introduces a colorful cast of characters from around the world to advance her claims. Her book will help inform the social ramifications of environmental manipulation in Central Asia for years to come.

Stephen Brain
Mississippi State University

The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus. By Sean Griffin. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2019. ix, 275 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $100.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2020.125

In the early 2010s, as I began to offer my first course on the history of Orthodox Christianity in what is now present-day Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, I asked students to read Metropolitan Ilarion's eleventh-century "Sermon on Law and Grace." The intent of that assignment was to demonstrate the impact that Christian concepts, symbols, and narratives had on the political and religious discourse of Kievan Rus′. Following the baptism of Prince Vladimir in 988 and the spread of Christianity among the Eastern Slavs, Kiev's rulers started to talk about themselves and their predecessors in unprecedented ways, mainly in the Christian idioms of universalism, successionism, and soteriology. A providential drama that had begun at the divine act of creation—enacted in time by the Israelites, eschatologically manifested in Christ, and bequeathed first to the apostles and then to the Roman Empire—was now a story that both encompassed and culminated in Rus′.

In ways textually, historically, and historiographically more sophisticated than a scholar of modern Russian Orthodoxy like I could accomplish or imagine, Sean Griffin's excellent new study, *The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus*, reveals just how complex, vital, revolutionary, and central this particular event—the Christianization of the Eastern Slavic peoples—was to the self-understanding and self-representation of Kiev's ruling elite. Through an attentive reading of the *Rus Primary Chronicle* and a careful comparison of that text with Byzantine texts and rites, Griffin demonstrates that twelfth-century chroniclers of early Rus′ scripted the triumphs and tribulations of their rulers onto preexisting storylines, often adopting the exact same phrases, plot devices, and narrative arcs that they had inherited from Byzantium. In this manner, Princess Olga, the first member of the Rurik dynasty to convert to Christianity, became a "Slavic Mary" and, akin to John the Baptist, a "Slavic Forerunner," whose conversion story was very likely taken "from the prayers, hymns, and rubrics of the [Byzantine] baptism service" (132–33). The story of Prince Vladimir, especially his conversion and Christian reign, was similarly modelled on Byzantine liturgical images of and panegyrics to Constantine the Great, whereby Vladimir, perhaps the first bishop of Rus′, succeeded not only Constantine, a bishop of Constantinople, but also Paul, who, like Vladimir (and Constantine), had once persecuted Christians but was now a follower of Christ and a defender of the faith (Chap. 5). Finally, the killings of Boris and Gleb in the early eleventh century were rendered as Christian martyrdom in terminology derived from Byzantium's eucharistic canon of the divine liturgy, which commemorates the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ—and, by analogy, the martyrdom of Boris and Gleb—through hymns and prayers (Chap. 6). Chroniclers also scripted the killings of Vladimir's two sons onto a key myth in the Byzantine consecration rite: each new Christian community, like that of early Rus′, was to be "built on the bones of the martyrs" and was to offer "to God martyrs of its own" (228), a task fulfilled by the blood of Vladimir's progeny.

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2020.125 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Despite the focus on comparative textual analysis, Griffin's work is much more than philological investigation, at least in the conventional sense. It principally is about power, discourse, ideology, and practice—in this case, the "very public and very powerful Roman [Christian] technology" of liturgy as it was adopted, reconfigured, and, most importantly, performed in early Rusʹ (13). Repeated, almost constant performances of liturgical rites occurred throughout the principality, including vespers services at the Kiev Monastery of Caves and the many feast days inherited by and celebrated in the new church (Chap. 3). "The cumulative effect" of "this liturgical repetition," Griffin argues, "was to immerse early medieval Christians," including those of Rusʹ, "in a shared mythological past" (90, 229). What liturgically occurred every day in the minds and through the bodies of the faithful "was the experience of [sacred] history itself" (13), which in turn allowed the Rusʹ narratively and experientially to enter the liturgical calendar and become participants in Providence. More specifically, liturgy constituted the lived medium through which "autocratic political propaganda was disseminated" in Rusʹ and by which its rulers were legitimized (90). The result of these experiences, practices, and dynamics was not just the Christianization of the Eastern Slavic peoples, although it was certainly that. "The politics of liturgy" also bound together "imagined political communities" and helped to form "new ethno-political identities" in Rusʹ (13, 240–42), all of which, as Griffin provocatively reminds us in his thoughtful introduction, resonates among the political and ecclesiastical elite of contemporary Russia.

Patrick Lally Michelson
Indiana University

Religious Freedom in Modern Russia. Ed. Randall A. Poole and Paul W. Werth. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018. ii, 314 pp. Notes. Index. Photographs. Tables. $50.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2020.126

This collection is a welcome addition to the burgeoning number of works on religious history, philosophy, and experiences in modern Russia. It is the outcome of what began as a forum on "Religious Freedom and Problem of Tolerance in Russian History" in the summer 2012 issue of the journal *Kritika*. It presents two of the three original articles, written by G. M. Hamburg and Victoria Frede, in addition to five new essays and a broader introduction. Together, they investigate the multiple understandings of religious freedom and problematize the concept of freedom of conscience as it evolved in various settings in new and refreshing ways. The emphasis here is not on the state and its regulation of multiple confessions in which one—the Russian Orthodox Church—was more equal than the others, but rather on individuals and groups within and without the societies of the multi-confessional establishment which attempted to reform the religious status quo.

A tour de force, Randall A. Poole's introductory essay should be mandatory reading for all historians of modern Russia. Here Poole sets out his goal as "mak[ing] a case for the experiential basis of Russian religious freedom," whereby nonstate actors ascribed varying meanings to religious freedom, toleration, and freedom of conscience (3). They did so, he argues, in reaction to the Petrine Orthodox Church's subordination to the state. As is well known, atheism emerged in the nineteenth century as the most extreme reaction to the Russian autocracy's manipulation of religion to serve its own needs. But it was not the only response. A significant Russian Orthodox religious revival arose as well. That revival constitutes the subject of much

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2020.125 Published online by Cambridge University Press