

## A GREETING FROM THE RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Athenis Finlandiae celebrates its tenth anniversary as part of the celebrations for the centenary of Finland's independence. This year the cultural event's theme is the Finnish language and the pioneers of Finnish-language education.

Born in 1810 in Laukaa, Wolmar Styrbjörn Schildt began creating new words for the Finnish language already in 1842. He was a significant force in the establishment of the oldest Finnish-language secondary school in Jyväskylä in 1858, which became the Jyväskylä Lyceum in 1873. Higher education in Jyväskylä started over 150 years ago when Uno Cygnaeus established the Jyväskylä Teacher Seminary. The Seminary grew to become the Jyväskylä College of Education and then an international, multidisciplinary university.

If you were asked to describe, in a few words, our surrounding society at present, which ones would you choose? Is the significance of the words determined by who is speaking and the relationships between us? To me, the words that come to mind are *change* and *renewal*.

Stability comes from our values and identity as a university, while changes help us to renew and adapt our operations to the current needs of society. The future may look uncertain and it may not be easy to find solutions to problems– but there are always opportunities.

We can use words to build walls between us or we can use them to build bridges. There is a Finnish saying that advises us to first examine our own situation before we evaluate that of others.

On behalf of the University of Jyväskylä, I congratulate Athenis Finlandiae and wish it success in the future as well.

*Keijo Hämäläinen*  
Rector