



CENTRAL
ASIAN
STUDIES
CENTER

Newsletter

College of Social Sciences, KIMEP University

#1, Spring 2015

Dear friends,

We are happy to present to you the first issue of KIMEP CASC Newsletter! We will release it three times a year to keep you updated on the activities of our center.

Roundtables. The first highlight of the season is the success of the roundtables that we organized with the support of our partner Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Kazakhstan. We focused on fresh and exciting topics that could be interesting for both scholars and the general public: the future of liberalism in Kazakhstan, the prospects of EU–Kazakhstan relations in the changing world, and war and media in the information age. You will find brief descriptions of the roundtables on [pages 2–3](#) and the detailed summaries and videos on our website. The results were extremely positive: a number of faculty and students from different universities, experts from research centers, and international institutions attended the events and contributed to vibrant discussions. We are definitely going to continue organizing the roundtables, so keep following us on the [CASC website](#) or our [Facebook page](#) for the coming events!

Partnership. Another highlight of our activities was the completion of the joint project with the University of Agder (Norway) that we started in 2012 with a generous grant from the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Education. KIMEP College of Social Sciences faculty members in cooperation with our Norwegian partners developed and launched three

state-of-the-art master-level courses: Emerging Markets and Powers, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Ethics in International Relations. The course packages have been externally reviewed by some of the best experts in the respective fields and are supported by new library resources acquired through the grant. As the icing on the cake, faculty members from the two institutions had the opportunity to conduct joint research projects. [Pages 6–7.](#)

Articles & news. Last but not least, we are glad to share with you the research on Central Asia carried out by the College of Social Sciences faculty members ([pages 8–9](#)). We will also continue to organize lectures from scholars and experts on Central Asia as a contribution to the process of exchanging ideas between the local and international communities. And to close, we chose a selection of the most interesting recent news ([pages 10–11](#)) and publications in the field ([pages 4–5](#)).

Nargis Kassenova,
CASC Director,
nargis@kimep.kz

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Events

Fall 2014–Spring 2015

Public lecture

February 13, 2015

Gulnara Mendikulova, International Academy of History and Social Sciences (Astana)

Kazakh participation in World War II

CASC–FES roundtable series

In November 2014 CASC with the support of Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) in Kazakhstan launched a series of roundtables addressing issues at the intersection of domestic and international politics. You can find videos of the roundtables and detailed summaries on our website.

ROUNDTABLE SUMMARIES: casc.kz/?page_id=157 **VIDEOS:** casc.kz/?page_id=95

November 13, 2014

Kazakhstan's economy: entering the turbulence zone

Nadeem Naqvi, KIMEP University

*Economic effects of 2014 crude oil price fall
on Kazakhstan*

Olzhas Khudaibergenov, Association of Economists
of Kazakhstan

*Beyond oil, beyond borders: External factors
influencing Kazakhstan's economic development*

Sabit Khakimzhanov, Halyk Finance

Internal constraints on countercyclical policy

Zhanibek Khassan, Zertteu Research Institute

*The state budget as a reflection of government policies:
Declarations vs. reality*

February 20, 2015

Is there future for liberal ideas in Kazakhstan?

Alessandro Frigerio, KIMEP University

Liberalisms

Aidos Sarym, political scientist

The liberal idea in Kazakhstan: Past, Present and Future

Anuar Ushbayev, Tengri Partners

The role of liberalism in economic progress



Roundtable “Reframing Eurasia” (March 2015). From left to right: Norwegian ambassador Ole Johan Bjørnøy, Latvian ambassador Juris Maklakovs, and Kamen Velichkov, head of Political Press and Information Section of the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan Photo by Daniyar Zhakulinov

March 20, 2015 · CASC–FES–EU roundtable

Reframing Eurasia: EU–Kazakhstan cooperation in the changing world

Session 1. Views from Europe

Juris Maklakovs, ambassador of Latvia to Kazakhstan

Ole Johan Bjørnøy, ambassador of Norway to Kazakhstan

Kamen Velichkov, head of Political Press and Information
Section, EU Delegation to Kazakhstan

Session 2. Views from Kazakhstan

Nargis Kassenova, CASC director, KIMEP University

Tulegen Zhukeyev, board of trustees of Sarsenbayev
Foundation

Elnara Bainazarova, security analyst

April 29, 2015

War and propaganda in the information age

Peer Teschendorf, Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Broadcast to kill: The effects of media in times of war

George Reuckert, KIMEP University

*Dr. Strangelove returns, or How I learned
to stop worrying and love the Internet*

Jiří Melich, KIMEP University

*Politics of the changing narratives towards the West
in Putin’s Russia*

Our picks

Selected articles related to Central Asian affairs

Scenarios for future Central Asian studies

Nargis Kassenova, KIMEP University, *IIAS Newsletter*, No. 70, Spring 2015

The author argues that the shape of Central Asian studies much depends on funding, which is driven by the interest in this region by external stakeholders. She considers three scenarios—optimistic, muddling-through, and pessimistic—under which further developments in the field may take place. A change in interests can result in the reformatting of the field. This can be caused by the ongoing changes on the ground, such as shifts in identity, nation-building and language constellations, and economic and social linkages with other regions. Political alliances will likely play a secondary role.

The Russian Analytical Digest

Co-produced with the Central Asian Program, Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, George Washington University

The recent issue (March 17, 2015) brings a series of articles on Central Asia's involvement in the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union. Nate Schenkkan looks at Impact of the Economic Crisis in Russia on Central Asia; Marlene Laruelle, Sebastien Peyrouse, and Saodat Olimova take in their respective analyses on cases of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The issue also brings relevant statistics and public opinion surveys from the region.

Post-Soviet Central Asia: A summary of the drug situation

Tomas Zabranskya, Viktor Mravcika, Ave Talua, and Ernestas Jasaitis, *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 25 (2014), 1186–1194

This well-researched paper provides an overview of the drug situation in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, using the EU methodology of “harmonised indicators of drug epidemiology.” (Most of the data reported here were gathered and analysed within the framework of the EU-funded CADAP project in 2012.) It concludes that—though much still needs to be done—the evidence is already available “that is useful for the planning of effective national and regional drug policies, which would be of the utmost importance in the forthcoming years of the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force from Afghanistan.”

Organized criminal groups in Kyrgyzstan and the role of law enforcement

Chyngyz Kambarov, *Voices from Central Asia*, No. 20, January 2015

With the end of the Soviet rule, new threats, including the “radicalized organized crime” resulting from post-Soviet socio-economic problems, arrived at the scene. Unfortunately, in Kyrgyzstan this crime is “intertwined with political power” and has since

1990's "penetrated into every level of government and parliament." So far, all attempts have failed to solve the problem of organized crime, as well as of extremism and corruption, or to address the underlying social and economic grievances through the reform of state institutions and agencies. For instance, previous reforms of the court system, with its crucial role in establishing rule of law, have brought little success. (Dr. Chyngyz Kambarov is Lieutenant Colonel of Police of the Kyrgyz Interior Ministry.)

The Irtysh and Ili transboundary rivers: The Kazakh–Chinese path to compromise

Zhulduz Baizakova, *Voices from Central Asia*, No. 21, January 2015

This paper analyzes the current state of Kazakhstan–China relations focusing on two transboundary rivers and related legislation and regulation of bilateral bodies. Irtysh and Ili are the largest of more than 20 rivers that cross Kazakhstan's border with China and have come under increasing strain due to China's water withdrawals to boost the economy of its western provinces, especially the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Kazakhstan, being downstream of both rivers, was put at a disadvantage. Thus, two fundamental issues between Kazakhstan and China emerged: rational equitable water allocation and environment pollution prevention. The multifaceted

and complex issues of the transboundary rivers are still far from being resolved and will require much negotiation and compromise.

Does India still have a chance in Central Asia?

Calum Heaton, *Times of Central Asia*, 26 February 2015

The author argues that a situation reminiscent of the "Great Game" of the 19th century has once again appeared in Central Asia—as the geographical location of the region and the resources it possesses has become a focal point of predominantly Russian and Chinese interests, but also that of the U.S. and the EU. Under its previous foreign policy, India "punched well below its weight" compared to other regional powers. With the victory of Narendra Modi in 2014 election, its interest in Central Asia increased rapidly and Central Asian countries have already signaled their willingness to work with India for mutual benefit. Bilateral partnerships have been encouraged, for instance, by high demand for Kazakh uranium, joint training exercises with the Tajik Air Force, contracted development of the Kyrgyz IT industry, and India–Turkmenistan's participation in the Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline (TAPI). According to the author, the TAPI will produce new jobs in Afghanistan and become "a key artery linking the Indian subcontinent with the Central Asian steppe." Also, the trade between India and Central Asia could pick up, as well as tourism in both directions, the article concludes.

Partnership

The Norwegian project at CASC

KIMEP and University of Agder develop 3 new master-level courses

In 2012 KIMEP CASC in partnership with the Faculty of Economics and Humanities of the University of Agder, Norway (UiA) received a grant from the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Education for the implementation of the project “Excellence in teaching on global business and international relations.” The goal of the project was to develop three new master-level courses: **Emerging Markets and Powers**, **Corporate Social Responsibility**, and **Ethics in International Relations**. A substantial part of the grant was allocated for acquiring most up-to-date library resources. The project also supported research activities by KIMEP and UiA faculty on issues relevant to the course development. Project members had an opportunity to make a study tour to Norway and interview representatives of ministries, businesses and scholarly community. Some findings have been already presented, e. g. at the conference organized by Nazarbayev University in May 2014. The grant also provided four scholarships for KIMEP CSS Master’s students to spend a semester at UiA.

In summer and fall 2014, all three courses were tested and received good response from the students. The course packages were also very positively evaluated by prominent external experts: Emerging Markets and Powers by Prof. Bhaskar Chakravorti (Tufts University) and Prof. Valeria Dinger (Osna-bruck University); Corporate Social Responsibility by Prof. Krista Bondy (Bath University); and Ethics in International Relations by Prof. Andrew Hurrell (Oxford University).

EMERGING MARKETS AND POWERS

Nygmjet Ibadildin, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

Eldar Madumarov, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics

Gerald Pech, Dean, College of Social Sciences

Dina Sharipova, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

Stein Kristiansen, Professor, UiA

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Azhar Baisakalova, Assistant Professor, Department of Public Administration

Stina Torjesen, Associate Professor, UiA

ETHICS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Aigul Adibayeva, Associate Dean, College of Social Sciences

Alessandro Frigerio, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

Harald Knudsen, Professor, UiA

LIBRARY

Olga Zaitseva, Director, KIMEP Library

Dina Kozhakhmetova, KIMEP Library

Arthur Olson, UiA Library

Henry Langseth, UiA Library

PROJECT COORDINATORS

Nargis Kassenova, Director, KIMEP CASC

Stina Torjesen, Associate Professor, UiA



Project members meet for a workshop in Istanbul (February 2014) Photo by Arthur Olson

“I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Norwegian Government, University of Agder, Central Asian Studies Center and the CSS Department of International Relations for this very unique chance to study and live in Norway. Being in Norway made me think differently of Norwegian culture and mentality. Norwegians are neither cold, nor reserved or estranged, as many of us assumed, but very sincere and warm people with open wonderful smile. Courses at the University of Agder, be it on EU institutions, political economy of corruption, or others contributed much to my academic development.”

Shynar Zeinolla, scholarship recipient (Spring 2015 semester), College of Social Sciences MIR program



Celebrating the 10th anniversary of Erasmus Student Network with the University of Agder Photo by Shynar Zeinolla

Recent publications

with Central Asia regional focus

by KIMEP College of Social Sciences faculty

Book chapters

Burkhanov, A. and Sharipova, D. 2014. Kazakhstan's civic-national identity: Ambiguous policies and points of resistance. **In** Omelicheva, M. *Nationalism and identity construction in Central Asia: Dimensions, dynamics, and directions*. (London: Lexington Books), 21–35.

White, K. D. 2014. Nature and economy in the Aral Sea basin. **In** Micklin, P., Aladin, N. V., and Plotnikov, I. (eds.). *The Aral Sea: The devastation and partial rehabilitation of a great lake*. (Berlin: Springer-Verlag), 301–335.

Journal articles

Ahmed, S. and Amagoh, F. 2014. Process analysis and capacity utilization in a dental clinic in Kazakhstan. *Competitiveness Review*, 24(4): 347–356.

Baisakalova, A. 2014. Comparative study of perceptions of corporate social responsibility by different stakeholders in emerging markets. *Journal of Global Management*, 7(1): 1–19.

Dadabayeva, G. and Adibayeva, A. 2014. A post-crisis world: The Chinese factor in the transformation of Kazakhstan. *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, v. 37(2): 1–18.

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Frigerio, A. and Kassenova, N. 2013. Central Asia: Contemporary security challenges and sources of state resilience. *Security and Human Rights*, 24.

Harvey, K. 2013. Are PR students prepared for the profession? American and Kazakhstani perspectives. *KazNU Bulletin*, Nov. 2013, 3(34): 82–87.

Kassenova, N. 2014. Relations between Afghanistan and Central Asian states after 2014: Incentives, constraints and prospects. *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)*, May issue.

Kassymova, D. 2014. Theoretical and methodological basis of the study of integration of repatriates in Kazakhstani society. *KazNU Bulletin History Series* 4: 153–159.

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- Melich, J. and Adibayeva, A.** 2014. Nation-building and cultural policy in Kazakhstan. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(10).
- Mouraviev, N. and Kakabadse, N.** 2014. Impact of externalities on sustainable development: Evidence from public-private partnerships in Kazakhstan and Russia. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 14(5): 653–669.
- Pech, G.** 2014. Tenge devaluation: The role of risk and uncertainty and economic consequences. A comment. *Central Asian Business Journal*, 6: 21–28 (invited, non-refereed).
- Saari, D. and Adibayeva, A.** 2014. To the question of perspectives and challenges in contemporary international trade diplomacy. *Canadian Scientific Journal*, 2: 36–40.
- Sharipova, D.** 2015. Who gets what, when and how? Housing and informal institutions in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Kazakhstan. *Central Asian Affairs*, 2(2): 140–167.
- Spehr, S.** 2014. Problems and perspectives of the party systems of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan at present (with Aigul Adibayeva and Daniel Saari). *Tamyр*, Fall issue.
- Tankibayeva, A.** 2014. Use of concept maps as a learning tool to analyze arguments in management problem solving, *Business Education in Central Asia: Best Practices in Integrative Learning and Teaching*, Create Space Independent Publishing Platform.
- Zardykhan, Z.** 2014. V iule. *Boulevard*, 5: 2–7.

In brief

Selected news from Central Asia

A vision for shared prosperity in Central Asia

The Obama administration recently completed a review of its policy towards Central Asia and outlined its “Enduring Vision for Central Asia” in a series of recent speeches by top officials. Richard E. Hoagland from the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and Anthony Blinken, Deputy Secretary of State, emphasized that U.S. interest in Central Asia is a long-term one and will not diminish with the U.S. troops withdrawal from Afghanistan, rather to the contrary. In the words of Hoagland: “Look at the map. Central Asia shares borders with Afghanistan, China, Russia, and Iran—this is an ‘interesting’ neighborhood, to say the least.” (Aitolkyn Kourmanova, Andrew C. Kuchins, CSIS, 15 April 2015)

President’s party wins parliamentary election in Tajikistan

The People’s Democratic Party led by President Emomali Rakhmon won 65% of votes in the country’s parliamentary election held on March 1. Some 300 candidates from eight political parties vied for 63 seats in the lower house of parliament. Three other parties will be represented here, all of them describe themselves as “constructive opposition” and openly support government policies. No election held under Rakhmon, who has been Tajikistan’s president since 1994, has been deemed free or fair by Western observers. (*The Times of Central Asia*, 2 March 2015)

Early presidential poll in Kazakhstan: fear of internal and external threats

Kazakhstan’s leader Nursultan Nazarbayev called an early presidential election for April 26, in a move expected to extend his 26-year rule by another five. The main reason for the early poll, in the absence of genuine democratic mechanisms, seems to be Kazakhstan’s search for continuity and stability needed for overcoming the present economic slump (mostly resulting from falling prices of oil) and implications of worsening geopolitical situation. (*The Times of Central Asia*, 1 March 2015)

An update: Nazarbayev has won the elections with the expected 97% of votes in his favor.

Turkmenistan allows public demonstrations in the country

President Berdymukhammedov signed a law that allows holding “peaceful” public rallies in the country starting from July 1, 2015. Organizers of mass events must be citizens of Turkmenistan, submit a written notification of a rally to local authorities not later than 10 days before the planned rally. Participants are not allowed to hide their faces and have things that can be used as weapons. Drinking alcohol at rallies is also banned. The last anti-government rally in Turkmenistan was held some two decades ago, after which many of its participants were labeled drug addicts and alcoholics and jailed. (*The Times of Central Asia*, 13 March 2015)



Near Tastobek, Kazakhstan on the Northern Aral Sea Photo by Kristopher White



Nauryz parade in Khiva, Uzbekistan Photo by Jiří Melich



Victory Day celebration in Almaty, Kazakhstan Photo by Kristopher White

Kyrgyzstan's shadow economy crawls into the light

Kyrgyzstan has a plan to bring its large shadow economy under control by legalizing it. A government commission has been set up to work on necessary measures over the next two years. Prime Minister Otorbaev has recently estimated the size of the underground economy at between 40% and 60% of the GDP, or about \$3 billion. (*Transition Online*, 19 March 2015)

Central Asian Studies Center

College of Social Sciences, KIMEP University

KIMEP Central Asian Studies Center (CASC) was created in November 2010 with the aim to become a regional hub for academic and graduate research on Central Asia. Since then every semester it has been organizing series of events: guest lectures, roundtables, and conferences. It has been facilitating the research of foreign scholars, especially Ph.D. candidates, and serving as a coordinator of research links between foreign universities and KIMEP.

CASC has been instrumental in the development of the dual MA degree in International Relations with the University of Glasgow and obtaining Erasmus Mundus scholarship fund for the International Masters in Russian, Central & East European Studies (IMRCEES) program run by a consortium of universities led by the University of Glasgow. On behalf of KIMEP, CASC has worked on the grant applications. It was successful in acquiring the Norwegian SIU grant together with the University of Agder for the development of curricula of three master-level courses: Emerging Markets and Powers, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Ethics in International Relations.

DIRECTOR

Nargis Kassenova, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Zhar Zardykhan, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

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Francis Amagoh, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Public Administration

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Jiří Melich, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of International Relations and Regional Studies

Adil Nurmakov, C.Sc., Senior Lecturer, Department of Media and Communications

Kristopher White, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration

COORDINATOR

Shynar Zeinolla, shynar.zeinolla@kimep.kz

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-chief Nargis Kassenova

Director of production Zhar Zardykhan

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Photo on page one Zhar Zardykhan

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