Twitter Thread by Pelagia



Pelagia
@Ljiljana1972



While the B sides of the Western phil canon wait here is a thread on The Pantokrator Xenon, the Byz hospital that you cannot hear a lot about at the usual places

The Pantokrator Xenon was established by John II Komnenos in 1136 as a part of the Pantokrator Monastery. Its purpose: to heal the sick of Constantinople

At the same time and the same place gerokomeion (home for seniors) was founded. Xenon and gerokomeion had diff functions

We know a lot about the functioning of the monastery and its charitable institutions thanks to the Typikon of the Imperial Monastery the Pantokrator: the constitution drafted by John II Komnenos

The facilities: no private rooms, 50 beds in 5 sections: fractures and wounds (surgical ward), diseases of the eyes and intestines, ward for women, and two wards for men with other illnesses

All beds in the wards had to have mattress, pillow, sheets, a cover, and in the winter two blankets of goat's hair. They all had to be maintained and replaced regularly

All wards had to have extra bed in the case more patients arrive. Xenon also had female and male latrines (illuminated at night!) and access to a bathing facility

The meals: patients were to get each day 850g of bread, two vegetable dishes dressed with olive oil, and two onion heads. Also each patient was to get 1 noumisma trachy to buy wine or additional food they might want

The staff: Two physicians and three ordained medical assistants, two extra medical assistants, and two servants (ordained and extra mark the ranks of medical assistants)

Doctors of the women's ward had a help of one female physician, four ordained and two extra female medical assistants, and two female servants

Specialists of the xenon: 2 surgeons and 2 specialists in internal medicine. There were also 2 extra physicians to treat the monks of the monastery but stationed outside of the hospital

Two main doctors (primmikerioi) supervised the whole treatment program of the hospital. During liturgical commemoration they would represent the staff by lightening torches of the services

Doctors had shifts and worked every second month in the hospital. The rest of the time they could devote to rich patients of the Constantinople

Administrators: the business of the Xenon was run by the ‘board of directors’ 4 monks who ran the business of the monastery. One of them was designated to make sure that the hospital and home for seniors had enough money

Med treatment: not so much about it in the Typikon as it dealt with the org of the hospital. still we can see that the routine baths were part of many treatments, from the supplies we can infer what ingredients of the remedies were as well as the tools that were used in surgery

Spiritual treatment was also available. Patients attended Divine Liturgy. Two priests were assigned by the patriarch of Constantinople to listen to their confessions: “so that they might not die truly ruinous death, a spiritual one, leaving this world… without confession”

The class origins of patients: many patients were poor. Hospital had shirts and gowns for those who were extremely poor. But some patients did have money. Doctors were banned from receiving any extra fees. But, they were allowed to have private practice outside of hospital.

For more info see T.S. Miller, The Birth of the Hospital in the Byz Empire, for the treatments and pharmacology see D. Bennett’s Med and Pharmacy in Byz Hospitals

Enough for this Friday! Cheers!