
IN MEMORIAM

OLEG FĚDOROVICH AKIMUSHKIN (1929—2010)



October 31 of 2010 became the day when Oleg Fëdorovich Akimushkin passed away...

Along with this man a part of an epoch passed away too — the epoch of development of Iranian studies in the Leningrad department / St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies (today known as the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts) in the post-war years. Oleg Fëdorovich stepped onto the premises of this institute at the end of 1953 and lived all of his life of a scholar within these walls. This life of his was rich and diverse; in it science organically combined with discharging of administrative obligations. For over 30 years Oleg Fëdorovich was the head of the Middle East Department of St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, having formed a solid viable creative team. And Oleg Fëdorovich was a prominent scholar, too. The circle of his scientific interests was quite broad: the history of Sufism and the history of Iran and Central Asia, oriental textual criticism and the history of manuscript booklore in Iran and Central Asia. In all of the aforementioned fields Oleg Fëdorovich oriented himself with ease and no constraints, founding his excellent knowledge on accurate study of original sources. However, the research talent of Oleg Fëdorovich in all his brilliance was manifested in the field of the history of Persian manuscript booklore and codicology. In this realm he was a high-quality expert and all researchers who embark on this course, whether in Russia or abroad, take into consideration his opinion.

As a researcher, Oleg Fëdorovich Akimushkin authored about 250 scientific works (including those written in English, French and Persian languages), including 19 monographs, either individual or co-authored with others. Among these monographs the publication of the critical text with commentaries of a part of the “Chronicles” of *Shāh-Mamhūd b. mīrzā Fāzil Churās* (*The Written Monuments of the Orient* series XLV (Moscow, 1976)), which presents great interest in informational respects, needs to be noted in the first place. This work was written within the frameworks of preparation for Ph. D. thesis, in the course of defending of which in 1970 opinions were shared that the degree contender needed to be conferred with Doctor of Philology. However, the existing tradition did not allow for that to happen. A substantial — not to say decisive — contribution of Oleg Fëdorovich was his work in the area of preparation of the well-known-to-specialists catalogue “Persian and Tajik Manuscripts of the Institute of Peoples of Asia of the Academy of Science of the USSR” (parts I and II (Moscow, 1964)). His monograph, which served as a follow-up to the series of “The Description of Persian and Tajik Manuscript of the Institute of Oriental Studies” (issue 10: Poetic collections, albums (Moscow, 1993)) was highly appraised. This, without any exaggeration, model description testifies to enormous amount of work done by the author, who in great detail inventoried 58 poetic collections from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies. A collection of articles of different years (with the total