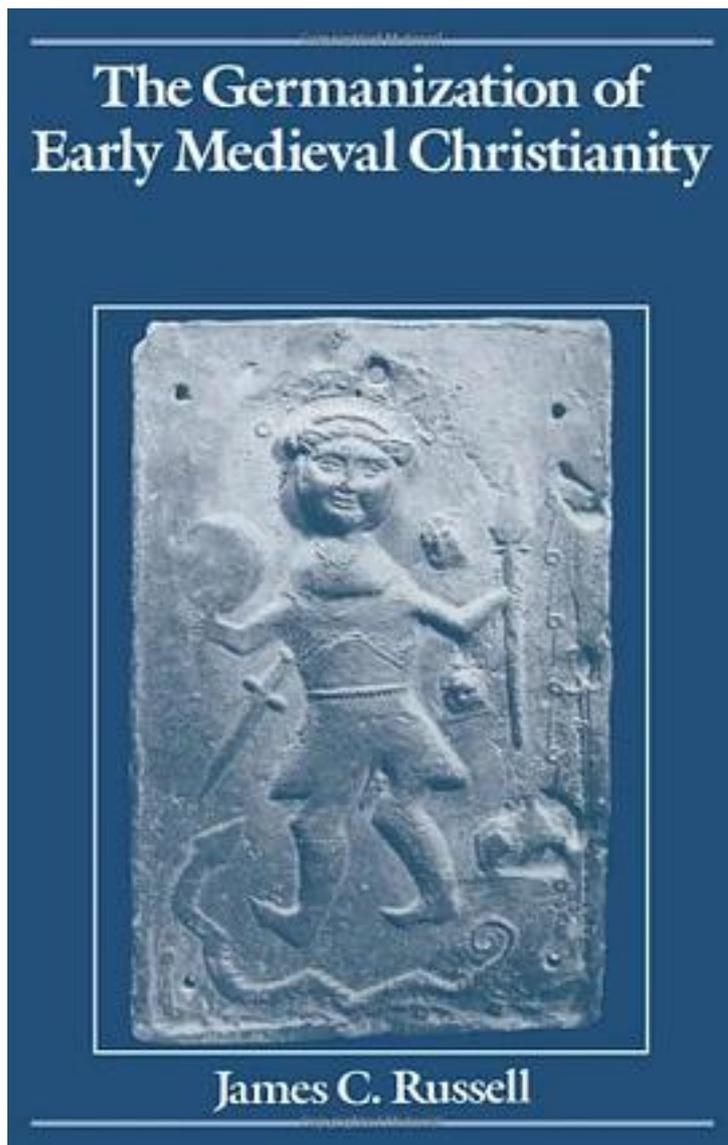


The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity



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European Christians think of their religion as the "normal" expression of Christianity, in contrast to such ethnic offshoots as the Maronite, Coptic, or Russian Orthodox faiths. In fact, however, as James Russell here shows, Europeanized Christianity is highly adapted, arising from the early interaction of Mediterranean Christianity with Northern European culture. This book takes a close look at the ways in which Christianity changed in order to win the allegiance of the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon peoples. Russell argues that the Northern peoples were far more resistant to conversion than the disaffected, urban populace of the Roman Empire had been. Unlike their Mediterranean counterparts, the Northerners displayed a high level of social solidarity. As a result, Russell contends, considerable cultural accommodation was necessary for Christianity to take hold in the Germanic context. In the process of exploring the nature of these changes, Russell develops a suggestive new model of the ways in which religious change occurs in any culture.

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