Central Asia: Local Politics, Regional Dynamics, and the Geopolitics of Energy

(MA course, 4 CEU credits, 8 ECTS)

Fall Semester, AY 2015/16
Class hours: Wednesdays and Fridays, 13:30 – 15:10
Room: Faculty Tower (Nador 9), 309

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Course description and structure:
The course primarily focuses on the five post-Soviet states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. It is structured in four sections. The first part offers an introduction to the region, including key events of the 130 years of Russian dominance in Central Asia and the regional implications of the Soviet collapse as well as the ensuing state building processes. Second, local politics will be examined, paying special attention to nationalist mobilization, ethnicity, regionalism, clan networks and neo-patrimonialism. The third part of the course explores the economic developments and foreign policy of the different countries since their independence in the early 1990s. Additionally, aspects such as religion, regional cooperation and other regional dynamics and problems of the local-global nexus are discussed. The final part of the course discusses the geopolitics of energy, the domestic and external dimension of natural resources and the political economy of the Central Asian states.

Format of the course:
A brief lecture introduces the main issue under consideration and outlines the terms of the scholarly debate. This is followed by case studies as well as various types of discussion, including debates, role plays, and presentations.
**Assessment:**

30% Continuous assessment  
(10% participation, 20% 2*short presentations, max. 15 minutes)  
30% Role play  
(1-page background paper; participation in the simulation; 6-page reflection paper)  
40% Research paper (3,500 words)

**Aims:**

The course’s main aim is to provide students with a strong understanding of:

- the key political actors in contemporary Central Asia
- political processes and developments in the region since 1991
- the foreign relations of Central Asian states
- the inter-twined nature of the various dimensions of local politics, regional dynamics and the geostrategic significance of the region

**Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the course students will:

- have a firm understanding of the role of the Russian and Soviet legacies in shaping the different pathways of the Central Asian states
- critically engage with the post-communist transition literature
- apply their knowledge of comparative foreign policies and democracy/autocracy research to this region as well as demonstrate their appreciation of the domestic/foreign policy nexus.

**Deadlines:**

Slides of Presentations: 24h before class  
Role play: 11/12/2015  
Research paper: 16/12/2015, 5pm

Note: Class attendance is mandatory. Failure to attend more than two classes will lead to failing the course. In case you are unable to attend, you need to inform us via email prior to our class.
### Introductory texts:

#### Central Asia in general:


Reeves, Madeleine; Rasanayagam, Johan; Beyer, Judith (Hg.). 2014: Ethnographies of the state in Central Asia. Performing politics. Rethinking the Political in Central Asia. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press.


#### Kazakhstan:


Dave, Bhavna. 2007: Kazakhstan. Ethnicity, language and power. London: Routledge (Central Asian studies series, 8).


#### Kyrgyzstan:


#### Tajikistan:

(International library of Central Asian studies, 1).

**Turkmenistan:**


**Uzbekistan:**

Amsterdam: Harwood Academic.
Inst. of Internat. Affairs.

**Relevant journals for this course include the following:**

Central Asian Survey, Central Asian Affairs, Europe-Asia Studies, Post-Soviet Affairs,
Problems of Post-Communism, Demokratizatsiya, Communist and Post-Communist Studies

**Useful news updates:**

RFE/RL (www.rferl.org)
Central Asia and the Caucasus Analyst (www.cacianalyst.org)
Fergana.ru (www.fergana.ru)
International Crisis Group (www.crisisgroup.org)
The Jamestown Foundation (www.jamestown.org)

**E-learning:**

The course makes use of e-learning, a web-based learning program (http://ceulearning.ceu.hu). Log
in with your university ID and password and register for the course (located under ‘International
Relations’). You will be given the enrollment key during the first class. Lecture slides will be
uploaded there, as well as key additional readings. You are, however, strongly encouraged to do
your own library searches, either among the hard copies of books and journals available in the CEU
library or among the electronic resources.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART ONE: Intro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Introduction to the course</td>
<td>23/09/15</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Introduction to the region (MOVIE, later class hours, <strong>18:00 -20:00, Auditorium</strong>, drinks afterwards!)</td>
<td>25/09/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russian and Soviet rule in Central Asia</td>
<td>30/09/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The collapse of the Soviet Union</td>
<td>02/10/15</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>07/10/15</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>DOUBLE-CLASS: State formation in Central Asia / Democracy in Kyrgyzstan? Class hours: 13:30-17:10</td>
<td>09/10/15</td>
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<td>PART TWO: Local politics</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nationalism</td>
<td>14/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ethnicity and Security</td>
<td>16/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Post-Soviet Islam and the fight against terrorism</td>
<td>21/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>23/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Clan politics and neo-patrimonialism</td>
<td>28/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Legitimating authoritarianism</td>
<td>30/10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>PART THREE: Regional dynamics</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>The local ↔ global nexus</td>
<td>04/11/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Foreign policy strategies I</td>
<td>06/11/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Intro to role play</td>
<td>11/11/15</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Foreign policy strategies II</td>
<td>13/11/15</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Post-Soviet regionalism</td>
<td>18/11/15</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>From the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to the Eurasian Economic Union</td>
<td>20/11/15</td>
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<td>PART FOUR: Central Asia and the geopolitics of energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>The political economy of Central Asia</td>
<td>25/11/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>The politics of energy in Central Asia (guest lecture)</td>
<td>27/11/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>A new Great Game? Russia, the West and Central Asia</td>
<td>02/12/15</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>China and Central Asia</td>
<td>04/12/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Role Play: Simulation</td>
<td>09/12/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Role Play (simulation cont., debriefing), course wrap-up</td>
<td>11/12/15</td>
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## Readings:

### PART ONE: Intro

### Class 1: Introduction to the course

**Core reading**

Hopkirk, Kathleen. 2013. Central Asia: Through writers' eyes. London: Eland. Selected chapters (see e-learning)

**Additional reading**


### Class 2: Introduction to the region

**(MOVIE, later class hours! 18:00-20:00, Auditorium)**

**Core reading**


**Additional reading**


### Class 3: Russian and Soviet rule in Central Asia

**Core reading**

**Additional reading**


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**Class 4: The collapse of the Soviet Union**

**Core reading**


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**Additional reading**


Postcommunist Word’, World Politics, 54:2, 212-244.
Slavic Review. 2004. Special Issue on Gorbachev and Reform of the USSR Vol. 63, No. 3.

**Class 5: NO CLASS**

*Reading in preparation of next class*


**Class 6: DOUBLE-CLASS State formation in Central Asia / Democracy in Kyrgyzstan? Class hours: 13:30-17:10**

*Core reading*


→ Kyrgyzstan held elections on the 4th of October, please check the Central Elections Commission's website: [http://www.shailoo.gov.kg](http://www.shailoo.gov.kg)

*Additional reading*

PART TWO: Local politics

Class 7: Nationalism

Core reading


Additional reading


Class 8: Ethnicity and Security

Core reading


Additional reading


Class 9: Post-Soviet Islam and the fight against terrorism

Core reading:

Additional reading
Knysh, Alexander. 2007. Contextualizing the Salafi - Sufi conflict (from the Northern Caucasus to Hadramawt), Middle Eastern Studies, 43(4).
York: Frank Cass.

## Class 10: NO CLASS

### Class 11: Clan politics and neo-patrimonialism

#### Core reading

#### Additional reading

## Class 12: Legitimating authoritarianism

#### Core reading
**Additional reading**


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**PART THREE: Regional dynamics**

**Class 13: The local ↔ global nexus**

**Core reading**


**Additional reading**


13
Class 14: Foreign policy strategies I

Core reading
   Chapter 2: How Central Asian Regimes Survive, 16-29.

Additional reading

Class 15: Introduction to role play

Reading in preparation of next class

Class 16: Foreign policy strategies II

Core reading

Additional reading
Class 17: Post-Soviet regionalism

Core reading

Additional reading
Rose, Richard and N. Munro. 2008. ‘Do Russians see their future in Europe or the CIS?’, Europe-Asia Studies, 60, No. 1, 49–66.

Class 18: From the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to the Eurasian Economic Union

Core reading

Additional reading


PART FOUR: Central Asia and the geopolitics of energy

Class 19: The political economy of Central Asia

Core reading


Additional reading


   http://centralasiaprogram.org/blog/tag/mongolia/

Class 20: The politics of energy in Central Asia (guest lecture)

Core reading

→ TBA

Additional reading


Ostrowski, Wojciech. 2009. Politics and Oil in Kazakhstan. London: Routledge. Ch. 3: The Kazakh oil industry in transition. Deformalising formal relations; Ch. 4: Strengthening the informal ties: The Kazakhisation of the oil industry; Ch. 5: Controlling oil rich regions: local populations; Ch 6: Controlling the oil-rich region: local interest groups.


**Class 21: A new Great Game? Russia, the West and Central Asia**

**Core reading**


**Additional reading**


Laruelle, Marlene. 2008. Russia’s Central Asian Policy and the Role of Russian Nationalism, Silk Road Studies Papers, Johns Hopkins University-Uppsala University.


Class 22: China and Central Asia

Core readings


Additional reading


Raballand, G. and A. Andresy. 2007. Why should trade between Central Asia and China continue to expand? Asia-Europe Journal, 5(2).


Class 23: Role play (simulation)

Class 24: Role play (simulation cont., debriefing), course wrap-up