

*Abstract of seminar paper:*

*Papal involvement in the spread of Greek culture to the medieval Latin West*

**Reka Forrai**

I aim to investigate the Papacy's role in spreading Greek culture to the Latin West from the 7th to the 13th centuries: from the reign of Pope Gregory the Great to Boniface VIII. Specifically, I'll be looking at the cultural policies of the medieval papacy and their effect on the formation of Greek textual canons in the West.

Whether as commissioners or dedicatees, from Late Antiquity onward, popes figure in many translators' prologues. Translators' connections to the papal court varied widely: some were papal officials, some were diplomats also engaged as interpreters. Sometimes even popes themselves were active translators. Both long- and short-term collaborations occurred, both at the papal court as well as through epistolary exchanges.

Patronizing and, at the same time, controlling the flow of Greek writings was of primary interest for the papacy. The pontifical court had strong opinions about what should be translated. But such selection criteria were not often in the center of scholarly attention. One possible reason for this can be that the strong emphasis on the scarce availability of Greek materials in the West and the small number of those mastering the language seem to imply certain randomness and lack of direction in the Latin translation movements (meaning that medieval people would just translate whatever they could lay their hands on). On the contrary, I argue that canons of translations were shaped not so much by the limitations of the resources, but by the cultural and political horizon of the institutions and individuals involved.