

OVERALL ROLE AS LEAD EDITOR FOR BYZANTINE SILK ON THE SILK ROADS: JOURNEYS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, PAST AND PRESENT

Lead Editor - Co-Anthology Editor, Contributing Author, and Art Director for the book titled Byzantine Silk on the Silk Roads: Journeys between East and West, Past and Present. This book is published by academic publishers **Bloomsbury Publishing Plc – Bloomsbury Visual Arts**, a publisher with a strong history and scholarly reputation worldwide. An extensive project, work began in 2015 when a proposal was started - necessitating much research between UK and Japan.

The book is in collaboration with Emerita Professor Ryoko Yamanaka Kondo of Tohoku University of Art & Design, Yamagata, Japan – we are co-editors of the book. There are seventeen contributing writers – Japanese, European and American, all experts in their respective fields. As the native English-speaking editor, I have finally edited all texts.

I have also contributed the **Preface – a 2,000-word text and Chapter One titled Silk Along the Silk Roads: Diversity and Eclecticism – a 6,000-word illustrated text (9 images including the front cover of the book)**. I have overseen the design and layout of the entire publication. The book reflects on 1,100 years of design with a focus on textiles/fashion/clothing/costume. It discusses and demonstrates the wide influence of materials/imagery encompassing the Far East (Eastern Asia), the Near East (Western Asia), Europe and UK.

This publication looks at a multitude of cross-cultural concerns and identities, investigating, debating, and illustrating ideas that are represented by individuals, communities, and collectives encompassing both historical and neo-fashion/textiles. It delves back in time and, also delivers content on the relevance and influence of the Byzantine era on the contemporary world. My specific input positions such contemporary aspects into an appropriate historical context, looking at an historic span of time lasting 1,100 years of design - extending my reputation that, to date, has been centred on the area of future advances and technologies.

A contract was agreed with the Commissioning Editor at Bloomsbury Visual Arts, a section of Bloomsbury Academic, London and New York, to publish a book (simultaneously in hardback and paperback), of around **60,000 words and with 220 colour images. The draft manuscript of Byzantine Silk on the Silk Roads was delivered at the end of September 2019 – all edited texts and images.**

The book then went through a blind peer-review stage undertaken by an external peer reviewer – a leading scholar in the Byzantine/East Asian studies field. Their report was unequivocally supportive for the project with very few suggestions for improvement. Words such as “superb” and “exceptional” were used which was particularly encouraging and it was great to receive such positive endorsement after many years (since 2015) of hard work in researching, writing, and compiling. Having adhered to the suggested amendments and, as Lead Editor, I have meticulously gone through the complete text of the book and any necessary changes have been made. **There was also an in-house Bloomsbury editor and an external freelance editor involved in this process.**

The revised manuscript of the full text plus images was delivered to Bloomsbury Visual Arts on 15 May 2020. Whereas the original publication date was to be September 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic this was postponed. During the pandemic it was evident that many designers were looking to the past, as secure and defined events, in order to create in the present, and predict future design scenarios.

Much can be learned about best thinking and practice from scrutiny and reflecting on the past and I found this approach of particular interest – building on, and learning, from successful, and enduring design eras. This knowledge is disseminated through my teaching in the form of tutorials, seminars, and lectures.

As Art Director I have made significant input to their in-house designer, suggesting choices of imagery, fonts, colours, print finishes, backgrounds, layout and image/text relationships – the front cover image followed my choices, layout decisions, and focused art direction.

As Lead Editor I was fully involved in all necessary editing processes – comprising of proof reading, further editing, scrutinising, and checking facts on all the texts from the seventeen contributors - numerous translations - many from Japanese, but also French, German, Spanish, Danish etc.; liaising with contributors; checking all text references; checking all image permissions from various museums/galleries/archives; and also Bloomsbury's forthcoming catalogue aimed at marketing and promotion; all Preliminaries – opening pages, lead-ins, title page etc., all End Matter, and finally the Index. Most of these tasks fell at my feet as Lead Editor, the index compilation alone took several weeks.

The publishers - Bloomsbury Visual Arts are most confident about the success of this book demonstrated by the fact that it is simultaneously published in both hardback and paperback, with worldwide distribution. This was an unusual and most flattering decision, indicating the publishers full backing and understanding that the demand and timing for a book on 1,100 years of breath-taking textile/fashion design is high.