

PREFACE

This volume is intended as a present for Professor Sándor [Alexander] Fodor* on his 60th birthday, the 6th November 2001. Since a gift should always be nicely wrapped, this volume will be handed over to the person to be fêted during a one day colloquium organised on his birthday for the presentation of the papers of this volume.

Since possibilities of *The Arabist* offered only limited space for this *Festschrift*, contributions were sought only from Alexander's closest (Hungarian and foreign) friends and academic colleagues, and – what seemed very important for the editors – from the representatives of the youngest generation of Hungarian Arabists who, by their contributions, pay tribute to the person who initiated them into the mysteries of Arabic studies.

Being the member (now professor) of a small department means that Alexander has lectured throughout his career on nearly all the subjects of the curriculum, that is why no subject limitation was imposed upon the contributors. It is our hope that all the articles would be of interest to him, albeit his favourites will most certainly be those which are closer to his scholarly interest, *i.e.* those with a touch of magic. Owing to the diversity of topics that resulted from the lack of constraint, any thematic grouping of the articles seemed too artificial, so authors follow in alphabetical order.

The editors owe special thanks to Professor Károly Manherz, Dean of the Eötvös Loránd University, without whose support the volume would never have seen the light of day. We are indebted to István Ormos and Zoltán Szombathy who helped in many ways.

The Editors

* A piece of information for the non-initiated: Sándor has always used the Latin (English, German, etc.) equivalent of his name, *i.e.* Alexander, when publishing in foreign languages.