

A kódextől a szépséggalériáig

Tíz évszázad portréi
az Egyetemi Könyvtárban



A kiállítás megtekinthető: 2005. október 5-től december 2-ig



Nyitva tartás: hétfő-péntek: 10-18 óráig
Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem
Egyetemi Könyvtár
1053 Budapest, Ferenciek tere 6. Tel.: 4116738
www.konyvtar.elte.hu

I. Portraits in codices

The evangelarium written in Greek and dated back to the turn of the 11th century was decorated with the picture of the four Evangelists' figure painted on a gold base. In our days the picture depicting Evangelist John unfortunately cannot be found in the codex.

Abu Al-Qasim Al-Zahrawi (936-1013) chirurgist and doctor, who is the author of the first known surgical book titled *Chirurgia*, lived in Spained occupied by Arabs at that time. The book was translated into Latin by Cremonensis around 1280. A manuscript of this translation from the 14th century contains the author's portrait. The author, Al-Qasim was referred to as Abulcassis (Albucassis) in the translation.

The so called Dante codex from the 14th century was decorated with more than 90 miniatures with a Dante portrait among them, and once it was the pride of King Mathias's library at Buda.

The fourth codex contains parts taken from the works of antique authors like Seneca, Cicero, Aristoteles, and Cassiodorus and on its back cover there is a pen sketch of the equestrian statue of Justinian once in the Augustaeum at Constantinople. The drawing was supposedly made by an Italian merchant, humanist, traveler, connoisseur and antiquarian named Ciriaco d'Ancona (Ciriaco De' Pizzicolti, 1391-1452).

The fragmentary codex with four pages dedicated to alchemy and once attributed to Plato present us an imaginary portrait of Plato. This is a part of the fourth volume of the *Liber quartus cum commento Hebuhabes Hamed explicatus ab Hestole* written by Pseudo-Plato.

II. Portraits in incunabula and in books from the beginning of the 16th century

The first woodcuts which showed the portraits of Hungarian rulers can be found in the Hungarian Chronicle of Johannes de Thurocz (*Chronica Hungarorum*) published in Bruno and Augsburg in 1488.

Another valuable incunabulum, i.e. a very early printed book published before 1500, in our library is the Venetian publication of the ecclesiastical decrees (*Decretales*) of Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) from the year of 1479, which is decorated with the portrait of the pope himself.

We can see the gilded portrait of Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560), who was Luther's colleague and one of the leading theologians of the Reformation, on the leather binding of a book from the 16th century, which contains the work of an antique author, Aulus Gellius.

Portraits and illustrations from historical and judiciary works in the 16th to 18th century

The work titled "*Pannoniae historia chronologica: res per Ungariam, Transylvaniam...*" was published in Frankfurt in 1596 by the noted German drawer and copper engraver of Flemish origin, Theodor de Bry (1528-1598) and it must be specially emphasized because it has Hungarian connections and among others we can find the portrait of Count Nicholas Palffy (1552-1600) in it.

There are portraits of mostly contemporary and slightly earlier deceased persons in Italian Count Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato's monumental works, which described the lives of Emperor Leopold I. (1640-1705) and Ferdinand III. (1608-1657).

The publication of the Hungarian Body of Civil Law, the *Corpus Juris Hungarici*, which was published at Nagyszombat in 1751, is decorated with the portraits of law-giving Hungarian kings.

Series of engraved portraits from the 16th to 17th century

The publication “Elogia Virorum bellica virtute illustrium “ compiled by the Humanist historian, physician, and bishop of Nocera, Paolo Giovio (Paulus Jovius) (1483-1552) contained portraits of known European personalities who had been famous for their military achievements. The portrait of King Mathias, who ruled Hungary in the second half of the 15th century, can also be found in this work.

There are portraits of Turkish sultans, from the founder of the Ottoman Empire, Osman to Mohamed II, in the book of the French historian and antiquary, Jean-Jacques Boissard (1528 - 1602).

The Humanist law scientist, Nicolas Reusner (1545-1602) published his work titled “Icones sive Imagines Impm. Regum Principum, electorum et Ducum Saxoniae” with the portraits of the Saxon princes.

The Augsburgian copper engraver, Elias Wideman (1619?-1652) published the portraits of a hundred famed Hungarian heroes in 1652 in Vienna.

The so called Nádasdy-Mausoleum published in Nuremberg in 1664 printed the portraits of Hungarian leaders and rulers, and some years later, in 1700, the Prophaeum brought out the portraits of the fictitious and real heroes of the famous Hungarian Esterhazy family.

Literary and historical writings from the 16th to 18th century with the portraits of the authors

Many works were decorated with the portraits of the authors, e.g. the 1529 publication of Dante Alighieri’s Divine Comedy showed the woodcut portrait of the Italian poet, who had lived two hundred years earlier; the history of the Silesian Duchies of Liegnitz, Brieg published by Gottfried Balthasar Scharffen in 1733 was decorated with the imposing copper engraved portrait of the author, George Thebesius (1637-1688), who had been dead for half a century.

Mathias Bel, the noted Hungarian historian published his cyclopedic work titled Notitia Hungariae... in five volumes between 1735 and 1742 and adorned it with his own two representative portrait.

III. Portraits of princes and generals: 17th-19th century pages from the collection of engravings of the library

The portraits, which were created as book illustrations, independent pages or part of a series of engravings, can be divided into two basic types. With the more demanding type the portraits were often placed in richly decorated, architectonic frames, which are reminiscent of mural shrines. In the case of the other portrait type, the so-called emblem form the portrait was surrounded by an oval or polygonal frame. In the process of making portraits we can distinguish the functions of representation, monument creation and the propagation of knowledge.

IV. The “true nobility”: portraits of scientists, writers, and artists from the 17th-19th century

The “true nobility”, which is based on education and eminence, i.e. the self-acquired merits of scientists and artists had been opposed to the nobility which was gained by the blind chance of birth since the time of Dante. It is true that in the Renaissance period the fame of the most

prominent painters, sculptors, architects, and poets equaled that of the princes and kings. The portraits of the noted writers, poets, artists, and scientists were the indications of this attitude.

V. Portraits from the period of the Napoleonic Wars

The French Revolution in 1789 and then the events of the Napoleonic Wars played a decisive part in the history of Europe at the turn of the 18th-19th century and the first two decades of the 19th century. The main characters like the members of the Bonaparte family often appeared on duplicated printed pages.

VI. “Beauty galleries” in the 19th century

Joseph Stieler, courtly painter for King Louis I of Bavaria (1825-1848) made the series of paintings, which became the most widely known beauty gallery of the 19th century at Castle Nymphenburg in Munich.

The exhibited engravings and lithographies show the most famous actresses, female singers, and dancers from the 19th century and the beautiful ladies marked only by their given names like Anastasia, Wilhelmine or Zephyrin.

VII. “Empirical patriotism” – the portraits of Johann Blaschke made for J. Hormayr’s Oesterreichischer Plutarch (Vienna, 1807-1814)

Johann Blaschke (1770-1833), who was born in Bratislava but worked mainly in Vienna, created the biographical series of Oesterreichischer Plutarch, oder Leben und Bildnisse aller Regenten und der berühmtesten Feldherren, Stattmänner, Gelehrten und Künstler der Österreichischen Kaiserstaates for the request of Josef Hormayr, who was the representative of the Austrian empirical patriotism. Blaschke published his work in 20 volumes between 1807 and 1814 and made 76 portraits of the empire’s late princes, generals, politicians, scientists, and artists.