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Ljubljana, 2 November 2009

REPORT
from the

IFLA-preconference
Munchen, 19-21 August 2009-11-02
Early printed books as material objects
Principles, problems, perspectives

Thanks to the financial support of BID – Bibliothec & Information International and the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia as part of the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia my colleague Blanka Avgustin Florjanovic and myself were able to attend the international IFLA-preconference “Early printed books as material objects - Principles, problems, perspectives” which was organized by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothec, DFG and IFLA. The event took place in the conference hall of the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munchen from August 19 to 21 2009.

The conference was attended by more than 140 participants from all over the world, among them 3 from Slovenia.

In the three days program 25 papers were presented in 8 sessions:

1. Methodological aspects (1): Principles
2. Illustration: Hand decoration in incunabula
3. Bindings (1): Fragments of manuscripts and printed books in bindings
4. Bindings (2): Binding databases and methods of description
5. Provenances (1): Private libraries in the 16th century
6. Provenances (2): Practices for recording owners and authority files
7. Manuscripts notes in printed books
8. Methodological aspects (2): Perspectives

Today library science is an interdisciplinary discipline inside the humanistic field is including also technological, information, natural science and conservational aspects.

As coming from book and paper conservation field, dealing with book as a material object we were very much interested in attending the conference. We received a lot of information

regarding the written and decoration contents, but we were missing lectures presenting book as a real material object and more interdisciplinary approach including also text block and bookbinding structures, writing supports, inks, pigments and other materials as well as the technology in producing early printed book.

Regarding the content of the papers presented in the 3rd and 4th session we would like to warn the need for the clarification of the definition of the term bookbinding and book cover decoration. Book cover decoration is the very final state within the field of bookbinding. Using the term bookbinding for book cover decoration is inaccurate and is showing the need to be clarified in one of the next conferences or symposia organized by BI International or IFLA.

Of course the conference was well organized, gives us many useful information and papers, and was also an excellent possibility to meet and communicate personally with colleagues and experts in the field.

On the evening before the starting of the conference the incunabula exhibition “Als die Lettern laufen lernten” was opened in the exhibition hall of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. We didn't attend the opening, but we joined the excellent guided tour, given by the author of the exhibition and the main organizer of the symposia Dr. Bettina Wagner on Friday afternoon the very last day of the IFLA - preconference.

Again many thanks to the BID – Bibliothec & Information International and the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia as part of the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia for the financial support to attend the IFLA – preconference “Early printed books as material objects - Principles, problems, perspectives” in Munchen last August.

With kind regards,

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