

## VIII. English summary

The illuminated manuscript of the Bible of Wencelas IV, housed in the ÖNB in Vienna (cod. 2759-2764), represent a new approach in the development of bohemian book painting. The text based on the german bible translation, commissioned about 1375-1380 by Martin Rotlev in Prague. The Wenceslas-Bible, dated around 1390, remains a torso. Richly decorated contains the Bible circa 650 miniatures, which were created by probably seven illuminators and their assistants. Some masters used for first time the Beautiful Style in book painting, which they took over from panel painting and sculpture.

The broad margin is covered apart from acanthus tendrils with figures of bath maidens, wild men, figures trapped in stocks, kingfishers, love knots, mottos written on scrolls, and the letters W and E. All these emblems gave the students much space for symbolic and allegoric interpretations, if not speculations.

The aim of my thesis is to confront and compare two basic studies on this topic, Julius Schlosser's „Die Bilderhandschriften König Wenzels“ and Josef Krása's „Rukopisy Václava IV.“ (Manuscripts of Wenceslas IV), and further some more recent contributions to the interpretation of the emblems in Wencelas' manuscripts.

Julius von Schlosser interpreted the emblems as an expression of the relationship between Wenceslas and his second wife Sophia of Bavaria. But this interpretation has a crucial problem, because the iconography of the emblems was very probably already established before the marriage with Sophia of Bavaria. Josef Krása, using Schlosser as a starting point for his study, shifted the focus to the questions around the royal bath order. He enriched the debate with an astrological interpretation of the emblems and the idea of spiritual renewal through the courtly rituals of the bath order.

Recent studies developed further in detail the astrological interpretation, points out to the spiritual dimension of the emblems, presents new documents concerning the bath order and putting them in relationship to the dragon order of Sigismund.

The margin decoration with this enigmatic emblems of the Wenceslas Bible will inspire further interpretations. But without finding new written sources concerning the bath order, it will be difficult, if not impossible to precise the meaning of the emblems.

**The Illuminated Manuscript – Emblems of King Wenceslaus IV – Royal Bath Order – Bath Maidens – Kingfisher**