

FACING AND FORMING THE TRADITION

– ILLUSTRATED TEXTS ON THE WAY FROM LATE ANTIQUITY
UNTIL THE ROMANESQUE TIME.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT THE NSZL –



On March 18-20, 2014, our library (more precisely the HAS-NSZL Res Libraria Hungariae Research Group belonging to the Directorate of Research and Academic Affairs) together with the Department of Art History of the Péter Pázmány Catholic University organized a prestigious international, interdisciplinary conference. The aim of the symposium was to establish a forum which discusses questions related to the reception, metamorphosis and bequeathing of illustrated texts from the late antiquity.

The subject matter of the symposium, in accordance with the interest of the organizers, was the process and mechanism of bequeathing, and the possibilities of *textual* and *visual* expressions in dialog with each other. The languages of the conference were Hungarian, English and German. The participants discussed the changing role of the illustrated text and of the story told by it – played in the cultural self-identification of different social groups. While talking about continuity and renewal, we taught about those conflicts also, which influence the prevailing society and accompany the process of preservation, re-thinking, transformation and bequeathing of knowledge. We also discussed the different aspects of the text-image relationship; the bequeathing of the textual and visual knowledge, and tried to understand that transformative process that took place regarding the complex relationship between text-image-meaning in the 4-12. centuries.

13 lecturers and 3 section leaders, acclaimed national and international experts of medieval art and book culture participated in the three days long conference. The conference had started with the plenary presentation by Professor Xavier Barral i Altet (Université Rennes 2; Inversità Ca'Foscari, Venezia). The following days we hold a morning and

an afternoon session. We completed the program on March 19 with the exhibition of art-historically exceptionally interesting medieval codices from the Manuscript Library, and the next day we closed with a round-table conversation. The conference provided an insight into the contemporary issues of the research field, methodologies of approaching them, and the latest results, for participating colleagues, university students and PhD students. It is important for us also that the symposium provided occasion for professional dialogs and vivid discussions following each lecture.

Probably the most important professional finding of the conference was that the illustrated texts did not necessarily result from the bequeathing through centuries of texts and images that belonged to each other; this is only one kind of interpretation. It is also possible that the surviving images and text had their own, independent trajectories; that they met at some point of time then later on they separated, and then they met again in a new constellation. The transformation of copies of images that illustrated the same text or the other way around, the migration of images through texts that can be illustrated with the same compositions provided us with broader perspectives regarding the process of the changing of the meaning, as well as the transformation of the one-time interpretation of texts-and-images – and in conclusion, placed our quest in the context of the metamorphosis of culture. We are proud to announce that the lectures will be published in the „*Convivium: Exchanges and Interactions in the Arts of Medieval Europe, Byzantium, and Mediterranean*”, in 2016.

Anna Boreczky
boreczky.anna.at.oszk.hu