

Roger II ever happened. It assumes the king had the mentality to engage with a visual document of this kind, and implies his active patronage in the endeavor.

In the case of the *Manasses*, the argument is that Tsar Ivan Alexander had a view of Byzantium that is explicated in the miniatures—that the Orthodox model of empire was to be emulated, and that Bulgaria was destined by history to be the site of a new renewed Rome. It is argued that his personal participation in the manuscript is shown not only by the choice of images, but also because he may have initiated the translation of the Greek text into Bulgarian, and is documented in the provocative frontispiece miniature (folio 1v) where Ivan is the central figure crowned by an angel, witnessed by the flanking figures of Christ and Constantine Manasses.

I do agree the Madrid Skylitzes was an original production, not a copy of a fully illustrated archetype brought from Constantinople, but it might equally be a nostalgic recreation of past history for a Greek community on Sicily rather than a piece of political propaganda. The case of a connection between the ruler and the production is stronger for the *Manasses* book, though not without difficulties in deducing the actual agency of production. The method of this book is what the ancient historian Keith Hopkins once playfully designated as a “wigwam” theory. It seems to stand in place, but the removal of just one prop would cause the whole edifice to fall. This book is a must read—but the challenge to all readers is to test every prop. For me, the very attractive idea here is that the motivation for the representation of power is not to impress the ordinary viewer, but primarily to confirm to themselves the legitimacy of the holders of power.

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The Bible in Slavic Tradition. Eds. Alexander Kulik, Catherine Mary MacRobert, Svetlina Nikolova, Moshe Taube, and Cynthia M. Vakareliyska. *Studia Judaeslavica* Vol. 9, ed. Alexander Kulik. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016. 576 pages. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Tables. \$234, hard bound and e-book. doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.192

This book contains two dozen articles arising from a scholarly conference organized in 2009 by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Broadly speaking, the works are focused on the cross-cultural transmission and historical impact of texts and ideas generated throughout the Middle Ages by the creation of the Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabets in the ninth century and the subsequent translations of canonical biblical books, apocryphal works, and pseudepigrapha into Slavonic from Hebrew and Greek. The editors divide the 24 articles into two uneven sections: “Slavonic Bible” (15 articles) and “Cyrillo-Methodian Traditions” (9 articles). This division is largely artificial, given the broad nature of the term Cyrillo-Methodian and the methodological similarities in textual analysis in articles of both sections. Nevertheless, it handily groups five articles about texts related to Cyril and Methodius with several pieces on historical events important for the development of medieval Slavonic letters, such as Angel Nikolov’s discussion of the Church Council of Preslav of 893. The first article in the book, Serge Ruzer’s analysis of the authoritativeness of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek translation in the Septuagint in early Christian writings, does not deal with the Slavonic tradition.

The production values of the book are excellent. The text, photographs, illustrations, tables, diagrams (stemmata), charts, lists of abbreviations, detailed endnotes,

and lengthy bibliographies are clearly and helpfully presented. The editors and publisher deserve praise for producing a volume that accurately and legibly presents large amounts of material in Hebrew, classical and Byzantine Greek, Slavonic (Glagolitic and Cyrillic), Latin, and Arabic, frequently synoptically line by line.

All of the articles are in English by design. The editors state in the introduction: “We hope that this collection of English-language articles will be of interest not only to Slavists, but also to Hebraists and Byzantinists who study Bible translations and who have so far not had the opportunity to study the Slavic Biblical tradition because most of the Slavic sources and studies have been written in Slavic languages” (ix). There are 26 authors from at least eight countries and ten different academic institutions. English is not the usual language of publication for many of them. By issuing these articles in the most widely used scholarly lingua franca, which must have added considerably to the technical challenges of preparing this complex volume, the editors have expanded international and interdisciplinary dialogue on the medieval Slavonic biblical tradition. Moreover, they have given exposure to a number of scholars in the early stages of their career and placed their work alongside distinguished scholars, some with publishing records since the 1960s and 1970s.

As with any collection from thematically-focused conferences, the articles range widely by topic within the volume’s overarching title and exploit numerous disciplines, including paleography, textual and literary criticism, philology and linguistics, theology, and history. Many articles are highly technical and reflect the painstaking scholarship and multidisciplinary approaches required for basic spadework on medieval manuscripts, such as issuing scholarly editions, defining manuscript traditions, identifying authors and redactors, and determining provenance. Specialists will find new and important contributions. Complementary articles by Catherine Mary MacRobert and Heinz Miklas, Melanie Gau, and Dana Hürner provide status reports on their work within a larger, long-standing team effort to publish a critical edition of the *Psalterium Demetrii Sinaïtici*, discovered in 1975 in St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mt. Sinai. Separate articles by Mario Capaldo and Cristiani Diddi summarize the results of their ongoing collaboration to produce a definitive critical edition of the *Vita Constantini*, one of the most challenging textual tasks in medieval Slavic studies. Francis J. Thomson and Margaret Dimitrova shed new light on the relatively understudied area of Byzantine catenae in Slavonic literature by analyzing translations of the Greek catena of Job and of Theodoret of Cyrillus’s commentaries on the Song of Songs, respectively. Yet even highly specialized articles can yield material of importance to non-specialists. Explicating a 15th-century Ruthenian translation of the Hebrew text of Proverbs, Moshe Taube concludes that it was done by a Jew dictating to a Slavic scribe, which opens a window on the complex social and confessional world of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy.

Many articles individually, but certainly the entire volume as a whole, emphatically underscore the editors’ point about the enormous potential of dynamic dialogue and active collaboration between Hebraists, Byzantinists, Slavists, and even Arabists. This is certainly true of the literary traditions. Sergey Minov argues that some thorny questions in Slavonic translations of Greek apocryphal literature can be resolved by understanding parallels if not antecedents in Muslim traditions and writings. Tatyana Mostrova makes the case that light can be shed on the original structure of the Hebrew Book of Jeremiah by examining the tradition of Slavonic translations that began in Bulgaria in the early tenth century. Christfried Böttrich speculates on the basis of Slavonic versions that the Greek work known as the History of Melchizedek has Jewish origins. Yet this is also true of historical developments, as Deislavna Naydenova shows in her description of how biblical prototypes, especially King David, informed both presentations of power and also questions of legitimacy

and limitations on authority in the first centuries of the Bulgarian kingdom after official Christianization in the 860s.

In short, this is not a book that one reads cover to cover, but its articles break fresh scholarly ground and raise many new fruitful lines of inquiry and discussion across fields and disciplines.

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Containing Balkan Nationalism: Imperial Russia and Ottoman Christians, 1856–1914. By Denis Vovchenko. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xii, 343 pp. Index. Illustrations. Maps. Photographs. \$74.00, hardbound.
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In *Containing Balkan Nationalism*, Denis Vovchenko makes an important contribution to the understanding and explication of the circumstances and consequences of the Bulgarian quest to create an autonomous Bulgarian Orthodox Church in the late nineteenth century. Relying upon published and unpublished sources from foreign ministry and ecclesiastical archives in Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey, as well as a robust secondary literature in multiple languages, the author eschews the common, nationally-determined narrative of the Bulgarian Church movement in favor of a multi-national/supranational interpretation. As stated in his introduction, Vovchenko advances the notion that “despite the appeal of nationalism as part of Western modernity,” Orthodox churchmen, diplomats, intellectuals, and military officers in the Russian and Ottoman Empires, Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia deliberately constructed and promoted ideas and policies to contain nationalism in the Balkans (13). The book is structured chronologically and divided into seven chapters with an introduction and conclusion.

Vovchenko begins his monograph with a brief historical overview of the four centuries from the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 to the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853. The context is essential to understanding the underlying and intersecting dynamics that inspired the nascent Bulgarian church movement to reject the existing political and religious institutions of the Ottoman Empire and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the hopes of realizing religious autonomy. Primary among them were incipient nationalist sentiments, dissatisfaction with local Ottoman governing structures, and significant resentment of the native Greek or Hellenized clergy and bishops of the Patriarchate. This, in turn, compelled the Russian Imperial government, the Russian Holy Synod, and conservative Russian and Ottoman Christian intellectuals to rally to the cause of Orthodox unity, although not necessarily for the same reasons.

As the nineteenth century progressed, so did the intensity of the forces (nationalism, secularization, westernization) tearing at the fabric of the Ottoman Empire and, most important, the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Vovchenko chronicles these accelerating forces and the reactions they elicited between 1856 and 1914 in the five chapters constituting the core of his monograph. Bulgarian nationalists, in lieu of having first attained territorial autonomy from the Ottoman Empire upon which to construct an independent nation state, chose to focus on creating an autonomous Bulgarian Orthodox Church. In fact, this had already begun in a more concrete manner in 1849 when the Ottoman authorities allowed the Bulgarian millet (Bulgarian nation) to construct a church in Constantinople: St. Stefan’s. In relatively quick succession, the Bulgarian Church movement declared secession from the Patriarchate in 1860, expanded the use of Old Church Slavonic for services, and received a “firman”