

## Introductory Remarks

Last month, on October 8th, 9th, and 10th, the Zattere campus of Ca' Foscari (CFZ), which overlooks the Giudecca Canal in the heart of Venice, hosted the seventh edition of the Postgraduate International Conference promoted by the PhD Programme in History of the Arts and self-managed by some of its PhD students. It was a great pleasure, in my capacity as Coordinator of the Doctoral Programme, to deliver the institutional opening remarks at the beginning of the proceedings, together with Professor Giovanni Maria Fara, Director of the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, the administrative headquarters of the PhD Programme, which co-finances this initiative.

For the seventh time, therefore, a dedicated group of our PhD students – this year an all-female team composed of Asia Benedetti, Marta Del Mutolo, Ester Giachetti, and Ilaria Grippa, and – organised, in full autonomy and with remarkable commitment, a three-day, internationally oriented conference on the history of the arts, conducted entirely in English.

This was an event of high scientific calibre and undeniable success, thanks to the excellent organisation of the programme, the quality and number of the papers selected from the call, the breadth of their temporal scope (from the Middle Ages to the present day), the multiplicity of interpretative approaches, and the variety of academic affiliations – both national and international – of the participating PhD students.

Moreover, the choice of the title, *Unveiling the Void: Erasure, Latency, Potentiality*, was particularly successful and engaging. The former clarifies the object of the doctoral meeting, which is the

invitation to focus attention on the topic of the void – a dimension that is never synonymous with absence in the world of the arts, as it is always charged with meaning, and stands in a relationship of mutual dependence with fullness, much like light and darkness in Parmenides (sixth-fifth century BC):

Now that all things have been named light and night, and the names which belong to the power of each have been assigned to these things and to those, everything is *full at once* of light and dark night, both equal, since neither has aught to do with the other. (*On Nature*, fragment 9)

The three words accompanying the main concept, on the other hand, introduce three variations on the theme: the void as a result of removal, as a temporal interval, and as a space of unlimited possibilities.

Now, only one month later, the PhD students who organised the three days of study are curating the publication of the proceedings in a new issue of *Quaderni di Venezia Arti*, entirely dedicated to them, as was the case for the six previous conferences.

Congratulations, therefore, to all of them on the successful achievement of this important goal, which is sure to have an impact, and applause also to all the PhD students who took part in the initiative by contributing their original articles.

The Gold Open Access option provided by Edizioni Ca' Foscari will ensure the immediate global circulation of the volume. I therefore wish all the authors wide dissemination of their scientific results, and all interested readers an enjoyable and stimulating read.

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