

## CONTENTS

<i>EDITORIAL BOARD</i> . . . . .	3
<i>TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH</i> . . . . .	5
<b>A. Sazykin.</b> Mongolian Hand-Written Books . . . . .	5
<b>M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya.</b> A Sanskrit Manuscript on Birch-Bark from Bairam-Ali: I. The <i>Vinaya</i> of the Sarvāstivādins (part 4) . . . . .	15
<i>TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION</i> . . . . .	19
<b>Z. Vorozheykina.</b> The <i>Ḍiyā' al-qulūb</i> on Pre-Islamic Beliefs of the Qirghiz . . . . .	19
<i>PRESENTING THE COLLECTIONS</i> . . . . .	25
<b>S. Levitt.</b> Indic and Greater Indic Manuscripts at the Burke Library . . . . .	25
<i>CONSERVATION PROBLEMS.</i> . . . . .	37
<b>K. Kalinina, E. Shishkova.</b> Some Aspects of Investigation and Conservation of Glue Painting on Paper from Khara Khoto . . . . .	37
<i>ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS AND NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES</i> . . . . .	45
<b>V. Jakobson.</b> Assyriological Database (Basic Requirements) . . . . .	45
<i>PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT.</i> . . . . .	49
<b>E. Rezvan.</b> Yet Another “‘Uthmānic Qur’ān” (on the History of Manuscript E 20 from the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies) . . . . .	49
<i>BOOK REVIEWS</i> . . . . .	69

### Front cover:

Fragment of one of the Qur’ānic folios kept in Katta Langar (photo by the author, December, 1999).

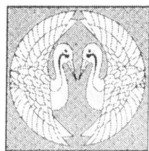
### Back cover:

**Plate 1.** The *mazār* in Katta Langar (photo by the author, December, 1999).

**Plate 2.** Reliquary of the *mazār* in Katta Langar (photo by the author, December, 1999).

**Plate 3.** Guard at the gates of the *mazār* in Katta Langar (photo by the author, December, 1999).

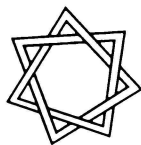
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## EDITORIAL BOARD

*Dear colleagues,*

May, 2000 marks the 5th anniversary of the *Manuscripta Orientalia* journal. The issue you hold before you is our twentieth. It sometimes seems a piece of miracle to us that, despite all that has happened in Russia in recent years, we have succeeded in creating an international, English-language scholarly journal with worldwide circulation. We have subscribers in thirty countries, and the journal is read now in London, Paris, Delhi, Teheran, New York, Tokyo, Ankara, Kuala-Lumpur, Tashkent, etc.

Today we would like to thank you, our dear readers and subscribers, for your support and ongoing interest in the journal. Your support has frequently helped us to maintain this publication despite unfavorable conditions we frequently faced.

During the time of its existence, the journal has published dozens of studies, introduced into scholarly circulation numerous Oriental manuscripts. Many manuscript collections were also presented to readers. In response to an increasing interest in new information technologies, the journal has made its pages a forum for fruitful discussions of the role of these technologies in Oriental studies. The journal has become truly international; numerous articles by scholars from the USA, Germany, Norway, Finland, the Czech Republic, Holland, Italy, France, Japan, and the Republics of the former Soviet Union have been published here. The pages of *Manuscripta Orientalia* have been made available for the publication of papers delivered at the 21st Conference of the European Association of Middle East Librarians (Liège, 1999) and the 4th conference "The Problems of Study and Restoration of Dunhuang and Central Asiatic Manuscripts" (St. Petersburg, 1999), and it is hoped that this practice will be continued in the future.

In the year 2000, the serial publication of works by E. A. Rezvan, M. I. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya, O. Akimushkin, Val. Polosin, etc., which have already aroused significant interest, will be also continued. We have every reason to think such publications will form the basis for the *Manuscripta Orientalia* monograph series, which is in the plans of Thesa Publishing House. Also, it is desirable to see on the pages of the journal more materials dealing with computer methodologies in Oriental studies. It seems especially timely to discuss the problem of developing a single standard for describing manuscripts, which will ensure the compatibility of the data bases already under creation in many scholarly centres. It is also important, viewing the special character of the journal, to continue publishing articles on the restoration of Oriental manuscripts.

Some remarks should be made concerning the journal issuing. Five years ago, when Russia lacked a high-quality typographic infrastructure and reliable postal system, Thesa Publishers and its Finnish partner came to the decision to print and distribute the journal from Finland. Over the past three years, these operations have gradually been transferred to Russia, where appropriate conditions at last appeared for issuing a journal such as *Manuscripta Orientalia*. We should like to draw your attention to the circumstance that the minor changes you find now in the journal's title page are linked with this transfer and surrounding circumstances.

*In closing, we would like also to draw your attention to certain changes in our editorial board. To our great regret, Professor Yury Petrosyan, the creator of the journal and its permanent editor-in-chief for all these five years, has resigned the post because of the impossibility of combining his work in the journal with his new obligations as Vice President of the St. Petersburg Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The team of the journal editors, who have worked side by side with Prof. Petrosyan since the journal's foundation, deems its pleasant duty to express its gratitude to him for his exceptional energy, organizational talents, and scholarly erudition, without which the journal's publication would be impossible. Prof. Petrosyan is now among the members of the **Manuscripta Orientalia** advisory board.*

*Beginning in January, 2000 the new editor-in-chief of **Manuscripta Orientalia** is Dr. Efim Rezvan, who has occupied the post of deputy editor-in-chief since the journal was founded.*

*On the occasion of the 5th anniversary of **Manuscripta Orientalia**, our warmest thanks are to the director of **Thesa** Publishing House, Prof. Boris Ionin, whose energy and faith in the success of the enterprise have aided the journal through its most difficult moments. We are also most grateful to Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Boris Gidasov, whose advise, while discussing with Prof. Petrosyan the possibility of publishing works by Russian Orientalists in early 1995, contributed to the appearance of the international scholarly journal **Manuscripta Orientalia**.*