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# From the Editor

**T**RAVEL THE SILK ROAD with the Penn Museum in this special expanded edition of *Expedition* magazine. This issue was created to compliment *Secrets of the Silk Road*, a significant new exhibition that opens on February 5 and runs through June 5, 2011. Penn Museum is the only East Coast venue for this remarkable collection of artifacts from East Central Asia. The Museum also has many exciting programs planned for the duration of the exhibition including lectures, family days, special weekend programs, and a major scholarly symposium. Check the Penn Museum website for further information: [www.penn.museum](http://www.penn.museum).

What follows is a collection of articles by experts in the field of Central Asian archaeology, art history, and linguistics. In our first feature article, “The Silk Roads in History,” Dan Waugh provides an overview of the famous trade routes that made up the legendary Silk Road, and the traders who traveled these routes. This is followed by Victor Mair’s fascinating look at some of the most noteworthy mummies discovered in the Tarim Basin, including those you will see in *Secrets of the Silk Road*. We then move to an article by Angela Sheng on the well-preserved textiles in the exhibition; Angela’s analysis reveals the cultural exchanges that took place among various groups that lived in this region. Our fourth article, by J.P. Mallory, discusses the linguistic complexity of the Tarim Basin; where did the people who lived there come from, and what languages might they have spoken?

Several short articles round out this issue. E.N. Anderson writes on the preserved foods in the exhibition, and Nancy Steinhardt recounts the mystery behind a Luohan statue in the Museum’s Asian collection. Mandy Chan reviews a book on the prehistory of the Silk Road, the period before the establishment of the famed trade routes. We also include a portrait of Dr. Elfriede Knauer, who passed away this past summer. Kezia, as she was known to her friends, traveled the Silk Road for over 30 years, becoming an authority on this part of the world.

This special Silk Road issue of *Expedition* would not have been possible without the assistance of Victor Mair—professor at Penn, curatorial consultant to the exhibition, and a scholar whose on-going interest in the burials of the Tarim Basin made *Secrets of the Silk Road* possible. Victor gave generously of his time in the initial planning and on-going production of this issue. 🏠

*Jane Hickman*

JANE HICKMAN, PH.D.

Editor

*Secrets of the Silk Road* was organized by the Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, California in association with the Archaeological Institute of Xinjiang and the Ürümqi Museum.