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SOMMARIO

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BYZANTINE ART IN/AND/BEYOND THE WEST DURING THE LONG ELEVENTH CENTURY: INFUSING THE 'BYZANTINE QUESTION' WITH A 'GLOBAL' PERSPECTIVE

Historians, economists, and sociologists alike tend to characterize the decade following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 as the beginning of a new era in world history and a new phase in the history of globalization[1]. Indeed, the 1990s were, by all accounts, not only a decade of unprecedented interconnectedness in global economic terms and communication technology, but also a period that ushered in a real sense of the world having become a more open, widely connected, and permeable place, one that is less defined by the nation-states of old than the desire to overcome the walls and boundaries that were created to divide them[2]. The terror attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent unfolding of the Global War on Terrorism, which, in their own right, have marked the beginning of a new, post-9/11 era, have since dramatically tempered the sense of optimism associ-

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1. For an early attempt to outline the emergence of a new, post-Cold War era, see J. L. GADDIS, *The Cold War, the Long Peace, and the Future*, in «Diplomatic History», 16.2 (1992), pp. 234-246. For a summary account of global economic developments and the International Monetary Fund during the 1990s, see J. BOUGHTON, *Tearing Down Walls: The International Monetary Fund 1990-1999*, Washington D.C., 2012. For an early assessment and analysis of the impact of globalization on society and culture, see A. APPADURAI, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis, 1996; M. ALBROW, *The Global Age: State and Society beyond Modernity*, Stanford, 1997.

2. In terms of the global economy, see S. STRANGE, *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations, 49, New York 1996; K. OMAE, *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Interlinked Economy*, New York, 1990; ID., *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies*, New York, 1995.

ated with globalization in a myriad of measurable and immeasurable ways[3]. When the Pew Research Center published one of its *Global Attitudes Surveys* on October 4, 2007, under the headline "World Publics Welcome Global Trade – But Not Immigration", clouds had already started to form on the world's horizon, indicating «an evolving world view on globalization that is nuanced, ambivalent, and sometimes inherently contradictory»[4].

While the 2007 survey emphasized that the publics of the world broadly embraced key tenets of economic globalization, it also pointed out that large parts of these publics feared «the disruptions and downsides of participating in the global economy. In rich countries as well as poor ones, most people endorse free trade, multinational corporations and free markets. […] But there are widely shared concerns about the free flow of people, ideas and resources that globalization entails. In nearly every country surveyed, people worry about losing their traditional culture and national identities, and they feel their way of life needs protection against foreign influences. Importantly, the poll finds widespread concerns about immigration. Moreover, there is a strong link between immigration fears and concerns about threats to a country's culture and traditions. Those who worry the most about immigration also tend to see the greatest need for protecting traditional ways of life against foreign influences»[5].

Given the survey's findings, it is perhaps not surprising that between 2014 and 2016, when global forced displacements grew dramatically and reached unprecedented levels, nation-states across Europe and North America took equally unprecedented measures to contain the flow of large numbers of migrants, who, displaced by economic hardship, natural disasters, and/or civil war, made the consequential and dangerous decision to leave their homes in order to find physical safety, economic opportunity, and an altogether better

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3. For the Global War on Terror, see B. BUZAN, *Will the 'global war on terrorism' be the new Cold War?* in «International Affairs», 82.6 (2006), pp. 1101-118.

4. The survey is available online and as a pdf-Report at https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2007/10/04/world-publics-welcome-global-trade-but-not-immigration/. For more information on the origins of the Pew Research Center's *Global Attitudes Project*, see https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2005/07/14/about-the-pew-global-attitudes-project/.

5. Ibid., p. 2.

future for themselves elsewhere[6]. The building of permanent walls at the southern border of the United States or the heavily secured barbed-wire fences at the south-eastern borders of Europe has since become a physical reality that belies the widely-shared optimism in open-border policies during the early 1990s and the promise of global mobility embodied by the idea of the free flow of goods, people, and ideas associated with it[7]. Three decades after the fall of the proverbial *iron curtain*, which neatly, if not altogether convincingly, divided the world along political lines into East and West during the Cold War era, we find ourselves today facing new, equally dehumanizing divisions along national, socio-economic, cultural, and religious lines[8]. Here, I refer not only to the division of the world into a Global North and South, however fraught and problematic these terms themselves may be, but also to the further division of the world as a result of the economic rise of China and the implementation of its Belt and Road Initiative since 2013, not to speak of the more recent Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which has since started to reshape political and economic alliances across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.[9] According to Michael O'Sullivan, Prince-

6. For specific data on the increase in global forced migration, see https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-global-trends-2014.

7. On the proliferation of border walls across the globe border closures as a result of the global migrant crisis, see C. Yeginsu and K. Shoumali, *Turkey Moves to Close All Gates at Border With Syria*, in «The New York Times», March 29, 2015; R. Lyman, *Bulgaria Puts Up a New Wall, but This One Keeps People Out*, in «The New York Times», 5 (2015); C. Minca and A. Rijke, *Walls! Walls! Walls!*, in « Society and Space», 18 (2017); E. Vallet, *The World is Witnessing a Rapid Proliferation of Border Walls*, in «The Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute», March 2, 2022. On the Trump administration's decision to build a border wall along the southern border between the United States and Mexico, see B. Chappell, T. Keith, and M. Kennedy, *'A Nation without Borders Is Not a Nation': Trump Moves Forward with U.S.-Mexico Wall*, in «National Public Radio», 25 (2017); P. Karasz, *Fact Check: Trump's Tweet on Border Walls in Europe*, in «The New York Times», 17 (2019).

8. On the historical resurgence of border walls since 9/11, see E. Vallet and C.-P. David, *Introduction: The (Re)building of the Wall in International Relations*, in « Journal of Borderlands Studies », 27.2 (2012), pp. 111-19, with reference to further literature. For a contextual analysis of the walls that have been built between 1968 and 2018, see A. R. Benedicto, M. Akkerman, and P. Brunet, *A Walled World: Towards a Global Apartheid*, Barcelona, 2020.

9. For a discussion of the term 'Global South', see the commentary by S. Patrick and A. Huggins, *The Term "Global South" Is Surging. It Should be Retired*, in https://carnegieen-

ton-based economist, «the evolution of a new world order – a fully multipolar world composed of three (perhaps four depending on how India develops) large regions that are distinct in the workings of their economies, laws, cultures, and security networks – is manifestly underway»[10].

Having read these introductory paragraphs, you may well ask yourself what our current global predicament has to do with either the history of cultural interactions between Byzantium and the Latin West during the long eleventh century or the so-called 'Byzantine Question', namely the scholarly debate that emerged in nineteenth-century antiquarian circles in Germany as an attempt to assess the status and presumed contribution of Byzantine art and culture to the development of Western medieval art and the emergence of the Renaissance in Italy and Northern Europe[11]. As I hope to demonstrate in my paper, understanding our own place in history, cultural formation, and geopolitical outlook is a crucial prerequisite not only for an adequate assessment of past scholarly trends and debates, but also for an appropriate evaluation of the material evidence in front of us.

Let me begin my investigation by setting some chronological and epistemological boundaries, which, as the title of my paper indicates, attempts to explore, on the one hand, a select number of tangible traces of the history and impact of Byzantine art and culture in what, in academic shorthand, is often labeled as the 'West', or 'Latin

dowment.org/posts/2023/08/the-term-global-south-is-surging-it-should-be-retired?lang=en. On the impact of China's Belt and Road Initiative on the existing world order, see B. Maçães, *Belt and Road: A Chinese World Order*, London, 2018. See also M. Sahakyan, *China and Eurasian Powers in a Multipolar World Order 2.0: Security, Diplomacy, Economy, and Cyberspace*, London, 2023.

10. M. O'Sullivan, *The Levelling: What's next after Globalization*, New York, 2019, p. 214.

11. For a summary account of the so-called 'Byzantine Question,' see M. Altripp, *Anmerkungen zur sogenannten "Byzantinischen Frage" - oder: Byzantiner im Westen*, in *Byzanz in Europa. Europas östliches Erbe. Akten des Kolloquiums ‚Byzanz un Europa' vom 11. bis 15. Dezember 2007 in Greifswald*, ed. by M. Altripp, Turnhout, 2011, pp. 342-367; H. A. Klein, *Byzanz, der Westen und das ‚wahre' Kreuz. Die Geschichte einer Reliquie und ihrer künstlerischen Fassung in Byzanz und dem Abendland*, Wiesbaden, 2004, pp. 1-14. For an early assessment of the question, see B. Haendcke, *Zur »byzantinischen Frage«. Eine handelsgeschichtliche - kunstgeschichliche Untersuchung*, in « Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft », 34 (1911), pp. 93-114.

West.' On the other hand, I would like to revisit some of the early scholarly contributions to so-called 'Byzantine Question,' which seem relevant in this context. I will try to tackle these two distinct yet intimately connected elements jointly in an effort to highlight and problematize past and present scholarly efforts to describe our own conscious and subconscious biases and blind spots in assessing Byzantine-Western relations in the realm of art, culture, and, almost inevitably, medieval politics.

In certain aspects, especially as far as Italy and Germany is concerned, the eleventh century was a particularly crucial period for the development and consolidation of Byzantine-Western artistic and cultural relationships[12]. However, the stage for more sustained interactions between East and West was already set somewhat earlier, namely in the second half of the tenth century, and its most tangible ripple effects can be observed well into the first half of the twelfth century[13]. I am thus taking the liberty to expand the focus of my investigation from the more strictly defined chronological boundaries of the century following the millennial watershed to the 'long' elev-

12. For access to the vast body of scholarship on Byzantine Italy, see the recent compendium of studies by V. von Falkenhausen, *Studi sull'Italia byzantina*, Rome, 2022; *A Companion to Byzantine Italy*, ed. by S. Cosentino, Leiden and Boston, 2021. See also V. von Falkenhausen, *Bisanzio e le repubbliche marinare italiane prima delle cruciate*, in *Le porte del paradiso: arte e tecnologia bizantina tra Italia e Mediterraneo*, ed. by A. Iacobini, Rome, 2009, pp. 55-64. For the role of the abbey of Montecassino, V. von Falkenhausen, *Montecassino e Bisanzio dal IX al XII secolo*, in *L'età dell'abate Desiderio, vol. 3/1: Storia, arte e cultura*, ed. by F. Avagliano and O. Pecere, « Miscellanea Cassinese », 67, Montecassino, 1992, pp. 69-107; H. Bloch, *Origin and Fate of the Bronze Doors of Abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino*, in *Studies on Art and Archeology in Honor of Ernst Kitzinger on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday* = « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 41 (1987), pp. 89-102; H. Bloch, *Monte Cassino, Byzantium, and the West in the Earlier Middle Ages*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 3 (1946), pp. 163-224.

13. For a summary account of the historical developments in Germany and Southern Italy during the tenth and early eleventh century, see the contributions by Jonathan Shepard and Graham Loud in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: Volume III c. 900-1024*, ed. by T. Reuter, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 605-623 (J. Shepard); pp. 624-645 (G. A. Loud). See also the various contributions in *Byzanz und das Abendland im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*, ed. by E. Konstantinou, Cologne, 1997; *Kaiserin Theophanu. Prinzessin aus der Fremde – des Westreichs Große Kaiserin*, ed. by G. Wolf, Cologne, 1991. For the twelfth-century 'ripple effects', which can be observed across much of Western Europe, see the summary account in O. Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West*, The Wrightsman Lectures III, New York, 1970, pp. 79-161.

enth century of relations between Byzantine and Western political – specially imperial – actors and their respective agents. Jointly, these actors and agents help to usher in a new era of interest in and appreciation for Byzantine luxury arts and their unparalleled material refinement and technical sophistication.

If it were necessary to define more specific chronological markers for the beginning and end of this 'long' eleventh century, I would probably set them with the coronation of the Saxon king Otto I as Roman Emperor by Pope John XII on February 2, 962, and the death of the Norman king Roger II of Sicily on February 26, 1154. However, tying such broader phenomena as stylistic assimilation, iconographic adaptation, and the creative reworking of artistic motifs and models to specific historical events, figures, or geographical regions rarely does justice to the complexities of such exchanges and the specific local circumstances, intellectual frameworks, or economic environments within which they occurred[14].

As Henry Mayr-Harting and others have argued, for instance, the moment when Otto I became "imperator augustus" could certainly be understood as a watershed moment in the history of the relationship between the Byzantium and an ambitious German dynasty that started to claim (or rather re-claim) the Roman imperial title with all associated expectations of unlimited, universal rulership[15]. But it neither explains nor fully accounts for the increasing receptiveness towards Byzantine art and culture at the court of Otto the Great, which is likely to have taken shape well before he had secured a Byzantine bride for his son and the manufacture of two of the most well-known artistic products commonly associated with the marriage of Otto II and Theophanu in Rome on April 14, 972[16]. I am speaking, of course, of the

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14. For a focused examination of the situation in Norman Sicily, see W. Tronzo, *Byzantine Court Culture from the Point of View of Norman Sicily: The Case of the Capella Palatina in Palermo*, in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. by H. Maguire, Washington, D.C., 1997.

15. H. Mayr-Harting, *Liutprand of Cremona's Account of His Legation to Constantinople (968) and Ottonian Imperial Strategy*, in « The English Historical Review », 116 (2001), pp. 539-556, here p. 541ff.

16. For historical context, see W. Huschner, *Kaiser der Franken oder Kaiser der Römer? Die neue imperiale Würde Ottos I. im euromediterranen Raum*, in *Otto der Große und das Römische*

so-called 'Marriage Charter' (Fig. 1), currently preserved at the State Archives of Lower Saxony in Wolfenbüttel[17], and the ivory plaque depicting the double-coronation of Otto II and Theophanu at the Musée Cluny in Paris (Fig. 2)[18]. Our understanding of these works is, to quote William North and Anthony Cutler, «largely shaped by the perceptions and interpretations of those who have come before us. These readings are marked by the situation in which the thing was and is to be found, the class of object into which it has been inserted, and the role that it has previously been said to play»[19]. In other words, how we interpret

Reich: Kaisertum von der Antike zum Mittelalter, ed. by M. Puhle und G. Köster, Regensburg, 2012, pp. 519-527.

17. Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv (Abteilung Wolfenbüttel), 6 Urk. II. On the 'Marriage Charter', see most recently J. Osborne, *The Dower Charter of Otto II and Theophanu, and the Roman Scriptorium at Santi Apostoli*, in « Papers of the British School at Rome », 89 (2021), pp. 137-157; E. Garrison, *Mimetic Bodies: Repetition, Replication, and Simulation in the Marriage Charter of Empress Theophanu*, in « Word & Image », 33.2 (2017), pp. 212-232; H. K. Schulze, *Heiratsurkunde der Kaiserin Theophanu*, in *Otto der Große und das Römische Reich: Kaisertum von der Antike zum Mittelalter*, ed. by M. Puhle und G. Köster, Regensburg, 2012, cat. no. V.39, pp. 627-629; A. Cutler and W. North, *Word over Image: On the Making, Uses, and Destiny of the Marriage Charter of Otto II and Theophanu*, in *Interactions: Artistic Interchange between the Eastern and Western Worlds in the Medieval Period*, ed. by C. Hourihane, Princeton, 2007, pp. 167-187; R. Kahsnitz, *Heiratsurkunde der Theophanu*, in *Otto der Grosse, Magdeburg und Europa*, ed. by M. Puhle, 2 vols., Mainz, 2001, II, cat. no. III.17, pp. 129-131. For a facsimile of the charter, see *Die Heiratsurkunde der Kaiserin Theophanu, 972 April 14, Faksimile-Ausgabe nach dem Original im Niedersächsischen Staatsarchiv in Wolfenbüttel (6 Urk II)*, ed. and trans. by D. Matthes, Stuttgart, 1980.

18. Paris, Musée de Cluny, Musée National du Moyen Âge, Cl. 392. See most recently D. Gerstl, *Die Tafel mit Otto und Theophano im Musée de l'Hôtel de Cluny in Paris. Ein Elfenbein der Nikephoros-Gruppe?*, in « Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft », 59/60 (2005-06), pp. 9-33. See also R. Kahsnitz, *Heiratsurkunde der Theophanu*, in *Otto der Grosse, Magdeburg und Europa*, ed. by M. Puhle, 2 vols., Mainz, 2001, II, cat. no. III.17, pp. 129-131; C. T. Little, *Christ Blessing Emperor Otto II and Empress Theophano*, in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261*, ed. by H. C. Evans and W. D. Wixom, New York, 1997, cat. no. 337, pp. 499-501; J.-P. Caillet, *L'ivoire d'Otton et Théophanu au musée de Cluny (Paris) et les pièces de son groupe:* état de la recherche, in *Kunst im Zeitalter der Kaiserin Theophanu. Akten des Internationalen Colloquiums veranstaltet vom Schnütgen-Museum Köln, 13.-15. Juni 1991*, ed. by A. von Euw and P. Schreiner, Cologne, 1993, pp. 31-48.

19. Cutler/North, *Word over Image* cit. (note 19), p. 167.

a work of art is, in this particular and other cases, by no means a neutral or objective endeavor.

As I will try to show in the following pages, our own place in a fragmented, globalized and increasingly multipolar world has significant relevance not only for the way we understand and assess our own scholarly tradition and trajectory, but also for the way we define and measure Byzantium's cultural and artistic impact on its neighbors. In other words, how we, as scholars today, pose and answer the 'Byzantine Question' is inextricably linked to our own time, geographical location, intellectual formation, national, cultural and/ or religious heritage, ideological outlook, and political persuasion, to name only the most obvious categories relevant in this context.

The same is true, if we take the longer historiographical view and try to evaluate how scholars of past generations have answered the 'Byzantine Question' in their own time. The issue of perspective, historical and otherwise, is crucial in this respect, as our understanding of the past cannot be disassociated from our understanding of the present. The changing assessment of the impact of Byzantine art and culture on its neighbors is therefore necessarily more revealing about us than it reveals our own understanding and judgment of the Byzantines and their various neighbors across the broad span of time we identify as the period of our scholarly inquiry[20].

A re-evaluation of the 'Byzantine Question' in our own time, which, in a different context, I have tentatively called the "Age of Global Thought", seems therefore justified and is perhaps overdue at a time when descriptive binaries such as 'Byzantium' and 'Europe', 'East' and 'West', or 'Greek' and 'Latin' may be considered to have lost their usefulness[21]. The fact that these broad categories still haunt

20. For a thoughtful assessment of the historiography of the 'Byzantine Question', see R. S. NELSON, Living on the Byzantine Borders of Western Art, in « Gesta », 35.1 (1996), pp. 3-11. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 1997 exhibition *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261* (March 11-July 6, 1997) may be seen as indicative of a changing scholarly attitude in addressing the relationship between Byzantium and its neighbors during the early and mid-1990s. For the curators' view, see *The Glory of Byzantium* cit. (note 19), pp. XV-XVI.

21. Preliminary thoughts on the topic were presented in a paper entitled *Re-evaluating the "Byzantine Question" in an Age of Global Thought* at the Round Table *The Byzantine Idiom Beyond Byzantium's Borders: A Historiographic Reflection*, co-chaired by Cecily Hilsdale and

us today, nearly twenty-five years into the twenty-first century, is probably owed less to academic inertia but the difficulty of identifying more appropriate tools and mechanisms for what amounts to a challenging hermeneutic endeavor. If our goal is a more nuanced understanding of the complex phenomena that undergird the movement of people, objects, and ideas across cultural, religious, and geographic divides, we will need to revise our terminology in order to reform our scholarly practice.

Where the question of artistic, or more broadly speaking, cultural exchange is addressed today, it generally transcends the narrow Eurocentric binary that once defined it. About a decade ago, Alicia Walker expressed the hope that a global approach to medieval studies may reveal its greatest usefulness in providing us with «a way to resist the casting of intercultural relations in reductive, bilateral terms, [and] instead laying the ground for the recognition of the diverse, complex, and multidirectional networks that shaped the distribution of goods, movements of populations, and traffic in ideas and works of art»[22]. At least in some quarters, such hopes seem to have materialized[23]. But the more recent past has also underscored the dangers inherent in a resurgence of nationalism and an insistence on the validity of nativist interpretations of culture[24]. Since it is ultimately direct contact as a result of the movement of people, objects, and ideas that leads to the adaptation of previously foreign visual motifs, stylistic idioms, artistic techniques, and/or iconographic formulae, we may want to pay attention more to the historical circumstances and context in which cultural and artistic appropriation and amalgamation took place. If nothing else, what our global awareness today may help us

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Alicia Walker, during the 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies "Byzantium – Bridge between Worlds" in Venice/Padua (August 22-27, 2022).

22. A. WALKER, *Globalism*, in « Studies in Iconography », 33 (2012), pp. 183-196, here p. 186.

23. See, for instance, the special issue *The Global Middle Ages*, ed. by C. HOLMES and N. STANDEN, in « Past and Present », 238, Supplement 13, Oxford, 2018; *A Companion to the Global Early Middle Ages*, ed. by E. HERMANS, Baltimore, 2020; G. HENG, *The Global Middle Ages: An Introduction*, Cambridge, 2021; *Teaching the Global Middle Ages*, ed. by G. HENG, New York, 2022.

24. For a summary account of recent trends, see J. B. JUDIS, *The Nationalist Revival: Trade, Immigration, and the Revolt Against Globalization*, New York, 2018.

to achieve is a clearer recognition and awareness for the pitfalls and limitations imposed on us by the frameworks and categories used in twentieth-century scholarship. What we may be able to offer today is an approach characterized by more interdisciplinarity and diversity, and a practice that is at once local, global, and collaborative. I will return to our contemporary predicament in assessing the 'Byzantine Question' at the end of this study. For now, let me sketch out, albeit in very broad strokes, some of the trends of the debate as it emerged during the nineteenth and twentieth-century.

In 1854, when the German jurist and art historian Carl Schnaase (1798-1875), one of the founders of the modern discipline of art history in Germany, coined the term 'Byzantinische Frage,' or 'Byzantine Question' in his *Geschichte der bildenden Künste*, or *History of the Fine Arts*, between 1843 and 1864, and thus introduced the debate into a nascent art historical discourse, the importance of Byzantine art and culture and its impact on the formation of Western European art and architecture had already been recognized and discussed among antiquarians and art connoisseurs of an earlier generation[25]. In 1817, for instance, the Cologne art collector Sulpiz Boisserée emphasized in a letter to his friend Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, that «Anyone who is at all impartial and properly informed will never deny the influence, indeed even the long-standing dominance of Byzantine art in Italy and Germany»[26].

Boisserée's conviction that Byzantine art had reigned supreme in Europe for "*many centuries*" did, however, not go unchallenged. Only a decade later, in 1827, the artist and connoisseur Carl Friedrich von Rumohr (1785-1843), took a more critical stance when he wrote that «In Germany people like to call everything Byzantine, in which those features that only later developed […] as hallmarks

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25. C. Schnaase, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste, vol. 4: Die romanische Kunst*, Düsseldorf ²1871, p. 718. For biographical information on Carl Schnaase, see P. Betthausen, P. H. Feist und C. Fork, *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon. Zweihundert Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten*, Stuttgart 1999, pp. 365-368.

26. S. Boisserée, *Briefwechsel/Tagebücher*, 2 vols., Stuttgart 1862, II, p. 198: «Wer irgend unbefangen und gehörig unterrichtet ist, wird nie den Einfluß, ja selbst die lange Zeit hindurch stattgefundene Herrschaft der byzantinischen Kunst in Italien und Deutschland läugnen […]».

of a German School, do not yet stand out»[27]. Rumohr's criticism of the vague terminology and synonymous use of terms such as 'Christian', 'Byzantine' and 'Greek' among the Romantic writers of his generation was well justified. But it cannot be taken as a general rejection of the idea that works of Byzantine art were meritless in their own right or indeed served Western artists as models across Italy and Germany. Rumohr's study of paintings in the collections of Rome and Florence led him to conclude that «the painting of the Greek Middle Ages especially from the epoch of the ninth to the beginning of the thirteenth century [differs] from Italian painting of the same period first of all through better execution, a great wealth in models, and consequently through real merits in content as well as technique»[28]. It was these very merits that, according to Rumohr, had inspired a revival of the Italian artistic tradition starting as early as the 13th century.

It may be surprising that – despite this positive assessment – Rumohr's judgement on Byzantine mentality and culture overall remained fundamentally negative. For in the same chapter, he wrote that «[…] the same people, whose technical superiority provided such powerful support for the aspiring art of modern Italy, [was] barbaric in regard to its moral and spiritual development. Its technical superiority rested not so much on active striving for perfection, but on the fortuitous circumstance that urban life had survived in the Eastern Empire and had incessantly caused friction and encouragement of industriousness, which could not take place in the

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27. C. F. VON RUMOHR, *Italienische Forschungen*, ed. by J. SCHLOSSER, Frankfurt, 1920, p. 185: «In Deutschland dagegen liebt man Jegliches byzantinisch zu nennen, worin die späteren, erst in den bildnerischen Verzierungen der gothischen Baukunst entwickelten Eigenthümlichkeiten der deutschen Schule noch nicht hervorsprechen. Dieser ältere, senkrechte, ruhige Styl der deutschen Bildnerey ist indeß, wie wir wissen, mit wenig Ausnahmen, durch andere Mittelglieder aus dem Style der altchristlichen Bilnerey entstanden». For biographical information on Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, see BETTHAUSEN/FEIST/FORK, *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon* cit. (note 25), pp. 332-335.

28. VON RUMOHR, *Italienische Forschungen* cit. (note 27), p. 196: «Demnach unterscheidet sich die Malerey des griechischen Mittelalters, vornehmlich der Epoche vom neunten bis zum Anfang des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts, von der Malerey gleichzeitiger Italiener zunächst durch bessere Ausführung, reichhaltigere Vorbilder, mithin durch wirkliche Vorzüge des Gehaltes, wie der Technik».

West after the Germanic immigrants had spread their rural customs everywhere there […]. In addition, the Greek artists, having a greater wealth of models, or objects for the most outwardly imitation, had more choice, if not exactly the desire and ability to invent their own, at least the possibility of rearranging what already existed and to reunite what has been separated. Where it was a question of finding new types for new ideas in reality or of showing one's own choice and invention […] the helplessness of their spirit and the rawness of their taste betray themselves everywhere in their work. The characters of medieval saints in their paintings are consistently glaring and empty, the clothing disfigured by hangings of jewelry and garments, which invaded the customs of the new Greeks, probably from the Near East, already in the sixth century»[29].

Rumohr's negative evaluation of Byzantine culture as 'decadent' and 'oriental' was shared by Carl Schnaase, who, as already mentioned, coined the term 'Byzantine Question.' In his highly influential *History of the Fine Arts*, he described the Byzantine Empire in the strongest possible terms: «The Byzantine Empire, in its thousand-year paralysis, with its despotism, its cruelties, its indolence is indeed notorious; it can count as the most unpleasant part of history. […] On the throne despotic cruelty or degrading cowardice, among

29. VON RUMOHR, *Italienische Forschungen* cit. (note 25), pp. 194-195: «Dasselbe Volk, an dessen technischer Überlegenheit die aufstrebende Kunst des neueren Italiens eine so mächtige Stütze gefunden, [war] doch in Hinsicht auf seine sittlich-geistige Entwicklung ein barbarisches. Seine technische Überlegenheit beruhte nicht sowohl auf thätigem Streben nach Vollendung, als vielmehr auf dem zufälligen Umstande, daß im östlichen Reiche das städtische Leben sich erhalten, und unablässig Reibungen und Aufmunterungen des Kunstfleißes hervorgerufen hatte, welche im Westen nicht stattfinden konnten, nachdem germanische Einwanderer dort überall ländliche Sitten verbreitet hatten […]. Zudem blieb den griechischen Künstlern, bey größerem Reichthum an Vorbildern, oder an Gegenständen der äußerlichsten Nachahmung, mehr Wahl, mithin, wenn auch nicht eben die Lust und Fähigkeit eigener Erfindung […]. Doch, wo es galt, in der Wirklichkeit für neue Vorstellungen neue Typen aufzufinden, oder in äußeren Verzierungen, Einfassungen oder Gründen der Bilder eigene Wahl und Erfindung zu zeigen, verräth sich überall in ihren Arbeiten die Hülflosigkeit ihres Geistes, die Rohigkeit ihres Geschmackes. Die Charaktere mittelalterlicher Heiligen sind in ihren Gemälden durchgehend grell und leer, die Bekleidungen verunstaltet durch Gehänge von Schmuck und Gewand, welche schon seit dem sechsten Jahrhundert in den Lebenssitten der neuen Griechen, wohl aus dem nahen Orient, sich eingedrängt haben».

the people sensual striving, lust for pomp and a servile sense, science a dead collector, art fading; [...] The sensuality of the Greeks, the soft luxury of the Orientals, the greed of the Romans was widespread throughout the empire. [...] The connection between ancient Roman civilization and Christianity was [...] disastrous. Meanwhile, a new element was added that determined the character of the Byzantine Empire. In the mixture of peoples in the Roman world, even before the separation of the two empires, the 'oriental' element, the same which the Greeks had fought and pushed back from the Trojan wars to Alexander, found its way into Europe and spread widely. [...] This oriental element of the late Roman spirit now gained decisive preponderance in the Eastern Empire after its separation from the Western provinces. The capital itself lay on the border with Asia and the most important provinces belonged entirely to this part of the world [...]. We must therefore regard the Byzantine Empire as an oriental one [...]»[30].

There can be no doubt that Schnaase's emphatically negative assessment of the Byzantine Empire was directly inspired by those of his teacher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), who, in his lectures on the *Philosophy of History*, had voiced similar concerns

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30. C. Schnaase, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste, vol. 3: Altchristliche, byzantinische, muhammedanische, karolingische Kunst,* Düsseldorf, ²1869, pp. 106-117: «Namentlich ist das byzantinische Reich, in seinem tausendjährigen Erstarren, mit seinem Despotismus, seinen Grausamkeiten, seiner Schlaffheit verrufen; es gilt für den unerfreulichsten Theil der Geschichte. [...] Auf dem Throne despotische Grausamkeit oder entwürdigende Feigheit, im Volke sinnliches Streben, Prunksucht und knechtischer Sinn, die Wissenschaft todte Sammlerin, die Kunst ermattend; [...] Die Sinnlichkeit des Griechen, der weichliche Luxus des Orientalen, die Habsucht des Römers waren über das ganze Reich verbreitet. [...] Schon die Verbindung der altrömischen Civilisation mit dem Christenthume war [...] verderblich. Indessen kam auch noch ein neues Element hinzu, welches den Charakter des byzantinischen Reiches bestimmte. In der Völkermischung der römischen Welt hatte schon vor der Trennung beider Reiche das ,orientalische' Element, dasselbe, welches die Griechen vom Trojanerkriege bis auf Alexander bekämpft und zurückgedrängt hatten, Eingang und weite Verbreitung in Europa gefunden. [...] Dies orientalische Element des spätrömischen Geistes erhielt nun im östlichen Reiche, nach seiner Trennung von den westlichen Provinzen entschieden das Uebergewicht. Die Hauptstadt selbst lag an der Grenze von Asien, die wichtigsten Provinzen gehörten diesem Welttheile ganz an [...]. Wir müssen daher das byzantinische Reich als ein orientalisches betrachten [...]».

twenty years earlier[31]. Hegel's views, in turn, form part of a much longer historiographic tradition that leads back via Herder's *Ideas on the Philosophy of History* (1784-91) and Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) to Montesquieu's *Considerations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains,* (1734) and Tillemont's *Histoire des empereurs et des autres princes* (1694), who all agreed that the Byzantine Empire was corrupted as a result of its geographic location and contact with its Eastern neighbors.

Rumohr and Schnaase were not the only art historians of their generation who promoted the view of Byzantine art and culture as deprived and oriental. Academic personalities who deserve to be called out for their views in this context are, above all, the art historian Anton Springer, who first addressed the 'Byzantine Question' in 1857 and characterized the history of the Byzantine Empire as deeply decadent and effeminate: «Where men leave the ruler's baton to women, imitate women's costumes themselves, and betray effeminate attitudes, education must also reveal many wrong and sick things. […] The nature of Byzantine art can be easily understood from what has been said. As a result of geographic influences and close contact with the peoples of the East, it will retain a variety of oriental features, and such can be found both in architecture and in painting […]»[32]. Springer sums up his assessment of Byzantine art by stating that its fate was «linked to that of the Byzantine Empire; it perished in barbarism in its own homeland and gave way to independent national movements in the West. But it was Byzantine art that prevented the complete

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31. See G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Werke Bd. 12), Frankfurt/Main ⁴1995, pp. 408-412. For Hegel's influence on Schnaase and other contemporary art historians, see M. Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art*, New Haven 1982, pp. 31-43.

32. A. Springer, *Kunsthistorische Briefe. Die bildenden Künste in ihrer weltgeschichtlichen Entwicklung*, Prag, 1857, p. 400: «Wo die Männer den Weibern den Herrscherstab überlassen, selbst die Weibertracht nachahmen, und weibische Gesinnung verrathen, muß auch die Bildung vieles Verkehrte und Krankhafte offenbaren. […] Die Natur der byzantinischen Kunst kann aus dem Gesagten ohne Mühe begriffen werden. Sie wird in Folge landschaftlicher Einflüsse und naher Berührungen mit den Ostvölkern mannigfache orientalische Züge bewahren, und solche finden sich sowohl in der Architektur wie in der Malerey […]». For biographical information on Springer, see Betthausen/Feist/Fork, *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon* cit. (note 25), pp. 391-394.

interruption of artistic activity and saved outward representational skills and ideal types»[33].

When Springer returned to the 'Byzantine Question' more than two decades later, the research landscape had already started to shift. In his essay *Byzantine Art and its Influence in the West*, first published in 1883, Springer now conceded that Byzantine art ranked «in many respects higher than the contemporary Occidental culture in the West» and that «in the early Middle Ages, that is the 9th to 11th centuries, it towered over Occidental art in many respects […]»[34]. He eventually concluded: «We give Byzantine art the honor of a living art, strongly developed from native roots, which in the early Middle Ages far surpassed Western art in beauty and wealth. This last concession, however, includes the demand that our western art be understood as an independent art as well. Byzantine art had no influence on the North in the later Middle Ages while in Italy it was limited to certain geographical landscapes and individual branches of the arts»[35].

Anton Springer was by no means a lone voice in his negative assessment of Byzantine art and culture. Franz Xaver Kraus and Wilhelm Vöge, for instance, could be cited with similar statements emphasizing western cultural hegemony at the expense of a Byzantine cultural tradition that is portrayed as corrupted both as a result of its geographical location and long history of contacts with its Eastern neighbors[36].

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33. SPRINGER, *Kunsthistorische Briefe* cit. (note 32), pp. 412-13: «[Das Schicksal der byzantinischen Kunst] war an jenes des byzantinischen Reiches geknüpft; sie ging in der eigenen Heimat in Barbarei unter und wich im Abendlande selbständigen nationalen Regungen. Doch war sie es, welche die gänzliche Unterbrechung der Kunstthätigkeit hinderte, und die äußere Geschicklichkeit, wie die idealen Typen rettete».

34. A. SPRINGER, *Die byzantinische Kunst und ihr Einfluß im Abendlande*, in ID., *Bilder aus der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, 2 vols., Bonn ²1886, pp. 79-112, here p. 98.

35. A. SPRINGER, *Die byzantinische Kunst und ihr Einfluß im Abendlande* cit. (note 34), p. 110: «Wir geben der byzantinischen Kunst die Ehre einer lebendigen, aus heimischen Wurzeln stark entwickelten Kunst, welche im tieferen Mittelalter die abendländische an Schönheit und Reichthum weit überragte. Dieses letztere Zugeständnis schließt aber die Forderung in sich, unsere abendländische Kunst gleichfalls als eine selbständige aufzufassen. Die byzantinische Kunst hat auf den Norden im tieferen Mittelalter keinen, in Italien nur einen auf bestimmte Landschaften und einzelne Kunstzweige beschränkten Einfluß geübt».

36. See F. X. KRAUS, *Geschichte der christlichen Kunst*, 2 vols., Freiburg (Breisgau), 1897,

More positive views started to emerge around the turn of the twentieth century. When George Count Vizthum of Eckstädt (1880-1945), a medieval art historian no longer widely known, held his inaugural lecture at the University of Leipzig in 1910, he emphasized that «the Byzantine question is hardly disputed today. There is incontrovertible evidence that Byzantine art exerted its influence on the West throughout the Middle Ages. The task now arises of finding an explanation for this fact, determining the extent of the influence and the type of its processing. […] The Byzantine models, which Western artists saw in abundance, must have awakened in them the idea of the possibility of a monumental style. In the development of the human figure, they preserved the connection with antiquity, and the compositions, which were essentially aimed at sensual effects and the stimulation of representational ideas, contrasted the disordered urge of Western art with the ideal of a clear and effective pictorial form»[37].

Despite such intrepid views, the rise of nationalism across Europe during the nineteen-teens and -twenties did not fail to have an impact on the 'Byzantine Question'. Following Schnaase, Kugler, Springer, and Kraus, it was early twentieth-century art historians such as Adolf Rosenberg and Wilhelm Pinder, whose arrogant na-

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pp. 77-97. For a more comprehensive investigation of the role of Kraus and Vöge, see H. A. Klein, *Byzanz, der Westen und das ‚wahre' Kreuz* cit. (note 11), pp. 1-14, especially pp. 8-9. For an assessment of the political and cultural climate in Germany during the decades in question, see generally K. Brush, *The Shaping of Art History: Wilhelm Vöge, Adolph Goldschmidt, and the Study of Medieval Art*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1996.

37. G. Vizthum von Eckstädt, *Résumé der Antrittsvorlesung an der Universität Leipzig am 19. November 1910*, in «Byzantinische Zeitschrift», 20 (1911), pp. 352-354. «Die byzantinische Frage ist heute kaum noch umstritten. Unumstößliche Beweise sind dafür beigebracht, daß die byzantinische Kunst das ganze Mittelalter hindurch ihren Einfluß auf das Abendland ausgeübt hat. Es erwächst nun die Aufgabe, eine Erklärung für diese Tatsache zu finden, den Umfang des Einflusses und die Art der Verarbeitung festzustellen. […] Die byzantinischen Vorbilder, die den abendländischen Künstlern reichlich zu Gesicht kamen, mußten in ihnen die Vorstellung von der Möglichkeit eines monumentalen Stiles erwecken. In der Durchbildung der menschlichen Gestalt bewahrten sie den Zusammenhang mit der Antike und die wesentlich auf sinnliche Wirkung und Erregung gegenständlicher Vorstellungen gerichteten Kompositionen stellten dem ungeordneten Drang der abendländischen Kunst das Ideal einer klaren und wirkungsvollen Bildform gegenüber». For biographical information on George Count Vizthum of Eckstädt, see Betthausen/Feist/Fork, *Metzler Kunsthistoriker Lexikon* cit. (note 25), pp. 425-427.

tionalism perpetuated their negative assessment of Byzantine influ-
ence on the West. A short passage from Rosenberg's *Handbuch der
Kunstgeschichte*, published in 1902, may indicate that voices margin-
alizing the impact of Byzantine art on its western neighbors can be
heard alongside more positive assessments. According to Rosenberg:
«Byzantine art had only a slight influence on the art of the Middle
Ages. Only where Byzantines, especially Greek monks, settled [...]
or where lively trade relations were maintained with Constantino-
ple, such as in Sicily and Venice, was Byzantine art and craftsmanship
introduced, but without planting fruitful seeds of further education.
The Occident, Western Europe, only became better acquainted with
the products of Byzantine craftsmanship through the Crusades, at a
time when local art based on ancient Roman and Roman-Christian
principles had already assumed an independent physiognomy»[38].

Some thirty years later, Wilhelm Pinder was even willing to char-
acterize the influence of Byzantine art and culture as an imminent
danger and sign of inevitable decline: «In Otto III», Pinder states,
«the grandson of an Italian and the son of a Greek, the connection
[with Byzantium] became a real threat to Germanness. […] He was
ashamed of his Saxon origins and wanted to set up a real southern
empire with his friend Gerbert of Reims as Pope. It was a good thing
for him and us that he died so early and was succeeded by another
German-blooded successor in the Bavarian Henry II»[39].

Notwithstanding such nationalist relapses, Count Vizthum of
Eckstädt's call for a more rigorous academic study of the 'Byzantine
Question' was taken up by a younger generation of scholars during
and after the Second World War, whose primary interest was in the
style-defining role of Byzantine art and the model-character of its
iconographic formulae. Among those scholars was Wilhelm Koehler
(1884-1959), who had held a professorial position at the University

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38. A. Rosenberg, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1902.

39. W. Pinder, *Die Kunst der deutschen Kaiserzeit bis zum Ende der staufischen Klassik (Vom
Wesen und Werden deutscher Formen, Geschichtliche Betrachtungen, Bd. 1)*, Leipzig, 1937, p. 119:
«In Otto III., dem Enkel einer Italienerin und Sohne einer Griechin, ist die Verbindung
[mit Byzanz] zur wirklichen Bedrohung des Deutschtums geworden. […] Er schämte sich
seiner sächsischen Abkunft und gedachte mit seinem Freunde Gerbert von Reims als Papst
ein echtes Südreich aufzurichten. Wohl ihm und uns, daß er so früh starb und in dem bay-
erischen Heinrich II. einen wieder deutschblütigen Nachfolger erhielt».

of Jena before emigrating to the United States in 1932 and taking up a position at Harvard University[40]. He stressed the profound importance of Byzantine art for the stylistic development of the pictorial arts in France during the Romanesque period. Pointing to the frescoes of Berzé-la-Ville and other twelfth-century monuments executed in various media, he identified several "waves of Byzantine influence" as a crucial factor behind the stylistic changes in the pictorial arts of medieval Europe[41].

In Koehler wake, it was particularly the work of Wilhelm Messerer (1920-1989)[42]. Hugo Buchthal (1909-1969)[43]. Ernst Kitzinger (1912-2003)[44]. Kurt Weitzmann (1904-1993)[45], and Otto Demus (1902-1990)[46], who, from the late 1940s through the 1970s, fundamentally re-shaped our knowledge and understanding of the model character of Byzantine monuments and their impact on Western artists and

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40. W. Koehler, *Byzantine Art in the West*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 1 (1941), pp. 63-87. For biographical information, see *Koehler, Wilhelm Reinhold Walter*, in *Dictionary of Art Historians* (website). https://arthistorians.info/koehlerw/.

41. Ibid., pp. 69-87.

42. W. Messerer, *Ottonische Einzelfiguren unter byzantinischem Einfluß. Studien zur byzantinischen Frage in ottonischer Zeit*, Munich, 1949 (PhD Dissertation).

43. H. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford, 1957; Id., *Byzantium and Reichenau*, in *Byzantine Art. An European Art*, ed. by M. Chatzidakis, Athens, 1966, pp. 43-58; Id., *The "Musterbuch" of Wolfenbüttel and its position in the art of the 13th century*, Vienna 1979.

44. See, for instance, E. Kitzinger, *Byzantium and the West in the Second Half of the Twelfth Century*, in « Gesta », 9 (1970), pp. 49-56; Id., *The Byzantine Contribution to Western Art of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 20 (1966), pp. 25-47 [= Id., *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies*, London, 1976, pp. 357-388].

45. See, for instance, K. Weitzmann, *Various Aspects of Byzantine Influence on the Latin Countries from the 6th to the 12th Century*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 20 (1966), pp. 3-24. See also, more generally, Id., *Art in the Medieval West and Its Contacts with Byzantium (Collected Studies Series, 148)*, London, 1982.

46. See, for instance, O. Demus, *Regensburg, Sizilien und Venedig. Zur Frage des byzantinischen Einflusses in der romanischen Wandmalerei*, in « Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik », 2 (1952), pp. 95-104; Id., Die Rolle der byzantinischen Kunst in Europa, in « Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik », 14 (1965), pp. 139-40; Id., *Vorbildqualität und Lehrfunktion der byzantinischen Kunst*, in *Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes (Akten des XXI. Internationalen Kongresses* für *Kunstgeschichte 1)*, Berlin, 1967, pp. 92-98; Id., *Byzantine Art and the West* cit. (note 13); Id., *European Wall Painting around 1200*, in *The Year 1200: A Symposium*. New York, 1975, pp. 95-118.

patrons. Thus, efforts to *orientalize* the Byzantine Empire and its cultural products in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gradually gave way to a new tendency to *Europeanize* – for the lack of a better word – Byzantine art and culture in the second half of the twentieth century, a trend that finds its perhaps most visible expression in the programmatic title of the 9th Council of Europe exhibition in Athens in 1964, *Byzantine Art – An* [sic!] *European Art*, which acted like a spark plug for a renewed interest in the 'Byzantine Question' in the years following[47]. As Otto Demus put it in his essay for the exhibition, Byzantium was now considered «a master teacher, the greatest between the antique and the Gothic»[48]. Six years later, in his publication of the prestigious Wrightsman lectures, entitled *Byzantine Art and the West*, Demus further defined his own scholarly goal as an effort to «show the role played by Byzantium in the development of Western art» with a stress «not on 'influences', [...] but on the function of Byzantine artists as teachers and pacemakers and on the object-lessons provided by Byzantine models in the West»[49].

Setting his own approach apart from earlier scholarship, he further emphasized in the first chapter: «What interests us today is not the amount of copying and borrowing that went on from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries [...] but that of teaching and guidance, of help in evolving the West's own artistic language. The great achievement of Western art can be understood and properly evaluated only if the conditions of its formation are known, including those elements which came from outside»[50].

Unfortunately, there is no room here to develop this historiographic strand further. Suffice it to say that new voices started to emerge from the late 1970s through 1990s, raising concerns about the appropriateness of the teacher-student model so strongly advocated by Demus and others[51]. Further criticism centered on the

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47. *Byzantine Art - An European Art*, Zapperion Exhibition Hall, Athens, 1964.

48. Ibid., p. 110. See also H. R. HAHNLOSER, *Magistra Latinitas und Peritia Greca*. in *Festschrift für Herbert von Einem*, ed. by G. KAUFFMANN, Berlin, 1965, pp. 77-93.

49. DEMUS, *Byzantine Art and the West* cit. (note 13), p. vii.

50. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

51. See, for instance, A. CUTLER, *Misapprehensions and Misgivings: Byzantine Art and the West in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, in « Medievalia », 7 (1981), pp. 41-77, esp. p. 45; B.

term 'influence' as well as the Koehler's 'wave' metaphor, in which such Byzantine 'influence' was said to have manifested itself across much of Western Europe[52]. This younger generation of American and European scholars, some of them trained or intellectually formed by the previous generation of German and Austrian emigré art historians, forcefully advocated for a more nuanced and differentiated understanding of Byzantine and Western medieval art[53]. The rise of critical and post-colonial theory and, more recently, the global turn in medieval studies have done much to accelerate these trends, and have sensitized us for the role Byzantium, understood as a political as well as cultural entity, might have played as a bridge, catalyst, incubator, and/or mediator of artistic and cultural transfer processes in more than one geographical direction[54].

Responding to the need for more nuance and greater differentiation, the recently published Routledge *Companion to Byzantium and the West, 900-1200*, accordingly features subsections entitled 'Byzantium and a Multifaceted Latin World' and 'Agents and Objects' in an effort to broaden the spectrum of scholarly perspectives and herme-

ZEITLER, *Cross-Cultural Interpretations of Imagery in the Middle Ages*, in « The Art Bulletin », 86 (1994), pp. 680-94.

52. For an early, more general critique of the term 'influence' in art historical discourse, see M. BAXANDALL, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, New Haven and London, 1985, pp. 58-62. See also A. CUTLER, *From Loot to Scholarship: The Italian Response to Byzantine Artifacts, ca. 1200-1750*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 49 (1995), pp. 237-267, here p. 244, note 40, with regard to the late Gothic art.

53. For a more nuanced approach to the 'Byzantine Question' during this period, see H. BELTING, *Zwischen Gotik und Byzanz. Gedanken zur Geschichte der sächsischen Buchmalerei im 13. Jahrhundert*, in « Zeitschrift *für* Kunstgeschichte », 41 (1978), pp. 217-257; H. BELTING, *Die Reaktion der Kunst des 13. Jahrhunderts auf den Import von Reliquien und Ikonen*, in *Il medio Oriente e l'Occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo* (Atti del XXIV Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte 2), ed. by H. BELTING, Bologna, 1982, pp. 35-54.

54. For my own efforts in this respect, see, for instance, H. A. KLEIN, *Aspekte der Byzanz-Rezeption im Abendland*, in *Byzanz - die Macht der Bilder*, ed. by M. BRANDT and A. EFFENBERGER, Hildesheim, 1998, pp. 122-153; ID., *Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 58 (2004), pp. 283-314; ID., *Amalfi, Byzantium, and the Vexed Question of Artistic ›Influence‹*, in « Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft », 69 (2015), pp. 130-156.

neutical approaches[55]. The volume's editors, well aware of the complexity of the issues at hand, stressed that «terminological difficulties have to be taken into consideration when speaking about medieval 'Byzantine-Western' relations. Such a label is, of course, completely anachronistic and at the same time seems to be rather blurred with regard to 'the West'. First of all, this term has a purely geographical meaning, but at the same time it risks evoking inappropriate and essentialist overtones about distinctive features of 'the Occident' or a nascent 'Western World' viewed in contrast with the Byzantine tradition»[56].

With regard to the Byzantine tradition, Marc Lauxtermann and Mark Whittow have recently taken a similarly nuanced approach when they described Byzantium during the Eleventh Century as a place that «is all about being in between, whether this is between Basil II and Alexios Komnenos, between the forces of the Normans, the Petchenegs and the Turks, or between different social groupings, cultural identities and religious persuasions»[57]. I would like to advocate a similar in-between-ness as a state of mind when reflecting the 'Byzantine Question' during the 'long eleventh century' and a focus on modes of communication and exchange as a means of bridging geographical, political, religious, and/or cultural divides[58].

For the remainder of this paper, let me therefore get back to the evidence of art and the way this in-between-ness as a state of mind might play out in art historical practice. I have already mentioned the ivory plaque depicting the standing figures of Otto II and The-

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55. *A Companion to Byzantium and the West, 900-1200*, ed. by N. Drocourt and S. Kolditz, Leiden and Boston, 2022.

56. Ibid., p. 2.

57. *Byzantium in the Eleventh Century: Being in Between*, ed. by M. D. Lauxtermann and M. Whittow, London 2017, pp. xv-xviii.

58. Indeed, the 24th Congress of Byzantine Studies, which was held in Venice and Padua in August 2022 under the title "Byzantium - Bridge between Worlds", revealed the continued interest in communication, exchange, and the bridging of geographical, cultural, political, religious, and a plethora of other divides, even though Paul Magdalino, in his inaugural lecture for the Congress, cautioned that the bridge metaphor is more indicative of our own attitudes and outlook on the world than reflective of the Byzantines' self-image. See P. Magdalino, *Reflections and Elaboration on the Congress and Its Main Theme: "Byzantium - Bridge Between Worlds"*.

ophanu crowned by Christ and accompanied by a figure commonly
identified as that of a certain monk John, who, crouching at Otto's
feet, implores Christ by way of an adjacent Greek inscription to have
mercy on him[59]. Notwithstanding old and more recent claims that
this plaque is a nineteenth-century forgery, I include it here as the
genuine medieval artifact I still believe it is, until a more persuasive
case to the contrary can be made[60].

The inscriptions identifying Otto and Theophanu in a mix of
Greek and Latin letters have been taken to indicate a date of man-
ufacture between 982-983, namely the year or two preceding the
death of Otto II on December 7, 983[61]. While such a narrow date
range has been widely accepted since Percy Ernst Schramm asserted
that the chancery of Otto II did not use the title "Imperator Ro-
manorum" consistently before March 982, focusing on the use of the
title in official documents alone may be misleading. As a polemical
gesture pointedly directed against the Byzantines, such titulature is
already used quite effectively in the opening lines of Liudprand of
Cremona's account of his *Legatio* to Constantinople in 968[62]. Here,
Liudprand offers his homage to Otto I, his wife Adelheid, and his
son Otto II addressing them as «Ottones Romanorum invictissimos
imperatores augustos gloriosissimamque Adelheidem imperatricem

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59. For the invocation inscription, see most recently Gerstl, *Die Tafel mit Otto und
Theophano* cit. (note 18), pp. 12-14. See also F. Dölger, *Die Ottonenkaiser und Byzanz*, in
*Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie, vol. 3: Karolingische und Ottonische
Kunst: Werden, Wesen, Wirkung*, Wiesbaden, 1957, pp. 49-59; A. Heisenberg, *Review: P. E.
Schramm, Die deutschen Kaiser und Könige in Bildern ihrer Zeit*, in « Byzantinische Zeitschrift »,
31 (1931), pp. 204-205.

60. For the most recent claim that the ivory plaque is a nineteenth-century forgery, see
Gerstl, *Die Tafel mit Otto und Theophano* cit. (note 18), pp. 9-33. For prior doubts about the
panel's authenticity, see A.-N. Didron, *Quelques jour en Allmagne*, in «Annales archéologiques »,
18 (1858), p. 313-330; E. Molinier, *Histoire generale des arts appliques a l'industrie*, *vol. 1: Ivoire*,
Paris, 1896, pp. 144-145.

61. P. E. Schramm and F. Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser
in Bildern ihrer Zeit 751-1190*, 2nd ed., Munich, 1983, Nr. 91, p. 193-194. W. Berschin,
Griechisch-lateinisches Mittelalter. Von Hieronymus zu Nikolaus von Kues, Bern and Munich,
1980, p. 222.

62. Compare Mayr-Harting, *Liutprand of Cremona's Account* cit. (note 15), p. 541. See
Schramm/Mütherich, *Die deutschen Kaiser und Könige* cit. (note 61), p. 194.

augustam»[63], If the person responsible for the commission and ex-ecution of the ivory was indeed John Philagathos, a Greek monk from Rossano in Calabria, who later served as chancellor of Italy from 980-982 and *archimandrite* of the imperial abbey at Nonanto-la before becoming pope John, it is tempting to consider that the ivory was commissioned much earlier, namely on the occasion of the celebration of the imperial couple's marriage and Theophanu's coronation in St. Peter's on April 14, 972, and that it was made in an Italian, perhaps even Roman workshop[64]. While details in the depic-tion of the imperial robes and gestures betray the hand of an artist not deeply familiar with Byzantine customs and conventions, the panel's style and iconography consciously assimilate, as has long been noted, contemporary Constantinopolitan models such as the double coronation of Romanos II and Bertha-Eudokia in the Cabinet des Medailles in Paris[65]. The iconography of the plaque and the titulature of its inscriptions thus participate in a broader attempt to emulate and assimilate Byzantine court culture at a critical moment in the history of Ottonian rule in Italy. The marriage charter (Fig. 1), which recently received renewed attention by John Osborne, should be cit-ed as the second object to have actively participated in this effort[66]. Executed in Rome in a scriptorium of or near the Church of the Holy Apostles by a team of scribes and craftsmen astutely familiar with Byzantine aesthetic norms and artistic practices, this legal doc-ument, unique in its artistic conception and execution, is composed

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63. Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de Legatione*, in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera Om-nia*, ed. by P. Chiesa, CCCM 156, Turnhout, 1998, pp. 185-218, here p. 187. For an English translation, see *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. P. Squatriti, Washington, D.C. 2007, p. 238.

64. For biographical information on John Philagathos, see most recently l. Canetti, *Giovanni XVI*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 55, Roma, 2001, pp. 590-95.

65. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Médailles. On the so-called *Romanos Ivory* and its date of manufacture, see most recently, M. G. Parani, *The Romanos Ivory and the New Tokalı Kilise: Imperial Costume as a Tool for Dating Byzantine Art*, in « Cahiers Archéologiques », 49 (2001), pp. 15-28; A. Cutler, *The Date and Significance of the Romanos Ivory*, in *Byzantine East, Latin West. Art-historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. by C. Moss and K. Kiefer, Princeton, 1995, pp. 605-614; I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 31 (1977), pp. 305-325.

66. J. Osborne, *The Dower Charter of Otto II and Theophanu, and the Roman Scriptorium at Santi Apostoli*, in « Papers of the British School at Rome », 89 (2021), pp. 137-157.

of three parchment sheets stitched together to form a single scroll and was stained with iron oxide and madder to resemble the purple murex dye widely used in the Eastern Mediterranean[67]. The scroll is further decorated with seven full and one half-pair of medallions with inscribed scenes of fierce lions and griffons subduing more peaceful animals, thus imitating the appearance of a patterned silk textile with embroidered borders over which the charter's text was applied in gold ink[68]. Much like the earlier *Ottonianum*, in which Otto I re-confirmed papal rights and possessions shortly after his imperial coronation in February 962, the marriage charter appropriates the format of Byzantine diplomatic documents in a conscious effort to emulate Byzantine artistic practices and diplomatic customs.[69] It does so, however, in an even more creative and effective way by imitating an entirely different artistic genre and technique, namely that of Byzantine silk textiles[70].

The Cluny ivory with its double coronation of Otto and Theophanu through the hands of Christ similarly engages a distinctive Byzantine image formula and visual aesthetic. Here, however, the execution matches both the medium and technique of its model, if we assume that the so-called *Romanos Ivory* or a closely related ivory plaque inspired its production. No doubt chosen for its poignant formulation of the idea of divine rulership in a specific dynas-

67. For the material aspects of the charter's manufacture, see E. Garrison, *Mimetic Bodies* cit. (note 17), here especially, pp. 213-221.

68. For a detailed analysis of the decoration of the charter, see Cutler/North, *Word over Image* cit. (note 19).

69. On the so-called *Ottonianum* (Rome, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, AA. Arm. I-XVIII, 18) see most recently Osborne, *Dower Charter of Otto II and Theophanu* cit. (note 66), pp. 137-157; L. Roach, *The Ottonians and Italy*, in « German History », 36 (2018), pp. 349-64, here 352-353; H. Hoffmann, *Sog. Ottonianum*, in *Otto der Grosse, Magdeburg und Europa*, 2 vols, Mainz, 2001, II, Nr. VI.25, pp. 431-432; W. Georgi, *Ottonianum und Heiratsurkunde 962/972*, in *Kaiserin Theophanu. Begegnung des Ostens und Westens um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends*, ed. by A. von Euw and P. Schreiner, 2 vols., Cologne, 1991, II, pp. 135-60. For the text, see *Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser, vol. 1: Die Urkunden Konrad I., Heinrich I. und Otto I.*, ed. by Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde, Hannover, 1879-1984, Nr. 235, pp. 322-27.

70. For an in-depth discussion of Byzantine silk textiles as models for the marriage charter and *Ottonianum*, see E. Garrison, *Mimetic Bodies* cit. (note 17), pp. 213-221; Cutler/North, *Word over Image* cit. (note 19), pp. 176-179.

tic constellation, the Byzantine model served its patron well to find visual expression for the idea that Christ's rule over the world works through the Ottonian imperial couple and, in extension, their legitimate offspring[71].

The visual adaptation of the Cluny ivory fits well into the orbit of an imperial court and chancery that had access to a set of highly skilled artists and learned advisors, who were eager to appropriate Byzantine visual formulae for specific political and ideological ends[72]. The importance of such early – and in some respects unique – experiments is borne out in later visual adaptations of the same idea in works produced by Western artists in the scriptoria of the Reichenau and Echternach. The first re-adaption of the new formula seems to occur between 1007 and 1012, namely in the frontispiece miniature of the Pericopes Book of Henry II at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (Fig. 3), where Sts. Peter and Paul introduce the slightly smaller figures of king Henry II and his wife Kunigunde to an enthroned Christ who places crowns on their heads while female personifications representing the cities and provinces of the realm look on from below, paying homage to Christ and the imperial couple[73].

The longevity of the formula is attested once again some forty years later in a Gospel book made around 1050 in the scriptorium of Echternach and destined for the collegiate church of Sts. Si-

71. For Byzantine attitudes towards divine rulership, see recently P. Magdalino, *Basileia: The Idea of Monarchy in Byzantium, 600-1200*, in *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, ed. by A. Kaldellis and N. Siniossoglou, Cambridge, 2017, pp. 575-598. For the impact of Byzantine and earlier Carolingian concepts of rulership in Ottonian Germany, see R. McKitterick, *Ottonian Intellectual Culture in the Tenth Century and the Role of Theophanu*, in *Early Medieval Europe*, 2 (1993), pp. 53-74. On the reign of Empress Theophanu's, see S. MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship*, pp. 150-179.

72. Osborne, *Dower Charter of Otto II and Theophanu* cit. (note 66), pp. 137-157.

73. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 4452, fol. 2r. On the manuscript, see *Das Perikopenbuch Heinrichs II. Clm 4452 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München (Begleitband zur Faksimile-Ausgabe)*, ed. by F. Mütherich and P. Bloch, Frankfurt, 1994; *Zierde für ewige Zeit. Das Perikopenbuch Heinrichs II.*, ed. by H. Fillitz, R. Kahsnitz, and U. Kuder, Frankfurt, 1994. See L. Körntgen, *Königsherrschaft und Gottes Gnade*, Berlin, 2001, here pp. 241-249; J. Ott, *Vom Zeichencharakter der Herrscherkrone. Krönungszeremoniell und Krönungsbild im Mittelalter. Der Mainzer Ordo und das Sakramentar Heinrichs II.*, in *Zeremoniell als höfische Ästhetik in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. by J. J. Berns and T. Rahn, Tübingen, 1995, pp. 534-571.

mon and Judas in Goslar, now in the University Library of Uppsala (Fig. 4)[74]. Here, Emperor Henry III and his wife Agnes approach the enthroned figure of Christ in a heavenly double-mandorla to receive their crowns from his hands in a joint act of coronation. The Latin inscription in the mandorla above and below quotes Psalm 113, verse 24: «Caelum Caeli Domino; filiis hominum terram autem dedit» (The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; the earth, however, he gave to the children of man), further re-enforcing Christ's divine blessing of the Salian dynasty and their imperial rule as encapsulated in the image[75].

Beyond the specific iconographic formula of the double coronation, ample evidence exists for the targeted appropriation and creative reuse of Byzantine art and culture during the late Ottonian and Salian periods[76]. Two well-known examples are the opening miniatures in Henry III's Golden Gospels for Speyer Cathedral in the Library of the Escorial[77]. Likewise executed in the scriptorium at Echternach sometime between 1043 and 1046, the manuscript's full-page miniature on fol. 2v (Fig. 5) shows Henry's parents Conrad and Gisela, both identified with their imperial titles in accompanying inscriptions, kneeling at the feet of the enthroned Christ in an effort to kiss them. This motif is familiar through another prominent monument of Ottonian art, namely the Golden Antependium of Basel Cathedral (Fig. 6), which was commissioned and executed at some

74. Uppsala, University Library, C 93, 3v. On the manuscript, see C. NORDENFALK, *Codex Caesareus Upsaliensis: An Echternach Gospel-Book of the Eleventh Century*, Stockholm, 1971.

75. See S. WEINFURTER, *The Salian Century: Main Currents in an Age of Transition*, Philadelphia, 1999, pp. 85-111, here pp. 92-93. B. SCHNEIDMÜLLER, *Zwischen Gott und den Getreuen. Vier Skizzen zu den Fundamenten der mittelalterlichen Monarchie*, in « Frühmittelalterliche Studien », 36 (2002), pp. 193-224. On the representation of rulers in Ottonian and early Salian manuscripts more broadly, see also K. G. BEUCKERS, *Der verfügte Adressat. Manifestation und Autorschaft in Herrscherbildern ottonischer und frühsalischer Buchmalerei*, in Mäzenaten im Mittelalter aus europäischer Perspektive. Von historischen Akteuren zu literarischen Textkonzepten, ed. by B. BASTERT, A. BIHRER, T. REUVEKAMP-FELBER, Göttingen, 2017, pp. 239-266.

76. For a summary account, see, for instance, H. A. KLEIN, *Aspekte der Byzanz-Rezeption im Abendland* cit. (note 54), pp. 122-153.

77. Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Cod. Vitr. 17, fol. 2v. See *Codex Aureus Escurialensis* [Faksimile edition with commentary], 3 vols, ed. by C. OLMOS, J. RATHOFER et al., Madrid, 1995-2001, pp. 363-396.

point during the reign of Henry II and Kunigunde and is represent-
ing the imperial couple crouching at the feet of Christ in *prosky-
nesis* and eternal adoration[78]. While its reappearance in the Golden
Gospels for Speyer Cathedral seems straight forward as a more or
less direct intervisual reference, the team of artists responsible for its
execution at Echternach added an interesting twist, for there can be
no doubt that an excellent, likely visiting, Byzantine artist worked
side by side with his German peers to execute the head, hands, and
feet of the enthroned Christ in an effort to add a distinct life-like
quality to the visible flesh parts of the divine figure[79]. But not only
the visual language changes in Christ's heavenly mandorla; the writ-
ten word surrounding the figure of Christ inside his mandorla is
likewise transformed, as the Latin words of Psalm 71, verse 19: «ben-
edictum nomen maiestatis eius in aeternum et replebitur maiestatis
eius omnis terra» are translated into Greek letters. Similar, equally
subtle interventions also characterize the manuscript's dedication
page, which shows Henry III and his wife Agnes approaching the
enthroned Virgin Mary, all comprised in an architectural frame that
represents Speyer cathedral (Fig. 7). The Virgin, whose facial features
and hands are, once again, rendered in a different, more life-like man-
ner, in turn accepts the gift of the Golden Gospels from the hands of
Henry with her right while crowning his wife in a swift adaptation
of the familiar Byzantine coronation formula with her left.

The presence of an itinerant or visiting Byzantine artist in the
scriptorium at Echternach is not the only evidence for a contin-
ued openness among German rulers towards Byzantium and their
affinity to its artistic products. Shortly after his own lavish imperial
coronation in Rome in 1027, Emperor Conrad II, is known to have
sent Bishop Werner of Strasbourg and Count Manegold of Werd on
a diplomatic mission to Constantinople[80]. While the specific objec-

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78. Paris, Musée Cluny. Musée nationale du Moyen-Âge, Cl. 2350. See G. SUCKALE-
REDLEFSEN, *Die goldene Altartafel und ihre kunsthistorische Einordnung*, in *Der Basler Münster-
schatz*, ed. by HISTORISCHES MUSEUM BASEL, Basel, 2001, pp. 293-303; J.-P. CAILLET, *L'antiquite
classique, le haut moyen âge et Byzance au Musee de Cluny*, Paris, 1985, pp. 233-235; B. VON
RODA, *Die Goldene Altartafel*, Basler Kostbarkeiten 20, Basel, 1999.

79. For the identification of the artist as an itinerant or visiting artist trained in Byzanti-
ne style and idiom, see DEMUS, *Byzantine Art and the West* cit. (note 13), pp. 79-80.

80. Contemporary evidence for Conrad's embassy is scant. However, see WIPO, *Gesta*

tive of Conrad's mission remains elusive, some scholars have argued that it may have been to secure a Byzantine bride for his son and heir Henry[81]. If indeed this was the journey's objective, it failed for a host of complex historical and political reasons. Yet, even without a Byzantine bride, the Salian rulers' openness to Byzantine customs is attested by Adam of Bremen, who claims that Henry III, in a letter to Constantine Monomachos, assured the emperor that he himself was «of Greek descent through Theophanu and the valiant Otto, and that it was therefore not surprising that he loved the Greeks and strove to imitate them in their habits and customs, which he indeed did»[82]. Additional material evidence for such claims may indeed be found in Conrad and Henry's coinage. A limited issue of silver denars minted in Speyer features the pair's bust portraits on either side of a central cross staff (Fig. 8) in clear imitation of similar gold coins minted in Constantinople during the joint reign of Basil II and Constantine VIII (Fig. 9). Here again, it is a poignant formula of Byzantine political iconography that struck a chord with Western rulers, eager to promote and effectively secure their own dynastic ambitions.

A direct knowledge of Byzantine diplomatic protocols and practices is attested for both Conrad and Henry through a number of contemporary Western sources, including one that allows us to reconstruct an act of re-gifting of Byzantine objects received as part of

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Chuonradi imperatoris, in *Die Werke Wipos*, ed. by H. Bresslau, MGH SS rer. Ger. 61, 3rd ed., Hannover, 1915 [reprinted 1993], pp. 1-62, esp. 42; P. Jaffé, *Regesta Pontificum romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum natum MCXCVIII*, Paris, 1885-1888, 1: Nr. 4207 (3202), p. 535; *Annales Augustani*, ed. by G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 3, Hannover, 1839 [reprinted 1986], p. 125.

81. For an evaluation of the sources, see Klein, *Eastern Objects and Western Desires* cit. (note 54), pp. 296-298; H. Wolfram, *Die Gesandtschaft Konrads II. nach Konstantinopel*, in « Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung », 100 (1992), pp. 161-174; O. Kresten, *Correctiunculae zu Auslandsschreiben byzantinischer Kaiser des 11. Jahrhunderts*, in « Aachener Kunstblätter », 60 (1994), pp. 143-162, here pp. 143-144.

82. Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, book III, chapter 32. See Adam von Bremen, *Hamburgische Kirchengeschichte*, ed. by B. Schmeidler, MGH SRG, 3rd ed., Hannover and Leipzig, 1917, p. 174.15-21: «[Tunc ille Constantinopolitano rescribens iactavit] se inter alia descendere a Grecorum prosapia, Theophanu et fortissimo Ottone sui generis auctoribus. Ideoque nec mirum esse, si Grecos diligeret, quos vellet etiam habitu et moribus imitari; quod et fecit».

a Byzantine diplomatic mission in 1049[83]. Thanks to Otto Kresten's hypothetical reconstruction, it can be assumed that Henry received a number of diplomatic gifts on this occasion, including precious textiles and a golden vessel, which he in turn donated to the collegiate church of Sts. Simon and Judas in Goslar, where the textile was appropriated as a *pala altaris* and the golden vessel turned into a chalice for the celebration of the liturgy[84].

Similar gifts of precious textiles, liturgical and devotional objects, and saintly relics are attested later in the eleventh century as part of Byzantine diplomatic missions to Salian emperors[85]. According to a letter cited at length in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, Henry IV received not only 144,000 nomismata and one hundred silk garments from Emperor Alexios I in an effort to convince him to take action against Robert Guiscard in Southern Italy[86]. The letter further reveals that Henry, after swearing an oath in support the emperor's cause in Italy, would receive another 261,000 nomismata and other payments. As if to stress the sincerity of the emperor's wishes, Alexios's letter concludes: «For now we are sending your Highness as a token of our friendship a golden pectoral cross decorated with pearls, a golden container with relics of several saints, each of which identified by an attached note, a chalice of sardonyx, a crystal goblet, a bloodstone set in gold, and some opobalsamon»[87]. It is difficult to assess what impact exactly such gifts had on the emperor, his family, and high-level members of his court, including leading clergymen and artists working in their immediate orbit. But the refined material and technical quality of these and other Byzantine products arriving in Germany during the eleventh century cannot have failed to impress the more sophisticated members of the late Ottonian and Salian elite, if they were indeed fortunate enough to experience and handle them first hand.

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83. See KRESTEN, *Correctiunculae* cit. (note 81), pp. 143-162.

84. Ibid., pp. 143-144.

85. For a later diplomatic mission, see A. BAYER, *Die Byzanzreise des Erzbischofs Gebhard von Salzburg*, in« Byzantinische Zeitschrift », 96.2 (2003), pp. 515-520.

86. ANNA KOMNENE, *Alexiade: Règne de l'empereur Alexis I Comnène (1081-1118)*, ed. and trans. by B. LEIB, 4 vols., Paris, 1937-76, I, pp. 133-36. See also A. CUTLER, *Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies*, « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 55 (2001), pp. 247-278, here p. 251.

87. ANNA KOMNENE, *Alexiade* cit. (note 86), I, p. 135.

Precious liturgical objects such as the reliquary cross, commissioned by abbess Bertha for the collegiate church of St. Nikomedes at Borghorst in Westphalia to enshrine a group of relics donated by Emperor Henry III, or the portable altar, altar crosses, and arm reliquary commissioned by Countess Gertrude for the church of St. Blaise at Brunswick (Fig. 10), which served as her family's *memoria*, give us a glimpse into the world of elite patrons during this period and allow us to appreciate the knowledge and sophistication of artists from whom secular and ecclesiastical patrons alike commissioned such artistic treasures[88]. While these objects more indirectly betray a keen sense of the meaning of materials and the technical sophistication inherent in Byzantine art – witness the subtle application of cloisonné enamel in Countess Gertrude's altar for St. Blaise, for instance –, other works such as the cover of Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim's *Precious Gospels* in the Dommuseum Hildesheim (Fig. 11) convey an even greater awareness of the material properties and iconographic potential Byzantine objects might unfold when re-framed or re-appropriated to function in a local liturgical context.

Commissioned sometime during the first quarter of the eleventh century and likely executed in Hildesheim, the front cover of Bernward's *Precious Gospels* was decorated with the central panel of a close contemporary Byzantine ivory triptych, which shows the classic Byzantine image formula of a *Deesis*[89]. Representing

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88. Pfarrgemeinde St. Nikomedes, Steinfurt-Borghorst. On the reliquary cross from Borghorst, see most recently E. Pallottini, *The Epigraphic Presence on the Borghorst Cross (c. 1050)*, in *Sacred Scripture / Sacred Space: he Interlacing of Real Places and Conceptual Spaces in Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. by T. Frese, W. E. Keil, and K. Krüger, Berlin and Boston, 2019, pp. 63-84; M. Bagnoli, *The Stuff of Heaven. Materials and Craftsmanship in Medieval Reliquaries*, in, *Treasures of Heaven. Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, ed. by M. Bagnoli, H. A. Klein, C. G. Mann, and J. Robinson, New Haven, 2010, pp. 137-147. Id., *Cross of St. Nikomedes of Borghorst*, in *Treasures of Heaven* cit. (note 87), Nr. 77, p. 174.

89. Hildesheim, Dom-Museum, DS 18. See New York, 2011, Nr. 32, pp. 90-93. See M. Brandt and U. Kuder, *Das Sog. 'Kostbare Evangeliar'*, in *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen*, ed. by M. Brandt and A. Eggebrecht, 2 vols., Mainz, 1993, 2, Nr. VIII-30, pp. 570-578; *Das Kostbare Evangeliar des Heiligen Bernward*, ed. by M. Brandt, Munich, 1993; C. T. Little, *The "Precious" Gospels of Bishop Bernward*, in *The Glory of Byzantium* cit. (note 18), Nr. 305, pp. 466-68; M. Brandt, *Bernward und Byzanz*, in *Buchkunst im Mittelalter und Kunst der Gegenwart: Scrinium Kilonense; Festschrift für Ulrich Kuder*, ed. by H.-W. Stork, B. Tewes, and C. Waszak, Nordhausen, 2008, pp. 43-54; Klein, *Aspekte der Byzanz-Rezeption*, cit. (note 54), pp. 131-132.

the Virgin and St. John the Baptist flanking a central figure of Christ, both standing slightly elevated on footstools as they plead with him for mercy and the salvation of mankind, this poignant intercessory image gained currency in Germany during the Ottonian period by way of such carved icons. The Latin inscription SIS PIA QVESO TVO BERNVVARDO TRINA POTESTAS (*I beg you, triple power, have mercy on your [servant] Bernward*), carved into the ivory by the donor himself or on his behalf, leaves no doubt that Bernward was keenly aware of the meaning of this pictorial formula and utilized it on behalf of his own salvation[90]. In the case of the *Precious Gospels*, however, the donor's creative re-appropriation of Byzantine works was not limited to the use of an ivory plaque, likely consciously taken out of its proper Byzantine context. For the artist, who created the silver gilt back cover of the *Precious Gospels* (Fig. 12) undoubtedly used as his model for the standing Virgin and Child a painted or carved Byzantine icon of the Virgin Hodegetria of the type that has survived in the Catharijneconvent (Fig. 13). The Greek letters appearing next to her, now jumbled as the result of a later restoration, spell out the epithet MHTHP ΘEOY, *Mother of God*, which, since the end of Iconoclasm, commonly identifies the Virgin as Theotokos, or *God-bearer*[91]. Nevertheless, the work is not a mere copy of its Byzantine model, for the palm branch in the Virgin's left hand can hardly be seen as anything other than a conscious Western modification. The Byzantine original is here deliberately reinterpreted in favor of a common Western motif, namely the palm branch as sign and symbol of Mary's virginity[92]. It is not until the early twelfth

90. For similar inscriptions and the attitudes of Western patrons vis-à-vis imported Byzantine ivory triptychs, see W. NORTH and A. CUTLER, *Ivories, Inscriptions, and Episcopal Self-Consciousness in the Ottonian Empire: Berthold of Toul and the Berlin Hodegetria*, in « Gesta », 42.1 (2003), pp. 1-17; A. CUTLER, *A Byzantine Triptych in Medieval Germany and Its Modern Recovery*, in « Gesta », 37.1 (1998), pp. 3-12.

91. For the cult of the Virgin in Byzantium and the use of the designation MHTHP ΘEOY, see, for instance, *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. by M. VASSILAKI, London, 2005; I. KALAVREZOU, *Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary Became "Meter Theou"*, in « Dumbarton Oaks Papers », 44 (1990), pp. 165-172.

92. For other instances of Western adaptations or re-interpretations of established Byzantine iconographic formulae, see, for instance, U. KOENEN, *Auftritt im Westen - Zur Wirkung*

century that we find first-hand accounts of ecclesiastical patrons of Bernward's caliber, who attest their eagerness and interest to learn from Byzantine artists and their works, if only to compare their own artistic and aesthetic ambitions with those of their Byzantine counterparts. Abbot Suger of St. Denis is such a case in point, who, in his *Liber de administratione sua gestis*, shares with his reader, and I quote: «I used to confer with travelers returning from Jerusalem, eager to learn from those who had seen the treasures of Constantinople and the decorations of Hagia Sophia whether these things here were worth anything in comparison»[93]. While Suger had to rely on accounts of travelers and his own imagination to make up for the lack of direct contact with a culture that must have remained foreign, yet ultimately alluring to him, other members of the German and French episcopate and secular elite, who were lucky enough to travel to Constantinople as political ambassadors or to Jerusalem as pious pilgrims, had the benefit of first-hand knowledge of how luxury objects functioned in the context of Byzantine liturgical celebrations and/or imperial ceremonies. Still others, who lived in closer geographical proximity to the Eastern Empire or in cities and regions across Italy, where commercial contacts with the Eastern Mediterranean were long established and more abundant, had altogether different expectations and sensitivities when encountering Byzantine luxury products at home or abroad[94].

As scholars, trying to assess past experiences of cultural practices and artistic encounters, we rely on fragments of evidence, both written and material, that present us with a few surviving knots from a monumental tapestry of commercial, political, and cultural encounters, a tapestry torn to shreds by the passage of time and scattered by historical progress. Our efforts in reconstructing a complex past are necessarily different from those of our forebears,

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byzantinischer Kunstwerke, in *Menschen, Bilder, Sprache, Dinge: Wege der Kommunikation zwischen Byzanz und dem Westen 1: Bilder und Dinge*, ed. by F. DAIM, D. HEHER, C. RAPP, Mainz, 2019, pp. 45-57, here pp. 51-53.

93. SUGER OF ST. DENIS, *De rebus in administratione sua gestis*, in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis and its Art Treasures*, trans. E. PANOFSKY, 2nd ed., Princeton, 1979, p. 65.

94. For Amalfi, which is by no means an exemplary case, see KLEIN, *Amalfi, Byzantium* cit. (note 54) pp. 130-156.

filtered through a different set of collective experiences and de-termined by our own place in a world that is inherently different from that of the Middle Ages or even that of the past centuries and decades.

If scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth century cast Byz-antium as the 'oriental' other, the generation of our own teachers in the latter part of the twentieth century re-cast it as an intricate part of Europe, and we today consider it as a bridge in a global network of cultural relations between East and West, we can only wonder what impact the unfolding realities of our own time will have on fu-ture generations of art and cultural historians and how they will an-swer the 'Byzantine Question'. As we witness the impact of climate change unfold across the globe, observe the increasing fortification of borders at the edges of Europe, Asia and the United States, and ponder a political and cultural realignment in a number of regions across the globe, we may ask whether Byzantium ever was the bridge between worlds we today imagine it to have been, or whether this metaphor is a construct of our own wishful thinking, implying all the positive and beneficial aspects of the free flow of people, ideas, and resources, including works of art, in our own global culture. Personally, I think we can and should relish in the thought that Byz-antine art may indeed have served as a bridge between worlds and cultures, but with the caveat that our own position as interpreters of history is as vulnerable to criticism as that of those generations that came before us.

Fig. 1 – Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv (Abteilung Wolfenbüttel),
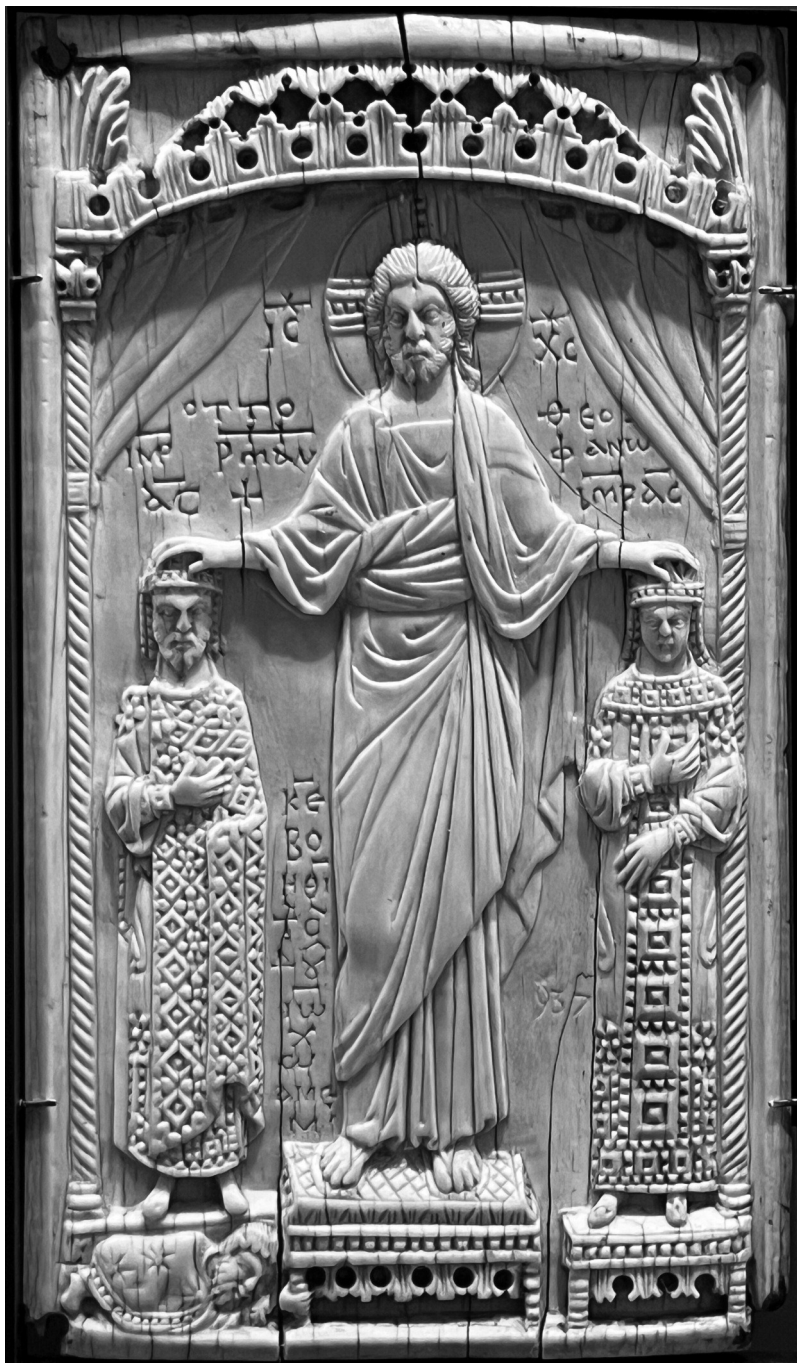6 Urk. 11. Marriage Charter of Emperor Otto II and Theophanu (detail).

TAB. II   H. A. KLEIN

Fig. 2 – Paris, Musée de Cluny, Musée National du Moyen Âge, Cl. 392.
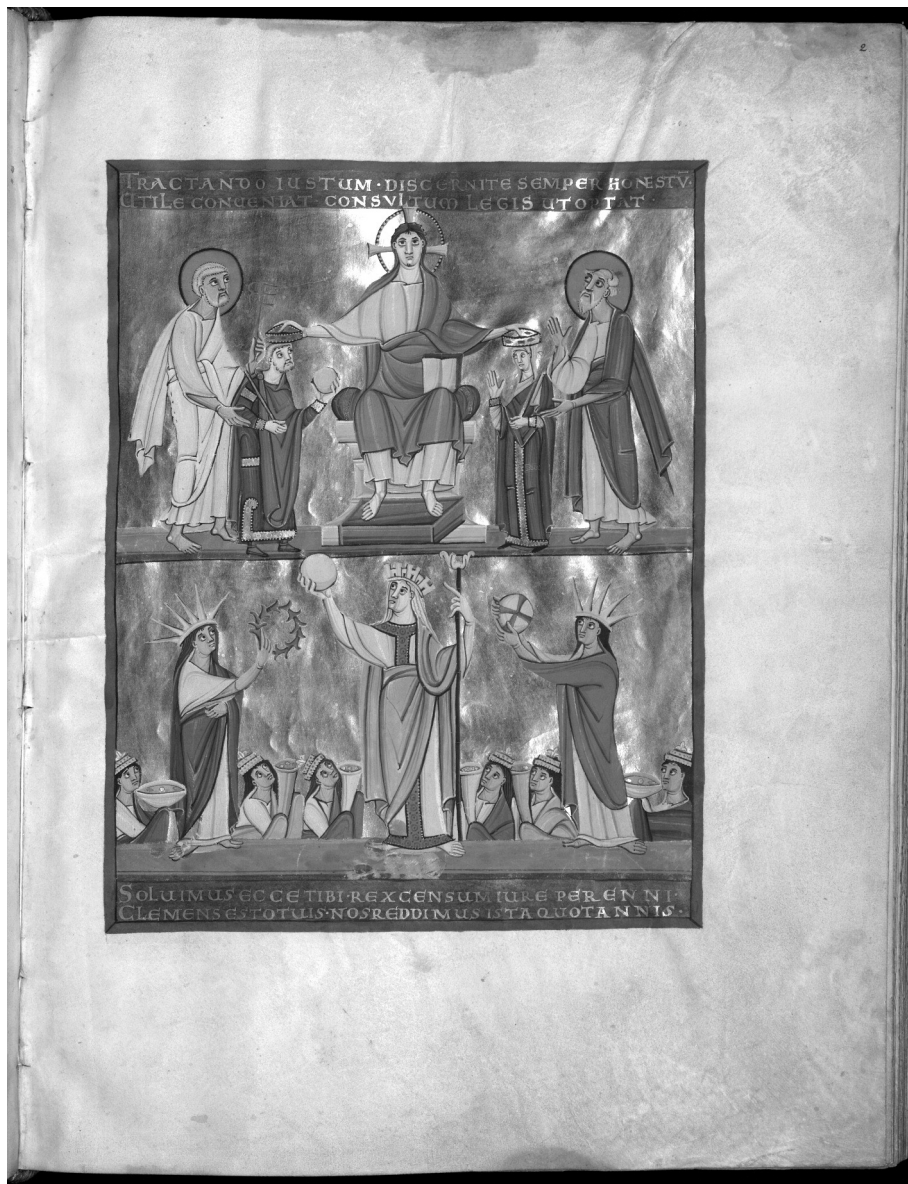Ivory Plaque, Emperor Otto II and Theophanu crowned by Christ.

Fig. 3 – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 4452, fol. 2r. Pericope Book of Emperor Henry II, Emperor Henry II and Cunigunde crowned by Christ.
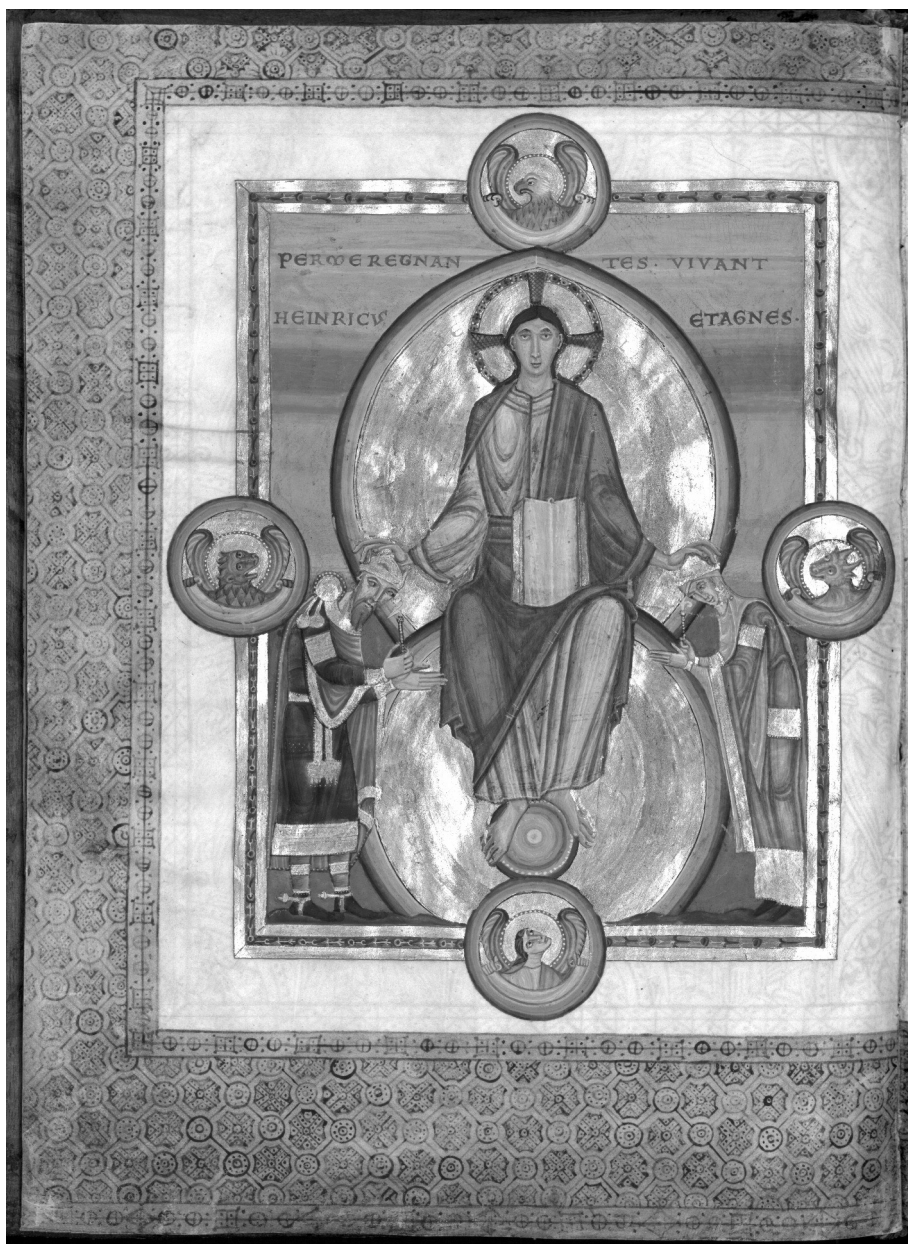
TAB. IV

Fig. 4 – Uppsala, University Library, C 93, 3v. Codex Caesareus,
Emperor Henry III and Agens before Christ in Majesty.

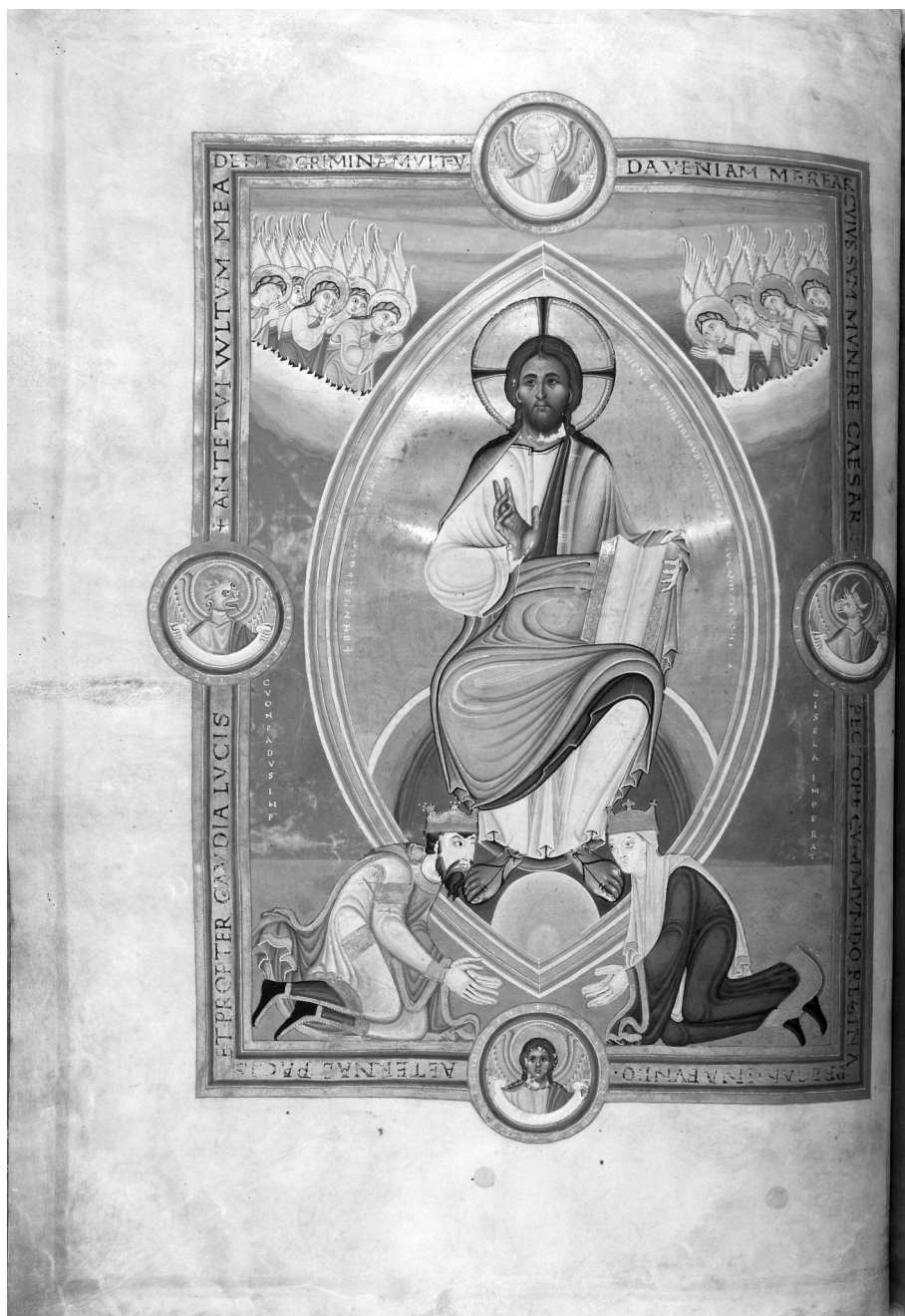Fig. 5 – Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Cod. Vitr. 17, fol. 2v. Codex Aureus of Speyer Cathedral, Emperor Conrad II and Gisela before Christ in Majesty.

TAB. VI   H. A. KLEIN

Fig. 6 – Paris, Musée Cluny, Musée nationale du Moyen-Âge, Cl. 2350.
Golden Altar of Basel Cathedral (detail), Emperor Henry II and Cunigunde before Christ.

Fig. 7 – Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Cod. Vitr. 17, fol. 3r. Codex Aureus of Speyer Cathedral, Emperor Henry III and Agnes before the Virgin Mary.

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Fig. 8 – Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Münzkabi-nett, Inv. Nr. 18202383. Denar of Conrad II and Henry III.

Fig. 9 – Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, BZC.1948.17.3173. Nomisma Histamenon of Basil II and Constantine VIII.

Fig. 10 – Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1931.55; 1931.461–462. Altar and Crosses of Countess Gertrude and Count Liudolf.

Fig. 11 – Hildesheim, Dom-Museum, DS 18. Pecious Gospels of Bishop Bernward (front).
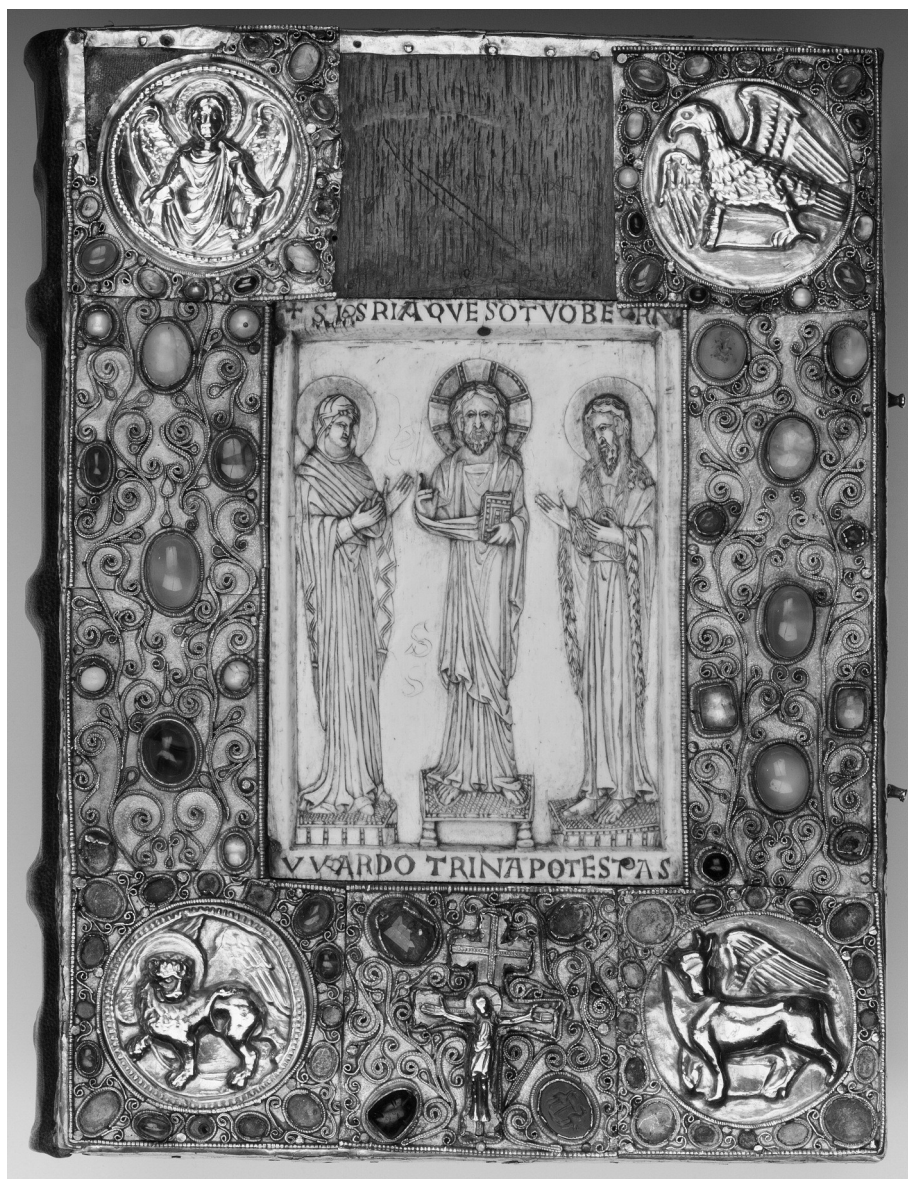
TAB. X   H. A. KLEIN

Fig. 12 – Hildesheim, Dom–Museum, DS 18. Pecious Gospels of Bishop Bernward (back).

Fig. 13 – Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent, ABM b.i. 751.
Ivory Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria.

Discussione sulla lezione Klein

JACOBSEN – *Lieber Herr Klein, vielen Dank für Ihren Beitrag! Nach Ihren Ausführungen zur Forschungsgeschichte haben Sie uns künstlerische Reaktionen des Westens im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert auf die byzantinische Kunst aufgezeigt. Meine Frage ist anders herum gerichtet: Gibt es Reaktionen in Byzanz auf irgend welche Aspekte der westlichen Kunst?!*

KLEIN – *Lieber Herr Jacobsen, Haben Sie ganz herzlichen Dank für Ihre Frage. Was die Reaktionen byzantinischer Künstler auf abendländische Kunstwerke betrifft, so haben sich aus dem 10./11. Jahrhundert meines Wissens nur wenige Werke erhalten, bei denen man tatsächlich von einer direkten Aneignung bzw. aktiven künstlerischen Reaktion oder Verarbeitung insbesondere stilistischer oder ikonografischer Vorlagen sprechen kann. Sieht man einmal von jenen byzantinischen Künstlern ab, für die man, wie im Fall des* Codex Aureus Escorialensis, *eine direkte Zusammenarbeit mit westlichen Künstlern an Werken der abendländischen Kunst wahrscheinlich machen konnte, wäre hier vielleicht in erster Linie auf byzantinische Exportprodukte wie die Pala d'Oro für San Marco in Venedig oder die (leider nicht erhaltene) Pala d'Oro für die Abteikirche von Montecassino zu verweisen, für die byzantinische Künstler eine ihnen nicht in allen Einzelheiten vertraute Heiligen-Vita künstlerisch adaptiert und in eine den Bedürfnissen des jeweiligen westlichen Auftraggebers angepasste Form (und im Falle Venedigs mit lateinischen Beischriften versehen) übersetzt haben. Auch was die in Byzanz für abendländische Auftraggeber in Italien hergestellten Bronzetüren des 11. Jahrhunderts betrifft, mag man hier und da auf Erwartungen der Auftraggeber reagiert haben. Eine bewus-*

ste Übernahme abendländischer Formen, Motive und Techniken, wie sie aus spätbyzantinischer Zeit für die Verarbeitung gotischer Elemente in byzantinischen Goldschmiedearbeiten – etwa im Kelch des Manuel Kantakuzenos oder Kelch und Patene des Thomas Preljubović – nachweisbar ist, gibt es meines Wissens im 10./11. Jahrhundert in dieser Form noch nicht. Auch was die Reaktion byzantinischer Künstler auf abendländische diplomatische Geschenke betrifft, haben sich in Byzanz selbst meines Wissens keine Nachweise erhalten, die eine direkte Reaktion byzantinischer Künstler auf abendländische Importprodukte erkennen lassen. Auch dies scheint sich erst im späten 13. Jahrhundert zu ändern. Man denke hier beispielsweise an die spezifische Aufnahme und Verarbeitung abendländischer hagiografischer Themen und Motive in dem von Kaiser Michael VIII in den 1260er Jahren aus Anlass des Vertrags von Nymphaion für die Stadt Genua hergestellten Peplos *mit Darstellungen der heiligen Laurentius, Sixtus und Hippolytus.*

VERBAAL – *You gave a nice overview of the Western background to the approach of the "Byzantine question". Do you know if there was a comparable approach to this "Byzantine question" from the part of Greek historiography after the independence, or in a broader sense, of the Eastern European or even Middle East historiography?*

KLEIN – *This is a very good and entirely appropriate question. In this paper, I concentrated my efforts on the formation and trajectory of the 'Byzantine Question' as it emerged in German antiquarian and art historical circles during the early nineteenth century. I did so in part because it is there, in the context of a nascent German debate about national identity, style, and cultural heritage, that ideological fault lines in the evaluation of the artistic merits of Byzantine art (or lack thereof) and its impact on the development of 'Western' art and culture are first drawn and established. The situation is, of course, somewhat different in France and England, where Tillemont, Montesquieu, and Gibbon have a somewhat different historical perspective and ideological outlook. As far as Greek, Russian, and Eastern European historiography is concerned, the situation is, predictably, quite different, as the focus there is often on artistic alignment and the construction of a decidedly Orthodox cultural, religious, and national identity. Robert Nelson emphasized the need for deeper historiographic explorations already in the 1990s, and, more recently, Zeynep Çelik, Edhem Eldem, Olivier Delouis, and Brigitte Pitarakis, among others, have shed new light not only on the scholars and institutions that played pivotal roles in the rediscovery*

of Byzantium and its artistic and cultural heritage, but also paid attention to the political and ideological frameworks in which this re-discovery took place in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The historiographic trends and developments that emerged in the late Ottoman Empire and young Turkish Republic on the one hand and Tsarist Russia on the other, are particularly interesting when compared to more recent trends and developments in post-Communist Russia and contemporary Turkey, where the political and ideological agendas of the ruling elites are still actively shaped by their understanding of Byzantium's impact on the formation of local and national identities.

TYLER – Thank you very much for your excellent paper. In thinking about your local-global framework, can you comment on the way Ottonian and Salian courts and ecclesiastical institutions acted as bridges mediating Byzantine art and ideology further north and west as part of the cultural capital of these ruling dynasties?

KLEIN – Thank you for this excellent question. I wish I knew more about the role Ottonian and Salian courts and ecclesiastical institutions played as bridges mediating Byzantine art and ideology to courts further north and west. As in previous centuries, I would assume that long-distance trade and other forms of personal and institutional contacts continued to bring secular and religious elites in Northern France, England, and Scandinavia in direct contact with portable luxury objects from the Eastern Mediterranean that conveyed foreign artistic techniques, materials, and iconographies as well as concepts and ideas to receptive audiences in those parts of Europe. However, we often find only traces of explicit knowledge and/or evidence for direct artistic inspiration in the liturgical objects or manuscripts of the period. Winchester, Canterbury, York, and other administrative and ecclesiastical centers are the most likely places where such interactions left their mark. But it is only during the twelfth century, when evidence for a broader artistic impact of Byzantine art becomes more readily visible in the products of the time. I am thinking of the so-called 'Byzantine Diptych' in the Winchester Psalter, which betrays a meaningful adaptation of Byzantine style and iconography in the context of an otherwise decidedly Western prefatory picture cycle produced in a local scriptorium, or the stone relief depicting an Enthroned Virgin and Child in York minster, which, in spite of its thoroughly Western character and manufacture, clearly betrays contact with the Byzantine (or at least Mediterranean) world and its tradition of iconic Marian images.