

TRADING PLACES

BYZANTIUM AND THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

A SYMPOSIUM AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY | APRIL 16 & 17, 2015



CROSSING LINES

Medieval Musical Encounters

April 17, 2015 | 6:00 PM
First Church | 11 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

THE JOY OF THE RESURRECTION:
GREEK ORTHODOX HYMNS OF THE PASCHAL SEASON
Holy Cross St. Romanos the Melodist Byzantine Choir

Since antiquity, the feast of Pascha has been the focal point of the Orthodox Christian liturgical cycle and worship practice. Its message of hope and joy has also permeated the historical experience of Hellenism, as evidenced by the usage of “Christ is risen!” as a greeting among Greeks after periods of wars or other national disasters. This performance will feature some of the most popular paschal hymns whose texts date to the first millennium. Some of the musical settings are traditional, while others are by contemporary composers. All of them, however, are composed of the same musical fabric that can be traced to the ceremonies of Hagia Sophia and other cathedrals and monastic establishments of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Christ is risen, mode plagal I, traditional
When you descended into Hades, mode II, arr. Ioannis Vyzantios (d. 1866)
Paschal Katavasiai, mode I, arr. Chrysanthos Theodosopoulos (d. 1988)
Paschal Stichera, mode plagal I, arr. Chrysanthos Theodosopoulos (d. 1988)
It is the day of Resurrection, mode plagal I, arr. Photios Ketsetzis (b. 1945)
Cherubic Hymn, mode plagal IV, Nektarios Thanos (b. 1976)
You the bright candle, mode I, Ioannis Arvanitis (b. 1961)
Though you descended into a grave, mode plagal IV, traditional

SINGING THE CRUSADES:
REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CRUSADER EAST IN TROUVÈRE AND
TROUBADOUR SONGS
Natasha Roule, Vielle, and Ian Pomerantz, Voice

Many participants of the crusades were trouvères or troubadours who wrote songs describing their encounters with Constantinople and the Holy Land. This performance will feature excerpts of songs written by witnesses of the Third and Fourth Crusades. The songs express feelings of distress over leaving France and missing loved ones who remain behind. They also capture vivid imagery of the Crusader East and feelings of triumph of western victories. Our performance will also address the challenges of performing crusader songs, whose surviving melodies present relatively little information regarding trouvère or troubadour musical aesthetics. Our conversation will showcase the enduring power of crusader repertoire to express crusader memories and imaginings of the east to modern audiences.

Chanterai pour mon courage, anonymous
A vous amant, Li Chatelain de Coucy
No m'agrad iverns ni pascors, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras
Au temps plain de felonie, Thibaut IV de Champagne

JEWELS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN:
MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES AND MEMORIES OF THE PAST IN
THE MUSIC OF THE SEPHARDIC JEWISH COMMUNITY OF THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Voice of the Turtle (Ian Pomerantz, Lisle Kulbach, and Jay Rosenberg)

After their expulsion from Spain in 1492, the Sephardic community of the Eastern Mediterranean, whose cultural capital was based in Thessaloniki, became the literary, musical, and theological center of the Jewish world. Music remains vital to this dynamic community even today. In the tradition of Sephardic ballad singing, collective memories are preserved and transmitted in a multicultural and cross-generational matrix of song. Texts, many of which predate the Expulsion, meld with melodies and musical styles that Sephardim encountered in the diaspora. The resulting songs create a microcosm of Greek, Turkish, Slavic, Arab, and Balkan influences, and thus an aural history of the Eastern Mediterranean. Voice of the Turtle, an ensemble of internationally recognized performers of Sephardic music, will present an interactive concert of Sephardic ballads – or, in Judeo-Spanish, romanzas – and other pieces illustrating the power of collective memory, communal experience, and story-telling in the Sephardic diaspora of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Kuando el Rey Nimrod
De Ke Yoras, Blanka Ninya
Ken se Kaza
Three Unaccompanied Romanzas
• Mas Arriva
• Pregoneros
• Maldicha Tripa de Madre
El Rey Ke Muncho Madruga
La Dolor de la Prinseza

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Holy Cross

COVER ILLUMINATION: The departure of Nicolò and Matteo Polo from Byzantium (Constantinople) | Illumination from the Livre des Merveilles, c. 1410–12 (author: Marco Polo; manuscript illuminator: maître de la Mazarine) | Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des manuscrits occidentaux, MSS Français 2810