

Lectori salutem!



We invite the gentle reader to welcome this jubilee volume. It was a decade ago that an annual was launched by the Institute of History at the University of Szeged – with the appropriate title *Chronica*. It's been ten years now! Although ten years do not seem much on a chronicler's scale, a decade is still long enough to call for summary and recapitulation.

What was the aim in the beginning? What were the motivations behind the project? To what extent were our hopes realized? Was it worth the effort? How should we go on? We could ask a lot of similar questions.

We should not spoil this quiet jubilee, still, we have to ask a severe question: was it worth it or is there a point at all in financing a foreign language history journal at own costs in Hungary in the first decade of the 21st century among serious financial restrictions?

What did the editor-in-chief, Prof. László J. Nagy promise ten years ago?

"The individual members and the departments of the Institute have a remarkable international cooperational network, but the aim is to extend these connections to institutional level. With the help of this newly launched annual, foreign historians and readers will be able to gain insight into the research work of the scholars and colleagues of the Institute of History [...] On the other hand, this yearbook wishes to address not only professional historians and scholars, but also the average readers interested in history. The intention is to competently present Hungarian national history to foreigners. First of all, we regard it important that, due to language barriers, Hungarian history is not very much known even for foreign experts. Secondly, the change of the political system in Hungary undergone in the last decade, and consequently a more open way of thinking makes it possible to publish the results of our research about the history of Hungary as well as other countries and nations. Our special Central-East European and Hungarian research attitude may contribute to the investigation of world history and may also help in solving certain historical problems."

It is in connection with the "was it worth it?" question that the exclamation "we have lived to see it!" gains a special meaning. Yes, we have lived to see it, and it was worth the effort, and our hopes have been realized.

There is no reason to feel ashamed. It cannot be denied that the historians of Szeged have shown their work to the world and have been assessed. It is a fact that the volumes of the *Chronica* can be found on the shelves of the major libraries of the world. It is a fact that this representative publication carries considerable scholarly values. It is a fact that the *Chronica* has a special barter value. It is a fact

that the *Chronica* has become integral part of the international relations of the historians of Szeged.

Its strength and in a way its peculiar weakness lie in the fact that it is published in Szeged. Its strength is that it has proved that the staff of the Institute of History at the University of Szeged made their way even on international ground. With a fashionable and trite phrase of our age: we are competitive and marketable. This is the result of the *Chronica's* decade, and it is also the token of its future.

Besides the words of praise demanded by the jubilee, we also need to find an answer to the question: how to go on. It is a commonplace that the past has a peculiar significance for historians. The *Chronica's* strength and in a way its peculiar weakness lie in the fact that it is rooted in Szeged – we said above. The task, one element of the answer to the question of how to go on, has thus already been given.

How can we improve on its weakness? We should open up from provincialism, from its Szeged-rootedness and through this opening up the scholarly product of our significant international relations can get publicity in the *Chronica*. This lays new tasks on Zsolt Hunyadi who has been doing the arduous job of editing our journal for ten years and Andrea Kökény who has joined him recently. The next volumes are to present the first moves in this direction proving that the values of the past oblige us while we also have to meet new challenges and carry out new and new tasks. What gives rise to optimism is the fact that one of the keys to these tasks at the University of Szeged is in good hands, it is in the hand of the staff of the Institute of History.

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