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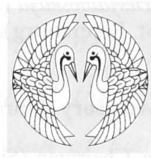
Front cover:

“Khusraw watching Shīrīn combing her hair after bathing”, miniature from the manuscript *Farhād wa Shīrīn* by Kamāl al-Dīn Bāfiqī Waḥshī and Muḥammad Shafīʿ al-Shīrāzī Wiṣāl in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, call number A 910. Copied by Muḥammad Ismāʿīl al-Anjawī al-Shīrāzī in Rabīʿ I 1284 / July 1867, fol. 51b, 6.4×4.2 cm.

Back cover:

- Plate 1.** ‘*Unwān* and page decoration, a Qājār style, the same manuscript, fols. 1b – 2a, 14.3×8.8 cm.
Plate 2. “Farhād in the castle of Shīrīn”, miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 48b, 4.9×3.2 cm.
Plate 3. “Shīrīn sees Farhād while coming to see the works at Mount Bisitūn”, miniature, the same manuscript, fol. 65b, 4.8×5.1 cm.

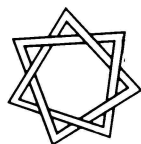
THESA PUBLISHERS
IN CO-OPERATION WITH
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH
OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



Manuscripta Orientalia

International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research

Vol. 8 No. 2 June 2002



THESA
St. Petersburg

The Editorial Board of MANUSCRIPTA ORIENTALIA
dedicates this volume to
Mr. Jan Mayer,
President of the Society of Friends of
the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies,
on the occasion of his 60th birthday



August 5, 2002 marks sixty years since the birth of Jan Heinrich Mayer, President of the Society of Friends of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, a non-commercial charitable organisation founded in 1992 at his initiative. Jan Mayer was born in Darmstadt during the Second World War, in those dark times of Nazi Germany which could bring his family nothing but calamities. His mother's uncle, Colonel-General Ludwig von Beck, one of the participants of the 1944 anti-Hitler conspiracy, perished following the conspiracy's failure, while her sister was compelled to flee her home and to move from place to place because of her husband's Jewish descent, until, at last, she had to settle down in the United States of America. Darmstadt, this cosy old city, the former capital of the Hessen-Darmstadt duchy, whose ruler, the Great Duke Ludwig IV, is known to have married his two daughters, Alix and Elisabeth, into the Russian Tsar's family, was almost wholly destroyed by the Anglo-American air raids in 1944. The family house of Jan Mayer, whose maternal grandfather, Dr. Draudt, was physician at Darmstadt court, and most probably knew little Alix, the future Russian Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna, remained unreconstructed (only family graves have survived). Jan Mayer's mother, with her three children, had rescued almost miraculously from air bombing, and ultimately found refuge in the Alps, where Jan had lived in a country house for a long time. Hence his love of mountains and mountain-skiing.

Jan Mayer's father has left his family, and all his three children had to build up their lives themselves. One of Jan's elder sisters became an artist, the other — an art critic, an expert in the history of weaving (today she works at the Chicago Textile Museum). Jan Mayer, who, like his elder sisters, is a personality with artistic leanings, has, however, chosen as his speciality a more “earthly” profession of economist. Until 2002, he worked in a governmental Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau and was busy in particular with crediting operations linked to the pure drink water supply in the African and Asian countries where the problem of water supply is especially acute. With his inspection tours he visited almost entirely all the countries of the “third world”. For this reason, he even had to start studying the Swahili. However, his old penchant for the arts appeared to

have been too strong: for some years Jan Mayer has been director of the Frankfurt am Main International Theatre, on whose stage various actors' companies and musicians' bands from different countries appear. Under the roof of this cosy theatre in the midland of Germany, one can hear French, English or Russian tongue, and flamenco music followed by Polish jazz melodies. Jan Mayer's theatre vocation, as he says himself in his interview for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, revealed itself quite unexpectedly for him himself, however, it can be traced back to his voluntary work as the Theatre's economist. But at first his trip to Russia was.

In June 1992, Jan Mayer, together with a group of the friends of the Schirn Museum (Frankfurt am Main), and with the then Museum's managing director, Christoph Vitali, a descendent of the famous sculptor I. Vitali who worked in Russia in the mid-nineteenth century, visited for the first time St. Petersburg and Moscow. It should be noted that before the Iron Curtain's fall, modern Russia was largely terra incognita to the young Western intellectuals. After the 1968 events, the USSR lost many of those who considered themselves his friends. The perestroika, or restructuring of the Soviet economic and political system, and the revolutionary overcoming of the famous putsch, known under the name GKChP, in August 1991, were therefore met with utter enthusiasm in the West. Many people there wanted to help Russia, and all of us remember how great the need for this help was. Jan Mayer's great service was his youthful eagerness to help. One must confess that he did his best: it is at that time that the Society of Friends of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies was founded by him. The Society has done much to help the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies to carry out its research programs by technical supporting the works to preserve its rich manuscript collections.

The Society has been especially crucial for the Branch's restoration programs. Without exaggeration, one can say that in recent years the Society's funds have been the main source for acquiring materials that are unavailable in Russia, yet indispensable for restoring the unique manuscripts and xylographs in the Branch's collection. Without this support, the Branch's exhibition programs would simply not be possible.

Supported by many people in Germany, the Society represents a generous gesture of friendship towards Russian scholarship and Russian scholars.

The Editorial Board of **Manuscripta Orientalia** and all of the staff of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies warmly congratulate Jan Mayer on his 60th birthday and wish him happiness and luck in all his activities, so that his joyous creative attitude to life with which he has been living all these years will never leave him.
