

Eurasia in Transition: Geopolitics, Connections and Challenges



University of Zurich, May 13 – May 15, 2020

Eurasia is transforming. Since the emergence of fifteen new national states on the territory of the former Soviet Union, this vast region saw major political and socioeconomic transformations, and repeated reconfigurations of its geopolitical and geo-economic landscape. The transformations in the central Eurasian space will have far-reaching repercussions on the international order and present challenges, but also opportunities, for the West, Europe and Switzerland. The key aim of this international conference is therefore to get a better understanding of the changes in this key part of the central Eurasian landmass, by exploring geopolitical, economic and societal trends and challenges.

This international conference is organized in cooperation between the Center for Eastern European Studies (CEES) at the University of Zurich and the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich.

Supported by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI, and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

CONFERENCE VENUE

University of Zurich, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich, RAA-G-01 (“kleine Aula”) and RAA-G-215

CONTACT & REGISTRATION

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020

Venue: University of Zurich, RAA-G-01 (“kleine Aula”)

17.15-19.30, conference opening with keynote speech & panel discussion

Introduction

- Jeronim Perović, Director, Center for Eastern European Studies, University of Zurich

Welcome addresses

- Gabriele Siegert, President ad Interim, University of Zurich
- Sarah Springman, Rector, ETH Zurich

Keynote speech: “Eurasia and the Europos Parkas: A Region in Transition and Motion”

- Rawi Abdelal, Director, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

Roundtable discussion

- Nada Boškovska, Director, CEES Advisory Board (moderator)
- Rawi Abdelal, Director, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University
- Gwendolyn Sasse, Director, Centre for East European and International Studies, Berlin
- Jinghan Zeng, Director, Confucius Institute at Lancaster University

20.00: Welcome dinner at “Zunft zur Schmiden” with conference participants and invited guests

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2020

8.30-10.30 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 1: The Geopolitical Dimension: Main Actors and Interests

Chair: Andreas Wenger (Zurich)

- Xin Zhang (Shanghai): Re-mapping Eurasia: The Production and Contradictions of Geographic Imaginaries
- Aglaya Snetkov (London): Russia’s geopolitical ambitions in Eurasia: regional concerns and great power ambitions
- Lin Minwang (Shanghai): China-India-Russia Relations in a Changing Eurasia Order
- Anna-Lena Hönig (Mannheim): The EU and the Decline in Democracy Promotion in Central Asia

10.30-11.00 Break

11.00-13.00 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 2: The View from the Region: Central Asia

Chair: Gwendolyn Sasse (Berlin)

- Benno Zogg (Zurich): Current Political and Security Challenges across Central Asia
- Nargis Kassenova (Cambridge, MA): Kazakhstan 2020: Lost in Transition
- Bayram Balci (Istanbul): Uzbekistan after Islam Karimov: A New Foreign Policy?
- Zarina Urmanbetova (Zurich): Activism in the Name of Forgotten City: Case of Local Activists - Shaarmans in Kyrgyz Cities

13.00-14.30 Lunch at ETH Dozentenfoyer

14.30-16.30 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 3A: Energy

Chair: Peter Finke (Zurich)

- Vitaly Yermakov (Oxford): An End of an Era of Russian Gas Pipeline Mega-Projects
- Mariia Shagina (Zurich): Impact of Western Sanctions on the Russian Energy Sector
- Farid Guliyev (Giessen): Global Energy Transition and its Impacts on Caspian Oil and Gas Developments (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan)
- Ramu C.M. (Manipal, India): Mapping India’s Energy Priorities in an Evolving Eurasian Geopolitical Paradigm

14.30-16.30 (Venue: RAA-G-215)

Panel 3B: Security Issues

Chair: Christine Bichsel (Fribourg)

- Charles J. Sullivan (Nur-Sultan): Passing the Torch in Central Asia: Authoritarian Transition Dynamics
- Andrei Dörre (Berlin): Feeding the Mountains: Shifting Foodscapes in High Asia
- Kateřina Zäch (Fribourg): Climate Change and Politics of Water Availability in the Rural District of At-Bashy (Kyrgyzstan)
- Aigul Kazhenova (Zurich): The issue of regional integration in Central Asia

19.00: Conference dinner at restaurant “Zum grünen Glass”

Conference Eurasia in Transition

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2020

8.30-10.30 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 4A: Societal Challenges

Chair: Nada Boškovska (Zurich)

- Peter Finke & Meltem Sancak (Zurich): Migration in and out of Central Asia: an Overview
- Shoirakhon Nurdinova (Eskişehir): Feminization of Migration from Uzbekistan to Turkey
- Shirin Tumenbaeva (Bishkek): Determinants of Electoral Participation and Voter Mobilization in Kyrgyzstan
- Zilola Khalilova (Tashkent): Female religious education in Uzbekistan: transformation of confessional traditions and intercultural networks
- Illias Mamadiarov (Paris/Bishkek): Formal and informal financial institutions in Kyrgyzstan

8.30-10.30 (Venue: RAA-G-215)

Panel 4B: Infrastructure & Trade

Chair: Jeronim Perović (Zurich)

- Agnieszka Joniak Lüthi (Zurich): A Road, a Disappearing River and Fragile Connectivity in Sino-Inner Asian borderlands
- Philipp Schröder (Freiburg): Addressing the New Silk Road: National Visions and Everyday Imaginaries between Kazakhstan and China
- Michiel Foulon (Zurich): Opportunity Makes the Strategy: European Trade Policy in the Pacific Century
- Robert W. Orttung (Washington): Mobility and Connectivity in Russia's Far North

10.45-11.15 Break

11.15-13.00 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 5A: Minorities, Religion and Civil Society

Chair: Nargis Kassenova (Cambridge, MA)

- Rune Steenberg (Copenhagen): "The Uighur question"
- Beate Eschment (Berlin): Kazakh or a Kazakhstani Nation? Challenges of the Nazarbaev Legacy
- Zulfiya Imyarova (Almaty): Role of Political Entrepreneurs in Minority Communities in Central Asia
- Adil Rodionov (Nur-Sultan): Social capital and hierarchy: networks of Kazakhstani NGOs

11.15-13.00 (Venue: RAA-G-215)

Panel 5B: Eurasian Regionalism

Chair: Robert W. Orttung (Washington)

- Alexander Libman (Munich): Does Ideology Help? Authoritarian Regionalism in Eurasia and Russia's Ideological Discourse and Non-Ideological Practice
- Linda Maduz (Zurich): The AIIB: China and Regional Governance in Asia
- Marcin Kaczmarek (Glasgow): Reconciling great power-led regional projects: the dynamics of Sino-Russian relations in Eurasia
- Evgeny Vinokurov (Moscow): The Issue of Regional Integration in Central Asia

13.00-14.30 Lunch at ETH Dozentenfoyer

14.30-16.30 11.15-13.00 (Venue: RAA-G-01)

Panel 6: The Rise of China and the New Eurasian Order

Chair: Roy Allison (Oxford)

- Emilian Kavalski (Nottingham/China): China's 'One Belt One Road' (view from Eastern and Central Europe)
- Jinghan Zeng (Lancaster): China's 'One Belt One Road' (view from China)
- Igor Denisov (Moscow): Evolution of Russia's Response to China's Belt and Road Initiative: Seeking to Align with Eurasian Developments
- Moritz Pieper (Berlin): Views on the Belt and Road Initiative from Central Asia to Europe

End of conference

ORGANIZED BY



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LOCATION

University of Zurich, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich, RAA-G-01 and RAA-G-215

