The Department of Medieval Studies and the Institute for Advanced Study cordially invite you to the public lecture of

Xavier Barral i Altet
Professor of History of Medieval Art
Universities of Rennes (France) and Venice Ca’Foscari (Italy)
Institute for Advanced Study, CEU, Budapest

The Role of Late Antique Culture in the Construction of Narrativity of the Bayeux Embroidery (11th and 12th Centuries)

5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2015
CEU–Faculty Tower FT 409
Budapest, V. Nádor u. 9.

Reception to follow!

The Bayeux Embroidery (Musée de la Tapisserie, Bayeux, France), which originally may have adorned a private residence, is now one of the most important surviving medieval narrative cycles. Over 70 meters long and 59 centimeters wide, it portrays the invasion of England by William the Conqueror, who defeated Harold II’s English army at the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

King Edward’s Death, Bayeux Tapestry

Throughout the Romanesque period, visual representations of history, whether painted, sculpted or embroidered, employed narration as a literary technique based on and inspired by famous late antique models. The starting point of the lecture is this influence of Antiquity upon the design of the Bayeux Embroidery, specifically the spiral Roman columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius framing the narrative sequence. Other examples include the visible influence of images on ancient sarcophagi, especially from the late antique period.

Xavier Barral i Altet, Affiliated Fellow at the IAS CEU, Professor of History of Medieval Art at the Universities of Rennes (France) and Venice, Ca’Foscari (Italy). His books on medieval art history have been translated to numerous languages. He is currently writing a book on the Bayeux Embroidery and antiquity, and co-authoring a collective book on medieval art in Hungary to be published by the Hungarian Academy in Rome.