

# Fellows

## **Anthony Grafton**

IFK\_Visiting Fellow

Duration of fellowship

15. June 1996 bis 15. July 1996

## **Anthony Grafton**

### **PROJECT TITLE**

Late Humanism and the Idea of Encyclopaedic Scholarship

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

On the second weekend in June, scholars from France, Germany, and the United States assembled under a spectacular plaster eagle in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek at the invitation of the IFK. The workshop, organised by Anthony Grafton set out to elucidate the nature of Renaissance humanism from the later sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century: in other words, of Renaissance humanism after the Renaissance.

Within that larger field, participants were asked to address relations between the core areas of the studia humanitatis and the very wide range of disciplines to which, in the period under discussion, humanists also tried to contribute- disciplines as varied as aesthetics, astronomy, and antiquarianism. To start the discussion, Grafton presented a brief sketch of research in the area. He pointed out that nineteenth century scholars still worked, in many ways, in a context recognizably connected to the world of the late humanists. Only after classicists and historians had declared traditional humanism dead - which did not happen until fairly late in the 19th century- could it become the object of historical inquiry. He also suggested that a pervasive sense of crisis and decline- a sense of trying to

carry further and defend an enterprise under sharp attack- characterized this form of humanism. This tentative thesis provoked sharp and productive debate.

## **CV**

Anthony Grafton, born. 1950, historian, Professor at the Department of History, Princeton University. Grafton studied in London and Chicago, with research stays in Berlin; he has published widely on the cultural history of humanism and the Renaissance.

## **Publications**

u.a.: "Humanism and Political Theory" in J.H. Burns et.al. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought: 1450 - 1700*, Cambridge, 1991; "Kepler as a Reader", in: *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 53 (1992).