

## From the Editor's Desktop

As always, I have learned a great deal by working with contributors whose range of expertise is as broad as the reach of the historic Silk Roads. I urge readers not to confine themselves to one or two articles closest to the subjects they know already, but rather to explore new territory.

It is a particular pleasure each issue to welcome authors who have not previously contributed to the journal in the hope that they and their colleagues may write for future issues as well. Here I would note an important first for us: contributions from Iran, where our readers can learn about the interesting collections of the generally little known Azerbaijan Museum in Tabriz and about the work of Iranian archaeologists on Parthian sites. Since so much of importance is happening in Iranian archaeology these days, I hope we will see many more reports from that rich field.

Another significant contribution here is Prof. Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens' article on the Brunei shipwreck. The "Silk Roads," of course, were not just about silk, nor did they encompass only land routes across Asia. We need to do much more to integrate the maritime routes into this history. As far as products of trade go, of course in some of the literature we read about the "Spice Route"; we might well imagine a "Porcelain Route" or a "Glass Route" (name your product), even if we are probably still going to use "silk" as a shorthand for much more.

Dr. Gunilla Larsson's article in this issue also opens up new perspectives for many who study the "Silk Roads." Western, and in particular northwestern Asia and the northern European connection are of substantial importance, as we have long known from the amount of Middle Eastern and Central Asian silver which made its way up along the waterways through today's Russia and Ukraine. The Caucasus has tended to remain little known; it is clear some of the routes there, which were important historically, still very much are in need of serious study.

Lastly, by way of information, I would mention the review section in this volume, which expands previous efforts in attempting to inform about a broad range of new publications. In writing most of the "review notices," as I call them, I make no particular claim to expertise on such a broad range of topics, even if I am willing to stick my neck out with critical comments. Real reviews, by real experts, are still very much a desideratum for this journal, as are, of course, contributions of original work in well illustrated articles that will interest our general readership.

As always, I am grateful to colleagues who have shared their expertise with me in answering editorial queries.

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P.S.: Do remember to check the online version of the journal (to be found at: <[http://www.silkroadfoundation.org/newsletter/vol9/srjournal\\_v9.pdf](http://www.silkroadfoundation.org/newsletter/vol9/srjournal_v9.pdf)>) if you are reading this in the print copy. Most of the illustrations in the online version are in color and thus display much better than in the grayscale reproductions which follow here in the hard copy.