



First OEBG-SPBS Joint Lecture

This joint online lecture is the result of a cooperation between the Austrian Association for Byzantine Studies (ÖBG) and the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies (SPBS).

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The Power of Rhetoric in the Byzantine Classroom and Beyond: Fluid Relations and Intersections between Prose and Poetry

Respondent: Foteini Spingou



Abstract

Modern scholars have frequently seen prose and poetry as binary opposites, placing them into two separate taxonomic boxes with watertight covers. Yet, their opposition is often broken down and their borderlines are frequently blurred. This holds true especially for medieval literature, when encounters between prose and verse in the same textual or contextual environment were standard practice; but while in the Latin tradition such encounters are quite conspicuous (e.g. *prosimetrum*), in Byzantium they turn out to be somewhat subtler and more complex.

This lecture will focus on the middle and late Byzantine period to discuss how prose and poetry interact in multiple performative contexts as well as in book culture. How did they join forces across various types of texts (*schede*, letters, hagiographical works etc.)? Are there any recurrent structural patterns in works written for different settings of literary consumption? Did their interaction first emerge in the Byzantine classroom and eventually spread to other types of texts, or the other way around? A better understanding of all these aspects may help us to acquire a more nuanced picture about the complex dynamics between prose and poetry in Byzantium and their place within the broader context of medieval literary culture.

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After registering, you will receive a confirmation email. For Zoom-safety reasons, after you confirm your data, we will send you the link to the event a few days or hours before the lecture.