
From the editor's desktop

This is the eleventh issue (of the twelve published) of this journal for which I have had editorial responsibility. I trust readers will agree that we have made a lot of progress in providing a publication of some substance and of interest to a broad audience, in keeping with the Silkroad Foundation's commitment to public education about the history and cultures of Eurasia.

An important part of our goal here is to make available information that may not otherwise be readily accessible. Clearly even specialists still have a difficult time accessing materials published in other countries and languages. I am particularly proud of our success in publishing the work of scholars whose writing otherwise might be inaccessible to an English-speaking audience of non-specialists. This issue of the journal offers several examples. Such articles are valuable not only for the specific information they contain but also for what they tell us about different emphases in scholarship, where the concerns of the authors and their audiences at home may often be different from those of readers in other countries. Those steeped in traditional European appreciation of the Hellenistic world might, for example, find Professor Yang Juping's emphasis on Alexander familiar, but in a tradition of scholarship where often the Silk Road has been viewed through an East Asian lens, his is a different approach. There is much in this issue which should be new to students of the "Silk Roads," from the intriguing and important questions concerning the "Korean connection" raised by Professor Staffan Rosén to the provocative hypotheses about the historic origins of Islamic mazar practices in Professor Rahilä Dawut's beautifully illustrated article.

The success of the journal depends on a continuing flow of stimulating and well-researched contributions. The next issue, to appear in autumn, will include articles on current directions in textile research, on the Tahilt excavations in Mongolia in 2008 co-sponsored by the Silkroad Foundation, and on an important ongoing project to document the Buddhist sites in Mongolia. Starting in 2010, the journal will appear as an annual, somewhat larger in size than an individual issue of the current semi-annual publication.

I have formatted the issue you have before you using software (Adobe InDesign CS4®) which has the virtue of making it easy to reproduce non-Roman characters, something which is critically important for rendering terms and proper names in Chinese. I trust that this upgrade of the digital editing tools has not generated significant error, even though there is always a steep learning curve in computer matters. There are many options here for continuing to improve the journal's appearance and better accommodate authors' wishes and readers' expectations. A detailed style sheet for contributors should soon be available on the Silkroad Foundation's Internet pages containing the electronic version of this journal.

Please send your contributions and suggestions to:

Daniel Waugh, Editor
Professor Emeritus
University of Washington (Seattle)
dwaugh@u.washington.edu