

## LETTER FROM THE GENERAL EDITOR

[1] The motivation behind this journal can be stated in a few words: Syriac research has always been lacking an exclusive journal through which work of scholarship can be circulated; a journal dedicated to this field is indeed an urgent desideratum. The motivation behind the medium in which the journal appears requires some elaboration.

[2] An *electronic* journal is advantageous for many reasons. Firstly, the circulation of the journal will not be confined to specialized libraries, giving researchers, students and even lay readers easy access to the publication. Secondly, the multimedia nature of this medium allows authors to provide not only high quality images, but also audio and video clips if the paper contents so require (see for example the images in Van Rompay's report on *Syriac Christian art*). Thirdly, the costs of publishing are virtually nil to the publisher and the reader (albeit minimal telecommunication costs), making such a project feasible. Finally, electronic publishing will soon become ubiquitous. A number of electronic academic journals in fields related to Syriac studies have already emerged, most notably *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* and *The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*; additionally, there is at least one electronic journal which is produced by members of a Syriac-speaking church, viz. *The Journal of Maronite Studies*.

[3] Having said that, one has to admit that an *electronic* journal in a field like Syriac studies is disadvantageous for the following reason: While papers in the sciences may become obsolete in a few decades, it is not unusual that papers in Syriac studies are referenced for a long period of time. Approaching the twenty first century, Syriac scholarship still pays tribute to the outstanding scholarship of the nineteenth century and earlier periods. This long life span of research will definitely outlive any digital medium, be it

electronic or otherwise. To remedy this, *Hugoye* will maintain an open policy towards republication: authors will be granted permission to republish articles in other printed journals (a request must be submitted to the General Editor); further, *Hugoye* itself will look into means of republishing papers in hard copy from to be deposited in specialized libraries.

[4] It is my duty and pleasure as General Editor to thank those scholars who accepted to serve on the Editorial Board of *Hugoye* (in alphabetical order): Sebastian Brock (University of Oxford), Sidney Griffith (Catholic University of America), Amir Harrak (University of Toronto), Susan Harvey (Brown University), Mor Gregorios Y. Ibrahim (Mardin-Edessa Publishing House), Konrad Jenner (The Peshitta Institute of Leiden University), Hubert Kaufhold (Oriens Christianus), Kathleen McVey (Princeton Theological Seminary), William Petersen (Pennsylvania State University), Mar Bawai Soro (Angelicum Pontifical University) and Lucas Van Rompay (Leiden University). Special thanks go to the Technical Editor, Thomas Joseph, whose tireless effort is evident in the typesetting (or rather bytesetting) of the current issue.

George Anton Kiraz, Ph.D.  
General Editor