



Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages

By David Keck

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Recently angels have made a remarkable comeback in the popular imagination; their real heyday, however, was the Middle Ages. From the great shrines dedicated to Michael the Archangel at Mont-St-Michel and Monte Garano to the elaborate metaphysical speculations of the great thirteenth-century scholastics, angels dominated the physical, temporal, and intellectual landscape of the medieval West.

This book offers a full-scale study of angels and angelology in the Middle Ages. Seeking to discover how and why angels became so important in medieval society, David Keck considers a wide range of fascinating questions such as: Why do angels appear on baptismal fonts? How and why did angels become normative for certain members of the church? How did they become a required course of study? Did popular beliefs about angels diverge from the angelologies of the theologians? Why did some heretics claim to derive their authority from heavenly spirits? Keck spreads his net wide in the attempt to catch traces of angels and angelic beliefs in as many portions of the medieval world as possible. Metaphysics and mystery plays, prayers and pilgrimages, Cathars and cathedrals—all these and many more disparate sources taken together reveal a society deeply engaged with angels on all its levels and in some unlikely ways.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Keck's impressive work examines the way in which belief in angels came to permeate medieval Christian society as deeply as belief in evolution steeps ours....Keck's exposition of the social-political consequences of angelology is fascinating....If I were to recommend one book on angels, Keck's impressive 'everything you wanted to know about angels but were afraid to ask' would be the one."--*Theological Studies*

About the Author

David Keck is at Ateneo del Manila University.

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