

The eastern Mediterranean in the first centuries of the Common Era was a formative time and place for Jews and Christians. Among the lasting legacies was a flourishing of sacred poetry across the languages of these religions. New poetic genres appeared during late antiquity in Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, and Aramaic, blossoming through the Byzantine era. Comparative study of these poetic expressions and their performative traditions is shedding new light on the interactions between Jews and Christians, as religious leaders, choirs, and congregations chanted and sang amidst shared civic landscapes. This workshop conference brings together scholars of Hebrew and Aramaic *piyyutim*, the Greek *kontakion* and *kanon*, and Syriac *madroshe* and *mimre* in comparative discussion, seeking new avenues of inquiry and charting new ground for social, religious, and literary history.



*Special Thanks to our Sponsors:
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Sacred Song in the Late Antique & Byzantine East: Comparative Explorations

A Workshop Conference at Brown University.

[http://www.brown.edu/academics/
religious-studies/node/215/sacred-song](http://www.brown.edu/academics/religious-studies/node/215/sacred-song)



May 3-6, 2015

All events are free & open to the public. To register or for more information, please email

Religious_Studies@brown.edu.

Conference Schedule:

Sunday, May 3

Conference Opening

BERT 130 | 85 Waterman St.

★4:45pm: Welcome

Lecture

★5:00pm: "Debate Poems for Pentecost: The Torah and her Bridegrooms," Joseph Yahalom, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

★6:30pm: Reception | BERT Lobby

Concert

Annmary Brown Memorial | 21 Brown St.

★7:00–8:00pm: Psaltikon Byzantine Chamber Choir, Directed by Spyridon Antonopoulos, City University London

Monday, May 4

Petteruti Lounge | Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center | 75 Waterman St.

★9:00am: Registration

Session #1: Genres & Contexts

★9:30am: "Christian Sacred Songs East of Antioch," Gerard Rouwhorst, Tilburg University

★10:15am: " 'We have all come now to listen to what the Gospels say': Romanos the Melodist as Preacher and the Question of Genre," Uffe Holmsgaard Eriksen, Aarhus University

★11:00am: Break

★11:30am: "In Search of Ephrem's Audience," Jeffrey Wickes, St. Louis University

★12:30–2:00pm: Lunch Break



Text Session #1

Petteruti Lounge | Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center | 75 Waterman St.

★2:30pm: "Historical Accounts concerning the Rise of Late Antique Liturgical Poetry," Ophir Münz-Manor, The Open University of Israel

★3:30pm: "Monologues with Death," Michael D. Swartz, Ohio State University

Lecture

BERT 130 | 85 Waterman St.

★5:30pm "Divine Triumph and Liturgical Joy in the Hymns of Romanos the Melodist," Derek Krueger, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Tuesday, May 5

Petteruti Lounge | Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center | 75 Waterman St.

Session #2: Figures & Themes

★9:00am: "The Sinful Woman (Luke 7:36–50) in Preaching and Song: A Comparative Study of Ephrem Graecus' Homily *The Sinful Woman* and Romanos' *Kontakion 21*," Kevin Kalish, Bridgewater State University

★9:45am: "Performing Repentance in the Kontakia of Romanos the Melodist," Sarah Gador-Whyte, St. George's College

★10:30am: Break

★11:00am: "Is There Room for Doubt in Christian Faith? Romanos and John the Monk on the Apostle Thomas," Mary B. Cunningham, Nottingham University

★11:45am: "From Literature to Liturgy: An assessment of a fragmentary hymn ascribed to Romanos the Melode," Sarah Insley, Brown University

★12:30–2:00pm: Lunch Break



Text Session #2

Petteruti Lounge | Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center | 75 Waterman St.

★2:30pm: "Poetry, Prayer, Presence: Invocations in the Mimre of Jacob of Sarug," Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Brown University

★"The Problem of Pity in Romanos, 'On Elijah'," Georgia Frank, Colgate University

Lecture

BERT 130 | 85 Waterman St.

★5:30pm: "The Poetics of Scriptural Reading: Syriac Mimre at Work," Sidney H. Griffith, The Catholic University of America

Wednesday, May 6

Crystal Room | Alumnae Hall | 194 Meeting St.

Session # 3: Responses: Technical & Poetic

★9:00am: "Voices Interwoven: Refrains and Vocal Participation in Late Ancient Kontakia," Thomas Arentzen, University of Oslo

★9:45am: " 'We shall clearly hear him say 'Rejoice!' as we sing': Hearing, Intelligibility, and Performance in Byzantine Chant," Spyridon Antonopoulos, City University London

★10:30am: Break

★11:00am: "The Death of God from Hymnography and Homiletics to the Encomnia of Holy Saturday," Niki Tsironis, National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens

★11:45am: " 'Suffering Not Yet Sufficient' : An Exploration of Maternal-Filial Discourse Performance," Laura Lieber, Duke University

★12:30pm: Farewell

