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## Editorial Comments

To our new readers: A warm welcome to issue 56 of the *Central Asiatic Journal*, an academic publication which sheds light on one of the most crucial crossroads of our planet. The complexity of Central Asia's geographical composition, its historical legacy and linguistic fluidity, as well as the inclusion of large territorial empires with multiple ethnic and religious identities open up a window on the world from the Pacific to the Mediterranean, from the Ganges to boreal Siberia.

To all readers who have known our publication over the years: Thank you very much for your patience! The *Central Asiatic Journal* has undergone a variety of changes, which required a considerable amount of energy and coordination and which, we sincerely hope, will take the CAJ into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The most palpable changes concern the process of accepting contributions and their thematic presentation. Firstly, the Journal has become fully peer-reviewed, implying that each submission is required to be approved by the editor and the relevant regional board member, as well as by two external reviewers. Secondly, the Journal will be publishing contributions in thematic clusters, starting with the current issue which is focused on Mongolia, its surrounding regions and the historical implications of Mongolian expansion. A further change, for which I am exceedingly grateful to our publishers Harrassowitz, is that all issues will be available electronically on JSTOR, greatly increasing the Journal's application as a research tool. Furthermore, the scope of our academic remit has increased, extending the chronological range into the present and firmly embedding the "Asian fringe" (Korea, Japan, 'Han' China, as well as northern India, Russia and Turkey) into the CAJ's subject matrix, provided there is an evident connection with the central Asian core region. Other stipulations can be gauged by looking at the new editorial instructions featured in this issue.

Finally, I wish to thank the new members of the *Central Asiatic Journal's* editorial board for their energetic participation. Without their devotion, it would have been impossible to deal with the considerable backlog of contributions which needed to be scrutinised. In the same context, I extend my gratitude to the departing board members, who have served the Journal for a remarkable period of time. Most of all, this praise needs to be directed at our long-serving editor Giovanni Stary, whose devotion to studying Central Asia as a unitary entity has played a decisive role in preserving, and even resurrecting, aspects of Asian history which would otherwise have been relegated to the filing cabinets of a forgotten era.

I thus wish the *Central Asiatic Journal* an enthusiastic continuation in serving an ever wider scholarly community and to our readers many interesting hours in pouring over the pages of the present issue.

Lars Peter Laamann

London, February 2014