

## Introduction

Only exceptional people and exceptional teachers receive *Festschriften* from their colleagues and disciples for their fortieth birthday. Gerhard Jaritz is the only one of this kind we know. The volume *Von Menschen und ihren Zeichen*, edited by Ingrid Matschinegg, Brigitte Rath and Barbara Schuh, with the contribution of seven female authors, appeared in 1990. Now, almost thirty years later, when the jubilant is still forty in his spirit and mind, it is high time to come forward with a new festive volume, this time with articles by Gerhard Jaritz himself.

Selecting the material for an edited volume from the total crop of 289 publications up to 2017 according to the *Regesta Imperii* database<sup>1</sup> only allows us to show the tip of the iceberg. The eighteen articles offered in this volume comprise just a small fraction of almost ninety articles and edited volumes published in English; we have had to leave aside the greater half of his work, published in German (over 170 articles, monographs, and edited volumes) as well as articles written in or translated into Albanian, Croatian, French, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Russian, and Spanish.

Our intention is to give a cross section of Gerhard Jaritz's academic profile through his English-language publications from the beginning of his activity as a historian to the present. We hope that although the selection was made without his input as a surprise, he will agree with our choices. The earliest article included, from 1985, represents his initial interest in the Cistercians, the theme of his doctoral dissertation, defended in 1973, "Die Konventualen der Zisterzen Rein, Sittich und Neuberg im Mittelalter." As he said, answering a question about his academic trajectory after his most recent public lecture at Central European University in Budapest on "Medieval Studies and the Joys and Pains of Interdisciplinarity" on 25 September 2019: "I was not born interdisciplinary. I was born in a medieval Cistercian environment and I still love the Cistercians." The most recent articles in the selection are on

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<sup>1</sup> [http://opac.regesta-imperii.de/lang\\_de/suche.php?q=Gerhard+Jaritz](http://opac.regesta-imperii.de/lang_de/suche.php?q=Gerhard+Jaritz) (last access September 30, 2019).

“Dogs in Church” and “Excrement and Waste,” published in 2017 and 2015, respectively.

Between these end-points one encounters a refreshing variety of topics and approaches to medieval humans, animals, and things, organized in five thematic units: Mentality, Human Behaviour, Emotions; Social Order; Minorities and Marginal Groups; Animals and Other Creatures; and Objects. All these reflect his engagement with the issues of everyday life at its broadest and best. This earned him the device “*Medium aevum quotidianum da nobis hodie!*” in the Order of the Unicorn, a knightly order established on the tenth anniversary of the Department of Medieval Studies at CEU. Besides his four decades of engagement at the *Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit* (IMAREAL) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Krems (at present attached to the University of Salzburg), as well as regular teaching assignments at the University of Graz, his alma mater, in the past more than 25 years CEU has become his main intellectual domicile. We feel proud and lucky to have him as our colleague and teacher here!

The reader of these articles, irrespective of knowing Gerhard from before or not, feels personally invited into the workshop of a meticulously creative mind, a profoundly professional historian who at the same time is also always ready to transgress traditional boundaries and conventions. Embodying interdisciplinarity (if not by birth), he utilizes an unparalleled spectrum of sources in his studies. From the written evidence, these include chronicles, sumptuary laws, charters, account books, travelogues, sermons and many other genres of religious and secular literature. These are taken not only from the Late Middle Ages, to which most of his research pertains, but the arc extends from the Church Fathers of Late Antiquity to the treatises of the Early Modern period. The other immense variety of materials comes from all those genres that late medieval visual culture produced, from murals to woodcuts, from panel paintings to graffiti. His attention to detail and ability to find patterns behind a series of individual occurrences have born the richest crops, particularly in the realm of the visual. His methods could hardly be further from the antiquarian collection of curiosities or the dry and descriptive nineteenth-century *Kulturgeschichte* (see the criticism of such approaches in Chapter 16). By the careful observation of signs and symbols, he establishes rank and status, norm and deviation. When looking at the “quotidian” and repetitive, he calls the reader’s

attention to the importance of operating with contrasts and comparisons. He opens our eyes and minds to signs, language(s), and message(s) encoded in images, particularly those pertaining to the appearance of the “lower orders” of society: peasants, thieves, the poor, people suffering from mental disorders – in brief, the Other. He sets an example not only when it comes to details (where the beauty is!), but also when he handles serial sources and large amounts of data. For Gerhard, quantifying has never been an end in itself; the quantitative has never overshadowed the qualitative, and humans are never dismissed for the sake of numbers.

His scholarly modesty is another of his typical traits. He may have been reinforced in this by his research themes, particularly on the contempt for the sin of pride (*superbia*), “one of the main deadly sins, often at the head of the list because the first sin committed by mankind to provoke the wrath of God,” as he explains in the study on *ira Dei* (Chapter 2). The prime way of expressing his selfless concern has been his intense involvement in editorial work. His editorial acumen developed at the Krems Institute, where he efficiently brought out the contributions to the conferences on various aspects of material culture year after year. He was the life and soul of the 71 fascicles of the periodical *Medium Aevum Quotidianum*, plus 33 special thematic volumes (*Sonderbände*), published over 34 years (1982–2016) and distributed to the members of the same association.<sup>2</sup> Some of these volumes are also part of the *CEU Medievalia* series, where he edited or co-edited seven volumes, more than one-third of the 18 volumes published so far.<sup>3</sup> He is also the series editor of Brepols’s *Studies in the History of Daily Life (800–1600)* and Trivent’s *History and Art* series, where the present volume also appears. To these services as editor one needs to add his active involvement in organizing workshops, sessions, and conferences. The annual medievalist meetings in both Leeds and Kalamazoo, where he has long been a member of the programming committees, would not have been the same without his incentives, particularly for all the CEU students and alumnae whom he strongly encouraged to participate. Between 2008 and 2016, for two terms, he was also president of CARMEN, an international association of medievalists.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.imareal.sbg.ac.at/maq/Verzeichnis.html> (last access October 1, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> <https://medievalstudies.ceu.edu/ceu-medievalia> (last access October 1, 2019).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.carmen-medieval.net/> (last access October 1, 2019).

Gerhard's scholarly output goes well beyond the scope of publications and service to the academic community, however. His role as a professor serves equally as a means of sharing his research results and profound knowledge. In his article on "Images and the Power of the Spoken Word" (Chapter 3) he writes that on medieval visual depictions "the spoken text might have been explaining, contextualizing, signifying, mediating, inviting, stimulating, or emotionalizing" – and this is exactly what his lectures, seminars, and tutorial consultations are all about. The more than twenty PhD dissertations and dozens of MA theses defended at CEU under his guidance and supervision are just as much part of his intellectual impact as his articles. The authors of these works, most of them present in this volume on the *Tabula gratulatoria*, carry on his intellectual curiosity and the awareness of patterns and contexts.

The editors wish to express their special thanks to all those who offered indispensable help in making the publication of this book possible. We are grateful to the publishers of the volumes and journals where the articles were originally published for giving permission to publish them again in the present volume. The texts of the articles are rendered in their original form except for any typographical errors or other formal mistakes, which have been corrected without further notice; the system of references has been standardized. The URLs have also been checked and updated, or in the cases of broken links, removed.

We owe gratitude to the institutions holding the copyrights of the images which are included in the articles for their permissions to reproduce these materials. The captions of the images have also been standardized and partially reformulated to better serve the coherence of the volume. In a few cases (e.g., the woodcuts), we used a different copy or a different edition (such as newly published facsimile editions) from the work cited by Gerhard in the original article. The greatest thanks are due to the photo archive and image collection of the *Institut für Realienkunde* in Krems, which has been the greatest single resource for Gerhard's image-based research. That all the images in this volume are reproduced in colour instead of the original black and white – an indispensable improvement since colour is so often a major part of an argument – is due to the generous help and digitizing work of the photographer Peter Böttcher. Represented by Gerhard's former colleagues in Krems, Ingrid Matschinegg, Elisabeth Gruber, and Thomas Kührtreiber, IMAREAL has offered a substantial contribution to the

success of this anniversary publication by assisting the editors with the illustrations.

At the joint Medieval Library of Central European University and Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, the librarians Ildikó Csepregi and Ágnes Havasi as well as the library curator, Balázs Nagy, have offered tireless assistance in providing the original publications of the articles. We are also greatly indebted to Josip Banić for contacting the signatories of the *Tabula gratulatoria*, to Sanja Miljan for preparing the index, to Judith Rasson for improving the fluency of the Introduction and to Brigitte Rath for providing us with a safe hinterland.

When we congratulate Gerhard on his even-numbered (“round”) anniversary and wish him many more active and creative years “bis hundert und zwanzig,” we also wish to express our gratitude to him for the unmistakable honey-and-garlic taste of so many medieval dinners that we prepared and/or consumed under his direction, and for all the other forms of inspiration and encouragement that he offered to all of us! We learned from you that the best justification for doing research on a theme is that it brings intellectual delight, or as you said at the public lecture noted above a few weeks ago with your characteristic half-smile: “Sometimes one likes that it is fun!”

Budapest, October 2019

*The Editors*