

CFP: Convivium VII/1, 2020 thematic issue:
A Hub of Art: In, Out, and Around Venice, 1177-1499

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Convivium VII/1, 2020 will focus on Venice as extraordinary commercial and artistic clearinghouse during its rise and triumph as a cultural hub. Too often, the artistic development of Venice is seen as dependent exclusively on Constantinople and the Byzantine tradition. By emphasizing the role of Venice as a cultural hub, we would like to shift the focus onto the processes, opportunities and contexts that produced monuments and works of art, which reveal the intense cultural exchange fostered in the city by commerce and trade. The horizons of the artistic ambitions of Venice, a city at the center of a vast web, were wide: from Byzantium and the larger Mediterranean world to Northern Europe, Hungary, Austria, France, all the way to Spain and Portugal.

Venetians, firmly rooted in their civic identity around the sacred core of the church of San Marco, were the engine of an extensive network of trade. In the visual arts, they were capable of in-depth technical observations as well as aesthetic appreciation for the extraordinary works that arrived in the city, some of the most precious of which entered the treasury of San Marco. Venetian craftsmen were quick to appropriate technical skills and start the chain of production of works that could soon be identified as "made in Venice". In fact, by creating new types of objects, they established brands that promoted new tastes and quickly became status symbols made specifically for the international market.

While promoting their luxury wares, patrons and artists in Venice carried out huge projects in the city. Monuments and the arts, both public and private, show how their multifaceted visual language was open to experimentation and their ambitions had long since left Byzantium behind. The long arc of this enterprise lasted over many generations and was full of challenges and innovations. From the perspective of the present, it emerges as one of the most impressive and long-lasting European enterprises. In 1177, the Doge Sebastian Ziani brokered a peace between Pope Alexander III and the emperor Frederick Barbarossa in what is known as the Treaty of Venice. In 1499, the Venetian fleet under the command of Antonio Grimani was defeated by the Turks at the Battle of Zonchio and Venice lost control over Nafpaktos, Methoni and Koroni. It was the end of her ambition of commercial dominance.

Further information on: <http://www.earlymedievalstudies.com/convivium.html>

Submission: The articles have to be sent to Karolina Foletti, executive editor of the journal (karolina.foletti@gmail.com)