Dear Cromohs Readers,

Nearly twenty years have passed since we launched this journal in late 1995 in a burst of visionary enthusiasm. Now, following the transformations of the last two years that have given the journal a new look and a more organic, coherent place within the Firenze University Press e-journals managing platform, the time has come for a change in our editorial and operational structure.

The need for change derives not only from the passing of time, but also from the emergence of important general developments in the contemporary historiography of the modern age, to which *Cromohs* must respond in some way.

The initial impulse to start an entirely new electronic journal came out of the youthful idea to throw down a two-part gauntlet: to demonstrate the sustainability of such a publishing venture on the Web; and to open a new channel for international publishing as an alternative to or even a competitor with Italian established journals, which depend on academic 'gatekeepers'. As might have been expected, we were only partially successful. It must be acknowledged that because of Italy's unique situation, the financial feasibility of our project was determined not by a winning business plan but by the impossibility of attracting funding. Obviously, we also started out with some scholarly ambitions.

Initially, we thought we could focus strictly on historiographical practice during the early modern age, with a broad approach to typology and chronology: representative works, problems of interpretation, actors, methods, languages, concepts and institutions from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth century. Undoubtedly, this was not a particularly original or innovative idea of what historiography is. We also very naively imagined supporting and complementing such a journal with a full-text digital library of classic historiographical titles and historical texts or historical analysis from the standpoint of other disciplines, including literature, philosophy, art, philology, orientalism and the sciences. This led to the creation of *Eliohs*, with its remarkable variety of important works of modern historiography, and although it still exists, it will not be developed any further.

After a few pioneering, daring years spent scanning and transcribing texts and HTML encoding, it started getting very difficult to keep up with the great digital publishing initiatives of large libraries and academic institutions and foundations – thanks to which we could avail ourselves of an incredibly vast and perfectly edited corpus of digitized texts. It turned out we could not keep up the pace, not even by modifying a purely digital library of original digital full-text editions into a virtual specialized library that could collect and connect with a unified web of historiographical e-texts from all over the internet.

In the meantime, however, we were forced to make another, much more serious consideration. We realized how taxing it was trying to maintain a journal exclusively devoted to historiography. It turned out to be quite challenging, not to mention presumptuous, for us to try to rival competitors like *History and Theory* and *Storia della Storiografia*, to mention just two of the better known titles in our field. *Cromohs'* scope and objectives had to change accordingly, and thus the journal has opened itself to a wider spectrum of subjects in modern intellectual and cultural

history. Even if the nature and ambitions of the journal have been international from the start, we have recently felt the pressing need for a stronger, more stable presence in the global scholarly arena. We have therefore begun to encourage the use of English, to attract the participation of international scholars and to pay more attention to newer, successfully developing historical sub-disciplines such as cultural history, imperial history and transnational and global history – each posing significant challenges to intellectual history – without however disavowing our fundamental intellectual-history approach. All this proved possible because of the involvement of younger researchers, which has already produced positive results. Thanks to their contribution, first as editorial assistants and later at the helm of the journal, our international relations have expanded and our 'drainage basin' has become larger and more diversified.

We now feel we can rightfully consider *Cromohs* an established entity in the world of academic publishing. In fact, the journal is now included in some major indexes and databases as well as the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institute's list of recognized academic journals, albeit not yet among the class-A journals (a position we feel fully entitled to occupy after twenty years in operation). However, much remains to be done. We still plan on adding new advisors to the editorial board, attracting more and varied international contributions, reaching an ever-wider readership and establishing a more systematic presence in international databases. All this constitutes the third challenge lying before *Cromohs*, one that we founding editors believe can be won by our younger colleagues. Indeed, we hereby announce our decision to pass the baton to Giuseppe Marcocci (University of Tuscia, Viterbo) and Giovanni Tarantino (The University of Melbourne), along with our utmost confidence, appreciation and personal esteem.

Cromohs will therefore undergo a major operational reconfiguration in 2015. The two new joint editors will take the lead, along with a fully renovated editorial board – in which we will continue to act, as long as our contributions remain expedient and fruitful – and an improved editorial office. We are pleased to make this announcement just as *Cromohs* n. 19 (2014) goes online, and we take this opportunity to express our deeply felt greetings and thanks to all our contributors and readers. Most of all, we would like to convey our best wishes to our colleagues who have agreed to step forward and get behind the wheel.

Guido Abbattista
Rolando Minuti
January 2015.