



Tales from Another Byzantium: Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha

Jane Baun

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The rich corpus of medieval Greek apocryphal religious literature has been little used by historians. This 2007 book was the first full-length study of two medieval Greek visionary journeys to heaven and hell: the Apocalypse of the Theotokos and the Apocalypse of Anastasia. Composed anonymously sometime between the ninth and eleventh centuries, both enjoyed a lively circulation in the Byzantine Empire and far beyond. Functioning on the fringes of the official Church, they transmit both traditional and novel theological ideas, and shed light on the reception of Church doctrine and imperial governance by ordinary Byzantine Christians. Though their heroines tour the Other World, their true concern is this world, and the reinforcement of social, moral, and ritual norms within local communities. Providing an original translation of both texts, the book probes the tales as manifestations of non-elite religious and moral culture in the medieval Orthodox Church.



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