

Vortrag von Prof. Stefania Gerevini (Mailand)

27. November 2019, 18.15 Uhr, Hörsaal Kunstgeschichte (02-521), Georg Forster-Gebäude

Byzantine art made ‘history’? the Pala d’Oro and the Pala Feriale in Dandolo’s Venice

My paper examines the fourteenth-century renewal of the altar area of the basilica of San Marco, Venice, with specific focus on the changes made to the *pala d’oro* (the majestic Byzantine altarpiece that embellished the altar since the twelfth century), and on the visual interactions between the Byzantine artwork and Paolo Veneziano’s *pala feriale*, the newly-commissioned painted altarpiece that covered the pala d’oro on non-festive days.

As I will suggest, the makeover of the high altar of San Marco specifically addressed issues of temporality and historicity. At one level, this artistic renovation transformed the high altar of San Marco generally, and the Byzantine *pala d’oro* more specifically, into sites of historical remembrance. Commemorating selected moments and actors from the Venetian past, and providing material proof that those events had actually happened, the high altar of San Marco was made to articulate ideas of institutional stability and continuity at times of heightened tensions. At another level, the artistic makeover turned the altar area into a multimedia visual recapitulation of the economy of Christian salvation. Placing the *pala d’oro* at the heart of a complex eschatological program that couched history in terms of eternity, this campaign also illuminates the dual meaning of Byzantine art in Trecento Venice, as the ‘stuff of history’ and a locus of transcendence.

Stefania Gerevini obtained her PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London (2011), and is currently Assistant Professor in the History of Medieval Art at Bocconi University, Milan. Prior to joining Bocconi, Stefania was Research Fellow at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut and at IMT (2010-2012); Lecturer in the History of Byzantine Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art (2012-2014); and Assistant Director at The British School at Rome (2014-2015).

Stefania’s recent publications concern the nexus between aesthetics and politics, with specific focus on artistic interactions, political conflict, and public memory in the medieval Mediterranean. Her current monograph project explores these issues through the interpretative lens of crisis, and in relation to the visual arts of Venice in the fourteenth century. Stefania also has a long-standing interest in questions of materiality, visibility and sacred presence; and in the conceptualizations and artistic applications of light and transparency, which she has addressed in a suite of essays on the aesthetics and meanings of rock crystal.

Essential Bibliography: J. Deér, Die Pala d’Oro in Neuer Sicht. In: J. Deér, Byzanz und das abendländische Herrschertum, 251-84 (Sigmaringen 1977); H. R. Hahnloser/R. Polacco (eds), La Pala d’Oro (Venedig 1994); D. Buckton/J. Osborne, The Enamel of Doge Ordelaaffo Falier on the Pala d’Oro in Venice. *Gesta* 39.1 (2000), 43-49; F. Flores D’Arcais/G. Gentili (eds), Il Trecento Adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente (Mailand 2002); H. Belting, Dandolo’s Dreams. Venetian State Art and Byzantium. In: S. T. Brooks (ed), Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557). Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture (New Haven 2006) 138-53; A. De Marchi, La postérité du devant-d’autel à Venise. Retables orfèvres et retables peints. In: J. E. A. Kroesen/V. M. Schmidt (eds), The Altar and its Environment, 1150-1400 (Turnhout 2009) 57-86; H. Maguire/R. S. Nelson (eds), San Marco, Byzantium, and the Myths of Venice (Washington 2010).