

**Course Code:** SS-830

**New Title:** “Regional Security Complex: Central Asia and the Caspian Sea (Elective)”

**Credit Hours:** 3

### **Course Objectives**

This course aims to analyze Central Asia and the Caspian Sea Region (CSR) both from historical (pre-Soviet and Soviet) and recent (post-Soviet) perspectives. In the introductory part of the course, general geographical conditions will be discussed, then some of the most important historical developments that affected the region will be examined. The course will explore some major security challenges in Central Asia and CSR, and the role of key regional powers and international actors in shaping the geopolitics and security milieu of the region. By focusing on some major ethnic and social conflicts in specific states, analyzing the shared traits as well as divergences in political processes across the region, it will identify some fundamental shifts taking place in the region. It will begin with exploring the historical debates on the geopolitical importance of the broader region, including Central Asia and CSR (the ‘Great Game’ perspective), analyzing the effects of its isolation during the Soviet years, and highlighting the new strategic salience of the region. It will explore the centrality of oil and energy resources in shaping cooperation and competition among the states in the region, as well as the engagement of international actors (Russia, China, the EU, and the US in particular) in the region. The likely impact of BRI and CPEC on Central Asia and CSR’s strategic dynamics shall be exclusively analyzed.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- A general familiarization with the region, its geography, history, politics etc.
- A competent knowledge of how the local context, Russian and Soviet legacy coupled with international actors are defining the geopolitics, energy security, conflicts, and overall security framework in Central Asia and CSR.
- A critical understanding of processes driving regional cooperation or hampering it.
- An understanding of the impact of transient world system on the region.
- A reasonable prediction of the future trends of security issues of the region, based on analysis of historical and current dynamics.

## Course Contents

- Historical Background.
- Geo strategic significance.
- Great Powers' interests.
- Regional and peripheral players.
- Geopolitics: Old and New ('Great Game' vs 'New Great Game').
- Energy Security matrix.
- Impact of BRI on the region.
- CPEC and CARs.
- Internal and external security challenges.
- Opportunities for the region.
- Regional Arrangements: AIOC, CIS, CSTO, SCO, ECO etc.
- The future.

## Nature of Assessment

Nature of Examination	Duration	Frequency	Weighting (%age)
End semester examination	3 hours	1	30 – 50
Mid Term	2 hours	1	15 – 25
Quizzes	-	Minimum: 3	05 – 15
Class Participation	-	-	0 – 5*
Assignments / Project(s) / Case Studies	Own time	-	10 – 40

\*Shall be allocated only if there are no case studies.

## Recommended Readings

- Agha Bayramov, *Constructive Competition in the Caspian Sea Region*, Routledge, 2024.
- Anis H. Bajrektarevic, Tanvi K. Chauhan, Mak Bajrekatarevic, *Caspian: Status, Challenges and Prospects*, Nova, 2021.
- Peter Frankopan, *The New Silk Roads*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.
- Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.
- Igor S. Zonn, Andrey G. Kostanoy, Aleksey N. Kosarev, Michael H. Glantz, *The Caspian Sea Encyclopedia*, Springer, 2014.
- Morten Anker, Pavel K. Baev, Bjorn Brunstad, Indra Overland and Stina Torjesen, *The Caspian Sea Region towards 2025*, Delft: Eburon Academic publishers, 2010.
- Gül Berna Özcan, *Building States and Markets: Enterprise and Development in Central Asia*, Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, New York: Anchor Books, 2010.
- Steve Levine, *The Oil and The Glory: The pursuit of Empire and Fortune on the Caspian Sea*, Random House, 2007.
- Rafis Abazov, *Culture and Customs of the Central Asian Republics, USA: The Greenwood Press*, 2007.
- Sergej Mahnovski, Kamil Akramov, and Theodore Karasik, *Economic Dimensions of Security in Central Asia, USA: Rand*, 2007.
- Richard Pomfret, *The Central Asian Economies Since Independence*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Anrey G. Kostianoy, Aleksey N. kosarev, *The Caspian Sea Environment*, Springer, 2005.
- Lutz Kleveman, *The New Great Game*, London: Atlantic Books, 2004.
- Bernard A. Gelb, Terry Rayno Twyman, *Caspian Sea Region & Energy Resources*, Novinka, 2004.
- Michael Kort, *Central Asian Republics*, New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2004.
- Alex Stringer, "Soviet Development in Central Asia: The Classic Colonial Syndrome?" in *Central Asia: Aspects of Transition*, Tom Everett-Heath (ed.) London: Routledge Curzon, 2003.
- Gennady Chufrin, *The Security of the Caspian Sea Region*, Oxford University Press, 2001.

- Roger D. Kangas, "State-building and Civil Society in Central Asia," in Vladimir Tismeneanu (ed.) *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc., 1995.
- Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Michael Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1990.
- Alexandre Bennigsen and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State*, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1983.
- Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- C.H.Ellis, *The Transcaspian Episode*, Hutchinson, 1963.
- Arnold J. Toynbee, *Between Oxus and Jumna*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1929.