

Introduction to the Monothematic Issue of the Journal

This year, the Institute of Economic and Social History of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, which manages the publication of the journal 'Prague Economic and Social History Papers', marks a quarter of a century of its existence. It has become an important centre for the discipline not only in the Czech Republic, but, as we hope, thanks to its long-term extensive cooperation with foreign counterparts, also in the Central European region. The field of study of economic and social history has undergone a tumultuous development over the past quarter-century, especially in terms of various methodological impulses from related social sciences. Some have enriched the analytical and interpretive approaches used, but others have also called into question the earlier emphasis on the structural perspective, and even questioned the traditional close links between economic and social history. The jubilee is thus an opportunity to reflect in what directions economic and social history should be heading in the 21st century.

We therefore proceeded to prepare for publication a monothematic issue on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the institute, which is devoted to its history. In addition to writing a summary study on its activities, major publications and research projects, we also asked its former directors and other contemporaries to recall the years they had spent in activities in favour of the Institute. As the interviews were conducted according to a uniform formula, it is easy to reveal the different perspectives that individual members hold on identical issues. We believe that such a critical look at the activities of the Institute will be not only a stimulating reading for those interested in our subjects, but also an opportunity to revise the performance of the assigned tasks and to think where to go farther.

The Editors