“Change” is history.

It occurs in every aspect of human culture: political, technical, theological, ideological, legal, literary, etc. It can affect a single person, a group (such as an institution) or an entire society. It has multiple temporal dimensions, from immediate decisions to long-term consequences. It is a process, which can be described and explained as the result of individual action, but also as the outcome of anonymous, collective, transformations.

Like other sciences, palaeography and codicology have gradually developed their own concepts and terms to analyse change in medieval and early modern scripts and manuscripts. Some of these endeavour to offer more or less ambitious explanatory models, either for specific phenomena or for general trends. Many others are essentially descriptive, typological and chronological, but they too refer to implicit (traditional) theories of historical evolution. All these notions deserve to be tested and discussed.

“Change in medieval manuscripts” can refer to many phenomena, on different scales (a scribe, a scriptorium, a wider context). These are mostly intertwined and can be studied as causes or consequences of one another, e.g.:

- the structure and style of scripts;
- the visual and material appearance of books;
- the social organisation and economy of writing and book making;
- materials and technical processes;
- processes of disseminating, preserving and using written works.

Change in the specific context of late mediaeval and Renaissance paleography might refer to, e.g.:

- change in scripts and the emergence of vernacular writing;
- change in scripts across books, documents and inscriptions;
- the invention of printing and the evolution of letterforms: scripts vs fonts.
- the production of printed vs handwritten books: change and continuity.

The Bureau of the Comité International de Paléographie Latine invites proposals (in French, English, German, Italian or Spanish) for its XIXth Colloquium. Preference will be given to proposals offering not only descriptive approaches but original reflections and interpretations, e.g. on the following:
- evidence of change;
- explanations of change;
- change as a turning-point (periodisation);
- factors facilitating or hindering change.

Please send your proposal in a separate text-processed file (i.e. NOT embedded in an e-mail; 2.000-3.000 characters, with a brief summary in English or French), containing your name and the title of your proposal, to Denis Muzerelle, Secretary of CIPL (dm2@palaeographia.org) before 25 March 2014. Thank you!