

IN MEMORIAM

At year's end, we tend to reflect on both our blessings and our losses of months just past. Work on every new volume of *The Silk Road* rewards me with the blessing of new discovery and interaction with the authors, most of whom I have never met. Yet this year at the forefront of my thoughts is loss, the loss of two wonderful scholars of unbounded promise who died young in 2013. Cherie Woodworth and Irene Good defended their dissertations at about the same time a little over a decade ago. Cherie concentrated on pre-modern Russia and had a serious interest in the ecology of steppe pastoralism. Irene Good was an archaeologist and specialist on early textiles, who also was deeply involved in projects concerning pastoralism and ecology. Both were questioning received tradition in the literature in their fields, and were active professionally, attending conferences, publishing articles and reviews. Cherie's work probably is little known to most readers of this journal — her CV described an ambitious but now only partially realized book project: "An environmental history of the steppe pastoralists, polities, and products and their relation to the rise of the Muscovite state in the early modern era; comparisons with China and other states bordering on the steppe." Irene's work is better known, since some of it applied sophisticated analytical techniques in an attempt to answer the seminal question about the location of the earliest production of silk. She published a penetrating review of how we must adopt new methodologies and ask new questions if we are to learn more about Eurasian exchange ("When East met West: Interpretive problems in assessing Eurasian contact and exchange in Antiquity," *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan* 43 (2010): 24-45). She was working on a book tentatively entitled *Cloth and Carpet in Early Inner Asia*.

For neither of them can I convey effectively a sense of the loss felt by their families and close friends. We exchanged a lot of e-mail, but in both cases met only once. The more recent of those meetings, with Irene at Oxford, where she had a post-doctoral fellowship which she was destined never to complete, left a vivid impression. Not knowing the battles she was fighting, ever the importunate editor, I kept encouraging her to write for us on her "work in progress," about which she was passionate. We never made it past some early drafts. Cherie had listed as one of her projects an article for us, and was to have reviewed the newly remounted Islamic collection at the Metropolitan Museum. When she apologized last spring for not being able to complete the review, I had no idea she had only weeks to live. My essay below on the collection in no way can replace the insights she would have provided. I think many of the articles which follow, in particular those which lay out new approaches and pose new questions, would have interested Irene and Cherie.

This volume of *The Silk Road* honors them.

— DCW