The Ancient Silk Road and Mutual Learning among Human Civilizations

Programme Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE	LOCATION
26 Aug 2026, 14:00 - 15:30	House 1 T-1006
THEME	CONFERENCE
J - Connections, Entanglements, and Universal Perspectives on History	International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

The “Silk Road” was an important corridor through which ancient China engaged in economic trade and cultural exchange with Central Asia, West Asia, and Europe. Over a long historical period, it functioned not only as a commercial route linking East and West, but also as a significant bridge promoting exchange and mutual learning among world civilizations. Such interaction was not a one-way transmission, but a process of reciprocal adaptation and re-creation. It enabled the major civilizational spheres of China, India, Persia, the Arab world, and the Greco-Roman world to enter into direct dialogue, fostering in-depth interaction in the fields of religion, science and technology, art, and material culture. The historical development of the Silk Road indicates that periods of its prosperity were often characterized by the coexistence and mutual enrichment of diverse civilizations. Inter-civilizational exchange constitutes an important driving force in social development. In the twenty-first century, when human societies are more closely interconnected than ever before, a deeper examination of the historical development of the ancient Silk Road offers important reference for promoting exchange and mutual learning among different civilizations today and for strengthening international cooperation.

Participants

Convenor

- Yilin Jin (Institute of Modern History, CASS)

Panelists

- Jian Liu (CASS)
- Xinyu Cao (Renmin University of China)
- Paata Surguladze (Office of the >>> President of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences)
- Jinxiu Li (Institute of Ancient History, CASS)
- Wutian Sha (College of History and Civilization, Shaanxi Normal University)
- Ioannis Kotoulas (History and Geopolitics University of Athens, China-CEE Institute)

Papers

Language Contact and Interaction on the Early Silk Road

Jian Liu (CASS)

Mongolian Names in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Manuscripts: Evidence of Cross-Border Migration along the Steppe Silk Road before and after the Ming–Qing Transition

Xinyu Cao (Renmin University of China)

Georgia’s Participation in the Belt and Road Initiative as a Member Country of the Middle Corridor and as a Modern Echo of the Historical Great Silk Road

Paata Surguladze (Office of the >>> President of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences)

From Mobei (North of the Gobi Desert) to Hedong (East of the Yellow River): Sassanid silver coins and the Steppe Silk Road

Jinxiu Li (Institute of Ancient History, CASS)

Alternative burials—The Battlement-Shaped Top Graves depicted in the Dunhuang Mural “Old Man Entering the Grave” as an Attribute of the Silk-Road Culture

Wutian Sha (College of History and Civilization, Shaanxi Normal University)

Ancient China and Greco-Roman World: A Comparative Perspective

IoannisKotoulas Kotoulas (History and Geopolitics University of Athens, China-CEE Institute)

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