pleaded for a return to the natural harmony of ancient times when all Japanese were endowed with spontaneous reverence for the kami and their representatives on earth, the emperor and his magistrates. The Meiji state drew heavily on this notion. State ideology stressed Japan’s unique “national essence” (*kokutai*), consisting of a divine emperor and a naturally loyal populace. Shrine ritual was used to express this idea.

In the interest of this ideology, holiness had to be concentrated in the emperor, and worship of others as kami was frowned upon. At the same time, the ideological “cleansing” of shrines alienated believers and drove them into the arms of religious confraternities led by shugenja-like figures. The nineteenth century saw the emergence of a considerable number of new religious groups with founders engaging in kami-possession and revered by their followers as living kami (*ikigami*). The state was interested in engaging such figures as propagators of its kokutai ideology, and it succeeded to some degree in persuading or forcing them to adapt their teachings accordingly. In most cases, however, this resulted merely in a widening gap between the teachings and the actual ritual practice of these groups.

In all these different guises, the notion of the priest as a holy container of kami-power has persisted to the present day. With state-imposed ideological pressure gone, a wide spectrum of shaman-like religious figures has been extremely active in postwar Japan. The imperial mystique was removed from the main stage of public life in a famous New Year address of January 1, 1946, when the emperor explicitly denounced the idea that he was a “manifest kami.” Yet, the continuation of Meiji ritual (with only minor adaptations) has

allowed many Shintoists to maintain that the emperor continues to serve as a kami-like priest of the kokutai to this day.

Holy People as Kami

Posthumous apotheosis has perhaps been more common in kami traditions than the worship of living people as kami. Worship of clan ancestors as protector deities can be traced back to ancient times, as can the belief that the spirits of the dead may haunt the living and strike them with illness, lightning, and other miseries. The spirits of historical people have been worshipped and enshrined both as dharmaprotectors—for example, Shôtoku Taishi (574–622) at Hôryûji in Nara—and as “angry spirits” (*goryô*)—as in the case of Sugawara Michizane (845–903) at Kitano Tenmangû in Kyoto.

Posthumous apotheosis by Shinto means became widespread as a sociopolitical practice from the seventeenth century onward. This trend was triggered by the enshrinement of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who reunified Japan, after more than a century of warfare, as the deified protector of the Toyotomi clan-temple, Hôkôji. On his own instructions, Hideyoshi was raised to the status of a dharmaprotecting kami (*daimyôjin*) by Yoshida priests. His example was followed by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) a



Worshippers entering Shinto shrine, Japan. (Corel Corp)

generation later. Ieyasu, too, was initially deified by the Yoshida, but his cult was soon hijacked by the Tendai-Buddhist complex of Rinnōji in Nikkō, where he was enshrined as a “great avatar” (*daigongen*). Shrines to Ieyasu’s spirit spread across the country and set a precedent. In the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a considerable number of domainal lords ordered shrines to be built for their deified spirits after their death. Soon, even villagers erected shrines to venerate the spirits of benefactors of their communities. In Fukui, for example, the Yonaori shrine was built to celebrate the spirits of two town magistrates who canceled an oppressive tax in the 1830s, and in Kaminoyama (near Yamagata) the leaders of a 1747 peasant uprising are enshrined in Itsutsudomoe shrine.

The Meiji government adopted the practice of enshrining the spirits of heroes on a grand scale. The war dead were honored as “heroic spirits” (*eirei*) in a nationwide network of shrines, of which the Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo served as the nexus. Shrines were erected in honor of all kinds of paragons of the *kokutai*, ranging from medieval warriors loyal to embattled emperors—such as Kusunoki Masashige (d. 1336), enshrined in Minatogawa shrine in Kōbe—to nativist scholars—such as Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), enshrined in Motoori shrine in Matsusaka. The largest effort in this vein was the construction of the huge Meiji shrine in Tokyo, completed in 1922 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Emperor Meiji’s death.

The practice of posthumous apotheosis, then, was inaugurated by the Yoshida and spread rapidly in subsequent centuries. It drew partly on older traditions of worshipping spirits of the dead but was first routinized as a ritual procedure by the Yoshida. As with the worship of priests as holy people, the apotheosis of spirits of dead heroes was conducted both by the state and on a popular level. In both cases, it was the contest between state and local communities for control over the symbolic capital generated by the attribution of holiness to people that caused practices of sanctification to spread so widely in Shinto traditions.

—Mark Teeuwen

See also: Apotheosis; Confucianism and Holy People; Intermediaries; Kamikaze of World War II; Kitamura Sayo; Meiji Tennō; Patriotism and Holy People; Priests; Rulers as Holy People; Shotoku; Sugawara no Michizane; Tokugawa Ieyasu; Toyotomi Hideyoshi; Veneration of Holy People

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Shirazi, Sayyid ‘Ali Muhammad

See Bab, The

Shivnarayan

(18th cent. C.E.)

Hindu mystic, poet

Shivnarayan, a member of the low-prestige *rajput* caste, was born near Ghazipur, about 50 miles north of Varanasi (Benaras) in northern India. Although the exact dates of his birth and death are not known, the scholar Ram Chandra Tiwari (1972) places him in the first half of the eighteenth century. Renowned for his asceticism and meditative powers, Shivnarayan is reported to have initiated Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah into his sect. Shivnarayan drew upon the nondualism of the Hindu philosopher-saint Shankara (c. 800), a cosmology in which the human body and the soul are identified with the universe. In a song attributed to Shivnarayan, the word of the guru is likened to an arrow that penetrates the mind of the devotee. When the devotee is quickened by the guru, the universe opens—for the universe can be seen mystically within the human body. For Shivnarayan, the human being and the entirety of creation are thus microcosm and macrocosm.

When the Shivnarayan sect was at its height it was a powerful force in northern India. Shivnarayanis would be initiated into the mysteries of the sect by a guru and renounce all image worship. Unlike most Hindus, Shivnarayanis would bury their dead. Although the sect is now virtually extinct, Shivnarayan’s songs are still sung by members of low and untouchable castes in contemporary north India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Accordingly, Shivnarayan is often located within the *sant* or *nirgun* traditions of Gorakhnath, Kabir, and Ravidas. Indeed, Shivnarayan shares much with Kabir, for both proclaimed what might be called a monotheistic synthesis of Hinduism and Islam that refused to acknowledge the distinctions of caste.

—Mathew N. Schmalz

See also: Gorakhnath; Hinduism and Holy People; Ravidas; Status

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Shoah

(1933–1945 C.E.)

“Shoah” is the Hebrew term for the Holocaust of World War II. The term “Holocaust” derives from a Greek word meaning “burnt offering.” The Hebrew, which means “catastrophe,” is more appropriate to some because the concept of an offering suggests divine complicity in the suffering of the Jews.

The Shoah was the systematic annihilation of 6 million European Jews by Nazi Germany, but the question of holiness surrounding the dead is vexed for both Jews and gentiles. Some argue that their deaths were involuntary and cannot be considered martyrdom in the strict sense of the word; others acknowledge that even though some of the 6 million were nonreligious, their extermination by the Nazis gives them a special status; still others maintain that because religion is at the core of Jewish identity and that identity condemned them to death, they must be considered holy martyrs. For many, however, the question of holiness is less how the 6 million died than how they lived. The Shoah revealed the heroism of many Jews who went to their deaths singing “Ani Maamin” (I believe) or other songs of faith; who protected others; and who sacrificed their own safety to secure that of others. Yom Ha-Shoa, the twenty-seventh day of the Jewish month Nissan, commemorates the Shoah by focusing memory not on the atrocities but on the remarkable acts of courage displayed by Jews during the 1930s and 1940s. The day also recognizes gentiles who risked their lives to protect Jews; the names of these are commemorated at Yad Va-Shem, the monument to European Jewry in Jerusalem.

The philosophy that drove Nazi anti-Semitism was that the Aryan race, of which Germans are a part, is superior to others and that it was the duty of true Aryans to subdue all inferior peoples, including Jews, Slavs, gypsies, homosexuals, and the mentally or physically handicapped. Written in prison before he came to power in January 1933, Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (My struggle) clearly articulated this mandate. The Aryan decree (April 11, 1933) defined as non-Aryan anyone having a non-Aryan, particularly a Jewish, parent or grandparent. On September 15, 1935, the Reichstag adopted the Nürnberg Laws, which deprived German Jews of their citizenship. In this way, Jews lost their rights to participate in most professions, to own property, and to operate businesses. They also lost the right to due process and protection under the law from economic and social discrimination, physical attack, and other persecutions. Violence against Jews escalated steadily until Kristallnacht (November 10, 1938), when Jewish shops were looted and synagogues burned throughout Germany. Assassinations, burning of synagogues, arrests, forced labor, beatings, incarceration in ghettos, and deportation to concentration camps increased in frequency and severity throughout the early years of the Reich. On July 31, 1941, Hermann Goering sent a message to

Reinhard Heydrich, the head of the Central Security Office of the Reich, authorizing the implementation of “The Final Solution,” the extermination of European Jewry.

Jews were herded into ghettos in preparation for deportation to the camps. Extermination camps were constructed at Sobibór, Treblinka, and Maidanek. In 1941, Heinrich Himmler ordered the construction of the camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Wannsee Conference systematized and coordinated the extermination policy, but in 1943, several of the ghettos and the camps witnessed uprisings. For example, in April of that year, some few thousand Jews remaining in the Warsaw ghetto took up arms to resist the Nazis as long as possible; it took the German army months to overcome the resistance.

At the end of the war, Adolph Eichmann estimated that approximately 4 million Jews had been killed in the camps, while the remaining 2 million had died in other ways, often at the hands of the Einsatzgruppen (special action groups), who were responsible for eliminating Jews in any way possible. Their methods included herding hundreds of Jews together, forcing them to dig a mass grave, then machine-gunning them and hastily shoveling dirt into the shallow graves. They also used carbon monoxide to gas truckloads of Jews, but these crude methods pale in comparison to the efficiency of the death camps.

—Mary K. Ramsey

See also: Anti-Semitism and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Shoghi Effendi

(1897–1957 C.E.)

Baha’i guardian

Shoghi Effendi was appointed by ‘Abdu’l-Baha to succeed him as leader of the Baha’i faith. ‘Abdu’l-Baha stated that he was to be the authoritative expounder of the Baha’i scriptures and gave him the designation of Guardian of the Cause of God.

Born in Akka in 1897, Shoghi Effendi was the eldest grandson of ‘Abdu’l-Baha on his mother’s side. He chose the surname Rabbani to indicate that his paternal family was related to the Bab. He attended the American University in Beirut and the University of Oxford. During his second year at Baliol College, Oxford, in 1921, his grandfather died; on his return to Haifa, Shoghi Effendi learned that he had been appointed the guardian of the Baha’i faith.

Having decided that it was not possible to establish the Universal House of Justice, the central elected authority of the Baha'i faith, without first having more and stronger national Baha'i assemblies, Shoghi Effendi set about building up the Baha'i administrative order on the spiritual principles laid down in the writings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha. In a stream of correspondence, he guided the various Baha'i national assemblies in how to function. The guidance laid down in these letters became the pattern for all assemblies.

By 1937, Shoghi Effendi decided that the Baha'i administration was functioning sufficiently well for him to be able to move to the next phase in the development of the Baha'i faith: the expansion of the Baha'i community to all parts of the globe. He therefore gave the North American Baha'is a seven-year plan (1937–1944). This plan and others led to the Ten-Year Crusade (1953–1963) involving the whole Baha'i world in missionary work. Shoghi Effendi, concerned with enhancing the prestige and establishing the independence of the Baha'i faith, promoted links with the League of Nations and later the United Nations.

In addition to numerous letters replying to questions and guiding the Baha'i world, Shoghi Effendi produced an important interpretation of Baha'i history, *God Passes By*; a translation of an account of Babi history, *The Dawn-Breakers*; an interpretation of contemporary events, *The Promised Day Is Come*; and an authoritative statement on Baha'i theology, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*. In addition, he translated a large amount of the Baha'i scriptures into English.

Shoghi Effendi acquired a number of historically important buildings both at the Baha'i world center in the Haifa-Akka area and elsewhere. He extensively developed the gardens at the Baha'i world center and built the superstructure of the shrine of the Bab and the International Archives building in Haifa.

With regard to his personal characteristics, he was a very modest man (always signing his letters to Western Baha'is as "your true brother, Shoghi") and he never made public appearances. His style of leadership of the Baha'i community was to overlook shortcomings and praise every effort made, to constantly exhort and encourage, to place before the Baha'is a vision and then to challenge them to rise to it, and only to impose his authority as a last resort.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: 'Abdu'l-Baha; Attributes of Holy People; Bab, The; Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Baha'u'llah; Intermediaries

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Shōmu

(701–756 C.E.)

Buddhist ruler

Shōmu (r. 724–749), formerly Prince Obito (b. 701), was Japan's forty-fifth emperor and the first ruler in Japanese history who embraced the imported faith of Buddhism and made it a state religion. Emperor Shōmu's reign is also referred to as the Tempyō Period (Period of heavenly peace) because of his aspiration to achieve national unity and peace throughout the nation by means of Buddhism. Emperor Shōmu advocated the Kegon (Skt.: Avatamsaka) sect of Buddhism and ordered, both in 741 and in 743, the establishment of a *kokubun-ji* (provincial monastery) and a *kokubun-niji* (provincial nunnery) in each province of the country. These provincial temples were linked with Shōmu's central Kegon temple, Tōdai-ji, in the Nara capital. The model for Shōmu's policy of constructing provincial temples and linking them with a central temple in the capital originated in China under Empress Wu (690–705). This statewide system of Buddha worship was aimed at enhancing the emperor's spiritual authority and directing the Buddha's power to the protection of the nation.

In 728, Emperor Shōmu established a *shakyōshi* (official scriptorium) within the imperial palace in order to provide temples with copies of *sutras* (Buddhist scriptures). In 743, following a nationwide smallpox epidemic, he ordered the construction of Tōdai-ji. Tōdai-ji's main hall, the largest wooden building in the world, houses the *Daibutsu* (Great Buddha), a sixteen-meter-high gilt bronze statue of the buddha Birushana (Skt.: Vairocana), the central buddha in Kegon belief. Regarded by the Kegon sect as the cosmic buddha, Birushana embodies the essence of buddhahood and presides over the myriad buddha worlds, an apt metaphor for the relationship between the emperor and his appointed governors in the provinces. Northeast of Tōdai-ji's main hall is the Shōsoin (treasury), a repository founded by Emperor Shōmu's wife that contains his collection of paintings, glassware, jewelry, textiles, and musical instruments.

In 749, the major casting of the *Daibutsu* was completed, but the unveiling did not take place until 752. Prior to this ceremony, Emperor Shōmu presented himself before the *Daibutsu* and declared himself to be a servant of the Three Treasures of Buddhism: the *buddha* (teacher), the *dharma* (teachings), and the *samgha* (monastic community). Never again in Japanese history did an emperor come so close to

denying his ancestors among the Shintō kami (Japan's indigenous gods) and his own role as divine ruler of Japan.

—Monika Dix

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Vairocana; Wu Zhao

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Shotoku

(573–621 C.E.)

Buddhist ruler, lawgiver

Shotoku Taishi was a regent of Japan during the late sixth and early seventh centuries and is credited with establishing a more pure form of continental Buddhism in Japan. The second son of Emperor Yomei (r. 585–587), he was born in 573 and was a member of the Soga clan, which already supported Buddhism in Japan. As a result, Shotoku received tutelage in Buddhism as well as in Chinese culture and Confucianism. In 592, Empress Suiko (r. 592–628), Shotoku's aunt, came to power. In 593, she retired from active political life to become a Buddhist nun, appointing Shotoku as regent, thereby giving him a large degree of control over the country.

Before Shotoku came to power, Japanese Buddhism differed from that of China and other regions of Asia. This form of Buddhism, also called Soga Buddhism, had been shaped by Japanese laws and was more concerned with magic and materiality. Shotoku, who had been taught by Korean scholars, practiced a continental form of Buddhism, which focused more on the inner self and selflessness. In 594, Shotoku issued an edict in which he called for the promotion of this more "pure" form of Buddhism.

Buddhism flourished during Shotoku's reign. Many new Buddhist temples and images were created under imperial sponsorship, including Shitennoji and Horyuji. In 608, Shotoku sent students and priests to study in China. They returned not only with a greater understanding of Buddhism and knowledge of the currently favored Chinese Buddhist sects but also with advanced Chinese models for government. At the time of Shotoku's death, there were reportedly forty-six Buddhist temples, 816 priests, and 569 nuns in Japan. Shotoku is also known for furthering Japanese understanding of Buddhism through his commentaries on the Lotus, Shrimala, and Vimalakirti sutras.

Shotoku was deified after his death in 621, and during the Kamakura period (1192–1333) a cult for the worship of Shotoku, called "Taishiko," developed, becoming especially

popular among Japanese artisans. Prince Shotoku is often represented as a young boy with his hair tied up on his head and his hands held together in prayer, a reference to his early understanding and devotion to Buddhism.

—Carl Gellert

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Shramanas

(6th cent. B.C.E.)

Hindu renunciants

The term *shramana* means "striver" and refers to a class of wandering mendicants that flourished in India in the sixth century B.C.E. This movement reflected a spiritual revolution, radically calling into question traditional patterns of religion in ancient India. These patterns were constructed, articulated, and transmitted by brahmins, high-caste priests and technicians of the premier form of "religion" in ancient India, sacrifice. The so-called Vedic worldview, flourishing from the twelfth century B.C.E., contained within it certain assumptions that were challenged by wandering truth-seekers, whose efforts had a decisive impact on emerging Hindu and non-Hindu traditions. The former included the metaphysical speculation found in the Upanishads, the last of the Vedic texts. The latter included the philosophies of Buddhism, Jainism, and the Ajivaka tradition. Still other groups held positions of skepticism and philosophical materialism.

What gave rise to this intellectual and spiritual ferment? The answer requires some understanding of the Vedic worldview, which harbored within it the seeds of later challenges. The religion of the Vedas was largely a "this world" religion shaped decisively by ritual sacrifice. According to one cosmogony in the Rig Veda (10.129), the macrocosm of the universe as well as mesocosm of society was created by the self-sacrifice of the divine person. Such an explanation of cosmic and social origins implied that sacrifice was necessary in order to re-create (that is, maintain) the universe in its smoothly turning fashion. The sacrifice constituted a ritual reconstruction of the universe, which in turn maintained cosmic and social order. The specific motivation to perform a sacrifice, however, was personal; the patron of the sacrifice, desiring material gain, would sponsor a sacrifice with the expectation that its proper execution by priests would ensure a positive outcome, either during the sacrificer's life or in

heaven. But early Vedic confidence in the sacrificial program gave way to an increasing anxiety over the temporary nature of all material and sensible rewards; moreover, heavenly exhaustion of such rewards gradually led to the notion of rebirth, a concept that in no way suggested an “interesting” return to a former life but instead meant a renewed plunge into suffering, struggle, pain, and limitations. In short, increased skepticism over the merits of sacrifice and a developing theory of karma and rebirth set the stage for shramana speculation on the ultimate truth of reality. This process was further stimulated by a rise of urban areas on the upper Gangetic plains, which saw the development of a sophisticated urban elite, perhaps more willing to challenge traditional certainties, subjecting traditional truths to rational critique and the test of experience.

These two criteria seem to mark the agenda of the shramana groups, many of which were in clear competition with each other. The “quest for truth,” based on experience, led to the development of competing metaphysics, here understood as an understanding of reality in its most complete context. The sages of the Upanishads, while affirming Vedic revelation, engaged in penetrating analyses of the cosmos, self, and sacrifice, ultimately discovering the same unconditioned principle of consciousness and generativity at the heart of each: *atman-brahman*. By “internalizing” the sacrifice, the sage accesses his or her deepest self (*atman*), which in turn was identified with *brahman*, the cosmic self. The notion of a unified brahman penetrating all mundane reality implicates a nondual metaphysic. Other shramana movements arrived at different metaphysical conclusions. The followers of the paths of yoga and Jainism asserted the duality of matter and spirit, and spirits, in these traditions, are infinite in number, rather than being one homogeneous immaterial “entity” as in the Upanishads. Buddhism categorically rejected, again on the basis of reason and direct experience, the notion of any underlying, enduring self or substance, whether one or many. Nothing is permanent, including our so-called self, which is merely a conglomeration of physical and mental events. Skeptics questioned the possibility of knowing anything at all, and materialists rejected the notion of any spiritual substance; in this case, “consciousness” did not indicate “soul” but occurred only as an epiphenomenon of physical and mental events. The philosophy of the Ajivakas was strongly shaped by a fatalistic determinism.

Although quite different in their assumptions, these groups shared various characteristics that in most cases included the following: the importance of direct experience of what is taken to be the truth of reality, meditation programs to facilitate such experience, a tendency toward renunciation and asceticism, and the development of a philosophy that articulates the meaning of the experience and offers justifica-

tion for the spiritual programs that conduce to it. The shramana movement made a decisive impact on ancient India, and its ramifications have rippled through Indian religious history to the contemporary era.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Priests

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Shripadaraya

(1422–1480 C.E.)

Hindu guru, composer

Shripadaraya, the saintly Vaishnava guru, was a pioneering composer of Vaishnava devotional songs in the vernacular Kannada language during the fifteenth century. He was a leader of the Madhva school of dualistic Vaishnavism, believing that the soul and God may be close but do not merge into one. He founded a monastery, was guru to a great ruler, and also guru to the great spiritual leader Vyasaraya. Shripadaraya is honored as the forefather of the influential Vaishnava group known as the Haridasas.

He was born in 1422 and grew up in a poor family in Abbur village near Channapatna in the Bangalore district. His father, Seshagiriappa, was a village accountant. Shripadaraya made good use of spare moments (when he was not busy taking care of the cattle entrusted to him) studying Sanskrit texts. Yet it was his knowledge of the life and the vernacular language common to the farmers and merchants that became integral to his work in later life. His monastic name was Lakshminarayana Tirtha, but people called him Shripadaraya to honor his achievements.

Shripadaraya was a member of the Dasakuta—the servants (*dasas*) or devotees of Vishnu (especially in the form of Krishna) from the four directions, congregating at the crossroads (*kuta*). Known as the Haridasas, these Telugu- and Kannada-speaking devotees followed a system of Vaishnavism taught by Madhva (1239–1318), the founder of Vedanta. Although they usually had families and were not monks, they owned almost no property and often lived on what they gleaned in their wanderings, singing while receiving alms. Unlike most Haridasas, Shripadaraya was a *sannyasin*, an unmarried renunciant.

Shripadaraya founded a *matha* (monastery) in Mulbagal in what is now the Kolar district of Karnataka. As a scholar he has been respected for centuries for his knowledge of Vedanta philosophy and logic. His Sanskrit text, entitled

Vagvajra, gives evidence of his profundity. But Shripadaraya's originality also has to do with his love of the folk and folk expressions. He was the first *acharya*, or Vaishnava teacher of the Madhva school, to use Kannada in songs and poems, teaching *dvaita* (the view that the soul and God are not absolutely the same) concepts to believers in the common people's regional tongue, opening access to those who did not know Sanskrit. He composed many devotional songs and poems for use in the nighttime worship at his monastery. Shripadaraya is well known for the personal quality of sincere feelings voiced in his lyrics. He was the first to compose *suladis* (a musical-lyrical form employing a medley of different *ragas* and rhythmic cycles, or *talas*, in succession to give a series of moods to one narrative structure), which later saints such as Purandaradasa and Vyasatirtha popularized. Shripadaraya also composed in several musical performance forms, including ever-popular *kirtanas*—colloquial songs often sung with cymbals and *tambura* (a stringed drone instrument) accompaniment. His lively works were powerful expressions of devotion, influencing the renowned Telugu kirtana composer Annamacharya (1424–1503).

Shripadaraya was the guru of Saluva Narasimha, the ruler of southern India's Vijayanagara Empire from 1485 to 1493, who was impressed with Shripadaraya's spiritual, intellectual, and creative powers. Shripadaraya was also the guru of a disciple named Vyasatirtha—who was destined to become known as Vyasaraaya, a great guru during the reign of Emperor Krishnadevaraya—recognized as one of the most important spiritual leaders of his time in the region.

Shripadaraya utilized music as a vehicle to popularize religious, philosophical, and social ideas. In the Haridasas tradition of devotional singing, the first salutation in the singing program, which consists of a poem dedicated to the earliest Haridasas, invokes the name of Shripadaraya. Shripadaraya composed 133 *suladis* (devotional medleys), which are known today, and many *kirtanas*. He died in 1480.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Gurus; Hinduism and Holy People; Laity; Madhva; Purandaradasa; Scholars as Holy People

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Sibyls

Greco-Roman prophets

Sibyls, prophetesses in the ancient Mediterranean world, were associated with several sites in the classical period,

often particular caves or springs. Varro, cited by Lactantius (c. 240–320), listed ten sibyls: Persian, Libyan, Delphian, Cimmerian, Erythraean, Samian, Cumaean, Hellespontine, Phrygian, and Tiburtine. The Romans believed that a sibyl had sold three books of prophecy, written in Greek verse, to one of their Etruscan kings, Tarquinius Priscus or Superbus, in the late sixth century B.C.E. The legend relates that this sibyl had originally offered nine books but had burned three after each of two previous rejections. Yet the king was still impressed by this strange woman and upon the recommendation of his priests paid the price originally asked for all nine. These texts, the Sibylline Books, were stored away safely in the Capitoline temple of Jupiter (after they burned, later versions were kept in the Palatine Temple of Apollo) and only read in times of crisis.

The Romans had a priesthood of ten (originally two, later fifteen) men whom the Senate charged with the duty of consulting the Sibylline Books whenever people observed foreboding omens or the city faced danger from a major threat, such as war, disease, or famine. These priests would read the sacred texts and recommend some form of expiation, such as building an altar or temple, providing gifts, sacrifices, or games, or even importing a new deity into the Roman pantheon.

Virgil, in Book VI of his *Aeneid*, introduces the Cumaean Sibyl as Aeneas's guide to the Underworld and calls her Deiphobe, the daughter of Glaucus. She inhabits a cave in the hills near Cumae in southern Italy. Apollo possesses her body and inspires her prophecies, which Aeneas asks her to speak out loud instead of writing them on leaves that might be easily dispersed. Virgil uses the sibyl to lead Aeneas around in the Underworld and to reveal Rome's glorious future to him.

Sibyls were similar to the priestesses at the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, but they were more symbolic of sites associated with prophecies than they were with an ongoing group of real people. They were venerated and viewed as mediators between human and holy, but only because they represented sacred, prophetic texts.

Sibylline prophecy continued into the Christian world, particularly in the Eastern church. The sibyls as symbols of prophecy survived in the literature and art of the Middle Ages, and Michaelangelo even included five of them on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the sixteenth century.

—Richard D. Weigel

See also: Greek Prophets; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Prophets; Pythia

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Siddhartha

See **Gautama**

Sigfrid of Växsjö (Siegfrid)

(d. c. 1060–1070 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary, apostle of Sweden

Sigfrid is one of many English monks who undertook missionary work in the remotest regions of Europe during the early Middle Ages. From his base at Växsjö in southern Sweden, he traveled widely throughout the countryside preaching the Christian gospel, winning converts, and establishing an ecclesiastical administration to serve the continuing needs of the faithful. He staffed his new foundations with clergy he brought from England or native clergy he trained himself. Tradition reports that in 1008 Sigfrid baptized King Olaf Skötkonung (r. c. 995–1020), the first Swedish king to accept Christianity. Sigfrid's activities had the enthusiastic support of King Olaf and his son Anund James. Sigfrid lived to an extreme old age, in his last year living quietly in the bishopric of Växsjö. He died sometime between 1060 and 1070. Although Christianity was still a minority cult in Sweden in the late eleventh century, Sigfrid's work laid a strong foundation for its eventual defeat of the pre-Christian religion.

Additional information about Sigfrid, and indeed about King Olaf, is fragmentary or lost altogether. What remains is shrouded in heroic myth and saintly legends designed to serve later ecclesiastical and royal politics rather than historical accuracy. For example, recent archaeology suggests that the see of Växsjö was not established until the mid-twelfth century. Sigfrid's connection with the archdiocese of York in England, and even his origins there, are sharply contested. Further, Sigfrid, the apostle of Sweden, might be the same person as Sigurd (or Jón-Sigurd), the English missionary who worked with King Olaf Trygvesson of Norway (r. 995–1000) in that king's attempt to unite and Christianize his kingdom. Modern scholar Birgit Sawyer has even suggested that Sigfrid is a thirteenth-century fiction created to give the Swedish church a history apart from that of Germany and Denmark.

—*Elaine M. Beretz*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Olaf of Norway

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Sikh Religion and Holy People

Sikh history begins in fifteenth-century Punjab, the predominantly agricultural region now shared by India and Pakistan. Sikhs revere a successive lineage of ten spiritual guides, or gurus, whose teachings are included in the *Adi Granth* (First volume), the Sikh scripture. The first guru of the Sikhs was Guru Nanak (1469–1539), a well-versed poet who was born to a Hindu family and traveled extensively during his lifetime. The Sikh community traces its beginnings to Guru Nanak's first followers. In the late seventeenth century, Guru Nanak's ninth successor, Guru Gobind Singh, bade his followers abide by a distinct code of conduct, and many Sikhs keep their hair unshorn and wear turbans as he ordained.

Today, Sikhs practice their religion in places of worship called *gurdwaras* (literally, "door to the guru") across the globe. Seventeen million Sikhs make their home in India's Punjab province, and an additional 4 million live in other parts of India. Four million Sikhs are also spread among countries such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Western scholarship has often branded Sikh doctrine as a compromise between Hindu and Muslim ideals, but the Sikh tradition contends for its own uniqueness.

Basic Doctrine

The *Adi Granth's* content principally concerns a unified divinity from which all things emerge and that resides in all things. The experience of being estranged from the divine is the problem of human existence and the cause of suffering. Deliverance in human life comes from devotion to this divinity via reflection and meditation, humanitarian service, and adherence to egalitarian ideals. Along with extolling the divine virtues in beautiful, mystical poetry, the writings of the Sikh gurus condemn the Indian caste system's inherent inequities, sound off against the destruction caused by imperial Mughal conquests, and criticize various types of holy people for neglecting their religions' principles. From early on, Sikhs developed a strong sense of communal identity; by the seventeenth century, the community developed a martial culture in order to defend itself from assimilation and conversion.

In the Sikh tradition, only gurus retain widespread, doctrinally holy status, though Sikhs who sacrificed their lives for the community are also held in high regard. Since after

the time of the gurus, Sikh practitioners have venerated various individuals as spiritual guides or contacts to the divine, but mainstream Sikhism holds that spiritual authority is vested only in the divine inspiration captured in the Adi Granth's poetry and not in any living individual. Any member of the community, irrespective of gender or social status, can read and learn from this holy text and achieve exalted spiritual states by absorbing and enacting its principles.

Guru

The word “Sikh” comes from the Sanskrit for “disciple.” Sikh life has always been rooted in learning and living the teachings of the gurus—the holiest of humans—beginning with Guru Nanak, whose philosophies and lifestyle are the ultimate paradigms for Sikh behavior. Each Sikh guru is remembered for his unique historical contributions to the Sikh community's evolution. *Janam sakhis*, or gurus' hagiographies, often attribute miraculous and healing powers to the gurus. These accounts were maintained orally and probably first written down within a century after Nanak's death. Hagiographies for other gurus continued to be recorded in the eighteenth century.

For Guru Nanak, Vahiguru (God) is the Sovereign Lord, the primordial guru, and the source of his inspiration. Sikh hagiographic tradition tells that Nanak arrived in the world on a divine mission to reform the wrongs of the times and establish a righteous path of truthful living. In his own writings, Guru Nanak propounds that Sikhs ought to search for truth and meaning by attuning with the divine order (*hukam*). Sikhs consider themselves disciples of Guru Nanak and his nine successors and venerate only this specific lineage of teachers, their teachings, and their life accomplishments.

Nanak was born in what is now Pakistani Punjab to a relatively high-caste, merchant Hindu family, and his early years were heavily influenced by Punjab's rural landscape and agrarian culture. Guru Nanak's writings reveal a strong awareness of contemporary political events and the religious practices of Hindus and Muslims, as well as a profound understanding of classical Indian scriptures, of Islamic mystical philosophy, and the development of Indian philosophy and theology. Although Guru Nanak's education was probably focused in accounting, he must have also rigorously trained in scriptural and philosophical history and had a grasp of Devanagari and Persian. Young Guru Nanak found employment in Sultanpur (a diversely populated trading town on a major trade route), was married during late adolescence, and had two sons. Sikh legend suggests the guru began his mystical journey in 1499 when, after disappearing for three days, he reemerged and recited his first teaching: “There is no Hindu and no Muslim.”

Guru Nanak promoted a distinct path of internal devotion and contemplation as the more efficacious religious al-

ternative. He was deeply critical of how brahmins, yogis, and Muslim clerics upheld notions of purity that fueled their egotism, engrossed their followers in futile repetition of religious compulsions, and thereby disconnected all from meaningful living. At the later stages of his life, Guru Nanak settled in a town called Kartarpur, lived a householder's life while spiritually guiding a small community, and chose a disciple, Lehna (1504–1552), as his successor.

When the office of guru was bestowed upon him after Nanak's death in 1539, Lehna's name was changed to Angad—related to a word for “limb,” which indicates an intention to ensure that the second Sikh guru was seen as an extension of the first. The inheritance of the position, however, was not without its controversies—not at the first succession, nor at any thereafter. The sons of the gurus and their followers split off from the mainstream Sikh tradition and formed rival communities. The resulting contention for community leadership is one reason that the Sikh tradition is cautious of venerating figures outside of the lineage of the ten gurus.

Because Guru Nanak's sons laid claim to their father's lands in Kartarpur, Guru Angad left the city and shifted the community's center to Khadur. Here, Guru Angad focused on the community kitchen (*langar*), which Guru Amardas (1479–1574), the third Sikh guru, developed into a flourishing institution. Guru Amardas's poetry echoed the teachings of his two predecessors. Amardas carried out two communally vital tasks just before his death: nominating Ramdas (1534–1581) as his successor, and founding a more permanent Sikh center at what is now the city of Amritsar. Guru Ramdas took on the task of digging a water tank at that new community center, and this sacred pool became a common metaphor in Sikh literature. He also contributed to Sikh identity by arranging the hymns that became the Sikh marriage rites, by trying to ensure the Sikh community had legitimate legal control over the Amritsar property, and by preventing rival claims to the land, such as those from his son Prithi Chand.

By the time Ramdas's son Arjan (1563–1606) inherited the office of guru, the Sikh community had expanded in pockets throughout the Mughal Empire in Kashmir, Kabul, Delhi, and Agra. Guru Arjan appointed representatives to look after the affairs of these communities and to collect the offerings they made to the guru. Himself an accomplished poet, Guru Arjan combined the writings of all the gurus, their poet-saint influences, and Sikh court poets into one, definitive manuscript where all Sikh ideology was concentrated—the *Kartarpur Pothi* (Kartarpur scripture). This manuscript was expanded in the 1680s and became the Adi Granth.

The Sikh tradition remembers Guru Arjan as its first *shahed*, or martyr—a category of veneration that became in-



A gilded plaque at the Golden Temple of Amritsar shows Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh religion, accompanied by Mardana. (Michael Freeman/Corbis)

creasingly important as the community developed. Sikh tradition holds that leading up to Arjan's death, rival claimants to the Sikh guru lineage (mostly sons of the gurus and their followers) used the rise of Mughal Emperor Jahangir to charge Guru Arjan with supporting Prince Khusrau, an alternate heir to the Mughal throne. Before his death in Mughal hands, Arjan is said to have suffered unbearable torture with phenomenal equanimity.

Sikh tradition tells that the sixth Sikh guru and son of Guru Arjan, Hargobind (1595–1644), militarized the Sikh community in response to its vulnerability, which had been made evident by his father's execution. Guru Hargobind established the center of Sikh polity at the *Akaal Takht* (eternal throne) in Amritsar. He was also a great warrior and an avid hunter. Guru Hargobind's successor, Guru Har Rai (1630–1661), is known for his tremendously gentle nature, and the eighth guru, Har Krishan (1656–1664), is revered for his ripe wisdom, though he died young of smallpox.

The ninth guru, Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675), spent much time traveling, preaching, and visiting the small Sikh communities that had materialized throughout upper India. According to the Sikh tradition, when he went to the center of

the Mughal Empire in Delhi to represent the grievances of a group of persecuted Kashmiri brahmins, he was arrested and executed along with three of his companions at the Chandni Chauk marketplace in Delhi.

Just as the sixth guru had militarized the Sikh community in response to his father's execution, so did Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), Nanak's ninth successor, raise Sikh armies to defend the community's interests. As with Nanak before him, Sikh tradition paints Guru Gobind Singh's life as a momentous mission, inspired by God to establish righteous order in the world. At the end of the seventeenth century, the tenth guru formed the Khalsa, a religious order of initiates that became the formal body of the Sikh community. Probably for the first time, Sikh identity took a physical form as keeping uncut hair and wearing weapons and garments to be ever-prepared for battle became part of the Khalsa code of conduct. Himself a poet and patron of the arts, Guru Gobind Singh is renowned as the ultimate and exemplary *sant-sipahi*, or saint-soldier.

Having established the Khalsa identity, and having fought long campaigns against major and minor hill chieftains, and against the Mughal army, Guru Gobind Singh died in 1708

without nominating a human successor. For about a century after the death of the last Sikh guru, the Sikh community fought hard for its existence under great military threats. For the first time in history, the Sikhs were without a guru, and thus without a divinely inspired leader upon whom the entire community could agree. Though Sikh political and military power was commanded by various Sikhs in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, no one Sikh religious leader ever gained the widespread religious authority of the Sikh gurus. Since the time of the gurus, mainstream Sikh doctrine has ordained that the office of guru be shared between the Adi Granth (referred to respectfully as the Guru Granth Sahib) and the Panth, the Sikh community.

Authority of Granth and Panth

The Adi Granth's authority is evident in everyday Sikh practice. Selections from the Adi Granth as well as some of Guru Gobind Singh's poetry make up the daily Sikh prayers. Sikh newborns are named from the first letter that appears on the text's left-hand page when opened at random. The central act of the Sikh marriage ceremony involves the bride and groom walking around the Adi Granth four times. As the exclusive repository of spiritual authority, Sikhs interpret the Adi Granth's teachings for advice. The text centers Sikh worship space and the community pays obeisance to it as if it were a living guru.

Guru Gobind Singh is supposed to have sanctioned the authority of a Sikh gathering as equal to that of the guru by saying: "Where there are five, there am I." The Khalsa began with five Sikh volunteers who represented the community because they agreed to give their lives if the community so needed. Since that time, five model Khalsa Sikhs, or *panj pyare*, are chosen to preside over Khalsa initiation ceremonies, and Sikh decision-making bodies are often headed by a group of five revered individuals.

For long, those Sikhs who had spilled their blood for the community attained exalted status as shaheeds. Beginning with Guru Arjan, the veneration of martyrs and the exaltation of their heroic deeds has been an important Sikh institution arousing the strongest of sentiments, especially during periods when the community was militarily threatened. To this day, the walls of Sikh homes and temples preserve shaheeds' images. At one of the holiest Sikh gurdwaras, Harimander Sahib in Amritsar, a shrine dedicates the martyrdom of Shaheed Baba Dip Singh, a Sikh warrior who, though mortally wounded, continued fighting to defend that sacred place in 1757.

The Sikh community has always set apart its most pious members and contributors with terms of respect such as *baba* (father) and *bhai* (brother). Baba Buddha is supposed to have been one of Guru Nanak's disciples, looked to by the community for counsel until the time of the sixth guru. Bhai

Gurdas was a close associate of four of the early gurus, the amanuensis in the compilation of the Adi Granth, and the first Sikh exegete, whose *Vaaran* (Ballads) provides an unparalleled source of information about the early community.

Although Baba Buddha and Bhai Gurdas are esteemed for their close connection to the gurus' lives, non-Sikh poet-saints such as Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Namdev, and Sheik Fareed are revered for their philosophical closeness to Sikh doctrine. Though they predeceased the gurus, their works were included in the Adi Granth and continue to be part of the Sikh liturgical traditions. Some of Guru Nanak's hagiographies mention the guru meeting and conversing with the prominent *bhakti* poet Bhagat Kabir, though it is unlikely that this event took place. Bhai Mardana, one of Guru Nanak's first and most loyal followers, is also remembered fondly by the community, and his poems are also included in the sacred Sikh text.

Many contemporary practitioners of Sikhism seek spiritual guidance from and make material supplications to spiritual guides revered as holy preceptors. The Punjabi countryside is replete with such *sants*, venerated by their particular followers, though none enjoy doctrinal distinction from mainstream Sikhism. Certain religious movements that are peripheral to the Sikh orthodoxy, such as the Namdharis, continue to worship living gurus.

Egalitarianism prevails in mainstream Sikh doctrine as there is no professional Sikh priesthood. Community leaders, decision makers, and custodians of Sikh sacred places are held to high religious standards but are not set apart from any member of the laity. Those who sing the Adi Granth's hymns or read from the text during religious services are expected to do so with utmost reverence, for they handle the divine's embodiment in the form of the eternal guru.

—R. S. Gill

See also: Amardas; Arjan; Gobind Singh; Gurus; Har Rai; Hargobind; Hereditary Holiness; Kabir; Martyrdom and Persecution; Models; Namdev; Nanak; Prophets; Purity and Pollution; Ramdas; Recognition; Ritual; Teachers as Holy People; Tegh Bahadur; Tolerance and Intolerance; Veneration of Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Silvester I

(d. 335 C.E.)

Christian pope

Silvester's papacy in 314–335 coincided with a period of great change for the Christian church. Under Constantine, the first Christian Roman emperor, the persecution of Christians was stopped, the clergy was given greater authority and privileges, and the church was enriched by imperial gifts. Silvester, however, played a negligible part in these developments, although later legends made him a central figure in Constantine's conversion.

Nothing reliable is known about Silvester's early life. The sixth-century *Liber pontificalis* (Book of the pontiffs) claims that Silvester was born in Rome and that his father was named Rufinus. Unfortunately, much of the early material in the *Liber pontificalis* is legendary, so these details must be treated with skepticism. Silvester may have been a victim of the persecution of Christians under Emperor Diocletian: Liturgical texts from the fifth century refer to him as a confessor (someone who suffers for the faith but is not actually martyred). He was consecrated pope on January 31, 314, and died December 31, 335. During this time, Silvester apparently never left the city of Rome, not even to attend the first ecumenical council at Nicaea in 325. Although the Council of Nicaea, like the earlier Council of Arles (314), recognized the primacy of Rome over the Western churches, Silvester did not assume a leadership role in ecclesiastical affairs. (The account of a Roman council supposedly called by Silvester in 326 is a later forgery.) It is indicative of Silvester's papacy that his entry in the *Liber pontificalis* mainly consists of a list of gifts given to Roman churches by the emperor Constantine.

Legends giving Silvester a much wider role in the events of his time began to circulate within a century of his death. These legends coalesced in the late fifth century into the *Actus Silvestri* (Deeds of Silvester). According to this account, Constantine was afflicted with leprosy during Silvester's reign. After having a vision of Sts. Peter and Paul, Constantine summoned Silvester, who converted the emperor to Christianity, baptized him, and cured his leprosy. In the eighth or ninth century, this legend gave rise to a forgery known as the "Donation of Constantine." Purporting to be a letter from Constantine to Silvester, the "Donation" transferred authority over the Western Roman Empire from the emperor to the pope. The document formed the basis of later medieval claims to political power and was not revealed to be a forgery until the fifteenth century.

Silvester's feast day is December 31.

—Stephen A. Allen

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Constantine; Pope-Saints

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Simeon ben Yohai

(2nd cent. C.E.)

Jewish rabbi, sage

Simeon ben Yohai was a rabbinic sage and a leading disciple of the distinguished Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph during the mid-second century. In ancient rabbinic texts, Simeon was best remembered for his passionate hatred of the Roman Empire and his equally fierce devotion to the study of Torah. In the most fully developed story (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 33b–34a), the Roman authorities caught wind of his constant denunciations and tried to arrest him, so Simeon and his son Eleazar (later an important sage himself) ran away and hid in a cave for thirteen years. Obtaining food and drink through miraculous means, they spent this time in Torah study to the exclusion of all other matters.

When the two men finally came out of the cave, they were appalled to see that other people were spending their time on worldly concerns, plowing and sowing and the like, and their gaze made anything they looked at burn. A heavenly voice instructed them to go back to the cave, and when they emerged again a year later, they were able to devote their learning to constructive ends. Simeon thus offered the ideal model of dedication to the well-being of the Jewish people, of the charismatic power that attached to those who are dedicated to Torah, and of the dangers inherent in such power when carelessly invoked.

A thousand years later, when the Jewish mystical classic known as the *Zohar* (Book of splendor) began to circulate, Simeon b. Yohai was widely believed to have been its author. It became standard kabbalistic doctrine that the *Zohar* was a repository of ancient secret teachings that had lain undiscovered for many centuries and only now come to light. Simeon himself thus became a hero not just of Torah study in general but of Jewish mysticism in particular, a charismatic teacher of profound mysteries and a model of pure-hearted dedication to contemplative study.

Simeon's purported tomb in Meron near Safed in northern Israel has become the focus of veneration and pilgrimage; especially on the purported anniversary of his death (the semi-holiday Lag Ba'omer, on 18 Iyyar). On this occasion, thousands gather outside the town, light bonfires, arrange to give three-year-old boys their first haircuts, and stay up all night singing kabbalistic hymns.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Akiba ben Joseph; Judaism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Simeon of Trier*(d. 1035 C.E.)**Christian monk, recluse*

Born to Christian parents in Syracuse, Sicily, Simeon was an itinerant monk and pilgrimage leader in the Holy Land, an ordained deacon at the monastery of St. Catherine at Sinai, and finished his days as a recluse in the German city of Trier. The year of his birth is unknown, but Simeon died on June 1, 1035. Information on the saint's life comes largely from the vita written by his friend, the abbot Eberwin, shortly after Simeon's death.

Simeon went to Constantinople at the age of seven to study. His vita reports that he spoke Egyptian, Syrian, Arabic, Greek, and Roman—the common speech developed out of Latin. Following his education, he journeyed to Jerusalem as a pilgrim and stayed there for seven years, working as a guide for other visitors to the Holy Land. For the next several years, Simeon also worked as a hermit's servant in Jordan and entered the monastery of the Virgin in Bethlehem before becoming a deacon at St. Catherine's.

Sent to Rouen on monastery business in 1026, Simeon was waylaid by pirates and ended up at Antioch instead. There he met a group of 700 pilgrims, one of whom was Abbot Eberwin of Tholey. Simeon eventually reached his original destination of Rouen. Once his errand was completed, he traveled on to Tholey to visit Eberwin, and then to nearby Trier, where he met Archbishop Poppo. The two became friends, and when Poppo decided to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Babylon in the years 1027–1030, Simeon accompanied him. Simeon chose not to rejoin his order at St. Catherine's and instead returned to Trier with Poppo.

In 1030, on the feast day of the Byzantine saint Andrew, Simeon had himself ritually "entombed" in the Porta Nigra, a stone gate in the old Roman wall that still partially enclosed the city. With great ceremony and the participation of the clergy and the townspeople, Simeon entered the north tower of the gate, where he would live as a recluse for the remaining five years of his life. He modeled himself after the desert saints of the East and even had a platform constructed so that, like the earlier desert penitents, he could pray while standing upon a column. Simeon was canonized in 1036, within a year of his death.

The miracles associated with Simeon are for the most part concerned with healing; pilgrims to Simeon's grave

were said to have recovered from blindness, speechlessness, paralysis, and possession. The cult of St. Simeon grew quickly, eventually prompting church officials to open his grave in 1401 in order to retrieve his relics. Simeon is commonly represented carrying a palm leaf in one hand and a book in the other.

—Kristen M. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Daniel the Stylite; Desert Saints; Hermits; Miracles; Simeon the Stylite

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Simeon the New Theologian (Symeon)*(949–1022 C.E.)**Orthodox theologian, mystic*

Noted as a talented mystic, Simeon the New Theologian was a controversial figure in the Byzantine church. He had powerful visions of God as light and experiences of ecstasy in which he saw Christ himself. Yet he was often accused of heresy and had many conflicts with church authorities. Eventually he was expelled from Constantinople, where he had been abbot and spiritual father of St. Mamas monastery.

The biggest influence on Simeon's life was his spiritual father, Simeon the Studite. Although Simeon the New Theologian lived a somewhat dissolute life in the world for thirty years, he was devoted to his spiritual father and followed his teachings. The Studite was a monk at the monastery of Studium, which still enjoyed the prominence it had achieved under its sainted abbot Theodore. Simeon the Studite advocated humility, simplicity, dispassion, love, and patience. Both Simeons expressed their spirituality through the tears that accompanied their prayers and the taking of communion. When the Studite died, Simeon the New Theologian treated him as a saint with the feasts and rituals accorded to saints even though he had not been officially recognized as such.

When Simeon the New Theologian decided to become a monk he was sent to St. Mamas, a monastery that had fallen into disrepair. He quickly became abbot and instituted reforms that rehabilitated both the structures and inhabitants of the monastery. But he had trouble with the monks and the authorities. Exiled from Constantinople, he founded a small monastery where he lived his life surrounded by disciples who were not offended by his expectation of mystical union with Christ or his visions of divine light. Here, according to his hagiographer, he performed healing miracles and inspired others with his compassion.

It was perhaps the intense personal aspect of Simeon's spirituality and his teachings that created such conflict. His teachings were considered dangerous and new because they seemed to center on personal experience rather than Orthodox tradition. The historian Hilarion Alfeyev (2000), however, has demonstrated that Simeon's methods and the form and content of his experience were indeed in conformity with Orthodox tradition, but a tradition older than that active in Byzantium in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Simeon had problems within his monastery as well. He expected that the achievement of those mystical, ecstatic states that he experienced would be within the grasp of anyone who sought them. The intensity of this expectation caused resentment among those who were unable to reach such heights. To many, however, he was an inspiring example of holiness.

—Diane Peters Auslander

See also: Mysticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints

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Simeon the Stylite

(c. 390–459 C.E.)

Christian ascetic

Simeon was the earliest of the so-called "stylite" saints, that is, those Christian ascetics who lived their lives on top of pillars, thus removing themselves from the "world" vertically rather than horizontally, the way the desert monks of late antiquity usually did. Born around the year 390 in northern Syria, Simeon began his holy career traditionally enough in a monastery east of Antioch in preparation for a life of solitude as a hermit. His ascetic lifestyle was so extreme that he began to attract pilgrims, prompting him to distance himself even more from human contact by climbing on top of a pillar. This only added to his popularity, prompting Simeon to seek ever higher pillars, which his admirers happily built for him, until he towered some sixty feet above the ground.

Many of his visitors—including a number of emperors—sought his advice and his blessing, which he offered from his holy perch. In a region like Syria, torn apart by trinitarian controversies, Simeon distinguished himself in the

last few years of his life as an advocate for the interpretation endorsed at the Council of Chalcedon (451). After spending almost forty years of his life on a pillar, Simeon died in 459 and was buried in Antioch. His example inspired many imitators, the most prominent of which was Daniel the Stylite (c. 409–493), who, after inheriting Simeon's cloak, was inspired to spend the rest of his life on a column outside of Constantinople.

—Kenneth B. Wolf

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Daniel the Stylite; Guidance; Hermits

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Singh, Sundar

(1889–c. 1929 C.E.)

Protestant ascetic, visionary

Sadhu Sundar Singh is probably India's best-known Protestant Christian holy man, proclaimed by many as "India's apostle" and as a modern *alter Christus* (another Christ). He was born to a relatively wealthy Sikh family on September 3, 1889, in a small village of the Punjab, northern India. His mother's devotional blend of Hindu and Sikh spirituality shaped his own piety and endowed him with a lasting respect for the ancient Indian tradition of the wandering *sadhu* (holy man). An adolescent religious crisis—brought on in part by his mother's death and in part by his contact with Christian missionaries—culminated in the first of his many supernatural visions—an unexpected *darshan* (vision) of Jesus Christ. Soon tension over his conversion drove him from his home, and he determined to serve his newfound master as a *sadhu*. Within a few months, at the age of sixteen, he was baptized, donned the traditional saffron dress of the ascetic, and began his lifelong mission of imitating and preaching Christ through much of northern India and beyond. In the life of Sadhu Sundar Singh, *imitatio Christi* (imitation of Christ), evangelical mission, and the ascetic tradition of the Hindu renunciant surprisingly coincide.

After nearly a decade of wandering in relative obscurity (c. 1905–1915), Sadhu Sundar Singh's fame began to grow, leading to a considerable number of publications about him and a series of wide-ranging tours, both in India and abroad (including Japan, Europe, and America, 1918–1922). Children, archbishops, and academics compared him to Christ, and he was often hailed as a living "saint." Given Protestantism's official rejection of a special class of "saints," however, most missionaries stressed his humility, orthodoxy, evangelism, and miraculous *calling* rather than his spiritual power or intercessory authority. Many liberal, Western Chris-

tians and Indian Christians, more comfortable perhaps with the very idea of a “holy man,” emphasized his Indianization of Christianity. For them, the sadhu’s undeniable charisma validated and fulfilled India’s ascetic and mystical traditions through devotion (*bhakti*) to Jesus Christ. Finally, for some European “modernist” Christians, all such talk of the miraculous, of sainthood, and of “Oriental” mysticism was just the problem: a superstitious “sadhu cult” was the antithesis of the *this-worldly* Christianity they championed. As the Roman Catholic scholar of mysticism Baron F. H. von Hügel intimated upon meeting the sadhu, proclaiming any contemporary to be a living saint—especially outside the jurisdiction of Rome—was a risky and ambiguous rhetorical strategy.

In 1922, Sadhu Sundar Singh made his final return to India. His ecstatic visions, which had been frequent at least since 1912, took on added significance as illness increasingly confined him to his newly purchased home in the foothills of the Himalayas. Notably, visionary encounters with the eighteenth-century Swedish seer Emanuel Swedenborg during this period coincided with, or were perhaps inspired by, the sadhu’s growing correspondence with Swedenborgians. The wisdom and solace received from the “spiritual world” formed the substance of the seven short devotional books that he now composed and, he felt, rendered the ongoing European controversy about his authenticity (the *Sadhustreit*) practically irrelevant. When strength permitted, he made intermittent returns to the lifestyle of a sadhu. In June 1929, though in extremely poor health, Sadhu Sundar Singh set out for one last missionary trip to Tibet and never returned. His lifelong desire for martyrdom had compelled him to disappear, as one historian of religion has recently put it, into “the brilliant darkness of legend” (Sharpe, forthcoming). Churches continue to be established in his name in India today.

—Timothy S. Dobe

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Mission; Protestantism and Holy People

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Sitting Bull

(c. 1831–1890 C.E.)

Hunkpapa Lakota medicine man, warrior, political leader

Sitting Bull is one of the best-known Lakotas and American Indians of the nineteenth century. He is remembered for his



This photograph of Sitting Bull, the visionary and leader of the Hunkpapa Lakota Sioux, was taken shortly before his death in 1890. (Library of Congress)

role in resisting American expansion on the Plains and for his accomplishments as a warrior and war leader. Often overlooked is his intimate interaction with the spiritual world that enabled him to resist so effectively.

From an early age, he demonstrated an ability to manipulate spiritual power as protection in war. His feats in war gained him honor and status among his people, but he continued to investigate the mysteries of the Lakota cosmos, eventually becoming a holy man who could foretell events. Sitting Bull participated in the sun dance ritual, whereby pieces of his skin were sacrificed to induce visions, numerous times. This spiritual skill and devotion to probing the deepest levels of spirituality elevated Sitting Bull above most of his contemporaries and placed an immense responsibility on his shoulders to protect and guide his people. The Lakotas looked to him as the embodiment of the courage, endurance, generosity, and wisdom that they valued.

As the U.S. government pressured the Lakotas to live on reservations in the 1860s and 1870s, Sitting Bull remained staunchly opposed to the reservation system and to accommodating to white ways. American intrusion into Lakota territory

culminated in the invasion of the Lakotas' sacred Black Hills in the early 1870s and the U.S. Army's attempt to round up Lakota people once and for all in the summer of 1876. During this military campaign, Sitting Bull held a sun dance and stripped about one hundred pieces of flesh from his arms. This sacrifice induced a vision of enemy soldiers with no ears falling into the Lakota camp and being slaughtered, and this is what happened to General George Armstrong Custer's men as the Lakotas routed them at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in late June 1876. Sitting Bull did not participate in the battle because he was recovering from his sun dance, but his vision came true.

After Custer's defeat, the Lakota bands scattered, and Sitting Bull and his followers went to Canada until surrendering to the United States in 1881. In subsequent years, Sitting Bull performed with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and then settled in as an elder on the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota. When the Ghost Dance Movement exploded in 1890, the reservation agents blamed Sitting Bull and ordered him arrested. He died at the hands of Indian policemen on December 15, 1890.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Black Elk; Crazy Horse; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; War, Peace, and Holy People; Wovoka

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Slessor, Mary

(1848–1915 C.E.)

Presbyterian missionary, social activist

Mary Slessor was a Scottish-born missionary who arrived in Nigeria in 1876. She worked to put an end to slave trading, intertribal wars, and other social vices, such as the customary killing of twins in West Africa. A popular figure, she was nicknamed "The White Queen of Calabar" by the people to whom she ministered.

Prior to the coming of the European explorers, slavery was already an accepted part of the social system in West Africa. Whether in the Niger Delta, in Igbo country, or in Yorubaland, slaves were the principal source of investment to indicate wealth. The West Africans regarded the possession of slaves, like the custom of having several wives, as adding dignity to a man and enhancing his social status. In Yoruba country, work on the farms and in the households was for the most part done by slaves, and slaves outnumbered both the Ijaw and the Efik people. However, with the

discovery of the New World and the development of its vast resources, demand for laborers for the mines and plantations arose, and African slaves, who could be readily obtained, were carried overseas. The provisioning stations of West Africa became slavetrading forts, and slave raiding was a dominant social vice plaguing the West African coast. This became the concern of Mary Slessor.

Slavery was not the only evil Mary Slessor was set to fight against. In many African societies, especially on the western coast, the birth of twins was taken as a herald of misfortune in the community. Twins constituted a sign that something had gone wrong and that something still worse would happen to the whole community unless the "evil" was removed. The children were killed for the sake of the larger community, to cleanse, "save," and protect the rest of the people. West Africans believed that if the twins were not killed, then not only would the twins themselves suffer, but the rest of the society would be in danger of annihilation. So in their eyes, the killings were carried out with good intentions, and not as cruel acts. In the Efik and Igbo regions where Mary Slessor worked, the mothers of twins were killed along with the children. Slessor intervened in cases where society sought to deal with twins according to their customary practices. As a result, each time a woman delivered twins, they were brought to Mary Slessor, and many children grew up in her home.

Mary Slessor gained a great deal of influence in the region and her decisions were recognized by the chiefs and the people of the land. Fearless and undaunted, she visited even those who had managed to avoid contact with outsiders. She brought the gospel to the people of the interior with a philosophy of ministry that focused on reaching the unreached and attacking every antisocial practice with the word of God. Slessor's first settlement was Calabar, where she had a fruitful ministry. In 1888, the British government appointed her a vice consul at Okoyong. Among the Okoyong, she adjudicated on matters of social concern, and the authorities of warring communities respected her judgments. In 1907, the chief of the Aros announced that he would rule in God's way as a result of Mary Slessor's influence over his territory.

Slessor's constant crusade against the killing of twins, slave raiding, and intertribal wars helped to eliminate these social vices in the territories of her ministry and even beyond. She died on January 13, 1915, and was buried in Calabar.

—John U. Anaba

See also: Compassion and Holy People; Mission; Protestantism and Holy People

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Smith, Joseph

(1805–1844 C.E.)

Latter-day Saint founder

Founder and first elder and president of the Church of Jesus Christ (later, of Latter-day Saints), Joseph Smith, Jr., is identified by members of the church as the “revelator” of a unique Christian message. Joseph, as he is still known to Mormons, was believed to be a divinely appointed prophet, like those of the Old and New Testaments, who was chosen to restore to earth the “pure gospel of Christ” and to found a new church in preparation for the second coming of the Lord.

Smith was born on December 23, 1805, to an ordinary New England farming family. In 1817, the family made its way to Palmyra, New York, where they were able to purchase a farm and make a subsistence living. Settling in this “Burned Over District” of upstate New York (so-called for its intense and varied religious life in the decades between independence and the Civil War) seems to have had a significant effect on Smith’s religious experiences. The area was the birthplace of much of the renewed religious excitement and revivalism of the Second Great Awakening, ultimately giving rise not only to the Latter-day Saints, but also to other groups, such as Mother Ann Lee’s Shakers and John Humphrey Noyes’s Oneida Community, and to revivalist preachers, such as Charles Grandison Finney.

Smith’s experiences as a visionary and prophet began in 1820 when he was just fourteen. Praying in the woods that surrounded the family home, he had a vision of the Father and Son, who cautioned him not to join any of the competing denominations that were seeking to attract new members. Three years later, on September 21 and 22, 1823, Smith had a series of visions of the angel Moroni. The angel told Smith that his father, Mormon, had entrusted him with the record of his people, which had been inscribed on “golden plates” to be revealed to Joseph. Together with two stones, the “Urim” and “Thummim,” which would allow the translation of the text of the sacred tablets, the plates were hidden close by in the hill Cumorah. Smith was instructed that he must wait for four years before gathering the plates; he did so, and in 1827 he reportedly found them. For the next three years, aided by his wife Emma and other followers, he worked to translate the plates, a labor that culminated in their publication in 1830.

The visions experienced by Smith between 1823 and 1827, and many more over the next decade, convinced him that God’s covenant with Israel was now ready to be fulfilled, that the second coming was imminent, and that the pure gospel of the Lord was to be preached in preparation for the beginning of Christ’s millennial reign. Toward this end, Smith and his followers left the Burned Over District and embarked on a latter-day exodus. During this period of

“wandering” and persecution on the way to the American “promised land” in the Great Salt Lake Basin, a promised land never glimpsed by Smith, the group built their first temple and instituted the controversial practice of polygamy (ultimately overturned in 1890). Arriving and settling in Commerce, Illinois, in 1838, Smith received a charter from the state and changed the name of the city to Nauvoo—a “beautiful plantation” in the midst of the New Jerusalem that was America. Tensions arose, however, over what was perceived by others as Smith’s dictatorial control, and he was ultimately imprisoned after he had the presses of a rival newspaper destroyed. He was killed in 1844 by a mob that stormed the jail.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Founders of Religions as Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Prophets; Young, Brigham

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Soamiji

(1818–1878 C.E.)

Syncretic guru

Soamiji, born Shiv Dayal Singh in 1818, initiated the revival in popular northern Indian esotericism that continues as Radhasoami tradition. He drew on the legacy of the Hindi sants, poet-singers whose most famous exponent was Kabir (c. 1450–1518), bringing together particular aspects of their yoga and devotion. The practice he taught had an appeal for the partially westernized, industrious middle classes of British India. It was disciplined but did not require ascetic renunciation, and it rested on internal results, not the sanction of brahminic authority. Although Soamiji died in 1878, Radhasoami tradition remains vital among middle-class Indians of Hindu and Sikh background, with continuing Radhasoami lineages based in Agra (Soamiji’s birthplace) and Beas, Punjab. The latter have large branches in many cities of northern India and a noteworthy international following.

Soamiji was born into a mercantile family of Hindu Khatri who had emigrated from the Punjab, maintaining their reverence for Guru Nanak, the Punjabi founder of the Sikhs, and an accompanying respect for the *sants* (holy people) included in Sikh scripture. As was common in families like his, he was educated in Persian. Soamiji’s teaching, then, derived

predominantly from Hindu modes of thought, but he easily incorporated Persian sufi idiom and, following common sant precepts, denied in principle the value of caste and the supremacy of the Vedas. His teachings were thus not Hindu in any orthodox sense, highlighting the importance of Soamiji's own cosmic status in the traditions that derived from them.

On this, the Beas and Agra Radhasoamis differ. Beas followers claim that Soamiji was a completely realized sant, a member of a class of exceptional beings. They point to other great sants and to certain sufis and suggest that Soamiji himself had a guru—Tulsi Sahib of Hathras, a nineteenth-century sant embraced by Soamiji's family. Agra followers, in contrast, claim that Soamiji was an absolutely unique being, a divine incarnation with no guru of his own. The Agra view thus credits Soamiji with starting a new religion, while the Beas view takes him as standing in a continuing line of sants.

—Daniel Gold

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Nanak; Sikh Religion and Holy People; Sufism

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Socrates

(c. 470–399 B.C.E.)

Greek philosopher

Socrates was a famous Athenian philosopher of the fifth century B.C.E. whose charisma and strength of character made him the founding figure of several Greek schools of thought and a hero of philosophers through the ages. Challenging his fellow Athenians through the so-called Socratic method of cross-questioning, Socrates was both admired and despised for his self-acclaimed role as the “gadfly” (*Apology* 30e) of the people. He earned the admiration of many through his reputation for courage and fortitude, his gentle humor, and above all his wisdom. The Delphic oracle itself reported that no one was wiser than Socrates. Some, however, seem to have been annoyed by his ways. Eventually Socrates engendered so much antagonism that a jury of his fellow Athenians sentenced him to death. Soon and forever after his death would be generally regarded as a martyrdom.

Socrates wrote nothing; our knowledge about him is derived primarily from Plato's dialogues, and also from the

writings of Xenophon, from passages in Aristotle, and from Aristophanes' play *Clouds*. These authors gave differing portrayals. Of his early life we know only a few things. Socrates gained a reputation for tremendous courage and fortitude as a foot soldier in the Athenian army. He devoted his middle and later life to teaching, though not professionally. In 399 B.C.E., Socrates was brought to trial, apparently on charges of corrupting the youth of Athens and of impiety. After a rather defiant speech by Socrates (reproduced by Plato in the *Apology*), the jury of 501 citizens indicted him by only 30 votes, then sentenced him to death. Most likely the jurors were motivated in part by disdain for Socrates owing to his apparent association with some of those responsible for the recent turmoil following the Peloponnesian War. Refusing to take advantage of an opportunity to escape, Socrates drank the hemlock and died.

There is disagreement as to the extent to which Socrates formulated the philosophical ideas that are put in his mouth in Plato's dialogues. But some features of his own philosophy are certain: the wisdom of avoiding false claims to knowledge, the need to examine diligently one's opinions about moral issues, and the conviction that “no evil can come to a good man” (*Apology* 41d). He was primarily interested in discerning what is the good life, in a moral sense. He also insisted on the careful definition of terms, and for this he is regarded as having contributed to the development of logic. Perhaps most of all Socrates has been admired for his exemplary strength of character, as one who refused to back down from any threat or criticism. Some claim that Socrates was a critic of traditional religion. But it is clear that Socrates took seriously the pronouncements of the Delphic oracle, and he understood himself to be guided by a certain divine sign that warned him against doing certain things.

Socrates' influence on the subsequent history of Greek philosophy cannot be overstated. The fact that we label what came before him as “pre-Socratic” is one indication of his impact. Plato and several other followers went on to found influential schools. The various Hellenistic philosophers who came later tended to look to Socrates as their hero and founding figure. Christian apologists and church fathers also regarded him as a hero, noting a number of striking comparisons between Socrates and Christ.

—Jeffrey Brodd

See also: Greek Philosophers; Hagiography; Heroes; Martyrdom and Persecution; Plato; Scholars as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Sojourner Truth

(c. 1797–1883 C.E.)

Christian activist, preacher

Sojourner Truth was an ex-slave, itinerant street preacher, abolitionist, and advocate for women's rights. At a time of great change during the history of the United States, Sojourner's passion for justice and human rights was powerful, compelling, and influential. A down-to-earth yet charismatic speaker and singer, she made good use of her gifts to confront the evil of personal and institutional racism in all areas of society, including slavery and the women's rights movement, and to challenge the hierarchical Christian patriarchy that kept women in subordinate positions. She knew that to free slaves without declaring women equal to men would keep black women in continued bondage, and that to declare women equal to men without abolishing slavery would be a travesty of human rights. She believed wholeheartedly that the mission of the Christian church was to bring the good news of God's reconciling love to all people, and that leader-



Christian activist Sojourner Truth, c. 1864. (Library of Congress)

ship in the church belonged to both men and women. Sojourner Truth drew strength, energy, and conviction for her ministry from her deeply held belief in an intimate relationship of love and faith with Jesus Christ.

Sojourner Truth was born into slavery in Ulster County, New York, in about 1797; her parents named her Isabella. She was sold at auction several times, given in marriage to an older slave, and bore the first of five children around 1815. In 1826, Isabella freed herself by escaping from her home, taking only her youngest daughter. It was shortly after she escaped that she experienced Christian conversion at a deeply personal level, an encounter that changed her whole concept of God, faith, and ministry.

It was about 1843 when Isabella became convinced that God was calling her to preach the good news of salvation and redemption. She felt inspired by God to rename herself "Sojourner" because she knew she would be traveling to teach God's love for all people, especially the poor and oppressed. "Truth" became her last name because she would be declaring the truth that all people of every gender, race, culture, and way of life are God's children and worthy of equal dignity and respect.

Sojourner Truth was considered by her contemporaries to be compassionate, benevolent, and spiritually enlightened, as well as a person of moral integrity, an indefatigable defender of human rights, and a constant source of inspiration to her companions in the abolitionist cause and the women's rights movement.

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People

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Solomon b. Isaac of Troyes

See Rashi

Sonam Gyatso (Dalai Lama III)

(1542–1588 C.E.)

Buddhist spiritual leader, monk, scholar

The third in the line of reincarnating Tibetan spiritual teachers known as dalai lamas, Sonam Gyatso was the first to

be called a dalai lama. He was a renowned scholar and teacher who completed the conversion of the Mongolian tribes to Buddhism during the sixteenth century.

His birth into a prominent family in 1542 was preceded by his mother's auspicious dreams. In childhood, he had frequent visions of buddhas and *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings). When the party searching for the reincarnation of the second dalai lama came to his home, he is said to have greeted its members by name and to have spontaneously recognized several possessions of his predecessor, such as a horse, a statue, and a rosary.

He was brought to Drepung monastery at the age of three and at age nine was formally enthroned there. The famed scholar Panchen Sonam Drakpa (pan chen bsod nams grags ba) conferred upon him the name Sonam Gyatso (bsod nams rgya mtsho), using the last name of the previous dalai lama, Gendun Gyatso, a custom that has remained to the present. Sonam Gyatso received a thorough education in Indian and Tibetan philosophy and was initiated into all the principal tantric practices of the Gelukpa monastic order. He maintained an extensive daily meditation practice his whole life, although he also spent much time in study, debate, and travel.

Sonam Gyatso's most important achievement was the conversion of the Mongolians to Buddhism. Altan Khan, a descendant of Chingis Khan, invited him to Mongolia. He performed several miracles en route, such as causing the Yangtze and then the Yellow River to subside so that the party might cross them safely. He was welcomed with great devotion and pomp and set about teaching the Mongolians to follow a path of nonviolence. They were to stop performing blood sacrifices for the dead, stop raiding and pillaging their neighbors, and instead practice Buddhist virtues.

Sonam Gyatso believed that in a previous life he had been Sakya Pakpa, the spiritual adviser to Kublai Khan. He revealed this to Altan Khan and said that Altan Khan had been Kublai Khan himself. Altan Khan conferred on Sonam Gyatso a new title for his reincarnating line, that of dalai lama (*dalai* means "ocean" in Mongolian, as does *rgya mtsho* in Tibetan). Other Asians, and eventually Europeans, began to use the title. Only recently has it been used among Tibetans.

Sonam Gyatso undertook teaching tours of eastern Tibet and returned again to Mongolia. He was invited to teach the Ming emperor, but before he could make that journey or return to Tibet he became ill and died in Mongolia in 1588, accompanied by many magical signs.

—Daniel Cozort

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Mission; Recognition; Reincarnation

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Sophia

Christian legendary holy woman

Legend tells that Sophia and her three daughters, Faith, Hope, and Charity, members of a wealthy, devout family, suffered and died in Rome during the reign of Emperor Hadrian (r. 117–138). Hadrian had each of the daughters questioned individually about their religious practices, and each enraged him by her resolute belief in Jesus Christ.

Before beheading each daughter, he subjected them to various types of torture. Indeed, the list of tortures they endured catalog the cruel practices of the time. The oldest, Faith (Pistis), age twelve, was stripped, beaten, and had her breasts cut off, but God protected her from feeling pain. Second, Hope (Elpis), age ten, was beaten and then thrown into a furnace, but the fire failed to burn her. Third, Charity (love/agape), age nine, was hanged and then chained so tightly that her bones broke. When she was thrown into a blazing furnace, an angel safeguarded her. Sophia encouraged her daughters to accept death graciously, for they would soon be united with Jesus. Sophia died peacefully three days later when praying at their tomb.

Although the genealogy might be authentic, the symbolic value is clear in this allegory of the cult of divine wisdom (*sophia*). Sophia, source of all virtues, engenders the three theological virtues. She is the archetype of the saint. Like her daughters, she demonstrated wisdom and justice, and she showed restraint, temperance, and perseverance to a heroic degree, under challenging circumstances and with a joyful heart.

The Roman Martyrology of 1584 retains the names of these four saints, whose feast day is August 1. Their names are also inscribed in the synaxaries, and the Orthodox Church venerates them on September 17.

Icons of Sophia show her either alone or with her daughters. Generally each figure is identified by name. Most frequently, Sophia carries a cross in her right hand and raises her left hand in submission to God.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Soubirous, Bernadette

(1844–1879 C.E.)

Roman Catholic visionary, nun

Bernadette Soubirous was born on January 7, 1844, at Lourdes, to a poor miller, François Soubirous, and his wife, Louise Casterot. For a time, the family inhabited a derelict jail, for lack of better lodgings. The first of six children, Bernadette worked as a shepherdess and a servant to help support her family.

On Thursday, February 11, 1858, Bernadette, her sister Toinette, and their friend Jeanne Abadie went to gather firewood. They stopped at the Massabielle grotto, where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette for the first of eighteen times. Mary, dressed in blue and white, appeared above a rose bush. She smiled at the young girl and made the sign of the cross with her rosary. Bernadette said that she dropped to her knees, took out her rosary, and prayed. The other girls never saw the apparition. Subsequently, Mary asked her to pray for sinners, do penance, and have a chapel built there in her honor. On the morning of March 1, during the twelfth apparition, Mary asked Bernadette to drink from a fountain in the grotto. Following directions, Bernadette dug in the soil, and a spring issued forth. The first healing at Lourdes occurred that same morning, when Catherine Latapie, a woman who lived in the area, regained the use of her paralyzed hand after bathing it in the spring water. Word spread that the water had curative powers, and in the years since the visions many people hoping to be healed of their ailments have visited the site.

At her fourteenth apparition, March 25, Bernadette, prompted by the local clergy, asked Mary her name. Her response was, "*Que soy era Immaculada Councepcioue*" (I am the Immaculate Conception). Pope Pius IX had proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854. The fourteen-year-old girl made her first communion on June 3, and she saw Mary for the last time on July 16, 1858.

While the crowds increased in size, Bernadette sought obscurity. The house of the Sisters of Notre-Dame de Nevers in Lourdes, which assumed the education of the indigent, accepted her as a student and taught her to read and write French. In 1866, they permitted her to go to the Convent of Saint-Gildard in Nevers to become a nun, but reluctantly, for Bernadette was ill. Although she survived the cholera epi-



Bernadette Soubirous. (Bettmann/Corbis)

demic of 1855, she suffered from asthma, tuberculosis, and digestive disorders. She professed her religious vows early, for the nuns did not think that she would live until the projected date. She assumed her baptismal name, Marie-Bernard, and worked in the Holy Cross Infirmary, which became a military hospital during the Franco-Prussian War. However, she was declared an invalid in April 1875 and received extreme unction for the fourth time in her life upon the approach of her death on April 15, 1879.

Pope Pius XI canonized Bernadette on December 8, 1933, when he sang the mass for virgins before 40,000 pilgrims in Rome. Bernadette's body was put in a silver and crystal reliquary in the chapel of the convent at Nevers, which millions of people visit annually. She is the patron saint of shepherds, the poor, and the ill.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Intermediaries; Mary, Virgin; Suffering and Holy People

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Southcott, Joanna

(1750–1814 C.E.)

Anglican millenarian leader

Joanna Southcott was a Christian mystic, a spiritual writer, and the leader of an English sect that believed she would give birth to the second Christ. Although she was born a farmer's daughter (in 1750) and received very little formal education, her visions and prophecies transformed her into the spiritual leader of thousands of people, and her popularity continued through the late nineteenth century. Throughout her life, Southcott was a regular reader of the Bible and a member of the Anglican Church. She remained single her entire life. In 1791, she joined the Wesleyan movement, and on Easter Monday of 1792 she received an apocalyptic vision and began to issue a number of prophecies. She was viewed with a great deal of skepticism, both by clergymen and by contemporary writers, including John Keats and Lord Byron, who spoke negatively of her in their poetry.

By 1801, however, her popularity had increased dramatically. In that year she paid for the publication of *The Strange Effects of Faith* and gained the support of several clergymen. She moved to Paddington and ultimately acquired around 140,000 followers, called Southcottians or Joannas, whose names she entered into a list of the elect. She authored approximately sixty-five different works and published two volumes of collected works, *Song of Moses and the Lamb* (1804) and *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1807), and two autobiographical works, *Life* (1814) and *Memoirs* (1814). Throughout her writings, Southcott reiterates the idea that, just as woman was responsible for the Fall, so would she be responsible for the salvation and redemption of humanity. It should not be surprising that she was immensely popular among women.

Southcott predicted in 1802 that she would give birth to Shiloh, the second Christ, but she did not begin to show physical signs of pregnancy until the spring of 1814. Her followers believed her prediction and began to build an expensive cradle in preparation for the birth. She remained in seclusion until her death that same year, however, and it was later determined that a large cancerous tumor had given the false appearance of pregnancy.

Southcott's influence did not end with her death. George Turner, the first Southcottian to take over leadership of the sect, prophesied that Shiloh would be born on January 28, 1817. When that proved untrue, he gave the new date of April 10, 1821, which proved both false and detrimental to his authority. Turner's immediate successor was John Wroe, but Wroe's popularity ended in 1831 after he claimed that

heaven had instructed that seven virgins should be delivered to him. There have been several leaders since Wroe. All of them have predicted the birth of Shiloh, and all of them have been disappointed. Joanna Southcott still has a small number of followers in England today.

—Michelle Ruggaber Dougherty

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Prophets

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Spiritual Guardians

The saints of medieval Christianity and modern Roman Catholicism play a central role as protectors and patrons of various locales, professions, and sufferers from various tribulations and in general watch over anyone who appeals to them. Despite denigration of this belief by most sects of Protestant Christianity (only the Anglican communion accepts the idea of "guardianship" by the spirits of dead saints, and that only hesitantly), this belief is by no means limited to Roman Catholics. The theme appears at least occasionally in several other religions, including ancient Greek polytheism, Buddhism, Islam, and even Judaism.

The Greek heroes in their afterlife were especially regarded as protectors of particular places, most notably cities. Sometimes they were the original founder of a city; at other times the identification was made later. It was assumed that a dead hero would especially protect the place that possessed his body. Thus Sophocles in *Oedipus at Colonus* emphasized that Colonus was hallowed by being the spot where Oedipus's body was swallowed by the earth. At the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.E., it was believed that the Athenian charge against the Persians was led by their ancient king, Theseus. To enhance this spiritual protection, after the battle the Athenians acquired Theseus's purported bones and provided him with a new grave in the city center.

Similarly, the tombs of Muslim and Christian holy people are believed to provide a special link that will induce the saint whose remains are buried there to protect the location. This theme also appeared in Hasidic Judaism, whose leaders have claimed a special spiritual authority that continues even posthumously—Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav (1772–1810) moved to Uman (the site of a great massacre of Jews) shortly before his death and declared that after his death he could help the troubled souls there to heaven. Other holy people are believed to give special blessings to whoever

comes to their tomb. For example, the sufi al-Hujwiri (d. 1073), “patron saint” of Lahore, is known as “the giver who bestows treasure,” and his shrine attracts vast numbers of Pakistanis.

Other holy people are credited with a posthumous interest in particular categories of people. Thus the Buddhist *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) Ksitigarbha is especially devoted to saving the damned in hell; in more historic context, the Buddha’s son Rahula (c. fifth century B.C.E.) has for many centuries been the patron-protector of all novices in the monastic life. In Rahula’s case, the connection to a specific function was made because Rahula himself had entered the *sangha* (monastic community) at a very young age. Christianity in its second millennium also developed a sense of particular functions of particular saints, usually based on some element in the saint’s hagiography. For example, Apollonia (d. c. 249), who had her teeth pulled out by her tormentors, is the patron saint to invoke for toothache; in a particularly curious linkage, the famous levitating saint Joseph of Copertino (1603–1663) is now the patron saint of astronauts. Other holy people are especially linked to groups of people, such as Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 547), who serves as protector of the Benedictine monastic order, or the Tibetan Dorje Shukden, a deity believed to be the reincarnation of Drukpa Gyeltsen (1618–1655), who serves as a protector of *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine), shielding the Gelukpa order from its enemies. Both Christian saints and Daoists after deification have been credited with guardianship of particular groups. To cite just one example, the Daoist patriarch Lü Dongbin (eighth and ninth centuries) is the patron of scholars, ink makers, swordsmen, and the wine trade. The Buddhist monk Upagupta (dates unknown) is the guardian of dharma, and the Buddha’s teaching itself protects all those who follow the way of meditation.

Judaism and Islam, perhaps drawing from a common basis in legend, give an even more glorious role to a small group of holy people as the ultimate spiritual guardians of the entire world. Jewish legend holds that thirty-six righteous men, the *lamedvavniks*, must exist in every generation—their role is to keep God from destroying the world, no matter how evil it becomes. Similarly, Muslim mystical writers have proposed the existence of the *abdal*, a group of seventy sufi holy people, whose number will remain constant until the end of the world. These people literally form the axis of the world, a tent of protection, by the holiness of their lives. In both the Jewish and Muslim cases, these essential guardians are unknown to their fellow humans, and indeed do not recognize themselves as part of this protective web, although particular holy people in Islam have been recognized as the *qutb al-Ghawth*, the axis on which the mystical support of the world turns.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Benedict of Nursia; Hujwiri; ‘Ali ibn Uthman al-; Joseph of Copertino; Lamedvavniks; Lü Dongbin; Nahman of Bratslav; Oedipus; Rahula; Theseus; Upagupta

Srimala

Buddhist bodhisattva

Although the historicity of Queen Srimala of Ayodhya, India, is uncertain, she is nevertheless a famous female *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. Her name means “one who wears beautiful flower-garlands,” and she is the major spokesperson in the Srimaladevisimhanada Sutra (Discourse on the lion’s roar of Queen Srimala). This Mahayana Buddhist scripture, originally written in Sanskrit but now extant only in Chinese and Tibetan translations, presented the theory of the “womb of the Thuscome One” (*tathagatagarbha*) and the doctrine of “one vehicle” (*ekayana*). As a Buddhist scripture it stands out because of its egalitarian view of women, its portrayal of the wisdom of the laywoman Queen Srimala, and its demonstration of Srimala’s concern for all beings and her role as a teacher of the Buddhist path.

The details of Queen Srimala’s personal life as recorded in the sutra are drastically different from those given in other Buddhist works. The sutra maintains that she was the daughter of King Prasenajit of Kosala and his wife Mallika. Against this position, three *vinaya* (disciplinary) texts stress that Queen Srimala was the wife of King Prasenajit. Commentarial descriptions also vary significantly on this point. The Japanese commentary *Shomangyo gisho*, attributed to Prince Shotoku Taishi (573–621), presents Srimala not really as a human being but the Buddha transformed into a woman’s body.

Whenever the head of state in East Asian Buddhist countries was a female (for example, as in the case of Empress Suiko in Japan in 592–628), the Srimaladevisimhanada Sutra acquired added significance because it gave prominence to females in the Buddhist religious path. In the history of Chinese Buddhism, the reign of Empress Wu (684–705) is important because she made Buddhism the state religion and sought an ideology within Buddhism to counteract Confucian arguments for male rule and to provide a basis for female leadership. Empress Wu chose to emphasize the Mahayana idea of a female bodhisattva as presented in the character of Queen Srimala in the Srimaladevisimhanada Sutra and its central doctrine of *tathagatagarbha*.

—Mahinda Deegalle

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Shotoku; Wu Zhao

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Srong btsan sgam po

See **Sengsten Gampo**

Stanislaus of Cracow

(c. 1040–1079 C.E.)

Christian bishop, martyr

Stanislaus was born in Szczepanow, near Cracow, most probably around 1040 or—according to the fifteenth-century Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz—on July 26, 1030. He died in Cracow on April 11, 1079. His feast day is May 7 in the *Breviarum Romanum* (Roman breviary) but May 8 in Poland.

Contemporary sources documenting Stanislaus's life (annals, catalogs of bishops, correspondence, the 1112 chronicle by Gallus Anonymus) are scarce and fragmentary; his late twelfth- and thirteenth-century biographers, Vincent Kadlubek and the Dominican Vincent of Kielce, respectively, testify to a rapid though not unproblematic development of the cult and legend of the bishop, who was canonized by Pope Innocent IV at Assisi on September 17, 1254. Biographic details, in large part questionable, have come down in the later hagiographic tradition. Stanislaus was born to parents related or connected to the royal court of Poland. Following a religious education, he was elected bishop of Cracow in 1072 by Prince Boleslaw, whose efforts at gaining political autonomy from the German king Henry IV he then firmly supported. The bishop's activity in the archdiocese of Cracow, supplemented in thirteenth-century and later legends by accounts of performed miracles (notably the restoration to life of the knight Peter), was devoted to strengthening the religious foundations of the recently Christianized Poland.

Stanislaus's harmonious cooperation with Boleslaw (a superb political leader, crowned in 1076) toward a sovereign country, on the one hand, and a reformed church, on the other (both were strong supporters of Pope Gregory VII), ended abruptly in a violent conflict culminating in the death of the bishop and the expulsion of the king. When in as yet unclear circumstances the bishop excommunicated Boleslaw II, the king brutally retaliated by ordering his assassination. According to tradition, when the guards ordered to slay the bishop dared not obey, the king assassinated the saint with his own hands during the celebration of mass in the chapel

of St. Michael. The ambiguous or conflicting explanations of the background of this event by succeeding chroniclers leave present historians in doubt as to the nature of Stanislaus's responsibility in the strife. Cited by his contemporary Gallus Anonymus to have been charged with *traditio* ("treason," "rebellion," or "curse") and condemned, customarily for a traitor or a rebel, to dismembering, in later chronicles the bishop typically became a staunch prosecutor of vice and corruption whose invocations against immorality enraged the depraved and vindictive king. The assassination provoked a revolt of the opposition, which forced the king to escape to Hungary, where tradition has him put on penitentiary clothes in the Benedictine monastery of Osjak before his death in 1081. Stanislaus's dismembered body, which in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century cult grew back together to symbolize a reunited Poland, was at first buried in the chapel, but between 1088 and 1242 the relics were transferred to the cathedral.

—Ewa Słojka

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Status

Do holy people come out of particular social classes or castes, or can anyone win recognition as holy? The Japanese Confucian scholar Ishida Baigan (1685–1744) angered many by openly teaching everyone, even women—a strong stand against the Confucian idea that learning should be restricted to certain classes. In general, however, hagiographers in many religious traditions have emphasized the equality of all men—and sometimes even women—before the divine. People who have broken out of the limitations of their own status have frequently been regarded as holy, and low-status people have frequently won renown for great holiness. Sometimes an aristocratic snobbery remains; for example, in Christian hagiography aristocratic Romans who converted seemed almost automatically to qualify for sainthood (including Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory I, and Jerome's circle of women followers). Still, one of the most consistent attributes of holy people across the world religions is a disregard for societal notions of status.

Several of the greatest religious leaders have shocked and attracted in equal parts by leaving their birth status. Mahavira (5th century B.C.E.), the twenty-fourth Jain *tirthankara* (ford maker), was a son of an Indian king who

renounced his wealth and family; Gautama the Buddha did the same during the same period. The central Asian Muslim Ibrahim b. Adham (c. 730–777 or 790) was also of royal family, but he renounced his riches after hearing a divine voice when he was hunting, reproaching him for his wastrel life.

It is harder for a low-status person to win esteem as holy. Jesus of Nazareth's lowly birth made many doubt his message, to judge from the gospel accounts, and later Christians were often barred from the regular channels of religious life because of their status, having to work out a more personal salvation for themselves. For example, Martin de Porres of Lima (1579–1639) suffered the double handicap of being a mulatto and illegitimate; refused admission to the Franciscan order, he became a lay brother. There have, however, been antielite movements in Christianity that have attracted low-status people, often in positions of great religious authority, such as in the Chilean churches founded by Willis Hoover (1858–1937).

Harder to overcome than the distinctions of social class by far are the limitations of the caste system of India, a system still essentially in place after more than two and a half millennia of holy people rejecting it. Both Mahavira and the Buddha rejected the sanctity of the caste system, and the Buddha accepted disciples from the lowest and even untouchable communities. Buddhist legend rejoices in cases such as that of Upali, a disciple of the Buddha who was originally a barber, but in the *samgha* (monastic community) held a higher rank than princes because he had been ordained earlier. The Chan Buddhist Linji (d. 866/867) went so far as to argue that a true human being is someone without rank or title, that is, free from all fetters connecting him to the world. This anti-status, egalitarian Buddhist view was not always practiced but was frequently reaffirmed. For example, the Japanese Buddhist Pure Land founder Honen (1133–1212), who suffered discrimination throughout his life because his mother was of lower-class birth, emphatically taught the basic premise that *every* believer is an ordinary person—whether male or female, monk or lay, commoner or aristocrat.

Hinduism, while preserving the caste system, has still taken great pleasure in venerating holy people who break the laws of caste, perhaps ultimately in an affirmation that caste is a matter for this world, while in the divine economy God has the power to touch people at any level. Asceticism especially breaks the constraints of caste; already a very ancient legendary Hindu sage, Vishvamitra, changed his caste from warrior to brahmin (which was supposedly impossible) through ascetic practices. Moving to more historically attested figures, Nammalvar (sixth to ninth centuries), the most famous of the twelve Hindu poet-saints known as *alvars*, was of low caste, but according to tradition he empha-

sized that spiritual merit transcends caste. The *nayanars*, devotees of Shiva active late in the first millennium C.E., also refused to make distinctions based on caste, age, or sex. Cokhamela (1293–1338) was an outcaste, so was not allowed even to enter the shrine where he worshipped—but was still recognized for his piety. The poet-saint Ravidas (c. 1450–1520) was also untouchable, which did not keep him from being widely worshipped. His contemporary Kabir (c. 1450–1518), according to legend, was the son of a high-caste brahmin who was brought up by a low-caste Muslim, perhaps highlighting the fact that he refused to differentiate not just between castes but also between Hindus and Muslims.

The devotion of such saints was perceived as so great that, when they suffered snubs at the hands of humans, the gods themselves validated them. This was the case of the singer-saint Kanakadasa of the sixteenth century, who was barred by his caste from entering the Krishna temple, so he stared through a hole in the wall, with such devotion that the statue of Krishna inside turned to face him. These anti-caste holy people seem especially to cluster in the sixteenth century, but examples can be found in many other periods. Important modern examples include Chinmayananda (1916–1993), a Hindu reformer who accepted followers of all castes, and Gandhi (1869–1948), who, although he did not want to break completely with the caste system, argued forcefully for the eradication of untouchability.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Adham, Ibrahim ibn; Chinmayananda; Cokhamela; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gautama; Hoover, Willis Collin; Ishida Baigan; Jesus; Kabir; Linji; Mahavira; Martin de Porres; Nammalvar; Nayanars; Ravidas; Upali; Vishvamitra

Stein, Edith

(1891–1942 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, educator; Jewish martyr

Edith Stein was an educator, mystical poet, writer, and Carmelite nun. Her doctoral dissertation, *On the Problem of Empathy*, explored the possibility of a connection between people so profound that the thoughts, feelings, and intentions of one person could be readily understood by another. She had a passion for truth, which she sensed could be best experienced through this kind of intimate love. She seemed to feel God in her being as the epiphany of truth that was manifest in unconditional love at the personal and universal level. She had a desire to share that universal love through acts of atonement and personal sacrifice, particularly in regard to the suffering of her own people in the Holocaust.

Edith Stein, born in Breslau, Germany, in 1891, was the youngest of eleven children in an Orthodox Jewish family. The limited instruction she received in Judaism and Jewish rituals started her on her spiritual journey. Although she admitted

that at age fifteen she stopped praying, Edith nonetheless was aware of the need to balance her many achievements with deep personal reflection and humility. In 1921, Edith read Teresa of Avila's sixteenth-century autobiography and experienced a profound spiritual awakening. Although she did not reveal the details of this experience, it seems clear that what she had read sparked a deep desire to seek the truth that is God, and she felt that Roman Catholicism, along with her Jewish heritage, provided a way for her to do this.

Edith was baptized Catholic in 1922 and entered the Carmelite monastery of Cologne in 1933, making her final vows in April 1938. Her quest for spiritual transformation was aided by her disciplined lifestyle and daily surrendering of her will to God. After the infamous Kristallnacht of November 1938, Edith felt that her presence in the convent endangered her sister Carmelites, and she was transferred to a convent in Echt, Holland. However, the pastoral letter from the Catholic bishops of Holland protesting the deportation of Jews of July 26, 1942, was met with retaliation from the Nazi regime, and Jewish converts to Catholicism were rounded up for deportation. Edith and her sister Rosa, who had joined her at the convent, were among them. They both died in Auschwitz on August 9, 1942.

The Catholic Church recognized Edith Stein as a saint (St. Teresa Benedicta a Cruce) and canonized her as a martyr on October 11, 1998. It is believed that she gave witness to her faith in God in words and actions while facing her death—which was a direct result of Nazi retaliation. Yet because she was executed for being Jewish, and because her Jewish identity was intrinsic to her faith life, much dialogue has been generated about whether the church had the right to claim her as a Christian martyr. It has been suggested that her life witness might have served better as a catalyst for addressing modern-day anti-Semitism, as well as for atonement by the Catholic Church for the atrocities of the Holocaust, than simply as a Christian martyrdom.

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Canonization; Contemporary Holy People; Shoah; Teresa of Avila

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Stephen

(d. c. 36 C.E.)

Christian protomartyr

Protomartyr of the Christian faith, Stephen was the first of Jesus' followers to die for the faith and was widely revered as such. His feast day (December 26) has been celebrated since at least the fifth century.

Stephen was one of the first deacons of the early church, chosen by the community in Jerusalem to serve the needs of the people and to help resolve conflicts between the Greek-speaking Jews and the Hebrew-speaking Jews. He was known to be full of "faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5) and "God's grace and power" (Acts 6:8). These attributes were manifest in the "great wonders and miraculous signs" (Acts 6:8) Stephen performed among the people.

Stephen's faith led him to speak publicly about Jesus as the bearer of a new law. Some of his listeners, enraged by his



A fifteenth-century tapestry shows Stephen, the first Christian martyr, being stoned to death. (Francis G. Mayer/Corbis)

words and attitude, forced Stephen to appear before the Sanhedrin, accusing him of blasphemy. Stephen responded by recounting the history of God's covenant with Abraham and Moses, ending with an accusation of his own: "You always resist the Holy Spirit!" (Acts 7:51). His subsequent vision of Jesus standing at the right hand of God further provoked his opponents and they stoned him to death.

The Holy Spirit as a fully equal partner in the community of God has been a topic of debate and a point of controversy throughout the history of the church. Providing Christians with insights into the person and power of the Holy Spirit, Stephen also has served as a model for Christians who strive to give witness to Jesus—in serving others, resolving conflicts with nonviolence, speaking out against injustice, confronting evil with love, forgiving enemies, surrendering one's life and spirit to God's care, and in trusting that death is the doorway to unity with God.

—Mary Ann McSweeney

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Stephen of Hungary (Istvan, Vaik)

(c. 975–1038 C.E.)

Christian ruler

Stephen, born in around 975, succeeded his father as king of Hungary in 997, just two years after his marriage to Gisela, the sister of Henry II of Germany, a union that was to reinforce the links between the two countries. Astutely balancing political as well as religious control, he set about converting his subjects to Christianity, the faith into which he was nominally born, having been baptized along with his father by Adalbert of Prague in 986. He succeeded in getting a crown, with the title "apostolic king," from Pope Silvester II and was crowned on August 15, 1000.

Politically, Stephen united Hungary and used the legal structure to support the state move to Christianity. He outlawed the indigenous Magyar religion and the superstitious practices that it entailed. The church as well as those less fortunate were supported through a series of tithes, and an episcopal system was developed. Monasteries and churches were founded, including that at Szekesfehervar, which was dedicated, like his country, to the mother of God, and it was here that the future kings of Hungary were crowned and buried.

Stephen's political as well as religious reforms were aided by his personable and human approach. He frequently gave

alms to the poor and could be approached by all. It was on one such occasion, as he was engaged in almsgiving, that an overzealous group of beggars attacked and robbed him, leaving him on the ground. Although advised by his council not to put himself at risk again, Stephen continued to undertake such acts of charity. In these acts of mercy, for which he is best known, he was similar to his countrywoman Elizabeth of Hungary, whose acts were in imitation of Christ. The premature death of Stephen's son and successor, Emeric, in 1031, caused problems for the last years of Stephen's life. He died in 1038 and was buried at Szekesfehervar but later translated to the church of Our Lady at Buda. It was not long before miracles were attributed to Stephen.

Surprisingly few scenes from Stephen's life are found in medieval art, and these center either on his birth or his role as king. He is always shown as a mature and crowned figure, usually dressed in elaborate robes and more often than not involved in narratives. It has been claimed that the Bamberg Rider, one of the most famous equestrian portraits of the early thirteenth century, represents Stephen. Other representations include those in Assisi (S. Francesco, lower church, north transept frescoes) as well as in a manuscript in the Vatican Library, Rome (lat. 8541, fol. 78r/ p. 79).

Stephen was canonized in 1038. His feast days are May 30, August 15 (formerly September 2), and August 20 (translation). He is the patron saint of Hungary, kings, and those involved in the building trade, such as masons and bricklayers.

—Colum Hourihane

See also: Adalbert of Prague; Christianity and Holy People; Elizabeth of Hungary; Patriotism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Stephen of Muret

(c. 1045–1124 C.E.)

Christian hermit, monastic founder

Stephen of Muret, founder of the order of Grandmont, was born in about 1045, the eldest son of Viscount Stephen of Thiers in Auvergne. Stephen the younger went on a pilgrimage at an early age, probably to the shrine of Monte Gargano (the traditional accounts, which state that Stephen went with his father to the shrine of St. Nicholas at Bari, are chronologically impossible). In the course of his travels he also became greatly impressed by the austerity of the hermits he encountered in Calabria. These Calabrian hermits strongly influenced Stephen's own ideas on the religious life, and some-

time between 1076 and 1078 Stephen established a hermitage at Muret, in the mountains north of Limoges.

Stephen's reputation for austerity, piety, and asceticism—he wore chain mail over his bare skin instead of a hair shirt—soon attracted a large number of followers, which he gathered together into what later became the order of Grandmont. Known as “Bonshommes” (good men), the hermit monks of Grandmont had a popular reputation for piety and zeal that led to the order's rapid expansion. Thirty-nine years after the death of their founder in 1124, the order had thirty-nine houses in France.

The Grandmontines were known for their generosity to the poor and their hospitality toward visitors. The order thrived during most of the twelfth century, but gradual relaxation of the rule of poverty led to a series of internal disputes, scandal, and a revolt of the order's lay brothers in 1185. Repeated attempts at reform eventually led to a split into two observances; the order was finally suppressed by the Commission des Réguliers in 1772.

Although Stephen left no authentic writings—and his later vita is an admixture of fiction and hagiographical convention—his teaching, which is reflected in his *Liber sententiarum* (Book of sentences), or *Maxims*, shows the influence of the gospels and Gregory the Great (540–604). Stephen's relics were translated to the motherhouse of the order of Grandmont from Muret in about 1166. He was canonized in 1189, and his feast day is February 8.

—J. M. B. Porter

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Hermits; Monasticism and Holy People

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Stephen of Perm

(d. 1396 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox bishop, missionary

First bishop of Perm, and one of Russia's most important missionaries, Stephen was recognized as a saint in 1547. Information about Stephen comes from Russian chronicles dating from the year of his death in 1396 and a vita written in the fifteenth century by Epiphanius the Wise.

The chronicles and vita both state that Stephen was born in Ustiug in northeastern Russia. Tonsured at Rostov, the episcopal seat, he was consecrated as a priest in 1379. He was inspired to go among the Finnic tribes, now called Zyrians, in the region known as Perm, and there he instructed the

local population in the Christian faith and built a church, a school, and a chapel. Stephen was not universally welcomed, for he was threatened by locals who, resenting his construction of new monasteries and churches, attempted to drive him away. They threatened to beat him, but in keeping with his spirituality, he refrained from violence, impressing the population with his forbearance. According to his Life, Stephen gradually convinced the Zyrians to cease idol-worship and convert to Orthodoxy, despite the efforts of one, Pam, to bring them back to the old gods.

Stephen defended his flock from brigands and river pirates and fed them during famine. After visiting Vladimir and asking Metropolitan Pimen to approve a new diocese for the region of Perm, Stephen was appointed its first bishop. Eventually, foreseeing his own death, he returned to Moscow; during his illness, he called together the clergy who had come with him from Perm, urging them to return there and tell the people to remain strong in their faith. Stephen is credited with not only learning the language of Perm but providing an alphabet for it and translating Slavonic and Greek texts as well as church songs into the Perm tongue. He is remembered on April 26.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Mission; Orthodoxy and Saints; Scholars as Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Sthiramati

(c. 6th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher, scholar

Sthiramati (Tib.: blo gros brtan pa; Chin.: Anhui; Jap.: Anne) was a commentator and philosopher of Mahayana Buddhist texts, in particular of works closely linked with the Yogacara Buddhist mentalistic trend.

According to Baron A. von Stael-Holstein (1926), there may have been three Sthiramatis: (1) one who wrote before 536, (2) one who lived toward the end of the sixth century, and (3) the spiritual grandfather of Silendrabodhi. Thus, according to von Stael-Holstein's account, Sthiramati could not have lived before the seventh century. Scholars differ in their dating of Sthiramati. A contemporary of the Madhyamaka philosopher Bhavaviveka (c. 490–570) and of the Yogacara thinker Dharmapala (mid-sixth century), he is considered to have been a disciple of both Gunamati (440–520) and Vasubandhu (400–480).

According to the Tibetan historian Buston (1931), Sthiramati mastered the *tripitaka* (three baskets of learning) very early in his life and was a scholar of both Theravada and Mahayana *abhidharma* (higher doctrine). By defeating the *tirthikas* (non-Buddhists) such as Vistapala and others, Sthiramati became famous as a master of debates. He is said to have surpassed Vasubandhu in abhidharma studies. Sthiramati was probably a student in the great Buddhist university of Nalanda established by the Gupta court (320–550), where he may have studied Yogacara Buddhism and helped make it flourish in that area.

As an advocate of Yogacara, Sthiramati interpreted Vasubandhu's teaching differently from Dharmapala (mid-sixth century), who claimed that the cognitive process was apparent in both the subject and object aspects. Sthiramati understood the subject-object dichotomy to be nothing more than a concept. Both Dharmapala and Sthiramati are listed among the ten commentators to Vasubandhu's work.

In the Japanese Buddhist tradition, there is another person named Anne (b. 795) who is often associated with Sthiramati, but this person is connected with the Japanese Tendai school of Buddhism.

—Leslie S. Kawamura

See also: Scholars as Holy People; Vasubandhu

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Subhuti

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.?)

Disciple of the Buddha

Subhuti has lived many lives in the history of Buddhist literature. He remains, however, first and foremost an *arahat*, literally, a worthy one. It is among the earliest designations for those who have realized the depths of Buddhist practice through eradicating the roots of dissatisfaction operative in everyday experience. They are the earliest virtuosos of the Buddhist tradition, in insight and in conduct, expressing the subtleties of the Buddha's diagnosis of conative and cognitive dis-ease. Subhuti is among the most prominent of the arahats and as such is said to have been on intimate terms with the historical Buddha in approximately the fifth century B.C.E. Subhuti is aptly named; the particle *su* is affirmative, connoting among other things perfection and excellence. The name not only suggests a quiet dignity and positive orientation to the world but fundamentally speaks

to a well-being or health (*bhuuti*) that has been successfully attained. As one of the earliest exemplars of human perfection in Buddhism, Subhuti presents not only the possibility of a nonafflicted experience of life but also a picture of its actualization.

The historicity of Subhuti is poorly documented. The ways in which he is depicted in Buddhist literature and the traits for which he is held in high esteem primarily serve as an invitation to examine distinguishing features of human cognitive makeup, to see how we measure up, as it were, with an instance of cognitive health. Instead of looking for an unavailable (and here, irrelevant) historical context, it is more illuminating to focus on the role played by the type of Buddhist practitioner that Subhuti exemplifies.

In many ways Subhuti represents the ideal interface between the renunciant dimension of Buddhist practice and its strong intuition that such practice is nevertheless socially relevant. The Buddha considered Subhuti to be the one whose practice was most worthy of being supported by a lay population. His very presence in society was said to be transformative; he was considered a "field of merit," which in the technical language of Buddhism translates to the idea that were a person to meaningfully interact with and provide for Subhuti's practice, such interaction would open up hitherto unsuspected horizons in that person's own conative and cognitive development. Subhuti's practice embodies the "middle way" suggested by Buddhism, that is, to be neither intoxicated by an ascetic withdrawal from human encounters, nor to blindly traffic in the projects and criteria of success that constitute the life-world of a society.

Subhuti's walk in the city afforded the chance for an exemplary human encounter, one unmotivated by anything external to a commitment to see the possibility of what humans can yet be, preserved as a possibility for all humans. Such a practice presupposes a high degree of proficiency with Buddhist training techniques; it should not surprise us that Subhuti was also regarded as accomplished in analysis and meditation and applauded for his insights into the conditions of phenomenological experience (codified formally in the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness).

—Sonam Kachru

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Gautama; Models

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Suffering and Holy People

Suffering of various sorts has led many of the holy people of the world to their first conversion, refocusing their attention from the ephemera of life to greater divine realities. Especially in monotheistic religions, it impels people to ask the great question of theodicy: If God is omnipotent, omniscient, and benevolent, why do bad things happen to good people? How holy people have answered that question, by a surrender of self to divine forces, marks them out from the general population; how deeply the normal human being is troubled by suffering can be seen in the veneration given to great saints who have overcome it. A surprising number of holy people, especially a staggering majority of modern leaders of sects and cults, have endured poor health, especially in childhood. Others had a life-threatening illness in adulthood—sometimes even a near-death experience—that served as a “wake-up” call, triggering a religious life. Yet others, especially among the modern nationalist heroes considered holy people, have been inspired to a more profound faith thanks to an experience of prison. The belief that suffering, by breaking down normal human habits and forcing a person into complete reliance on a god or gods, can open a door between the sufferer and the divine seems to be nearly universal. And, fundamentally, the established holy person is one who has won the struggle: Suffering can no longer touch her or him in the same way and may indeed become a source of further religious inspiration. Although many of the world’s saints have suffered exile, torture, and illness, in popular belief, at least, they accept further suffering with patience and hope.

Childhood suffering is a great incentive either to become embittered and give up on religion completely or to seek God. The prophet Mani (216–274/277) is believed to have been born with a short, twisted leg, and his pain was said to be directly linked to a first visitation by a heavenly messenger when he was twelve years old. Similar cases can be found in many eras: A modern example is Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), founder of the Church of Christ Scientist, who had severe health problems growing up until a vision brought healing following a serious accident. Others, more simply, isolated from a normal childhood by ill health, have found every conventional path closed to them. Thus, Gemma Galgani (1878–1903) suffered chronic illness from childhood, so was not accepted into a nunnery despite her wishes. Cases of actual illness in childhood are common among saints. There are also cases of social deprivation that led to an outcast status. The Hindu saint Tulsidas (c. 1532–1623) was abandoned as a baby and endured a childhood of mis-



Hindu renunciant practicing self-mortification. Taipusan Festival, Singapore. (Art Directors)

ery and deprivation until rescued by a group of Rama devotees. Even crueler and more isolating, the Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa (1775–1836) was simply fat, and so clumsy that he accidentally put out his own eye with an arrow. Not surprisingly, he became an alcoholic, but he eventually had a vision that led to his conversion experience. Although modern media focus on socially outcast children who set out for revenge against the world that has rejected them, one must assume that some children still find in such trials the effective first steps along a spiritual path.

Adult suffering as a path to holiness has taken many forms. The fourteenth-century Hindu mystic Lalla suffered greatly in her marriage to an unsympathetic and abusive man, as did a number of Christian saints. It is not clear in most such accounts whether the victims were already saint material before the abuse or the process of suffering made them turn to divine consolation. That suffering led to conversion is clearer in cases of grave illness, such as for Julian of Norwich (c. 1343–after 1419), who experienced her visions of God when in a deathlike coma, or Ignatius of Loyola

(1491–1556), who converted during a long and painful convalescence after his leg was shattered in battle. The Muslim saint Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058–1111) made the transition from legal expert to sufi holy man after he had a nervous breakdown in 1095. He thought he was losing his faith and even became paralyzed; doctors diagnosed emotional conflict. So al-Ghazali gave up his normal life, went to Jerusalem, and practiced sufi exercises for ten years, a process from which he emerged as a spiritual master. Such a case suggests that, at least at times, holy people who have suffered profoundly from mysterious illnesses have in fact been displaying psychosomatic manifestations of inner spiritual conflict.

Time in prison tends to make people either better or worse than they were before, and in several cases prison has been the catalyst that turned a person to a life of great holiness. It hardly seems to matter whether the future holy person was imprisoned for the “right reasons” (such as punishment for murder or theft) or for “wrong reasons” (defense of their religion, the struggle against imperialism, and so on): It is the fact of isolation and helplessness that appears to be the key to spiritual awakening in such circumstances. For members of the Baha’i faith, the special revelation of their religion began when Baha’u’llah (1817–1892) was imprisoned for four months in 1852–1853. He was held, apparently unjustly, after a group of radicals tried to assassinate the shah of Iran. During his time of incarceration, Baha’u’llah enjoyed a series of visions in which a heavenly maiden appeared who assured him of his divine mission. The god Krishna came to Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950) while he was in jail after being implicated in a nationalist bombing case—he told Ghose to devote his life to the spiritual uplifting of India and the world. Examples could easily be multiplied.

Many holy people have continued to suffer following their conversion or have been stricken with a debilitating illness after already being established in the popular mind as close to God, enlightened, or otherwise linked to the divine. The ability to remain steadfast in the face of such human catastrophe is one of the ultimate tests of holiness. Many Christian saints have not only accepted suffering but have embraced it; several hundred people, ranging from Francis of Assisi (c. 1180–1226) to Padre Pio (1887–1968), have received the wounds of Christ on their own bodies (the stigmata) as a reward for their devotion. The greatest proof that a Buddhist holy person has truly reached enlightenment is that he or she has reached impassivity, beyond both desire and affliction.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Aurobindo Ghose; Baha’u’llah; Eddy, Mary Baker; Francis of Assisi; Galgani, Gemma; Ghazali, Abu Hamid al-; Ignatius of Loyola; Julian of Norwich; Lalla; Mani; Pio of Pietrelcina; Tenskawatawa; Tulsidas

Sufism

Sufism (Arabic: *tasawwuf*) is an esoteric aspect of Islam focusing on closer contact with the divine in the here and now, rather than waiting until the next world. Sufism has been taught to other Muslims by noteworthy religious figures, known as *awliya’* (sing. *wali*), or “friends [of God],” whose teachings were followed by disciples, generation after generation, thus creating what has been called a *tariqah* or “[spiritual] path.” Followers of such paths meet in groups once a week to utter *dhikr*—prayers of praise for God and requests for his help, including special prayers passed down from the original wali of their tariqa, some of whom claim that they received them from the prophet Muhammad, either by a direct vision or through a spiritual “chain” going back to him. There is no mention of the term *tasawwuf* in the Qur’an, or in any known sayings of Muhammad, but the prophet himself began his mission seeking contact with God, and the textuality of his lifetime contacts is what was put together as the holy book of Islam—the Qur’an. Although many Muslims understand the text of the Qur’an in a literal way, sufis see in much of it different interpretations, which they view as spiritual understandings of divine word.

In order to become a sufi, a Muslim must devote himself to an existing sufi leader, known as a *shaykh*, learning from him how to purify his behavioral patterns, and through him how to contact the founding wali of his tariqah, and thus to have a channel for spiritual contact with God. The *awliya’* may also be seen as “saints” in that they have bestowed on them manifestations of divine grace, known as *karamat*, which are like miraculous acts. Sufis often refer to *Tasawwuf* as *haqiqah*, or “absolute truth.” After working with, and for, the shaykh, the disciple would eventually be given the *wird* (devotional text) created by the original wali of the tariqah, so that he could repeat it following regular prayers one or more times per day to increase his spiritual development.

Sufism through tariqahs became an important element of Islamic religion from the twelfth century, though in the eighteenth century it gradually came to be opposed by a fundamentalist movement in Saudi Arabia known as the Wahhabiyya. More than twenty main tariqahs came into existence, but many of them also developed branches led by later shaykhs. The latest tariqah to establish itself was the Tijaniyyah, initiated by the Algerian Ahmad al-Tijani (1737/1739–1815), and it has been widely accepted in West Africa.

—John Hunwick

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Guidance; Islam and Holy People; Joy; Lawgivers as Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Muhammad; Mysticism and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Teachers as Holy People; Tijani, Ahmad al-

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Sugawara no Michizane*(845–903 C.E.)**Shinto/Buddhist politician, poet, scholar*

Sugawara no Michizane, a politician, poet, and scholar in ninth-century Heian Japan, was posthumously deified as a *tenjin* (heavenly deity). He has been venerated up to the present as the patron of scholarship in numerous shrines (*tenmangū*).

Born into a family of scholars and poets in 845, from his early days Michizane enjoyed an education in the Chinese classics by his father, Koreyoshi (812–880), who served the court as an administrator, professor, and scholar. It is said that Michizane was able to read Chinese poems at a young age and that he composed his first poem at the age of eleven. At the age of eighteen, he passed the university entrance exam. He completed his studies eight years later, passing the civil service examination. Starting his career at the court bureaucracy in the capital, Heian (present-day Kyoto), he was assigned to various administrative, political, diplomatic, and educational positions. In 886, he was appointed governor of the province Sanuki (present-day Kagawa prefecture). Upon his return to the capital, Michizane was favored by the emperor Uda, and finally advanced to the rank of *udaijin* (minister of the right), the second-highest office in the court bureaucracy.

Four years after the abdication of Emperor Uda in favor of his son Emperor Daigo, leaders of the Fujiwara family, who entertained antipathy against the rapidly rising Michizane and sought to strengthen their influence on court politics, intrigued against Michizane, resulting in his banishment to the government of Kyushu in Dazaifu (present-day Fukuoka prefecture) in 901. Michizane spent the years until his death in 903 mainly composing poems dealing with his fate of unjust banishment. His much-valued poetry, written in Chinese, is collected in two anthologies, the *Kankebunshō* and the *Kankekōshū*, the latter containing the poems composed during his exile in Dazaifu. He also participated in the compilation of the historical works *Ruijūkokushi* and *Sandaijitsuroku*.

After the death of Michizane, a series of calamities occurred in the capital, and persons previously involved in Michizane's banishment as well as their relatives were stricken with misfortune. According to tradition, the members of the family of Fujiwara no Tokihira, who had been the

leading exponent of the intrigue resulting in the banishment of Michizane, all met with premature death before reaching their forties. These incidents were attributed to the curse of Michizane's angry spirit (*goryō* or *onryō*). Michizane was posthumously pardoned by those who wished to appease his vengeful spirit, and shrines called *tenmangū* (heaven-filling shrines) were dedicated to him at his place of exile, Dazaifu (Dazaifu Tenmangū, 919), and at Kitano (Kitano Tenmangū, 947), north of the capital. There he was apotheosized and worshipped as *tenjin* and considered not only the god of thunder, uprightness, and the wrongly accused but also god of learning, calligraphy, literature, and scholarship. By and by, the vengeful connotations weakened in favor of the latter aspect. During the Edo period (1603–1867), the worship of Michizane as *tenjin*, which shows a highly syncretistic character, integrating aspects of both Shinto and Buddhism, expanded widely and to all social classes. At present, Michizane's deified spirit is widely venerated as god of scholarship, commonly sought for assistance by students facing the entrance examinations for schools and universities.

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Attributes of Holy People; Buddhism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Shinto and Holy People

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Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin*(1145–1234 C.E.)**Muslim sufi*

Abu Hafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardi belonged to a prominent Persian sufi family and was responsible for officially organizing the Suhrawardi sufi order. Born in 1145, at an early age he was initiated into Islamic mysticism by his renowned uncle, Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi (d. 1168), and studied jurisprudence, philosophy, law, logic, theology, Qur'anic studies, and historical studies of the prophet Muhammad. He studied theology under the eminent scholar and sufi teacher ʿAbdul al-Qadir Jilani (1088–1166) and at a young age mastered the Hanbali branch of Islamic law in Baghdad.

Caliph al-Nasir of Baghdad designated al-Suhrawardi Shaikh al-Islam (minister of religious affairs) to supervise

political and religious affairs for the Abbasid administration. As a political theorist, al-Suhrawardi advocated the supremacy of the caliph because he was the capstone who mastered the Islamic sciences, who commanded knowledge of law, and who was the mediator between God and creation. For al-Suhrawardi, since humanity was incapable of returning to God on its own, the caliphate was the temporal overseer and the representative of God on earth. His political theories did invite their share of criticism from legal scholars of his time who felt he was too closely connected to legitimizing state affairs.

Al-Suhrawardi's legacy is primarily within sufism, where he asserted that living according to sufi principles and beliefs was the perfect way to conduct devotion and to enjoy divine beauty. According to al-Suhrawardi, the sufi tradition was rooted in the life of the prophet Muhammad, who embodied human perfection and divine guidance. It is the goal of sufis to mirror the prophet in order to discipline their entire inner and outer selves. His sufi theosophy stressed proper moral conduct (*adab*), based on the idea that the physical world is very much related to the spiritual world, and said that in order for sufis to perfect their spirituality to meet the divine, their physical customs must reflect their internal condition.

Al-Suhrawardi's ideas on proper moral conduct stemmed from the belief that it was necessary to obey the law completely because it was a manifestation of divine order. *Adab* was a critical element in his ideal world because, in his view, all the minute details of an individual's behavior could be controlled, a practice the sufi novice needed to master. For al-Suhrawardi, sufis were practicing more than spiritual purity; in the larger scheme, they were attempting to reunite with the divine, and this required them to uphold the law. According to al-Suhrawardi, one needed to be prepared to carry out this extraordinary responsibility by having one's thoughts and actions planned for every moment, at every place.

One of al-Suhrawardi's best works, *'Awârif al-Ma'arif* (The benefits of the spiritually learned), was one of the more popular sufi books of his time, and posthumously it became the standard preparatory textbook for sufi novices. One of the many reasons for its high reputation in the sufi world was that the manual attempted to reconcile the practices of sufism with the observance of Islamic law. To later generations of sufis, and to a wide cross-section of sufi orders, al-Suhrawardi's treatise became one of the most closely studied and memorized texts in the tradition.

Al-Suhrawardi's contribution to sufi thought, to Islamic piety, and to living a holy life was to ensure that sufis fully comprehended *adab* as a transformative medium between the inner and outer worlds. For him, *adab* was a type of the-

ology that was less about the physical, psychological, and temporal dimensions of moral conduct than about accentuating the constant opening of the heart that inspires a real journey toward encountering God.

—Qamar-ul Huda

See also: Islam and Holy People; Jilani, 'Abdul al-Qadir; Morality and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; Sufism

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Sulami, Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman

(936–1021 C.E.)

Muslim scholar, mystic

A pivotal Muslim scholar, theologian, and mystic of Nishapur (a city in what is now Iran), Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman Sulami, born in 936, was one of the first to categorize the early generations of Muslim mystics into a distinct group of people called sufis. He was also the author of an important and early Qur'an commentary, as well as a number of other works that elaborated a legally minded, mainstream approach to Islamic mysticism.

Sulami is perhaps best known for his biographical dictionary, *Tabaqat al-sufiyya* (The generations of the sufis). It contains just over a hundred biographies of early Muslim holy men, five generations of approximately twenty people each. Each biographical notice contains the full name of the sufi, the names of his teachers, and the prophetic and mystical sayings that he transmitted to others. Sulami's emphasis on sayings not only reflects the oral nature of scholarly transmission in the early Islamic period but also Sulami's scholarly approach, one that foregrounds Muhammad's sayings and their transmission as a paradigm for Muslim learning. Sulami appended to his dictionary of sufi men a series of entries dedicated to sufi women, an appendix once thought lost but recently rediscovered and published (Sulami 1999).

As in his biographical work, Sulami's Qur'an commentary *Haqa'iq al-Tafsir* (The realities of exegesis) emphasizes the sayings of the early sufis, in this case using them to explain key passages of the Muslim holy text. When this crucial

work is finally edited and translated, it will provide a valuable resource for examining how early Muslims in general and early sufis in particular approached the Qur'an. Recently a number of new studies on Sulami's works have begun to appear, yielding a new appreciation for the role that this Sunni sufi theologian played in shaping the formation of medieval sufism.

—Frederick S. Colby

See also: Hagiography; Mysticism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Sufism

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Sultan Walad

See **Baha'uddin Walad**

Surb Sahak

See **Isaac of Armenia**

Surdas

(Early 16th cent. C.E.)

Hindu poet

Surdas was a prestigious medieval Hindu poet-saint and occupies an important niche in the canon of early Hindi literature. He is commonly seen as the foremost of eight sixteenth-century poets (*Ashtachapa*) affiliated with the Vaishnava sect called Vallabha-sampradaya. Recent research has shown this affiliation to be a late sectarian development, but still, the Vallabhan hagiographies have been influential in the way Surdas is remembered. They depict Surdas as a blind holy man who settled in the neighborhood of Mathura in the Braj area of northern India, then newly rediscovered as the scene of Krishna's pastimes on earth. They claim that Surdas was converted to Krishna devotion by the great guru Vallabha, who appointed him to sing in the service of the sect's main image, Shri (Govardhan) Nathji, then housed on the hill Govardhana in Braj. This is still one of the most famous Krishna images of northern India, now enshrined in Ra-

jasthan, and Surdas's songs are still performed in front of this deity, as well as in other Vallabhan temples and households throughout the region.

The sectarian interpretation of Surdas's life is mirrored in the arrangement of modern anthologies of his poetry, entitled *Sur Sagar* (Sur's ocean). The standard editions are subdivided into two parts. First come the more sermon-like poems (*vinaya*), attributed to the preconversion stage of Surdas's life. This is followed by poems that were supposedly inspired by Vallabha, focusing on incidents of Krishna's life modeled after the Sanskrit scripture *Bhagavad Purana*. Recent research, however, has shown that early nonsectarian manuscripts do not arrange the poems in that pattern but intersperse many sermon-like poems with the others. This shows the sectarian interpretation to be later.

Surdas is best known for his loving descriptions of the child Krishna in the so-called "parental mode" (*vatsalya bhava*). Commentators often note that, while blind to the world, Surdas enjoyed a special vision of Krishna to be able to create such vivid vignettes. However, again, this understanding is not borne out by early manuscripts, which show instead a preponderance of poems in the "erotic mode" (*madhurya bhava*), celebrating the love for Krishna of the young girls in Braj, and a predilection for the theme of "love in separation" (*viraha*). Evidence for Surdas's physical blindness, too, seems sparse. However, whether blind or not, the strength of Surdas's divine vision has remained inspiring to this day, well beyond the sectarian circles that claim him as their own.

—Heidi Pauwels

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna

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Suso, Henry

(c. 1295–1366 C.E.)

Christian friar, mystic

Henry Suso, a Dominican mystic, was widely read and admired—particularly in the late Middle Ages—for his devotion and asceticism. He was beatified by Pope Gregory XVI in 1831, and his feast day in the Dominican calendar is January 23.

Born into a noble family at Constance, Germany, in about 1295, at thirteen Suso entered the Dominican convent there. In 1324, he was sent to Cologne, where he studied with the mystic Meister Eckhart, who greatly influenced his spiritual development. Suso also likely knew the famed preacher and Eckhart disciple Johannes Tauler. Returning to his convent at Constance around 1327, Suso was appointed lector, responsible for training young Dominicans. Although briefly removed from his duties for suspicion of heresy—related to his espousal of Eckhart’s teachings—this charge proved unfounded. Suso served briefly as prior of the community. Transferred around 1348 to Ulm, he remained there until his death in 1366.

Suso’s mystical life began at age eighteen, when he became a self-proclaimed “servant of eternal wisdom.” He experienced frequent visions and ecstasies and practiced severe asceticism, which included prolonged bouts of fasting. He also took to wearing a nail-studded hair shirt. In later years, he moderated such practices following a celestial vision. His spirituality exemplified the ideal of patience in suffering as a living sacrifice to God.

Known for his preaching abilities, Suso was also the spiritual guide to many local Dominican nuns, especially Elspeth Stigel (c. 1300–c. 1360), with whom he developed a close spiritual bond and who was responsible for preserving many of his writings. In addition to sermons and letters, these included a number of devotional works. Suso’s spiritual autobiography, the *Leben Seusses* (Life of the servant), graphically detailed his austerities and tribulations. Shortly before his death, he prepared an authoritative edition of his vernacular writings, called the *Exemplar Seusses* (Exemplar).

—Alisa Plant

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Suffering and Holy People

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Suzuki, Daisetz Teitarō

(1870–1966 C.E.)

Zen Buddhist scholar, teacher

Religious scholar and “apostle” of Zen Buddhism in the West, Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki is also known as Suzuki Daisetsu and D. T. Suzuki. Born in Kanazawa in present-day Ishikawa prefecture in 1870, he was a member of the first generation born in Meiji Japan (1868–1912). Suzuki was educated at Ishikawa Professional School and Tokyo Imperial University.

He began training as a lay Zen practitioner at the Rinzaï sect temple, Engakuji, in Kamakura in 1891. In 1893, he translated Abbot Shaku Sōen’s address to the World Congress of Religions in Chicago. The paper, “The Law of Cause and Effect, as Taught by the Buddha,” impressed religious publisher Paul Carus, who invited Suzuki to come to the United States to translate a number of “Oriental” texts for his Open Court Press. Suzuki spent more than ten years in America translating and performing domestic chores in the Carus home in LaSalle, Illinois. He returned to Japan in 1909 and began teaching English at the Peers’ School (now Gakushuin University). Because of philosophical differences with some administrators, Suzuki left the Peers’ School in 1919 and went to Ōtani University, where he spent many years teaching Buddhist philosophy.

In 1911, Suzuki married American Beatrice Lane, who, until her death in 1939, helped him produce a remarkable corpus of English-language literature on Buddhism, including the journal *The Eastern Buddhist*. Suzuki’s *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927–1934) remains the foundational English-language source on Zen, and with *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (1938) forms the core of the Zen canon in North America. Associated with Nishida Kitarō and the conservative Kyoto School during the 1930s and 1940s, Suzuki was implicated in pre–World War II Japanese cultural nationalism, but he avoided post-war ostracism by publicly condemning Japan’s initiation of hostilities.

Suzuki spent the 1950s largely outside Japan spreading the doctrines and practices of Zen Buddhism. As a writer, lecturer, and visiting professor at Columbia University, Suzuki presented Zen as a kind of antidote to Western materialism and demonstrated the applicability of Zen-style “awakening” to Western religion, psychology, and literature. Erich Fromm, Thomas Merton, Carl Jung, Gary Snyder, and Alan Watts are only a few of the Western scholars whose work was influenced by Suzuki’s interpretations of Zen. Suzuki died in Tokyo in 1966. His works in Japanese, *Suzuki Daisetsu Zenshū* (The complete works of Daisetz Suzuki), fill thirty-two volumes, and his English-language works, which have undergone several editions, number roughly thirty volumes.

—Eric Cunningham

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Laity; Merton, Thomas; Scholars as Holy People; Shaku Sōen; Teachers as Holy People

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Sweet Medicine

Legendary Cheyenne prophet

The tale of Sweet Medicine, also known as Sweet Root Standing, is the most sacred story of the Cheyenne. They believe this man was used by the creator, Maheo (The Great Mysterious One), to bring all good things to the Cheyenne. Although he gave many gifts to the people, the greatest is said to be the sacred arrows. However, his life was not always one of beauty.

Sweet Medicine's parents died when he was an infant and he was raised by an older woman of limited means. She covered him with a scrap of buffalo robe, and he was known as Nivhevoss, Eagle's Nest. As he grew older, he was mischievous, performing tricks, and was disliked by some. One day, the handsome young man killed a buffalo bull with a black coat. A great chief desired the robe, but Sweet Medicine refused to part with it, and a blow to the head of the chief resulted in his death. Nivhevoss was then pursued by the Dog Soldiers, Kit Foxes, Red Shields, and the Elk Society, those men whose job it was to ensure that all things were done properly.

These men said they would kill Nivhevoss by beating him to death. He ran away and then reappeared to these men in the days that followed. He was impossible to catch, and five times he escaped as different animals—first as a coyote, then a magpie, next a crow, a blackbird, and then an owl. Next he was seen standing near the camp dressed as a Dog Soldier, then as a Red Shield. Escaping all, on the next appearance he wore a war bonnet and carried a crooked lance, both insignia of the Elk Society. Then he dressed as a Kit Fox. On the fifth day he appeared again, and on the sixth day he was acting like a chief, carrying tobacco bag and pipe, with a painted face.

Every day they chased him and every day he escaped. The people observed that whenever he left, so did the buffalo, and upon his return, the buffalo herds came back also. Realizing that his power was helpful to them, they finally welcomed him back. Sweet Medicine then made a pilgrimage to the Sacred Mountain. Most accounts of this trip include a female, the chief's daughter, who was very pretty, but they did not marry before the pilgrimage.

Upon arriving at the Sacred Mountain, Sweet Medicine was welcomed by humans, animals, and all things that grow upon the earth. Four principal men were sitting around the lodge, and Sweet Medicine was given his choice as to which one he wanted to resemble. Although all were more handsome than any he had ever seen, Sweet Medicine chose the best-looking one. Had he chosen any of the other three, he would have lived forever. But because of his choice, he would eventually die.

The chief people of the lodge gave Sweet Medicine advice and the gift of the medicine arrows. The arrows were wrapped in a coyote's skin and feathered with eagle feathers.

They were carried out by the girl and placed on her back. Upon their return, Sweet Medicine taught the people all they needed to know in order to live well, such as how to make arrows for hunting buffalo, how to tan skins, how to make clothing and robes, and pipes, and how to dry certain plants to smoke in the pipe.

Sweet Medicine lived four lifetimes, turning young in spring and summer and older each fall and winter. He died in the spring of the year as a young man. Before his death, he prophesied concerning those who would come to fight with the people, the disappearance of the buffalo, the introduction of the horse, and the white people who would be all over the land. The story of Sweet Medicine is still told, his name is still spoken, and the medicine arrows are still kept by the Cheyenne to this day.

—Connie H. Rickenbaker

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Nature; Sages

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Swithin

(d. 862 C.E.)

Christian bishop

Swithin, a ninth-century bishop of Winchester in England, was venerated posthumously as a miracle worker and patron of the tenth-century Benedictine reform.

Swithin served as an adviser to the West Saxon king Egbert (r. 802–839) and succeeded to the see of Winchester during the reign of King Ethelwulf (r. 839–856). He was consecrated by Ceolnoth, the archbishop of Canterbury, on October 30, 852, and died in 862. Little else is known of his life. As the tenth-century Ælfric, one of his biographers, complained, his contemporaries "out of negligence" recorded nothing of his deeds or way of life. Ælfric knew only that Swithin had been buried to the west outside his cathedral church.

Swithin's main contribution to Anglo-Saxon Christianity came more than a century after his death, when on July 15, 971, Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester dug up his remains and reinstalled them in an elaborate new shrine in the Old Minster, his cathedral church. Soon pilgrims flocked to the shrine, attracted by reports of miraculous cures worked by the saint's relics. Lantfred, a visiting monk, collected and



Although the shrines of saints throughout England were destroyed in the 1530s at the orders of Henry VIII, the Anglo-Saxon saint Swithin once again has a shrine in his cathedral at Winchester, England. (Art Directors)

recorded the miracles in a Latin account, the *Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni* (Translation and miracles of St. Swithin). This became the basis for literary works by two of Æthelwold's pupils: a Latin poem by Wulfstan of Winchester ("Cantor") and an Old English translation by Ælfric, abbot of Eynsham.

The translation of the saint's relics increased Winchester's prestige and gave support to Æthelwold's plan to reform the cathedral clergy by replacing dissolute priests and secular canons with well-disciplined Benedictine monks. Indeed, Æthelwold's interest in ecclesiastical reform, coupled with his promotion of Swithin's cult, may well be the source of the

tradition (completely unsupported by evidence) that the saint had been the prior of a Benedictine community at Winchester. It is no coincidence that one of Swithin's first recorded miracles involved a priest, Eadsige, who had been expelled from the Old Minster by Æthelwold, but who returned to the cathedral after taking monastic vows.

Swithin's remains were translated one more time, in 1093, when Bishop Walkelin erected a new church in the see. The shrine and its relics were destroyed during the Reformation.

—Nancy M. Thompson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Veneration of Holy People

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Sylvester

See **Silvester I**

Symeon

See **Simeon ben Yohai; Simeon of Trier; Simeon the New Theologian; Simeon the Stylite**

T

Tagami Michi

See **Kikusha-ni**

Tahirih (Qurratu'l-'ayn)

(1817–1852 C.E.)

Babi disciple

Tahirih (The Pure One), also known as Qurratu'l-'ayn (Consolation of the Eyes), was a leading figure in the Babi movement, the only woman among the “Letters of the Living” (the first and highest-ranking group of the Bab’s disciples).

Tahirih was born in the Iranian city of Qazvin to a family of leading Islamic clerics in 1817. From her earliest years, she showed extraordinary abilities, memorizing the Qur’an and grasping abstruse points of religious law and theology. She was also very beautiful and a talented poetess. She was married to her cousin and had four children. She became an enthusiastic supporter of the teachings of Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsa’i, despite the fact that her husband and father-in-law were virulent enemies of the shaykh. Eventually, in 1843, Tahirih left for Karbala to meet with Sayyid Kazim Rashti, the successor to Shaykh Ahmad. Unfortunately, Sayyid Kazim had died by the time Tahirih arrived, but, with his wife’s permission, she set up in Sayyid Kazim’s home and continued his teaching circle, teaching the men from behind a curtain.

In 1844, news reached her of the claims of the Bab and she immediately accepted these, becoming one of the eighteen Letters of the Living. She began to teach this message in Karbala. At the end of 1847, she was arrested and sent to Baghdad, where she resided at the home of the mufti of Baghdad. The Ottoman authorities decided to expel her and she returned to Qazvin. Here, she was involved in further confrontations with her father-in-law and husband, which ended in their divorce. When in October 1847 her father-in-law was murdered, her husband accused Tahirih of complicity

in the crime, and her life was in danger until Baha’u’llah, founder of the Baha’i faith, arranged for her removal from Qazvin.

Tahirih attended the Conference of Badasht in summer 1848, at which most of the leading Babis were present. Here she proclaimed the advent of a new religious dispensation by appearing unveiled. Shortly after this conference she was arrested and held at the home of the *kalantar* (mayor) of Tehran. She captivated her captors and succeeded in converting to Babism some women from the highest reaches of society, including a royal princess. In 1852, Tahirih, at the age of thirty-five, was strangled and her body thrown into a well.

Tahirih is considered the outstanding woman of the Babi religion and was regarded by the Babis as the return of Fatima, the daughter of the prophet Muhammad, from whom she was descended through her mother. Her holiness may be thought to reside, at least partly, in the compelling manner in which she interpreted the sacred role of Fatima. She has become for many Iranian women a symbol and icon of the women’s movement. For Baha’is she has come to symbolize their concern for the equality of women and social action, and girls are frequently named after her.

—*Moojan Momen and B. Todd Lawson*

See also: Ahmad al-Ahsa’i, Shaykh; Bab, The; Baha’i Faith and Holy People; Baha’u’llah; Fatima bint Muhammad; Gender and Holy People; Kazim Rashti, Sayyid

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Tai HsüSee **Taixu****Tailfeather Woman***Sioux prophet*

The vision of Tailfeather Woman is the origin of the ceremonial powwow drum. In English it is called “Sioux drum,” and in Ojibwa, it is *bwaanidewe’igan*. Much of the music for the traditional ceremonies of the Chippewa/Ojibwa and Potawatomi is set within the Drum Dance Religion, also called the Big Drum Religion and the Dream Dance Religion. The actual story of Tailfeather Woman and the details of the origin of the drum are not known. The basic structure is the same and the story is always told at Drum Dance ceremonies. However, there are themes that pervade all versions.

A Sioux woman lost her four sons as they fought against the white soldiers. As her people were being massacred, she fled and ran into a lake. The soldiers pursued her, and while she hid among the lily pads the Great Spirit came to her and over four days told her what to do. At noon on the fourth day, she went to see who was left and to share what the Great Spirit taught her. The only way to stop the soldiers from killing the people was to build a drum. She taught the songs to the men, and they built the drum and played and sang as Tailfeather Woman shared with them what to do.

As they sang and played, the soldiers heard the sound of the drum and put down their weapons. They stood still and stopped their killing. Peace terms were made with the Indians, and the powwow continues to this day. The Great Spirit came to Tailfeather Woman with a message of the power of peace, and the people listened. The drum, which expressed the power and beauty of Indian culture, is still the focal point in contemporary powwows.

As the story of Tailfeather Woman and the drum was being passed on to other tribes, the message of peacemaking shifted. The emphasis moved to making peace between the tribes. The ceremonies surrounding the drum still follow the original traditions, with the lead female member representing Tailfeather Woman. Although the drum itself is greatly revered, equal emphasis is placed on the ceremonies, as they symbolize the spirit helpers and the teachings shared by the Great Spirit over those four days.

—*Connie H. Rickenbaker*

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Prophets; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Taixu (Tai Hsü)

(1890–1947 C.E.)

Buddhist reformer

A leading monk of the Buddhist reform movement in modern China and the “Martin Luther of Chinese Buddhism,” Taixu, born in 1890, became a Buddhist novice at the age of sixteen. Having received full ordination (*bhikṣu*) under Jin’an (1851–1913) in 1904, he studied Buddhism, especially Dharmalakana philosophy, and practiced meditation under various masters. In 1913, Taixu proposed a threefold reform of Buddhist organizations, economics, and intellectual learning with the hope of reviving Chinese Buddhism. In 1914, he decided to devote himself to religious practice at Mount Putuo. After almost three years of self-confinement, Taixu toured Japan and Taiwan in 1917. In 1918, Taixu, together with other gentry in Shanghai, founded the Enlightenment Society (Xueshe) and started a magazine, later renamed *Haichaoyin* (Sound of the sea tide). The magazine and the Wuchang Buddhist College (Wuchang foxue yuan), which he founded in 1921, became the two most important platforms for him to advocate Buddhist reforms.

Taixu’s role in the Asian Buddhist Conference held in Tokyo in 1925, and his world tour of Europe and America in late 1928 and early 1929, further established him as the Buddhist leader of China. He founded the Chinese Buddhist Study Society (Zhongguo foxue hui) in 1928 and was elected a standing committee member of the Chinese Buddhist Society (Zhongguo fojiao hui). During the Japanese War (1937–1945), Taixu actively supported the Chinese government’s war policy and led a political mission of Buddhist delegates to Burma, India, and Sri Lanka in 1939. At the end of the war, he was awarded the Medal of Victory by the nationalist government, and was authorized to reorganize the Chinese Buddhist Society. Taixu died on March 17, 1947, leaving behind 300 relics and an unharmed heart after cremation. His *dharma* (doctrinal) heritage was embodied in the *Complete Work of Master Taixu*, which consists of 7 million words. His Buddhist social philosophy of “establishing Pure Land on earth” has become a major force for Buddhist revival in Taiwan and mainland China.

—*Xue Yu*

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Reform and Reaction

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Takla Haymanot

(c. 1215–1313 C.E.)

Christian missionary

Takla Haymanot, among Ethiopia's most prominent evangelizers, was the first to introduce monastic institutions into central and southern Ethiopia. According to his hagiography, he was born in the region of Shoa (Selaleh, in the locality Zorare, probably present-day Bulga, Etissa). His father, Tsaga Za-Ab, was a priest, and his mother, Egzi Haraya, was of noble descent.

Takla Haymanot was born in about 1215 under unusual circumstances. When the non-Christian ruler of Damot, Motalami, invaded Shoa, he captured the beautiful Egzi Haraya and wanted to marry her, but the archangel Michael reportedly came to her rescue and brought her back to Tsaga Za-Ab. Soon afterward, she conceived and gave birth to a boy who was baptized Fesseha Seyon. The child could work miracles before he could even walk. When Fesseha Seyon grew up, Metropolitan Cyril consecrated him deacon and, after some more years, priest. Later, it is said that Jesus appealed to him to start missionary activities, giving him the new name Takla Haymanot (Plant of the Faith). From then on, Takla Haymanot ardently preached in the neighboring areas, overcoming the resistance of the local elite.

In Damot, after a bitter fight he was able to convert Motalami. Later, he traveled to other sanctuaries of Ethiopia, becoming a monk in the process. Wherever he went, he astonished other monks with his humility and miraculous deeds. Following pilgrimages to Jerusalem, he returned to Shoa and founded a monastic community called Dabra Asbo (renamed Dabra Libanos in the mid-fifteenth century). He spent his last years in seclusion, standing upright and praying. After years of standing, one of his legs apparently broke and separated from his body (this episode became a widespread motif in traditional Ethiopian painting). He died of plague at the age of almost 100 in 1313.

After Takla Haymanot's death, his veneration spread and his monastery grew in importance. He figures in many Ethiopian hagiographic texts, including at least three versions of his Acts, accounts of his life written after his death. A considerable number of other saints or notable monastic leaders are believed to be his "spiritual children" and pupils, and their monasteries are thus affiliated with the "house of Takla Haymanot." The literary heritage of Takla Haymanot's hagiography is vast: Apart from his Acts, there are homilies, cycles of miracles, spiritual genealogies, and the like.

Many churches are consecrated in the name of Takla Haymanot, and Dabra Libanos of Shoa, where his grave is located, attracts large numbers of pilgrims. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church celebrates annual feasts of Takla Haymanot on 24 Nahase (August 30), 24 Tahsas (January 2), and 12 Genbot (May 20); he is also commemorated on the twenty-fourth day of each month. Takla Haymanot is vener-

ated in the Eritrean Orthodox Church, and he is the only Ethiopian saint canonized by the Coptic Church, which commemorates him on 24 Misra and 24 Kihak.

—Denis Nosnitsin

See also: Mission; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Veneration of Holy People

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Tansi, Cyprian Michael Iwene

(1903–1964 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, monk

Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Oba, southeastern Nigeria, on March 22, 1998. Historian Elizabeth Isichei had labeled Tansi "a saint by acclamation" in her 1980 biography of Tansi. Isichei's work was based on dozens of oral and written accounts by those who had lived with, studied under, and taught Tansi, both in Nigeria and England, where he died.

Tansi was born in 1903 in Aguleri, an Igbo community in what was then a British colony. Tansi grew up in a "Christian village" in Aguleri, having been sent to live there with an uncle at the age of six by his widowed mother. Life in the Christian village was lived along extremely strict principles. Three years later, Iwene was baptized, taking the name Michael. At the age of sixteen, Tansi became a certified teacher. He taught for several years at Holy Trinity School, Onitsha, and served for one year as principal of the school in Aguleri. In 1925, at the age of twenty-two, he entered the newly established seminary in Igbariam. In 1937, following twelve years as a seminarian, Tansi was ordained. Ordinations to the priesthood in Igbo land were rare because of reservations on the part of both family members and the European missionaries.

In 1950, after thirteen years as a parish priest, Tansi left Nigeria to enter Mount Saint Bernard, an abbey of the Cistercians of Strict Observance in Leicestershire, England. The road to monastic life was even more difficult than the

path to the priesthood. There were no monasteries in Nigeria at the time, and so aspiring monks had to appeal to European monasteries. Rejections cited the impossibility of Africans and Europeans living a communal life as dictated by monastic rules. Tansi died in England in January 1964, having spent the last eleven years of his life as a monk.

Tansi embarked on the pursuit of the ascetic ideal long before he formally made the monastic vow; companions recalled him living an extremely austere life devoted to prayer, piety, abnegation, and the pursuit of religious and moral propriety. Although abstemious himself, he was generous with others. By all accounts, Tansi showed striking religious devotion from a very early age. It should be noted, however, that some felt that Tansi's extreme religiosity made him inflexible. He was a great foe of non-Christian ritual practices. A particular concern of his was marriage and the family, and to this end he took steps to safeguard the "purity of girls," building homes where young affianced girls were required to stay until their marriage had been celebrated in church.

—Anene Ejikeme

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Tao Hongjing (T'ao Hung-ching)

(456–536 C.E.)

Daoist patriarch

Tao Hongjing, born in 456, was a Chinese Daoist master who was, and still is, considered a patriarch of Mao Mountain (Maoshan) or Upper Clarity (Shangqing) Daoism. Upper Clarity Daoism included theories of the human body in relation to the external universe, longevity techniques focused on herbology and mineralogy, as well as visualization and meditation techniques. Tao was also the first to write out a Daoist lineage making the Daoist pantheon more orderly, arranging them in hierarchical order and describing all the deities in great detail.

Tao was also a very prominent political figure, serving as high-ranking minister and tutor to the royal princes in the southern Qi dynasty (479–502) court. During the Liang dynasty (502–557), even though he had retired in 492, the court still sought his advice and he became known as the "Prime Minister from the Mountains." After retiring, he lived

and worked on Mao Mountain, in present Jiangsu province, southeastern China. Tao was well known for his scientific endeavors, including alchemical experiments, medicine, herbology, astronomical charts, sword making, and water-clock designs. Tao advocated a synthesis of the "Three Teachings," those of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. He was a follower of the Daoist master Ge Hong (283–343/363) and wrote some fifty works.

Tao collected, edited, and annotated the fragmentary manuscripts of the original Upper Clarity revelations. These scriptures were texts that were revealed to the Daoist Yang Xi (330–386?) by deities who appeared to him in visions between the years 364 and 370. Yang's texts had emanated from the highest reaches of the heavens, as described in the texts, from the hands of the highest deities, the Perfected Beings (*zhenren*). Yang's texts were collected into the first of the three sections of the Daoist canon. Writing in poetic verse, Tao created two compilations: the *Dengzhen yinjue* (Hidden explanations for ascending to the perfected) and *Zhen'gao* (Declarations of the perfected). The former was a text that instructs on the rituals of sending documents to the gods. In the latter, Tao relates his recovery of the Upper Clarity scriptures, as well as guided meditations and visualizations.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Ge Hong; Guidance; Scholars as Holy People

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Tao-an

See Daoan

Tapas

Hindu asceticism

In Hinduism, the term *tapas* has come to mean "asceticism" or spiritual austerities, and a person who practices asceticism is known as a *tapasvin*. The words are very old and come from the Sanskrit root *tap-*, "to give out heat," "to make hot," and/or "to be hot." The noun form has as its most basic and initial translation "heat" or "warmth," and in the natural world, it is literally related to the heat and energy of the sun and fire. In the earliest of Indian sacred texts, the Vedas (1500–600 B.C.E.), sacrifice was the central sacred action, and fire, as both a creative and destructive element, was the most important component of this ritual. It is not surprising

that a term for and related to sacred heat came to exhibit a variety of meanings and connotations outside the strictly ritual context. In the Vedic literature, there are myths that credit tapas as the very energy or force behind the initial creation of the universe. The texts cite tapas as associated with many different kinds of heat and warmth: fertilizing heat, destructive and creative heat, consuming heat, incubating heat, purifying heat, sexual heat, and so on.

For the holy people of the Vedic period, usually the priests, or *brahmins*, their labor, particularly with regard to the performance of sacrifice, could in itself produce powerful heat, or tapas. However, the word becomes especially descriptive of the intense power that could be generated by the austerities, or “heated efforts,” of self-denial and bodily mortification. A man (or less often, a woman) could perform acts of asceticism such as fasting, chastity, seclusion, looking at or being exposed to fire and the sun for long periods of time, and sleep deprivation. These actions and many like them were designed to be painful, difficult, and, in fact, contrary to natural human behavior. As such, tapas-laden acts had as their consequence the elevation of the ascetic to a condition that is beyond the normal human experience. Tapas is both the means and the end—it is the ascetic activity, and it produces the “magical heat.” The tapasvin can become an extremely powerful as well as a holy figure.

In post-Vedic texts, such as the epics and Puranas, there is ample testimony that the practice of asceticism, tapas, continued to be a prominent feature of Hinduism. Asceticism remains a viable means to induce and produce an incredibly potent energy recognized by gods and humans as both creative and destructive. There are many accounts of legendary human and divine tapasvins who performed great austerities and gained great power. There are also accounts of gods who seek to prevent tapasvins from accumulating too much power by sabotaging their ascetic endeavors.

Today in India there are tapasvins practicing tapas in major cities as well as in small, remote villages. Asceticism in many forms remains an acceptable and valued form of religious experience in Hinduism as well as in other traditions existing on the subcontinent such as Buddhism and Jainism.

—Phyllis K. Herman

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People

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Tapduk Emre

(13th–14th cent. C.E.)

Muslim sufi, teacher

Tapduk Emre is a household name in Turkish culture, though very little is known about his life. He was an accomplished sufi master during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but his fame comes from the fact that he was the spiritual teacher of Yunus Emre (c. 1241–1320/1321), the famous mystical poet of the Turkish language.

Like many figures of Anatolian sufism, Tapduk Emre’s life and teachings are recorded and narrated in folk traditions, legends, and stories. The most important source about his life, however, is his student Yunus. As Yunus Emre’s spiritual guide, he not only initiated Yunus into sufism but also inspired him to create a unique mystical-poetical imagery in Turkish. According to one story, it was Haji Bektash Wali who directed Yunus toward Tapduk Emre. Some sources relate that Yunus married Tapduk Emre’s daughter, thus becoming his disciple as well as his son-in-law. Yunus is reported to have served Tapduk Emre for more than thirty years until the master’s death. Many of Yunus’s poems refer to Tapduk Emre as a great spiritual master, and this theme runs through much of Turkish-Islamic mysticism, where unequivocal allegiance to the spiritual master is the first step in the spiritual path. With his burning soul and poetic eloquence, Yunus represents the “unripe” novice and Tapduk Emre symbolizes the pole of perfection and maturity.

In his role as a social-spiritual leader Tapduk Emre is comparable to the sufis of his time, such as Haji Bektash Wali and Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi. The Turkish sufis of this period played an important role in consolidating the sufi tradition in Turkish-speaking areas of Anatolia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when they were instrumental in alleviating the destructive impact of the Mongol invasion. The spiritual revival in Turkey and other places that followed the Mongol attacks can be traced back to these figures and their spiritual legacy. Tapduk Emre symbolizes this kind of active mysticism.

—Ibrahim Kalin

See also: Bektash Wali, Haji; Mysticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Rumi, Mevlana Jalaluddin; Sufism; Teachers as Holy People; Yunus Emre

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Taqi Muhammad

(c. 790–c. 840 C.E.)

Isma‘ili Muslim imam

Taqi Muhammad followed his father, Wafi Ahmad, as the ninth imam of the Shi’a Isma‘ili Muslims in 828. Like his

father, he lived primarily at Salamiyya, Syria, and ‘Abdallah b. Maymun al-Qadah, the chief *da’i* (representative), continued to serve as the *hijab* (cover) for him. In addition to spreading his message via his *da’is*, Taqi Muhammad actively engaged in the sociophilosophical concerns of his time.

Taqi Muhammad is said to have prepared with his followers an encyclopedic text called the *Rasa’il Ikhwan al-Safa* (The epistles of the brethren of purity, or Epistles of the sincere brethren). The work contains fifty-two epistles divided into four main categories: mathematical sciences, natural sciences, intellectual sciences, and theological sciences. In this text, pre-Islamic wisdom, such as Greek philosophy and Babylonian astrology, was presented along with Isma’ili ideas. Multiple copies of this work were secretly prepared in a cave, and when sufficient numbers were produced, they were simultaneously placed in the leading *masjids* (schools) of the Abbasid lands. As was to be expected, the text aroused much intellectual curiosity.

According to tradition, even the caliph, al-Mamun, was eager to discover the source of *Rasa’il Ikhwan al-Safa* and gathered a group of scholars to discuss the text. A representative of Taqi Muhammad, popularly referred to as Dai Tirmidhi, participated in these royal discussions. Caliph al-Mamun pretended to have completely accepted Isma’ili doctrine and expressed the desire to meet with the imam. Dai Tirmidhi was not sure of the sincerity of this request, however, and, to protect Taqi Muhammad, said that he himself was the imam. Al-Mamun quickly had him beheaded. Dai Tirmidhi’s action is very typical of the considerable sacrifices that the representatives made in order to keep the imams safe from harm. However, according to other sources the *Rasa’il Ikhwan al-Safa* was produced by a group of Isma’ili intellectuals in the city of Basra. Taqi Muhammad passed away in Salamiyya and was succeeded by his son ‘Abdallah, who was called Raziuddin ‘Abdallah.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Wafi Ahmad

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Tara

Buddhist goddess

Tara (Sgrol-ma), the Buddhist savior-goddess and the feminine counterpart of the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) Avalokiteshvara, is widely venerated in Nepal, Tibet, and



The Buddhist goddess Tara, believed in several Buddhist lands to be incarnate in every virtuous woman. Darjeeling, India. (Art Directors)

Mongolia, where she is believed to be incarnate in every pious woman. With the establishment of Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet in the eleventh century, Tara became the most popular female deity, and the Tibetan people, in fact, began to see her as the very source of their origin. She is said to have come into existence from a tear of Avalokiteshvara. This tear fell on the ground and formed a lake; out of the waters of the lake grew a lotus, and when this lotus opened Tara was revealed. Like Avalokiteshvara, she is a compassionate deity who is always ready to help. She is said to represent the very essence of loving devotion, extending her loving care to the good as well as the bad. She is not only the protector of earthly travel but also of spiritual travel on the way to enlightenment. She invariably stays by the side of her devotees in their religious practices.

Tara shares many mythic parallels with the Hindu deity Durga, and it is difficult to say which of the two influenced the other. The earliest iconic representations show Tara

seated with just two arms and two hands. However, with the passage of time, her iconic representations became quite complex. Not only the number of her heads, arms, and hands increased, but also the number of different figures attending on her multiplied. Later, she also came to be associated with the *dhyani* (transcendent) buddhas, and she began to appear generally in colors corresponding to the colors of these buddhas.

In one tradition, Tara manifests herself in the form of five protective goddesses to protect her devotees against various earthly troubles. In another tradition, eight different Taras protect their devotees against terrors of elephants, lions, fire, serpents, robbers, fetters, sea monsters, and vampires. The banners in Tibetan temples often show a green Tara, surrounded by twenty different Taras in various colors.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddha; Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Spiritual Guardians

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Tayyib, Muhammad al-

(d. 1988 C.E.)

Muslim holy man

The cult of Muhammad al-Tayyib, an Egyptian saint, has remained limited to the inhabitants of the village Qurna (Upper Egypt), where he is interred, and its surroundings. But his life serves as a reminder that in Egypt saintliness is not a vestige of the past; on the contrary, it is alive and in constant renewal. Like Muhammad al-Tayyib, who died in 1988, many great saints from this country have died during the past forty years. For his devotees, Muhammad al-Tayyib was the pole (*qutb*) of his era, that is, the axis around which the world turns, the supreme aid (*gawth*).

Muhammad was born into a *sharifian* family (one that is descended from the prophet), and his ancestors were originally from Fez; one of them may even have been one of the companions of the great Egyptian saint Ahmad al-Badawi (1199/1200–1276). His father, Ahmad al-Tayyib al-Hassani (d. 1955), founded a mystical order, the Khalwatiyya Hasaniyya. He transmitted his charisma and *baraka* (divine

grace) to his son Muhammad, who succeeded him as the head of the order.

Muhammad, following in the footsteps of his father, studied at the great theological university al-Azhar in Cairo before returning to his village to dedicate himself to meditation, prayer, and the spiritual direction of his disciples. The disciples say he was an ascetic who regularly took spiritual retreats in a cell, accompanied by youths. He dressed entirely in white, from his shoes to the veil covering his head. Like the prophet, he wore perfume, and he let the end of his turban hang down his neck. It is said that his face was luminous, that he inspired a mixture of fear and respect (*hayba*), and that he had the gift of clairvoyance and could read people's thoughts. He worked to bring people back to God and eradicate their superstitions.

At the end of his life Muhammad al-Tayyib ate very little, just a few spoonfuls of milk at a time. His skin became so delicate that he had to wrap his hand in a scarf so that his numerous visitors could touch it. He is buried today next to his father in the village of Qurna, where each year the anniversary festival (*mawlid*) of these two saints is celebrated.

—Rachida Chih (translated by Karna Hughes)

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Badawi, Ahmad al-; Contemporary Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Islam and Holy People

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Teachers as Holy People

The Bab (1819–1850), prophet of the Baha'i faith, taught that God would raise up a world teacher who would bring religious unity and an age of peace; Baha'is see this prophecy fulfilled in his disciple Baha'u'llah (1817–1892). All faiths acknowledge that religion must be taught and that some people are specially inspired to do the teaching. Religious teaching can take many forms, and in many religions the exemplary teacher is honored as a holy person. A distinction, however, may be made between preachers (those who share religious knowledge with a wide, public audience) and teachers (those who give instruction to a select group of disciples). In reality, the dividing line between these two practices is often unclear, especially since many holy people have emphasized public preaching while also teaching a small circle of companions, or vice versa. Such saints as the *sadhus* of India are especially hard to categorize because they wandered from place to place accompanied by disciples, who were their primary learners, but also had a deep impact on

popular spirituality. Still, since various religious traditions have emphasized one or the other practice, the distinction is useful. The ranks of Christian saints include a wide array of preachers, but few teachers in the narrower sense. In contrast, Buddhism, Jainism, the Sikh faith, and Hinduism have all given an enormous role to the inspired teacher as an essential bridge to the divine. Islam has perhaps struck a happy medium with its tradition of both preaching and teaching. Because of the public, authoritative role of both preachers and teachers, holy people in this category were nearly always men until the twentieth century, and men still enjoy a sizable majority in this aspect of holiness.

The great religions of Asia present some teachers as conveyers of authoritative spiritual insight. The word “guru,” used in Hinduism, Sikhism, and to some extent in Buddhism, literally means “heavy,” in the sense that the words of the teacher have a special authority. In the tantric traditions, a guru is absolutely necessary for spiritual growth and is given a godlike status by disciples—even his touch or glance can bestow enlightenment or salvation. In the Hindu tradition, sometimes a god gives directions on how to find a guru; for example, Kali was said to have appeared to Radharaman Charan Das Dev (1853–1905) in a solar eclipse, telling him where to locate his destined teacher. Gurus often form part of a lineage of inspired teachers, passing down special, sometimes secret wisdom to designated successors over several generations. Sometimes the Hindu gurus are popularly believed to be reincarnations of a great teacher of the past, or even incarnations of a god. Similarly, the Jain *acharyas* and Tibetan *lamas* are spiritual teachers who pass on their special powers to designated successors.

In Buddhism, lineages of teachers—for example, the lines of Chan/Zen patriarchs—are especially important. It is regarded as nearly impossible to achieve enlightenment in Buddhism without the aid of a teacher, and the inspired teacher is the most commonly acknowledged form of holy person. A fundamental issue in the religion has been the diverse methods used by these spiritual guides, whether harsh or gentle, sudden or gradual. Thanks to the centrality of monasticism in Buddhism, teachers rather than preachers have dominated. These teachers focus their efforts on small clusters of disciples in monasteries, only rarely engaging in any concerted effort to spread Buddhism to the population at large comparable to Christian evangelization. One of the few exceptions to this generalization is Gautama the Buddha himself in the fifth century B.C.E., who both preached and taught for forty-five years after his enlightenment, giving public sermons as well as advanced teaching to a circle of disciples. In Confucianism, too, people who can plausibly be called holy men have almost always taught a select group of disciples—and their veneration has been limited to a narrow intellectual elite. One of the few exceptions was the

Japanese Confucian scholar Ishida Baigan (1685–1744), who took to giving public lectures on Confucianism, and who is still one of the very few popular Confucian holy people of Japan.

Islam, especially in the sufi tradition, produced a happy synthesis of teaching and preaching, with acknowledged, inspired teachers very often wandering from place to place with their disciples, encountering popular audiences in the process. The importance of the teacher, most often called a *shaykh*—that is, a guide who leads disciples on the spiritual way, cleansing their hearts and leading them to God—is central. These teachers and their followers have often stressed membership in a lineage; for example, when the sufi saint Nasiruddin Chiragh-i Dihli (1276/1277–1356) died, the relics of four previous shaykhs of the Chishti line were buried with him, symbolizing the end of the first lineage. Sufis have also reached out to a wider audience, however. An excellent example of sufi saint as popular preacher is the Moroccan Ahmad ibn Idris (1749–1836). To fulfill his life’s goal of educating people to make them better Muslims, he traveled throughout North Africa, teaching people in their own dialects how to perform rituals and making sure they had a basic understanding of their religion.

Christianity, by contrast, has given much more acclaim to preachers than to teachers. In part, this is an illusion imposed by the canonization process: Catholic authorities have tended to canonize people perceived as particularly “useful” to the faith. Underlying this practice, however, is the fact that Christian accounts of saints do not emphasize the role of mentor. Even abbots and abbesses, the spiritual “parents” of monks and nuns, are usually, when they make their way into the ranks of the saints, given more credit as “rulers” than as teachers. Although there have been many great Christian spiritual advisers and inspirers, even they are not normally described in terms of the teacher or mentor relationship or even as teaching particular methods or doctrines. Instead, among the greatest of the Christian saints are the preachers. Some have been missionaries; others have preached to an audience already superficially Christianized. A few great preachers are remembered from the early centuries of the religion—for example, John Chrysostom (c. 349–407), who received his nickname “golden-mouthed” (*chrysostomos*) for his great skill in oratory. The great age of preachers only began in the twelfth century with the wandering preachers who inspired the great orders of mobile preachers, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, in the thirteenth century. Since then, the preaching holy man has remained a regular motif in both the Catholic and Protestant imaginations. Indeed, since the American Great Awakening in the mid-eighteenth century, Protestants have tended to give an especially important place to the evangelical, charismatic, God-inspired

preacher, while in Catholicism preaching has normally taken a distant second place to administration of the sacraments. The great preachers have been regarded as having a special insight into the will of God, and the wide audiences that they have reached, especially since the advent of mass media, have rendered their influence and fame incalculable.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Bab, The; Baha' u'llah; Chiraghi Dihli, Nasiruddin; Gender and Holy People; Ishida Baigan; John Chrysostom; Radharaman Charan Das Dev; Sadhus

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Tegh Bahadur

(1621–1675 C.E.)

Sikh guru, martyr

Guru Har Krishan, who died of smallpox at the age of eight after guiding the Sikh community for only three years, nominated Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675), his grandfather's brother, as his successor in 1664. With his new office, Guru Tegh Bahadur moved the community to Makhawal, which he renamed Anandpur. Had Tegh Bahadur remained in Anandpur, he might not have angered the Mughal authorities, who wanted Ram Rai to be the leader of the Sikh community, but Guru Tegh Bahadur left Anandpur to travel extensively for the next six years. He traveled as far east as Assam and Dhacca, and throughout his journeys he reestablished contacts with the Sikh communities, especially in the towns and cities of the Gangetic plains. He returned to Anandpur in 1671 with a renewed vigor for strengthening the community in Punjab. His aggressively defiant activities eventually forced the Mughals to arrest him. His captors offered his life in exchange for either a miracle or his conversion to Islam. He refused to comply and was executed at Chandni Chowk, a prominent square in the center of Mughal Delhi, on November 11, 1675. However, before his capture he nominated his son, Gobind Das, to the guruship, thus ensuring the continuity of leadership in the community.

Tegh Bahadur added his own compositions to the Sikh sacred literature, a tradition that the previous three gurus had not followed. His compositions are similar to those of the first five gurus, and he adheres to much of the religious ideology espoused by Guru Nanak (1469–1539), founder of the Sikh community. However, he emphasizes the fragility of life on this earth and the importance of living life without fear. Thus, he treads a fine line of encouraging Sikhs to stay true to their beliefs under persecution, beliefs that included the importance of community, family, and land but

at the same time recommended not becoming so entangled in the world as to lose sight of the fact that it is God's creation and not one's own. His emphasis on courage in the face of fear has prompted scholars to call him the "Prophet of Assurance."

—Daniel Michon

See also: Gobind Singh; Martyrdom and Persecution; Nanak; Politics and Holy People; Sikh Religion and Holy People

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Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre

(1881–1955 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest, scientist

Scientist and Catholic priest, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin approached the universe with the tools of both vocations: empiricism and love. The result was a unique vision of unity that has been exceedingly attractive to people in search of a language for faith and love that befits the modern experience.

Teilhard was born in Sarcenat, France, in 1881 to a father schooled in natural history and a mother with the heart of a poet. Their two ways of seeing the world would come together in Teilhard. He entered a Jesuit novitiate at the age of eighteen, traveled to England for final training for the priesthood, and finished the doctoral thesis in 1922. In April 1923, he joined the French paleontologist Père Emile Licent in China. The first sign of his unique spirituality was the essay "Mass on the World," which came out of his experience in the solitude of the Ordos desert. His return to France in 1924 occasioned strong criticism from religious superiors over his theology. This rebuke was the beginning of an ongoing conflict with authorities in the church who did not understand or countenance his views on evolution. Eventually Teilhard left France, accepting an appointment at the Wenner-Gren Foundation in New York. He died on April 10, 1955, never having received the church's approval to have his work published.

The strictly scientific writings were not the issue for the church. The problem was such writings as *The Phenomenon of Man* and *The Divine Milieu*, in which Teilhard described an evolution that is both physical and spiritual in nature and that is energized by the attracting power of Omega, that is, Christ, also called Christ-Omega or Christ-the-Evolver. The church refused to accept the notion of a world evolving toward perfection, that is, completion, rather than having been

created perfect. In Teilhard's view, the role of Christ is to attract the process upward to fulfillment. This role differed radically from the traditional christology that Christ was born into the world to redeem it to its former perfection. The view of a static universe, in Teilhard's opinion, was at odds with the position of science arrived at through empirical methodology. For different reasons neither the church nor the scientific community could accept his ideas about a spiritual-scientific evolution. Nonetheless, the writings that express this vision are for many people reason to consider Teilhard a holy man for the modern world.

—Mary E. Giles

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Scholars as Holy People

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Ten Martyrs

(d. 135–138 C.E.)

Jewish martyrs

When the Jewish rebellion led by Simon bar Kokhba was finally subdued (135 C.E.), the Roman authorities in Judaea carried out a brief (135–138) but intense persecution of traditional Jewish practices. Rabbinic tradition names public religious instruction as among the activities most intensely suppressed, and many revered teachers of Torah, most notably Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph, were arrested and put to death. The story of the “Ten Martyrs” (*‘aseret harugei malkhut*) is a later literary embellishment of these events. In its developed form (not attested until the Middle Ages), the Romans arrested ten leading teachers, tried them collectively for the already ancient crime of Joseph's brothers, and then put them to death in various unspeakably cruel ways.

Some details of the later story may be historical, but it is impossible to determine which these may be. The list of ten names varies from one version to the next and often includes individuals who lived in different generations, while some other stories of martyred rabbis (for example, the death of R. Judah ben Bava [Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 14a]) are incompatible with the story of the Ten Martyrs. Nevertheless, the story worked itself into the standard liturgy for the Day of Atonement as the poem “Eleh Ezkerah” (These do I remember) and also formed the basis of several dirges written for the commemorative fast of the Ninth of Av. The ten rabbinic victims, and the earlier family of Hannah and her

seven sons, became the two prototypical cases of Jewish martyrdom, stories recounted and embellished in later generations when further outbursts of persecution threatened to overwhelm the Jewish people.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Akiba ben Joseph; Hannah and Her Seven Sons; Judaism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Tenskwatawa

(1775–1836 C.E.)

Shawnee prophet

Tenskwatawa, also called the “Shawnee Prophet,” led a militant spiritual revitalization movement against American expansion in the early nineteenth-century Great Lakes and Ohio Valley region.

Born to a Creek mother and Shawnee father in 1775 as one of a set of triplets, but raised by older siblings, Tenskwatawa, called Lalawethika until the early 1800s, showed little promise as a youth. He was fat, he did not readily learn how to hunt, he complained constantly, and he was clumsy, accidentally putting out his right eye with an arrow. He became an alcoholic rather than an accomplished warrior, and he played almost no role in the multiracial war against the United States in the Ohio Valley during the 1790s, although his brother Tecumseh and many other Shawnees did. After the defeat of the Ohio Valley Indian Confederacy by General Anthony Wayne's army and the signing of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, Tenskwatawa's people moved farther west to western Ohio and eastern Indiana. Tenskwatawa continued to drink heavily and enjoyed little respect from other Shawnees.

The ensuing couple of decades were hard on the Shawnees and other Ohio Valley and Great Lakes Indian groups. Game animals became increasingly scarce, American settlers encroached on their lands, diseases killed them, and apathy and alcoholism became widespread. In April 1805, Tenskwatawa passed out, apparently dead, but he awoke several hours later claiming that he had experienced a vision that told him how the Shawnees might recover from their malaise.

Americans, Tenskwatawa preached, were the children of the Great Serpent who spread evil throughout the world, whereas Indians were the chosen people of the Creator. Moreover, Indian “witches” had assisted the evil Americans in spreading chaos and disorder, and they must be exposed and killed. Tenskwatawa urged all Indians to adopt a militant message of rejection of American ways. Contact with Americans should be minimal, and American food, clothing, alco-

hol, and most manufactured goods should be abandoned. If these strictures were followed, Tenskwatawa insisted, game would return to the forests and dead relatives would come back to life. If not, a Christian-like hell awaited all Indians.

By 1807, after performing miracles such as correctly predicting a solar eclipse, Tenskwatawa gained hundreds of followers from tribes throughout the upper Midwest. Around this time, Tenskwatawa began to insist on being called by his new name, which meant “the Open Door,” reflecting his ability to communicate with the Great Spirit. In 1808, he and his followers formed a new village called Prophetstown near the juncture of the Tippecanoe and Wabash Rivers. Tenskwatawa’s older brother Tecumseh began recruiting far and wide for warriors to bring their families to the new village in anticipation of a showdown with the United States. Tenskwatawa’s new religious message inspired Indians from varying tribal affiliations to believe in the possibility of a successful unification and resistance to the Americans. While Tecumseh visited the southern tribes, the American governor of the Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, attacked Prophetstown and broke Tenskwatawa’s power at the Battle of Tippecanoe after the Shawnee prophet had erroneously promised his warriors that they would be immune to Harrison’s bullets. The warriors scattered, and Tecumseh assumed command of the multi-tribal confederacy upon his return in 1812.

When the War of 1812 erupted between the United States and Britain, Tecumseh led Indian forces against the United States, but Tenskwatawa took little part in the fighting. After the war and his brother Tecumseh’s death at the Battle of the Thames in October 1813, Tenskwatawa lived in Canada for ten years before returning to assist some Shawnees in removing west to the present site of Kansas City, where he died in 1836. To the end he still had followers.

—Greg O’Brien

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; Red Sticks; Suffering and Holy People

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Tenzin Gyatso (Dalai Lama XIV)

(1933 C.E.–)

Buddhist spiritual leader, ruler, monk, scholar

Tenzin Gyatso, Dalai Lama XIV, has governed less than several other dalai lamas, yet he has been the most important of

all, for he has preserved Tibetan culture in the darkest period of its long history and has become a spiritual teacher for millions around the world. Born in 1933, he became Tibet’s ruler when he was still a teen, and he was forced into exile nine years later. He has spent the rest of his life reminding the world of his people’s plight and spreading the Buddhist religion.

Signs appeared shortly after the thirteenth dalai lama’s death in 1933 (an unusual cloud formation; a moss pattern on a wall; shifts in the position of the thirteenth’s corpse in its mummification box) to indicate that the fourteenth would be found in the northeast. These signs were confirmed by the Nechung oracle and by a vision experienced by the regent in a sacred lake. When a search party in disguise visited his house, the child, then only two, successfully identified possessions of the thirteenth and conversed in the Lhasa dialect, although he had never heard it. His family already included an important *tulku* (reincarnate lama) whose previous incarnation had been the thirteenth’s good friend. Tenzin Gyatso’s recognition was complicated by the need to pay a ransom to a Chinese warlord.

Tenzin Gyatso arrived in Lhasa with great celebration in 1939. He spent a lonely childhood engaged in the difficult and complex study of Buddhist philosophy in the manner of the Gelukpa order. His studies were interrupted by political events, but he completed them nonetheless and earned the highest monastic degree of Geshay Lharampa in public debate in 1959.

Tenzin Gyatso’s youth was a time of great uncertainty for Tibet, which lost its Mongolian allies to the Soviet Union and its British protection when India became independent. It now faced a new Communist China that claimed Tibet as part of the motherland. Power struggles between religious and secular officials and a rift between the powerful *panchen lama* (the lama from another reincarnating lineage) and the central government divided and weakened the government. In 1947, there apparently was an attempt to either remove the dalai lama or declare another boy the real dalai lama, but whether it was an attempted coup d’état by the ex-regent, Reteng Tulku, who may or may not have been acting on behalf of the Chinese, or a conspiracy by those who succeeded Reteng, is unclear. The dalai lama’s father was murdered, and Reteng died in prison from torture.

In late 1949, the Chinese began preparations for the invasion of Tibet. This accelerated the timetable for the dalai lama’s enthronement, who became ruler of Tibet in 1950 at the age of fifteen. The Chinese occupied Tibet with little difficulty, and although the “Seventeen Point Agreement” was supposed to protect Tibet’s relative autonomy, Chinese control of Tibet grew more pervasive, despite occasional revolts. The dalai lama made visits to Beijing in 1954, where he was subtly threatened by Mao Tse-tung, and to India in 1956,

where Jawaharlal Nehru assured him that in the worst case Tibetans could take refuge there.

On March 10, 1959, fearing that the Chinese intended to harm the dalai lama, large crowds gathered in Lhasa around his residence. To prevent further bloodshed, the dalai lama and his party adopted disguises and escaped to India. Many Tibetans attempted to follow him, although most died or were captured in the attempt. In India, the young dalai lama did what he could to resettle the refugees, who had many difficulties, such as disease and malnutrition, in their new country. He worked with secular and religious leaders who had also escaped and with Indian and Western experts to establish a new Tibetan government in exile, a system of education, and several institutions to preserve Tibet's culture, and to reestablish some of the monasteries from Tibet.

In his role as a spiritual teacher he has given countless teachings in his home base of Dharamsala, India, and in many other places. In particular, he has conferred the Kalachakra tantric initiation, a specialty of dalai lamas, on many large public gatherings in Asia, Europe, and America. He is recognized widely as a brilliant scholar and teacher and has published dozens of books that have a wide and ever-expanding readership.

As the leader of the Tibetan people he has toured the globe to remind the world of the plight of human rights in Tibet. He has unflinchingly pressed for nonviolent solutions to world problems, and for these contributions he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.

—Daniel Cozort

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Recognition; Reincarnation

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Teresa of Avila

(1515–1582 C.E.)

Roman Catholic reformer, mystic, doctor of the church

Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada, born in Avila, Spain, on March 28, 1515, did not seem destined for fame as a religious reformer and spiritual mentor when she took the habit at the Calced Carmelite convent of the Incarnation on November 3, 1536, or at her profession a year later. Teresa had been a lively child who was able to have her way with a doting father following the death of her mother when Teresa was twelve years old. By the time Teresa was a teenager, her father was so concerned about her behavior that he sent her to the Augustin-

ian convent for a year and a half. There, the good example of a certain nun and the influence of a devout uncle set Teresa to thinking about the religious life. After a serious illness had frightened her into thinking she might die and go to hell, she decided on a safe course, and against her father's will entered the convent of the Incarnation. Twenty years of physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering followed.

By 1555, Teresa was in a spiritual combat reminiscent of Augustine of Hippo's (354–430). Like Augustine, whose *Confessions* she had read, she lamented that she loved God but that things of the world attracted her. One day, at the unexpected sight of a new crucifix in the oratory, Teresa fell to her knees in sorrow and contrition. A new life began. She negotiated the reform of the Carmelite order in Spain, from 1567 to 1582 founding seventeen convents on the principles of the original Carmelites: strict enclosure, silence, asceticism, and prayer. Responding to her own experiences in prayer, in which she was instructed by God to listen and be attentive, she imparted to nuns and laypeople the wisdom of the inner way by which God was leading her. Chief among her writings on the mystical life are *The Life* (1562–1565), *Way of Perfection* (1565), and the *Interior Castle* (1577). Also of importance is the *Foundations* (1573), the story of the founding of the Discalced (shoeless) convents.

The *Interior Castle* is Teresa's masterpiece, a sustained development of the image of the soul as an interior castle where God dwells unceasingly. The mystical journey is one of becoming ever more aware of God present in the soul and of responding ever more subtly yet passionately in love. The interior castle has seven mansions, and the language of love that expresses the journey inward through the mansions is prayer. The soul enters the castle by means of mental prayer, which differs from vocal prayer in requiring a person to think about the words that she utters aloud or to herself. Contrary to prevailing attitudes in the church and society, Teresa advocated that women use their minds rather than merely mouth the words, as they had been taught to do. Unless a woman thinks, Teresa maintained, she cannot even enter the castle but will be forced to remain outside with reptiles and other ugly creatures. In the first three mansions, which correspond to the purgative way, Teresa teaches how to purge imperfections, nurture virtues, and discern progress. The prayer of recollection, treated in the third chapter, is the transition from the purgative way of beginners to the illuminative way of proficients. Passive as opposed to active recollection was awareness of being quieted with no effort on the soul's part. Henceforth the journey through the inner castle would be more and more passive as the soul became gifted with the Prayer of Quiet (fourth mansion) and the Sleep of the Faculties (fifth mansion.)

The Spiritual Betrothal and Spiritual Marriage express the deepening intimacy between the soul and God as one is



*Teresa of Avila in ecstasy. Detail from Gian Lorenzo Bernini's sculpture group in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome.
(Bettmann/CORBIS)*

brought into the sixth and seventh mansions. Of all the mansions, the sixth is the most troublesome. Here Teresa treats supernatural phenomena that she herself had experienced: wounds of love, rapture, flight of the spirit, and jubilation of the soul. She also explains understandings that may come to the soul during these experiences, relying on traditional classifications to identify kinds of visions and locutions. The suffering that marks the sixth mansion, when the soul feels crucified between heaven and earth, ceases in the Spiritual Marriage of the seventh mansion as the soul is brought to rest, both within herself and with God. Teresa's account of the journey in love to Love retains its freshness because she employed the familiar language of her experience. Hers is not the language of the trained theologian but rather that of an "ignorant woman"—as she was wont to call herself.

Teresa's importance as a reformer, founder, mystical writer, and teacher was recognized in her day. She died in 1957, and forty years later she was canonized. In 1970, she and Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) became the first women proclaimed doctors of the Catholic Church. Her appeal is strong today, especially for women who seek models for a creative spiritual life. The intensity of Teresa's struggle for spiritual authenticity, her courage to live in a way that was consonant with her deepest desire, which was to love God intimately, and her uniquely expressive writings are testimony to the holy life that was Teresa of Avila.

—Mary E. Giles

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Catherine of Siena; Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Hagiography; Mysticism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Scholars as Holy People

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Teresa of Calcutta

(1910–1997 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, caregiver

Mother Teresa of Calcutta has caught the world's imagination like few holy people of the twentieth century. She was an Albanian by birth, born in what is now Skopje, Macedonia, in 1910. In 1928, she joined the religious order of the Sisters of Loreto in Ireland, taking the name Teresa upon her profes-

sion. Her order soon sent Teresa to India, where she began her mission to "the poorest of the poor."

At first, Teresa's time in India was spent teaching at a high school run by her order. In 1946, however, she experienced an inner conversion while on a train, feeling herself called by Jesus to what became her life's work, the care for the destitute of India. To carry out this mission, in 1948 Teresa received permission to leave her convent, wearing the white, blue-trimmed sari that became her trademark, to live and work among the poor of Calcutta. She studied some medicine, but she put the bulk of her effort into providing food and care for the hungry and sick and into personally visiting, comforting, and giving practical aid to the destitute. Soon her former students started to join her, creating a circle of caregivers that in 1950 was formally organized into the Missionaries of Charity.

The Missionaries of Charity, recognized as a religious order under the direct control of the papacy, grew rapidly, soon acquiring branch orders for male religious, and two organizations of "Co-workers," laypeople who devoted themselves to helping Teresa in her cause. The order's members, living in great personal privation, have expanded their work to supply not just food but orphanages, shelters, and hospitals throughout India and beyond. By the time of Teresa of Calcutta's death in 1997, the order had 610 foundations in 123 countries, most strikingly in a number of Communist states. She won increasing recognition during her life, including the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize, and the government of India gave Teresa a state funeral. Her tomb in Calcutta is already a locus of pilgrimage. The process for her canonization has also already begun, in the least possible time Roman Catholic law permits.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Teresa of Calcutta's life, totally devoted as it was to a Christian model of indiscriminating love for others, was only discovered after her death. It turns out that, while devoting herself completely to Jesus' call, Teresa herself felt separated and rejected by God, a state she called "the darkness," which started about the time she began to work with the poor and continued throughout the almost fifty years until her death. That this woman persevered so long with such little interior comfort suggests indeed what the Roman Catholic Church designates as "heroic" virtue.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People

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Teresia Benedicta a Cruce

See Stein, Edith

Tezcatlipoca

Mesoamerican god-hero

Tezcatlipoca is the warrior divinity in opposition to Quetzalcoatl in Aztec accounts. He is also linked to the Chichimec warrior Mixcoatl and the Mexica patron Huitzilopochtli. Like Quetzalcoatl, this tutelary divinity is often perceived in human form. His most frequent image is that of a warrior in full battle array. He is usually portrayed with an obsidian mirror replacing his right foot, which the Earth Monster bit off as he battled Quetzalcoatl to establish the fourth sun. Many groups in Mesoamerica consider Tezcatlipoca their ancestor, and he is often referred to as Ipalnemoani, "The one by whom we live."

Tezcatlipoca also acts as the trickster in many accounts. He dresses up as an old man to go into the marketplace to observe the Toltec ruler Huemac. Tezcatlipoca also tricks the historical Quetzalcoatl of Tula, resulting in his downfall. Tezcatlipoca's magic mirror causes Quetzalcoatl to believe himself ugly and disfigured. In despair, Quetzalcoatl imbibes *pulque*, a fermented beverage made from the maguey cactus, and commits incest with his sister. Ashamed by his transgressions, Quetzalcoatl leaves Tula, allowing the forces dedicated to Tezcatlipoca to regain control of the city.

Although the Catholic missionaries chose Quetzalcoatl as the sacred person to be aligned with Christ, it is clear that in pre-Hispanic times many groups revered both Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca as patrons of a cosmic and sociopolitical balance. The two represented different classes: Quetzalcoatl the elite and Tezcatlipoca the military. Religion and cosmology were never far removed from statecraft, and leaders in power had to balance the forces. Any successful ruler would require support from both. The educational system of Tenochtitlan best represents this concept.

Two types of schools existed. One, the *calmecac*, was the educational system of the elite. This represented a closed society, accessible only by birth or marriage, where students learned to serve their patron, Quetzalcoatl. The military schools, or *telpochcalli*, were dedicated to the service of Tezcatlipoca. Entrance into the military and success in battle were the only methods of social advancement allowed to the nonelite segments of society. Although some accounts claim that Quetzalcoatl eliminated human sacrifice, many cities devoted to him continued the practice. Sacrifice to Tezcatlipoca occurs throughout Mesoamerica. For that reason, the missionaries favored alignment with Quetzalcoatl to discourage the militaristic aspects of Mesoamerican religion.

—Jeanne L. Gillespie

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Gods on Earth; Heroes; Quetzalcoatl Topiltzin; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Theban Legion

(d. c. 287 C.E.)

Christian martyrs

Almost nothing is known of the Theban Legion except for the circumstances of the group's martyrdom in about 287, but the centrality of the relics of these Christian soldiers made them a powerful thaumaturgical force in Western Europe. They were members of a Roman legion from the Thebaid in Egypt during the reign of Maximian. On campaign at Martigny, near Lake Geneva, Maximian ordered the army to sacrifice to the gods. The Theban Legion withdrew to nearby Agaune-en-Valais (now St. Moritz in Switzerland) in order to avoid compromising their beliefs, and Maximian ordered his army to attack them, killing a tenth of the legion. He believed that those remaining would then obey him, but led by their commander Maurice, they remained true to their faith even after a second onslaught, laying down their weapons and finally being slaughtered to a man.

Exaggerations and elaborations of details of the incident abound. The legion was said to number around 6,600 men, and besides their leader several became known by name, including Exuperius, Candidus, Innocent, and Vitalis. In some versions, some legionnaires escaped the massacre at Agaune and were martyred elsewhere: Ours at Soleure; Gereon at Cologne; Cassius and Florentius at Bonn; and Victor at either Agaune, Cologne, or Xanten. Later in the Middle Ages, Gregory the Moor, a black member of the legion (as Maurice was sometimes represented), was recognized.

Maurice was by far the most important member of the Theban Legion, but many churches in the Holy Roman Empire, France, Savoy, and Piedmont were dedicated to them all. The Swiss flag, a white cross on a red ground, was originally the banner of the Theban Legion. St. Moritz, which had become an important pilgrimage site by the fifth century, remains the center of their cult. The cathedrals of Magdeburg, Tours, and Angers were also dedicated to them. As soldier-saints, they were important in many military contexts. In the Roman church, the feast day of the Theban Legion, September 30, was limited to local calendars in 1969.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Maurice; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Thecla of Iconium

(1st cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary holy woman

Thecla of Iconium provided Christianity with the prototype of the virgin martyr. Her story, appearing in the apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla from the late second century, was the earliest reworking of the motifs and conventions of Greco-Roman romance to serve the new religion. In it, the maiden Thecla is converted by the apostle Paul's preaching in a manner akin to love at first sight. As a result, she refuses an arranged marriage and dedicates herself to perpetual virginity. During the course of her life, she preserves her chastity through a series of ordeals. Each time she is miraculously saved by divine intervention. Her preaching and her example are credited with gaining many more converts to Christianity.

Thecla's cult grew rapidly, becoming very popular by the end of the fourth century as she became a behavioral model for religious women and men alike. Yet the ambiguities within the story itself support a range of interpretations. It has been characterized as an exemplar of the appeal to celibacy as a higher state during Christianity's identity formation, of the conflict between men as Christian preachers challenged established authority, and of the protest of communities of continent women against the misogyny of the early church fathers.

—Helen E. Maurer

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Paul; Sexuality and Holy People

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Theodore

(d. c. 287 C.E.)

Christian martyr

The historical circumstances surrounding St. Theodore (d. c. 287) were so vague that, by the ninth century, two separate Theodores became recognized, both among the most prominent Eastern military saints.

One of these Theodores joined the army as a young man and was martyred at Amasea on the southeast shore of the Black Sea during the dual reigns of Emperors Diocletian and Maximian. As was common among Christian soldier-saints, he refused to sacrifice to the state gods as he was ordered to do. Instead, he set fire to the temple of Cybele. He was imprisoned to die of hunger, but angels joined him in his cell to sing psalms, converting his jailers. He then underwent horrible tortures: He was suspended while his flesh was ripped with iron hooks, stretched on a rack, and then burned at the stake. The fire finally killed him but without consuming his corpse, which remained unmarked and accompanied by the odor of sanctity. His body was then taken to Euchaïta (present-day Avkat) in the Hellespont. This Theodore became known as the Tyro (recruit), or Theodore of Amasea.

Particularly in the East, however, another St. Theodore eventually was recognized, the Stratilates (general), or Theodore of Heraclea (d. c. 319). Like his namesake, Theodore Stratilates refused to worship the state gods, but during the reign of Licinius. He destroyed golden and silver cult statues, distributing the pieces to the poor. His tortures were more numerous: He was scourged with lead whips, which broke his limbs, and lacerated with broken glass or pottery shards. He was then crucified, and while he was on the cross his eyes and genitals were mutilated. But an angel took him from the cross and healed him. Finally, he was decapitated. His remains were taken to Euchaneia, near Euchaïta. Although not much else is known of the life of either saint, Theodore Stratilates became known, on the model of St. George, as a dragon slayer.

The feast of Theodore the Tyro is celebrated on November 9 by the Catholic Church and on February 17 by the Orthodox Church. Theodore Stratilates is remembered on February 7, and the translation of his relics is commemorated on June 8. Both had considerable reputations as miracle workers. One of the great soldier-saints, Theodore was considered the patron of the Byzantine armies and was credited with assuring many military victories. He is also credited with curing diseases, expelling demons, and imparting spiritual blessings, particularly at Euchaïta, the site of his shrine, a major Orthodox pilgrimage center until the Ottoman takeover in the fourteenth century. He was also venerated in Europe, the Near East, Georgia, and Russia. His body was claimed by both Euchaïta and Brindisi, his head by both Cajeta and Chartres. Before St. Mark, he was also the first patron of Venice, which claimed to have one of his arms.

—James Bugslag

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Death; Martyrdom and Persecution; Orthodoxy and Saints; Veneration of Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Theodore of Tarsus (of Canterbury)

(c. 602–690 C.E.)

Christian archbishop, organizer

Theodore, born around 602, was an accomplished Greek scholar who studied philosophy and law. He spent his early years in Tarsus, which was often troubled by Persian aggression. His early life is little known and not recorded; his major accomplishments occurred following his sixty-fifth birthday. In 667, he was working in Rome and wearing the Eastern tonsure but was highly respected by the Roman clergy and Pope Vitalian. An Englishman, Wighard, who had been sent to Rome to be consecrated archbishop of Canterbury by the pope, died from the complications of the journey. Pope Vitalian asked Hadrian, an African cleric, to accept the post. He refused but recommended Theodore for the position. As a result, Theodore was ordained subdeacon, tonsured in the Roman fashion, and consecrated archbishop of Canterbury in 668.

Hadrian accompanied Theodore to England, where they set about visiting and evaluating the entire state of Christian

shrines and cathedrals on the island. Theodore convened two major synods during his archbishopric, one at Hereford in 673 and another at Hatfield in 680. Theodore's extensive influence and knowledge of Greek writings and of the Eastern church helped establish Canterbury as a major center of culture and learning in the seventh and eighth centuries. Bede, writing a generation after Theodore, noted Theodore's influence in stabilizing the structure of the English church and establishing the primacy of the church of Canterbury. Theodore died in 690, and his feast day is celebrated on September 19.

—Bradford Lee Eden

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission

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Theodore the Studite

(759–826 C.E.)

Orthodox abbot, reformer

Theodore was a monk and holy man of the Byzantine church who became abbot of the monastery of St. John of Studium in Constantinople in 794. His writings, his zeal for monastic reform, his stand on iconoclasm, and his way of life made him one of the major figures in the history of Byzantine monasticism. The overriding requirement of monastic communities was to follow Christ's instructions to leave family and all worldly things behind and live in egalitarian harmony according to his example. The need to survive, however, involved monks in the world and created a tension between the ideal and reality.

Theodore the Studite devised a rule that would return the monasteries of his time to an earlier state of purity. It set forth guidelines for communal living that included strict poverty, manual labor, and enclosure. He emphasized charity, moderation, and the stability of remaining within the community. He was so concerned for the purity of those in his care that he even banned female animals from monastic properties. This reform was a major accomplishment, as during the ninth century the development of Byzantine monasticism was interrupted by the iconoclastic controversy that pitted the monks against imperial authority. Theodore was seen as a hero in this fight to uphold Orthodox beliefs against the power of the emperor. His reputation and his reforms attracted monks from all over the Byzantine Empire to St. John of Studium. Because of his dedicated

and outspoken defense of Orthodox doctrine and beliefs, he spent the last few years before his death in 826 in exile at Chalcis. He lived on, however, through his writings, and the form of monasticism he instituted had lasting influence as the standard against which all future Byzantine monastic endeavors would be measured.

—*Diane Peters Auslander*

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Orthodoxy and Saints; Politics and Holy People; Purity and Pollution; Reform and Reaction

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Theodosius of Kiev

(c. 1030–1074 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox monk

The Russian saint Theodosius of Kiev was a monk who co-founded (with Anthony Pechersky) the Kiev Caves Lavra. He was born around 1030 in Vasilev (now Vasilkiv) near Kiev and died on May 3, 1074, in Kiev.

Theodosius grew up in the city of Kursk in the family of a pious government official. Against the will of his mother, who directed the boy's steps toward a civic career, he renounced all connection with the comfortable circumstances of his parents and at the age of twenty-three dedicated himself to monastic life. Accepted by venerable Antony, a holy ascetic, to his cave community, Theodosius received tonsure at the hands of the priest-monk Nikon and served the monastery with work, prayer, and fasting, becoming its superior around 1062. When his leadership attracted a flow of disciples (their number soon reached 100), he reformed the life at the caves in order to unite the ascetic community above the ground. He adopted the rule of the Studite monastery, introducing the ideal of cenobitic monasticism to Ukraine, a change that revived the spiritual life of the people. The abbot relieved the austerity of asceticism by emphasizing charity, instruction, missionary work, the common good, and collective life.

As the reputation of the monks for devotion and piety drew pilgrims and benefactors from among both the poor and the wealthy, the monastery's charitable works grew. Open to the outside world and disagreeing with the practice of monastic isolationism, the Kievan-Pechersky Lavra soon became one of the foremost religious institutions in Eastern

Europe. It managed during Theodosius's rule to remain independent from the political strife of the Kievan princes. Throughout his life, Theodosius never ceased to be a source of inspiration for his brethren by practicing self-mortification, by dedicating himself to prayer and labor, by assisting all those in need of spiritual guidance, and by showing endless mercy, compassion, and humility toward his countrymen. His extraordinary zeal in the service of souls, united with kindness and love for the poor, won numbers for the Christian faith.

Before his death in 1074, Theodosius commissioned the building of a new stone church, the future Dormition Cathedral. He did not live to see its completion. It is in this cathedral church that the saint's relics were laid on August 14, 1091. His canonization took place in 1108, and his feast day is May 18 (or May 3 by the old calendar) and August 27 (or August 14).

—*Ewa Slojka*

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Mission; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints

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Theophilus the Penitent

Christian legendary holy person

The story of the legendary Theophilus was widespread in literature and art in the Middle Ages. The original story is attributed to the seventh-century writer Metaphrastes; in the tenth century, Hroswitha of Gandersheim adopted the Faustian theme for her Latin play. The story was recast in vernacular languages as well. Jacobus de Voragine included it in his *Golden Legend*, and it was well known in England. In the thirteenth century, the French poets Rutebeuf, Gautier de Coinci, and Philippe de Remi, and the Spaniards Gonzalo de Berceo and Alphonso, retell the story as tribute to the miraculous deeds of the Virgin Mary. Many representations of the story in stone and stained glass remain in churches in France. Among the most outstanding examples are the sculpture in the tympanum of the north portal at Notre-Dame Cathedral, Paris, and in a stained-glass window at Saint-Pierre Cathedral, Beauvais.

According to these accounts, Theophilus, archdeacon of Adana in Cilicia, was much respected because of his piety and humility. When offered the bishopric, he rejected it politely. The new bishop dismissed him from his post, which made the good man angry and jealous. Once loved by the

people, he was now poor, slandered, and despised, and pride made him suffer despair. Because he wished to regain his position, he consulted a non-Christian (the Salatin in Rutebeuf's work; a Jew in Gautier de Coinci's), who introduced him to Satan. Theophilus bartered his soul, renounced Christianity, signed a pact in his own blood with the devil, and immediately regained his post. He learned how to manipulate the bishop and became as self-serving and egotistical as the other members of the clergy.

However, seven years later he came to repentance. He fasted for forty days and forty nights and prayed to the Virgin Mary, who appeared to him. She descended into hell to retrieve the charter from Satan, and returned it to Theophilus, whom she found sleeping before the altar. Theophilus made a public confession of his sins and spoke of how Mary had saved him from damnation. The bishop read the contract in public and then preached a sermon on the repentant sinner's experience. Three days later, Theophilus died and was proclaimed a saint. The saint's name was added to the Latin liturgy of the mass. His feast day is February 23.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Mary, Virgin

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Thérèse of Lisieux

(1873–1897 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, writer, doctor of the church

Thérèse of Lisieux, known as the "Little Flower," was a Carmelite nun and author during the nineteenth century. Her spiritual autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, written in the last years of her life and published posthumously in 1898, proved immensely popular and has been translated into many languages.

Born Thérèse Martin in Alençon, France, in 1873, she was the youngest of five sisters. Her mother died when she was five, and the family moved to Lisieux, where Thérèse was raised in a strict Catholic household. Convinced of her vocation at an early age, she sought to follow her two eldest sis-



Thérèse of Lisieux is venerated not just by Roman Catholics but by members of the Greek Orthodox Church. This painting of Thérèse is in a church dedicated to her in Hamra Beirut, Lebanon. (Art Directors)

ters into the Carmelite convent at Lisieux. Faced with ecclesiastical opposition because of her age, she pleaded her case before Pope Leo XIII, interrupting the scripted flow of an audience of pilgrims. The pope was noncommittal, but despite her youth she entered the convent at fifteen as Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face. (Another sister and a cousin later entered the same foundation.) Still a novice herself, Thérèse became novice mistress in 1896, a position she held until her death from consumption the following year.

In late 1894 or early 1895, Thérèse came to an understanding of her "little way" of spiritual childhood. She believed that heroic acts were not necessary to gain salvation; God's love and mercy extended equally to small, everyday actions and thoughts. These were the themes that she expounded so eloquently in her popular autobiography. Thérèse's simplicity and spiritual confidence—reflected in her dying statement in 1897, "I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth"—has inspired millions of Catholics. She remains one of the most popular Roman Catholic saints.

Thérèse was canonized in 1925 by Pope Pius XI, who named her copatroness of missions (with Francis Xavier) in 1927. She was named copatroness of France (with Joan of Arc) in 1944 by Pope Pius XII, and declared a doctor of the church in 1997 by Pope John Paul II. Her feast day is October 1.

—Alisa Plant

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Joan of Arc; Suffering and Holy People

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Theseus

Greek hero

Today, the mythical hero Theseus is best known for navigating King Minos's labyrinth and killing the Minotaur of Crete. In antiquity, however, he was counted an early Athenian king and enjoyed a special connection to that city with due prominence in the religious cult of Athena. Yet this attachment is late, and the first Theseus of myth was an obscure adventurer, and not a sympathetic one: He used and abandoned Minos's daughter Ariadne, abducted and raped a very young Helen, and was indirectly guilty of his father's death. He appears only infrequently in pre-Archaic myth. From the late classical era on, however, in texts such as the *Athenaion Politeia* (Athenian constitution) and Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, he is credited with a variety of civilizing acts, including the unification of Attica, the invention of coinage, and even the establishment of democracy.

This change in status dates to the middle and late Archaic age of the sixth century B.C.E., when prominent Athenians began to employ his myth for propagandistic purposes. The tyrant Peisistratos (r. c. 560–527 B.C.E.) is probably the first to have done so, but Cleisthenes in the early fifth century B.C.E. also used Theseus as part of the reforms that led to the development of Athenian democracy. Later, in 476 B.C.E. after the Persian Wars, Cimon brought back the “bones” of Theseus from the island of Scyros, entombing these relics in a special shrine in the Athenian *agora* (marketplace). By the first century C.E., when Plutarch wrote his biography of Theseus, the hero had gone from relative obscurity to lasting fame as “the Athenian Herakles.”

—Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman

See also: Herakles; Heroes; Sages; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Thomas

(1st cent. C.E.)

Christian apostle

Thomas is identified as one of the twelve apostles of Jesus in each of the gospels as well as in Acts (1:3). It is only in John, however, that Thomas as a person gains any substance or clarity. He appears in four passages, and in three of them (11:16; 20:24; 21:2) he is called Didymos, “the twin.” This rather unusual appellation, which is not explained, led to later speculation that Thomas was the twin brother of Jesus.

Thomas is often called “doubting Thomas,” an unfortunate reference that has its origin in John 20:24–29. According to the story, Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared to the other apostles and refused to believe that Jesus had risen unless he could see and touch the wounds suffered by Jesus. Here Thomas asks for nothing more than the evidence already provided for the other disciples (see 20:20). Once the risen Christ appears to him, Thomas offers one of the most developed confessions in the gospels, identifying Jesus as his “Lord and God” (20:28). The picture of Thomas elsewhere in John hardly comports with the image of feckless doubter. In John 11:16, Thomas, in spite of the danger, encourages the other disciples to accompany Jesus to Bethany, vowing to be with Jesus even to the death.

The New Testament offers little else on Thomas. The third-century Acts of Thomas, however, asserts not only that Thomas was the twin brother of Jesus but also that it fell to Thomas among the apostles to travel to India. Having declared that he would not go, Thomas was sold into slavery as a carpenter to agents of Gundafor, an Indian king. Once there, Thomas was entrusted with building a palace for Gundafor, but he gave the money to the poor instead. Eventually Gundafor was converted, and Thomas began to travel throughout India. Some point out that there is evidence of a king named Gondophernes or Gunuphara in the region of present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan, who reigned from about 20 to 50 C.E. The story says that Thomas died a martyr's death there.

—David Nystrom

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Disciples; Jesus; Mission

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Thomas Aquinas

(c. 1224–1274 C.E.)

Christian friar, theologian, doctor of the church

Thomas Aquinas, a medieval Western Christian theologian, is most famous for systematizing Catholic theology in such a way that his thought still dominates much of Catholic theological discussion. He is most famous for producing the *Summa Theologiae* (Summa of theology, 1265–1273) and the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (Summa against the gentiles, 1259–1267).

Thomas was born at Roccasecca in southern Italy around 1224. In 1231, he was sent to the famous Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino as an oblate. During his nine-year stay, he was educated in the tradition of *lectio divina*, or divine reading. Divine reading consisted in prayerful, meditative reading of the Bible. After receiving this traditional monastic education, Thomas studied at the new University of Naples. The university was the first established by a secular ruler, Emperor Frederick II, and was a center of cultural interaction between the Arabic-, Greek-, and Latin-speaking worlds. When Thomas studied there, Naples was a great center of the emerging study of Aristotle's works, newly translated from Greek and Arabic. It was also at the university that Thomas first became familiar with the Dominican order, which he soon joined.

After entering the order, Thomas's family kidnapped him and held him for a year trying to convince him to change his mind. Upon his release, the order sent him to study at the University of Paris under the guidance of Albert the Great, the famous Dominican philosopher and scientist. By the age of twenty, Thomas had been exposed to traditional monastic spirituality and education along with the latest secular knowledge and Aristotelian thought. These experiences, combined with his encounter with the Dominican order and Albert, in addition to his natural genius, gave him the tools to create the great array of treatises he would produce in his short life.

Designed to help convert Jews and Muslims, the *Summa Contra Gentiles* was designed for use by Dominican missionaries. The *Summa Theologiae* was an attempt to cover all of Christian theology in one work in a clearer and more effective manner than earlier theological textbooks. A massive work containing thirty-eight treatises and more than 3,000 articles, it owed a great deal to Aristotle, to both Eastern and Western patristic writers, and to the biblical knowledge Thomas had attained at Monte Cassino and Paris. The popularity the work attained owes much to its elaborate scholastic structure and clarity. While attempting to cover all of

Christian theology, the work is perhaps best known for its five proofs of the existence of God and for trying to find a middle way in the medieval disputes about the relationship between faith and reason. Other writings included sermons, letters, and tracts on politics and spirituality. It should be kept in mind that the overwhelming number of Thomas's writings were scriptural commentaries or spiritual in nature, many written at the request of the pope, his own order, bishops, or the University of Paris.

It is crucial to understand that for a student in theology at a medieval university, especially for a Dominican, the idea was to study, then teach, and finally to preach. Academic work was not separate from a pastoral ministry of preaching. For Thomas and the Dominican order, teaching was the most important work one could do for fellow Christians.

Although usually associated with the University of Paris, Thomas spent more of his life creating and working in the individual friary schools of Italy within the Dominican system, particularly in Rome and Naples. His intellectual abilities were noticed both by popes, who frequently pressed him into service writing on controversial matters, and kings, including Charles of Anjou, king of Naples, who asked Thomas to form a study center at Naples. Thomas would have considered himself a theologian, not a philosopher, and as such he was open to prayer to solve intellectual problems. Prayer, which was crucial throughout his life, led him to such a mystical revelation in 1273 that he stopped writing, saying that "all that I have written seems like straw to me" (Davies 1993, 9). He died in 1274.

Thomas's spiritual life and contributions to faith are often overshadowed by his philosophical accomplishments. Thomas's work, often controversial in his lifetime, was soon adopted as the base curriculum for the Dominican order. The original and controversial nature of his writings kept him from canonization until 1323. However, it was only at the Council of Trent (1545) that Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* became a standard text for theological education. In 1567, Pope Pius V declared him a doctor of the church. That position of primacy was reinforced by Pope Leo XIII in the nineteenth century and again by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. Thomas's theology is the only work of one individual recognized as official church doctrine.

—Patrick J. Holt

See also: Albertus Magnus; Christianity and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Recognition; Scholars as Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Thomas Becket

(c. 1120–1170 C.E.)

Christian archbishop, martyr

Born in London, England, around 1120, the archbishop and martyr Thomas Becket inspired one of the most popular Christian cults of the Middle Ages. After studying at Merton Abbey and in Paris, Thomas went on to become a successful administrator and joined the curia of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas became archdeacon of Canterbury in 1154, and the following year King Henry II appointed him chancellor of England. The two men became close friends. Thomas supported the king at court as well as on the battlefield. In 1162, Henry pushed for Thomas's election as archbishop of Canterbury. Soon afterward, the dramatic events that led to Thomas's martyrdom began to unfold as Thomas adopted a more austere life, reinventing himself in his role as primate of England, and his friendship with the king soured.

Although Thomas and Henry fought over a number of issues, the one that stirred the embers into a blaze was the rivalry between church and crown. At the center was the Constitutions of Clarendon, a collection of ancestral privileges and customs that Henry wanted to maintain and reissue in 1164. Thomas objected to the Constitutions because they professed the king to be the head of the English church. By the end of the year, emotions had become so charged that Thomas fled England; for the next six years, he waged his campaign for the rights of the English church from France.

In July 1170, Thomas and Henry were reconciled, and the archbishop returned to England on or about December 1. Relations between Thomas, Henry, and their supporters rapidly became strained throughout the month, however, and many royalists believed that while Thomas lived there would be no peace in England. This sentiment might well have needed Henry to utter the famous and ambiguous plaint: "What miserable drones and traitors have I nourished and promoted in my household, who let their lord be treated with such shameful contempt by a low-born clerk" (Barlow 1986, 235). This sentence, which Henry probably spoke on Christmas Day, sealed Thomas's fate. Four barons interpreted these words as a challenge and plotted against the archbishop. The men reached Canterbury on December 29, and by late that afternoon they had attacked Thomas, killing him in his own cathedral.

Pope Alexander III officially canonized Thomas in 1173, but a popular cult had developed immediately after his death. The focus of veneration was the martyr's blood, which

had been spilled in the cathedral. Mixed with water and stored in vials for ease of transport, the blood became famous for its healing power. Thomas soon gained wide recognition as a thaumaturgic saint who interceded to cure a variety of ailments. Some claimed his intercession could raise the dead. Although focused at Canterbury, the cult was immensely successful and soon took on an international character, having been dispersed through the scattering of his relics and the belief in his ability to intercede even on behalf of those who did not have access to them. The cult remained popular until 1538, when King Henry VIII had the shrine destroyed. The Roman Catholic Church continues to celebrate his feast on December 29, the anniversary of his death.

—Dawn Marie Hayes

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Politics and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Wealth and Poverty

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Thorlákr Thórhallsson (Thorlac)

(1133–1193 C.E.)

Christian abbot, bishop

Thorlákr Thórhallsson was Iceland's first saint, and the only one recognized by Rome today. Born in 1133, he was educated for the priesthood by a learned member of the powerful family of the Oddaverjar. After spending some time as a priest, Thorlákr went abroad to finish his education, studying in Paris and Lincoln. Shortly after his return to Iceland, he was made prior of the newly founded house of Augustinian canons at Thykkvabær in 1168. He soon became abbot, and he was consecrated bishop of Skálholt in 1178.

Knowledge of St. Thorlákr comes primarily from the different versions of the vernacular saga about him. The earliest of these, composed shortly after his translation, portrays a typical holy bishop in language redolent of the Bible. A

fourteenth-century manuscript of the saga contains an additional narrative, “Oddaverja Tháttr,” which portrays Thorlák fighting for church rights, as did Bishop Árni Thorláksson of Skálholt after him. The historical value of this passage has been questioned, most recently by Orri Vésteinnsson (2000). The chief value of these works for historians lies in the various collections of miracles associated with Thorlák, which provide an unparalleled window into the everyday life of medieval Icelanders.

The fact that Thorlák maintained a celibate lifestyle would have set him aside from other Icelandic clergy of his time and may have contributed to a reputation for sanctity that developed soon after his death. By the end of the twelfth century, Iceland was the only Scandinavian country without a local saint. The nearest major shrine was that of St. Olaf at Trondheim, whose archbishops had recently shown a tendency to interfere in Icelandic affairs. The impetus for Thorlák’s popular canonization appears to have originated with reports of dreams and miracles in the northern Icelandic diocese, Hólar. In 1198, at the instance of Bishop Brandr of Hólar and others, Bishop Páll of Skálholt announced at the National Assembly that vows to Thorlák were permitted and that the anniversary of his death would be liturgically commemorated. The reaction was all that could be desired; enough miracles had been collected within a month to justify his translation on July 20 of the same year.

Thorlák’s popularity is attested by the large number of churches that include him in their dedications or owned statues or paintings of him, by reports of miracles, and by translations in 1229 and 1292. The anniversary of his initial translation was established as an obligatory feast in 1237.

—Margaret Cormack

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Sexuality and Holy People

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Tianhou (T’ien-hou) (Empress of Heaven)

(960–987 C.E.)

Daoist goddess

Tianhou is a Daoist goddess who emerged during the early northern Song dynasty (960–1127) in southeastern China. Although closely associated with her home in Meizhou on the coast of Fujian province, Tianhou’s popularity extends throughout China, Taiwan, and overseas Chinese communi-

ties. The goddess is particularly popular in Taiwan, where she is commonly known as Mazu (Granny). As the traditional guardian of sailors, fisherpeople, and official envoys at sea, Tianhou protects people and boats from storms. Tianhou’s duties also include prevention of droughts and floods, protection of people from bandits, and assistance with conception and childbirth. The Chinese imperial court granted the goddess the titles Tianhou and Tianshang shengmu (Holy mother in heaven). However, Tianhou has been thoroughly integrated into Chinese popular religion in a similar fashion as the Buddhist deity Guanyin.

The numerous versions of Tianhou’s hagiography reflect her appeal to people from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. Many accounts state that before her apotheosis the goddess was born in 960 to a family of fisherpeople surnamed Lin. Miss Lin never cried as a child and was a precocious youngster who had learned the Confucian classics by age eight and mastered the major Buddhist sutras by age eleven. As an adolescent, she encountered a Daoist spirit who gave her a magical talisman that she used to heal the sick and exorcise demons. She also developed the ability to allow her spirit to travel outside of her body. Tianhou never married. She died in 987.

Many Chinese boats have a small shrine to Tianhou on the bow. The goddess usually appears wearing a headdress of dangling beads appropriate for an empress. She is often accompanied by two fierce-looking attendants: Shunfeng Er (Ears that hear with the wind) and Qianli Yan (Eyes that see a thousand miles). Devotees celebrate her birthday on the twenty-third day of the third lunar month.

—Noelle Giuffrida

See also: Apotheosis; Daoism and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians

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Tianming

See Mandate of Heaven

Tijani, Ahmad al-

(1737/1739–1815 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Ahmad al-Tijani, considered an Islamic saint (*wali*) by Muslims throughout North and West Africa, is the founder of a

sufi order (*tariqa*) that is named after him, the Tijaniyya. Since its establishment in the eighteenth century, the Tijaniyya order has grown to be one of the largest and most widespread orders of Islam in Africa. Pilgrims frequent al-Tijani's tomb in Fez, Morocco, on a regular basis, believing that it is a holy site.

Born around 1737 in 'Ain-Madi, Algeria, Ahmad al-Tijani was part of a Berber family. At the age of twenty-one, he journeyed to Fez to study with noted sufi scholars. Fifteen years later, in 1773, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, staying there for nearly a year. While traveling to and from Arabia, he joined different sufi orders along the way. Returning to Morocco in 1774, al-Tijani claimed that the prophet Muhammad had communicated with him during his journey. Shortly thereafter, he amassed a loyal following and founded his own order.

As the leader of the Tijaniyya order, al-Tijani was considered a living saint who embodied spiritual grace and divine blessing (*baraka*). From the outset, al-Tijani strove to maintain and ensure the existing loyalty of his followers. One of his first moves was to forbid his followers from becoming members of any other order or taking oaths of allegiance (*'ahd*) to anyone other than himself. In this, the Tijaniyya was different from most sufi orders of the time, and it continues to be so at present. Further differences distinguishing the order from other Muslim sects are found in the litanies (*wird*) that members say following prayer, and the fact that their recitation (*dhikr*) generally takes place collectively rather than on an individual level. Neither *dhikr* nor *wird* are practices that stem from al-Tijani—they had been in existence for some time in various sufi orders; nevertheless, al-Tijani did add specific features particular to his order.

As his order gained in numbers and he gained renown as a holy man, al-Tijani embarked on a vigorous proselytization campaign throughout Morocco. He derided public religious festivals, activities organized by Berbers from competing sufi orders, arguing that they were an exploitation of divine grace (*baraka*) and a negative innovation (*bida*) not in accordance with Islamic doctrine.

The Tijaniyya continued to expand markedly after al-Tijani's death in 1815. After first spreading throughout northern Africa, the Tijaniyya made its first significant strides in West Africa, specifically Mauritania and Senegal, in the early nineteenth century. Via trade networks and the holy wars (*jihads*) of a Senegalese Tijani named Omar Tall, the Tijaniyya moved eastward past the Niger bend from the 1830s through the mid-1860s. Conversions en masse were not uncommon, and by the 1930s large parts of previously non-Islamic sub-Saharan West Africa were predominantly Muslim. At present, the Tijaniyya is one of the largest and best-known orders in Africa. Indeed, Tijanis constitute majorities or are at least

a close second in many of the nations of Islamic North and West Africa.

—Noah Butler

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Mission; Reform and Reaction; Sufism; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Tillich, Paul

(1886–1965 C.E.)

Lutheran theologian

The son of a Lutheran minister, Paul Tillich was born in Starzeddel, Germany, in 1886. He studied theology at the universities of Berlin, Tübingen, and Halle, and in 1912 he was ordained a minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. During World War I, he served as a chaplain in the German Army. Developing into one of the most influential philosophical theologians of the twentieth century, he taught at a number of universities between 1919 and 1933, including Frankfurt am Main, from which he was dismissed because of his vocal opposition to the rising influence of the National Socialists (Nazis) in Germany. After his dismissal, Tillich left Germany for the United States, accepting a position at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, where he taught from 1933 until 1955. He subsequently took a position at Harvard University, where he remained until 1962, when he became the Nuveen Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago. Tillich taught at Chicago until his death in 1965.

In books such as his monumental three-volume *Systematic Theology: The Courage to Be* (1952) and *The Dynamics of Faith* (1957), Tillich sought to articulate his complex conceptualization of religion and faith. For Tillich, religion may be understood in a normative, or “narrow,” sense: belonging to a certain religious tradition or sect; attending a church, temple or mosque; maintaining particular symbols or ideas about God; or participating in certain rituals or sacramental activities. But it can also be understood in a “larger” sense. Religion in this larger sense represents an “ultimate con-

cern” about the “meaning of one’s life,” or about the “meaning of ‘being’ as such.” Religion must be understood in relation to what concerns us ultimately, says Tillich, because in its narrower sense alone it is subject to a profane “demonization” wherein religious ideas and symbols may be absolutized and become “idols” themselves, or where one particular religious group, symbol, or worldview may begin to be understood as the “truth.”

Although Tillich alludes to religion as “ultimate concern,” he usually reserves this concept in order to define faith. True to his Lutheran roots, Tillich understands faith in relation to the Pauline notion of grace. Faith, then, is not understood as a conscious decision to accept or turn oneself over to some “thing,” perhaps God, that we take to be “unconditional,” but rather as an existential experience of being “grasped” by that which concerns us ultimately. We do not *make* something a matter of ultimate concern; rather, we have *already* been grasped by that which is unconditional when we begin to reflect upon it. In this way, God *may* be called the unconditional, but in the truest sense *even* God is indefinable, as the unconditional precedes all created things and thus lies outside the realm of finitude.

Although for many Tillich’s theology, grounded as it was in existentialist philosophy, often seemed far too difficult to understand and sometimes even nihilistic in its expression, his sermons proved to be another matter. In “You Are Accepted,” for example, although Tillich does say that our lives are characterized by “estrangement from others and ourselves,” by separation from “the mystery, the depth, and the greatness of our existence,” he goes on to say that when “grace abounds we receive the power to say ‘yes’ to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and that our self is reunited with itself.” For Tillich, it is ultimately in the “light of grace” that we “experience moments in which we accept ourselves, because we feel that we have been accepted by that which is greater than we.”

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Martyrdom and Persecution; Protestantism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Tilopa

(988–1069 C.E.)

Buddhist teacher

Tilopa was a Buddhist teacher and adept within the *mahasiddha* (the great perfected) traditions of early medieval India. As such, he is considered an exemplar of a type of Buddhist practice that leads the *sadhaka* (from the same root as *siddha*; it here means “realizer, attainer, practitioner”) to a direct realization of the human awakening known as buddhahood. In *mahasiddha* fashion, Tilopa terms both the practice for and realization of this awakening *mahamudra* (great seal). This is the pure, that is, nondual (*advaya*), awareness of the insubstantial (*shunyata*) nature of phenomena, simultaneously begetting liberation from deluded preoccupation with the objects of the sensory field. In addition to his role as an adept, Tilopa is revered as the founder of the lineage that would become one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, the Kagyu (Bka’brgyud, “transmission of mastery”).

Tilopa’s historicity is obscure because all of the extant works (in Sanskrit and Tibetan) purporting to illuminate the life of the master are really hagiographical, rather than biographical, in nature. Nonetheless, these texts are illuminating in ways that a strict biography is not. The most popular such account of Tilopa’s life, that of the seventeenth-century Tibetan historian Padma Karpo, provides a summary of his “outward biography.” According to this account, Tilopa was born in eastern India to a brahmin family in 988. When just a child, he was recognized by the *siddha* Nagarjuna to be perfectly suited for esoteric tantric training. As a young man, Tilopa trained as a Buddhist monk in the monastery at Somapuri. As is often the case in the *mahasiddha* literature, Tilopa’s stay in the monastery was followed by a period as a wandering *yogin*. During this time, he received teachings from *siddhas*, practiced meditation, and performed tantric rituals.

After twelve years, Tilopa settled in Bengal. Here, he took a job crushing sesame seeds (hence his name, which is derived from *tila*, “sesame seed”) by day and waiting on a prostitute by night. In accordance with the *siddha* notion that awakening can be realized in the course of everyday activities, Tilopa attained some understanding of reality through his work. He therefore resumed wandering, teaching others of his insight. When the limited nature of his realization eventually dawned on him, Tilopa set out for a cremation ground, where he sat motionless until the buddha Vajradhara appeared to him and revealed to him the highest teaching. This teaching, as he would later proclaim, consists in “allowing the muddy waters of mental activity to clear; refraining from both positive and negative projection; leaving appearances alone.”

Tilopa’s character may be glimpsed in the legend of his greatest disciple, Naropa, who saw his guru appear to him as

“a dark man dressed in cotton trousers, his hair knotted in a tuft, and with protruding blood-shot eyes” (Guenther 1963, 36–37). In one of the initial encounters between master and disciple, Tilopa asks Naropa to look for the unity of all of the elements in the initiation ritual that he is about to undergo. Naropa asks, “How can I [see] when blinded by my dark ignorance?” Tilopa replies:

Watch without watching for something. Look
From the invisible at what you cannot grasp
As an entity. To see and yet to see no things
Is freedom in and through yourself. (Guenther 1963, 42)

—Glenn Wallis

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Nagarjuna; Naropa

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Tiresias

Greek seer

Of all seers in Greek myth, the blind Tiresias is best known. Son of one Everes and a nymph, Chariclo, of the family of Udaeus, one of the original inhabitants of Thebes, he first appears in Homer's *Odyssey* (10.490–495). There the enchantress Circe instructs Odysseus to find the spirit of the dead seer Tiresias, who, although dead, still has understanding. Homer means that Tiresias has to some extent overcome death, and when Odysseus makes a pit of blood on the other side of the river Ocean, only Tiresias's soul, his *psyche* (“breath”), can speak without first drinking the blood. Tiresias's *psyche* has a special vitality. He then does drink the blood and prophesies to Odysseus about the dangers ahead and how he will die “a gentle death from the sea.” Even in death, Tiresias knows what the future will bring.

The principal story about Tiresias explains how he gained his prophetic powers. While walking through the woods, Tiresias saw two serpents copulating. He struck and killed the female and was immediately changed into a woman. Seven years later, he again saw snakes copulating. This time

he struck the male and regained his sex. Later, according to a jocular story, Zeus and Hera were squabbling about which sex derived the most pleasure from intercourse, each insisting it was the other. Because Tiresias had experience of being female and male, they asked him and learned that of ten parts of pleasure, the female enjoys all ten, whereas the male enjoys but one. His answer so enraged Hera that she struck him blind. To console him, Zeus gave Tiresias the art of prophecy and a life so long that it spanned seven generations, from the founding of Thebes by Kadmos until its destruction by the sons of the Seven against Thebes. Another story says that Tiresias was blinded when he saw Athena naked in her bath.

Tiresias turns up repeatedly in Greek tragedy as one who warns the protagonist against a disastrous course of action. In Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, he is first to accuse Oedipus of having himself killed the Theban king Laertes, whose murderer Oedipus seeks. In Sophocles' *Antigone*, he warns King Creon against his refusal to bury Polynices, a rebel against the city, and in Euripides' *Bacchae* he warns King Pentheus to accept the new religion of Dionysos.

Fleeing the burning city of Thebes after the second, and successful, assault against it, Tiresias stopped to drink from a spring and immediately died.

—Barry B. Powell

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Greek Prophets; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Prophets

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Titu Cusi Yupanqui

(d. 1571 C.E.)

Inca priest, ruler

Known as the author of the *Relación de la conquista del Perú* (Account of the conquest of Peru, 1570), Titu Cusi Yupanqui was the son of the rebellious Manco Inca, one of the last incas of Vilcabamba who resisted Spanish colonization and formed a neo-Inca state outside Cuzco. Manco Inca was son of Huayna Capac and younger brother of Huascar and Atahualpa, the last incas of Cuzco. Although Manco Inca tried also to negotiate with the Spaniards, he was betrayed and killed by those whom he thought were collaborators. When Manco Inca died, his son Sayri Tupac (1534–1560) was his successor, and Titu Cusi was named high priest of the Sun. After two years of negotiations with the viceroy Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza, Sayri Tupac died

mysteriously. His brother, Titu Cusi, was then proclaimed inca in Vilcabamba.

Following his father's steps, Titu Cusi Yupanqui resisted the Spaniards at the same time that he was negotiating with them. However, when he was organizing a rebellion in the southern Andes, a chieftain betrayed him. In 1566, Titu Cusi allowed the entrance of two Christian priests, Marcos García and Diego de Ortiz, into Vilcabamba. In 1567, his son Quispe Titu was baptized, and so was the inca in 1568, taking the Christian name "Diego de Castro." In spite of the apparent success of the Catholic Church, Titu Cusi remained in Vilcabamba until his death in 1571. After his death, his son Túpac Amaru was proclaimed inca at a very early age, but he was finally captured by the army sent by Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, and killed later on. With the death of Túpac Amaru, the Inca dynasty disappeared.

The *Relación* of Titu Cusi is addressed to the Spanish king and tells the heroic story of his father Manco Inca and his ancestors. Titu Cusi Yupanqui dictated the story of his father to the priest Marcos García, since he did not know how to write. In his *Relación*, the inca narrates proudly the organization and history of the Inca dynasty, justifies the rebellion of his father and the last incas of Vilcabamba, and requests a reward for his services.

The *Relación* joins the chronicles written by other Andean authors, such as Joan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua (1613) and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (1615), to offer the Inca side of the Spanish conquest of Peru.

—Rocío Quispe-Agnoli

See also: Amerindian Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Priests; Rulers as Holy People

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Tokugawa Ieyasu

(1543–1616 C.E.)

Shinto-Buddhist ruler, god

Tokugawa Ieyasu unified early seventeenth-century Japan, established the Tokugawa shogunate, and served as the first shogun of the Edo period (1603–1867). He was posthumously deified as *tōshō daigongen* (great avatar manifestation illuminating the east) and enshrined in the Tōshōgū at Nikko (Tochigi prefecture).

Born in 1543 during a bellicose period of Japanese history as the son of a minor chieftain in the province Mikawa (present-day Aichi prefecture), Ieyasu succeeded in expanding the territory he had inherited from his father after forming an advantageous alliance with the upcoming warlord Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582). After the death of Nobunaga in 1582, Ieyasu continued to ally with Nobunaga's successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), who reallocated him to a new domain, the Kantō area. Here Ieyasu established his headquarters in Edo (present-day Tokyo), then still a small fishing village. After Hideyoshi's death, Ieyasu managed to install himself as the dominant warlord of Japan, defeating his opposition in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Following this victory, Ieyasu claimed authority over the whole country and started to strengthen his control over the *daimyō* (feudal lords). In 1603, he assumed the title of *seii tai shōgun* (barbarian-subduing generalissimo; abbreviated *shogun*), thereby laying the foundation of the rule of the Tokugawa family over the unified country, which would last until 1867. Only two years later, in 1605, Ieyasu handed the title of shogun on to his son Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632) and retired to Sunpu (present-day Shizuoka), where he passed away in 1616.

In accordance with his last wishes, Ieyasu's body was transferred to Kunōzan (present-day Shizuoka), where he was installed as a deity in a newly built shrine in accordance with the rites of *yoshida shintō* (a school of Shinto that was developed and handed down within the Yoshida family). After Ieyasu's interment, dispute arose among the leading religious advisers as to the interpretation of Ieyasu's last words, which had included ideas regarding his entombment and posthumous treatment. Main issues were the title under which Ieyasu was to be deified, as well as the ultimate location of his mausoleum. Tenkai (1536–1643), monk of the Buddhist Tendai sect, which advocated a Shinto-Buddhist syncretism, emerged out of this argument victorious. He succeeded in convincing the son and successor of Ieyasu, Tokugawa Hidetada, that Ieyasu should be conferred the title *daigongen* (great avatar) instead of *daimyōjin* (great god). Ieyasu's last words were thus reinterpreted, with the result that one year after his demise his remains were moved to Nikko, where a shrine called Tōshōgū was erected.

Ieyasu was enshrined there and by imperial edict under the title *tōshō daigongen*. The Nikko Tōshōgū thus became the main center of veneration for his deified spirit, which was considered the protecting deity of the ruling Tokugawa family for the next two and a half centuries. The history of his deification, the architecture of his mausoleum, as well as the posthumous title itself all testify to the Shinto-Buddhist syncretism underlying the posthumous veneration of Ieyasu, closely interweaving elements of both religious traditions.

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Buddhism and Holy People; Shinto and Holy People; Toyotomi Hideyoshi

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Tokugawa Mitsukuni

(1628–1700 C.E.)

Neo-Confucian leader

Tokugawa Mitsukuni, the Japanese lord of Mito domain from 1661 to 1690, was a promoter of Neo-Confucianist thought and is noted for his passion for learning, his religious activ-

ities, and his leadership skills in the first century of the Edo period (1603–1867). Born in 1628, he was a grandson of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the warrior who unified the early modern Japanese nation, and the third son of Tokugawa Yorifusa, the first ruler of Mito domain. Mitsukuni is also known by his posthumous Buddhist name Gikō, but more often by his popular name, Mito Kōmon.

With the assistance of more than 130 scholars from around Japan, Mitsukuni began to compile the work *Dainihonshi* (History of Great Japan) at his school in Edo, Shōkōkan. This work was begun in 1657 and not completed until 1906, but after the project was moved to Mito in 1698, Mito scholarship developed its own original style that later became known as Mitogaku.

Tokugawa Mitsukuni was deeply sensitive toward Japanese literature and Shinto, and this was reflected in his political policies. During his rule, he destroyed 1,000 Buddhist temples that had recently been constructed in his domain and established a system of one Shinto shrine for each village to replace them. In addition, until the time of Mitsukuni, it was the custom of learned Confucian scholars to shave their heads and adopt Buddhist names, but he abolished this system, commanding all his scholars to grow their hair and elevating them to samurai status. Mitsukuni was noted for his



Gateway to the shrine of Tokugawa Mitsukuni. Nikko, Japan. (Art Directors)

perceptive political and economic policies. He actively promoted paper production, gold mining, and other economic activities while reducing annual rice taxes and stabilizing his administration through the help of his band of retainers.

Many legends and myths surround Tokugawa Mitsukuni. These were created by fictional publications from the late Edo and early Meiji period (1850s–1880s) that portray him as a *meikun* (benevolent ruler). The popular contemporary Japanese television series *Mitō Kōmon* also builds on these legends.

—*Timothy D. Amos*

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People; Tokugawa Ieyasu

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Tolerance and Intolerance

Tolerance of the beliefs or practices of others seems to be a very modern virtue of holy people. Although saints of the past may have been very tolerant, they won popular esteem much more for their ability to harm those who disagreed with them. This is a tradition that goes back at least to the Jewish prophet Elijah, who, after defeating the priests of Ba'al in an invocation contest, called for their massacre. Until modern ecumenical movements encouraged at least some populations to see the unity within all religions, a holy person was much more likely to be described as a heroic defender of the faith than as “intolerant,” “prejudiced,” or inclined to “persecute.” Thus, intolerance has been regarded as a positive attribute in the holy people of dominant religions, especially those that claim universality, and worst of all those that are monotheistic.

Intolerance appears as a defining characteristic of Christian saints through much of the history of Christianity. All of the early Christian saints are portrayed as intolerant of other religions, as well as of “heresy”—which, of course, meant interpretations of religion that they themselves did not follow. The great theologians of the early church defined their beliefs in polemic. For example, much of Augustine of Hippo's (354–430) work is polemic against non-Christians, Manichaeans, Pelagians, and Donatists. Athanasius's (c. 300–373) theology was similarly shaped in opposition to Arians. Opposition to opposing belief was sometimes extremely blatant, not excluding physical force. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376–444) in his fight with the teachings of Nestorius

bribed the imperial court and even terrorized the city of Ephesus with his own private army of monks. Throughout the Middle Ages the pattern continued: Recognized saints were not just intolerant of vice, but of Jews, much of popular religion, and above all heretics—who were often perceived in medical terms as rotten limbs that needed to be amputated to save the greater Christian body, an attitude that only grew in strength with the Reformation movements of the sixteenth century. It is often forgotten by his modern fans, for instance, that the saintly Thomas More (1478–1535) engaged in a vicious, often scatological polemic against Protestant leaders—and Protestants such as Martin Luther (1483–1546) returned the favor.

This attitude was not limited to Latin Christianity. The Russian Orthodox Joseph of Volotsk (1439/1440–1515) specialized in rooting out heretics and getting them burned. It is important to note, though, that it is often possible to find a model of tolerance active at the same time as an advocate of intolerance. At the very time Joseph of Volotsk was attacking heretics, Nilus of Sora (1433–1508) condemned all forms of coercion and violence against heretics—an attitude that, however, made him almost unique among Christians of the period. While in modern times the rhetoric has shifted to “hate the sin, love the sinner,” the popularity of various apostles of hatred and intolerance attest to the continuing strength of this theme in Christianity. A notable modern case is the Zambian prophet Alice Lenshina (1919–1978), who violently denounced many traditional religious practices, besides the general sinfulness of the world.

Intolerant holy people have won admiration in many religions. Cases are fairly rare in the religions of India, where at least since the time of Ashoka (third century B.C.E.) recognized holy men and women have advocated tolerance of religious diversity, a position made possible by both polytheism and the similarities between most of the Indian religions. Still, examples of intolerance appear, especially in folkloric accounts. A particularly horrific case is that of the Jain monk/scholar Haribhadra (eighth century C.E.), who took a gruesome revenge after his nephews, who had gone to study at a Buddhist monastery, were murdered. He challenged the leading Buddhist scholars to a debate, the losers to jump into a vat of boiling oil, which indeed they did after he bested them in argument. But perhaps this is the exception that proves the rule: Haribhadra's own writings are ecumenical, and perhaps this tale shows the temperament of the average Jain, rather than of the holy man himself. As in the Christian case, though, the tale suggests that a body of opinion *wanted* holy people to stop being tolerant of religions that were just plain wrong in the popular eye. And the legend concludes with the report that Haribhadra's teacher made him perform penance for his un-Jainlike behavior. Much of this traditional tolerance broke down with the Islamic drive

into northern India, but the tradition of tolerance was strong enough to win a wide following for Nanak (1469–1539), the first Sikh guru, who took a stand against the caste system, advocated peace between Muslim and Hindu, and even fought to end discrimination against women.

There are also a few Buddhist holy people who are associated with attacks on their religious rivals, but in the hagiographical tradition they seem to be admired more despite their intolerance than because of it. For example, the Buddhist Aryadeva (second or third century B.C.E.), a philosopher, became so heated in his attacks on rival philosophies that he was eventually assassinated. But he is not for that reason regarded as a martyr, as his counterpart in Christianity would be. Similarly, the Japanese monk Nichiren (1222–1282) was vehement in his attacks against the reformer Honen (1133–1212), prophesying that Japan itself would fall unless all other forms of religion but his own were obliterated. He was attacked by a mob, arrested, and exiled.

Nichiren's attitude, however, gives a clue to the vehement intolerance especially of newly introduced ideologies that marks a number of modern holy people in several religions, including Buddhism. For example, the modern Thai monk Kitthiwultho calls on devout Buddhists to kill Communists as a threat both to the state and to Buddhism. He argues that some people are so depraved that killing them is like fighting disease. Such an attitude also marks some modern Christian fundamentalist groups that laud those of their members who use armed force against what they declare to be unjust law. This is also an important theme in some sectors of modern Islam—intolerance based on a deep fear that state and religion are being corrupted. When wielded by a person of great authority and religious conviction, such as Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989) of Iran, the line between intolerance and defense of the faith is very blurry.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Aryadeva; Ashoka; Athanasius; Augustine of Hippo; Contemporary Holy People; Extremists as Holy People; Haribhadra; Honen; Joseph of Volotsk; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Lenshina, Alice; Luther, Martin; More, Thomas; Nanak; Nichiren; Nilus of Sora

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Tommaso de Vio

See Cajetan

Toral and Jesal

(16th cent. C.E.)

Hindu poets

Jesal and Toral were sixteenth-century saint-poets of the *nijia* tradition of Ramdev Pir in Rajasthan. Their memorial chapels are in Anjar, Kutch (Gujarat, India).

Jesal was a member of a robber band; Toral, a beautiful woman, was married to one Sasatiya Kathi, who was also a follower of the *nijia* path. According to legend, once Jesal came to steal Kathi's horse and sword, but Kathi caught him. However, Kathi later gave him not only the horse and the sword but also his wife, Toral, so that he would learn from her how to live a more virtuous life. In another story, Jesal and Toral were on their way to Kutch when, on a boat at sea, they got trapped in a storm. Jesal was frightened; Toral was calm. When Jesal asked her to save his life, Toral asked him to confess his sins and promise to live a virtuous life. Jesal did so, and his life was spared. He then made Toral his guru and lived a pious life. But in his final days, Jesal became a *samadhi* (entered the final stage of yogism). When Toral found out, she prayed for three days for Jesal's return to this mundane world, as taking *samadhi* without living a married life was not advised in their sect. Finally, Jesal returned from his contemplative trance, Toral married him, and they became *samadhis* together. People continue to worship this saintly couple today.

Toral is said to have composed many *bhajans* (religious songs) and narrative poems, but few of them survive today. Many of her *bhajans* are written in a dialogue form with Jesal. Her narrative poems are devoted to various themes, including the origin and importance of the *nijia* sect. In one poem, she claims that the *nijia* sect was originally preached by Lord Shiva. In another she narrates an event in which the king makes a lower-caste woman his guru after the latter described him as untouchable, as he was a man without guru.

—Babu Suthar

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People

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Mohanpuri.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi

(1536–1598 C.E.)

Shinto ruler, god

Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a warlord in bellicose sixteenth-century Japan, succeeded Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) and preceded the establishment of the shogunate under Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616). Hideyoshi is considered one of the three unifiers of Japan. He was posthumously deified as *toyokuni daimyōjin*; the first term means “rich country”; the second

signifies a great god. The characters for *toyokuni* can also be transliterated *hōkoku*. He is enshrined in the Toyokuni Jinja in Kyoto.

Hideyoshi was born in 1536 as the son of a foot soldier serving the Nobunaga family, an ambitious clan situated in the area around Nagoya. He started serving Oda Nobunaga from 1558 and succeeded in establishing himself as a main vassal, assigned important military missions and thereby contributing to the enlargement of his lord's sphere of control. After the death of Nobunaga in 1582, Hideyoshi greatly expanded his territory, so that by the end of 1585 he ruled over large landholdings in central Japan. He consolidated his authority by disarming the peasants and tying them to the soil, and he also conducted a land survey. After seizing control over the whole country through military expeditions to Kyushu (1587), the Kantō area, and the northeastern regions (1590–1591), he launched campaigns against Korea (1592 and 1597). Hideyoshi died in 1598 before he could satisfy his ambitions overseas.

Although his death was initially kept secret in order to avoid endangering the ongoing military campaign in Korea, construction of a shrine commenced near Kyoto. It is handed down that the Kitano shrine in the north of Kyoto, the place of worship for the deified spirit of Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), served as its archetype. The necessary religious advice for the project was provided by leading members of the *yoshida shintō* (or *yuiitsu* [unique] *shintō*), a school of Shinto that was developed and handed down within the Yoshida family and enjoyed recognition and high esteem at the imperial court. These same experts advised the court with regard to the divine title to be conferred upon Hideyoshi's spirit. His remains were soon moved to the newly built shrine, where he was installed as a deity with the title *toyokuni daimyōjin*, the divine name bestowed upon him by the emperor. However, the shrine, called Toyokuni, subsequently declined after the ultimate defeat of the Toyotomi family by the hands of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who had seized Hideyoshi's position as Japan's dominant warlord. It was not until the first year of the Meiji period (1868) that the shrine was restored as Toyokuni Jinja.

—Tobias Bauer

See also: Apotheosis; Shinto and Holy People; Tokugawa Ieyasu; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Trisong de Tsen

(742–797 C.E.)

Buddhist ruler

Trisong de Tsen (742–797) is considered by Tibetans to be the second religious king of Tibet, after Sengtsen Gampo (617–698) of the previous century. He is known both for asserting Tibet's secular power as well as for contributing to Tibet's spiritual development in the Buddhist tradition. In 755, he ascended the throne, and by 763 he had extended Tibetan military power to as far as Chang'an, the Tang dynasty Chinese capital.

Around 762, Trisong de Tsen began inviting hundreds of Indian scholars and yogis to Tibet, including Santariksa, the famous abbot of Nalanda University. Together with Santariksa, the king implemented plans for the first monastery in Tibet, later known as Samye. Legend has it that destructive influences from evil spirits and the king's wicked ministers hindered the monastery's construction, so Trisong de Tsen invited Padmasambhava, India's great tantric Buddhist master, to rid Tibet of its negative forces. Padmasambhava proved successful in dispelling the evil influences, and Samye monastery was finally founded in 779.

Under Trisong de Tsen's patronage, Indian scholars and 108 Tibetan translators translated many sutras and tantra texts from Sanskrit into Tibetan. After his death, Trisong de Tsen's successors continued to develop and broaden Buddhist doctrine in Tibet.

—Ingrid Pharris

See also: Padmasambhava; Rulers as Holy People; Sengtsen Gampo

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Triumph

The triumph was the grand procession of a successful Roman general into the city of Rome, representing the apex of any Roman's public career. The closest equivalent in our own time to the ancient Roman triumph must surely be the ticker-tape parades given in various large cities for astronauts, victorious sports teams, and, of course, successful generals.

The *triumphator*, as the triumphing general of ancient Rome was called, would ride in an ornate chariot drawn by

four horses on a special—indeed, ritualized—parade route, attended by his sons and freedmen, with notable captives and major items of booty in train. The soldiers of his army would follow the chariot, singing ribald verses about the triumphator; some of the verses sung about Julius Caesar have been preserved, and they are very salacious indeed, making specific remarks about his sexuality. The purpose of these verses was to avert *invidia*, “the evil eye (of jealousy).” The fact that we are unsure whether this jealousy was human or divine in nature gives us a valuable clue as to the exalted status of the triumphator. Akin to this was the notable appearance of the triumphator, who would be dressed in a purple toga wearing a wreath of laurel leaves on his head, with his face painted red in imitation of the statues of the gods, particularly that of Jupiter Capitolinus. As a living representation of the chief Roman god, the general embodied the majesty and dignity of the state and its religion, victorious over its enemies.

All of these details point to the extraordinary character of the triumph: In ordinary times, a general was disallowed from leading an army into the city (in fact, no military personnel on active duty were allowed within the city walls). Nor would any soldiers be free singly or in a group to insult their commanding officer. And, of course, no mortal might don a god’s guise without expecting divine retribution to follow. But on the day of his triumph, the triumphator was beyond the regulations normally imposed upon human beings. Small wonder, then, that as some sources record, a slave would stand by the triumphant general in his chariot whispering, “Look backward and remember that you are mortal.”

—Christopher McDonough

See also: Adventus; Heroes; Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa (tsong kha pa blo bzang brag pa)

(1357–1419 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Tsong kha pa lo zang drak pa, a renowned scholar, monk, and philosopher, was one of the most profoundly influential and innovative minds in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

According to traditional biographies, Tsong kha pa, in a previous incarnation, was a young boy who offered Shakyamuni Buddha a crystal rosary and received a conch shell in return.

The Buddha then prophesied that the boy would be born in Tibet and that he would be instrumental in the spread of Buddhism in the “Land of Snows.” This prophecy would be fulfilled in 1357 when Tsong kha pa was born as the fourth child to an ordinary nomadic family in the Tibetan province of Amdo. Tsong kha pa would go on to become a prominent figure in Tibetan Buddhist scholarship, referred to in the later tradition as “the Second Buddha” (sang rgyas gnyis pa). An erudite and thoroughly trained scholar, Tsong kha pa was also an accomplished practitioner who blended together theory and practice, utilizing an emphasis on both monastic discipline and the techniques of tantric transformational technology. He is most widely known as the founder of the Ganden pa (dga’ ldan pa) school, which later evolved into the present-day Gelukpa (dge lugs pa) school. He is recognized for his innovative establishment of a definitive understanding of consequentialist middle way philosophy (*dbu ma thal gyur ba*) within Tibet, which integrated epistemological (*tshad ma*) traditions with the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) school of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy.

Tsong kha pa wrote more than 200 works in eighteen volumes. His definitive interpretation of Madhyamaka philosophy was presented within four major treatises: the *Lam rim chen mo* (Great stages on the path to enlightenment), the *Dgongs pa rab gsal* (Illumination of the thought), the *Rigs pa’i rgya mtsho* (Ocean of reasoning), and the *Legs bshad snying po* (Essential correct explanation of intentional and definitive meaning). His scholastic genius, which articulated subtle distinctions of consequentialist Middle Way philosophy, was only superseded by his acknowledgment as an embodiment of Manjushri, the buddha of wisdom himself. Tsong kha pa also performed “four great deeds” that shaped Tibetan Buddhist culture: refurbishing the Maitreya image at ‘Dzing ji (1395), teaching monastic discipline (*vinaya*) at Gnam-rtse-ldeng (1400), establishing the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa (1409), and founding Dga’-ldan monastery (1410). He died in 1419.

—James B. Apple

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Gautama; Gods on Earth; Gyeltsap Darma Rinchen; Manjushri; Scholars as Holy People

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Tsung-mi

See Zongmi



Image of the Tibetan scholar Tsong kha pa from a temple in Tibet. (Art Directors)

Tukaram

(c. 1607–1649 C.E.)

Hindu poet

Tukaram was a Hindu poet who worshipped the deity Vithoba at Pandharpur, India, during the seventeenth century. He was the younger son of a poor family of the farmer caste. His father gained a considerable fortune in about 1607 upon Tukaram's birth, and this was considered to be a gift from the god Namadeva. The father wanted his eldest son to assume the family business, but this son wanted to renounce the world. Accepting his eldest son's wishes, the father entrusted the family business to Tukaram.

After his first wife became ill, Tukaram married the daughter of a wealthy banker and grew prosperous for a time. Adversity was to overshadow his family life, however. His mother and father died, and a short time later his brother's wife died; then, Tukaram's business ventures began to fail. He interpreted these events as testing from God. But as his personal sorrows increased, so did his love of God. Although he finally fell into abject poverty, he would not renounce God. During a severe famine, his elder wife starved

to death, and a bit later his eldest son also died. His friends and relatives criticized him for spending too much time repeating the names of God, for being too absorbed with his religious life, and for not being more practical. Tukaram abandoned worldly life by retiring to a mountain, where he eventually had a vision of Krishna.

Tukaram practiced nonviolence, compassion, and austerities. He even invited deliberate suffering in order to be led to God. During the day, he spent his time in the jungle meditating; in the evenings, he sang and chanted. By chanting the praises of God (*kirtana*), Tukaram believed, it was possible for a person to encounter the divine presence. In Tukaram's vision, his deity gave him a sacred *mantra* (formula) that reportedly made the poet immortal because it had the power to destroy death. The vision freed him from worldly connections and ultimately drove him mad. Based on his religious experiences, Tukaram composed thousands of verses in *abhang* meter in which he expressed his ardent devotion to God. These poems also expressed the obliteration of caste distinctions and the equality of everyone before God.

—Carl Olson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Death; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Insanity; Suffering and Holy People

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Tukt'ong Kihwa

(1376–1433 C.E.)

Buddhist philosopher, apologist

Tukt'ong Kihwa was a leading Buddhist philosopher and apologist in the early Choson period (1392–1910) in Korea. He is known as one of the leading Buddhist thinkers in Korea because of his successful reformulation of Buddhism in Neo-Confucian terms and his ability to demonstrate the essential unity of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism as forms for the attainment of sagehood.

Kihwa was born in 1376 the son of a Koryo provincial official and thus was trained in the Confucian classics at the National Academy in Seoul. According to the hagiographic biography that has been handed down, he was so proficient in Confucian studies that he earned the respect and admiration of his teachers and was even compared with Confucian sages. Sometime during his stay at the National Academy, he learned of the tragic death of a close friend and decided to become a Buddhist monk. He spent a couple of years wandering from monastery to monastery and eventually became a disciple of the Zen master and national teacher Muhak (1327–1405). Kihwa spent the rest of his days immersed in meditation, travel, and teaching and composing commentaries on Buddhist scriptures. His popularity as both a Confucian and Buddhist teacher grew, and King Sejong (r. 1418–1450) appointed him in 1427 as tutor to the royal family. After four years in the court, he retired once again to the mountain monasteries, where he taught and wrote until his death in 1433.

Kihwa lived at a time when Buddhism was under attack by Confucian polemicists in the court. They argued successfully before the throne of the early Choson kings that Buddhism, long the state religion of Korea, was false and evil, and should be suppressed for the sake of Confucian orthodoxy. In response to those arguments, Kihwa published two apologetic treatises, the *Hyongjong non* (Exposition on correct understanding) and the *Yu-sok chirui ron* (Exposition of questionable doubts in Confucianism and Buddhism). In both he defended the right of Buddhism to exist within the order of a Neo-Confucian state by demonstrating that Buddhism could not only aid in the development of the state by teaching people to be moral and restrained but could also show people how to become sages. Kihwa used

his training in Neo-Confucian metaphysics and epistemology to show that the Confucian polemicists had either misunderstood Buddhism or misunderstood their own Confucian ideas. Though he was unable to prevent the disestablishment of Buddhism in the early Choson period, Kihwa's apologetic works did establish important philosophical links between all three traditions.

—John I. Goulde

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Confucianism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Tulsi

(1914–1997 C.E.)

Jain teacher, acharya

Tulsi, born in 1914, was the ninth *acharya* (spiritual teacher) of the Terapanthi subset of the Shvetambaras (Jains whose monks wear white robes). Acharya Tulsi was a Jain teacher from 1956 to 1994 and fostered a major revival of Terapanthi Jainism, including promotion of environmental and anti-nuclear causes, vegetarianism, animal rights, reform of Indian politics, and an active overseas missionary effort (a radical departure from traditional Jain practice). In 1949, he founded the Anuvrat Movement, which encourages people in all professions to take the lesser vows (*anuvratas*) of renunciation and restraint. The Anu-Vrata, "Atomic" (*anu*) "Vow" (*vrata*), was promoted as the solution to the Cold War threat of atomic annihilation. This antinuclear stance gave Terapanthi Jainism appeal to non-Jains and a modest international profile and following.

Acharya Tulsi and his chosen successor, Acharya Mahaprajna, are also well known in India and abroad for a style of Jain meditation known as Preksha Dhyana, "insight meditation." Terapanthis promote this method as a restoration of a lost Jain system of meditation, scripturally justified by a passage from the Acaranga Sutra advocating "knowing the Self by the Self," and scattered Jain scriptural references to meditation postures. Upon this basis, Acharya Tulsi and his followers have reconstructed Jain insight meditation, borrowing from Zen Buddhism, Hatha Yoga, and other sources. Preksha Dhyana is mandatory for Terapanthi monks and strongly encouraged for lay followers. It is becoming popular among Jain youth overseas, including American students, enhancing the influence of the Terapanthi sect abroad. How-

ever, some Jain scholars, for example, Nathmal Tatia, dispute the Terapanthi contention that Jain meditation was lost and had to be reconstructed, maintaining instead that detailed directions on how to meditate have always been freely available in the Jain scriptures.

Another innovation introduced by Acharya Tulsi is an order of monks and nuns with special dispensation to travel by means of mechanical transport in order to do missionary work abroad. These traveling monks are called *samans*; the nuns are called *samanis*, and they may accept food prepared especially for them instead of begging for it. These Terapanthi missionaries have made a modest number of converts and have continued their work since Tulsi's death in 1997.

—Jerome Bauer

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Jainism and Holy People; Meditation and Holy People

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Tulsidas

(c. 1532–1623 C.E.)

Hindu reformer, poet

Tulsidas was one of the greatest reformers and poets in the Hindu tradition. His devotional poem *Ramcaritmanas* (Holy lake of the deeds of Rama) is the most popular and influential of the many narratives detailing the life of Rama (or Ram), the incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Tulsidas was most likely born around 1532. Although the date and place of his birth cannot be fixed with certainty, there are many legends about his youth. These stories agree that Tulsidas was abandoned as a baby and that his childhood was one of misery and deprivation. He was rescued from his loneliness and pain by a group of holy men, the Ramandis, who were devoted to Rama. He studied with them, and though he married and loved his wife, it is reputed to have been at her urging that he finally let go of earthly desires and concentrated his love and devotion on Rama. Tulsidas renounced the material world, including his family, and traveled to holy sites in northern India. He settled finally in the sacred city of Benares on the banks of the Ganges River and lived there until his death in 1623.

On a visit in around 1574 to Ayodhya, customarily acknowledged as the birthplace and capital of Rama, Tulsidas was inspired to begin his earliest and largest devotional poem, the *Ramcaritmanas*. It took several years to write, consisting finally of roughly 12,800 lines divided into 1,073

stanzas. The title suggests that, like bathing in holy water, the reading, reciting, or hearing of this text will purify the devotee. The poem was not written in Sanskrit, the traditional sacred language that had become inaccessible to most modern Hindus, but in the colloquial and popular dialect of Hindi. The *Ramcaritmanas* narrates the story of Rama, first told at least a thousand years before in the Sanskrit Valmiki *Ramayana* (Exploits of Rama). The *Manas* is not a translation of the older text, however, but a reformulation of devotional piety to Rama. The god is described as the Ultimate Reality in the universe, the Sacred who has infinite love (*bhakti*) for devotees, who in turn love him. Although Tulsidas wrote other poetry, it is the *Ramcaritmanas* that rendered the Absolute personal and accessible and brought this experience of the supreme Lord Rama to the masses. Quite soon after his death, Tulsidas himself became an object of reverence, and he is today described as a saint, a modern incarnation of Valmiki, and one who mastered his senses.

—Phyllis K. Herman

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Rama; Reform and Reaction; Reincarnation; Suffering and Holy People

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Tunolase

See Orimolade Tunolase, Moses

Turner, Nat

(c. 1800–1831 C.E.)

Christian ascetic, rebel

Nat Turner was born in Southampton County, Virginia, around the year 1800. No one knows the exact date of his birth because those types of records were not deemed important for those born slaves. Nat's mother did not want to see her son born into slavery so she tried to strangle him with his birth cord as he exited the womb. Turner survived, and from that moment until his death in 1831 superstitious plantation slaves felt Turner was marked by God for some special service.

Turner was a precocious child who was fond of living alone in the woods of his plantation and experimenting with gunpowder and fire. He was also very religious and early in

life developed a reputation as a shaman and mystic. The reputation was well earned, for Turner grew up believing that God had specially chosen him to be the avenger of suffering black slaves and lived his life in devoted ascetics. Turner forswore the use of tobacco, alcohol, and money and sought through a life of prayer and fasting to direct himself to God's use. As he matured, Turner came to believe that God had chosen him to be the vessel to lead blacks from bondage. The Old Testament became the food from which he drew his encouragement as he began to see visions and hear voices directing his activities.

After Turner became convinced that he was God's chosen vessel, he began to foment his plans for insurrection. With these plans complete, Turner and the eight fellow slaves he enlisted to help with the rebellion waited for God's sign to begin their war for freedom. The sign came in February 1831 in the form of a solar eclipse. Nat Turner successfully executed his rebellion and sent a shock wave throughout the slaveholding south.

In October 1831, Nat Turner was captured and tried for leading a war against slavery. A month later, in a town called Jerusalem, he was hanged. Future generations of blacks would nickname Nat Turner "the Prophet," and historians would point to his insurrection as the beginning of the end for the institution of slavery in America.

—Rick Gray

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Prophets; Shamans

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Tu-shun

See **Dushun**

Tusi, at- (Shaykh at-Ta'ifah)

(955–1067 C.E.)

Shi'i scholar, leader

Muhammad ibn al-Hasan at-Tusi, known as Shaykh at-Ta'ifah (Leader of the sect), was the outstanding Shi'i religious leader of the eleventh century. He was the first Shi'i scholar to move to Najaf, establishing it as a center of scholarship when Baghdad was no longer under Shi'ite control.

Shaykh at-Ta'ifah was born in Tus (now Mashhad) in northeastern Iran in 955 and moved to Baghdad in 1017 in order to study under Shaykh al-Mufid and 'Alam al-Hudá, the leading Shi'i scholars of the time. With the death of the latter

in 1044, Shaykh at-Ta'ifa himself, with a circle of as many as 300 students, became the foremost Shi'i scholar. He lived in a period, however, when the fortunes of Shi'ism were changing. After a century during which Shi'i dynasties had controlled most of the Muslim world, Sunni powers were once again reasserting control. In 1055, the Sunni Seljuk Turks captured Baghdad, removing the Shi'i Buyid dynasty from power. In the following year, during Sunni-Shi'i riots in the city, Shaykh at-Ta'ifah's house was attacked and his valuable library burned. After this, he decided to move to Najaf and establish the center of Shi'i scholarship there. He taught the next generation of Shi'i scholars until his death in 1067. His shrine is still visited.

Shaykh at-Ta'ifah was a prodigious scholar, and his works in several fields continue to be used up to the present day. His work on biography, *ar-Rijal* (Biography), continues to be important as a source of information on those who transmitted the Shi'i traditions (*hadith*). His bibliography, *al-Fihrist* (Catalogue), lists a large number of Shi'i works, many of which are no longer extant. *Al-Ghayba* (The occultation) gives historians important information on beliefs about the occultation of the twelfth imam. And his two works *at-Tahdhib* (The correcting of judgments) and *al-Istibsar* (The examination) are among the four "canonical" collections of hadith. In the field of religious law, Shaykh at-Ta'ifah initiated important developments that allowed Shi'i clerics to undertake some of the roles previously allowed only the imam (who was now in occultation, and therefore these roles had lapsed). These roles included collecting and distributing the religious taxes and organizing the Friday prayers. So great was Shaykh at-Ta'ifah's influence that the century following his death is called a century of *taqlid* (imitation, that is, following his lead without question).

—Moojan Momen

See also: Islam and Holy People; Lawgivers as Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Tusi, Nasir al-Din at-

(1201–1274 C.E.)

Shi'i Muslim scholar

Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Muhammad, also known as Khwaja Nasir ad-Din and Muhaqqiq at-Tusi (the investigator or seeker after truth of Tus), was a gifted polymath scholar of the thirteenth century who is claimed by both the Twelver and Isma'ili Shi'is.

Khwaja Nasir ad-Din was born at Tus (now Mashhad) in northeastern Iran to a Twelver Shi'i family in 1201 and stud-

ied both Shi'i law and philosophy there. He left his home in about 1227, possibly because of the Mongol advance toward that area, and lived for some thirty years among the Isma'ilis, at first in eastern Iran and then at Alamut, the Isma'ili mountain stronghold in northern Iran. During this time, it appears that he became an Isma'ili; he composed a number of important writings, some of which bear an Isma'ili stamp. He is credited with developing the Isma'ili doctrine of *satr* (the concealment of true Isma'ili beliefs or of the imam in adverse times).

When the Isma'ili strongholds fell before the Mongol advance in 1256, Nasir ad-Din put himself at the disposal of Hulegu Khan, the Mongol leader, and was appointed court astrologer and astronomer. Because of his influential position, he was able to save many important manuscripts when the Mongols captured Baghdad in 1258. He then built an astronomical observatory in Maraghih. He died in Baghdad in 1274 and is buried near the Shi'i shrines in Kazimayn.

Nasir ad-Din wrote important works on astronomy, mathematics, medicine, geography, and history. He reworked Shi'i theology so as to incorporate philosophical concepts. His work on ethics, *Akhlaq-i Nasiriyyih* (The Nasiriyyan ethics), remains important up to the present time.

—*Moojan Momen*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Tutu, Desmond Mpilo

(1931 C.E.–)

Anglican archbishop, human rights activist

Desmond Tutu, born October 7, 1931, in Klerksdorp, South Africa, epitomizes repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation as exemplified in the Christian scriptures. He is the voice of the voiceless, an Anglican priest who captures for many the true manifestation of God's love. With Nelson Mandela, he led the cause in the struggle for peace, justice, equality, and freedom from the oppression of apartheid in the 1970s and 1980s.

At the age of twelve, he met and was greatly influenced by an Anglican cleric, Father Trevor Huddleston, who was an outspoken critic of apartheid. Educated in Johannesburg, Tutu followed in his father's footsteps and became a teacher. He taught for four years until he decided, in 1958, to enter the



Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town (seated), with South African President Nelson Mandela. (Art Directors)

ministry with the Anglican Church of the province of Southern Africa. After receiving his licentiate in theology in 1960, he was ordained in 1961. Tutu and his family lived in England between 1962 and 1966, where he worked as a curate while obtaining his bachelor's degree in divinity and a master's degree in theology.

Tutu was the first black to become the dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg, and three years later again the first black to become the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches. At a time when most anti-apartheid leaders were in prison, exiled, or banned, clergy members such as Tutu were prophetic voices speaking out against oppressive laws. Although in some circles he is seen as a political figure, he maintained his aggressive, forceful struggle for liberation against apartheid through his strong Christian convictions. In 1984, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his courage and heroism and for his use of nonviolent methods in the struggle against apartheid.

In 1985, Tutu was elected bishop of Johannesburg, and in 1986 he became archbishop of Cape Town. In 1987, he was elected president of the All Africa Conference of Churches; in 1995, President Nelson Mandela named him chairperson of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. On the commission, Tutu presided over the traumatic revelations to the world of the secrets of apartheid. Underlying Tutu's theological convictions is *ubuntu*, the concept of community wherein human dignity is defined in terms of the belief that people are created in the image of God. Tutu was a vocal opponent of apartheid because it denied this fundamental tenet of his faith.

—Samuel A. Paul

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Mandela, Nelson Rolihlahla; Politics and Holy People; Violence and Nonviolence

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Tyagaraja

(1767–1847 C.E.)

Hindu composer, musician

Tyagaraja is the most honored saintly composer of southern India. He was born to a Telugu-speaking brahmin family liv-

ing in Tamil Nadu in 1767. Telugu is called the Italian of the East; because of its vowel sounds it has a naturally flowing and musical quality. Inspired by devotion to Rama, Tyagaraja sang many songs in the classical style of the region (Karnatak music) and taught numerous students who perpetuated the tradition. Together with his contemporaries Muthuswami Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri, he is one of the “Trinity of South Indian Music.”

According to early accounts by his disciples, before his birth Tyagaraja's parents had a dream in which the deity Shiva, in the form of Tyagarajaswami of the temple in Tiruvarur, announced that a son would be born to them. This son would be an incarnation of Narada (the archetypal musician devotee of Lord Vishnu), they were told, and they should name him Tyagaraja. As it turned out, even as a baby Tyagaraja was fascinated by music and stopped nursing whenever he heard a melody.

In another dream, Tyagaraja's father, Rama Brahmam, was directed to go to Tiruvayaru, a village on the Kaveri River twenty miles from Tiruvarur. He told King Tulajaji II of the dream, and the king gave him a house and land in Tiruvayaru. The child Tyagaraja studied in the king's Sanskrit school, learned religious practices from his father, and daydreamed of Lord Rama while playing with playmates. True to his name, which means “king of renunciation,” he showed indifference and generosity regarding his belongings. He survived a famine that gripped the Tanjavur region when Haidar Ali invaded and farmers fled, and it is said that when he was ill, a wandering holy man restored his health.

Tyagaraja's father, who recited and discoursed on the Ramayana epic in the Tanjavur court, taught the boy to perform worship of Rama daily at home. Tyagaraja began composing songs for those daily devotions while still a youth. A wandering renunciant named Ramakrishnanandaswami initiated Tyagaraja with a Rama mantra and a chant invoking Narada. Tyagaraja's youthful songs showed promise, and his father took him to a famous Tanjavur court musician, Sonti Venkararaman, who taught the boy music. To explore deeper mysteries of music, Tyagaraja also developed devotion to Narada and studied his maternal grandfather's texts on music. Legends say Tyagaraja studied a rare treatise by Narada, “Ocean of Musical Notes,” on the mystical power of harmonious sounds.

After repeating the Rama mantra 10 million times, Tyagaraja reportedly glimpsed a vision of Rama and burst into song. In time, his teacher asked him to sing some of his own songs for the leading court musicians, praised him as a greater musician than himself, and gave him a gold medal and chain that he had been awarded in court, which Tyagaraja later returned to him. It is said that after twenty years, when Tyagaraja had said the mantra 960 million times, he was inspired by seeing Rama again. Tyagaraja composed

many great songs and grew famous. King Sarabhoji sought to honor him, inviting him to court, but Tyagaraja declined to perform.

When Tyagaraja was twenty years old, his father died and the family home was partitioned between him and his brother, Japesha. Tyagaraja immersed himself in devotion and music. At eighteen, Tyagaraja had been married to a woman named Parvati. When she died five years later, he married his deceased wife's sister, and they had a daughter. Tyagaraja composed many songs known as *kritis*, including the *Pancharatna kirtanas* (Five gems), masterpieces that are often sung together by groups. More than 700 of his songs were published, and many are still popular among the musicians of southern India. He composed the *Nauka Charitram* (Boat performances) and the *Prahlada Bhakti Vijaya* (Devotion of Prahlada), poetic narratives in Telugu verse forms interspersed with songs. Some of his lyrics celebrate the power of music as a means of spiritual liberation. He taught many disciples his songs; they taught others, passing down Tyagaraja's original compositions.

According to one story about Tyagaraja, a wealthy man in Madras (now Chennai) wished for Tyagaraja to visit Madras and perform his music, but he could not persuade him to do so. He asked Upanishad Brahman, the saintly scholar and composer who headed the Kanchipuram monastery, to convince Tyagaraja to make the journey. Upanishad Brahman wrote as an old friend of Tyagaraja's father, and as a lover of devotional music, suggesting to Tyagaraja that he make a pilgrimage to the hill shrine at Tirupati and stop in Kanchipuram en route. In *bhakti* (devotional) tradition, singer-saints compose songs at temples visited on a pilgrimage, and Tyagaraja was no exception.

Nearing the end of his life, Tyagaraja formally became a renunciant, the last stage in the classical Hindu life-cycle. As the end neared, Tyagaraja asked pupils to sing his songs. He made offerings to brahmins and the poor, and in 1847, as *bhajans* (religious songs) were sung "in the presence of a great sound," he died, or as is said by Hindus, he entered divine formless consciousness (*brahman*). His gravesite memorial (*samadhi*) near the banks of the Kaveri is now a shrine. At annual festivals, accomplished musicians and beginners perform in his honor. His great musical contributions earned him the title "Beethoven of South India," and his lifelong devotion has been celebrated by numerous storytellers and musician-preachers (*bhagavatars*) dramatizing his songs and life.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Dikshitar, Muthuswami; Hinduism and Holy People; Shastri, Shyama

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Tzaddiq

Tzaddiq (pl. *tzaddiqim*) is a Hebrew term meaning "righteous one" or "saint." In the Jewish scriptures, the term originally denoted the sort of highly moral individual who might be called a "good person" in English; thus Noah was chosen to survive the flood because he was a *tzaddiq* (Genesis 6:9; 7:1) who took no part in the violence that had engulfed the world. The term had no specific denotation and could be used relatively; in the course of King Saul's murderous rivalry with his son-in-law David, for example, Saul said that David had been more *tzaddiq* than he, meaning only that in their quarrel David had behaved better and was more morally right (1 Sam. 24:18–19).

As time went on, the term became more abstract. The prophet Ezekiel distinguished between a *tzaddiq* and a *rasha'*, or "bad person" (Ezek. 18). Proverbs 10:25 declares that the *tzaddiq* is the foundation of the world, but a more pessimistic passage, Ecclesiastes 7:16, warns that trying too hard to be *tzaddiq* can lead to unfortunate consequences, and 7:20 flatly denies that a real *tzaddiq*, that is, one who never sins, can even exist. This has come quite far from the term's original meaning.

Rabbinic Judaism used the term in all its biblical meanings but also to designate the special powers and rewards that accrue to persons of uncommon virtue. In the heavenly realms, the place of *tzaddiqim* will be closer to the divine presence than that of the angels (Jerusalem Talmud [JT], Shabbat 6:9 8d; see also Babylonian Talmud [BT], Ta'anit 31a, Sanhedrin 93a). It is the righteous who will eventually revive the dead (BT, Pesachim 68a). The prayers of a *tzaddiq* are always heard (BT, Yoma 29a), and the decree of a *tzaddiq* is always fulfilled (BT, Sotah 12a, Ta'anit 23a). The *tzaddiq* can transform or even overcome the will of God (BT, Sukkah 14a; JT, Ta'anit 3:10 67a), and in the future *tzaddiqim* will be called "holy" just as God is called holy (BT, Bava Batra 75b).

Rabbinic legend, building on Proverbs 10:25, developed the idea that the whole world exists only on the merit of a certain limited number of *tzaddiqim*; because such persons were exceedingly humble, it was taken for granted that no one knew who they were. Early texts mention different quantities of such saints, but eventually thirty-six became the commonly accepted number (BT, Sanhedrin

97b; forty at BT, Hullin 92a). The number thirty-six can be represented by the Hebrew letters *lamed* and *vav*, and many medieval legends grew up around the miraculous exploits of unheralded *lamedvavniks*.

Among the Eastern European Hasidim of the late eighteenth century, the figure of the tzaddiq was magnified to an unprecedented degree. Hasidic communities would grow under the leadership of a charismatic tzaddiq or *rebbe* said to be endowed with all sorts of miraculous powers and arcane wisdom. In this final stage of its development, the concept tzaddiq came to denote a spiritual giant above the ordi-

nary human level, a virtual god (or perhaps even God) on earth.

—Robert Goldenberg

See also: Attributes of Holy People; Hasidism; Judaism and Holy People; Lamedvavniks; Sages; Spiritual Guardians

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U

Uich'on

(1055–1101 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar, sect founder

Uich'on, an eminent Buddhist monk of the Koryo period (918–1392) in Korea, was known as the National Teacher of Great Awakening (*Taegak kuksa*). He was also a bibliographer of Buddhist works and the founder of the Ch'ontae (Chin.: Tiantai) school of Buddhism in Korea.

Born in 1055, Uich'on was the fourth son of King Munjong (r. 1046–1083). He entered the monastery at age eleven, took first place in the monk examinations at age fifteen, and then five years later went to China to study with the masters of the various sects. While in China he was drawn to teachings of the Tiantai school as the one school that combined both meditation practice and a thorough grounding in scriptural study. When he returned to Korea, he attempted to bring about an end to the economic and doctrinal conflicts between the various meditative and text schools by establishing a new sect that would combine both the study of doctrine and the practice of meditation. With the backing and support of his father and three older brothers, he was able to gather many of the brightest minds from the Nine Mountain Son schools and the Huayen school into his new Ch'ontae order. His early death in 1101 put an end to his attempt to unify Korean Buddhism, however, and the Ch'ontae school became just another school among others. The reaction of the Son schools was to form a new unified Son school from their numbers and to call themselves the Chogye school. The doctrinal schools also banded together to form a new Doctrine school.

Uich'on's second major contribution to Korean Buddhism was his creation of a supplementary extension of and catalog to the first Koryo canon. After returning from China, he became the director of the library at Hungwangsa and gathered books from Sung, Liao, and Japan. He published a catalog of these works in 1090, then had them republished and dis-

seminated. This extension contained the writings of East Asian Buddhists, and its inclusion in the canon marked an elevation of East Asian Buddhist writing to the level of sacred scripture. Of note is the fact that Uich'on did not include in his extension any writings by the practitioners of Son Buddhism. This omission was due to the status of Son Buddhism in Korea, which, until its reformation by Chinul (1158–1210), was considered useless and nonproductive, as well as Uich'on's own predilection for Ch'ontae Buddhism, which he had helped to establish as a separate sect in Korea.

—John I. Gould

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Chinul; Scholars as Holy People

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Uisang

(625–702 C.E.)

Buddhist school founder

Uisang was an eminent Buddhist monk of the Unified Silla period (668–918) and founder of the Huayen school of Buddhism in Korea. The Koryo historiographer Iryon reported in *Samguk Yusa* (Legends and history of the three kingdoms of ancient Korea) that Uisang was considered an emanation of the Buddha. The *Sung Kao-seng Chuan* (Lives of the great monks) relates how he was able to bring about the religious awakening of a young Chinese girl who had tried to seduce him soon after his arrival in China. This same girl transformed herself into a dragon spirit to protect him throughout his life.

Uisang was born into the Kim clan in 625 and was almost certainly related to the royal family of Unified Silla. After

studying at Hwangbok Temple, he attempted to travel to China in the company of the Buddhist monk Wonhyo, but they were turned back by the border guards of Silla's enemy, the Koguryo Kingdom. Later, Uisang was later able to travel to China in the entourage of the Chinese ambassador. He settled at Chungnanshan near the Tang capital of Chang-an, where he studied under the Chinese monk and Huayen patriarch Chih Yen (602–668). He also studied alongside and held a life-long friendship with Chih Yen's most famous disciple and successor, the Serindian monk Fazang (643–712). After a twenty-year stay in China (650–670), Uisang returned to Silla to preach the teachings of the Huayen Sutra. There, he established ten temples dedicated to the Huayen lineage.

Uisang insisted on the exclusive use of the Huayen Sutra as the supreme doctrine of the Buddha and the path of salvation. He and his sect were accorded preeminence by the aristocrats of Unified Silla, who may have been drawn to Huayen's totalism and sense of harmony as well as the Huayen validation of the mundane world as a manifestation of the highest truth. His influence on all later developments in Korean Buddhism is clear; even the modern Korean Son Buddhism of the Chogye order is based on the Huayen philosophical tradition that Uisang introduced. His most famous and the only extant work he left behind is *Hwaeom ilseung peopkye to* (The diagram of the Dharmadhatu according to the One Vehicle of Huayen), which is a mandala and auto-commentary on Huayen doctrines of harmony, nontemporality, and co-origination of all phenomena. Because of his influence in both Silla and China, he was accorded the title of patriarch of Huayen in the Eastern Nation (Korea).

—John I. Goulde

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Fazang; Gods on Earth; Scholars as Holy People; Spiritual Guardians; Wonhyo

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Ulrich of Augsburg

(890–973 C.E.)

Christian bishop, reformer

Ulrich, bishop of Augsburg in southern Germany, church reformer, model cleric, friend of kings, and protector of the

poor, was the first saint formally canonized by the medieval Christian church. Born to noble parents in Swabia (southwestern Germany) in 890 and educated at the monastery of St. Gall (now in Switzerland), he became a priest, and in 923 he became bishop of Augsburg with the approval of King Henry I of Germany (r. 919–936). Renowned for leading Augsburg's successful resistance against the invading Magyars (Hungarians) in 955, Ulrich gained the favor and friendship of King Otto I (r. 936–973).

An activist for higher standards in the church, he preached often, strengthened Augsburg's cathedral school, made regular visitations of the clergy, and held two clerical convocations (synods) in his diocese each year. He also revived monastic life in his diocese, rebuilding monasteries destroyed by the Magyars, enforcing strict observance of monastic constitutions, and founding a religious house for women. He financed the rebuilding of run-down churches, including his own cathedral, and encouraged rich nobles to build new ones. Although an accomplished administrator, Ulrich was especially admired for his personal piety and holy lifestyle, which included frequent prayer, spiritual reading, and celebration of the mass. He visited Rome four times, cared for the poor and needy throughout his life, established a hospital for the indigent in Augsburg, and supported the rights of the weak against the powerful.

When he died on July 4, 973, Ulrich was already regarded as a saint by the common people. His grave in the church of the monastery of St. Afra immediately became a much-visited pilgrimage site, and in 993 Pope John XV proclaimed Ulrich a saint in the first formal canonization process of the Western Christian church. In the eleventh century, the monastery of St. Afra was renamed the monastery of Sts. Ulrich and Afra. Throughout the Middle Ages and into the modern period, Ulrich retained his popularity with the common people, who regarded him as the spiritual patron of wine makers, fishermen, and travelers, and an intercessor against fever, plagues of mice, and dog bites. He was also invoked against bad weather and dangers associated with water, and people with eye diseases visited numerous springs associated with his name. He is the patron saint of the city and diocese of Augsburg. In medieval images, he is often depicted holding a fish.

—Steven Sargent

See also: Afra of Augsburg; Canonization; Christianity and Holy People; Politics and Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Upagupta

(c. 3rd cent. B.C.E.–1st cent. C.E.)

Buddhist monk, protector

Upagupta, a Buddhist monk, preached and taught Buddhist meditative practices in northern India. In Southeast Asia, he is associated with various local guardian deities and invoked primarily as a protective figure. He is also the guardian of *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) and patron saint of those who follow the way of meditation. Some northern Buddhist texts refer to him as the converter and spiritual adviser of Ashoka, who is said to have remarked that in seeing Upagupta he was seeing the Buddha himself. Some texts describe Upagupta as a “Buddha without marks,” and others credit him with the compilation of the Sarvastivadin *Vinaya* (Monastic discipline).

According to the *Divyavadana* (Heavenly legend), Upagupta was born in the house of a perfume merchant of Mathura 100 years after the death of the Buddha. After meeting the early patriarch Shanakavasin, he began to take an interest in meditation and attained the first of four paths of liberation. As a layman, he had an important encounter with Vasavadatta, a famous citizen of Mathura. She had conceived a strong desire for union with him, but Upagupta resisted meeting her. Eventually, her limbs were cut off in punishment for some crime and she was left to die. By taking care of her, Upagupta not only won her for the faith but also became a nonreturner (*anagamin*), that is, one who would soon achieve nirvana and not have to be reborn again.

After being ordained by Shanakavasin, Upagupta became an *arahant* (enlightened person) and demonstrated the depth of his realization by converting the demon Mara. He then asked Mara to manifest the physical form of the Blessed One through his magical powers of transformation. Mara agreed but warned Upagupta that he should not bow down before the apparition, as it would not be the Buddha himself but only a likeness. However, when Mara produced a vision of the physical form of the Buddha, Upagupta bowed before it and justified his action by saying that it was same as paying homage to a statue of the Buddha. After confirming his disciple Dhitika in the transmission he had received, he attained nirvana and a *stupa*, or shrine, was raised over his remains.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Ashoka; Buddhism and Holy People; Mara; Meditation and Holy People; Spiritual Guardians

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Upaka

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Disciple of the Buddha

Upaka, a member of the heterodox Ajivaka sect, is also called Kala (the black one), perhaps because of his dark complexion. He was born during the time of Siddhartha Gautama during approximately the fifth century B.C.E. in a village called Nala in India located near the famous bodhi tree where Gautama first attained enlightenment. His first meeting with the Shakyamuni Buddha took place near the bodhi tree while the latter was on his way to Rishipatana to deliver his first discourse. Upaka asked the Shakyamuni about his accomplishment, and the Buddha told him about his enlightenment. Upaka then asked if Gautama was the *ananta-jina* (incomparable conqueror). When the Buddha replied in the positive, Upaka shook his head, saying, “So it be, friend,” and went his way. The commentary of the *Digha Nikaya* (Long discourses) points out that Shakyamuni had walked all the way from the bodhi tree to Rishipatana just to meet Upaka, though otherwise, as per the custom of the buddhas, he could have flown through the air.

After this meeting, Upaka fell madly in love with Capa, the daughter of a hunter. He fasted for a week. Finally the hunter consented to give Capa’s hand to him. Thereafter, Upaka lived by selling meat brought by the huntsman. After his wife bore him a son, she began to constantly mock Upaka. In the end, Upaka got so exasperated by her teasing that he decided to leave his home and go to meet the Buddha at Shravasti. Upon hearing his story, the Buddha admitted him to the order.

As a result of his meditation, Upaka became an *anagamin* (nonreturner), that is, someone who would attain nirvana and not have to go through another lifetime on earth. He was said to be reborn in the Aviha heaven. According to the commentary *Majjhima* (Middle-length discourses), Upaka then became an *arahant* (enlightened one). The *Samyutta Nikaya* (Connected discourses) also records a visit paid by Upaka to the Buddha in Aviha. Shakyamuni’s conversation with Upaka is not regarded as a real *dharma* (doctrinal) discourse as it took place before the wheel of the dharma was formally set in motion at Rishipatana. Thus, as pointed out in the commentary called the *Udana* (Solemn utterances), it only produced a *vasana-bhagiya* (impressionable) result.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama

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Upali

(c. 5th–4th cent. B.C.E.)

Disciple of the Buddha

Upali, an eminent disciple of the Buddha, was born into a low-caste family during the time of the Shakyamuni Buddha in approximately the fifth century B.C.E. As a young man, he took up employment as a barber with the Shakyamuni princes and joined the *samgha* (monastic community) along with them. The Buddha ordained Upali before he ordained the princes in order to humble the latter. Many incidents related in the Buddhist texts portray him as a special friend of the monks, whom he was always willing to help. It is said that Upali had a special affinity for the forest and thus requested permission from the Buddha to dwell there. The Buddha turned down his request on the grounds that if Upali went into the forest, he would learn only meditation, whereas by remaining among humankind he could learn both meditation and the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine). Upali took the Buddha's advice and by practicing insight was able to win *arahantship* (enlightenment). Three verses in the Theragatha, and another in the Milindapanha, are ascribed to Upali.

According to Pali sources, Upali learned the *vinaya* (monastic discipline) from the Buddha himself, who rated him among the foremost *vinaya* masters (*vinayadharas*). The "Upali-Panchaka" chapter of the Parivarapatha contains a list of Upali's questions on matters pertaining to the *vinaya* as well as the Buddha's answers. Even during the Buddha's lifetime, monks considered it a great privilege to learn the *vinaya* under Upali. After the Buddha's death, Upali became the *vinayapramukkha* (guardian of the *vinaya*). He performed this duty for thirty years until his death at the age of seventy-six. It was in his capacity as a *vinaya* master that Kassapa entrusted him with compiling the *Vinaya Pitaka* (Basket of monastic discipline) at the First Buddhist Council.

Because of his meritorious deeds in previous births, Upali was said to be born in heaven for 30,000 cosmic eons—1,000 times as *devaraja* (king of the gods) and another 1,000 times as a *chakravartin* (just king). He was succeeded by his disciple Dasaka as the *vinayapramukkha*.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Hermits; Kassapa; Status

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Upatissa

See Shariputra

Ursula

(4th cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary martyr

In the most popular version of Ursula's story, she was the daughter of a Christian British king, possibly during the fourth century. Scheduled to marry a non-Christian prince against her wishes, Ursula was granted a three-year postponement of the wedding so she could go on a pilgrimage to Rome. She took ten companions with her, and each companion took 1,000 handmaidens. She is thus traditionally associated with approximately 11,000 virgins. The group took eleven ships and sailed first to Cologne, then down the Rhine to Basel. From Basel they crossed the Alps to Rome. When they returned to Cologne after visiting Rome, Ursula and her companions were martyred. Early versions name Romans as their killers; later legends blame the Huns. Ursula's story is included in Jacobus de Voragine's thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea* (Golden Legend).

The vast number of maidens who accompanied Ursula is probably a result of a misreading of an earlier text or an error in copying. The earliest account of Ursula's story mentions only ten companions, which is much more plausible. The story as it is now began to be told in the eighth or ninth century and was very popular during the Middle Ages. However, that is not to say that the legend is entirely fictional. There is a church dedicated to St. Ursula in Cologne, and a marker there indicates that a church was originally built there in the fourth century, by a man named Clementius, to mark the site where a group of maidens was martyred, possibly during the anti-Christian campaigns of Diocletian. In the 1100s, a mass grave was discovered outside the walls of Cologne, and it was identified as dating to Roman times. The bodies were quickly identified as Ursula and her companions.

Ursula is usually represented holding an arrow, which perhaps is a confusion of Ursula with Urschel, a Germanic moon goddess who also sailed up the Rhine. Ursula's other emblems are a ship or a clock, and she is sometimes depicted with maidens under her mantle as well. The patron of young women, teachers, and drapers, she is also called upon in issues involving chastity, marriage, and plague. Her feast day is October 21. Universal observation of her feast no longer takes place; Ursula's cult was reduced to local status in 1969. The Ursulines, a religious order founded in the sixteenth



The martyrdom of Ursula and her ten thousand virgins, German, early sixteenth century. (Gianni Dagli Orti/Corbis)

century by Angela Merici for the education of young girls, took their name from Ursula.

—Kelly A. O'Connor-Salomon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Merici, Angela

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Uthman dan Fodio (Shehu)

(1754–1817 C.E.)

Muslim sufi, scholar

Shehu Uthman dan Fodio, a Sunni Muslim of the Qadiriyya sufi order, was a Fulani scholar whose ancestors settled in

the region now known as northwestern Nigeria during the fifteenth century. He was the leader of the Sokoto jihad in 1804 and 1808. After his death in 1817, the jihad continued under the leadership of his son and his brother. His surname, Fodio, means “learned” in Fulfulde. Thus, Uthman is *dan*, or “son of,” the learned; the title “shehu” also indicates someone who is learned. Indeed, there were many scholars in his family, including women as well as men.

The Shehu was born in 1754. His mother, Hauwa, and maternal grandmother, Rukayya, were his earliest teachers, drawing on a canon of Islamic writings for study and teaching. After a long period of study, the Shehu married and established a household that aimed to follow the pious practices (*sunna*) of the prophet Muhammad. The Shehu is said to be responsible for miracles, some of which are comparable to those performed by the prophet Muhammad. As a Qadiriyya sufi, he devoted himself to ascetic practices and spiritual concerns. Everyone in the family was expected to

make something useful; the Shehu made rope, understanding that productivity was a necessary part of spiritual obligation.

The Shehu preached the tenets of Islam and taught sufi precepts of right living, with careful attention to equitable treatment of all, regardless of origin or gender. He fostered the pursuit of knowledge, understanding that learning is the path to God. His son, Muhammad Bello, once said that his father's scholarship "dazzled men's minds." The Shehu's personal library numbered hundreds of volumes, among them many of his own works, which he had begun writing as early as the age of twelve. In thirty years of preaching, the Shehu advocated courtesy, patience, generosity, the pursuit of knowledge, and adherence to the practices of the sunna.

Traveling widely, the Shehu gained a large following. This provoked the Hausa king of Gobir to attack him, starting the jihad. The Shehu's aim in waging jihad was to secure for his community the right to preach, study, and practice Islam freely. Eventually, the jihad was successful, and all traditional, nominally Muslim kings in the region were replaced

with Fulani Muslims, who became known as "emirs." The society subsequently shifted to cultural focus on Islam.

The Shehu strove to imitate the life of the prophet Muhammad and felt that there were many parallels between them, as he wrote in his works. He was recognized as a saint during his lifetime, and his influence changed the nature of Hausa/Fulani society, instilling adherence to Sunni Islamic practices. He died in the room of his wife Hauwa in Sokoto and was buried there. His tomb remains a place of pilgrimage.

—*Beverly B. Mack*

See also: Islam and Holy People; Miracles; Models; Muhammad; Reform and Reaction; Scholars as Holy People; War, Peace, and Holy People

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V

Vacchagotta

(c. 5th cent. B.C.E.)

Disciple of the Buddha

Vacchagotta, a contemporary of the Shakyamuni Buddha during approximately the fifth century B.C.E., belonged to a rich brahmin family of the Vaccha clan. He became very learned but failed to find what he sought in brahminical texts and traditions and became a wanderer (*parivrajaka*). He later became a disciple of the Buddha. Vacchagotta is the subject of a complete section in the ancient *Samyutta Nikaya* (Connected discourses), and several of his discussions with the Buddha appear in the scriptures named after him, the Vaccha, Vacchagotta, Mahavacchagotta, Tevijja Vacchagotta, and Aggi Vacchagotta sutras, which focus on whether the world is eternal, the existence of the Buddha after death, and the nature of life. His discussions with senior monks such as Ananda and Moggallana on similar subjects are also recorded in the Pali texts.

The details of his conversion are given in the *Majjhima Nikaya* (Middle-length discourses). According to this account, Vacchagotta so enjoyed listening to the Buddha's discourse that he instantly declared him his teacher. He was then ordained, but just two weeks later he returned to tell the Buddha that he had learned all that could be attained by someone who was not an *arahant* (enlightened). He asked the Buddha for a further exposition of the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine), and the Buddha advised him to go further with his studies to acquire the sixfold *abhijna* (supernormal knowledge). Vacchagotta profited by the lesson and soon became an arahant. When some monks took his message of attainment to the Buddha, the Buddha is said to have remarked that the gods had already told him the news.

One of Vacchagotta's verses of ecstasy is included in the Theragatha. In the time of Vipassi Buddha, he was a householder of Bandhumati. During this birth, when Vipassi Buddha was invited to the king's palace, he swept and decorated

the street along which the buddha passed. As a reward for this, Vacchagotta was later born as a king by the name of Sudhaja.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Ananda; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Disciples; Gautama; Moggallana; Reincarnation

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Vairocana

Buddhist deity

Vairocana (lit., “illuminator”), the buddha of light and radiance, is the cosmic embodiment of the Buddha's body of truth (*dharmakaya*) and a symbol of ultimate reality. His name is also a word for the sun in Sanskrit and Pali, which points to his origin as a solar deity. He is related to Virocana, a deity mentioned in Vedic literature in connection with the sun, moon, and fire. Although he appears in pre-Mahayana texts as a minor deity, Vairocana is best known as the main buddha of the Avatamsaka Sutra, also known as the Flower Garland Scripture, a monumental text that exerted great influence on the history of East Asian Buddhism and was adopted as key scripture by the Huayan school.

In the scripture Vairocana epitomizes the essence of buddhahood that is identical in the infinite buddhas of all times and places. He is also a personification of the realm of reality (*dharmadhatu*) that encompasses the whole universe and permeates all phenomena. In that sense, the whole universe can be seen as Vairocana's limitless body. Because in

Buddhism ultimate reality is inconceivable and cannot be expressed through the medium of language, throughout the whole scripture Vairocana remains silent and communicates his teachings by emitting various kinds of light.

Vairocana came to play an important role in the esoteric (or tantric) traditions of Buddhism, where he is known as Mahavairocana (great illuminator). The main tantric text associated with him is the Mahavairocana Sutra, which in its Chinese translation became the principal scripture of the esoteric schools of East Asian Buddhism (Chin.: Mijiao or Zhenyan; Jap.: Mikkyo or Shingon) and was also a basic text of two classes of tantra in Tibetan Buddhism. In esoteric Buddhism, the absolute reality symbolized by Mahavairocana is realized by ritual practice, which includes physical postures and gestures (*mudra*), mystical spells (*mantras*), and meditative absorptions (*samadhis*). As a key buddha in the Mahayana pantheon, Vairocana became a focal point of cultic practice and a frequent subject of works of art. Some of his most impressive artistic representations are the giant statues at Yungang (fifth century) and Longmen (completed 675) in China and Todai-ji in Japan (consecrated 752). He is also a central motif in various *mandalas* (pictorial representations of reality) occupying a central place in the iconography and ritual practice of esoteric Buddhism.

—Mario Poceski

See also: Buddha; Buddhism and Holy People; Gods on Earth

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Vairotsana

(8th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Vairotsana, Tibet's greatest translator, was one of the first seven Tibetan monks to be ordained by Indian master Santaraksita at Samye, the first Tibetan monastery, where he received his name, which means "radiance." He was one of the first teachers of Dzogchen (Great Perfection) in eighth-century Tibet and the translator of many important volumes. To this day, his work is the standard of excellence among Tibetan translations of Indian Buddhist scripture. Many events recounted in his biography, *The Great Image*, are the stuff of legend. Regardless, the biography is a classic of Tibetan literature and a very important source for understanding the early period of Tibet's Buddhist culture.

Vairotsana was discovered by King Trisong de Tsen at the age of eight and sent to Samye to study language. Already a

brilliant scholar at fifteen, Vairotsana was sent to India with other translators to obtain the Dzogchen teachings. There, he studied with twenty-five masters, especially Shri Singha, for forty-two years. Once he attained ultimate enlightenment, he returned to Tibet, where he was received with great honor. At Samye, he taught King Trisong Deutsen and translated scripture. Some ministers—hostile adherents of the indigenous Bön religion—pressured for Vairotsana's removal. The king sequestered Vairotsana and continued to consult with him, however. Eventually Queen Margyen, angry because the celibate monk refused to sleep with her, betrayed Vairotsana to the ministers, and he was exiled to the empire's hinterlands.

At Vairotsana's urging, King Trisong de Tsen invited the Indian master Vimalamitra to teach and translate Dzogchen. Hearing of this, Vairotsana sent his disciple Yudra Nyingpo to debate with Vimalamitra. During their debate, Vairotsana's excellence became evident in the person of his disciple, and those who had once conspired against him were compelled to welcome Vairotsana back. On his return journey, Vairotsana met Pang Mipham, a frail old man who became his disciple and, soon thereafter, a celebrated master of Dzogchen.

After a sentimental reunion with King Trisong and Queen Margyen's sons, Vairotsana rejoined the royal translation group. After many years of engaging in translation, teaching, and solitary meditation, Vairotsana is said to have dissolved into rainbow light, leaving no mortal remains.

—Ani Jinpa Palmo and John Whitney Pettit

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Death; Martyrdom and Persecution; Santaraksita; Scholars as Holy People; Trisong de Tsen

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Vaishnava Sahajiyas

Hindu sect

The Hindu Vaishnava Sahajiya sect is found mainly in Bengal and northeastern India. Vaishnavas are devoted to the Hindu deity Vishnu; the term *sahaja* means "easy or natural tendencies and instincts." The Sahajiyas thus seek to actualize devotion to Vishnu, in his incarnation as Krishna, the "Dark Lord," by focusing especially on human feelings of sexual love, longing, and ecstatic union. The beliefs and

practices of the Sahajiyas are a blend of Hindu, Buddhist, and possibly Muslim concepts, but the sect was particularly influenced by tantrism, a heterodox mystical movement that emerged and spread throughout India from about the sixth century C.E. Many aspects of the tantric tradition were not sanctioned in the Hindu orthodox texts, and the Sahajiyas were and are a secretive group. Their texts are written in code, and reliable information about them is, by definition, limited.

The basic text of the Sahajiyas is the Bhagavata Purana (ninth or tenth century), which describes in detail the birth, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu. One of the most influential episodes in the Purana is the Rasalila, "Dance of Passion." Krishna, having grown into a young, handsome man in the countryside of Brindavan, plays his flute along a riverbank. Gopis, female cowherders, hear his song and are irresistibly attracted to his presence. With love and longing for Krishna, they leave their duties and families to join him. After experiencing union with Krishna, though, the Gopis feel pride and Krishna disappears. The women suffer unbearable longing and sorrow, and he returns to them, once again engaging in the Dance of Passion. Although none of the Gopis is named in the Purana, a later poet essentially collapses the many into one, naming her Radha (prosperity).

The Purana illustrates the ideal of *bhakti*, or devotion toward the divine, as characterized by feelings of love and longing, ecstatic union, and painful separation. The Sahajiyas see the love affair as one that can be experienced between human beings. They believe that all dualities, especially those of the genders, are false, and that through special practices, believers can bring about the union of opposites. The man in a relationship embodies the masculine divine force (Krishna), and the woman, the female divine force (Radha). The Sahajiyas thus emphasize the literal practice of sexual intercourse between the two as a means of attaining the realization of the sacred. Furthermore, the ideal of love in union/separation is found in *parakiya* (belonging to another)—that is, the woman involved in the relationship must be married to another man, just as the Gopis were when they went to Krishna. The sexual act must not be the ordinary, profane act of procreation. Rather, the man must not ejaculate, and there is a great deal of preparation and control necessary. The point of Sahajiya religious experience is the transformation of human bodies into spiritual ones.

The texts of this sect, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are extremely esoteric, describing meditation, ritual, and devotional techniques essential to bringing about this reconstitution of the human body into the divine.

—Phyllis K. Herman

See also: Devotion; Gopis/The Gopis; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna; Sexuality and Holy People

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Valentine

(3rd cent. C.E.?)

Christian bishop, martyr

There are at least nineteen saints with the name Valentine, and several of their received biographies and cults share a number of common elements. Ultimately, however, two of them vie for identification as "the" Saint Valentine celebrated on February 14: one of them of Rome, the other of the central Italian city of Terni. Scholars have generally agreed that the Roman Valentine was in fact the donor of a basilica outside Rome, and not its holy dedicatee. The Valentine identified with Terni is a martyr of the second or third century; from about the sixth century onward, he is described as being a local bishop. The earliest martyrology that describes this saint declares he went to Rome in order to heal a crippled boy, whereupon he was arrested by a prefect who demanded he worship idols; upon refusing, Valentine was decapitated. His body was taken first to a tomb near Terni and in the early seventeenth century was translated into the local cathedral. Many other places (including Glasgow and Dublin) claim to possess his relics.

Over the years, legends have grown from these basic details. Of them, the ones that are most often repeated relate that Valentine took particular pastoral care of young people, and especially of lovers. The association of the theme of love and the feast day of February 14 may well be due to the pre-Christian festival of Lupercalia held on that day; it is assumed by many that Christians sought to replace this old cult with one that was identifiably Christian, resulting in a feast with obvious ties to the celebration of love. Such an association between love and the feast of Valentine may also be found in the folkloric belief, in medieval France and England, that birds begin their annual mating on February 14. It is no surprise, then, that the earliest supposed "Valentines" should date from this time and region.

—George Ferzoco

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Vamaksepa

(1837–1911 C.E.)

Hindu devotee

Vamaksepa (also called Vamakhepa or Bamdeb) was a famous *shakta* (goddess-worshipping) saint of west Bengal in the town of Tarapith. A worshipper of the goddess Tara Ma, he was believed by his disciples to have achieved perfect insight (or *siddhi*). He was also a “mad saint” who violated the traditional Hindu rules of behavior and worship because of his great love and passion for the goddess.

Vamaksepa was born in the village of Atla in 1837 of brahmin parents, who named him Vamacharana Chatterji. His family was very religious. Neighbors called his sister a madwoman because of her religious intensity, and as a child Vamaksepa would scream and cry before a Kali statue. His nickname Vamaksepa means “mad Vama.” Vama’s father was a professional singer, and the child would sing with him and fall into ecstatic states. Sometimes his father would go into states of ecstatic love as well. His wife would beg him to pay attention to the world so they would not starve. They were too poor to send the child to school.

Vama took his sacred thread initiation, the rite of passage to adulthood, when he was sixteen years old and had a difficult time finding work. He came to spend more and more time in Tarapith, with its great shrine to the goddess Tara near grounds where cremations were performed, and started having visions of the goddess there. He began to sing and dance among the skulls and bones from the cremated bodies and experienced visions of ghosts and spirits. His actions eventually became more bizarre and upsetting to his neighbors. He stole their statues of the gods and set fire to the village rice storehouse. In the flames, he saw the goddess Tara dancing, shouted to her, danced with her, and jumped into the fire. He did not, however, die in this incident.

Vama was subject to mood changes, sometimes showing intense love and sometimes hatred and anger. He would cry and wail to the goddess and later curse her, calling her a prostitute and a demon. He violated brahminical purity rules by eating with dogs and by eating the sacred food offered to the goddess during ritual worship. Indeed, he would

throw food at her instead of ritually offering it; once he threw his own urine at her statue, saying, “This is the holy water of the Ganges River.” Rumors abounded about him. It is said that he refused to bathe, that he drank alcohol, and that he ate flesh from human corpses. These are practices of certain types of rituals known as *vamacharis*, those who reverse the rules of what is pure and impure in order to go beyond the traditional rules of culture and society into liberation.

Vamaksepa spent much of his life in trance states. He was popularly believed to be capable of miracles such as curing illness, stopping epidemics and natural disasters, and engendering devotion to the goddess in nonbelievers. He could see Tara when others could not and called himself her favorite son.

Vamaksepa died in 1911, and Tarapith became a pilgrimage site for people who wished to contemplate his great devotion to the goddess. Its cremation ground became a popular place for meditation, and Vamaksepa is still invoked in meditation as a spiritual guide by many practicing Bengali shaktas.

—June McDaniel

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Insanity; Morality and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Purity and Pollution

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Vasubandhu

(4th–5th cents. C.E.)

Buddhist scholar, school founder

Mahayana Buddhist tradition gives Vasubandhu, along with his brother Asanga, credit for founding the influential Yogacara school of philosophy in the fourth and fifth centuries. According to Buddhist legend, Vasubandhu came from a location named “land of the hero” in northern India, where he was born into a brahmin family. Two of his brothers were also named Vasubandhu (heavenly kin). All the brothers became Buddhist monks. Asanga converted his brother to Mahayana Buddhism after Vasubandhu gained fame as a philosopher, a winner of debates, and a builder of monasteries. Vasubandhu composed treatises expounding the Yogacara position until his death at age eighty.

The Yogacara school, also called Vijñānavāda (literally, “holders of the doctrine of consciousness”), deals with the practice of yoga and argues that the two root problems of life are ignorance and craving. Followers believe that the human mind is the source of all objectifications. Not only is the root problem of ignorance located within consciousness, however, but the solution, enlightenment, finds its locus in consciousness. Vasubandhu, in fact, argued that the world is

produced by consciousness only. Thus the only reality is consciousness, because the objects of the world are nothing more than products of one's consciousness. Consciousness does not see anything as an object except the perceiving consciousness itself—thus there is an identity of consciousness and object. When consciousness sees a thing as it truly is in fact, it is consciousness seeing itself as it really is. This, Vasubandhu said, is the enlightened way to see.

—Carl Olson

See also: Asanga; Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Vedanta Deshika

(1268–1370 C.E.)

Hindu philosopher, poet, devotee

Vedanta Deshika, known as a great philosopher, poet, and exemplary devotee of Vishnu, was born in 1268 in Kanchipuram, one of the seven sacred cities of India, southwest of Madras. He learned the texts of Hindu religious life easily while still a youth and went on to write philosophical, poetic, and devotional masterpieces, carrying on the Vaishnava tradition of the great teacher Ramanuja (1017–1137).

Deshika's parents were elderly. His father was a retired pandit regarded locally as a sage. Lord Venkateshvara appeared to this pious brahmin in a dream, legend has it, and told him to come to Tirupati, promising that if he and his wife worshipped him there, they would be blessed with a son. Reaching Tirupati, the old couple worshipped Venkateshvara. When they went to sleep, the mother dreamed that the Lord came to her as a boy and gave her a huge bell, saying, "I will be your son. Swallow this bell," and in her dream she did. The couple awoke to a commotion. Temple priests were announcing to pilgrims, "The temple bell is gone!" and servants suspected of stealing it were being punished. The mother told the priests her dream, and the *archaka* was inspired to interpret the meaning, telling the mother of Lord Venkateshvara's intention to bless the son with far-reaching powers of communication. He would be an inspired saint of eloquent wisdom.

The couple went back to Kanchipuram. After twelve years, their son was born on the tenth day of the festival of the Lord of the Seven Hills. They named him Venkatanath, in honor of this deity, but he would also be known as "incarnation of the bell." Others considered him an aspect of Ramanuja (an earlier Vaishnava teacher) incarnate; still

others thought of him as Lord Venkatesha himself embodied to teach devoted people. Even in his boyhood, Venkatanath showed signs of his destiny to be a great teacher. The boy easily mastered lessons useful to one who would become a spiritual leader, studying the Vedas, Upanishads, Itihasas, Shastras, and esoteric wisdom known only to initiates. Before the age of twenty, he had mastered many disciplines. Even elders who encountered him accepted him as a guide because he was so full of spiritual intelligence. During this time, one of his fellow pupils was Vidyananya, another brilliant brahmin destined to do important things.

Venkatanath went to Cuddalore to repeat his Garuda mantra, and his worship culminated in a vision of Garuda, the falcon vehicle of Vishnu and the embodiment of the Vedas, who initiated the youth into practice of the mantra of Hayagriva (Vishnu as half horse and half man). Venkatanath performed his spiritual exercises, praying, meditating, repeating his mantra, and worshipping at the site where Ramanuja had been initiated. On Herb Cure Hill overlooking the Garuda River and Devanayaka temple he prayed, concentrating intently on Hayagriva. Hayagriva is the deity of wisdom, lord of language and knowledge. It is said that in a luminous milk-white vision Hayagriva revealed himself in all his glory to Venkatanath, granting him wisdom.

The inspired youth uttered a hymn, *Hayagrivastotra*, a composition said to integrate intellectual clarity and *bhakti* feelings. Hayagriva blessed the youth with the ability and grace necessary to strengthen Ramanuja's Vaishnava teachings. With such knowledge, Venkatanath would be honorifically named Vedanta Deshika, "Teacher of Vedanta." Deshika went to Tirupati; worshipping Venkateshvara (the deity enshrined there), he was inspired to compose a *dayashatakam*, a series of verses on Vishnu's grace. In due course, Vedanta Deshika married a virtuous woman of good family and lived an exemplary life.

Vedanta Deshika composed many Vaishnava hymns, poems, plays, and commentaries and summaries of earlier Vaishnava works. He was honored as a great philosopher and poet. He lived in Shri Rangam much of his life, spiritually ministering to devotees. With his wide-ranging knowledge, Vedanta Deshika was master of both northern and southern traditions of Vaishnavism.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Devotion; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Ramanuja; Reincarnation; Scholars as Holy People

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Vemana

(16th cent. C.E.)

Hindu ascetic, poet

Vemana, an ascetic yogi and wandering social critic who wrote verses still popular today, lived in the sixteenth century. Lines from his hundreds of poems became proverbial among Telugu-speaking people because he expressed trenchant criticism and wary wisdom in memorably incisive, colloquial language. The poetry he left is more important than the legends about his life, which contain colorful folklore and themes about passionate love and desire for gold, and renunciation of the world and constant wandering, but not much historically verifiable information.

The traditional picture of Vemana shows a naked man sitting on the ground, surrounded by the ultimate debris of life—skulls and bones—under a tree in a jungle. There Vemana sits alone, contemplating existence. It is the archetypal image of a disillusioned, solitary yogi. Sometimes the same figure is seated on a deerskin under a tree with a bowl of fruit before him, and a stream flowing nearby. In either case, he is the timeless thinker gazing into eternity, saying what he observes, not caring if some dislike his message. He nevertheless became a wandering “people’s poet.”

Some say Vemana was born in 1562 in Moogachintapalle, in Chittoor district, southeastern Andhra Pradesh, probably into a Reddi family of agriculturalists and merchants. It is thought that his mother died when he was quite young. When his father married again, Vemana’s stepmother mistreated him. In these tales, Vemana became infatuated with a *devadasi* (woman of the temple dancer community) when he heard her singing. She was also attracted to him. The devadasi’s mother told him that unless he could bring her jewelry, he would no longer be welcome at her house. Vemana went home, feeling pained. His sister-in-law, noticing he was not eating, asked him why. “The woman I’m in love with has asked me to bring jewels like yours. I don’t know what to do,” he replied. His sister-in-law laughed at his problem and gave him some of her jewelry. When he gave the jewels to his ladylove, she greedily grabbed them. Vemana compared this with his sister-in-law’s sweet generosity. Her virtue was so much more meaningful than this ugly avarice that he felt like a fool.

In other stories, Vemana worked as a supervisor in a goldsmith’s shop and learned a mantra from a goldsmith’s guru. In any case, Vemana grew disillusioned with dreams of love and wealth and began discerning deeper truths. He became indifferent to conventional householder life, wandered the roads as a mendicant, and shed his belongings and social relationships, even his clothes. While on the road he used his energetic mind to compose pithy teachings in verse. Some who encountered him thought him mad, but he was a yogi concerned with spiritual matters instead of material things.

In Vemana’s verses, one hears an eloquent, confident voice insisting on deeper spiritual values. A typical verse of Vemana notes that in creation everything is equal. No one is worth more or less than anyone else, and claims of superiority in religion have no meaning. There is no point in saying that devotees of one god are better than another; in the end, after all, Shiva devotees die and are buried, and Vishnu devotees are cremated. Ordinary people prized Vemana’s frank observations and repeat them to this day.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Guidance; Hinduism and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Veneration of Holy People

The holy people of the world are commemorated in many ways. Living saints receive gifts and prayers, most notably in Hinduism. This is not particularly surprising: Great figures of any age have attracted admiration and even veneration. More surprising is that many holy people of the world continue to be venerated centuries and even millennia after their death. Prayers are addressed to them, millions of people each year visit a saint’s tomb, their anniversaries are celebrated, and people keep images of honored people in their homes or read biographies of saints; the ways to honor a holy person are endless. In different religious traditions, people honor those believed to be (or to have been) particularly close to the divine for a variety of reasons. In Hinduism, the veneration of a holy person is a way to venerate God. Similarly, in many religions veneration of a holy man or woman is considered a method of focusing the mind on religious truths. Honoring a great religious figure may also be thought of as a way to win divine favor. Even in religions such as Judaism, which discourages the veneration of any human being, popular religious practices include visits to saints’ tombs—and requests for the saint’s help in dealing with the myriad problems of human existence. The veneration of holy people is based on the premise that people in such alignment with the divine are liminal figures: They are open doors, helpers who can mediate in some way between humans and the divine. Whether this mediation takes the form of intercession for miracles or the religion emphasizes instead that holy people are simply role models and teachers, the appeal of these figures remains based on the fact that at some level they are pipelines to the divine.

Some religions (or subsections of religions) have used the bodies or other relics of a holy person as a focal point for veneration. This phenomenon appears in Islam, Shinto, Jainism, Judaism, ancient Greco-Roman religion, and even Hinduism (although bodies of dead Hindu saints are cremated and the ashes normally poured into a sacred river). Medieval Christianity made a convenient distinction between first-class relics (the actual body of a saint), second-class relics (an object handled by a saint, such as an item of clothing), and third-class relics (an object that has touched a first- or second-class relic). Islam also acknowledges and reveres second-class relics of some holy people, such as the sword of the prophet Muhammad (570–632). Christianity and Buddhism went further than other religions in the matter of relics, however, dividing the bodies of holy people, sometimes into almost microscopic parts, in the belief that every particle had special merit and could be a focal point for worship. Christianity can further be distinguished as unique because of the practice of moving relics from place to place; in other religions, devotees must go to the remains of saints for worship.

Many religions encourage veneration of holy people because of precise, tangible benefits that people believe they will receive: Pray to a saint, and the saint will help. In Islam and Christianity, it has been a common practice to seek burial near the tomb of a saint to benefit from his or her eventual bodily ascent to heaven. Thus the legend of Ethiopia's national saint, Takla Haymanot (d. 1313), tells that those buried near Takla will rise to heaven with him; many pilgrims bring the bones of their relatives to bury in the valley that contains Takla's tomb. More broadly, people of faith have often believed that a visit to a saint's remains can bring blessing to the devout pilgrim, a belief that continues in Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism today, as well as in Islam. A visit to the shrine of the modern Senegalese sufi Ibrahim Niasse (1902–1975) has become as meritorious as a journey to Mecca for his followers (just as a visit to Takla Haymanot's tomb is considered equivalent to visiting the Holy Sepulcher for Ethiopian Christians), winning them special blessings. In the late Middle Ages in Western Europe, believers were told that they could earn relief from purgatory for making visits to saints' tombs or by possessing their relics; Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490–1545) had a relic collection that could win a whopping 39 million years of remission.

More commonly, however, believers around the world have turned to holy people for relief from suffering in this life, whether they visit physical remains or just pray in their homes. The only notable exception is the Jains, who worship their *tirthankaras* but believe that these great “ford-makers” of the religion are totally disengaged from the world and will not intervene in human life. Most common is the holy person's ability to cure illness. Other saints deal with a variety of

intractable human problems, very commonly the issue of human fertility. For example, the tomb of Rachel, one of the holiest shrines of Judaism, attracts many pilgrims—Muslims and Christians as well as Jews. Since Rachel died in childbirth, many women by logical association still visit her tomb to pray for a large family or safe delivery.

Legend tells that when the historic Buddha died, an argument arose over who would have the honor of retaining his remains. This conflict grew into what is sometimes called the War of the Relics. It was only settled when the great Indian emperor Ashoka in the third century B.C.E. divided the relics of the Buddha into 84,000 shares and had 84,000 special structures, called *stupas*, built all over India to contain them. Although a certain amount of pious exaggeration seems to be at work here, the story reflects three basic Buddhist beliefs about the relics of holy people: (1) They have special power, (2) even a little bit is as effective as the whole, and (3) a cult of relics developed at an early stage of Buddhist history. Early followers of the Buddha, such as Ananda, also had their cremated ashes divided and enshrined, and stupas came to house the remains of many saintly people—or sometimes just religious images, considered nearly as efficacious. The very form of early stupas—and their cousins, the pagodas—suggests veneration: Consisting of a base and an egg-shaped dome that contains the relics, they are surmounted by a spire with three rings, and the whole structure is surrounded with railings to mark off holy space. The stupa is a liminal region, containing both earth and heaven, with the relics providing a channel between the two. It has been pointed out that pagodas lay out the whole cosmos in symbolic form. The relics, especially of the Buddha himself, remain very important in Buddhism, and folk belief holds that venerating them brings protection from misfortune; veneration most commonly takes the form of circumambulation. Sri Lanka has one of the most famous of these relics, a tooth of the Buddha. Kublai Khan demanded it of the Sri Lankans in the thirteenth century, but they sent a false tooth and hid the true one—as happened again under British rule in the nineteenth century. The prime minister of Sri Lanka still holds one of three keys to the enclosure in which the relic is kept; it is, among its other functions, a symbol of political legitimacy.

The Buddha and other Buddhist holy people are venerated in other ways, as well. Sri Lanka has several “second-class” relics of the Buddha, including a depression in rock believed to be the Buddha's footprint and a tree grown from a cutting of the original bodhi tree, under which Gautama received enlightenment (a cutting of the Sri Lankan tree now grows at the site of enlightenment and draws many pilgrims). The sites of the Buddha's birth, first sermon, and death are also popular pilgrimage locales. Further removed

from the physical, the lands of Theravada Buddhism celebrate an annual “Buddha’s Day” (*Vishakha Puja*) that falls on the full moon in the month of Vishakha (April/May). This festival commemorates the great events of the historic Buddha’s life. Zen Buddhists also have a collective commemoration of the Buddha’s enlightenment, including a great group meditation that lasts for several days. Zen monasteries celebrate the anniversary of the death of Bodhidharma (d. c. 530 C.E.?), the first Chan/Zen patriarch in China. Other holy people receive similar anniversary celebration.

Many of the same elements of venerating holy people are also present in Christianity (although rejected by the Protestant communions, with the partial exception of Anglicanism): use of relics but also a belief that commemoration in the absence of relics is efficacious; a sense of connection with the cosmic order (in Christianity defined as “God”) effected by the saint; and a belief that saints can help in misfortune. In Christianity, however, the belief that a saint upon death enters the presence of God and is thus in a position to intercede for divine favor turned reliance on saints into a central feature of the religion. Excepting Protestants, most Christians since at least the third century have believed that a saint can intercede to win miracles. There is no clear differentiation between popular and elite belief. The only difference lies in the distinction sometimes lost in popular practice between the veneration of saints and the adoration properly given to God alone; in popular belief, saints have often been perceived as powerful figures able to work miracles, while official theology teaches that their only power is intercession with God in hope of a miracle. Christians have honored saints by making pilgrimage to their tombs, by saying prayers invoking them, and by keeping images of popular saints in their homes and churches. Presently, by far the most popular of the saints is the Virgin Mary, regarded as worthy of special veneration as the mother of Jesus.

The quest for relics in Christianity has been a search for something tangible, a way to honor a saint and therefore win his or her approbation as well as simply providing comfort. Relics were needed to consecrate altars, and they were longed for by people of all ranks. This, of course, led to abuse, invention, and wishful thinking. Relics were and are valuable: At the end of the tenth century, Christians obtained the body of Adalbert of Prague from the Prussians who had killed him by paying its weight in gold—a small price to win the relics of a martyr in that age. But bits of bone and other substances are very anonymous until someone gives them a name, and many have preyed on the credulity of believers, selling them fakes. The sixteenth-century humanist Desiderius Erasmus said that there were enough relics of the True Cross (on which Jesus was crucified) to build a ship; by the fourth century armed deacons stood at either side of the

relic in Jerusalem to make sure that pilgrims kissing the Cross did not bite off pieces. Legends tell how relics were miraculously conveyed to deserving places (perhaps the most spectacular is a flying house, the house of the Virgin Mary at Loreto in Italy), duplicated to prevent quarrels, or discovered thanks to dreams and visions. More prosaically, relic theft became common. A famous case comes from the ninth century, when Venetian merchants absconded with the relics of the evangelist Mark and bore them home in triumph. Protestant reformers delighted in exposing evidence of holy fraud, just as modern skeptics enjoy mocking miraculous apparitions of the Virgin Mary.

The veneration of saints, very often at their tombs, is also widely popular in Islam even though conservative Muslims denounce the practice. Unlike Christianity, there is a stark division between popular Islam, both Sunni and Shi’a (which venerates saints), and Sunni theology (which makes an absolute distinction between God and God’s creation). Muhammad’s tomb in Medina is an important pilgrimage site. However, the practice of visiting the tombs of holy people only became common with the rise of sufism from the ninth century, and charismatic sufi leaders are believed to have a special relationship with God comparable to that of Christian saints. Massive pilgrimages take place each year on the anniversary of a holy sufi’s death. It is typical to make small offerings at these sites; for example, the women who oversee Fatima of Ourika’s (c. 1000/1200) tomb place couscous at the head and foot of her grave daily. Vigils are also common, and visiting many shrines is believed to remove sin from the pilgrim.

Shi’a Islam gives a particularly central role to veneration of its early martyrs, ‘Ali b. Abi Talib (600–661) and Husayn b. ‘Ali (626–680). Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, where their tombs are found, are holy cities. So many Shi’a Muslims want to be buried near these holy men (who have a reputation for securing paradise for those who do so) that many families bring their dead to the shrine and carry the coffin around the tomb of one of these saints before burial nearby. The anniversaries of their martyrdoms are celebrated with massive public festivals that include public mourning and reenactment of their seventh-century deaths.

Muslims also honor holy people away from their tombs. Special veneration is given to Muhammad—whose name is always invoked with the phrase “peace be upon him”—because of his unique role as the last and greatest of the prophets. Public celebration of Muhammad’s birthday has led over the centuries to creation of a large body of songs and poetry for performance at the festival of Mawlid al-Nabi, celebrated on the twelfth day of the month of Rabi al-Awwal. Although figural art is forbidden in Islam, stories and writings of many holy men and women circulate widely, helping to focus devotion on these figures.

Judaism avoids the veneration of mortals, reserving worship for God alone. At least that is the official attitude toward saints. The reality is much fuzzier. Especially from the twelfth century on, perhaps thanks to Christian and Muslim influence, popular pilgrimage became an occasional (largely regionally determined) feature of Judaism. The rise of pilgrimage to the shrines of holy people can be seen in the history of the cave of Machpelah, the burial place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Hebron. There was apparently some early veneration of the tombs of these patriarchs; the first-century historian Josephus tells that there were fine marble tombs there, which certainly did not date back to the time the patriarchs lived and died. A church built over the site was later converted to a mosque. But only centuries later, in 1267, were Jews forbidden by Muslim authorities to pray there: Apparently enough pilgrims had been coming to constitute a nuisance. Since the Six-Day War, the cave has again become a popular Jewish pilgrimage site. Other tombs of great Jewish holy people also receive veneration. The pious still visit the grave of Gershom ben Judah (c. 960–c. 1030) in Mainz, and Hasidic pilgrims are drawn annually to the tomb of the Ba'al Shem Tov (1698/1700–1760). Thousands each year visit the supposed tomb of the second-century sage Simeon ben Yohai, especially on the anniversary of his death. There they spend the night in a vigil and also give three-year-old boys their first haircuts.

The physical remains of holy people also receive veneration in the Baha'i faith. When the Bab (1819–1850), the prophet of the religion, was executed, his followers took the body and kept it hidden in various places. It was moved to the Holy Land and finally interred on Mt. Carmel in 1909; the bodies of other great Baha'i leaders, including 'Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921), are buried at the shrine there. But it is the shrine of the founder, Baha'u'llah (1817–1892), near Akka that receives the most veneration: It is the holiest place on earth for Baha'is, and the place toward which Baha'is face to pray.

Other religions celebrate the great contributions of their holy people. Sikhs celebrate the births and deaths of the ten gurus. The most important of these events, the anniversaries of the births of Nanak (1469–1539) and Gobind Singh (1666–1708) and of the martyrdoms of Arjan Dev (1563–1606) and Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675), are marked by reading their great inspired book, the Guru Granth Sahib, cover to cover (which takes forty-eight hours). These are great public festivals that include bands playing and competitions. Hindus extend their veneration more freely to include any popular saint. Since Hindus do not normally have the physical remains of their holy people (although it is interesting to note that some of the ashes of Mahatma Gandhi [1869–1948] were kept and enshrined near Bombay until 1997), they make much use of pictures of both gods and saints, both in their homes and in temples. Still, some tombs exist and are centers

for public veneration—for instance, the grave and memorial chapel of Svami Haridas (sixteenth century) at Vrindaban. *Panj pir* (Five guides) is a popular Hindu cult of five saints—any five the devotee chooses. Jains also make pilgrimages to sites associated with holy people. Although there are no bodily remains of any of the *tirthankaras*, or “ford-makers” (according to legend, when Mahavira died, the god Indra collected his relics and took them to heaven for the gods to venerate), pilgrims visit a site with footprints said to be those of Mahavira (trad. 599–527 B.C.E.) preserved at Pava-puri, where he died. It is customary for a Jain layperson to make at least one pilgrimage by the age of fifty to places associated with the *tirthankaras* or other ascetics of the past, as well as to revered living ascetics. Daoist and Confucian holy people receive veneration in temples as well as prayers for good fortune and health, although relics are not kept.

Veneration of holy people has been a deeply embedded element of popular religion in much of the world, often to the dismay and annoyance of religious elites or people who oppose a particular holy person's message. Elements of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have all tried to quash popular veneration, with partial and regional success. Most notable were the Protestant reformers of Europe, who destroyed relics with enthusiasm, but such puritanical movements have also been notable in Islam. Secular authorities have sometimes tried to prevent veneration of a saint, usually by destroying his or her relics. The process continues today: When the Nazis executed the Austrian Jacob Gapp (1897–1943), the court ordered that his body be burned and the ashes dispersed. As late as 1980, the government of Nigeria exhumed and cremated the body of the radical Muslim prophet Muhammadu Marwa (d. 1980), hoping in that way to eliminate the movement he had fostered. Nevertheless, the popularity of holy people remains undiminished.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Adalbert of Prague; 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; Ananda; Arjan; Ashoka; Ba'al Shem Tov; Bodhidharma; Fatima of Ourika; Gautama; Gobind Singh; Haridas; Husayn b. 'Ali; Mahavira; Mark; Mary, Virgin; Matriarchs, Hebrew; Muhammad; Nanak; Niasse, Ibrahim Kaolack; Simeon ben Yohai; Takla Haymanot; Tegh Bahadur

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Verbermacher, Hannah Rachel

(c. 1815–1895 C.E.)

Hasidic Jewish leader

Hannah Rachel Verbermacher, known in Hasidic Judaism as “the Holy Maid of Ludomir,” is one of the few women who achieved a position of religious leadership in any form of Judaism prior to the twentieth century. Hasidism, a pietistic

and mystically oriented movement that developed in eighteenth-century Poland, championed the belief that certain religious leaders are distinguished by outstanding spiritual qualities that include enhanced access to the divine. Such *tzaddiqim*, “righteous ones,” known individually as *rebbe*, have almost invariably been male. Verbermacher, born in the Ukrainian town of Ludomir, crossed gender boundaries in achieving religious leadership of a Hasidic sect.

The only child of a wealthy merchant, Hannah, born in about 1815, was unusually well educated and demonstrated exceptional piety, studying holy texts and adopting religious practices ordinarily reserved for men. Following a mystical vision, the young Hannah broke off her engagement and devoted herself to learning and prayer. When her father died, she used her sizable inheritance to build a study house with an attached dwelling in Ludomir, where she lived in complete solitude. She soon acquired a reputation for saintliness and miracle working, attracting both men and women to her Hasidic court where she delivered learned lectures on the Sabbath from behind a door.

Verbermacher’s achievements as a *tzaddiq* reflect a profound spirituality that found communal expression despite the absence in Judaism of leadership, contemplative, or ascetic options for women. Her success was facilitated by her personal wealth and the cultural influences of a larger Christian environment familiar with “holy maidens” and female saints, but it certainly did not go unopposed. Hannah’s rejection of a conventional female role presented a direct affront to the male Hasidic leaders of her region, who believed that Jewish women should serve as enablers of their husband’s religious activities. Ultimately Hannah acceded to rabbinic pressure and entered into two brief and unsuccessful marriages. Although apparently unconsummated, these marriages had the intended result of ending her religious leadership. Hannah spent the latter part of her life in the land of Israel, where she was involved with mystical and messianic circles; nothing she may have written survives. She died in 1895.

—Judith R. Baskin

See also: Gender and Holy People; Hasidism; Tzaddiq

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Veronica

(1st cent. C.E.?)

Christian legendary saint

Associated with Christ’s passion, although not mentioned in the Bible, Veronica is the subject of a legendary story trans-



Veronica and her veil. Hans Memling, c. 1480. (Francis G. Mayer/Corbis)

mitted in several variants through apocryphal accounts. The oldest reference to her appears in the Acts of Pilate dating from between the second and fourth centuries. There called Berenice, she was confused with and took on characteristics of the Hemorrhissa, the woman mentioned in gospel accounts who suffered from an issue of blood and was cured after touching Christ’s garment (Luke 8:41–48; Matt. 9:20–22).

According to the account of Veronica that developed in the sixth century, she wiped Christ’s face as he approached Calvary, thus preserving an imprint of it on her veil. This *Vera Ikon* (true image), a term that became the saint’s nickname, according to the twelfth-century Giraldu Cambrensis, had miraculous powers, and Veronica was asked to work cures by means of this precious relic. The story of King Abgar (fourth century), cured by contact with the *Mandyllion* (another miraculous portrait of Christ), inspired the account about Emperor Tiberius, who was likewise said to be saved by Veronica’s veil. Veronica finally reportedly joined Sts. Peter and Paul to live near them in Rome, where she was martyred under Nero.

Veronica’s veil was deposited in Rome at St. Peter’s at least by the eighth century, where it was preserved in the St. Veronica chapel until the city was sacked in 1527. It became

the object of a very sizable cult, and in 1216 the church recognized the holy nature of the veil by attaching a large number of indulgences to its veneration. The enormous popularity of Veronica in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was intimately connected with these indulgences, which were made particularly large for the Roman jubilees. According to a legend popular at the end of the Middle Ages, Veronica was exiled to France with relics of the Virgin Mary (her milk and hair), and her remains were preserved at Soulac (Dordogne), where her tomb was long visited by the faithful. Although her feast was celebrated on July 12, her name was also associated at the end of the Middle Ages with the feast of Shrove Tuesday, when people veiled themselves in carnivalesque masks.

Veronica is often represented near Christ on the road to Calvary, holding the cloth in her hands. However, she is sometimes present at the crucifixion exhibiting the image. More rarely, she is represented between Sts. Peter and Paul.

—*Claire Labrecque*

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Jesus; Legendary Holy People; Models

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Vestal Virgins

Roman priestesses

The Vestal Virgins were priestesses of ancient Rome's goddess of the hearth, Vesta. From the earliest days of Rome until 394 C.E., they maintained her eternal flame and received special honors in society. Romans, including political leaders, showed them deference and respect, both for their performance of sacred duties and rituals and for the unique roles they played in Roman life.

According to Roman legend, Romulus and Remus were born in Alba Longa to the vestal Rhea Silvia (or Ilia), who had received that office from her evil uncle, usurper of the throne. After Romulus served as Rome's first king, Numa Pompilius established the Roman vestals and assigned them the duty of protecting Vesta's sacred flame and other holy objects. The vestals also had the duty of preparing the *mola salsa*, salt-cakes made each year from the first ears of grain harvested and used in particular religious rituals. In addition,

they participated in the ceremony of the Argei every March, when they ritually tossed straw dummies into the Tiber. They safeguarded wills and treaties, prayed for the Roman people, and could intercede in disputes, such as when they helped Julius Caesar gain forgiveness from the dictator Sulla.

There were originally four vestals, but the number soon became stable at six. They had to be virgins, free from bodily defect, and with both parents living. The vestals wore white garments and had their hair closely cropped or bound, and their heads were usually covered. They lived in the Atrium Vestae near the temple of Vesta and the Regia (office of the *pontifex maximus*, or high priest). Men were forbidden to enter their home at night.

Vestal virgins received special honors and privileges that set them apart, including the right to own property, make a will, testify in court, have special seating reserved at festival games, and be buried within the city walls. A *lictor* was assigned to carry the *fasces*, the symbol of Roman authority, in front of a vestal while she circulated on city streets. If a vestal unintentionally passed a criminal on his way to execution, his life was to be spared. Scholar Mary Beard has pointed out that "the ambiguity of their sexual status, the way they share the characteristics of virgins, matrons and even men need be regarded no longer as an awkward aspect somehow to be accommodated in any explanation of their position, but as a crucial element in designating their sacredness" (Beard 1980, 21).

There were two methods of choosing vestals. The *pontifex maximus* could select twenty eligible girls from six to ten years old, from whom the successful candidates would be drawn by lot, but Roman nobles could also offer the chief priest the services of their daughters. Vestals took vows of chastity and served for thirty years, ten of learning their duties, ten of performing them, and ten of teaching novices what they needed to know. After serving for thirty years, vestals could retire and marry, but apparently few did, and many continued and served much longer terms. The senior vestal had particular duties, such as burning unborn calves, whose ashes would later be mixed with the blood of the October horse for distribution to shepherds at the Parilia festival.

The *pontifex maximus* could discipline the vestals and punished even minor infractions by whipping them. The punishment for breaking the vow of chastity was burial alive. The guilty vestal was carried through the forum in a covered litter and then sealed in an underground chamber located near the Colline Gate with only bread, oil, milk, and water. Famous vestals include Aemilia, who prayed to Vesta for assistance and miraculously rekindled the sacred fire by throwing a piece of her garment onto the cold altar, and Tuccia, who carried water from the Tiber to the temple of Vesta

in a sieve to demonstrate her innocence of the charge that she had broken her vow of chastity.

—Richard D. Weigel

See also: Mediterranean Religions of Antiquity and Holy People; Priests; Sexuality and Holy People

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Vianney, Jean-Baptiste Marie

(1786–1859 C.E.)

Roman Catholic priest

Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney, the "curé of Ars" and patron of the parochial clergy, was born at Dardilly, France, in 1786. He spent his childhood years tending sheep on his father's farm and received little, if any, schooling. The French Revolution forced the family to practice its faith in secret. Vianney felt called to the priesthood yet had great difficulty being admitted to seminary because of his mediocre intellectual abilities. His extraordinary piety made up for his deficiencies in that area, however, and he was ordained in 1815. His fame as a great confessor spread rapidly, and soon he attracted hordes of pilgrims to Ars, his parish. His life of self-mortification and devotion to his flock ended on August 4, 1859. He was canonized in 1925.

The convulsions experienced by the Gallican church during and after the French Revolution may have contributed to the astonishing piety and, at times, ultrazealous activity of Vianney, attributes he shared with other members of the French clergy of the early nineteenth century. In 1790, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy had created a virtual schism in the church in France, separating those priests who swore an oath of allegiance to the newborn republic from those who remained faithful to Rome. In 1792, the de-Christianization of France began in earnest, but with scant success among the laity. By 1804, when Vianney was eighteen years old, the pope was in Paris to crown Napoleon; however, by 1815, many French parishes had no pastor.

In this same year, Vianney was sent to Ars, a village with 230 inhabitants of mostly indifferent religious practice but well-versed in blasphemy and obscenity. The village was slowly transformed by its pastor's preaching, one-on-one contact with his flock, and catechism classes for the young. But the saintliness that seemed to radiate from this man, manifested by extreme self-mortification (self-flagellation and fasting) and extraordinary insightfulness in the confes-

sional (he was said to be able to discern an incomplete or "bad" confession), changed Ars into one of the major pilgrimage sites in France, comparable to Lourdes and Lisieux. By 1855, approximately 20,000 people a year traveled to Ars to go to confession.

Numerous miracles were reported during Vianney's lifetime, not the least of which was his ability to survive on scant food and very little sleep. He is said to have credited St. Philomena, removed from the canon in the twentieth century, with miracles he himself was responsible for, thereby virtually creating the Philomena cult. He founded an orphanage for girls, which was removed from his control under circumstances that remain clouded.

Toward the end of his life, Vianney habitually spent fourteen to eighteen hours a day in the confessional. His piety, self-mortification, and physical struggles with the devil, whom he called *le grappin* (the grabber), inspired the writer Georges Bernanos (1888–1948) in his descriptions of several of his saintly fictional curates. Vianney died August 4, 1859, worn out both by his asceticism and his tireless work for those seeking absolution from the saintly curé of Ars, who had struggled mightily with the devil and won.

—Kathryn E. Wildgen

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Demons and Monsters; Guidance; Priests

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Vidyaranya

(d. 1386 C.E.)

Hindu philosopher

Madhava Vidyaranya Muni, a mysterious fourteenth-century Hindu philosopher, has been called the chief architect of the Vijayanagara Empire's founding. As a Shaivite brahmin, he had the traditional learning and the vision to show the ways to reconstitute Hindu polity in the south. He spent a significant part of his earlier life as a married householder, and there are references to his role in conducting a number of Vedic sacrifices. But in later life he advised kings and was a great religious authority, the author of important philosophical works on Advaita (nonduality).

The Vijayanagara Empire of southern India was founded sometime around 1335. According to tradition, Vidyaranya served as chief minister to the first king, Harihara, and to the succeeding kings Bukka I and Harihara II. He was the most important and influential religious thinker of his time in the region.

Vidyaranya was initiated into the renunciant stage of Hindu life in 1331. He trained students whom he later entrusted with important duties in Virupaksha and Shringeri monasteries, he debated thinkers such as Akshobhya Tirtha, and he invited the celebrated poet and philosopher Vedanta Deshika to the Vijayanagara court. As a *smarta* brahmin, he was a member of the priestly caste of custodians of orthodoxy. The smartas have produced many culturally creative updaters of religion who preserved essentials and systematized sprawling Hindu traditions. His brother Sayana wrote the most important surviving commentary on the Rig Veda.

Vidyaranya's philosophical clarity enabled him to delineate essentials with vision. He is known for four philosophical writings in Sanskrit: (1) *Panchadasi* (The fifteen), on the Advaita theme that only *brahman* (the supreme being) is real (the world is unreal, or a mixture; the soul is brahman); (2) *Jivanmukti-viveka* (Knowledge of jivanmukti), also on Advaita; (3) *Anubhuti-prakashika*, on interpreting the Vedas; and (4) *Vivarana-prameya-sangraha* (Summary of interpretation), on the interpretation of Vedanta as understood by the philosophers Padmapada (early eighth century) and Prakasatman (twelfth century). Despite its title, this large opus actually features innovative interpretations and fresh ideas. He is also known for his legal works in Sanskrit.

Vidyaranya ranks alongside Nagarjuna (c. 150–250) and Sayana (fourteenth century) as one of the all-time most important thinkers of southern India. In his philosophical writings, he shows a flair for using archetypal images. His biography of the great Advaita philosopher Shankara is an unforgettable, creatively written story of a spiritual conqueror's adventurous encounters and conquests.

Some say Vidyaranya died in 1386 near Virupaksha temple in Hampi, where a memorial grave shrine (*brindavan-samadhi*) still exists, though another tradition says his life ended in Kanchi, a holy city to the east of Hampi where he seems to have spent considerable time.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Hinduism and Holy People; Nagarjuna; Scholars as Holy People; Shankara; Vedanta Deshika

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Vieira, Eduardo Duarte

(1921–1966 C.E.)

Baha'i martyr

Eduardo Duarte Vieira died in prison in Portuguese Guinea, West Africa, on March 31, 1966, and is regarded as the first African martyr of the Baha'i faith. He was born a Catholic in

1921 in the Portuguese colony, where he was educated and eventually promoted to the position of director of tourism within the colonial government. During a brief visit to Lisbon in 1961, Vieira learned of the Baha'i faith and quickly converted to the new religion.

In 1962, upon returning to Bissau in Portuguese Guinea, he formally severed his affiliation with the church. He succeeded in converting his wife and establishing a small circle of about fifteen new Baha'is in the city. However, his Baha'i activities provoked persecution from both church and state, and he was forced to retire from his government post. He was denied travel documents, and eventually his house was raided. His Baha'i books were confiscated, he was forbidden to hold meetings in his home, and strict censorship was imposed on all his correspondence. Vieira was harassed by the colonial authorities and arrested repeatedly on various pretexts. His final arrest, on a charge of subversive political activity, took place on March 11, 1966, about two months after his forced retirement. He died in prison shortly thereafter, in uncertain circumstances, on March 31, 1966. His body showed signs of torture.

Before his death, Vieira was able to write a final message to his wife, Antonia, crudely scratched with a sharp instrument on the metal biscuit box she used to transport food into the prison for him. It reads: "Tonia: This is the way of destiny. All is terminated. Love your fellowman and raise your children with love. Love everybody. Forgive all the wrongs I have done. Be able to face life with naturalness. Goodbye, and I wish you a long life. Duarte 29–3–1966" (Lee 1974, 14: 389–390).

—Anthony A. Lee

See also: Baha'i Faith and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Patriotism and Holy People

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Vijayakrishna Goswamin

(1841–1899 C.E.)

Hindu visionary, ecstatic

Vijayakrishna was a Bengali Hindu saint, or *siddha*, and a Vaishnava practitioner. However, he was not a part of the orthodox tradition of Bengali or Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Rather, he was a worshipper whose religious experience included visions of gods and ghosts, kundalini yoga, and ecstatic song and dance that would bring large crowds of people into states of intense devotional love.

Vijayakrishna was born in Shantipur, west Bengal, in 1841 into a brahmin family descended from Advaitacarya, a companion of the saint-god Chaitanya in the sixteenth century and a religious figure in his own right. Both of Vijayakrishna's parents would fall into ecstatic states, and his

mother had periods of madness. By the age of six years old, Vijayakrishna would fall into trances. At these times, he would seem to speak with dead friends and relatives as well as with saints and deities. At eighteen, he left Shantipur to go to Calcutta and study medicine.

At this point Vijayakrishna married a six-year-old wife and left her in the village while he went to complete his studies. He became interested in Vedanta, however, and joined the Brahmo Samaj, a sect that followed a rationalist and humanist type of Hinduism, advocated worshipping God through meditation, and rejected caste, image worship, and festivals. Vijayakrishna eventually became a priest, left the study of medicine, and traveled as a missionary and preacher for the Samaj. After a few years he became disillusioned with the infighting within the sect and grew interested in Vaishnavism. He had visions of Chaitanya and joined several Vaishnava sects. In 1883, he visited the town of Gaya and sat in meditative trance for eleven days. This event is called his “day of regeneration.” At the high point of the trance, it is said, the name of the god Krishna resonated in every organ of his body.

During six months of constant meditation following his regeneration, Vijayakrishna experienced burning heat, or *namagni* (purifying heat caused by chanting the name of God). He later described his body as rearranged, destroyed, and remade. He continued to perform meditation and austerities for several years until he felt stabilized in Krishna’s grace. In 1897, he and his disciples built an ashram in the town of Gendaria, where he lived between pilgrimages. He settled there with his wife and had five children.

Vijayakrishna was well known for his religious experiences. He would fall into trances, weep, and have visions of gods and their actions that he would act out dramatically. His disciples would describe him as intoxicated with love, radiating light, and full of bliss. There were also descriptions of his visions becoming spontaneously imprinted on his body, along with mantras and Sanskrit phrases. He would sing and dance at *kirtans* (gatherings for worship), calling out to the gods and goddesses whom he saw before him, and whole crowds would share in his visions. These gatherings would often last for six or seven hours, with people falling into trance, dancing wildly, finding themselves possessed by gods or spirits, trembling, and sobbing with joy.

Vijayakrishna emphasized the importance of both devotion and meditation and became famous as a saint and perfected being—he was even called an avatar by his disciples. He personified intense Hindu *bhakti*, or devotion. By the time of his death in 1899, he had thousands of followers.

—June McDaniel

See also: Chaitanya, Krishna; Devotion; Gods on Earth; Hinduism and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Prophets

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Vimalakirti

Buddhist bodhisattva

In Indian Mahayana Buddhism, Vimalakirti is a semi-legendary *bodhisattva* (enlightened being), that is, an emanated incarnation of the Buddha who says and does things solely for the purpose of liberating living beings from the cycle of death and rebirth. In the Shakyamuni Buddha’s time during the fifth century B.C.E., Vimalakirti lived at Vaishali with his wife and son, endowed with great fortune and attendants. He became a bodhisattva without ever renouncing a householder’s life. In the Vimalakirtinirdesha Sutra (Exposition of Vimalakirti), Vimalakirti displays his profound wisdom as a quintessential example of the Buddhist layman, teaching that the buddha-land is accessible to anybody with a pure and clean mind who embarks on the quest for supreme enlightenment.

Vimalakirti’s presence on earth is said to have been only for the purpose of converting beings through “skillful means” (*upaya-kaushalya*) to the Buddha’s *dharma* (doctrine) and spreading the doctrines of the Mahayana. Simulating an ailing man, he allowed bodhisattvas, deities, and other non-human beings of various classes, as well as monks, nuns, and lay devotees, to come and inquire after his health and seek supreme enlightenment. In theory, he did not believe in beings or things, but in practice he worked for the good of all creatures. Thus, his contradictory actions arising out of wisdom and compassion made him appear both a skeptic and a believer. He was endowed with inconceivable psychic powers and could not only reduce or enlarge his own home but also pack different universes into each other at will. With the same powers, he could restrain the demon Mara, create imaginary bodhisattvas, and send them to the farthest corners of any of the universes.

Vimalakirti rejected the Buddhist systems current at the time and attacked the physical and moral premises on which human society was based. He preached the nonduality of things and was neither an idealist nor a nihilist. As a matter of fact, he adopted a position that may be called the absence of any position. It was perhaps because of such a position that he became the “patron saint” of Chinese intellectuals.

—K. T. S. Sarao

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gautama; Laity

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Vincent de Paul

(1576–1660 C.E.)

Roman Catholic social reformer

Vincent de Paul was a social reformer during the seventeenth-century renewal of Roman Catholicism after the Protestant Reformation. He worked to turn the church in France from its alliance with the powerful toward service to the needy. The two religious orders he founded, the Daughters of Charity (1633) and the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, or “Vincentians” (1626), are still active. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, familiar in American cities for its charitable work, was founded in France in 1836 by lay students inspired by his example.

Vincent de Paul was born in southern France in 1576 and ordained a priest in 1600. Moving to Paris in 1608 to seek a benefice, at the time a source of income and a means of social advancement, he came under the influence of Catholic Reformation thinkers. Although Vincent’s early careerist ambitions were satisfied by his appointment as chaplain to the general of the royal galleys and almoner to Queen Marguerite, he began to use his social prominence to serve the poor. Vincent de Paul led a strange double life. On one hand, he moved at the center of French power. An acquaintance of Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, he became the spiritual director of King Louis XIII and confessor to his widow, Queen Anne. Mazarin appointed him to the council established during the boy-king Louis XIV’s regency. On the other hand, he lived and worked among the poorest and most helpless in society.

The thread connecting the two parts of Vincent de Paul’s life was his talent for organization. The Congregation of the Priests of the Mission originated from his recruitment of a number of priests who relinquished benefices to serve poor people in country districts. The Daughters of Charity evolved from his society of upper-class ladies who visited the sick and the poor. They constituted the first religious order of women who were not cloistered but remained in the world to perform works of mercy. As his charitable concerns grew, these organizations grew as well. The Daughters of Charity brought comfort to prisoners in the galleys as well as to orphans, the mentally ill, and refugees. Their wide-winged headdress became a symbol of the nursing profession in hospitals throughout the world. Vincent defrayed the enormous cost of these efforts by insisting that his powerful pa-

trons develop a sense of social responsibility based on their Christian faith. Vincent de Paul died in Paris in 1660 at the age of seventy-nine. He was canonized in 1737.

Vincent de Paul’s particular kind of holiness is more clearly discernible now than during his own time. The modern mind recognizes “managerial” ability, running organizations and motivating people toward common goals, as a distinctive quality. If managerial ability used in the pursuit of worthy goals can become a form of holiness, then Vincent de Paul, like Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 547) and Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), merited sainthood on that ground alone. St. Vincent de Paul is represented in art holding a foundling child, with other foundlings gathered around him.

—Thomas F. Pyne

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Vincent Ferrer

(1350–1419 C.E.)

Christian friar, preacher

Vincent Ferrer, a noted Dominican preacher and thaumaturge, was born in Valencia in 1350 and died in Brittany, in the city of Vannes, in 1419, following a twenty-year preaching mission that took him through much of Europe. He was made a saint of the Catholic Church by Pope Calixtus III in 1455. Best known as an effective and moving preacher, Vincent drew enormous crowds for his daily celebrations of mass and sermons, and witnesses attributed many miracles to his intercession both before and after his death. His sermons were said to have converted thousands of Jews and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula, including Rabbi Solomon Ha-Levi, who became Paul of Burgos, later bishop of Cartagena. A band of flagellants followed him wherever he went, just one sign of Vincent’s ability to move a crowd to penitence. Witnesses reported that Vincent had the gift of tongues, enabling him to be understood by audiences anywhere.

A pious child whose brother Boniface would become general of the Carthusian order, Vincent Ferrer entered the Dominican order in 1367 and soon distinguished himself in theological studies. The preaching mission for which Vincent was best known began only late in his life, in 1399, following a vision of Christ between Sts. Francis and Dominic in which Vincent was charged to preach the imminent Last

Judgment. Before and after 1399, Vincent also saw distinguished service in university life, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and to the crown of Aragon. Most of Vincent's career coincided with the years of the Great Schism (1378–1414) in the Catholic Church, during which time there were two rival popes headquartered in Rome and Avignon (and eventually a third, centered in Pisa), and Vincent played an important role in the intricate church politics of his day. Vincent's talents had early on attracted the attention of Pedro de Luna, a cardinal from Aragon, and when in 1394 Pedro de Luna became Pope Benedict XIII of the Avignon line, he summoned Vincent to Avignon, where he became the pope's confessor. Although Vincent remained convinced throughout his career that the Avignon papacy was the true one, he hoped to persuade Benedict to resign the papal seat in the name of bringing peace to the church. Only in 1416 did Vincent break with his former patron.

Vincent was the author of numerous works of philosophy, theology, and ecclesiology in addition to his corpus of sermons, including important treatises on logic, *De vita spirituali* (On the spiritual life), *De moderno Ecclesiae schismate* (On the current schism in the church), and a 1412 letter to Pope Benedict XIII about the end of the world, in which Vincent also described the vision that inaugurated his preaching mission.

—Laura A. Smoller

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Miracles; Politics and Holy People; Repentance and Holy People; Teachers as Holy People

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Vincent of Saragossa

(d. 304 C.E.)

Christian deacon, martyr

Vincent of Saragossa was a Spanish Christian deacon and martyr who died on January 22, 304, in Valencia during the persecutions of the emperor Diocletian. According to the earliest source for his martyrdom, the Spanish poet Prudentius (*Peristephanon* 5, c. 400), Vincent was captured along with his bishop, Valerius, and other priests. Owing to the bishop's speech impediment, Vincent spoke for the group, proclaiming their devotion to Christ and refusing to turn over copies of scripture to the magistrate. Consequently, the magistrate inflicted several tortures on Vincent: He was racked and clawed, placed on a gridiron (a detail also in the martyrdom of Lawrence of Rome), and made to lie on sharp potsherds in his prison cell. Two angels came to visit him

there, and the potsherds miraculously began to bloom. Vincent's followers, seeking to relieve his agonies, placed him on a soft bed they had made, where he finally died. The magistrate continued to torment Vincent's corpse: He had the body exposed to beasts and birds, but a raven defended it from mutilation. The magistrate then had Vincent's body weighted with a millstone and thrown into the sea, but the waves brought it safely to shore.

From the fifth century onward, the cult of Vincent spread throughout Spain and into Gaul, Italy, and North Africa. Augustine of Hippo (354–430), in a sermon for Vincent's feast day, declared that the saint was known everywhere in the Roman Empire. By the medieval period, his cult was firmly established in Britain as well, with Vincent's feast day listed in several English calendars and the Old English Martyrology. In art Vincent is often represented with a raven, or in diaconal dress. It has been suggested also that the fifth-century mosaic of Lawrence and the gridiron in Ravenna is actually a representation of Vincent, which would be additional proof for the popularity of Vincent's cult.

—Jessamyn Lewis

See also: Augustine of Hippo; Christianity and Holy People; Lawrence of Rome; Martyrdom and Persecution

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Violence and Nonviolence

Ahimsa, the reverence for all life, is central to Jainism, and Jain holy people can often be recognized because of their commitment to nonviolence, a commitment that they spread to Hinduism and that in the twentieth century came to be imitated by holy people through much of the world, thanks to the great example of Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948), who was influenced by the Jain spiritual reformer Shrimad Rajacandra (1867–1901). This was a development of the Hindu definition of *ahimsa* as "not-killing," not taking life except in sacrifice. The religions of the world are split on the issue of nonviolence. Some religions have praised warriors, especially fighters in religious causes; others have usually praised those who embraced nonviolence even against active threat to their persons or their religion. Yet other religions have an ambivalent tradition on this matter, some periods and regions praising violence in a religious cause, others adulating nonviolence as a prime virtue.

Islam has from the beginning recognized that violence is sometimes necessary both at the individual and the societal



Buddhist monk performs a ritual suicide, by self-immolation, in the central market square of Saigon, 1963. (Bettmann/Corbis)

level. The problem lies in deciding when violence is justifiable and when it isn't, an issue that has divided the modern Muslim world. Islam's two daughter religions, the Sikh and Baha'i faiths, also recognize the need for violence, as can be seen in the praise they give martyrs such as the Babi Husayn Bushru'i (1813–1849), who proclaimed the coming of the *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse) with an armed revolt.

Buddhism rivals Jainism in its embrace of nonviolence. This is apparent early in the tradition, for example in the testimony of the Indian emperor Ashoka (third century B.C.E.), who tells in his edicts that he was sickened by the destruction he had caused in warfare and after his conversion to Buddhism felt a growing aversion to war and bloodshed. Buddhists have rarely praised as religious figures leaders who followed the path of violence, even against the worst of colonial oppression.

Christianity falls between these two extremes. On the one hand, the Hebrew scriptures of the Bible depict a great deal of violence for the faith, praising heroic kings, such as David, who slew "ten thousands." On the other hand, Jesus preached a message of "turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29). Which teaching to follow? By the central Middle Ages, a theology had developed that argued that violence, or even resistance of evil, was to doubt the power of God. Thus St. Edmund, king of East

Anglia (c. 841–c. 870), is depicted as renouncing violent resistance to the Vikings who were devastating his lands; Gerald of Aurillac (c. 855–909), a military man, made his men reverse their swords and lances in battle so they would not hurt anyone (at least according to his hagiographer!); and the eleventh-century Russian princes Boris and Gleb offered no resistance when their brother seized their lands and finally murdered them. In fact, they were canonized with the special title "passion bearers" because by their innocent and voluntary suffering they shared in the passion of Christ. But Christian holy people also advocated (and sometimes participated in) war against the "enemies of God," whether Muslims, Jews, or Christian heretics, launching, most notably, a long series of crusades to win the "Holy Land" for Christianity.

There are no easy answers among the holy people of the world to the question of whether to embrace violence or nonviolence. Is it admirable to take up arms against injustice—as part of an army, or as an individual? The world's religions have often praised military saints, but less frequently have they condoned an individual decision to fight for a cause, such as the abolitionist John Brown's (1800–1859) raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. Is the Kenyan Elijah Masinde (1908–1987), who encouraged assault on government employees and the destruction of government buildings and

settlers' farms in his campaign to restore native religion and to fight colonialism, a saint or an evil man? For his victims he is a monster, but for many Kenyans he is a great hero in a religious cause. Likewise, John Brown was admired as a latter-day prophet by abolitionists and detested by slaveholders. Can ability to commit murder be regarded as an attribute of a holy person? The Tibetan Buddhist monk Belgi Dorje murdered a Tibetan king in 842 who was a noted persecutor of Buddhism, an event still regularly reenacted in dance. But when is a ruler so demonic that it is meritorious to murder him (or her)? Many Protestants regard Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945) as a deeply holy man—despite or because of his involvement in a plot to murder Hitler.

The way of nonviolence moved to center stage around the world in the twentieth century as religious leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), and Dorothy Day (1897–1980), to name just two, consciously imitated the inspiring example of Gandhi. But what to do when the enemy is unscrupulous, apparently without a conscience that can be touched by persuasion and suffering, especially in impoverished and “voiceless” parts of the world? Belief that a holy person is someone willing not only to be killed but to kill is also an important part of the legacy of the twentieth century.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Anti-Semitism and Holy People; Bonhoeffer, Dietrich; Boris and Gleb; Brown, John; Day, Dorothy; Edmund of East Anglia; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Gerald of Aurillac; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Kings; Masinde, Elijah; Rajcandra, Shrimad; War, Peace, and Holy People

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Virashaivas

(from 12th cent. C.E.)

Hindu devotees

Virashaivas are members of an important movement in the Hindu *bhakti* (devotional) tradition. Virashaivism means “heroic Shaivism” and clearly intends to separate the worship and cult of this community, which began in the twelfth century, from traditional patterns of orthodox Hinduism and other devotional groups, including different Shaiva traditions (those dedicated to the god Shiva). Virashaivism also is called the Lingayat tradition and evokes the aniconic image of Shiva, the *linga*, an upraised stone shaft centered upon a round base. The two elements symbolize, at a basic level, the male and female sexual organs; at a more profound level, they symbolize the male and female principles inherent in divinity itself and thus represent the union of Shiva and Shakti, the goddess. Thus the symbol represents the creative potency in the godhead, the straining movement toward a penetrating union

with the divine that consummates in bliss. This ecstatic state (*anubhava*) was realized by the early Virashaiva saints, including the movement’s founder, Basavanna (1106–1167), and the great female saint Mahadeviyakka (fl. 1160).

Virashaivism shares features with other devotional traditions in India. It is a local, regional tradition, in this case established in southern India in the area of modern-day Karnataka. The passion of the tradition has been expressed by its saint-poets, written in a regional language, Kannada, in a free-style verse called *vacanas* (sayings). The poetry itself expresses the subjective experience of the poet, including challenging critiques of orthodox Hinduism, the bliss of consummate union, and the pain of (apparent) separation from the divine. The poetry thus represents an ideal human experience of passionate longing for and surrender to the divine. Written in the vernacular, Virashaiva poetry was and is accessible to all classes and castes, unlike the Vedas, the pan-Indian sacred scriptures, which were restricted to the “twice-born,” or high castes. Virashaivism, at least in its early phase, was an egalitarian form of religion, affirming the truth that spiritual merit was earned by authoritative spiritual experience, not by birth or caste. Its democratic sensibility finds parallels in other devotional traditions and in non-Hindu Indian traditions as well; the Buddha, for example, repeatedly appealed to the authority of experience over and against doctrine, belief, texts, or tradition.

Finally, the Virashaiva tradition tends to affirm the Supreme as beyond form or qualities, an impersonal absolute. Although this sensibility has been shared among other bhakti poets, notably Kabir (c. 1450–1518) in northern India, it does mark a difference between other kinds of devotional poetry that affirm the glorious personhood of God, including God’s auspicious form and qualities. This latter sensibility is captured by numerous poets dedicated to Vishnu, though it is also implicit in the poetry of Mahadeviyakka, who yearned to marry Shiva.

—Thomas A. Forsthoefel

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Basavanna; Bhakti Saints; Devotion; Hinduism and Holy People; Kabir; Mahadeviyakka; Sexuality and Holy People; Status

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Vishvamitra

(Dates unknown)

Legendary Hindu sage

Vishvamitra (from Sanskrit, “Friend to All”) was a celebrated and legendary Indian sage, or *rishi*, who is noted in the earliest texts of Hinduism, the Vedas (1500 B.C.E.–600 B.C.E.). His singular career is elaborated in the later epics and *puranas*, literally the “old books” that tell stories of the Vedic

age. Particularly important is the story of his very unusual rise from warrior to brahmin (priest), which entailed a shift in class status.

Vishvamitra had been a mighty sovereign and warrior who, on the way to a hunting tour with his 100 sons, encountered the great priest-sage Vasishtha. Vasishtha, also a rishi, deeply impressed Vishvamitra with his ability to provide anything one could possibly need or want at any given moment. Vishvamitra learned that Vasishtha owned a magical cow that granted wishes and attempted to take it for himself by force. Vasishtha's powers, gained through asceticism, roundly defeated him. Vishvamitra, angry and desirous of the superior powers of a sage, renounced his kingship and began to practice great austerities to make himself a brahmin. After long years of intense ascetic practice, Brahma, the creator god, pronounced Vishvamitra a great sage (*maharishi*) possessed of superior powers and knowledge.

Vishvamitra is counted as one of the seven great rishis of Hinduism, and stories and legends of his numerous abilities and his continuing enmity with Vasishtha abound in the Hindu texts. Vishvamitra was so wise in all things pertaining to both the brahmin and the warrior classes that he became the teacher of Rama, the earthly incarnation of the god Vishnu. Their relationship is described in the Valmiki *Ramayana* (Exploits of Rama, 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E.). At the end of the epic, owing in great part to the tutelage of Vishvamitra, Rama is described as the best of all possible kings.

—Phyllis K. Herman

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Rama; Rishis; Sages; Status

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Vivekananda

(1863–1902 C.E.)

Hindu teacher

Vivekananda, a charismatic religious leader and a disciple of the Bengali saint Ramakrishna (1836–1886), is best known for his inspiring speech through which he introduced Hindu philosophy at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. A social reformer and powerful orator, he was also the founder of the Ramakrishna Mission, which has branches in many parts of the world.

Born Narendra Datta in a prominent family in Kolkata, India, in 1863, he learned stories from the Hindu epics at home and also had a secular education in Western-style schools. He became a disciple of the spiritual teacher Ra-

makrishna, giving up his plans to become a lawyer, and eventually became a monk, taking the name Vivekananda. After his master's death in 1886, he decided to dedicate himself to the service of humanity. In 1893, Vivekananda sailed to America to attend the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Arriving several months before the date of the conference, and without money, he was helped by strangers and eventually attended the parliament. He began his speech, considered to be one of the most inspiring messages given at the event, by addressing the delegates as “brothers and sisters.”

An eloquent speaker, Vivekananda was invited to several other forums in the United States and spoke at universities and clubs presenting Hindu philosophy and culture with clarity and with pride. Local newspapers reported his speeches in considerable detail and called him “cyclonic Hindu” and “militant monk.” Vivekananda stayed in the United States for three years and on his way back to India gave several talks in England. Among his many disciples was Margaret Noble (later known as Sister Nivedita), who went to India to serve the needy. News of Vivekananda's successful American tour had reached India by the time he came back in 1897, and he was given a hero's welcome at home. Vivekananda, with patriotic zeal, gave a rousing call to all Indians to be involved in spiritual and volunteer activities as well as social reform. In this connection, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission. He made a second trip to America in 1899. He died from complications of diabetes while he was meditating on July 4, 1902.

Vivekananda founded a monastery (*Math*) in Baranganore, a suburb of Kolkata, and moved it to Belur in 1899. The Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, which was formally registered in 1909, are distinct but interconnected institutions. They function as meditational, educational, and service centers. The societies welcome people of all faiths for nondominational meditation. The mission runs educational programs, schools, and colleges all over India, as well as hospitals and shelters for victims of disasters, and is also involved in other charitable activities. There are about 141 permanent centers in India and other countries, including the United States, Switzerland, Bangladesh, Argentina, and the United Kingdom. Many branches in the United States are called “Vedanta Societies.”

Vivekananda's primary teaching was a form of Hindu philosophy called Vedanta, which is based on the Hindu sacred texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. There have been many interpreters of Vedanta in the Hindu tradition, and although Vivekananda's followers respect all the schools of Vedantic thought, the primary emphasis is on the nondualist philosophy made famous by Shankara (circa eighth century C.E.). Vivekananda's speeches and writings have been collected and published in several volumes. His personality and speeches have had a profound impact on

generations of Hindus, many of whom understand Hinduism through his words.

—*Vasudha Narayanan*

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Ramakrishna Paramahansa; Shankara; Teachers as Holy People

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Vladimir

(d. 1015 C.E.)

Christian ruler

The name of Prince Vladimir of Kiev is firmly associated with the baptism of Russia during the tenth century. Even though Vladimir was not the first among the Russians to accept Christianity, with his conversion Christianity became the state religion. There exist several traditional accounts of Vladimir's baptism, and even the Primary Chronicle, the main source for early Russian history, offers several versions of the event. Many aspects of Vladimir's rule and conversion remain contested to this day, including exactly when he started his rule in Kiev, when and where he was baptized, and in what year the population of Kiev was baptized.

The famous "trial of the faiths" account in the Primary Chronicle starts with the report on the embassies of the Bulgars (the Muslims), the Khazars (the Jews), the Germans (Western Christians), and the Greeks (Eastern Christians) to Vladimir's court in 986. After their visitation, Vladimir addressed the boyars and the city elders with the following speech, according to the chronicle: "Behold, the Bulgars came before me, saying, 'Accept our religion.' Then came the Germans and praised their own faith. After them came the Jews. Finally the Greeks appeared, disparaging all other faiths but praising their own, and they spoke at length, telling the history of the whole world from its beginning. Their words were wise, and it was marvelous to listen and pleasant for anyone to hear them." Even though the account names all the participants of the debate on different faiths, it obviously privileges the Greeks from the beginning. Vladimir asked his subjects to advise him on the proper course of action, and the wise assembly suggested that the prince should send an embassy to witness various religious ceremonies and collect information about the different religious practices.

When the embassy returned to Kiev, they had nothing good to say about the services of the Bulgars, the Jews, and the Germans, but they rhapsodized about the ceremony of the Greek church: "Then we went to Greece, and the Greeks



Eighteenth-century monument to Grand Duke Vladimir, known as the apostle of Russia for his encouragement of Christianity in his domains. Kiev, Ukraine. (Art Directors)

led us to where they worship their God, and we did not know, whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men, and their service is better than the ceremonies of the other nations." The boyars further bolstered the case for Orthodox Christianity with the argument that if the Greek faith had been evil, Princess Olga, Vladimir's own grandmother, would not have accepted it.

The motivation that lies behind this legendary account is widely debated to this day. The explanation offered by the famous nineteenth-century Russian historian Soloviev that Vladimir was disappointed by the emptiness and poverty of thought in the brand of polytheism practiced in Kievan Rus' seems too highbrow for the reality of tenth-century Russia. The most important factor in Vladimir's decision must have been his close ties with Byzantium, consolidated by

Vladimir's marriage to the Byzantine princess Anna, the presence of a large Christian merchant community in Kiev, and perhaps the example and influence of Princess Olga.

There are two accounts of Vladimir's actual baptism. According to the version favored by the Primary Chronicle, Vladimir was baptized in Kherson in 988. In this version, Vladimir demanded the Byzantine princess Anna for his wife as the condition for restoring Kherson to Byzantium after his army took the city, and emperors Basil and Constantine agreed to the marriage only if Vladimir accepted Christianity. Vladimir received baptism in Kherson, married Anna, then returned to Kiev, destroyed all the idols, and baptized the population in the river Dnieper. According to the other version, Vladimir was baptized in Kiev in 987 after hearing the account of the embassy about the glory of the Greek faith.

The population of Kiev was baptized either in 989 or in 990. The chronicle describes how Vladimir ordered the humiliation of Perun, the main god of the Slavic pantheon, then proclaimed that everyone in Kiev would have to come to the Dnieper the next morning to be baptized or suffer the displeasure of the great prince. Vladimir erected the church of St. Basil on the site of the pre-Christian cult center. The chronicle credits Vladimir with instituting the first schools in Kiev, where the children of the best families were sent, and relates how the mothers lamented their children's fate. In reality, during Vladimir's reign Christianity took root slowly. The chronicle is silent about the incidents of resistance to the new faith. Only the chronicle of Joachim describes the revolt in Novgorod that ended in bloodshed.

—Margarita D. Yanson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Olga; Orthodoxy and Saints; Rulers as Holy People

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Voes, Hendrik, and Johannes van Esschen

(d. 1523 C.E.)

Protestant protomartyrs

Hendrik Voes (or Vos) and Johannes van Esschen (or von Esch) were two Augustinian monks from an Antwerp cloister

imprisoned in 1522 and burned at the stake in Brussels in 1523 for their failure to recant their Reformation convictions. They were first commemorated by Martin Luther in a famous song that immortalized their deaths, and their stories reappeared in sixteenth-century Protestant martyrologies.

After the 1521 publication of the Edict of Worms, which forbade evangelical teachings in Hapsburg domains, the University of Louvain and local communes began to publish local regulations against heresy under the influence of papal legate Hieronymus Aleander. This initiative quickly impacted the local Augustinian cloister, which had espoused evangelical teachings since 1519 under the priorship of Heinrich von Zutphen, a former colleague of Martin Luther at Wittenberg. After the dissolution of the Antwerp cloister, sixteen monks were imprisoned, including Zutphen, who was later freed by local sympathizers and hidden; he ultimately escaped to Bremen. Thirteen monks publicly recanted their evangelical convictions in the Antwerp church, but Voes, Esschen, and a third monk, Lambert von Thorn, remained steadfast despite undergoing both interrogation and torture by Louvain theologians Latomus, Tappert, and Hoogstraten.

Voes and Esschen became the first of many alleged heretics burned in the Brussels marketplace; for unknown reasons, Thorn was sentenced to life imprisonment and died there in 1528. Zutphen's escape was short-lived, as he was kidnapped and burned by peasants in 1524 while on a preaching mission in Dithmarschen (located in present-day Schleswig-Holstein, Germany) after the agitation of Dominican preachers. "Ein neues lied wir heben an" (We raise a new song), Luther's response to these events and the first hymn customarily attributed to him, was intended to counter the popular rumor that Esschen and Voes had recanted before their executions and spread a new Lutheran notion of sainthood that included the rewriting of martyrs' actions not as witness to the church's truths but rather testimony against its abuses. The song, in the metric form of a folk ballad, appeared in broadsheet in 1523 and was adopted in the first complete Lutheran hymnal, the 1524 *Geistliches Gesangbuechlein* (The little book of hymns), edited by Johann Walter, as well as in subsequent sixteenth-century Lutheran hymnals. Luther also composed a report on Zutphen's death in 1525 in the form of a martyr's tale that enjoyed broad dissemination. Reports of these deaths held pride of place in the Protestant martyrologies of Jean Crespin, Ludwig Rabus, and Adriaen von Haemstede.

—Susan R. Boettcher

See also: Luther, Martin; Martyrdom and Persecution; Protestantism and Holy People

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Vyas, Hariram

(c. 1492–c. 1606 C.E.)

Hindu poet-saint

Hariram Vyas was a charismatic sixteenth-century Hindu poet-saint devoted to the divine pair Radha and Krishna. He belongs to the devotional movement (*bhakti*), which celebrates saints more for their love for God than for their wisdom or virtuous life. Thus, in the hagiographies Vyas is portrayed as valuing devotion more than the rules of conventional religion (*dharma*) and traditional book learning, though he was a brahmin pandit. He is understood to be an incarnation of Vishakha, one of Radha's friends (*sakhis*).

Vyas, born in about 1492, hailed from the small kingdom of Orcha in Bundelkhand. In the 1530s, he moved to Vrindaban in the Braj area of northern India, an area known at the time as the place where Krishna and Radha had once dwelled. Vyas lived in these inspiring environs until his death in about 1606. His tomb (*samadhi*) there is still tended by his descendants in a bower-like setting called Kishorban, but the image he worshipped, Yugalakishora, was later moved to Panna in Madhya Pradesh.

Vyas was a prolific poet. About 800 of his songs and 150 distichs in the vernacular of Braj are collected in *Vyas Vani* (The inspired word of Vyas). They include beautiful descriptions of the love play of Radha and Krishna, of which he claimed to be an eyewitness. Vyas also translated in Braj verse five chapters from the Sanskrit scripture Bhagavata Purana (the "Rasapancadhyaya"). Vyas's poems further include inspiring religious advice and biting satire on hypocrisy. Yet other poems are in praise of other devotees, both his contemporaries and predecessors. Vyas includes in his "family of devotees" non-Krishna devotees such as Kabir (c. 1450–1518) and other so-called *nirguni bhaktas* (devotees of God without attributes). This seems indicative of a nonsectarian atmosphere in early sixteenth-century Vrindaban. Some Sanskrit works have been attributed to Vyas, but with little manuscript attestation.

Hariram Vyas and his friends Hit Harivansh and Haridas are often classified as "the three Haris" (*Hari-trayi*) or "the three connoisseurs" (*rasika-trayi*). However, in contrast to the other two, Vyas did not come to be regarded as the founder of a new sect. Instead, his presumed sectarian allegiance became a hotly disputed topic from about a century

after his death, and it has remained so until the present day. The Radhavallabhan and Gauriya sects have been the most prominent claimants. Not surprisingly, the corpus of legends that has grown around Vyas provides an interesting case of sectarian appropriation.

—Heidi Pauwels

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Devotion; Haridas; Harivansh, Hit; Hinduism and Holy People; Krishna

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Vyasaraya (Vyasa Tirtha)

(1460–1539 C.E.)

Hindu scholar, guru

Vyasaraya, a Hindu saint devoted to Vishnu, was a spiritual leader during his own lifetime and is remembered for his influence at court and in the Haridasa movement during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Known as Yatiraja as a child, as Vyasa Tirtha in his middle years, and as Vyasaraya in his old age, this Hindu guru was the spiritual adviser to the emperor during the height of the Vijayanagara Empire in southern India. Under his leadership, the Haridasas, enthusiastic Vishnu devotees, became a culturally creative and influential force. As a scholar, a debater, and a renowned writer of religious treatises, he set a high standard for the religious traditions of the region.

Yatiraja's father had no children with his first wife and married for a second time in the mid-1400s. Seeking divine grace to begin their family, this couple went to the guru Brahma Tirtha and he blessed them, asking only that their second son be dedicated to working with him on the path of Vaishnavism. The couple had three children, a girl and two boys. Yatiraja, born in 1460 in the village of Bannur in Karnataka, was their third child. After Yatiraja had spent several years studying, Brahma Tirtha reminded the boy's parents of their promise. Legend has it that after teaching the boy for some time, the guru wanted him to become a monk and a Vaishnava leader. Yatiraja, now a teenage boy, intuited his teacher's plan, balked, and ran away. Then, resting under a tree, he saw Lord Vishnu in a dream. Vishnu explained what was expected of him and stirred his conscience. Fortified with resolve, Yatiraja returned and became a monk, taking the name Vyasa Tirtha to identify himself during this stage of his life.

Brahma Tirtha died sometime after the famine of 1475–1476. Vyasa Tirtha then went to Kanchi, a center of learning in southern India, and studied philosophy, becom-

ing knowledgeable in the views of Shankara (seventh and eighth centuries), Ramanuja (1017–1137), and others. He then went to Mulbagal, another center of learning, and spent years meditating and studying Dvaita Vedanta (the dualist view that the soul and God do not merge absolutely). He studied with Shripadaraya for five or six years (some accounts say a dozen years).

Next, Vyasa Tirtha spent some years in the court of Saluva Narasimha at Chandragiri in close contact with the king, debating various scholars. He was entrusted with the responsibility of performing regular worship of Vishnu at the mountain temple Tirupati, holding this position a dozen years. In around 1493 or later, he went to Vijayanagara, where Saluva Narasimha was then ruling. He was honored as spiritual guardian of the ruler, and when a team of philosophers challenged him he debated them in a month-long contest and won. He promoted the spread of Hanuman shrines in the kingdom, gave religious discourses for the king's edification, and became the leader of the Haridasas, who thrived under his encouragement.

When Krishnadevaraya became ruler, Vyasa Tirtha was his guru. At one point, when astrological portents pointed to a catastrophe for the king, Vyasa Tirtha occupied the throne at the king's behest until the inauspicious time had passed. He was called Vyasaraya (*raya* means "king") because of that incident. Vyasaraya taught the ruler daily and enjoyed a close

relationship with him. When a neighboring ruler sent a work on Advaita, Vyasaraya answered each point to show the Dvaita position (that is, the dualist view that the soul and God are separate). In 1526, the king gave him Bettakonda village (which was renamed Vyasasamudra).

After Krishnadevaraya died in 1530, the new king, Achyutaraya, also sought Vyasaraya's advice and honored him as a guru. Vyasaraya thus played a more important role in the Vijayanagara court than previous Madhva gurus had, enjoying a close connection to three rulers. He wrote songs in the Kannada language and important works in Sanskrit. His magnum opus was *Nyayamrita*. Other works include *Chandrika* and *Tarkatandava*. An Indian proverb says that Vyasaraya bound the "melon" of Madhva's teachings with these three "straps," saving it from breakage and loss. In 1539, close to the end of the Vijayanagara Empire's power, Vyasaraya died.

—William J. Jackson

See also: Gurus; Madhva; Ramanuja; Recognition; Shankara

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W

Wafi Ahmad

(c. 766–after 828 C.E.)

Muslim Shi'a imam

ʿAbdallah b. Muhammad, popularly called Wafi Ahmad, succeeded his father, Muhammad b. Ismaʿil, as imam in approximately 813. Born in Persia in about 766, like his father he was forced to remain in hiding from the general public to protect himself in a hostile political environment.

The Abbasid rulers were keen to eliminate those descendants of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib whom they perceived as a challenge to their authority. From his father's base in the vicinity of Ahwaz in Khuzistan, Wafi Ahmad moved 40 kilometers north to ʿAskar Mukram, where he became a successful trader with two houses. He traveled to Basra as renewed hostilities flared and then sought refuge in a Christian monastery in the hills of Jabal al-Summaq in Syria. Eventually, his *da'is* (agents) found refuge for him in the city of Salamiyya in Syria. This was an old city that had existed since Greek times and that also flourished during the Christian era. Here, the imam's agents purchased a suitable house for him along the main street. Wafi Ahmad lived in Salamiyya as an ordinary merchant and was known to the local inhabitants as a trader and an *attar* (chemist/pharmacist). Wafi Ahmad was able to meet with his followers and instruct them in spiritual matters without interference.

The imam was mild-mannered and well liked. He acquired his nickname, Wafi, which means "reliable," because he was known to be true to his word. In order to protect himself, he used the name Maymun al-Qaddah, the name of his chief *da'i*, who served as a *hijab* (cover) for him. The cover was so successful that the imam is misidentified in certain sources. Despite the hardships of leading such a restricted, anonymous life, Wafi Ahmad continued to attract followers and to send out *da'is* who proclaimed his ideas to the people. Even when he lived in inhospitable or difficult terrain, such as in the Daylam region, his *da'wa* activities continued.

Eventually he and his son gained sufficient support for the imamate that a few decades later his grandson, ʿAbd Allah al-Mahdi, was able to live openly and even became a ruler. Wafi Ahmad died in Salamiyya after 828.

—Habibeh Rahim

See also: Imams; Islam and Holy People; Mahdi, ʿAbd Allah al-Muhammad b. Ismaʿil b. Jaʿfar

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Waiyaki wa Hinga

(d. 1892 C.E.)

Kikuyu holy man, warrior

Born in the mid-1800s, Waiyaki wa Hinga was a great warrior and distinguished Kikuyu leader. He led Kikuyu warriors against neighboring Maasai communities with great success, defeating their dreaded commander, Naleo.

Waiyaki was highly regarded in Kikuyu society. His homestead had several buildings, including separate huts for each of his wives, a hut for his personal porter (who carried Waiyaki's ceremonial stool when he visited other homesteads or attended meetings), and a guest hut outside the gate with a servant to care for any visitor who arrived too late to enter the homestead. The visitors were given food and shelter there until Waiyaki could meet with them. This system of governance prevailed in Kikuyuland until Captain Frederick Lugard, leader of the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC), arrived in 1890 on his way to Uganda.

Waiyaki gave Lugard a piece of land to establish a stopping place for his caravans en route to Uganda at a place

called Dogoretti. Waiyaki and Lugard entered a blood brotherhood by drinking each other's blood and signed a treaty stipulating that the Europeans would not take any land or property of the Kikuyu by force. Lugard gave Waiyaki five guns with which to guard his territory. However, Lugard's men later violated the treaty, raiding Kikuyu villages for food and women. They also attempted to occupy Kikuyuland. Provoked, Waiyaki ordered his warriors into battle against Lugard's men and defeated them.

In 1892, Lugard's men attacked Waiyaki's relatives, the Ndorobo, and Waiyaki once again declared war. As his warriors were celebrating a victory with a beer party, Lugard's men attacked and disarmed them. Waiyaki then ordered his men to surrender. He was injured when Lugard's men knocked him off a scaffold, crushing part of his skull. Waiyaki died as he was being driven into exile by his captors. In his last words, he cautioned his people never to surrender their land to foreigners.

The Kikuyu honor Waiyaki as a holy person and a prophet. They remember his leadership and his ability to look death in the face and still urge his people to fight for their rights and their land, and they celebrate him in song and poetry for those traits.

—Hannington Ochwada

See also: African Religions and Holy People; Patriotism and Holy People; Rulers as Holy People

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Walad

See **Baha'uddin Walad**

Walburga

(710–779 C.E.)

Christian abbess, missionary

Venerated as protector of churches and monasteries, Walburga was born in Dorsetshire in 710 to St. Richard and Wuna, noble Anglo-Saxon Christians. She entered the monastery at Wimborne in 720, and in 748 she joined the mission to convert the Germanic peoples, directed by Boniface (673–754). He created a network of monasteries and bishoprics and appointed Wimborne-educated Benedictines as administrators. Walburga's brother St. Willibald (c. 700–787) became bishop of Eichstätt, and in 750 her brother St. Winnebald (d. 776) founded a monastery at Heidenheim, where Walburga organized a nunnery in 761. She became abbess of the double monastery upon Winnebald's death.

With her supervision, the nun Hugeburc composed his vita and an account of Willibald's pilgrimages to Rome and Palestine. Her feast day marks her death on February 25, 779.

In the ninth century, Wulfhard of Herrieden discussed Walburga's sanctification and cases of healings attributed to her intercession. After his vision of the abbess, in about 870 Bishop Otgar had her remains translated to the church in Eichstätt. When her remains were exhumed in 893 to obtain relics, Bishop Erchanbald found them immersed in liquid. A two-tiered tomb permits the collection of "Walburga oil" which is bottled for the healing of illnesses. Upon the consecration of St. Walburga Abbey in Eichstätt in about 1035, Bishop Heribert of Rothenburg composed a hymn praising her saintly perfection.

—Irene E. Gnarra

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Hereditary Holiness; Miracles; Mission; Willibald

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Waldès, Peter

(d. c. 1205–1218 C.E.)

Christian lay preacher, reformer, dissident

Peter Waldès was a thirteenth-century layman who founded a spiritual movement within the European Christian church. The Waldensians (as their critics called them), or the Poor of Lyons (as they called themselves), had spread throughout southern and eastern Europe by the end of the twelfth century. In its literal interpretation of the Bible and its criticism of the church hierarchy, the movement anticipated many ideals of the Protestant movements 400 years later.

Waldès was a wealthy merchant in the southern French city of Lyons. Legend has it that in about 1173 he was inspired by a minstrel's song about the life of St. Alexis, an early Christian saint who gave up all of his wealth to live in extreme poverty. Waldès took Alexis as his role model. After making provision for his wife and daughters, he used the rest of his wealth to feed the people of Lyons during a famine. When his money was gone, he lived from charity, traveling and preaching the gospel in imitation of Jesus' apostles. He soon gained a wide following among the merchant classes in the trading centers of the region.

Waldès's movement centered primarily on individual piety, but it contained explicit criticisms of the institutional church. The Waldensians believed that virtuous living, not an office in a hierarchy, suited someone to preach and administer sacraments. The sect allowed equal leadership roles for women, as opposed to the all-male hierarchy of Catholicism. Waldensians based their creed on the literal interpretation of the Bible, which challenged the philosophical interpretations of professional theologians. The Waldensians had the Bible translated into the vernacular language. Before then, the Bible had been available only in Latin, and thus only to the clergy.

Waldensian beliefs had wide-ranging political ramifications. Their life of absolute poverty reproached the wealth not only of the institutional church but also of the landed nobility and the urban merchants. Waldensians also rejected many other aspects of urban and feudal life in this period, refusing to take oaths, make contracts, or condone warfare. Pope Lucius III declared the movement a heresy in 1184, and its followers were often expelled from their communities. Despite (or because of) these difficulties, Waldensianism expanded far beyond Lyons into Germany, Alsace, and Italy. Although Waldès died sometime around 1205 or 1218, many Waldensian communities survived until the sixteenth century, when they merged with Calvinism. There is still a Waldensian church active in the Piedmont region of Italy.

—Elaine M. Beretz

See also: Gender and Holy People; Laity; Martyrdom and Persecution; Reform and Reaction; Teachers as Holy People; Wealth and Poverty

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Wali Songo

Muslim holy people

The Wali Songo are the nine founders of Islam on Java. The term *wali* describes a person who is regarded as a special “friend” of God. Contemporary Javanese tradition identifies

nine such saints, although in the nineteenth century in East Java there was a tradition of eight saints (*wali walu*).

The *Babad Tanah Jawi* (Chronicle of the island of Java) is the oldest Javanese source to recount the activities of these wali. This *Babad* gives prominence to four wali who formed part of a larger council convened in the kingdom of Demak after the fall of the great kingdom of Majapahit. It recognizes in particular the authority of Sunan Giri from Gresik. Sunan Bonang from Tuban was a critical intermediary and teacher. Sunan Kudus was the defender of Demak, his native region, and Sunan Kalijaga from Adilangu safeguarded the spiritual foundation of the kingdom of Mataram.

Other sources, as well as a lively oral tradition, provide a rich repertoire of tales about the wali. These tales combine historical narrative with exemplary accounts of their powers to portray the virtues of Islam. As such, they embody sufi traditions that have contributed to the formation of Islam on Java. In recent years, a substantial popular literature, consisting of booklets, pamphlets, and locally stenciled brochures, has developed to recount their lives.

Solichin Salam's influential *Sekitar Wali Songo* (Regarding the Wali Songo), first published in 1960, is principally responsible for consolidating the tradition of the *Wali Songo* around specifically named figures. Each of these nine saints is designated by title and a personal, usually Arabic, name. They are (1) Maulana Malik Ibrahim: Syeik Maghibi, (2) Sunan Ampel: Raden Rakmat or Raden Ainul Yaqien, (3) Sunan Bonang: Raden Maulana Makdum Ibrahim, (4) Sunan Giri: Raden Paku or Prabu Satmata, (5) Sunan Drajat: Raden Syarifuddin, (6) Sunan Kudus: Ja'far Sodik, (7) Sunan Kalijaga: Raden Mas Syahid, (8) Sunan Muria: Raden Umar Said, and (9) Sunan Gunung Jati: Faletahan or Raden Syarif Hidayatullah. Both genealogical and teacher-student relationships establish connections among these figures. The discovery at the beginning of the nineteenth century of an early Islamic gravestone at Gresik dating from the first part of the fifteenth century led to the inclusion of Maulana Malik Ibrahim in the core group of the wali.

Each of these figures has a recognized tomb associated with a mosque that serves as a site for local pilgrimage (*ziarah*). Visitors come at specific times determined by the intersection of cycles according to Javanese calendar reckoning to pray and carry out acts of religious piety. Tomb visitation may take place at any time, and many tombs have become the focus for local tourism. Proper visitation, however, is deemed more auspicious if it occurs at night, and especially on particular nights of the year. In East Java, the night of the Friday that coincides with Legi in the Javanese calendar is considered auspicious; in Central Java, the Friday night coinciding with Kliwon is considered so. Five of the nine wali have their tombs in East Java, three in Central Java, and one in West Java.

Besides the nine main wali, there are many other holy men who are regarded as wali in local tradition. Many of these, such as Sunan Tembayat, Sunan Geseng, and Syaikh Abdul Muhyi, also have tombs tended by descendants that are important sites of visitation. In fact, the whole of the Javanese countryside is filled with potential ziarah sites.

Visitors to the tombs of the wali believe that they gain blessing (*baroka*) from the rituals they perform during their visit. On their return to daily life, they look for signs of this blessing, and many return to offer thanks if they feel that they have obtained the blessing that they sought.

—James J. Fox

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See also: Veneration of Holy People

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Wang Yangming (Wang Shouren)

(1472–1529 C.E.)

Neo-Confucian scholar

Wang Yangming was undoubtedly the most influential original Confucian thinker of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), and the movement his teachings gave rise to, which took on the character of a religious revival, influenced the entire climate of Ming religion and thought. His school of thought also attracted considerable attention in Edo-period Japan, where they contributed to the idealism and political activism of the young samurai who led the anti-Tokugawa movement culminating in the Meiji Restoration. In China, Wang’s teachings were much criticized by Qing dynasty (1644–1910) scholars, some of whom even blamed them for the fall of the Ming. Yet the movement found major promoters again in the late nineteenth century in China, Japan, and Korea because of its lack of identification with the old regime and because its emphasis on self-reliance and independent moral judgment was felt to be appropriate to a modernizing society.

The course of Wang’s spiritual and intellectual development is often described with reference to “five falls” and “three changes.” The “five falls” refer to his recurrent periods

of inordinate interest in “knightly ventures,” sporting and martial skills, literature, the Daoist pursuit of physical immortality, and Buddhism. The fact that he had such unorthodox interests suggests his bold and unbridled character, a character that eventually led him to redesign the whole program of Neo-Confucian self-cultivation in accord with his own personal spiritual experience. The “three changes” refer to changes in his teaching emphasis after his definitive conversion to Confucianism. According to his disciple Qian Dehong, his first period of teaching emphasized the doctrine of “the unity of knowledge and action.” Subsequently, from 1513, Wang gave special emphasis to quiet sitting or meditation. Finally, after 1521 he began to teach the doctrine of the extension of *liangzhi*, the “inborn knowledge of the good” (a term borrowed from the *Mencius*) into one’s own daily life of involvement with things and affairs.

The doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action is clearly a rejection of Zhu Xi’s (1130–1200) intellectualist teaching that knowledge precedes action, and it emphasizes that one has no real understanding of moral principles until one has struggled to put them into practice. The doctrine of the extension of *liangzhi* similarly rests on a rejection of Zhu Xi’s interpretation of the terms *gewu* and *zhizhi*, as found in the Confucian classic *Daxue* (Great learning), as meaning “to investigate things” in order to “extend [one’s intellectual] knowledge.” For Wang, the word “knowledge” actually refers to *liangzhi*, and the *gewu* practice, whereby *liangzhi* is extended, really means “to rectify affairs.” In line with his belief that lower-ranking and local officials should have more independent authority and more intimacy with the common people, he also rejected Zhu Xi’s emendation of the *Daxue*’s dictum “cherish the people” (*qinmin*) to read “renew the people” (*xinmin*), since the latter reading clearly supported the traditional paternalistic and authoritarian attitude of the official bureaucracy toward the people.

For Zhu Xi, the understanding of truth grows gradually over many years of book learning alternating with periods of quiet sitting and involvement in practical affairs. When Yangming was exiled to Longchang in the frontier region of Guizhou province, however, he had an enlightenment experience in which he realized that to search for moral principles externally is an endless task that can never reach fulfillment—because the *object* of the search is always separate from the *subject* who is searching. Rather, he proclaimed, one’s *own* heart-mind is in itself fully sufficient for the pursuit of sagehood, for it is born with an innate knowledge of the good (the original substance of the mind) that merely needs to be uncovered from the obscurity caused by self-centered desires. The heart-mind is naturally bright, like the sun, and becomes obscure only when hidden by some obstacle. Thus another core doctrine of Wang’s teaching, derived from Zhu Xi’s contemporary and philosophical rival, Lu

Xiangshan (1139–1192), is that “the mind *itself* is principle.” If this is so, then truth is something that is grasped intuitively, in a single insight, even though it might take many years of practice to learn how to allow this inner light to shine forth amidst all of one’s activities.

Wang’s teachings, as with any great teacher, were open to different interpretations, and they gave rise to three main schools, usually referred to as the Existential Realization school, the Quietist school, and the Cultivation school. The first, founded on Wang’s controversial teaching that the original substance of the mind is beyond good and evil, emphasized the transcendental freedom of innate knowing and its spontaneous exercise, as well as the immediacy of the here and now and the sudden nature of enlightenment. The second taught that quietism was the essence of the doctrine of *liangzhi* and emphasized Wang’s doctrine of forming one body with all things. The third countered the unrestrained tendencies of the first school by emphasizing the necessity of effort, self-correction, and caution and attempted to bridge the gap between the Zhu Xi school and Wang’s teachings by maintaining that *liangzhi* was the same as heavenly principle (*tianli*).

Wang’s long interest in Buddhism and Daoism, and his strong populist emphasis on the idea that “every man can become a sage,” helped assure that his followers were more open to popular religious ideas and the theistic ideas preserved in the Confucian classics than to orthodox Confucianism, helping to fuel Ming movements toward syncretism among the “three religions.” For instance, Wang’s prominent disciple Wang Ji, the founder of the Existential Realization school, wrote, “The commitment to self-knowledge means to do without selfish calculation, premeditation, or disputation, and just to stand in the sight of the Lord-on-High to the end of one’s days” (de Bary 1999, 1: 858). Nakae Tōju (1608–1648), the founder of Wang Yang-ming learning in Japan, was first drawn to Yangming’s teachings by Wang Ji’s writings and their compatibility with religious worship. Some other of Wang’s disciples carried his teachings even further in the direction of bringing the pursuit of sagehood to the common man. Wang Gen (1483–1541), for instance, worked as a salt dealer and discussed the Four Books and the *Xiao Jing* (Classic of filial piety) on his business trips with anyone who would listen. He also practiced silent meditation for long periods of time, but he took no interest in scholarly study or in becoming a scholar-official. He was concerned, rather, with the conduct of life and with preserving and loving the self: “If the self is not secure, the root is not established. To make the self secure, one must love and respect the self, and one who does this cannot but love and respect others.” He also emphasized the enjoyment of life: “Enjoy and then learn, Learn and then enjoy. . . . Ah! among all the joys of this world what compares to learning!” (de Bary 1999, 1: 861, 863).

The long debate between Wang’s and Zhu Xi’s versions of Neo-Confucianism can be likened to the earlier “gradual enlightenment” vs. “sudden enlightenment” debate between different schools of Zen Buddhism, and it appears that the same tension between the affirmation of external and internal authority exists within every religious tradition. As a case in point, one might also liken Wang’s rejection of Cheng-Zhu learning, which had become institutionalized as the official doctrine of the state and the examination system, to the Protestant rejection of Catholic Christianity, even though there were advocates of what might be called “sudden and unmediated salvation” in the Catholic tradition as well, at least among the mystics.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Confucianism and Holy People; Nakae Tōju; Zhu Xi

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Wang Zhe (Wang Che)

(1112–1170 C.E.)

Daoist school founder

Wang Zhe, also known as Chongyan, was the founder of Quanzhen (Perfect Realization) Daoism in China. Although he lived during the twelfth century in northern China (Shaanxi and Shandong provinces), Quanzhen Daoism expanded and still survives today as a vital school throughout China, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora. Quanzhen is a monastic form of Daoism that includes monks, nuns, and lay believers. Wang’s teachings emphasized leaving the family (*chujia*) and practicing asceticism and inner alchemy (*neidan*). As a patriarch of Quanzhen, Wang, his life, and his teachings have been the subjects of scriptures, temple murals, statues, paintings, and rituals throughout Chinese history.

Historical and hagiographical sources provide details of Wang’s life. He was born in Xianyang (Shaanxi province) to an elite family in 1112. Some accounts report that Wang’s mother became pregnant after having a dream and that her pregnancy lasted twenty-four months. Wang briefly served as a low-level local official responsible for tax collection on alcoholic beverages. His first episode of religious awareness occurred in 1159, when he encountered two immortal beings in a butcher shop who gave him secret instructions. After this experience, Wang adopted the Daoist name

Chongyang (double superior powers) and began practicing a form of self-cultivation known as internal alchemy in which he concentrated his mind and body to create a powerful elixir using the elements within himself.

Following a second encounter with some immortals in a wine shop, Wang left his family and dug a burial mound in which he lived for three years while he engaged in rigorous practice. Wang continued to live and practice in a hut nearby until he achieved enlightenment in 1167. Once enlightened, Wang burned his hut and traveled to the Shandong area, where he attracted disciples and established many congregations. He died in 1170.

Several texts preserved in the Daoist canon claim to be the works of Wang Zhe. Two of the best known are a manual for Quanzhen practice called *Chongyang lijiao shiwu lun* (Fifteen discourses on the teachings set forth by Chongyang) and a collection of his writings entitled *Chongyang quanzhen ji* (Quanzhen anthology of Chongyang).

—Noelle Giuffrida

See also: Action in the World; Ascetics as Holy People; Awakening and Conversion; Daoism and Holy People; Monasticism and Holy People

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War, Peace, and Holy People

All religions agree that war is proper under some circumstances, but not all religions make warriors into heroes of the faith. Tribal religions of the Americas and Africa especially allow the concept of the warrior as a holy person—a servant of the gods and at times a protector of religious values. At the other end of the scale, Christianity has almost always been deeply ambivalent toward war, especially in light of Jesus' admonitions to "turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29), and Christianity has only under special circumstances elevated the warrior to holy status. In the modern world, the spiritual leaders of many religions now advocate peace—but Islam especially still recognizes the role of the hero of the faith as an important element of holiness.

The ethnic-focused religions tend to define enemies as the "other" and give an important role in their conceptions of the divine to gods who can give aid in battle. So it is hardly surprising that great Amerindian war leaders, ranging from Aztec rulers such as Axayacatl (d. 1481) to Crazy Horse (1840–1877), were perceived as enjoying the special favor of the gods. For the peoples of central Mexico, warriors in general were regarded as holy people, their success ensured by

proper rituals and a proper relationship to the gods. Indeed, it was said of the Aztec ruler Nezahualcoyotl (d. 1472) that he had been specially anointed with the "spirit of warfare," waging war as part of his sacred duty to obtain captives who could then be sacrificed to the sun. Similarly, with African rulers it is sometimes unclear whether they were great warriors because they were holy people or vice versa. Several heroic figures, such as the orisha Oyá, were deified specifically as war deities. Similarly, ancient Greek heroes such as Theseus were especially venerated because their warrior prowess in life was believed to continue after their deaths.

A similar process, making great warriors on earth into holy figures who can bring further victory, can also be seen in China and Japan. For example, Guandi, a military hero of the Han era of the third century, was promoted into the celestial hierarchy by imperial decree. Similarly, the Japanese warrior Sanno Gongen (d. 1333) was declared a god at his death and became the guardian of the Tokugawa dynasty. Also in Japan, the semilegendary emperor Ōjin (c. 400 C.E.) became the major warrior *kami* Hachiman.

In the other religions of the East, with the exception of Jainism, members of the warrior caste have been not only permitted but required to kill enemies in a just war. For Hinduism, the position is laid out definitively in the Bhagavad Gita, in which the god Krishna commands the unwilling Arjuna to fight his enemies as a matter of duty even though they are his kinsmen. But Arjuna is not regarded as a holy person in the Hindu tradition, nor are other members of the *kshatriya* caste who have fought, no matter how just the cause. Similarly, Buddhism has accepted the occasional necessity of war, but only rarely have Buddhists venerated the warriors involved as holy. More typical of the Buddhist position is the Indian emperor Ashoka's disgust in the third century B.C.E. at the destruction he himself had caused with his conquests, causing him to forswear physical warfare for the sake of "*dharma* war"—spreading a moral message throughout India and beyond. Nevertheless, several Buddhist national traditions include holy warriors. This is a particularly strong theme in Vietnam, which includes no fewer than three holy women who fought for Vietnamese independence: Trieu Au (third century C.E.) and the sisters Trung Trac and Trung Nhi, who led a rebellion in about 40 C.E. All three committed suicide when their rebellions were crushed, and all are still worshipped. This seems a clear case in which nationalist longings created a local variant of popular belief. Southeast Asia, so often the victim of outside conquest, has other cases of Buddhist holy people who defended their countries, ranging from the Korean monk Sosan Hyujong (1520–1604), who led a successful guerrilla war to repel the Japanese, to the modern Thai monk Kitthiwuttho, who has argued that devout Buddhists should kill Communists to cleanse their society.

Of the universal religions, Islam has produced the most holy people whose holiness derives specifically from their leadership of *jihad* (holy war). The evolution of this idea began with the origins of Islam: Muhammad (570–632) was not holy *because* he was a successful war leader, but his leadership in war was acknowledged as divinely aided and necessary to the establishment of the new religion. Muhammad's victory at the Battle of Badr in 624, in which a small Muslim army defeated a much larger force of Meccans, made it clear that warfare could not be bad. Many of the Shi'i imams who are regarded as holy people were also effective fighting men, some leading large campaigns. It was only the crucible of the early modern world, though, that began to transform the warrior of Islam from simply a pious man doing God's will into a saint.

Starting in about 1500, a series of leaders rose, widely regarded as holy people, whose central message was to urge the people to *jihad*. Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi (c. 1506–1543) waged *jihad* in East Africa, while in West Africa Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Karim al-Maghili (d. 1505) urged good rulers to embrace *jihad*. Perceived ill treatment of Muslims by colonial powers triggered all the mechanisms to call full-scale *jihad*s into being in many regions by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because Islam itself was perceived to be under threat, the leaders of such movements won renown as holy people, ranging from Uthman dan Fodio (1754–1817) in Nigeria to Muhammad Ahmad al-Sayed (1844–1885) of the Sudan, who declared himself to be the *mahdi* (forerunner of the apocalypse) and drove his followers to establish a pure Islamic state. Ruhollah Khomeini (1902–1989) of Iran is a more recent example. The Sikh faith, growing out of Islam, has not conferred holiness on its warriors, but like early Islam its followers exhibit a willingness to fight for their religion. All Sikh men carry a dagger as testimony to their commitment to defend their faith, a militant response to persecution initiated by the sixth guru, Har-gobind (1595–1644).

And then there are the Christians, coming of age in a Roman and Germanic world that idealized war, and seeking to make sense of an often-pacifist gospel message in light of their society's warrior values. The result was that mainstream Christians have sometimes advocated peace and sometimes idolized warriors; minority groups have often urged the opposite stand to that of the mainstream. Christianity soon accepted that one could practice the religion while serving in the Roman army—although not to the point of fighting fellow Christians. Thus early Christianity produced several warrior saints, Roman soldiers such as Maurice and the other members of the Theban Legion, who were loyal soldiers except for their refusal to betray their faith, and were martyred as a result in 287. Rare indeed is the legendary statement of Martin of Tours (c. 336–397) that as

a soldier of Christ he was not allowed to fight. Several other Christian saints became special patrons of the military. This was a logical development in the case of the military St. George. Odder are cases of virgin martyrs defending their faithful flocks posthumously, such as Geneviève of Paris (c. 422–500), credited with diverting Attila the Hun with her prayers in life, and with stopping the Vikings long after her death. Oddest of all, though, is the afterlife of the apostle James the Greater, who in Spain became the heavenly patron of the reconquest, famed as Matamoros (killer of Moors), often depicted in armor on a white horse.

Still, few Christian saints were regarded as saints *because* of their qualities as fighters. An early exception from peripheral lands is the Ethiopian Caleb (d. before 549) who warred against the persecutors of Christianity. Although the crusades were preached up and down Europe as holy wars, the crusader movement produced very few saints. The only clear cases of warriors regarded as holy in the medieval centuries were the Russian Alexander Nevskii (1220–1263) and the Castilian Ferdinand III (c. 1198–1252). Ferdinand's sanctity was based especially on the great successes of the reconquest against the Moors during his reign. The Russian Alexander Nevskii was a nationalist saint similar to the Vietnamese Buddhist cases considered above; he protected his land from an invasion of people aimed at the destruction of his religion—in this case, Latin-rite Catholic Christians, the Teutonic Knights. Joan of Arc (1412–1431) was a more controversial case, since the English enemies of France whom she fought were also Christian. This ambiguity probably accounts for the fact that she was not formally canonized until 1920.

In general, though, the mainstream teachings of Christianity have more often advocated peace than war, and many more Christians are regarded as holy people for their role in making peace than in making war, suggesting that, whatever the realities of political life, popular opinion did regard peace as more true to Christianity. Thus in the 960s when the patriarch of Constantinople was asked to declare that all soldiers who died fighting Muslims were martyrs, he refused, declaring that all war is against Christianity. Much of the strength of medieval Christian monasticism lies in the fact that monks did not (with rare exceptions) fight; therefore, they could pray for the warrior classes, who were sullied with blood. Many of the greatest Christian saints, such as Catherine of Siena (1347–1380), were especially famed for their ability to reconcile enemies and end fighting.

The role of the holy person as reconciler is an important subtheme of other religions as well. The Sioux legend of Tailfeather Woman tells how the Great Spirit inspired her to make peace between her people and the soldiers; the Huron prophet Deganawida (c. 1550–c. 1600) brought peace and unity to the tribes of the Iroquois. Examples can be found in

other religions of holy people whose personal spiritual authority has stopped war. The role of saint as peacemaker, indeed, has taken on new life in the twentieth century as military technology has made war more devastating than ever. A series of great Muslim leaders, such as Malik Sy (1854–1922), Ayatullah Burujirdi (1875–1962), and Cerno Bokar Salif Taal (c. 1880–1940), have condemned jihad. Christians of all denominations have advocated peace, some popular figures, such as Peace Pilgrim (1908–1981), making themselves living symbols of a desire for peace. Perhaps the greatest twentieth-century martyr for peace was the Hindu Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), who was influenced by the Jain teaching of *ahimsa* (not-harming) to win India's independence peacefully and to contain the ensuing civil war.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Alexander Nevskii; Ashoka; Axayacatl; Burujirdi, Ayatullah; Caleb; Catherine of Siena; Crazy Horse; Deganawida; Extremists as Holy People; Gandhi, Mohandas K.; Geneviève; George; Ghazi, Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-; Guandi; Hargobind; James the Greater; Joan of Arc; Khomeini, Ruhollah Musavi; Malik Sy, Al-Hajj; Martin of Tours; Maurice; Muhammad; Muhammad Ahmad; Ōjin; O'yá; Peace Pilgrim; Salif Taal, Cerno Bokar; Tailfeather Woman; Theban Legion; Theseus; Uthman dan Fodio; Violence and Nonviolence

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Ward, Mary

(1585–1645 C.E.)

Roman Catholic nun, order founder, educator

Mary Ward, a Catholic Englishwoman and founder of the Institute of the English Ladies, was born in 1585 into a Yorkshire gentry family, and in 1606 she entered a convent of the Poor Clares in the Spanish Netherlands. In 1609, a vision inspired her to establish a new religious order using the organization and rules of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) as her model. The purpose of the Institute of the English Ladies was to educate and conduct missions among women. The institute grew rapidly, founding a number of houses in the Holy Roman Empire and Italy, along with a secret house from 1614 in London.

Ward's vision was of a female religious order active in the community rather than enclosed within the walls of a convent that could operate in hostile lands outside the jurisdiction of bishops. This concept ran counter to the church's efforts after the Council of Trent (1545–1563) to enforce more strict enclosure and greater control by local bishops over female monastic houses. Thus, when Ward traveled to Rome in 1621 to gain formal recognition of her organization from

Gregory XV, her request met with a hostile response. Between 1625 and 1630, the papacy closed the institute's houses, and in 1631 Ward was imprisoned in Munich for a short period by the Inquisition. After her release, she worked to transform her organization into a secular teaching institution for girls—a more acceptable vocation in the eyes of church authorities.

Ward died in 1645 and never received formal recognition from the church of her holy status. Her desire to play an active role in the educational and missionary fields outside the traditional boundaries of female monasticism made her a controversial figure during her lifetime. Nevertheless, in many respects she embodied several aspects of holiness recognized in other contemporary figures. Of the fifty-five saints canonized between 1588 and 1776, twelve, like Ward, were founders or reformers of religious orders. Moreover, missionaries and teachers were prominent among those recognized by the church as worthy of canonization. Many of her contemporaries, including Archduke Albert of the Spanish Netherlands and Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, viewed her as a holy woman despite her radical vision, which challenged the church's efforts to cloister religious women. However, the close control over the canonization process by the Catholic Reformation church removed the possibility of formal recognition of her holy status.

—Eric Nelson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Mission; Recognition

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Wealth and Poverty

All of the world's religions have emphasized that a true worshipper should focus on the divine rather than concentrating energy on acquiring the goods of this world. A very frequent theme is absolute poverty, stripping away worldly goods for God's sake. At the least, as in Confucianism, Daoism, and Judaism, a person with any pretensions of holiness should not crave wealth, especially if wealth comes only at the price of moral compromise. Within this broad context, however, attitudes toward wealth and poverty have varied in the world religions, and a fair number of recognized holy people have lived in conditions of affluence, although usually with the disclaimer that wealth meant nothing to them.

Renunciation of all possessions is a very common theme in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, forming the cen-

tral basis of an ascetic life. But what does this renunciation mean in practice? For Christian monks and nuns through the past two millennia, giving up possessions has meant above all a renunciation of self-will: The monastic owns nothing *personally*, but the monastic environment supplies all their needs, including usually plentiful food, shelter, libraries, expensive liturgical gear, and so on. The mendicant movement launched in the early thirteenth century by Sts. Francis (c. 1180–1226) and Dominic (1170–1223) in its early days stressed *absolute* poverty, to the point of real need, but a comfortable infrastructure of communal houses and incomes soon developed. Whether or not professional religious should have possessions has sometimes become an explosive issue in Christianity, as when a number of “spiritual” Franciscans of the early fourteenth century went to the stake to defend their commitment to utter poverty. In early sixteenth-century Russia, there was a strong movement that monks should be poor, started by Nilus of Sora (1433–1508), that led to a major struggle between “possessors” and “non-possessors,” the possessors arguing that what was important was spiritual rather than actual poverty. Similarly, Buddhist monks and nuns possess only a robe and a begging bowl—personally. But through most of Buddhist history, the corporation, the monastery, has been at least adequately and sometimes lavishly endowed. In both religions, the starting premise is that real contact to the divine, or liberation, requires complete commitment, and worldly possessions are a distraction. But to exist as an institution in time, monasticism needs a regular income. It should be noted, though, that in both religions the spiritually advanced have often retreated from the comfort of the monastery to become hermits or wanderers.

Perhaps because less institutionalized, the renunciants of Islam, Hinduism, and Jainism often appear more absolute in their commitment to absolute poverty. Some Hindu holy people have taken the vow of *samnyas*, complete renunciation of all possessions; indeed, renunciation is built into Hindu life as the ideal fourth stage of human life. Less common but still significant is the Muslim *faqir* (poor man), a person who is dependent on God sometimes specifically for spiritual needs, but often for daily physical needs. Such a person lives by begging, as do Jain renunciants. In both cases, however, the renunciant is normally protected from actual physical need by the religion’s strong emphasis on the duty of the laity to provide for such holy beggars.

Such an attitude makes it impossible to condemn wealth completely, and several religions have recognized as holy rich people who have served as patrons of renunciants. In fact, in Christianity a look at any book of saints leaves the strong impression that the best way to win a reputation for holiness has been to endow a monastery. Giving gifts to holy people is a way to obtain merit, as especially stands out in

the cases of the early fifth-century female saints Paula (347–404) and Melania the Younger (c. 383–439), both exceedingly rich, and both of whom showed themselves to be holy by the practice of traveling around giving gifts to holy people, as well as founding religious houses. In more modern times, Katharine Drexel (1858–1955) inherited a large fortune that she decided to spend to help suffering blacks and Amerindians. The theme also appears in Buddhism: The early Buddhist Anathapindika (fifth century B.C.E.), a wealthy banker, provided a home for the Buddha and his disciples in the wet seasons, as well as feeding them and other renunciants. He gradually reduced himself to poverty in this way, but a god made him rich again, suggesting a divine blessing to the open-handed wealthy.

Better yet is a wealthy person who gives up *everything*. It is important to note that simply being impoverished is not enough to win holy status; even the comfortable middle class do not win much esteem in the popular eye by giving up their wealth, unless they do so as flamboyantly as Francis of Assisi did. But people around the world have marveled at *rich* people who take on complete poverty, perhaps from astonishment that perceived oppressors should have such a conversion, perhaps from a simple conviction that the rich have everything they could possibly want, so it makes a strong impression when they give it up for God. Spoiled rich kids who adopt radical poverty are indeed an edifying spectacle, especially when they have a visible conversion, such as John the Almsgiver (c. 550–616/619), who gave up all his wealth after his family influence won him the patriarchate of Alexandria, or Thomas Becket (c. 1120–1170), who distributed his wealth after becoming archbishop of Canterbury. Sometimes the conversion is portrayed as dramatic, as in the case of the Hindu Purandaradasa (1485–1565), who, according to legend, was a wealthy jeweler—and a hard-hearted miser. The tale is told of him that he refused to help a poor man, upon which his wife gave the beggar her own nose ring. Purandaradasa was outraged, and his wife decided to poison herself, but the ring that had been given away miraculously appeared in the cup of poison before she drank it.

A particularly attractive combination is when holy people have combined personal poverty with a firm commitment to help the involuntary poor. This can take the form of actually living among the poor. The monks of the ecumenical community of Taizé, who are sent in groups to live in some of the most impoverished regions of the world, are a significant recent example. The Baha’i leader Baha’u’llah (1817–1892) taught that the poor are a divine trust and that the need to help them is absolute because poverty degrades people in contradiction to God’s law. It is hard, though, to combine personal poverty with significant care of the poor, since practical support requires systematic, regular, dependable income, whether raised through collections or by any other

means. Especially from the seventeenth century on, religious leaders have founded many charitable organizations. Vincent de Paul (1576–1660), Frances Cabrini (1850–1917), and Dorothy Day (1897–1980) are notable examples of holy people who have chosen this approach.

The modern consumer society has succeeded in displacing even this deeply rooted respect for poverty as an ideal for holy life, at least for some people. Many founders of new religions and cults have adopted lives of extraordinary luxury. Sometimes when word of this has spread it has led to a revulsion of feeling among their followers; at other times, the material success of the leader appears to be taken as a proof of holiness. A good example of the modern phenomenon is Osho, also known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (1931–1990), the founder of a Hindu movement that attracted a wide following in Europe and America (he was regarded as immoral by Indians). Osho moved to the United States, where he lived on a massive ranch in Oregon. He acquired, among other things, a vast collection of watches and ninety-three Rolls Royce automobiles before the government finally charged him with immigration fraud and tax evasion and deported him. These revelations diminished but did not destroy his following.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Anathapindika; Baha'u'llah; Cabrini, Frances; Day, Dorothy; Dominic; Francis of Assisi; Hermits; John the Almsgiver; Melania the Younger; Nilus of Sora; Osho; Paula; Purandaradasa; Thomas Becket; Vincent de Paul

Wenceslas

(907–929 C.E.)

Christian ruler, martyr

At a time of tension between the native Slavic religion and Christianity during the tenth century, Wenceslas's holiness was displayed through his promulgation of Christianity and, ultimately, by his martyrdom for the cause. The son of the Christian prince Vratislav, he was born in 907 near Prague. Vratislav had married a nominally Christian woman, Drahomira, the daughter of a non-Christian tribal chief, who held tenaciously to the ancient beliefs. When Wenceslas was thirteen, his father was killed in battle. Wenceslas was brought up by his highly religious grandmother Ludmilla, with the help of her priest, a disciple of St. Methodius.

Wenceslas became duke of Bohemia in 922. He was renowned not only for following the advice of the clergy but also for working to improve the education of his people. This required greater contact with the rest of the Christian world, especially the German empire, whose ruler, Henry I, was his overlord.

Wenceslas was killed by his brother's followers in 929, probably as an anti-Christian backlash against his Christian

determination. Nevertheless, his brother had his body translated immediately to the church of St. Vitus in Prague. The position Wenceslas had held against the pagan onslaught in this period of extreme anxiety ensured that he was immediately viewed by the townspeople as a martyr for the faith. The church became a place of pilgrimage and his tomb a miracle-working shrine. For example, Charles IV recorded that a poor woman who was blind and whose arms were impaired went into the church, fell onto the ground before the grave of Wenceslas, and prayed until she regained her sight and the use of her arms.

The cult of Wenceslas spread to Bavaria and Saxony, and his feast was officially celebrated from 985. By the early eleventh century, he was recognized as the patron saint of Bohemia. His image was engraved upon coins, and the crown of Wenceslas was recognized as a symbol of Czech republicanism and nationalism. In 1344, Charles IV began the construction of the gothic cathedral of St. Vitus, employing Peter Parler to build the Wenceslas chapel, magnificently decorated with wall paintings and precious stones.

The name of Wenceslas became popularized and associated with generosity by the famous Christmas carol "Good King Wenceslas," which was adapted from a thirteenth-century spring carol by J. M. Neale (1818–1886). There is no evidence, however, that the contents of the carol are based on any particular events in the life of the saint.

—Eleanor Pridgeon

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rulers as Holy People

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Wesley, John

(1703–1791 C.E.)

Christian mystic, founder of Methodism

Born in Epworth, England, in 1703, John Benjamin Wesley was the fifteenth child (of nineteen) of Samuel Wesley, a fervent minister of the Church of England, and his equally devout wife, Susanna; he was the grandson of stalwart Dissenters. Susanna Wesley was the strong-willed protector and frugal steward of her rectory household and instructed her children thoroughly in prayer and Christian discipline. Rescued like "a brand plucked from the burning" from a fire consuming the rectory when he was six years old, John (with his mother's concurrence) later considered his escape from sure death a sign from Providence of his marked spiritual



John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church. Painting by Nathaniel Hone, 1766. (Bettmann/Corbis)

destiny. Throughout his early years, John also absorbed his father's teachings on the authenticity of "the inward witness" of a religious life.

In 1720, Wesley entered Christ Church at Oxford University, and his years there were to be decisive for his later ministry. At Oxford, Wesley was able to enrich his inquisitive mind with a wide array of studies. In 1726, as a fellow at Lincoln College (the same year his brother Charles entered Christ Church), he was able to refine his natural abilities as a speaker and as a facile moderator of complex ideas while teaching Greek and philosophy. John Wesley was a voracious reader, particularly of spiritual writings, including the works of William Law (1686–1761) and Thomas à Kempis (c. 1379–1471), and of the Eastern and Western fathers, including Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330–394) and Ephrem the Syrian (c. 306–373). On September 19, 1725, John Wesley was ordained a deacon, and on September 22, 1728, Bishop Potter of Oxford ordained him as a priest of the Church of England.

In 1729, Wesley became the leader of a religious group at Oxford that had been recently founded by his brother. Charles Wesley had gathered together a community of students known as the Holy Club for regular Bible study, organized devotions, communion, and scholarly investigation into early Christian liturgies and practices. Upon John Wesley's

assumption of leadership of the Holy Club, so frankly singular in their devotions and Christian fellowship were the members of the group perceived to be that they collectively became known as the people of "the method," or the "Methodists." Wesley set as an ideal for himself and for the members of his community to live on about £28 a year, strongly urging his group toward works of social reform. He also insisted that Methodist meetings take place at times apart from the services of local churches so that his community could still receive communion from ministers of the Church of England.

In 1735, three weeks after his father's death, John Wesley, along with his brother Charles and others from the Holy Club, sailed to America on an evangelical mission to Georgia. It was a dismal failure. However, on his voyage to America, Wesley and his comrades were shipmates with a group of Moravians who, during a violent storm at sea, merely sang hymns as the ship tossed to and fro. This so impressed John Wesley that he determined to learn more from them, including a study of their German language and its pious hymnody. His study and then translation into English of the German hymns transformed Wesley. He now embraced in a profoundly spiritual way the words of those hymns: "love," "prayer," "surrender," "grace," "assurance," and "joy." Wesley's spirituality, always on the brink, was turning more and more inward, laced with a mystical and sacramental fervor. It was a Moravian, Peter Bohler, who urged Wesley, now safely at home in London, to put aside the intellectualism of his faith and allow it to arise fully felt in his soul.

On May 24, 1738, John Wesley went to a meeting on Aldersgate Street and, as he listened to a reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, "felt his heart greatly warmed." From that experience and others over the course of the next several months, John Wesley crystallized the doctrine of Methodism as an itinerant preacher in England, emphasizing inwardness of faith, the role of grace and works, and perfect love. His spiritual message was mirrored by a tightly organized Methodist fellowship and missionary movement within the Church of England, although Methodism quickly expanded into regions such as Wales and the American colonies in response to the passionate preaching of itinerant Methodist lay preachers such as George Whitefield and Samuel Walker. In that expansion lay the doctrinal and organizational seeds of the inevitable break of the Methodist movement from the Church of England.

Wesley himself admitted that the tenets of Methodism set it apart from the Church of England because they allowed itinerant preaching by laypeople, encouraged nonliturgical prayer, supported the formation of small Methodist societies wherever they sought to arise, and had evolved a less liturgically based, less sacramental form of worship. Wesley was also very socially conscious and was often quoted as having

said, “Go to those who need you most.” His various pamphlets against social ills included invectives against smugglers, freeholders, and, in 1774, slavery. He encouraged the American Methodist members to act on behalf of emancipation, stating that slavery was against the laws of God. John Wesley died materially poor but spiritually fulfilled in London after a short illness on March 2, 1791. Although married, Wesley had no children, but he did leave a growing religious sect of 135,000 members (at the time of his death) and 541 itinerant preachers.

—June-Ann Greeley

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Ephrem the Syrian; Gregory of Nyssa; Laity; Protestantism and Holy People; Reform and Reaction; Ritual

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White, Ellen Gould Harmon

(1827–1915 C.E.)

Cofounder of Seventh-Day Adventism

Along with Joseph Smith and Mary Baker Eddy, Ellen Gould Harmon White, cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is recognized as one of the three most important prophets in the American Christian tradition. She was born in 1827 in Maine, where her childhood took an important turn when she received a head injury at age nine, after which she received no more formal schooling and withdrew strongly from the world. The young Ellen’s family accepted the message of William Miller that the world would end in 1844, and when the Great Disappointment came (the failure of Christ to appear), Ellen was particularly devastated by it. The great nonevent triggered the first of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of visions the prophet experienced during her lifetime.

Ellen Gould Harmon’s visionary existence took a more focused turn in 1846 when she married James White, a major leader of the Adventist movement that continued after the failure of Millerite millennial expectations. The group that the pair soon came to lead marked themselves off by the influence of the Seventh-day Baptist church and Ellen’s own vision clearly signifying that the instruction to honor the sabbath was the most important of the Ten Com-

mandments. The group insisted on worshipping on Saturday rather than Sunday, very strictly prohibiting secular activities on that day. The combination of this and ongoing belief in the imminent coming of Christ was the beginning of the establishment of a distinctive American denomination that also came to emphasize healing, hygiene, and the belief that for most humans death is the normal end of life, but good Christians will have a new life at the resurrection and become immortal.

Ellen White’s role in the movement seems to have been intended by her husband to be that of a “tame prophet.” White’s visions were utilized to certify and confirm the movement’s doctrines and the decisions of the leaders. But after James White died in 1881, Ellen White increasingly took the initiative, sometimes to the alarm of the rest of the leadership circle, but increasingly shaping the growth of the new church. Her personal theology is perhaps best expressed by her work *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan*, first published in 1858. By the time of her death in 1915, the Seventh-day Adventists were a stable body, famous for their hospitals and general care for health, with congregations in many countries.

Some Adventists read White’s works as scriptural in their authority. It is more common now, though, to recognize that she was a fallible human being—some of her reported visions are very naive—who was sometimes inspired by God.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Contemporary Holy People; Miller, William; Prophets

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Wiborada

(d. 926 C.E.)

Christian recluse, prophet, martyr

Wiborada, the tenth-century recluse of the Christian monastery of St. Gall, was the first woman canonized by the Roman church. She displayed all the prized characteristics of an early medieval female saint: noble birth, virginity, bodily asceticism, violent martyrdom, and the ability to aid male figures of importance.

Growing up in the Swiss town of Klingnau, Wiborada spurned the luxuries of her aristocratic family. When her brother Hatto joined the monastery of St. Gall, she made his clothes and worked for the abbey, primarily by binding books for the library. Eventually, Wiborada joined Hatto, turning their house into an infirmary and saying the Latin offices with her brother. It was through her encouragement

following a pilgrimage to Rome that Hatto decided to take his vows.

Although Wiborada's life became increasingly pious, a servant raised accusations that she was having improper sexual relations with Hatto. She was forced to undergo trial by ordeal. The charges were cleared when Bishop Salomon of Constance visited the abbey and recognized her goodness. Deciding to withdraw from the world, Wiborada first retreated to the mountain hermitage of St. George. Her austerity became well known, and people vied with each other to give her alms. Her desire for eremetical solitude increased so that by 891 Bishop Salomon agreed to wall her into a cell next to the church of St. Magnus, where she remained, practicing extraordinary mortifications, for thirty-four years. Due to her gifts for healing and prophecy, many came to see her, and other women, such as the blessed Rachild, whom Wiborada had cured, settled in nearby cells to also live as recluses. Among Wiborada's notable prophecies was her prediction that a young student at St. Gall would rise to the episcopate and should therefore not enter the monastery: This was the famous St. Ulrich, bishop of Augsburg.

Wiborada also had a vision that the invading Hungarians would storm the area and cause her martyrdom. Her warnings allowed the monks to escape, but she refused to leave her cell. In 926, the Hungarians burned the church and killed her with a hatchet while she knelt in prayer.

Wiborada was canonized in 1047. She was a figure of undisputed holiness and was immediately venerated as a saint. Wiborada is the patron of book lovers and sellers, the protector of items of learning usually associated with the medieval male clergy.

—Annika Elisabeth Fisher

See also: Gender and Holy People; Hermits; Martyrdom and Persecution; Prophets; Ulrich of Augsburg

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Wilfrid

(634–709 C.E.)

Christian abbot, bishop

Wilfrid, an Anglo-Saxon abbot of Ripon and bishop of York, is remembered for his defense of the Roman church at the

Synod of Whitby in 664. He was active throughout his life both in England and on the continent.

Born in 634 in Northumbria, Wilfrid spent his early life under the influence of the Irish church but eventually became one of the staunchest defenders of the Roman church in England. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to live at the court of Oswy, king of Northumbria. Oswy's queen, Eanfleda, took a personal interest in him and supported him in his decision to study at the monastery of Lindisfarne, an Irish monastery off the east coast of England. After three years there, Wilfrid traveled to Rome and then to the kingdom of the Franks, where he received the Roman tonsure.

Wilfrid returned to England around 660 and was made abbot at the newly founded Roman-style abbey at Ripon, which replaced an existing Irish house. After having an influential role in the Roman church's triumph at the Synod of Whitby, he was made bishop of York in place of Colman, who had argued on behalf of the Irish church. Wilfrid returned to France and was consecrated there.

Wilfrid did not return to England until 666. He was caught in a storm in the English Channel and shipwrecked on the Sussex coast, where he came into contact with hostile non-Christian tribes. When he finally made it back to Northumbria, he discovered that another bishop, Chad, a proponent of the Irish church, had been appointed in his absence. Wilfrid retreated to southern England and was only reappointed as bishop in 669 through the influence of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury.

Wilfrid's troubles continued. He allowed Queen Etheldreda (Aethelthryth), the wife of Oswy's successor, Ecgfrid, to leave her husband and enter a convent, thereby earning the king's disapproval. Etheldreda later founded the monastery at Ely. Theodore, perhaps upset by Wilfrid's propensity for leaving his see for extended periods of time, subdivided the diocese of York and chose bishops himself to fill the new sees. Wilfrid left for Rome to appeal to the pope, and the case was decided in Wilfrid's favor. Though the division of York remained, the new bishops were to leave their seats. Wilfrid himself was to appoint their successors. He returned to England in 678 only to be imprisoned by Ecgfrid and later exiled to Sussex.

In 686, Wilfrid came back into favor with Theodore and returned to Northumbria. Ecgfrid had died, and his successor, King Aldfrid, welcomed Wilfrid as bishop of Hexham. He later became bishop of York again, although he fell into disfavor with Archbishop Brihtwald, who had replaced Theodore after his death in 690. In 703, Wilfrid traveled again to Rome (by way of Frisia, where he stayed with Willibrord) to argue against the subdivision of York. He was in Rome for many months but finally returned to England, where Brihtwald gave the sees of Hexham and Ripon to Wilfrid. He died in 709.

—Dorothy Carr Porter

See also: Bishop-Saints; Chad; Theodore of Tarsus; Tolerance and Intolerance; Willibrord

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Wilgefortis

(Dates unknown)

Christian legendary holy woman

Wilgefortis, the bearded female saint, is known by many names, including Uncumber, Ontcommer, Kummernis, Regenfeldis, Liberata, and Livrade. “Wilgefortis” may derive from *hilge vartz* (holy face) or *vierge forte* (strong virgin); other names suggest the saint’s role as a deliverer who disencumbers supplicants from their troubles.

Wilgefortis was one of seven (perhaps nine) children (in some accounts all sisters) born to a non-Christian king of Portugal; all were eventually martyred as Christians. Wilgefortis was promised in marriage to the non-Christian king of Sicily. In order to preserve her vow of perpetual virginity, a sign of her commitment to Christ, she prayed to God for disfigurement and was blessed with a full beard and mustache. This divine deterrent worked; the king of Sicily called off the marriage. However, Wilgefortis’s father was so enraged at her for thwarting his dynastic aspirations that he had her crucified, stating that she could die in the same disgraceful manner as her heavenly bridegroom.

While on the cross, Wilgefortis prayed that all who remembered her passion be freed from their cares. According to legend, for a peck of oats Wilgefortis would liberate wives from troublesome husbands, making her the patron saint of unhappily married women. Another story reports that, from her cross, Wilgefortis dropped one of her golden boots to a poor fiddler, who played to relieve her suffering. When he was condemned to death for the theft of the boot, she kicked off the other one to prove his innocence.

Although the details of Wilgefortis’s legend remain fairly consistent, the question of when she lived remains. Dates have been suggested as early as the second century and as late as the tenth. This inability to locate her historically has contributed to theories that Wilgefortis is a completely legendary saint. She has been considered a variant of the bearded nun Galla who is mentioned by Gregory the Great (540–604) in his *Dialogues*. Alternatively, she has been traced to a misunderstanding of the twelfth-century *Volto Santo* at Lucca, a crucifix with a figure wearing a long, feminine tunic; this theory may explain the spread of her cult throughout Europe after 1200. More recently, it has been sug-

gested that Wilgefortis was a medieval attempt to represent *lanugo*, the growth of hair associated with anorexia in young women.

Whatever the origin of her legend, one thing is certain: Wilgefortis continues to capture the popular imagination. She appeared in Mexican folk *retablos* well into the nineteenth century, figures prominently in Robertson Davies’s 1970 novel *The Fifth Business*, and is even featured in a contemporary comic strip as “St. Wilgefortis—Women’s Liberator.”

—Christina M. Carlson

See also: Gender and Holy People; Legendary Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution

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William of Norwich

(c. 1132–1144 C.E.)

Christian “martyr”

The story of William of Norwich is anti-Semitic in origin and there is no evidence for its validity. It is an example of the falsehoods about Jews that were spread throughout Europe and other regions of the world during the Middle Ages.

The central accusation in the story was that William, a twelve-year-old boy in Norwich, England, had been crucified by Jews in 1144 out of their hatred for Christians and for Christ himself. The story appears in “The Life and Passion of William the Martyr of Norwich” by Thomas of Monmouth. According to the story, the boy’s body was found on Easter day in a wood, where it apparently had been lying for over a week. Once it was found, someone buried it right where it lay. William’s uncle was notified. The boy’s aunt then told her husband about a dream she had had wherein Jews had broken her leg and torn it off of her body. Based on this alone, the uncle came to the bishop and accused the Jews of killing his nephew. In the course of the twenty years or more that it took to compile his *Life of William*, Thomas of Monmouth developed out of this the story, complete with miracles and relics, of an innocent Christian boy being tortured and crucified by Jews.

This was the first time on record that such an accusation had been made, but it would not be the last. William's story spread throughout Europe, and ritual murder accusations against Jews became more common, creating the blood libel that Jews ritually crucified Christian children or used the blood of sacrificed children in Jewish rituals, particularly Passover. Accusations based on this myth resulted in violent persecutions and caused fear, anxiety, and suffering among Jews and Christians alike throughout the Middle Ages and even into the nineteenth century.

—*Diane Peters Auslander*

See also: Anti-Semitism and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Judaism and Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Willibald

(c. 700–c. 790 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

Willibald was an Anglo-Saxon world traveler, a bishop of Eichstätt, and a missionary to the Franks. He was born in about 700 in Wessex (England). His father was St. Richard; his mother was related to St. Boniface. According to legend, Willibald's parents prayed for him during a childhood illness and promised God that they would give Willibald to the church if he recovered. He survived the illness, and when he was five years old his parents brought him to the monastery at Waltham and placed him in the care of Abbot Egeald.

In 720, Willibald, his father, and his brother Winnibald set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. Richard died en route, and the young men continued the journey. They remained in Rome for two years living in a monastic community. They both became seriously ill, however, during their stay. This propelled Willibald into an even more ascetic lifestyle than the one he had already adopted.

In 724, Willibald and a few companions traveled east, visiting monasteries along the way. They arrived at the island of Cyprus at Easter and later went to Syria, where they were arrested and held in prison by the ruling Islamic government. All eight were eventually found innocent of any wrongdoing. They immediately went to Damascus, then to the Holy Mount and on to Capernaum, tracing the travels of the earliest followers of Christ. Willibald bathed in the Jordan and finally arrived in Jerusalem. The details of his travels are told

in the *Hodoeporicon* (Account of a voyage), a work put into its final form by an Anglo-Saxon nun who was Willibald's contemporary. The account is presumably told in Willibald's own words.

The monastic pilgrims finally returned to Rome in 730. Willibald joined the monastery at Monte Cassino where Saint Benedict had written his rule some 200 years before. Ten years later, Willibald was called to assist Boniface in his mission to the Frankish kingdom. Boniface made him priest, and in 741 Willibald was consecrated bishop at Stülzenbrücken. He was appointed bishop of Eichstätt after its formation a few years later. Willibald worked hard to balance his duties as bishop and missionary and his desire to live an ascetic and humble life.

Winnibald had returned to the west long before Willibald did and had already been called to assist Boniface. In 752, the brothers founded a double monastery (a monastery housing both men and women, in separate quarters) at Heidenheim. Winnibald was superior over the men, their sister Walburga over the women. It was Huneberc, a nun of Heidenheim, who worked on the *Hoedoeporicon*. Willibald died in about 790.

—*Dorothy Carr Porter*

See also: Boniface; Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Walburga

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Willibrord

(658–739 C.E.)

Christian bishop, missionary

The Northumbrian Willibrord is considered the founder of the Anglo-Saxon missionary movement. Although Boniface is the best known of these missionaries, it was Willibrord who first crossed the English Channel to bring the word of God to the unbaptized of northern Europe. The cooperative relationship he developed with the Frankish kings extended after his death in 739, and if not for this relationship Boniface would not have had the impact on the German church that he did.

Willibrord was born in 658 and as a child studied at the monastery of Ripon under the abbacy of St. Wilfrid. He received the tonsure at the age of fifteen, and at the age of twenty he traveled to Ireland. It is notable that this year, 678, was the same year that Wilfrid was expelled from York. Many sympathetic monks exiled themselves in support of Wilfrid, and it is possible that this was the reason for Willibrord's relocation. He remained in Ireland for twelve years.

In 681, at the age of thirty-three, Willibrord and eleven others left Ireland for Utrecht. This city was in Frisia and

controlled by the king Radbod, an unapologetic pagan who associated the Christian church with Frankish occupation. Willibrord left Frisia soon after his arrival and went south to the Frankish kingdom, which was under the control of Pepin, the true power behind the throne. Here he was welcomed and allowed to preach in the kingdom. In 692, he was sent to Rome to receive authorization as a missionary from the pope. He returned to the Frankish kingdom, but in 695 he traveled to Rome again, where he was consecrated bishop of the Frisians. At his consecration, his name was changed to Clement.

Willibrord went back to the Frankish kingdom and soon returned to Utrecht, where he founded a monastery and built a cathedral church. He also founded an abbey at Echternach in 698. Pepin died in 714, and the next few years were difficult ones for the mission, as Radbod was still not interested in accepting Christian teaching. In fact, he was more likely to destroy Christian churches and replace them with polytheistic temples than he was to listen to the missionaries. Eventually, Willibrord went to Denmark, and though his mission was not successful, he returned to the Frankish kingdom with thirty Danish boys who were to be raised in the church. Following Radbod's death in 719, Willibrord returned to Frisia, assisted for a time by Boniface. Willibrord was buried in the oratory at Echternach.

The main source of information on Willibrord is a Life written by Alcuin, who was born forty years after Willibrord's death. Although based on an earlier Life (no longer extant), Alcuin's writing lacks historical detail and instead focuses on Willibrord's miracles.

—Dorothy Carr Porter

See also: Boniface; Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Wilfrid

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Wolfgang of Regensburg

(924–994 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop, missionary, reformer

A schoolteacher, missionary priest, and monk, Wolfgang is best known for his service as bishop of Regensburg and the reforms he brought about there in the tenth century. A vita written in 1052 by Othlo, and another, shorter work written in the same century by Arnold, both monks of St. Emmeram's in Regensburg, provide the primary information on the saint's life.

A nobleman by birth, Wolfgang requested at an early age to be allowed to study at the monastery school at Reichenau.

From there he went to Würzburg to attend the cathedral school, and in 956 he accompanied a friend, Henry, the newly appointed archbishop of Trier, to the city where he served as a schoolmaster. In Trier, Wolfgang became acquainted with Ramwold, the abbot of the monastery of St. Maximin located on the outskirts of the city, and it appears to have been here that Wolfgang formed his strong reformist principles. Saint Maximin's had been a center of the Gorzian monastic reform movement since 934. When Wolfgang was appointed the dean of canons at the Trier cathedral school, he quickly reformed the school, bringing the canons into regular community living according to the monastic rule.

A recurring theme of the vitae is Wolfgang's continued wish to retire from public life. He left Trier after the death of Archbishop Henry and in 968 took up residence in the Benedictine abbey of St. Mary at Einsiedeln. This remote abbey observed a strict rule that would have appealed to Wolfgang's ascetic tastes. He was called away from his position as schoolmaster there and ordained as a priest by Bishop Ulrich of Augsburg. Wolfgang was sent to Pannonia as a missionary to help evangelize the Magyars. He served there for only one year before being called once again to an administrative post. Wolfgang became bishop of Regensburg and abbot of St. Emmeram's in 972. He separated the two offices for the first time in 975, bringing in Ramwold of Trier to serve as abbot. Together the two reformed St. Emmeram's. Wolfgang also worked to replace the long-standing canonical tradition of the Regensburg nunneries Obermuenster and Niedermuenster with the stricter Benedictine Rule. Wolfgang retained the position of bishop, which he held for twenty-two years, until his death in 994.

The majority of Wolfgang's miracles concern his struggles to reform the foundations in Regensburg. In one miracle, the local Regensburg saint, Erhard, appeared to Wolfgang to ask him to rescue the canonesses from their corrupt ways. In another, relics were miraculously transported from one side of an altar to another after Wolfgang prayed for a signal to proceed with the reforms at Niedermuenster.

—Kristen M. Collins

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Mission; Reform and Reaction

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Wonhyo

(617–686 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar, iconoclast

An eminent Buddhist monk of the Unified Silla Period (668–918) in Korea, Wonhyo is revered as a Buddhist saint who combined the highest level of scholarship with an iconoclastic lifestyle. A renegade from the cloistered life, Wonhyo often frequented wine shops and marketplaces, ate meat, and attended popular entertainments—three activities proscribed by his clerical vows. As he traveled through the countryside, he composed and sang pious songs in honor of Amitabha Buddha and performed dances for the edification of the lowest classes. Later he broke his vow of celibacy, married a widowed princess of the Kim royal household, and fathered a son.

Wonhyo had been born in 617 into a provincial family of the Sol clan, which meant that in the context of Silla aristocratic society he would not have been allowed to achieve high social standing. Like many in his day, Wonhyo chose the career path of a Buddhist cleric, but unlike most of the clergy, he dedicated his life to the comprehensive understanding of Buddhist tradition and to the dissemination of that understanding to those outside the aristocratic order. Having mastered the Buddhist teachings available in Silla, he set out for China to obtain new teachings. One night he and a traveling companion, Uisang, were caught in a rainstorm and took shelter in cave. In the middle of the night, Wonhyo got up to get a drink of water. The next morning, when he discovered that the water vessel he had drunk from was a human skull and the cave that he had slept in was an open tomb, he felt revulsion and horror. This immediately triggered his own enlightenment, which he later described as the realization that nothing exists apart from the mind. No longer needing to obtain Buddhist teachings, he left Uisang and returned to Silla, where he decided not to study with any teacher apart from his own mind.

For the next thirty-six years, Wonhyo composed about 240 commentaries on most of the known Mahayana scriptures and philosophical treatises. He attempted, in such writings as *Simmun hwajaengnon* (The harmony of disputes of the ten gates) and *Pophwagyong chongyo* (The essentials of the Lotus Sutra), to spread the view that all the teachings and vehicles of Buddhist practice, if properly understood, form a single vehicle of Buddhism (*ilsung pulgyo*) leading to enlightenment. Modern historians see in his writings and in his enlightenment experience the clue to his iconoclastic lifestyle, the dissolution of all distinctions, sociological and doctrinal, that are generated by the unenlightened mind.

—John I. Goulde

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Morality and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Uisang

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Wovoka

(c. 1858–1932 C.E.)

Paiute prophet

The Paiute prophet Wovoka launched a major Indian religious revitalization movement in the western United States after experiencing a vision in 1889. He is credited with spreading the Ghost Dance to many Native American groups. Born in about 1858 in western Nevada, he was raised by a white ranching family, the Wilsons, after his father's death in about 1872. He took the name Jack Wilson during this time.

During a solar eclipse on January 1, 1889, Wovoka, sick with fever, had a vision that he termed his Great Revelation. In the vision, he died, entered heaven, conversed with dead ancestors, and received instructions to change his life and spread a new message. Those guidelines included abstaining from fighting, living peacefully with whites, and performing the traditional Paiute Round Dance. He also believed that he gained the power to control nature, especially the weather, during the vision experience. His reputation grew because of his purported ability to cause rain after a long drought and other miraculous occurrences. Indians throughout the West journeyed to Nevada to hear his message.

Throughout 1889 and 1890, a new religious movement based on Wovoka's teachings erupted among several western Indian groups. Seemingly everywhere new circle dances were performed, and people fell into trances and communicated with deceased ancestors. The immense popularity of this new spirituality most likely stemmed from the degraded condition that most Indians found themselves in after being confined to live on reservations where traditional rituals and practices were suppressed. Moreover, the buffalo had virtually disappeared, destroying Plains Indian peoples' ability to live traditionally. Thus, a message of renewal and the ability to establish links with relatives from the prereservation days held special appeal. The Lakotas, the people of Black Elk, Sitting Bull, and Crazy Horse, found Wovoka's preaching particularly compelling.

A Lakota delegation visited Wovoka and were impressed by what they saw. They adapted Wovoka's message to fit their history and situation, however, forever connecting Wovoka

with a horrendous tragedy. When the Lakota delegation returned to South Dakota, they said that Wovoka preached the imminent destruction of the whites, the resurrection of Indian dead, and a return to the traditional way of life. As proof, they offered the buffalo they saw on their return journey, a sign that Wovoka's prophecy was coming true. As hundreds of Lakotas began practicing what they called the Ghost Dance (or Dance of Souls Departed), Bureau of Indian Affairs agents on the Lakota reservations became nervous about Indian intentions and called in the army to keep things under control, especially since the Lakota Ghost Dancers insisted that special Ghost Dance shirts made them bulletproof.

The Ghost Dance movement might have died of its own accord had the reservation agents not panicked, but the army came to South Dakota and began tracking down Ghost Dancers. Sitting Bull died at the hands of Indian reservation policemen in December 1890. That same month, 300 or so Miniconjou Lakotas under Chief Big Foot were massacred at Wounded Knee Creek. Wovoka was deeply saddened by the deaths when he heard of them. Though he lost many—but not all—of his religious supporters, he lived out his days as an active Paiute leader in Nevada still prophesying on various topics. He died in 1932.

—Greg O'Brien

See also: Black Elk; Crazy Horse; Patriotism and Holy People; Prophets; Sitting Bull

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Wu Zhao

(623–705 C.E.)

Buddhist ruler

Wu Zhao, born in 623, became one of the Tang emperor Taizong's concubines at a young age. She was placed in a nunnery at age thirteen following Taizong's death, but she was soon removed by then Empress Wang in a vain attempt to distract Emperor Gaozong from another concubine. Wu began to compete with Wang for Gaozong's favor and managed to make herself empress, disposing of Wang by accusing her of infanticide, a lie the emperor believed. Empress Wu quickly rose to power, becoming consort after Gaozong suffered a stroke in 660. In 674, she adopted the title "Heavenly Empress" and began making changes to the Tang imperial structure. She declared equal footing for Buddhist and Daoist clergy, removing the earlier preference given to Daoism. Giving herself the title "Sage Mother," Empress Wu

equated herself with the Daoist deity revered as the mother of Laozi. Wu also funded Buddhist text translation projects and the construction of Buddhist sites. She is especially well known for having funded the colossal Buddhist image at the Longmen caves, and popular legend has it that this image was fashioned upon a portrait of Empress Wu herself.

In 690, Empress Wu terminated the Tang Empire and declared herself ruler of the new Zhou dynasty. In order to legitimize her reign, she turned to Buddhist institutions, declaring Buddhism superior to Daoism. In the same year, Wu was also presented with the *Dayunjing* (Great Cloud Sutra). From this text, Empress Wu gained legitimacy as ruler of China by equating herself to an enlightened princess central to the text, a princess prophesied to be reborn 700 years after the Buddha's death and to rule the largest kingdom in the East in an enlightened fashion. Wu then added to her title "Sagelike and Divine Sovereign of the Golden Wheel," in reference to the Buddhist notion of the *chakravartin*, or "enlightened monarch."

In 697, Empress Wu became embroiled in an affair with two brothers; eventually their dissolute activities would spell the end of her reign. Their assassination in 705 was followed immediately by Wu's own abdication and subsequent death.

—Holly Larson

See also: Laozi; Rulers as Holy People

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Wulfric of Haselbury

(c. 1090–1154 C.E.)

Christian recluse

Wulfric of Haselbury was an English anchorite, miracle worker, and counselor in early twelfth-century England. Born in about 1090 near Bristol to an Anglo-Saxon family, he served as a village priest while enjoying feasting and hunting in company with the local Norman lord. A chance encounter with an angelic beggar prompted an interior conversion. Moving then to the Somerset village of Haselbury Plucknett, in 1125 he enclosed himself as a recluse in a cell adjoining the village church. A steady stream of visitors afforded material support and sought his counsel. Wulfric's reputation for holiness attracted a visit from the future king Stephen and the admiration of Bernard of Clairvaux. Though supported by the nearby abbey of Ford(e), he was almost certainly not a Cistercian.

Noted for the austerity of his asceticism, Wulfric regularly bathed in ice-cold water in the dark of night while reciting the whole book of Psalms from memory. (Once he discovered an adder in his bath and fainted from fright.) He added a coat of mail to his hair shirt, a sign of the spiritual “knight-hood” on which he believed himself to be embarked. He died in 1154.

His Life was written by the Cistercian author John, abbot of Forde (1140–1214).

—Patrick J. Nugent

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Christianity and Holy People; Guidance; Hermits

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Wulfstan of Worcester

(c. 1008–1095 C.E.)

Christian monk, bishop

Wulfstan, a Benedictine monk and bishop of Worcester, enjoyed a reputation for sanctity even during his lifetime during the eleventh century. Although not formally canonized until 1203, he was venerated as a saint by the monks of Worcester cathedral from the time of his death. His *vita*, written by his chaplain and chancellor, Coleman, describes a humble man assiduous in his monastic and episcopal duties, able to expel demons, effect cures, and perform other miracles, both in life and posthumously. Contemporary chronicles also attribute miracles to him. One popular legend describes the miraculous intervention that thwarted an attempt by Norman authorities to depose him. This story, while apocryphal, was widely circulated in twelfth- and thir-

teenth-century saints’ Lives, chronicles, and histories. Nevertheless, Wulfstan’s cult remained primarily local until it attracted the attention of King John in the early thirteenth century. A collection of Wulfstan’s miracles, compiled in about 1235, attests to a wider following outside Worcestershire.

Wulfstan was born in about 1008 and educated in the monasteries of Evesham and Peterborough. He was ordained and became a monk of Worcester, where he served as schoolmaster, precentor, sacristan, and prior before being elected bishop in 1062. Wulfstan’s diplomacy helped ease the transition from English to Norman rule. Although he had been King Harold’s confessor, he worked effectively with the Norman secular and ecclesiastical authorities. By 1075, he was the sole remaining Anglo-Saxon in the English episcopate.

A capable administrator, Wulfstan recovered alienated monastic estates and acquired new ones, increased the number of monks in the cathedral priory, and rebuilt Worcester’s cathedral. The *vita* records his skillful preaching; his evenhanded treatment of people rich and poor, Norman and English; his efforts to end the sale of Englishmen into slavery in Ireland; and his dedication to the values of both the English monastic tradition and the Gregorian reform movement. He died in 1095, and his feast day is January 19.

—Mary Lynn Rampolla

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Miracles; Politics and Holy People

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X

Xavier, Francis

(1506–1552 C.E.)

Roman Catholic Jesuit, missionary

Francis Xavier, a founding member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and an overseas missionary, was canonized in 1622. Indeed, he was the most famous missionary in a period of missionary fervor, and his canonization reflected the importance of missionary activity as a holy endeavor in the seventeenth-century Catholic Church.

Francis was born in the Basque region of Spain in 1506 and educated at the University of Paris. He met Ignatius of Loyola at Paris and in 1534 became one of the seven founding members of the Society of Jesus. In 1541, at the request of King John III of Portugal, Ignatius sent Francis to evangelize the East Indies. Francis arrived in Goa in May 1542 and immediately began to organize the Jesuit mission in India. Over the next seven years, he traveled as a missionary to Travancore, Malacca, the Molucca Islands, Ceylon, and the Malay Peninsula. In 1549, he traveled to Japan, where he spent eighteen months establishing a viable Catholic community among the local population. After returning briefly to Goa, he set sail for China in 1552, but he died on the island of Chang-Chuen-Shan before he could enter the kingdom.

During his travels, Francis worked tirelessly to establish and organize Catholic communities. With time, many of the communities, such as that of the Paravas in southern India, endured and grew. Francis modeled his mission on that of the apostles, seeking to bring the message of Christ and the

tenets of the Catholic faith to every community he visited. To make his message intelligible, he would translate his teachings into the local language. He also sought to convert the population by living a model life. His efforts were particularly effective with the poor, among whom he willingly lived in poverty.

Francis, the patron saint of missionaries, was the most famous Catholic overseas missionary in a period when the Roman Catholic Church established itself as a world religion through the settlement of European colonists and the conversion of indigenous peoples in the New World and Asia. His missionary activities define his holiness, and he is commonly referred to as “the apostle of the Indies and Japan.” His reputation in the West was established during his lifetime through the publication of the letters he wrote to his Jesuit brethren in Europe. The uncorrupted state of his body, which was placed in quicklime at his death and eventually buried in Goa, also added to his reputation as a holy man, and his tomb became a site of popular pilgrimage.

—Eric Nelson

See also: Christianity and Holy People; Ignatius of Loyola; Mission

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Y

Yajñavalkya

(8th cent. B.C.E.?)

Hindu teacher

Yajñavalkya is the best known among the great teachers of the late Vedic texts known as the Upanishads, as well as of later Hindu texts. He is portrayed vividly in this literature, a rarity in the older texts of India. Presented as an innovative, humorous, and sometimes sarcastic individual, he appears as a ritualist, a defender of brahminical orthopraxy, an authority on ritual matters, and a great religious thinker who advocates groundbreaking ideas that radically revolutionize older Vedic conceptions about the meaning and significance of ritual. It is thought that he lived during the eighth century B.C.E.

Like all brahmins, Yajñavalkya was concerned primarily with accumulating cattle, which were given to the priests who were hired to perform rituals. In one account, King Janaka offers the prize of 1,000 cows to the most learned of the brahmins. After the challenge has been issued, Yajñavalkya exclaims, “This way [drive] them!” When asked if he is indeed the “best of brahmins,” he sarcastically replies, “We bow humbly to the most learned man! But we are really after the cows, aren’t we?” (*Shatapatha Brahmana* [SB] 11.6.3.2; *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* [BAU] 3.1).

Yajñavalkya was also an authority on matters of ritual and doctrine. Though he generally deferred to his own ritual school, at times he offered his own independent solutions. In the texts, these solutions are presented in language that underscores his authority and superior knowledge. For example, Yajñavalkya once ridiculed the idea of rebirth into animal forms and the correlative idea of abstaining from eating cow meat. In response to the suggestion that the cow represented “everything here on earth,” he said, “I, for one, eat it, provided it is tender” (SB 3.1.2.21). Yajñavalkya valued his own understanding of the

ritual above that of others and thus helped shape the direction of Hindu practice.

Yajñavalkya was also the spokesperson for important new concepts such as *brahman*, *atman* (BAU 3.5–4.6), and *karma* (BAU 3.2.13) and for new formulations regarding the nature of the dream state (BAU 4.3.9–33). When Gargi questioned him about what “this world is woven back and forth upon,” Yajñavalkya revealed that it was woven upon brahman, the imperishable, described as *neti neti* “not this, not that”—that is, beyond the limits of language (BAU 3.6).

In post-Vedic texts, Yajñavalkya’s status and fame are even greater. In the *Mahabharata*, he learns the *yajus* (ritual formulas) directly from the sun (12.319). He is also said to be the author of the *Yajñavalkya Smṛiti* (Law of Yajñavalkya, actually a work of the eighth century C.E.), a late *dharma* (doctrine) text that became influential through its medieval commentary, the *Mitakshara* (eleventh century C.E.).

—Carlos Lopez

See also: Gargi; Hinduism and Holy People; Sages

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Yang Renshan

See Yang Wenhui

Yang Wenhui

(1837–1911 C.E.)

Buddhist layman, reformer

A well-known lay Buddhist and the “father of Buddhist revival” in modern China, Yang Wenhui (also known as Yang Renshan) and his family moved to Beijing after his father passed the metropolitan examination in 1838, just a year after Yang’s birth. Before he became interested in Buddhism, he studied Confucianism as well as the philosophy of Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.) and Zhuangzi (c. 369–286 B.C.E.). He was fascinated with Buddhist philosophy when he read *Dacheng qixin lu* (Awakening of faith in Mahayana). In 1863, Yang was put in charge of engineering and construction projects in Nanjing, which had been devastated during the war against the Taiping Rebellion. He then found a number of friends who shared a common interest in Buddhism.

In order to circulate Buddhist texts destroyed by the Taiping Rebellion, Yang donated a part of his family’s building in Nanjing and founded Jinling kejing chu (Jinling scriptural press) in 1866. He began to collect Buddhist texts and images from society and had millions of copies printed to encourage both Buddhist practices and studies. In 1878 and 1886, Yang Wenhui worked in the Chinese embassies in London and Paris, where he became acquainted with Max Müller and Nanjio Bunyiu. With their help, he was able to obtain a large number of Buddhist texts that had been lost in China. In 1884, Timothy Richard, a Baptist missionary in China, visited Yang in Nanjing. Their meeting marked the beginning of Buddhist-Christian dialogue in modern China. The two of them collaborated on the English translation of the *Awakening of Faith in Mahayana*. In 1893, Yang met Anagarika Dhammapala, the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society in India, and the two discussed cooperation between Buddhists in China and India.

Influenced by Japanese Buddhist missionaries who set up Buddhist schools in China, Yang edited Buddhist textbooks and founded the Jatavana Hermitage in Nanjing; twenty-four students enrolled, including Taixu (1890–1947) and Ouyang Jingwu (1871–1943). In 1909, Yang founded the Society for Buddhist Research and began to compile *Dazan jiyao* (Essentials of Taisho), which consists of 460 texts in more than 3,300 scrolls. Yang Wenhui died in 1911 at the age of seventy-five.

—Xue Yu

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Laity; Laozi; Reform and Reaction; Scholars as Holy People; Taixu; Zhuangzi

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Yared

(fl. 6th cent. C.E.)

Ethiopian Christian liturgist

Yared, also called Yared Mahletawi (Yared the Singer), is venerated as the sixth-century creator of the liturgical music of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. According to Ethiopian tradition, he composed the hymns and scholars of subsequent centuries developed them and supplied musical notation. Yared is also sometimes considered the first to write *qine*, Ethiopian spiritual poetry. Traditional sources narrate that some other sacred texts were given to Yared by Cyriacus, the bishop of Behnesa, when the Virgin Mary miraculously arranged their encounter near Aksum. Finally, Yared is usually mentioned as one of the early Ethiopian scholars of the traditional exegesis. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church commemorates him on Génbot 11 (May 19).

Yared was born in the ancient city of Aksum (northern Tigray). His parents, Enbaram and Tawleya, sent him to a relative named Gedeon to study. Yared’s first attempts were unsuccessful: He could not memorize the sacred texts. Finally, unable to bear his teacher’s constant punishments, he fled into the desert. There he saw a caterpillar that tried to reach the top of a bush. It fell down many times on its way, but every time it began to climb again, and finally it reached its goal. Enlightened and inspired, Yared returned and miraculously learned the Psalter and all the scriptures within one day. He was then appointed to serve in the cathedral of Aksum.

According to one legend, he once was enraptured and taken to the Garden of Eden, where he heard the heavenly music of the seraphim singing glory to God. Yared learned the heavenly mode of chanting from the “twenty-four heavenly priests.” Back on earth, he entered the cathedral and glorified the Lord “in loud voice” in the same manner. Everyone was amazed and rushed to the cathedral to hear the beautiful singing. Presumably based on this experience, Yared established three modes of chanting, known as *ge’ez*, *’ezel*, and *araray*, representing the three persons of the Trinity. Tradition claims that Yared composed both music and texts for six collections of liturgical chants that are still used in the Ethiopian Church.

Yared’s vita reports that one day King Gabra Maskal was listening to Yared and unintentionally dropped his stick on the saint’s foot and pierced it. However, Yared did not stop singing until he finished the chant. In order to compensate for the harm, Gabra Maskal offered to grant any wish Yared might have, and Yared asked to be allowed to leave Aksum and become a monk. Gabra Maskal was in deep sorrow, but he could not break his word. Yared retired to Semen, northwest of Aksum, and lived there as a hermit until his death, visiting other monasteries in a “shining chariot” and teaching his chants to everyone who came to him. The place of his

grave was hidden from the people and revealed by God only to a few saints.

—*Denis Nosnitsin*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Christianity and Holy People

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Yellow Emperor

See *Huangdi*

Yeshe Od

(d. late 10th cent. C.E.)

Buddhist ruler, monk

Yeshe Od was the king of Gu-ge (western Tibet) and a key figure in what Tibetan religious historians refer to as “the later dissemination” of Buddhism in Tibet. This later dissemination began with his rule in the late tenth century following the persecution and near elimination of Buddhism from Tibet at the hands of an earlier king, Langdarma. Langdarma’s reign only lasted from 838 until 842, but his persecution was so heavy-handed that traditional histories report not a single monk or nun was seen in Tibet for seventy years after his death. When Yeshe Od assumed the throne, he embarked on a vigorous campaign to reestablish Buddhism in his country. Many of his efforts had lasting effects in Tibet. Eventually Yeshe Od himself renounced his throne in order to take ordination as a monk.

By far the most famous story in traditional accounts of Yeshe Od’s life involves his invitation to the Indian master, Atisha, to come to Tibet. Atisha was among the most revered Buddhist teachers in India at the time, and Yeshe Od relished the potential benefits for Tibetans if Atisha were to teach them. He raised a large sum of money as an offering to Atisha and sent it to India with his request. Atisha denied the invitation, citing his old age and the need for his presence among his many Indian students at Vikramashila monastery. Yeshe Od thought that he simply had not offered enough, so he embarked on a trip through western Tibet to raise more. The king of Garlok, a small kingdom in western

Tibet at the time, captured Yeshe Od, stole the small fortune, and imprisoned him. A message was sent out that it would take a ransom of his body’s weight in gold to secure Yeshe Od’s release from captivity. When his great-nephew Changchub Od arrived with nearly his weight in gold, Yeshe Od told his great-nephew not to use that gold for his ransom, but rather to take it to India and offer it to Atisha with another invitation to teach in Tibet. His reasoning was that if Atisha were to come and teach in Tibet, it would be of enormous benefit to many people, but that he as an individual could not have nearly the effect.

Yeshe Od gave up his own freedom and his own life for the benefit of countless others and has been revered as a great *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) in Tibet ever since. Atisha did accept this second invitation and went on to be arguably the most important figure in the period of the later dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet. Yeshe Od died in the Garlok prison.

—*James Blumenthal*

See also: Atisha; Buddhism and Holy People; Martyrdom and Persecution; Rulers as Holy People

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Yeshe Tsogyal

(757–817 C.E.)

Buddhist scholar

Yeshe Tsogyal, born in 757, was a Tibetan Buddhist saint, yogini, and scholar. The daughter of the prince of Kharchen, a principality controlled by Tibet, she was exceedingly beautiful and demonstrated great intelligence and devotion to the *dharma* (Buddhist doctrine) throughout her childhood. As word of her beauty spread throughout the land, rival princes competed for her hand in marriage. Yeshe Tsogyal wanted to remain single and practice the *dharma*. Her father, fearful of the warring princes, sent her outside the palace gates to be fought over. Escaping from one suitor, she was captured by another, but she was badly beaten when she resisted. When the ruler of Tibet, King Trisong de Tsen, heard of her plight, he claimed her for himself and made her his queen.

King Trisong de Tsen, a philosopher and *dharma* practitioner, recognized Yeshe Tsogyal’s potential and put her in charge of *dharma* activities. After Guru Padmasambhava arrived in Tibet, the king offered Yeshe Tsogyal to him as his spiritual consort. She wrote down the guru’s teachings, and together they hid many of them throughout the land to be discovered by future generations.

Yeshe Tsogyal was a prolific writer herself. Among her compositions are a life of Guru Padmasambhava, an important commentary on the practice of Vajrakilaya (a compassionately wrathful form of the Buddha), an autobiography, and a prayer of remembrance of the guru.

Although considered to be an emanation of the female buddha Tara, she performed many ascetic practices in order to progress along the spiritual path and undo the effects of unfortunate karma. Humble, gentle, compassionate, and generous, she had many students. It is said that when she was raped by a gang of thugs, all of them attained realization of the dharma. She performed miracles such as raising the dead and flying in the sky.

When Guru Padmasambhava left Tibet, and after the death of King Trisong de Tsen, she remained for many years teaching the people, founding monasteries, and maintaining the dharma. It is said that she was instrumental in resolving a debate between the philosopher Kamalasila, who believed in the gradual path to enlightenment, and the yogi Hoshang Mahayana, who believed in sudden enlightenment.

—Marie Friquegnon

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Buddhism and Holy People; Compassion and Holy People; Gender and Holy People; Padmasambhava; Scholars as Holy People; Tara; Trisong de Tsen

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Yisrael ben Eliezar

See Ba'al Shem Tov

Yixing

(673/683–727 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, astronomer

A Buddhist monk and astronomer in the Tang dynasty (618–907), Yixing was a child prodigy born in the 670s or 680s into an aristocratic family in decline. He could recite books that he had only read once. Yixing studied Chinese philosophy and science, especially Daoism, and established his reputation for learning when he was very young.

Later on he was approached by associates of Wu Sansi, a nephew of Empress Wu Zhao. In an attempt to avoid political involvement that would come from an association with the Wu family, Yixing renounced the world when he was about twenty-five and became a Buddhist novice under Puji

in Shaoling Si. After receiving full ordination, Yixing traveled and studied under various Buddhist masters all over China. In 717, he was summoned to Chan'an by Emperor Xuangzong to assist Subhakarasiṃha (Shangwuwei) in translating the Vairocana Sutra. From that point, he concentrated on astronomy and organized expeditions to the Southern Seas to chart stars and determine latitudes. Nine stations for observing the stars were set up across China, stretching from the Great Wall in the north to the border between China and India. Based on the scientific data he collected, Yixing composed *Dayanli* (The great calendar) and rearranged the Chinese calendar system. He more accurately determined twenty-four seasonal periods of a year. In 723, he invented a new *huntian yi* (universal observatory machine) and verified the movement of the stars. Yixing was the first in human history to measure the length of the prime meridian.

Meanwhile, he studied esoteric Buddhism under Subhakarasiṃha and Vajrabodhi (Jingangzhi) and received esoteric transmission from both. In 725, he composed *Darijing su* (Commentary on the Vairocana Sutra), in which he elaborated on Buddhist cosmology and *bodhisattvas* (enlightened beings). Yixing died in 727 and was posthumously given the title Dahui chanshi (Chan master of great wisdom) by Emperor Xuangzong.

—Xue Yu

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Yogananda, Paramahansa

(1890–1952 C.E.)

Hindu yogi

Paramahansa Yogananda was born in Gorakhpur in northeastern India in 1890. He was the second son and the fourth of eight children. His parents were Bengalis of the *kshatriya* caste, the second-highest caste in Indian society, traditionally warriors but now often administrators. When Yogananda became very ill with cholera at the age of eight, he was healed by gazing at a photograph of a holy man named Lahiri Mahasaya. Yogananda reported seeing a blinding light that enveloped his body and the entire room during this experience. Yogananda is best known in the West as the author of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, first published in 1946.

Yogananda's father and a teacher named Sri Yukteswar (1855–1936) encouraged him to attend college in Calcutta because his teacher believed that a college degree would bolster his credibility in the West. He attended the Scottish Church College and eventually graduated from Serampore, although, by his own admission, he was not an outstanding

student because he concentrated more on his spiritual life than on his studies. In his autobiography, he relates tales about powers that he acquired on his spiritual path. He says, for example, that he took a dare to defeat and chain a tiger and accomplished this feat with his bare hands. He also reports receiving a telepathic message from Sri Yukteswar. The autobiography describes various healings that he performed as well.

Yogananda viewed himself in a long line of teachers that included Lahiri Mahasaya (1828–1895), Sri Yukteswar's teacher. It was this spiritual heritage that Yogananda brought with him to the United States when he arrived in Boston on October 6, 1920. During the next decade, he taught yoga classes to many Americans. The type of yoga that he taught, Kriya yoga, was based on practical efforts. He eventually founded the Self-Realization Fellowship in California in 1925. Yogananda was one of the first Indian religious teachers to export Hinduism to the West. His efforts proved enduring.

Yogananda's name is suggestive because it implies that he finds his bliss (*ananda*) through yoga, whereas other Indian holy men find their bliss through, for instance, discriminatory knowledge (*Vivekananda*) or through mildness (*Dayananda*). Yogananda's emphasis on self-realization stands in contrast to other Indian spiritual leaders who stress other concepts, such as god-realization or the attainment of a state of absorption with the one real principle of the universe. With its foundation in yogic practice, Yogananda's message made an appeal for personal experience. This message found a positive reception from Americans. Although Yogananda died in 1952, his followers continued to teach his ideas and practices, and they remained popular especially through the 1970s.

One part of Yogananda's message did not resonate positively in America—the idea of becoming a world-renouncer. This emphasis is implied in his first name, Paramahansa, which in the ancient Indian epic called the *Mahabharata* (13.141.89) was identified as the highest state of spiritual attainment. The term *paramahansa* itself was instructive because it literally meant “highest goose” or “highest swan.” This bird led a wandering life that served as a symbol of the world-renouncer. Its ability to fly high suggested transcendence of the world. By traveling to America to spread his teaching, Yogananda kept alive the ancient symbol of the wandering bird and its many symbolic connotations.

—Carl Olson

See also: Ascetics as Holy People; Contemporary Holy People; Hinduism and Holy People; Mission; Vivekananda

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Yoshikawa Koretari

(1616–1694 C.E.)

Shinto teacher

A Shintoist of the early Edo period (1603–1867), Yoshikawa Koretari developed the Yoshikawa style of Shinto that greatly influenced many contemporary and future political and philosophical leaders of Japan. Yoshikawa's family name can also be read as Kikkawa, and his personal name Koretari can be read as Koretaru.

Koretari, originally named Amagasakiya Gorozaemon, was born in 1616 in Oomi-no-kuni. He was the son of a samurai but raised in Nihonbashi in Edo as the adopted son of a merchant. As a youth, Koretari showed interest in traditional Japanese literature. In 1651, finding himself not well suited to business, he moved to Kamakura, then to Kyoto in 1653 to study Yoshida Shinto under Hagiwara Kanetsugu and Hagiwara Kaneyori.

In 1656, Koretari received a certificate of instruction from Hagiwara Kanetsugu. Then based in Edo, Koretari taught the principles of Yoshida Shinto to the lord of Kishō domain, Tokugawa Yorinobu, in 1657, and to the lord of Aizu domain, Hoshina Masayuki, in 1661. Masayuki was originally an ardent Confucianist, but after hearing Koretari speak he commanded his own Confucian scholar-vassal Hattori Ankyu to further his study of Shinto. With the backing of his influential followers, Koretari received an audience with the shogun in 1667, and he was appointed Shintōkata (director of Shinto affairs) in 1681. After this, concerned that his own Yoshikawa-Shinto teachings were getting mixed up with those of the older Yoshida Shinto school, he secured the lasting dominance of his school by deciding that his own son, Yorinaga, should succeed him. Koretari died in 1694, and the Shintōkata position within the shogunate became a hereditary one for the Yoshikawa family until the end of the Edo period.

Koretari's most famous works include *Shintō daii kōdan* and *Shindaikan koretari shō*. His theology was based mainly on Yoshida Shinto with elements from Song dynasty Confucianism. Rather than advocate the coexistence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism, Koretari held Shinto to be the fountainhead of all things, including other religions. Koretari emphasized a rational Shinto and attempted to influence the Tokugawa shogunate's policies with Shinto ideas but was unsuccessful owing to the strong influence of Tendai Shinto on the Tokugawa establishment. He was able to exert a major influence on the politics of both Aizu and Hirosaki because the lords of these domains advocated Yoshikawa's Shinto. Koretari emphasized *tsutsushimi* (seriousness of mind) as the way of humankind and stressed the importance of the rite of *oharai* (purification). He also taught Yamazaki Ansai and thus greatly influenced attempts to synthesize Shinto and Neo-Confucianism.

—Timothy D. Amos

See also: Politics and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Shinto and Holy People

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Young, Brigham

(1801–1877 C.E.)

Latter-day Saint president, preacher

Second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brigham Young was a preacher, governor, and colonizer who led thousands of Mormons to the “Great Salt Lake City” promised land. Following the death in 1844 of the church’s founder and first president, Joseph Smith, Young was confirmed as “prophet, seer, and revelator,” the true successor of Smith. He remained the leader of the church until his death in 1877.

In the spring of 1830, Joseph Smith’s brother, Samuel, passed through Mendon, New York, where Young and his family were living. Samuel was distributing *The Book of Mormon*, which Joseph Smith claimed was a translation of the “pure gospel of Christ.” A copy made its way to Young, who, although impressed with it, was cautious. After two years of investigation, he, along with his immediate family, was baptized. One week after his baptism, he preached his first sermon, proclaiming, “Nothing would satisfy me but to cry abroad in the world, what the Lord was doing in the latter days” (Young 1954, 1:313). Acting on this conversionary desire to “cry abroad,” Young set out to assist Smith and his followers in building the kingdom of God. Embarking on numerous missionary journeys, Young distinguished himself, ultimately being selected as one of the church’s original “Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.” He eventually became the president of the Quorum, second only to Smith in authority and responsibility. After Smith died, Young became the second president of the church.

The Mormons had been living in Commerce, Illinois, which Smith had renamed Nauvoo—the “beautiful plantation.” After Smith’s death, however, Young and his associates decided to move further west. Young directed this massive exodus to the Great Salt Lake Basin. Once there, he determined the exact spot on which the Salt Lake Temple would be built, explored the region, helped survey and apportion the land, and named the new settlement. In 1850, this “provisional state” was recognized by the U.S. government as “Utah Territory,” and Young was appointed governor. The region was not granted statehood at this point, though, largely because of Young’s vision of how the community should function: The “Great Basin Kingdom,” defined as it was as a theocratic cooperative, represented a nineteenth-century



Brigham Young, second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (Library of Congress)

“counterculture” that contradicted many of the economic and religious values of most Americans.

—Philip C. DiMare

See also: Politics and Holy People; Smith, Joseph; Teachers as Holy People

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Yu the Great

(c. 2200 B.C.E.?)

Confucian sage, ruler

Yu (or Yü) is described as a sage-emperor and the putative founder of the Xia (Hsia) dynasty (c. 2200–1800 B.C.E.?). He is credited with personally building canals that brought the Yellow River under control and with beginning the practice of hereditary rule.

Yu was the last of the six sage-emperors, following Fu Xi (Fu-hsi), Shen Nong (Shen-nung), Huangdi (Huang-ti), Yao, and Shun. The *Shi ji* (Book of historical records) places spe-

cial emphasis on Yu by treating the first five sage-emperors in one chapter and beginning the next with Yu. The first five transferred the crown to their ministers, despite these ministers' demurrals in favor of the emperors' offspring. Yu broke this pattern by transferring power to his son Qi (Ch'i).

Yu is valorized for taming the Yellow River. His father, Gun (Kun), was also charged with this task but built barriers that failed to contain the waters. For this, Shun imprisoned him, giving the job to Yu. Yu built drainage channels (apparently transforming into a bear to do so). These proved effective, and Shun made Yu the next king.

Yu's efforts to improve the land for the people were hailed as highly virtuous, and Yu was set as an exemplar of *ren* (*jen*), or humaneness. That he apparently performed these labors himself has been viewed variously, with the acclaim centering around his display of rule based on work and not privilege, and the critique centering on his lack of bureaucratic leadership.

Along with other culture heroes, Yu is posited as a historical personage. The Si (Ssu) clan, whose territory was by the Yellow River, claimed descent from Yu. Yu is also noted for originating a dance designed to harmonize the empire. It is said that possession of one of the nine bronze tripods that he cast signified legitimacy of rule.

—Dan Wright

See also: Confucian Culture Heroes; Huangdi; Rulers as Holy People; Sages

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Yunus Emre

(c. 1241–1320/1321 C.E.)

Muslim mystic, poet

Known as Ashik Yunus (Yunus the lover) and Dervish Yunus, Yunus Emre of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is revered as Turkey's greatest folk-poet, mystical troubadour, and indigenous saint. Yunus and his pioneering vernacular Turkish verse are both so highly and widely esteemed that his significance resembles a combination of St. Francis of Assisi, William Blake, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Bob Dylan. To this day, Turks universally recognize, memorize, imitate, and sing his work, especially his vast repertoire of *ilahis* (hymns), at Turkish sufi gatherings. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed 1991 as International Yunus Emre Year.

Living in the Seljuk period of Mongol hegemony, Yunus is credited with forging a Turkish intertribal cohesiveness as he traveled and sang his *ilahis* with a six-stringed lute (*cheshte*). His 303 poems, collected in *Divan* (Collection), and his *Risalat al-Nushiyat* (Book of counsel) convey a universalist message of love and tolerance at the heart of Turkish culture and particularly dear to the Bektashiyya (the followers of Haji Bektash, 1248–1337). His influence especially touched Kaygusuz Abdal (fifteenth century) and Niyazi Misri (d. 1697), who wrote a commentary on Yunus Emre's verse. His tomb (among twelve others in Turkey) in his alleged birthplace of Sariköy annually attracts thousands of pilgrims.

The *Vilayetname* of Haji Bektash recounts the initiation of Yunus Emre. In a famine year, Yunus brought wild pears to Haji Bektash's center (*tekke*) to trade for wheat grains and seeds to bring back to his village. Haji Bektash offered instead a *nefes* (breath of blessing) to convey *himmet* (spiritual power) and confer initiation (*nasip*). Yunus declined, and Haji Bektash offered ten *nefes*. Yunus departed with grain but then reconsidered. When Yunus tried to return the grain and gain the *nefes*, Haji Bektash said, "I can't. We gave your padlock [your training] to Tapduk Emre." Yunus served at Tapduk's *tekke* in Emre Koyu for forty years as a woodcutter, honoring his *pir* (master) and path by never carrying in wet or crooked wood. During his service, he developed *junun* (divine madness of love), as his *pir* was "boiling him."

When Tapduk witnessed Yunus bundling wood with a snake, he sent Yunus on a *dikme* (training journey for advanced dervishes). After Yunus returned, Tapduk one day asked the resident poet (also named Yunus) to recite poetry, but he froze up. Tapduk turned to Yunus and said, "What Haji Bektash told you is now a reality. Your padlock is unlocked. I sent you as a closed box. Now you are opened." Yunus began to recite verses that inspired everyone to ecstasy.

In an apocryphal story, Rumi (1207–1273) testified of Yunus, "Whenever I arrived at a new spiritual height, there I found the footsteps left by that Turkish mystic and I never could surpass him." Yunus summarized Rumi's 24,660-couplet *Mathnawi* in one couplet: "I came from eternity, took form in flesh and bones/and called myself Yunus."

In his life and work Yunus expressed the vital role of humble and ardent love (*ashk/ishq*) for God, all humanity, and one's *pir* as the core of all authentic spirituality. While revering the orthodox piety of the Qur'an, love of the prophet Muhammad, and the *namaz/salat* (ritual prayer), Yunus emphasized deep and heartfelt love beyond forms: "I love you deep inside and way beyond my soul/There is a path deep inside and way beyond the faiths of old." Yunus addressed and described God as Dost (Beloved, Friend): "Love is minister to us; our flock is the innermost soul/The Friend's Face is our Mecca." Yunus aspired to an undogmatic, ecumenical vision that was embraced by many of his contemporary Turks

as a model for “humanism”: “We regard no one’s religion as contrary to our own/True love is born when all faiths are united as a whole.”

—*Hugh Talat Halman*

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Attributes of Holy People; Devotion; Bektash Wali, Haji; Islam and Holy People; Kaygusuz Abdal; Mysticism and Holy People; Sufism; Tapduk Emre

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Z

Zahir, al-

(1005–1036 C.E.)

Shi'ite imam, caliph

Abu'l-Hasan Ali al-Zahir li-I'zaz Din Allah, a hereditary imam of the Isma'ili Shi'ite Muslims and seventh Fatimid caliph, reigned in Cairo during the eleventh century. The Fatimids were first established in North Africa and then conquered Egypt, where al-Zahir was the fourth caliph of the dynasty to reign. His sovereignty was acknowledged beyond the borders of Egypt in parts of North Africa, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia. After the death of his father, the controversial caliph al-Hakim, his succession to the throne was assured by the maneuvering of his aunt Sitt al-Mulk. On March 28, 1021, at the age of sixteen, al-Zahir was acknowledged publicly as caliph.

His aunt continued to hold effective power for two years until her death in 1023. Her death led to the cancellation of a treaty she had been negotiating with Byzantium to improve bilateral relations. The young caliph seemed uninterested in wielding power and preferred to leave the responsibility for important decisions to his entourage. This tendency was to persist in the caliphate beyond his death in 1036 until the end of the dynasty in 1171.

During his reign there was a severe famine, in 1024–1025, followed by an epidemic that led to disorder. Fatimid rule in Syria was threatened by a coalition of Bedouin tribes, but order was restored in southern and central Syria through military intervention.

Relations with Byzantium improved eventually and an agreement in 1027 with Constantine VIII allowed the name of the Fatimid caliph to be acknowledged in the mosques in the emperor's domain and the mosque at Constantinople to be restored. In exchange, the caliph granted the emperor permission to rebuild the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed on the order of al-Hakim in 1009. The Druze sect, which formed toward the

end of al-Hakim's reign, was brutally persecuted under al-Zahir, and in 1032 a joint Fatimid-Byzantine expedition attacked and killed the Druze in the Syrian mountains, forcing them to seek shelter in the caves.

Al-Zahir died on the eve of his thirty-second birthday on June 13, 1036. He was succeeded by his eleven-year-old son al-Mustansir, who reigned for almost sixty years.

—Hamid Haji

See also: Hakim, Abu 'Ali al-Mansur; Imams; Mustansir, Abu Tamim Ma'add al-; Rulers as Holy People; Tolerance and Intolerance

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Zakariyya, Baha' ud-din

(1183–1262 C.E.)

Muslim sufi

Baha' ud-din Zakariyya was a prominent sufi disciple of Abu Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardi (1145–1234). He was born near the city of Multan in 1183 and lost his father at age twelve. He pursued studies in Khorasan and memorized the Qur'an, and in Bukhara people assigned him the affectionate name "angel" because of his recitation abilities. He studied mystical theology, law, jurisprudence, and the life of the prophet in Jerusalem, Medina, and Baghdad. Al-Suhrawardi personally invited Zakariyya to study with him in Baghdad, and within seventeen days Zakariyya was initiated into the Suhrawardi order. Al-Suhrawardi asked Zakariyya to establish the sufi order in Multan, and Zakariyya was soon recognized as an authority in sufi theology, philosophy, law, and the Islamic sciences.

Zakariyya believed that God established the daily Islamic ritualistic prayers so that creation would worship the divine and see the presence of the divine in all things. He was noted for his understanding of ablution before prayer, which he considered to be an act of prayer in itself. For Zakariyya, cleansing oneself with water before prayer (*wudu*) paralleled the action of the heart. Moreover, he said that in prayer, the position of the body, with legs bent, hands placed on the ground, and the forehead firmly placed on the earth, represented the heart opening and releasing impurities. Zakariyya's understanding of prayer emphasized spiritual movement toward the divine. For him, when the outer body prostrated itself it allowed the heart to prostrate itself to God and prepare a purified place for divine presence. According to Zakariyya, the sufi path required real purification of the self in order to be mentally, spiritually, and physically prepared for divine encounter.

In adhering to the Suhrawardi sufi tradition in India, Zakariyya's theology concentrated on qur'anic verses suggesting that the heart (*qalb*) reminded human beings that they are never left alone. He taught that the world was not a place for intense ascetic practices where one was alienated from the community; rather, the law, the Qur'an, and the customs of the prophet were all divine illuminations to follow. Zakariyya explained that the qur'anic verse 4:63, "God knows what is in their hearts," was evidence that God was to be invited to the heart of the sufi disciple to disclose his love to the seeker. One must therefore concentrate on purifying the inner essence of the heart. The heart could be used as a weapon to be self-destructive, or it could be trained to remember God. Zakariyya emphasized that the heart could only begin to cleanse away its worldly concerns when it was in prayer and in remembrance of God because at these times it opened itself up to the divine presence.

—Qamar-ul Huda

See also: Islam and Holy People; Mysticism and Holy People; Ritual; Suhrawardi, Shihabuddin

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Zarathustra

See **Zoroaster**

Zaynab, Sayyida

(c. 630–684 C.E.)

Muslim holy woman, heroine

Sayyida Zaynab, granddaughter of the prophet Muhammad by his daughter Fatima and his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali b. Abi Talib, accompanied her brother Husayn to Karbala in October 680, where all seventy-three males of the family were killed by troops of the ruling Umayyad caliph Yazid except for Husayn's young son 'Ali, whom Zaynab rescued. She thereby ensured the continuity of Husayn's line of descent. Zaynab is known in sufi and Shi'i Islamic traditions for her mystical knowledge, eloquence, and courage. She is particularly venerated in Egypt, where legends about her migration to that land and her burial extend beyond historical sources, and where she is known as mother of the clan of Hashim and mother of the Egyptians in general.

Early historical references to Zaynab are largely confined to her role at the battle of Karbala and its aftermath. She was born in about 630. She married her cousin 'Abdallah ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Talib and had five children, but they were later divorced. 'Aisha 'Abd al-Rahman, an Egyptian Qur'an commentator who adopted the pen name Bint al-Shati' (Daughter of the Coast), noted that Zaynab was always depicted at the side of her brothers, for whom she became a surrogate mother at the tender age of six when their mother died. In Egypt, Zaynab is called Sayyida, "lady"; indeed, she is the only one who can be identified by that title without adding her personal name. She is also known as the "heroine of Karbala" for risking her own life to save 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, who later became the fourth imam of the Shi'a, and for rescuing the women of the family from violation. The women were taken as captives to the caliph in Damascus, before whom she delivered ringing, eloquent denunciations that shamed him into silence. Although early historians stated that once she fainted at Karbala, modern biographies focus on her militancy, courage, and eloquence.

Shortly after returning to her home in Medina, according to Egyptian legend, Zaynab migrated to Egypt, where the Egyptians gave her an enthusiastic welcome because of their special love for the family of the prophet. There she interceded with the ruler on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, and he consulted her because of her wisdom. She lived in Cairo only six months, however, before her death in 684. She is buried in an ornate tomb that is the object of fervent veneration, including weekly visitations and an annual carnival attended by huge throngs.

Throughout the Muslim world, Zaynab is the "Pure One." Her devotees also call her "Mama," and she appears to them in visions. The oil in the lamp at her shrine is said to have healing properties for eye ailments. (The conflict between this tradition and modern medicine is the focus of an acclaimed Egyptian novella [Haqqi 1973].) Egyptians believe

that along with her brother Husayn and the great jurist al-Shafi'i (767–820), Sayyida Zaynab serves on a hidden celestial court to which appeals are made for justice. The dome of her shrine radiates with light when the court convenes there to decide the affairs of the living.

Not all scholars agree that Zaynab went to Egypt, however. Yusuf Ragib (1976) wrote that Sayyida Zaynab never came to Egypt at all and that the tomb was first identified as hers in the sixteenth century by the sufi al-Sha'rani.

—Valerie J. Hoffman

See also: 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Zayn; Fatima bint Muhammad; Gender and Holy People; Husayn b. 'Ali; Imams; Islam and Holy People; Muhammad

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Zeno

(c. 300–c. 370/380 C.E.)

Christian bishop, writer

Zeno was the bishop of Verona, Italy, in the late fourth century. His significance is due primarily to his collection of more than ninety sermons on a variety of topics. These sermons are the oldest surviving examples in the Latin west and provide evidence of the development of the Christian liturgical calendar, rites, and customs during the late Roman/early Christian transitional period.

There is some evidence that Zeno may have been born in North Africa in about 300, that he studied in Carthage or Madaura and traveled to Syria before being ordained a priest in about 350, and that he became bishop of Verona in the 360s. He is known to have founded a convent for nuns, established a religious school in Verona, and organized the diocese. His death date is uncertain but has been placed at approximately 370/380.

Although considered one of the "minor" Latin fathers of the church, his sermons are composed in a distinctive, highly poetic, and elegant prose style derived from classical authors. This classical, rhythmic, and balanced style led him to be termed the "Christian Cicero" by Italian Renaissance humanists. A number of his sermons give evidence of lingering pre-Christian traditions during this period of the establishment of the Christian church in northern Italy. He also articulately defended Christianity against contemporary here-

sies, such as Arianism, and advocated charity and almsgiving. Writing during the early period of theological development in the West, he was concerned with baptism and Easter rites, the subject of more than sixty of his sermons. His work serves as important historical evidence of liturgical practices in the late fourth century.

The cult of Zeno as a saint seems to have begun in Verona in the fifth century and spread slowly elsewhere in Europe. The miracles at his tomb, and the miracle reported by Gregory the Great in his *Dialogues* (late sixth century), in which Zeno's intervention saved the citizens of Verona who sheltered in his church during a flood, were expanded by later hagiographers. Zeno is thus a patron saint invoked against floods and drowning. He is often depicted in art as a fisherman or with a fish hanging from his crosier. This symbol may relate to the water miracle, to other episodes in his vita, or to his pastoral position as a "fisher of souls." His feast day is April 12.

—Leslie Ross

See also: Bishop-Saints; Christianity and Holy People; Gregory I; Scholars as Holy People

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Zhang Daoling (Chang Tao-ling)

(34–156 C.E.)

Daoist school founder

Zhang Daoling, also known as Zhang Ling, was the first to make Daoism a religion in China that served the spiritual needs of the common people. He is also the acclaimed founder of the Celestial Masters school of Daoism (*Tianshi dao*).

A quasi-historical biography states that Zhang was from today's Zhejiang province. Born in 34 C.E., from an early age he studied the Chinese classics and was interested in spiritual matters. He read the Daoist classic *Daode jing* (Classic of the Way and its power), attributed to Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.), and explored astronomy and geomancy. Later he moved to the kingdom of Shu, today's Sichuan province, where he cultivated the Dao (Way) and wrote a book in twenty-four chapters. His creation of talismans for healing and exorcism, which are still used today, brought him a large following. The talismans are strips of yellow paper with special magical script written on them invoking the power of particular Daoist deities. Zhang is often represented as a powerful, charismatic personality with frightening eyes and

a black face, brandishing a sword and seated on or near a tiger.

Tradition has it that on the winter solstice of 142 (today celebrated on the first day of the fifth month of the Chinese lunar calendar), Zhang received revelations related to healing from Laozi himself, who also revealed the secret of how to produce a pill of immortality. This event marks the founding date of the Celestial Masters school of Daoism. Zhang is considered the first Celestial Master, one who was able to communicate between Daoist deities and the believers. He coined the term *Taishang Laojun* (Highest Venerable Lord) for Laozi, the supreme deity of his Daoist pantheon. His movement was first known as *Wudoumou dao* (Five Bushels of Rice Daoism), as members were told to contribute five bushels of rice as a membership fee. They set out to produce the elixir of immortality. Tradition says that Zhang achieved this: Upon swallowing the pill his face became as rosy and fresh as a young boy's even though he was over sixty at the time. It is said that Zhang and two of his closest disciples "rose to heaven in broad daylight" (*feisheng*) in 156, thus becoming Daoist immortals.

—Richard A. Pegg

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Death; Intermediaries; Laozi; Repentance and Holy People

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Zhang Zai (Chang Tsai)

(1020–1077 C.E.)

Neo-Confucian scholar

Zhang Zai (Zhang Hengqu) is one of the five eleventh-century Northern Song masters who initiated the movement usually known as Neo-Confucianism, in English, and as Daoxue (The learning of the Dao) in Chinese. Or, in more accurate terms, he is one of the five whose ideas were drawn upon by Zhu Xi (1130–1200) in his grand synthesis that became the orthodox doctrine of the Chinese empire from the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368).

Zhang's most famous saying comes from the beginning of his *Ximing* (Western inscription): "Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions" (Wing-tsit Chan, 497). Zhang's philosophy is distinguished by his

monism of *qi*, that is, his teaching that all reality consists of *qi* (*ch'i*, "material force"), as opposed to the dualism of *li* (principle) and *qi* developed by Zhou Dunyi (1017–1073), Cheng Yi (1033–1107), and Zhu Xi (1130–1200). To Zhang, that is, even the heaven of early Confucianism and the Dao of the Daoists were still within the realm of *qi*, though a rarefied *qi* that had not yet taken form.

Zhang's term for the original form of *qi* was *Taixu* (*T'aihsü*), or the "Great Vacuity." He wrote, "From the Great Vacuity we have the name 'Heaven'; from the transformation of *qi* we have the name 'Dao'" (*Correcting Youthful Ignorance* [*CYI*] 1.9). Furthermore, he said, "The Great Vacuity has no form; it is the original substance of *qi*" (*CYI* 1.2). Since all existing things are coagulations of *qi*, when physical things (including human beings) cease to exist, they all return to the Great Vacuity, which is not annihilation: "Whether integrated or disintegrated, it is my body just the same" (*CYI* 1.3). This monism of *qi* was a direct rejection of the Daoist teaching that existence is born from nonexistence and the Buddhist teaching that all things are produced by mind or consciousness. *Qi* is constantly moving, because it contains within itself two forces (yin and yang) that both mutually attract and mutually repel one another: "One entity, two substances: this is *qi*. Being one, it has spirituality; being two, it is always undergoing transformation" (*CYI* 2.11).

In Zhang this dialectic monism remained somewhat mixed with dualistic concepts—for instance, he said that in the beginning the universe split into that which was capable of assuming form (*qi*) and that which was not (spirit) (*CYI* 1.1). His monism of *qi*, however, was picked up and developed further by great thinkers such as Luo Qinchun (1465–1547) and Wang Tingxiang (1474–1544) in the Ming dynasty, by Wang Fuzhi (1619–1692) in the Qing dynasty, and in Japan by thinkers such as Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714) and Itō Jinsai (1627–1705). At the hands of Ōshio Heihachirō (1793–1837), the concept that all things return to *Taixu* and are not annihilated was developed into a kind of samurai religious faith capable of overcoming the fear of death.

According to Zhang, human beings gain their knowledge of things through the senses, but their knowledge of "spirit"—the *original nature* of the transformations that *qi* undergoes—and of the Dao—the *process* of the transformations of *qi*—is independent of the senses, coming rather through people's "virtuous nature." The path to developing this virtuous nature involves recovering the original nature of *qi* as it exists within the human being—*tiandi zhi xing*, a translucent, pure, tranquil, and completely good nature that is one with heaven and earth—by transforming the impure physical nature (*qizhi zhi xing*) that each particular individual receives at birth.

The way to enlightenment is to discipline oneself so as to overcome the human desires that arise from the contact be-

tween the physical nature and things in order to return to the “Principle of Heaven” (or “Principle of Nature,” *tianli*). It is this concept of the physical nature as the lower nature of man and the source of evil that was Zhang’s greatest contribution to the Cheng-Zhu school’s methodology of spiritual self-cultivation.

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Awakening and Conversion; Confucianism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Zhu Xi

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Zhisheng

(fl. c. 730 C.E.)

Buddhist monk, scholar

Little is known about Zhisheng, a Chinese Buddhist monk during the middle of the Tang dynasty (618–907). He renounced the world at an early age and mastered the doctrine of both Mahayana and Theravada, was especially proficient in the Vinaya school, and extensively studied Chinese history, philosophy, and religion. Zhisheng’s most important work is *Kaiyuan shijiao lü* (Buddhist catalog in the Kaiyuan era), sometimes called *Zhisheng lü* (Catalog of Zhisheng), which he composed in 730. From the time of Daoan (312–385), who created the first catalog of translated Buddhist texts up to the time of Zhisheng, numerous Buddhist catalogs were composed to record translated Buddhist scriptures as well as texts written by Chinese masters. Nevertheless, discrepancies and even contradictions often occurred among them, and subsequent confusion constantly bothered Chinese Buddhists. In order to fix the problem, Zhisheng collected all available Buddhist catalogs and made a careful comparative study. In 730, he completed *Kaiyuan shijiao lü* in twenty scrolls.

Kaiyuan shijiao lü consists of two major parts. First, the general catalog records the scriptures translated between 67 C.E. and 730. It gives a short biography of each of 176 translators and lists the place and year that the text was translated. In addition, Zhisheng comments briefly on the previous catalogs by pointing out their strengths and mistakes. The second part is divided into seven sections according to the nature of recorded texts, including texts that still exist, such as the *Bodhisattva Pitaka* (Bodhisattva basket), *Sravaka Pitaka* (Hearer basket), and biographies of Buddhist saints; the texts that were translated yet undiscovered; individual texts that circulated independently; texts with several different translations; additional texts that are not found in

the *Pitakas*; dubious texts that needed further clarification; and finally, apocrypha. *Kaiyuan shijiao lü* has become the source for assessing the status of Buddhist scriptures after the Song dynasty (960–1271).

—Xue Yu

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Hagiography; Scholars as Holy People

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Zhiyan (Chih-yen)

(602–668 C.E.)

Buddhist patriarch

Zhiyan was a Chinese Buddhist monk of the Tang dynasty (618–907) who was designated as the second patriarch of the official lineage of the Chinese Huayan school. He was born in 602. It was said that when Zhiyan was twelve, Dushun, the first patriarch of the school, came to his family and asked his parents to let him become a Buddhist monk, and they readily agreed. Thus he began to study with Dushun at Zhixiang temple on Mt. Zhongnan.

At the age of fourteen, Zhiyan went to northern China and studied the *Mahayanasamgraha* (Summary of Mahayana) under Fazang. Within a few years, he mastered the spectrum of Mahayana theories and was praised by his teacher’s colleagues. Having received his full precepts at the age of twenty, he traveled widely and studied numerous Buddhist texts, such as, among others, the *Four Division Vinaya*, *Satyasiddhisāstra*, *Dilun*, and the *Nirvana Sutra*. Nevertheless, he felt that there were too many Buddhist texts and schools to study so he focused on the *Huayan Jing* (Flower garland sutra), one of the longest Buddhist texts. He first studied under Master Zhizheng at Zhixiang temple for a year, but he still could not comprehend the difficult passages in the *Huayan Jing*. Then he read various commentaries and found Huiyuan’s (334–416) commentary, which led him to understand the Huayan theory of dependent origination. He started to write commentaries on the *Huayan Jing* and produced many works. He also lectured on *Huayan Jing* at Yunhua monastery. Thus, he was commonly known during his lifetime as the great master Zhixiang and the Venerable from Yunhua.

Zhiyan had many disciples, including Baocheng, Fazang, Huixiao, Huaiji, and Daocheng, but it was Fazang who inherited his Huayan study and developed it into a school. Zhiyan wrote many commentaries on the *Huayan Jing*. He inherited Huayan thought from Master Dushun and further developed it, but others developed it further after his death in 668. His contributions to the Huayan school are included on the ten profound gates and six characters that express the main Huayan doctrine of the interdependence of all phenomena.

—Guang Xing

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Fazang; Huiyuan; Scholars as Holy People

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Zhiyi (Chih-i)

(538–597 C.E.)

Buddhist school founder

Zhiyi was a Chinese Buddhist monk of the Sui dynasty (581–618) who founded the Tiantai school in China, which was named after the mountain on which he lived. Born in 538, he became a Buddhist at an early age and entered the monastic order at seventeen. Having received his full precepts at the age of twenty, he went to Guangzhou (today in Henan province) to study under the meditation master Huisi (515–677), who would later be listed as Zhiyi's predecessor in the Tiantai lineage. In 569, he was invited to Wuguan monastery to lecture on the Lotus Sutra. There he established a new way of Buddhist hermeneutics that laid down the foundation for his school.

After six more years of study, Zhiyi retired to Mt. Tiantai in 575 for intensive study and practice with a group of disciples. In 585, he was invited by the prince of Chen in eastern China to lecture on *Dazhidulun*, the commentary on the *Mahaprajnaparamita* (Heart sutra). Later, he moved to Guangzhai monastery and lectured on the Lotus Sutra; his lectures were written down by his disciple Guandin and compiled as the *Fahuawenju* (Exposition of the Lotus Sutra). In 591, on the invitation of Governor Yangguan of Yangzhou, Zhiyi came and bestowed the *bodhisattva* (enlightened being) precepts on him in a formal ritual. In the following year, Zhiyi came back to his native town and established Yuque monastery, where he lectured on his *Fahuajing Xuanyi* (Exposition of the profound meaning of the Lotus Sutra) and *Mohe zhiguan* (Great meditation). In 595, Zhiyi was again invited to visit Governor Yangguan. Zhiyi also wrote a commentary on the Vimalakirti Sutra before his death in 597.

Zhiyi's contribution to Chinese Buddhism is mainly in four areas. First, he is considered the first major figure to establish an indigenous Chinese system based on the teaching of the Lotus Sutra. Second, he was the first in the history of Chinese Buddhism to elaborate a complete, critical, and systematic classification of the Buddhist teachings, which almost became a standard for teaching Buddhism in East Asia. The system is named the "five periods and eight teachings" and divides the order in which Shakyamuni Buddha taught the *dharma* (doctrine) into five periods; his teachings are further subdivided into two groups of four each. Third, he developed a method to expound Buddhist scriptures by ex-

plaining the fivefold meaning of the title of a text first, followed by using four ways to explain its contents. Finally, he adapted the method of Indian meditation practice into his system. Only thirty of his many important works are extant.

—Guang Xing

See also: Buddhism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People

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Zhou Dunyi (Chou Tun-i)

(1017–1073 C.E.)

Confucian scholar

Zhou Dunyi (Zhou Lianxi) is generally regarded as the pioneer of Neo-Confucianism. Although he was not very influential in his own time, the eleventh century, he had a great influence on the direction that the movement was to take. Through its adoption by Zhu Xi (1130–1200), the great synthesizer of Neo-Confucian thought in the Southern Song (1127–1279), his schema of the unfolding of the universe from the Great Ultimate, or Supreme Ultimate (*Taiji* or *T'ai-chi*), became a core concept of Chinese thought in general, and it has entered the international vocabulary of spiritual cultivation with the worldwide spread of the health-oriented martial art usually called "Taichi" (*taiji-quan*, or "the Supreme Ultimate pugilism").

The concept of Taiji is derived from the *Xici*, a commentary on the *Yijing* (Book of changes), a core Confucian classic, but it has long had important connections with Daoism as well. In fact, Zhou's famous "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate" is very similar to a medieval Daoist diagram called "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate that Antedates Heaven," which is believed to have been transmitted to Zhou through a number of intermediary teachers from a tenth-century practitioner of the Daoist arts of immortality named Chen Tuan. Zhou, however, explained the diagram purely on the basis of the *Yijing*, and his purpose in using it was not to obtain the elixir of eternal life by "reversing" the process of creation from multiplicity back to the original oneness, but to understand rationally how the world of multiplicity had come into being.

The "ultimate of nonbeing" (*wuji*) is a Daoist concept referring to the formless, infinite source of all existing things, the ultimate reality to be realized through enlightenment, very similar to the "nothingness" (*wu*; *mu*) or "emptiness" (*kong*; *kō*) of Chan and Zen Buddhism. Zhou much admired Buddhism and Chan, and he expressed his Buddhist respect for life by refusing to cut the grass outside his window or to hunt animals. His teachings, however, pointed away

from Buddhism's negation of the world and Chan's rejection of logical reasoning and toward a path of self-cultivation that carefully balanced disciplined intellectual inquiry with the search for spiritual tranquillity through contemplation.

The Great Ultimate is a more positive concept than wuji, because in Zhou's understanding it is the single source of all the "principles" or "patterns" (*li*) by which the world of nature and the world of man are ordered. It is not only transcendent, but immanent within every thing and person in the world, making the achievement of sagehood possible for the individual. This dualism of *li* (unchanging principles, cognized by the human spirit and epitomized in the Taiji) and *qi* (material force, that is, the dynamic world of yin and yang and the five phases, cognized by the senses) was only adumbrated in Zhou's thought, but it was fully developed by Zhu Xi.

Like all Confucian thinkers, Zhou believed that ethical living according to the norms of interpersonal relationships was essential to achieving both wisdom and peace of mind, and his core ethical concept was "authenticity" (*cheng*), expounded most thoroughly in the ancient text *Zhongyong* (The doctrine of the mean), one of the Confucian classics. He believed that authenticity was the embodiment of the *yang qi* that emanated from the Supreme Ultimate, and that its innately perfect goodness, naturally tranquil, should be the wellspring of all human actions. Evil arises from the temptations of material desires and from environmental influences that prevent the hard and soft elements within this pure yang qi from achieving their proper balance. To overcome this imbalance and return to the original goodness of their natures, he taught, people must cultivate themselves by "making tranquility the lord" (*zhujing*) and by learning to be without desires. Zhou wrote: "Only when yin and yang operate according to order can they be in harmony. . . . In ancient times sage-kings instituted ceremonies and cultivated moral education. . . . Consequently all people were in perfect harmony and all things were in accord. Thereupon the sage-kings created music to give expression to the winds (people's sentiments) . . . and to appease the feelings of the people. . . . Ancient music appeased the heart but modern music enhances desires. Ancient music spread a civilizing influence, but modern music increases discontent" (Ch. 13 and 17; Wing-Tsit Chan 1963, 471–472). A great Song dynasty man of letters, Huang Tingjian (1045–1104), acclaimed Zhou as "a man of exceedingly high character, whose feelings were as free and unforced as a balmy breeze in a cloudless sky" (Feng 1952–1953, 435).

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Scholars as Holy People; Zhu Xi

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Zhu Xi (Chu Hsi)

(1130–1200 C.E.)

Neo-Confucian scholar

Zhu Xi is certainly the most influential Chinese thinker of the past 800 years, and his interpretation of the Confucian classics dominated education and official ideology from the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) until the abolition of the examination system in 1905, notwithstanding major critiques of this orthodoxy put forward by Ming and Qing dynasty thinkers. Zhu's position in laying the foundations of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy has often been compared with that of Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224–1274) in the Western Christian tradition. Zhu Xi must be regarded as a major religious thinker as well as a great philosopher because he completed the task of reconstructing Confucianism into a complete system of cosmology, metaphysics, ethics, and spiritual practice fully capable of competing with Buddhism and Daoism—which had dominated Chinese spiritual life for over a millennium from the end of the Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) into the Song (960–1120) dynasties. This paradigm shift in Chinese elite culture was closely related to the decline of the aristocracy following the fall of the Tang dynasty (618–907) and its replacement in the Song by a meritocratic system of office-holding based on the examination system, which required years of study of the Confucian classics.

He spent forty years of his life in educational work (particularly at his White Deer Grotto academy) and served as an official for less than ten, a fact that clearly affected the nature of his teachings. In his disputations with other Confucian scholars, such as Lu Xiangshan, he emphasized the importance of broad learning, observation, and systematic intellectual inquiry (*dao wen xue*) over the contemplative pursuit of the original mind (*zun dexing*, or "revering the virtuous nature"), which he thought was too close to Buddhism and Daoism. Nevertheless, he still believed that the goal of learning was not simply the accumulation of knowledge and literary skills, but the achievement of a penetrating insight into the fundamental nature of things that would transform a person's character and physical nature. He also emphasized the importance of quiet sitting (meditation) as a balance to engagement in study and work. And the most important aspect of knowledge was the understanding of moral principles (*li*; *tianli*), an understanding that requires one to put one's knowledge into practice both in one's interpersonal relations and in one's government service.

It was through his emphasis on the reality and rational knowability of the unchanging metaphysical principles that create order in both the natural and human worlds, as well as his insistence on the importance of objective

knowledge of the world, that Zhu completed the work of his Northern Song predecessors in reviving Confucianism. These principles were called *li*, a character that as a noun refers to regular patterns or orderliness and as a verb means to put things in order. Principles—particularly the fundamental moral principles that are the basis of social order and harmony—were also referred to by the word “Dao” (Way). All the principles of individual things and affairs, Zhu Xi taught, were particular manifestations of a single Principle, for which he used the term “Supreme Ultimate” (*Taiji*) from the commentaries to the *Yijing* (Book of changes) and Zhou Dunyi (1017–1073). Individual things or human beings are also able to fully manifest the *Taiji* in themselves, and the *Taiji* is the foundation of their existence. The differences between things and persons are due to their different endowments of *qi* (material force).

Li is the original metaphysical cause of the existence of *qi*, and it requires embodiment in *qi* in order to become manifest as the phenomenal world of objects, beings, and events. Although *li* logically precedes *qi*, since it exists before any things come into existence, “in the world there has never been any *qi* without *li*, nor any *li* without *qi*.” All things and affairs are governed by definite principles and norms and necessary laws, and if people accord with these principles and laws, they can manage affairs easily with no need to resort to artificial effort. Accordingly, understanding of principle comes first and action afterward. *Li*, moreover, is present within human beings as their nature (*xing*)—the virtuous nature mandated by heaven as opposed to the physical nature, the mixture of *li* and *qi* that gives rise to human desires. Historically, Zhu believed that the world was ruled in accord with heavenly principle by sagely rulers in the ancient period of the Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Zhou), but that subsequently human desires ran amuck and rulers began to rule by force and despotism instead of the power of virtue.

It was Zhu Xi’s commentaries that established the Four Books—the *Daxue* (Great learning), the *Lunyu* (Analects), the *Mengzi* (Mencius), and the *Zhongyong* (Doctrine of the mean)—as the core object of study for the civil service examinations, and he stipulated that the books should be studied in this order. The *Daxue* (an extract from the *Li qi* [Book of rites]) came first because it clearly laid out the proper order of learning in its teaching of the eight steps: the investigation of things (*gewu*), the extension of knowledge, sincerity of the will, rectification of the mind, cultivation of the person, regulation of the family, order in the state, and world peace—in which each step is the prerequisite for achieving the next. Exhaustively investigating things requires coming into contact with things and affairs one by one in their particularity—from the near at hand to the remote, from the shallow to the deep, from the outside to the inside—both through studying the classics and histories and through involving oneself in practical affairs.

Zhu Xi’s method of spiritual cultivation centered on learning to recover the original condition of the mind in which the “mind of the Way,” or heavenly principle, is not admixed with human desires. However, he revised Cheng Yi’s (1033–1107) teaching that “the human mind is the same as human desires,” saying that even the sage cannot be without the human mind (natural desires, such as the desire for food and drink), but for the sage the mind of the Way is always in charge. In fact, natural desires, when kept in moderation, are themselves heavenly (natural) principles. The mind of the Way is the mind that is naturally inclined toward humanness, rightness, propriety, and wisdom, which, as Mengzi taught, manifest themselves as the social virtues of compassion, a sense of shame, yielding to others, and the ability to distinguish right and wrong (see *Mencius* 2:A6).

—Barry D. Steben

See also: Confucianism and Holy People; Daoism and Holy People; Mengzi; Scholars as Holy People; Zhang Zai; Zhou Dunyi

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Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu)

(c. 369–286 B.C.E.)

Daoist sage

Zhuangzi lived in the fourth century (c. 369–286) B.C.E. during the confusion and conflict of the Warring States period in China (403–222 B.C.E.). He is considered the intellectual heir of Laozi (sixth century B.C.E.) and the second most important sage in the development of Daoism. Zhuangzi transformed Laozi’s thought in a lively, insightful, and often humorous style. He deepened the philosophical basis of Daoism by developing sophisticated strategies of argumentation and confronting rival philosophical positions. The foundation of his approach is *ziran*: naturalness or spontaneity.

The thirty-three chapters of the *Zhuangzi* or *Chuang Tzu* describe his conversations, thought, and way of life. Zhuangzi apparently only authored the first seven *Inner Chapters* of the existing text. The remaining *Outer Chapters* are derived from his students’ writings, the “School of Zhuangzi,” and related thinkers, whom A. C. Graham classified as Primitivists, Yangists, and Syncretists. These texts were presumably included because they develop themes from the *Inner Chapters*

or introduce other materials about Zhuangzi, although some are different in style and content. Whereas philosophers such as Confucius, Mozi, and Xunzi argued for perfecting the human condition according to contradictory ideals of human nature and morality, Zhuangzi showed the superiority of the Dao (Way) such that humans ought to live according to nature, by letting it be, rather than against it, by attempting to control it (chapter 5).

Instead of focusing on profit, progress, and morality, humans, Zhuangzi said, needed to understand how they related to nature from within nature itself. Zhuangzi thus asked whether humans could save themselves from their own activity by yielding to the immanent spontaneity of nature itself in order to let it occur. He concluded that one could do the most by doing nothing (*wuwei*). This nonassertive or inactive action occurs in relation to unprincipled or anarchic knowing (*wuzhi*) and objectless desire (*wuyu*). Zhuangzi viewed nature as a self-transforming web demanding naturalness, understood as spontaneity, flux, and change. All things involve a natural difference in perspective as well as relative parity such that they are equally important (chapter 2).

Zhuangzi's principle of transformation also involves the mutuality of opposites such that, for example, a man is connected to a butterfly (chapter 2), life is tied to death (chapter 6), and the masculine can find the Dao only by recourse to the feminine (chapter 7). Zhuangzi therefore ultimately affirmed the dynamic unity of opposites beyond all duality in order to recognize the uniqueness of all things as interdependent particularities.

—Eric Sean Nelson

See also: Daoism and Holy People; Laozi; Scholars as Holy People

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Zongmi (Tsong-mi)

(780–841 C.E.)

Buddhist patriarch

A Chinese Buddhist scholar-monk of the Tang dynasty (618–907), Zongmi was commonly referred to by his monastic name, Guifeng. He was honored as the fifth patriarch of the Huayan school as well as a patriarch of the Heze Chan (Zen) lineage.

Zongmi was born into a wealthy family in 780 and received a classical education in Confucian studies. He also

read Buddhist scriptures extensively. On his way to attain the national examination in the capital, he came to Dayun monastery in Sichuan and met meditation master Daoyuan, who inspired him to enter the monastic order. Daoyuan taught him the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment. In 810, Zongmi met Chengguan's disciple Lingfeng, who gave him Chengguan's two commentaries on the *Huayan Jing* (Flower garland sutra). After reading them, Zongmi wrote to Chengguan asking to study under him. Chengguan agreed, and Zongmi studied under Chengguan for two years. He then went to Mt. Zhongnan for an intensive study of Buddhist scriptures. In 828, the emperor summoned him to court to lecture on Buddhism; he accepted the invitation and stayed at court teaching for some time. Prime Minister Peixiu became a pious Buddhist under his guidance. Zongmi died in 841, and Emperor Xuanzhong gave him the title of Chan Master Dinghui (stability and wisdom).

As one of the most important figures in Chinese Buddhist history Zongmi studied all major texts of the Chinese Buddhist canon of his time and specialized in the works of the Chan and Huayan schools. He was deeply interested in both the practical and doctrinal aspects of Buddhism, and especially advocated the harmonization between Chan and doctrine. Thus he wrote the *Chanyuan Zhuquan Jidu* (Origins of the various Chan teachings). In Huayan study, Zongmi inherited the teaching of the second patriarch, Zhiyan, and attempted to account for the apparent discrepancies in the Buddhist doctrines by categorizing them according to their specific aims. He wrote many important works, such as a commentary on the Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment and the *Yuanren Lun* (Inquiry into the origin of humanity), besides various commentaries on the *Huayan Jing*.

—Guang Xing

See also: Chengguan; Scholars as Holy People; Zhiyan

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Zoroaster (Zarathustra)

(c. 1400 B.C.E.)

Founder of Zoroastrianism

The Iranian prophet Zarathustra (more familiar to Western audiences by the Greek form of his name, Zoroaster) was the only prophet of a major religion who served as a priest of the original religion from which he separated. Zoroaster is also the oldest known prophetic founder of a religion. Although the Zoroastrians' own tradition states that Zoroaster lived 258 years before Alexander the Great (c. 600 B.C.E.), this is a late calculation based on a Greek fiction. Other Greeks argued



A modern artist's rendering of the ancient Iranian prophet Zoroaster, founder of the Zoroastrian religion. Zoroastrian Fire Temple, Yazd, Iran. (Art Directors)

that Zoroaster lived 6,000 years before Plato, or 5,000 years before the Trojan War, emphasizing his antiquity. Scholars now argue on the linguistic and cultural evidence of the Gathas (Hymns), the seventeen hymns written by Zoroaster that form part of Zoroastrian scripture (the Avesta [The injunction]), that the prophet lived sometime between 1500 and 1200 b.c.e., most likely in about 1400. This dating is consistent with the very early form of language in the Gathas, which is similar to the Indian Rig Veda, and also with the pastoralist, preagricultural life Zoroaster's people are described as living.

Zoroaster may have lived in what is now Kazakhstan, but his people finally settled in eastern Iran. The religion he taught had a world-reaching importance as the belief of the rulers of the Persian Empire. Zoroaster was a priest of the traditional religion, apparently a poor man. He seems to have lived at a time when warfare was on the rise and traditional values were breaking down thanks to contact with the more settled peoples of the west and south. Certainly the Gathas include a passionate sense of the powerlessness of the poor. Even more movingly, an entire Gatha is devoted to

the plight of the defenseless cow, unable to protect itself in a world of increasing violence and disruption. This unsettled world was the background to a series of visions in which the supreme god, Ahura Mazda (Lord Wisdom) appeared to Zoroaster, calling him a prophet.

Zoroaster set out to reform the traditional religion. He did not deny his polytheistic heritage but taught that in the beginning there was only one god, Ahura Mazda, who was creator and upholder of *asha*, the principle of truth and order in the universe. But this good god found himself opposed by an antagonistic principle, *drug* (deceit, or "the lie"), given form as the spirit of destruction, Angra Mainyu. They began a cosmic struggle, one that will eventually end in the victory of good and order. Each force created subsidiary gods to help in this ongoing battle, and the world itself was created as a battlefield between order and chaos.

Zoroaster can fairly be said to be the first proponent of a religion based primarily on ethics rather than sacrifice. He taught that humans are absolutely central to this battle of good and evil—they must choose to support either Ahura Mazda or Angra Mainyu and must live their lives in a way to aid the battle for good. Thus morality is central, although Zoroaster did not reject the role of ritual in religion. In the end, good *will* triumph, in a great "Making Wonderful" that will include punishment for evil and reward for good—an idea adopted by other religions, including Christianity.

The traditional priests did not appreciate Zoroaster's efforts at reform, and he was driven away from his native land. He found refuge with a prince named Vishtaspa, whom he converted to the new religion. Settling at court, Zoroaster preached his prophetic vision to rich and poor, men and women. With royal patronage, he became wealthy and lived a long life, perhaps reaching the age of seventy-seven. His teaching was given validation when, egged on by traditional priests, neighboring states attacked, only to be defeated by Zoroaster's supporters. Finally, according to Zoroastrian legend, he met a martyr's death, killed while carrying out his priestly function at the fire altar, either by a rival priest or in a raid by a neighboring tribe.

Later Zoroastrian legend emphasized the prophet's role as an emissary sent by Ahura Mazda, creating a nativity myth that included a miraculous conception at which all of the good creation rejoiced, while the forces of evil tried to destroy the baby (threats from which Zoroaster was saved miraculously). He was perceived as a world savior sent by God, and as it became clear that the final great battle was not imminent, the legend grew that he would come again as the future savior to finish the work he had begun.

Although the world population of Zoroastrians has sunk to only 100,000 today, the teachings of Zoroaster had an incalculable effect on the religious thought of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and the repercussions of his thought can

also be traced in China and India. The perception of humans as essential tools of God, giving humankind an elevated place in the struggle between good and evil, placed the religion of Iran on a moral footing not central to other religions for many centuries. And the millenarian heritage of Zoroaster—that a great cosmic battle will lead to the final establishment of order on earth—is with us still today.

—Phyllis G. Jestice

See also: Aesthetics and Holy People; Authority of Holy People; Founders of Religions as Holy People; Hagiography; Martyrdom and Persecution; Messiahs; Prophets; Reform and Reaction; Ritual

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Zosima and Savatii of Solovki

(d. 1478 and c. 1430 C.E.)

Russian Orthodox monks, missionaries

Zosima and Savatii were northern Russian missionary saints in the fifteenth century and founders of Solovki monastery. Their vitae are usually bound together. The two best-known versions are in the Great Menology of Metropolitan Makarii, compiled in the mid–sixteenth century, and a later account with an introduction by Maxim the Greek.

Savatii began monastic life at Valaam monastery, one of the oldest Orthodox monasteries in northern Russia. His written Lives say that he longed for a more severe spiritual life and fled to the cloister of Cyril of Beloozero, but eventually he stole away from there in the dead of night, afraid that he was attracting too much praise for his asceticism. He then encountered a monk named German, and together they settled on Solovki Island, in the middle of the White Sea, and built a hermitage. Winter ice and storms made travel impossible for long periods, and the two remained for a few years with no other companionship. Savatii passed away in solitude in about 1430 after searching out an Orthodox priest in order to receive last rites. Though a hermit, Savatii nonetheless taught the institutional forms of Orthodoxy to those whom he encountered and in this manner participated in the missionary activity of the church. His importance in northern Russia grew when his remains were entombed in the monastery built on Solovki some decades later. Savatii, along with Zosima, became a major patron saint to the trading and fishing community of northern

Russia. Savatii's spiritual role as mentor passed through German to Zosima.

Zosima came from a wealthy trading family in Novgorod. He opted for the monastic life and left his patrimony after his parents died. Zosima met German, admired his eremitic life with Savatii, and determined to go with him to Solovki. Zosima and German together founded a cloister, commonly known as Solovki, which received a blessing from the archbishop of Novgorod in about 1460. A few years later, Zosima became the leader of the cenobitic community. It appears that Zosima was an able administrator and charismatic spiritual leader. He built two churches and a refectory and attracted many disciples in addition to receiving land and wealth from the Novgorod population. Zosima and his monks contended with opposition from the local Karelian and Russian population, which resented intrusion on their fishing and hunting grounds. This opposition dissipated over time thanks to the cult of Savatii that was created by Zosima. Savatii's remains were brought to Solovki from the church where he had passed away, and Zosima created Solovki's first official shrine at his tomb. After Zosima's death in 1478, the two saints came to be revered together and received credit for protecting, healing, and punishing traders, peasants, and fishermen throughout the Russian northeast—a region dominated by trade, trapping, and fishing.

Savatii and Zosima are among the great missionary monks of Russia who carried the institution of the Orthodox Church into the northern “desert” during the late thirteenth- to early fifteenth-century renaissance of Russian monasticism. They were regional saints in three senses: They came from the north, they were tonsured in the north, and they gathered their followers primarily from the northern regions. Miracles of these two saints are recorded into the modern period. Thanks to donations, purchases, and an active role in fishing and salt-making, Solovki became a major trading house in the pre-Petrine north, where wealth depended on native industries rather than on agriculture. Solovki monastery, with its concentration of a number of major pan-Russian saints' cults, remained significant in Russia's northern spiritual and economic community until 1917. Savatii and Zosima were recognized in 1547, and they are remembered on September 27, April 17, and August 8.

—Jennifer B. Spock

See also: Cyril of Beloozero; Mission; Monasticism and Holy People; Orthodoxy and Saints; Spiritual Guardians

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