

Byzantine Liturgy in Rus: The Making of the Kievan Primary Chronicle (Fellowship am Historischen Seminar der Universität Münster von Dr. Sean Griffin)

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"Byzantine Liturgy in Rus: The Making of the Kievan Primary Chronicle" is a transnational study of medieval monastic culture and the role that religious rituals played in the generation of cultural artifacts. The monastic chroniclers of medieval Rus lived in a liturgical world. Morning, evening and night they prayed the "divine services" of the Byzantine Church, and this study is the first to examine how these rituals shaped the way they wrote and compiled the Povest'vremennykh let (Primary Chronicle, ca. 12th century), the earliest surviving East Slavic historical record. This study's principal argument is that several foundational accounts of East Slavic history - including the tales of the baptism of Princess Ol'ga and her burial, Prince Vladimir's conversion, the mass baptism of Rus', and the martyrdom of Princes Boris and Gleb - have their source in the feasts of the liturgical year. The liturgy of the Eastern Church proclaimed a distinctively Byzantine myth of Christian origins: a sacred narrative about the conversion of the Roman Empire, the glorification of the emperor Constantine and empress Helen, and the victory of Christianity over paganism. In the decades following the conversion of Rus', the chroniclers in Kiev learned these narratives from the church services and patterned their own tales of Christianization after them. The result was a myth of Christian origins for Rus' - a myth promulgated even today by the Russian Orthodox Church - that reproduced the myth of Christian origins for the Eastern Roman Empire articulated in the Byzantine rite. This study systematically uncovers this overarching liturgical subtext and reveals a vast web of new and previously undetected meanings in the text of the Primary Chronicle.

Projektbeteiligte

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