

## ***Introduction*** *[To a second decade]*

The first edition of *JAAS*, vaguely dated 1985-86, launched off a busy first decade which saw a total of 15 issues. The first issue featured some 92 pages. Of the original editorial team, only the typesetter remains. A special editorial triumvirate emerged by the fourth issue -- Robert Paulissian, Daniel Benjamin, Francis Sarguis. At the time, little did this group suspect that in the not too distant future it would be called on to perform tasks beyond its experience. Yet following the surprise resignation of founding editor Edward Y. Odisho after the 8th issue, this team found the means to carry on. In fact, if our critics are sincere, we have continued to improve with each edition.

This 16th issue marks the launching of the second *JAAS* decade. Happily, our ranks have been strengthened with the arrival of Zomaya Solomon, a grammarian who dissects our mother tongue through a series of elaborate English-language explanations. But we are all aware of our mortality. We are in ardent search of more members for our editorial team, hopefully individuals who are younger but as convinced as we are about the importance of the mission this publication has carved out for itself.

In launching its second decade of publication, this edition maintains the tradition launched four years ago under its new Editor-in-Chief, namely, the production of two issues per year. We continue to tinker with the format and layout of the Journal, but one thing remains the same: We strive to for researched articles designed to enrich understanding of our culture. We hope our readers find the current edition in keeping with that goal.

**Bishop Mar Bawai Soro** is a standout prelate of the Church of the East. In addition to his spiritual leadership at the grassroots, the Bishop played an important role in meetings both prior to and following the “Common Christological Declaration” signed by Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV. Temporarily sidelined by health problems, the Bishop is otherwise engaged in advanced studies at a theological school in Rome. Of course, he is also learning Italian. We are pleased to have this second *JAAS* contribution from Bishop Mar Bawai. It is informative and timely.

**Chorbishop Michael J. Birnie**, also a prelate of the Church of the East, is an outstanding scholar and an honorable graduate of the school of self-learning. A non-Assyrian, Father Birnie has remarkable command of our classical language, to say nothing of his broad knowledge of the early history of our Church. Father Birnie and Bishop Mar Bawai co-authored two articles which appeared a year ago in *JAAS* Vol. IX, No.1.

Though he has contributed several previous articles to the Journal, **Dr. Michael Abdalla** has been absent from our pages for the past year or two. We are delighted to see him back to discuss *Assyrian Culinary Practices*.

**Zomaya S. Solomon** has become a reliable standby. His discussion of sentences in Assyrian Aramaic simply adds to the edifice he has created with his previous pieces.

In our previous issue, we erroneously placed **Christopher Buck** in the Department of Religion, University of Toronto. In fact, Mr. Buck teaches religion at Carleton University. But he is also connected to the University of Toronto, which will soon award him the Ph.D. The present article, longer than the average, is but a minor

sampling of Mr. Buck's doctoral dissertation. We look forward to more from this young scholar.

*F.S.*