Introductory Note by Editor-in-chief Angela Schottenhammer

The journal, formerly entitled *Crossroads – Studies on the History of Exchange Relations in the East Asian World* (縦横—東亞世界交流史研究/ クロスロード—東アジア世界の 交流史研究 / 크로스로드—東아시아세계의交流史研究), was first established 202in 2010.¹ It was a first step in our plan to establish an academic research centre, the Crossroads Research Centre (<https://crossroads-research.net/>), serving as the centre's publication organ. *Crossroads* was originally designed as an international forum for contributions related to the history of exchange relations in the East Asian world. We consequently explicitly concentrated on the macro region of East Asia. The “East Asian World”, in this context geographically comprising China, Japan, Korea (core region) and their neighbours or alleged “peripheries” (such as, for example, Taiwan, Mongolia, Tibet, Vietnam etc.), and the relevant outer access points (such as the Ryūkyūs, Bohai and Manchuria). Still other regions beyond the East Asian world proper have also been covered, as long as they are connected through particular relations and interactions with any region in East Asia. See my original introduction to the journal for a detailed outline of the policy and focus of the journal.²

A hallmark of our approach in our journal has been a focus on both continental (overland) and maritime (overseas) exchange relationships, as parts of bilateral and multilateral interaction structures, and a focus at the same time on a comparative analysis of textual and archaeological sources, embracing coverage of broad historical periods from antiquity to early modern times. Emphasis has been on commodity and product exchanges, on trade, on the transfer of culture, science & technology, and religion, but also on migration and the organisation of functioning networks across continental and maritime

1 Between 2010 and 2017, the journal was generously sponsored by the German Research Council (DFG) and we offer our thanks.

2 “Crossroads – An Introduction”, *Crossroads* 1/2 (2010), 1–6. Available online at https://www.ostasien-verlag.de/zeitschriften/crossroads/cr/pdf/CR_01-02_2010_001-005_Schottenhammer.pdf.

borders. We have concentrated, thus, on the interconnectedness of the various regions along the two “silk routes”, rather than upon the regions themselves. *Crossroads* also challenges the traditional definitions of “centre” and “periphery”, attempting instead to focus on the interaction between regions, peoples, and politics themselves whatever their possible status as “centre” or “periphery”.

In order to disseminate our research and publications world-wide, we have included abstracts of our articles in the main East Asian languages, that is, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. In the course of time, we realized that we should both extend our originally more narrowly defined geographical focus even further, to comprise the entire Asian world as far as the Arabic world, and, above all, also to include the modern period. With the end of our funding by the German Research Council in 2017, we have had to find a new venue for publication. At the same time, it became clear that I could no longer manage the editing of the journal as chief editor entirely alone. In these contexts, we were looking for a new publisher and have reached out to Brill Publishers, that has been interested in taking over the publication of the journal. Right from the beginning, the idea of moving the journal to Brill and making it a yet more interdisciplinary journal covering the entire Asian world was seconded by my colleague Tansen Sen, with whom I have been cooperating for decades. In our conversations, we decided to co-edit the journal. A transition phase then began, and in early 2020 we successfully transferred the journal to Brill Publishers (see <https://brill.com/view/journals/cjai/cjai-overview.xml>). The current issue is the first published by Brill.

Already in 2018/19, I had decided to include abstracts in Russian and, if possible, in the Arab and Persian languages, to further improve dissemination of the journal, and to directly address researchers from the Russian- and Arab/Persian-speaking world.

In spite of our new publisher, the thematical focus of the journal will remain the same, with emphasis on both maritime and continental exchange relationships and interactions, covering the wide range of research on the maritime and overland “Silk Roads”. We hope our journal will interest and attract scholars world-wide, and serve as a major forum for the development of new insight into the history of Asian connections and interactions, employing disciplinary or interdisciplinary frameworks, analysing archaeological, textual, oral, visual, or other sources, and ranging from historical studies to contemporary topics. Geographically covering not only the (Eur-)Asian continent, and countries in adjacent maritime spaces, such as the Indian Ocean world, or the Asia-Pacific,

but also regions elsewhere that are connected to Asia through trade, politics, science and knowledge transfer, the diffusion of ideas, cultures, religions, or migrations, etc., we seek to make an important contribution to the growing field of global history.

Angela Schottenhammer, Bernau am Chiemsee, October 25, 2020