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# Charles University Celebrated 665th Anniversary since its Foundation

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In commemoration of the 665th year since its founding by King Charles IV in 1348, Charles University hosted a festive gathering in the Magna Aula of Karolinum on Wednesday, 3rd of April 2013. Aside from members of the Czech Senate, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and rectors of other Czech universities, the gathering was attended also by international guests – the vice-rector of the University of Vienna, Professor Heinz Fassmann, and Dr Jerzy Skuciński from the Jubilee Office of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow. Diplomats from Prague embassies were also present, as were the many deans and academics from Charles University itself.

The rector of Charles University, Professor Václav Hampl, started off proceedings by asserting the importance of the University: "Charles University represents one of the most important and permanent bonds this country has to past traditions as well as to the present ties with European culture, science and social reflection".

Hampl's speech focused upon the words of Roman philosopher and orator Marcus Tullius Cicero - '*Quod bonum, faustum, felix, fortunatumque sit!*' (traditionally translated to 'May the issue be prosperous, propitious, lucky, and successful.' or more literally as 'May everything that is good, fortunate and lucky be blessed!') – before turning this outwards to the assemblage. "But what is good, fortunate and lucky for the university? What is good for the teachers and what favorable to its students?"

Cicero's quote (from '*De Divinatione*' – '*On Divination*') has been used at Charles University since the time of Emperor Rudolf II (16th century) and even today traditionally closes the speeches of the rector.

Hampl continued: "Is there any prophecy to be found within the words of Cicero? If so, as a treatise on divination, it would most likely be this: Charles University will be always be a pillar of Czech society and scientific pursuits as long as it will have dedicated students, and it will always be ready and able to cultivate and pay interest on this, its most valuable capital – and to apply it on both the European and global market of critical academic wisdom".

*Following the rector's speech came the awards. They are as follows:*

1. **The Miloslav Petrušek Award for Presentation** (*named after deceased Sociology professor, former dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and vicerektor of Charles University*) :

The team of employees from the Institute of Particle and Nuclear Physics of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics working under the leadership of Associate Professor RNDr. Rupert Leitner, DrSc. for their endeavours on the experiment ATLAS in CERN, Geneva.

2. **The Bedřich Hrozný Award for Creative Work:**

The team of archeologists under the leadership of Professor Mgr. Miroslav Bárta Ph.D. of the Faculty of Arts, Department of Egyptology, for their work in Abusir and particularly for the discovery of a set of statues of high officers of the Egyptian Old Kingdom.

Professor RNDr. Vojtěch Jarošík, CSc. of the Faculty of Science for his work on invasive biology and understanding of the rules and success of the nonoriginal (invasive) types of plants and their influence on the natural ecosystem (for important reasons the awardee was not able to attend personally).

The event was closed by means of concert (featuring harp and flute), followed by a refreshment in the Karolinum. The actual anniversary of the 665th occurred several days later, on the 7th of April. There was an Open Day in the Karolinum (the historical heart of Charles University), where the building was exceptionally open to the public, which, aside from celebration and graduation ceremonies, is not possible.