



Menologion Basileios' II. (Vat. gr. 1613, p. 35), Quelle: wikimedia.org

Although the Byzantine Rite stands among the most important liturgical traditions, its formative phase is particularly obscure. Liturgical sources, in the strict sense of books written for and used in worship, emerge only in the middle ages; so the reconstruction of earlier developments mostly relies on hints in patristic literature. Festal homilies are thus the primary source for what can be called the "prehistory" of the Byzantine liturgical year. Their investigation, however, is complicated by the fact that almost all homiletic corpora from late antique Constantinople (except for that of Gregory of Nazianzus) pose serious problems of literary and historical identity: the assignation of many of John Chrysostom's sermons is notoriously ambiguous; Severian of Gabala has gained clearer contours only in the last decades; the attribution of homilies to Proclus remains contested in many cases; the transmission of Nestorius's homilies is obfuscated by his condemnation; Leontius is only known from his homilies and his identity blurred by homonymous authors in other places; and a number of other preachers, beginning with Atticus, largely remain to be explored. Manifold detailed studies are necessary before a synthesis may be attempted. The envisaged interdisciplinary conference focuses the various perspectives of patristic, liturgical and Byzantine scholars on the development of the Byzantine liturgical year in the mirror of late antique homilies. Speakers will reflect on (1) the literary and historical identity of late antique Constantinopolitan preachers and on the criteria which can be used to establish their homiletic corpora, as well as on historical and intellectual influences; (2) the contribution of these homilies to the history of the liturgical year and its celebrations (feasts, stations, readings, etc.) and the relation of that evidence to other regions and to the later liturgical tradition of Byzantium; and (3) the theology of the various feasts and the liturgical year as such. Hymnography is also included insofar it can be localised with confidence in preiconoclast Constantinople.



City map of Regensburg - Old Tax Office

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