



FREĪMAN, ALEKSANDR ARNOL'DOVICH

FREĪMAN, Aleksandr Arnol'dovich (b. Warsaw, 23 August 1879; d. St. Petersburg, 19 January 1968; [Figure 1](#)), founder and the head of the Soviet school of the comparative-historical method in Iranian linguistics. In 1903 he was graduated from St. Petersburg University, where he studied with K. G. Salemann and V. A. Zhukovskii. He continued his study of ancient Iranian Languages with [Christian Bartholomae](#) at Giessen University in Germany. After 1917 he taught Avestan and Old, Middle, and New Persian and headed the subdepartment of Iranian philology at St. Petersburg University until 1950.

For sixty years, Freĭman worked in various areas of Iranian languages. His work on Sogdian, Chorasmian, and Ossetic is especially important. In 1933 he led an expedition sponsored by the Russian Academy of sciences to the ruins on Mount Mug in Tajikistan, where a large archive of Sogdian documents from the 8th-century reign of Dēwāštič was discovered. He published the first results of his efforts at decipherment as *Sogdiiskii sbornik* (Sogdian Transactions; Leningrad, 1934) which was eventually expanded to *Opisanie, publikatsii i issledovaniya dokumentov c gory Mug* (Description, publications, and studies of the documents from Mount Mug) I, Moscow, 1962. These works opened a new era in Sogdian studies.

In 1936, the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies obtained a 14th-century manuscript, written by a 13th-century jurist, Moḳtār Zāhedī Ġazmīnī (d.



658/1260), containing an Arabic tract with glosses in Chorasmian. By investigating these glosses Freĭman reconstructed the Chorasmian language (see [CHORASMIA iii](#)) of the 13th century, which had almost been lost. He also established the relationship between this and other Iranian languages, particularly Sogdian. The results were published in *Khorezmiĭskii yazyk*, Moscow, 1951.

Another important work was his preparation for publication of V. F. Miller's Ossetic-Russian-German dictionary, left on cards at the latter's death. Freĭman almost doubled the size of the dictionary, augmenting the words listed, enriching the phraseology, and documenting usage. The dictionary was published in three volumes as *Osetinsko-russko-nemetskii slovar'*, Leningrad, 1927-34.

Freĭman was elected a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1928 and a corresponding member of the Persian Academy in 1944. He won the title of *Kodimi kizmatniĭshondodai ilm* "Honored Scholar" of Tajikistan in 1949. His name is well known outside Russia, where his works have been published in Austria, Poland, Persia, India, and Czechoslovakia.

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