

FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the first and (hopefully) only pandemic issue of *The Silk Road*. It has been a trying year for everyone, and many sectors in the global economy have suffered severe economic losses. Academic institutions were by no means immune to these consequences, and the disruption to education, both K-12 and universities, is unprecedented in our lifetime. The human toll, of course, is incalculable. Perhaps no academic venue is more suited to reflect on the interconnectivity of the world we live in—for better or for worse—than *The Silk Road*.

The articles in this volume were all produced in trying times, when the normal cycles and rhythm of academic research were no longer possible to maintain. It is thus doubly impressive to see that it was still possible to produce an excellent volume in spite of all the hardships currently facing researchers throughout the world. And our accomplished authors do indeed come from all over the world. We begin with the sort of photo essay that only our former editor Daniel Waugh could produce: poignant photographs of a Kashgar that is fast disappearing under the impulse of modernization. We then are treated to an in-depth article by Jolyon Leslie on ongoing conservation work on the Shahzada Abdullah Mausoleum in Herat, Afghanistan. Caren Dreyer provides an overview of the “Turfan Files” in the Museum of Asian Art in Berlin, with an eye toward making the archives of the German expeditions to Turfan more accessible to researchers. Hongnam Kim then engages in an engrossing comparative study of the spread of stone-joint metal clamp technology in medieval China and Korea. In an English translation from the original Chinese publication, Chen Chunxiao makes her fascinating research on the evolution of Muslim terms for “China” available to audiences in the Anglophone world. John Man reflects on the manipulation of Mongol history for political and tourist agendas in Inner Mongolia, while Luca Villa once again rescues a precious photographic collection from near obscurity and provides a preliminary analysis of its scholarly value. An obituary for the great Russian scholar Sergiev Miniaev concludes the narrative portion of this volume, with a rich collection of book reviews and notices to follow. As an appendix, we are also reprinting Daniel Waugh’s photo essay on the Hagia Sophia mosque, which he compiled in 2020 in response to the Turkish state’s decree that it once more become an active mosque.

- Justin M. Jacobs, Editor
American University