



24th  
International Congress  
of Byzantine Studies  
VENICE AND PADUA, 22-27 AUGUST 2022

# Abstracts of the Free Communications, Thematic Sessions, Round Tables and Posters



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**The 24th International Congress  
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Proceedings

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Antonio Rigo

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**Abstract of the Free Communications,  
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and Posters**

FC	Free Communication
PO	Poster
RT	Round Table
TS	Thematic Session



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## **The Role of Dignitaries of Lower-Rank Thematic Units in Byzantine Society**

Miloš Cvetković  
Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade

FC

The paper aims to elucidate the place and role of functionaries of lower-ranking units in the Byzantine theme system. Their status in the Byzantine bureaucratic and aristocratic society was essentially determined by honorary dignities and by their place in the commanding staff, which was accompanied by precisely defined powers in the army and administration. Military powers were one of the main factors in the process of acquiring influence but the real power of a functionary in society often transcended that framework. The real power they wielded was reflected in their participation in the most important political developments in the Empire, which will be discussed in more detail in the presentation.

## **Language and (Hate) Speech in Byzantine Literature Towards a Linguistic Dossier of the Religious Prejudice**

Luigi D'Amelia  
Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII, Bologna

TS

In Byzantine literature, language was moulded, and rhetoric exploited to spread or consolidate precise ethnic/cultural stereotypes about each of the religious antagonists of the Empire. Formally standardized linguistic expressions and derogatory labels – which are recurrent in Byzantine literary ‘system’ – constructed the image of the ‘others’ in several respects and were often used to demean them. In these cases, language vehicles identity-making issues and political agendas. This paper intends to sketch out possible multidisciplinary research, which would entail the critical approach of Discourse Analysis and the interpretative category of ‘hate speech’.

## **Byzantine Lighting Effects and the Phenomenology of Sacred Space at San Marco in Venice**

Thomas Dale  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

RT

San Marco in Venice is often interpreted as deploying Byzantine models to project the city's imperial ambitions. I propose that it also emulated ephemeral aspects of Byzantine sacred space to cast it as successor to Mark's shrine in Alexandria. Building on recent research on the phenomenology of Byzantine sacred space, I explore how San Marco's lighting adopts two Middle Byzantine practices: fenestration that concentrates natural light in the sanctuary and creates a shimmer from marble and mosaic surfaces, and artificial lighting of oil lamps and candelabra to highlight individual icons and enhance key Venetian liturgical festivals.





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