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Prospects for Peace Research in Central Asia Between Discourses of Danger, Normative Divides and Global Challenges

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Dr. Anna Kreikemeyer

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Prospects for Peace Research in Central Asia
Between Discourses of Danger, Normative Divides and Global Challenges

Concept and Findings of an
International Conference at IFSH Hamburg
by
Anna Kreikemeyer

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Summary

In the current crisis of liberal universalism, European peace research is confronted equally with imbalances and limits. The post-liberal debates have shown that concepts of peace are contested and liberal peace research must reflect on how it is perceived and how - if at all - it can reach out to states and societies beyond Europe.

In Central Asia, the preconditions for peace research are mixed. While there is no lack of studies on conflicts, security and stability in and with Central Asia, the underlying concepts, the state of research and its dissemination are predominantly Western-dominated and often securitized. Genuine European peace research concepts are poorly received in Central Asia as they are confronted with political, normative and cultural barriers and different understandings of peace. Researchers from the region have often used the theories and tools of traditional security studies when studying conflict issues. They have only begun to develop their own approaches with peace research perspectives rooted in their living conditions and political and academic cultures. Thus, the state of research on peace in Central Asia appears both unbalanced and limited.

At the international conference, *Prospects for Peace Research in Central Asia. Between Discourses of Danger, Normative Divides and Global Challenges*, researchers from five European and four Central Asian states searched together for prospects for peace research in and from Central Asia. This joint search departed from a critical analysis of current discourses on conflict, security, stability and order in Central Asia. It identified fractures and voids, but also prospects for more region-specific peace research concepts. It took different perceptions into account and critically discussed the current discourses of difference.

The conference addressed the following questions:

- Where are the strengths and deficits of the current discourses on Central Asia with respect to key aspects of peace research?
- How is peace (research) perceived among Central Asian scholars? What are the differences between European and Central Asian perceptions?
- What can we learn about prospects for peace research in and from Central Asia?

This report introduces the concept of the conference and summarizes the contributions of the panelists. Both the theme and the concept of the conference are relevant and innovative. In view of contemporary power and normative shifts in Eurasia, joint discussions about prospects for peace research make inspiration and learning possible, open up new horizons for scholars from Europe and Central Asia and help to prevent alienation.

1 Imbalances and limits of peace research in/from Central Asia¹

In post-Soviet Central Asia², the preconditions for peace research are mixed. Conflicts, security and stability in and with Central Asia have been studied over the last 25 years. However, the underlying concepts, the state of research and its dissemination appear to be dominated by external, mostly Western academia. Genuine European peace research concepts are rarely applied in Central Asia and are confronted with political, normative and cultural barriers.³ Researchers from the region hardly develop region-specific peace studies approaches of their own that are rooted in their living conditions and political and academic cultures. Thus, the current state of research on peace in Central Asia appears unbalanced.

In the European tradition, we understand peace as a constructive way to deal with inevitable social conflicts. Peace is a process that requires the absence of violence as a minimum condition (“negative peace”, Galtung 1969). It has to be constructed (Czempiel 1986) and kept up by “the tireless efforts of many actors at all levels of society” (Schneckener 2016: 16). In addition, structural conditions have to be provided in order to make collective violence increasingly unlikely and to reach “positive peace” (Galtung 1969). Nevertheless, peace always remains fluid. Peace research, as it has been developed in Northern Europe since the 1950-60s, comprises different conceptualizations based on a variety of widely accepted concepts (Bonacker 2008; Wallensteen 2011). It studies the causes, forms and dynamics of non-peaceful action as well as normative orientations towards peaceful thinking, practices and strategies at societal, national, inter- and transnational levels (Imbusch/Zoll 2010; Gießmann 2011). At the end of the 20th century, German liberal peace research concepts stressed the universal importance of democratization, increasing economic justice and modernization, rule of law and confidence for the absence of war (Czempiel 1986, Senghaas 1995). Czempiel (1998) emphasized in particular the progressive role of non-governmental actors and their rights and duties with respect to non-violent interference at the societal level of other states.

In the current crisis of liberal universalism, European peace research is confronted with limits. Post-liberal debates (Debiel/Held/Schneckener 2016 et al.) have shown that concepts of peace are contested. In the broader debate, external peacebuilding interventions have been questioned in particular by *Critical Peace Studies* with respect to the limits of normative universalism, difficulties in localization and an overwhelmingly instrumental character. Richmond and Mac Ginty (2010-2015) refer to the co-constitution of local and international practices (hybridizations), Chandler demands a return to classic liberalism (2010), points to the resilience of local communities (2014) and to the complexity of emerging orders (2017). Heathershaw/Juraev/Lewis/Owen (2018) stress the diminishing influence and legitimacy of the West in view of the growing multipolarity in the international system. These

¹ My thanks go to the German Foundation for Peace Research for funding this international conference, in particular to Thomas Held for his valuable comments on this paper. Equally supportive were the colleagues at IFSH (Michael Brzoska, Martin Kahl and Wolfgang Zellner) and Christine Smith-Simonsen, Centre for Peace Studies Tromsø.

² By Central Asia, we understand Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. In other contexts, narrower or broader definitions of this region are possible.

³ By using the terms *Western*, *European* and *Central Asian* we do not want to contribute to simple binaries. These kinds of terms can only be auxiliary constructions, which have to be differentiated and filled with more detailed information.

contributions to the debates demonstrate that peace research can no longer be solely grounded in the particular historic development in Europe. It is confronted with the challenge of reinventing itself in view of the rupture zones of globalization, changing power structures, norms and cleavages. It must reflect on how it is perceived, how peace is constructed in non-Western regions and how - if at all – it can reach out to such regions in the future.⁴

The spillover of European peace research to the post-Soviet space was and is very limited (Werkner/Kronfeld-Gohorani 2010; Kodama 2012). In the former Soviet Union, the abolition of capitalism and exploitation through the revolution of the working class were originally seen as the relevant peace theory. Peaceful coexistence - the respect of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs - was emphasized as a basic contribution to peace. Western peace research was mainly perceived as a critique of the Soviet socialist system and as know-how for small opposition groups, such as the Helsinki Citizens Assemblies or dissidents (Schlaga/Spanger 1982; Grönik 1993). In the post-Cold War era, peace research has contributed ideas to broader efforts at democratization of civil societies in transition countries and, more or less, to conflict prevention by Western governments and international (non-governmental) organizations.

Perceptions of peace in Central Asia have not been studied systematically in the past. In an initial multilevel analysis of discourses, Lewis (2015) distinguishes local everyday, national hegemonic and international illiberal views on *peace* in Central Asia. In this region, *peace* is mostly understood as social unity, hierarchical authority and economic well-being. He emphasizes complex patterns of contestation of peace against the background of different experiences of conflict in all Central Asian states and societies. Despite rhetorical deference to global discourses of liberal peace, most regional approaches diverge from liberal ideas.⁵ Such differences have either been ignored or pushed aside by external Western actors, failing with conflict prevention or aid interventions in Central Asia (Megoran/Heathershaw/Lewis/Satybaldieva 2014; Bichsel 2009 et al.). Today, the current authoritarian governments again perceive external peace concepts as destabilizing interference in internal affairs and don't allow them to be studied (Luhn 2015; Bohr 2004; Dailey/Laber 1993). Some scholars work on conflictology (Russ. *conflictologiya*, Reeves 2005) and mediation has been promoted for inter-ethnic conflict settlement in the *Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan*.⁶ In academic institutions willing to 'import' Western concepts in teaching, master's programs for peace research have been established in line with the *Bologna process* at externally funded institutes and faculties in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Most of the Central Asian scholars and

⁴ The IFSH work program 2013-2018 deals with *Peace strategies today – peace and security policy at breaches of globalization* (<<https://ifsh.de/forschung/mittelfristiges-arbeitsprogramm/>>). Since 2015, an IFSH research group has been studying "Elements of a theory of trans-liberal peace". Anna Kreikemeyer presented initial results at the annual conference of the Study Group of Peace and Conflict Studies (AFK) in Bonn in March 2016.

⁵ "This set of shared discourses and practices, that constitute authoritarian approaches to conflict, diverge markedly from internationally-promoted ideas of liberal peace. But they resonate strongly with the regional and global stances promoted by the dominant Eurasian powers, Russia and China, and their multilateral organizations. Moscow and Beijing offer considerable reinforcement for the policy positions of elites in Central Asia both domestically and internationally." (Lewis 2016: 9).

⁶ Interviews of Anna Kreikemeyer with Azamat Temirkulov, Kyrgyzstan, in Bishkek in October 2014, with Jafar Usmanov, Tajikistan and Irina Chernykh, Kazakhstan, in Hamburg in January and March 2016.

students are confronted with the fact that their research activities are largely driven by Western donors and primarily oriented towards these academic markets.

State of research

Research articles on Central Asia are overwhelmingly published in journals of area studies, but contributions based on peace research approaches have barely been found in the last five years.⁷ At the same time, the region has hardly been examined as a case study in well-known peace research journals.⁸ This shows a general research gap: today we cannot speak of peace research in and from Central Asia. Furthermore, it documents an imbalance between Europe and Central Asia as both groups of journals are of Western origin.

Searching for prospects of peace research in Central Asia, we believe a critical analysis of current discourses on conflict, security, stability and order in this region might be useful. Conceptually, we distinguish state-, society- and globalization-oriented discourses, which mirror the recently begun self-reflection in Central Asia on external, regional, national and local conceptions. These different discourses offer initial insights into fractures and voids, but also into prospects of joint peace research.

State-oriented international relations and security studies: Peace research criticizes the fact that peace, peace research and non-military policies seem to have lost relevance in the era of globalization, while security, security studies and military policies have increased in relevance. Another dominant trend can be observed in area studies on Central Asia. Most experts, both external and regional, look through a state-oriented lens at this region. They are primarily interested in national power strategies used to cope with international conflict and cooperation. Western studies emphasize problems of leadership succession, clientelism, corruption, rent-seeking and the dangers of a state-crime-nexus or state-capture (Cornell 2014; Heinemann-Grüder 2014 et al.). Correspondingly, research on foreign and security policies of Central Asian states is grounded in (neo-classical) realism and directed towards national interests. States appear as individual actors preoccupied with power strategies, following multi-vector diversification and competing against the background of hegemonic change (Pikalov 2014; Laruelle 2012; Cooley 2012). Research is preoccupied with the risks of region-specific bilateralism, intraregional non-cooperation, hegemonic (re-)integration with Russia, competing and risky cooperation with China and regime-boosting regionalism in Eurasia. Economization of foreign policy and securitization of energy economy prevail (Kreikemeyer 2014, 2012; Aris 2013; Hoffmann 2011).

Security studies focus on presumed threats and risks but less on regional capacities for peace. Since the *War on Terror* was launched in 2001, we have observed a trend towards securitization. The Fergana Valley and the borders to Afghanistan are framed as powder kegs despite the fact that Central Asia has been comparatively quiet in the post-Soviet era.⁹ Western authors quickly see risks of instability in Central Asia referring to state weakness and

⁷ See *Central Asia Survey, Europe-Asia Studies, International Journal of Central Asia Studies, Central Asian Affairs, Journal of Communist, Post-Communist Studies*.

⁸ See *Peacebuilding, Co-operation and Conflict, Journal of Peace Research, International Journal for Peace Studies, Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*.

⁹ Since the end of the Tajik Civil War (1992-1997), Central Asia has “only” seen major violent clashes in the 2005 Andijaan massacre and in 2010 in Osh.

the administrations' inability to regulate the basic socioeconomic infrastructure and to prevent radical Islamist mobilization or threats emerging from the proximity to unstable sub-regions (Afghanistan, Xingjiang). The policy-oriented *International Crisis Group* nourishes discourses of insecurity with pressing reports on ethno-nationalist conflict, religious mobilization, radicalization and terrorism.¹⁰ Journals of area studies, such as the *Central Asia Survey* (Heathershaw/Thompson; Jackson; Mac Farlane/Torjesen, all 2005) and the *Journal for Communist and Post-Communist Studies* (Korostelina; Sandole, both 2007) have debated these discourses of risk and tried to differentiate between securitized and *real* conflicts. Only in recent years has the security perspective been broadened and aspects of region-specific stability, based on different cultures of legitimation and different strategies of modernization, have come under consideration. Here, non-democratic practices, such as informality, symbolism, façade behavior and populism, are addressed (Schiek 2014; Cummings 2010; "Politics of the Spectacular. Symbolism and Power in Central Asia", special issue of *Europe Asia Studies* 2009). In 2016, *Central Asia Survey* again issued a call for "Critical Approaches to Security in Central Asia" (Lemon 2016).

Society-oriented discourses. This group of discourses is influenced by the Western debate on (post)-liberal peacebuilding and external actors' search for localization and legitimation on the ground by making better use of micro-level contributions to stability and by linking to capabilities of local social orders. Prominent is the demand for better external action at the micro-level, for local ownership and for relational sensitivity (Debiel/Rinck 2016; Hellmüller 2014; Debiel/Chadwick/Gadinger 2013). Research on everyday practices for peace and on local resilience emphasizes cultural and normative differences (Richmond/Mac Ginty 2013; Menkhaus 2013). Correspondingly, local, ethnographic and practice turns have become fashionable in area studies, emphasizing normative differences of everyday, customary, communitarian and religious orders and cultures (Bräuchler 2017, Bräuchler/Naucke 2017; Millar 2015).

In Central Asia, the search by external actors for better localization and capacities for peace focuses a great deal on the Fergana Valley (Megoran/Heathershaw/Lewis/Satybaldieva 2014; Bichsel 2009) and has stimulated interest in the customary social order and agency for peace (Beyer 2013; Dadabaev 2013 et al.). The role of local informal actors and institutions in peacebuilding has been analyzed for Kyrgyzstan (Ismailbekova 2012; Temirkulov 2011; Ranjibar 2012), for Uzbekistan (Urinboyev 2013) and for Tajikistan (Hojiev/Kreikemeyer 2018; Boboyorov 2013). Research on conflict-prone borders in the Fergana Valley (Reeves 2005, 2014) and on the capacities of civil society in Kyrgyzstan confirms the advantages of ethnographic and practice orientations (Bayaliyeva-Jailobaeva 2014; Ismailbekova/Sultanaliev 2012). Anthropology has studied representations of social order in political assemblies (Beyer/Rasayanagam/Reeves 2014).

Globalization-oriented critical areas studies. Globalization-oriented discourses address conflicts from a different point of view. They emphasize the fluidity of temporal and spatial

¹⁰ Since 2000, 55 properly researched ICG reports on Central Asia have appeared, 47 alone on the Fergana states. Many of them stress "growing tensions", "decay and decline into chaos", "risks of terrible violence", states "on the verge of political breakdown and possible civil war" (2006 Kyrgyzstan), a state "remain[ing] a serious risk to itself and its region" (Uzbekistan 2007), "government[s] lurch[ing] from crisis to crisis in the face of worsening political violence" (Kyrgyzstan 2005) or a state "remaining the most vulnerable of the Central Asian nations" (Tajikistan 2001).

categories as well as changing identities and norms. For them, a traditional spatial orientation to territorial containers is misleading and runs the risk of being instrumentalized politically. *Critical Area Studies* (Schetter 2013 et al.) prefer non-normative explanations to conflict, mobility and development, which they see primarily as counter-moves to globalization. As yet, they have hardly taken root in Central Asia. Already in 2009, Heathershaw stressed that concepts had to cover processes of “transnationalization in (de)-nationalized states”. Between 2011 and 2017, the *Crossroads Asia Network* investigated corruption, migration, religious radicalization and drug trafficking as transnational dynamics (Boedecker et al. 2015). Nowadays, Western experts increasingly engage Central Asian partners to investigate the transnationalization of conflicts (Böhmcken/Boboyorov/Bagdasarova 2016).

Aims and guiding questions of the IFSH conference

In view of contemporary power and normative shifts in Europe and Eurasia¹¹, the IFSH conference searched for prospects for peace research in and from Central Asia. The two-day international conference brought together 26 renowned experts. In order to broaden the common ground, all panelists were requested in advance to both comment on the overall concept and to answer panel-specific questions.¹² We paid particular attention to equal participation of Central Asian and European speakers as well as to gender balance (fourteen male, twelve female speakers) in order to achieve our conference objectives of debating different perceptions and undertaking a joint effort to engage in peace research.¹³

We operated from the premise that research on peace in Central Asia can still make use of some theories, methods and results from Western peace research, but its approach to research has to be combined with homegrown scientific concepts. A major challenge of this endeavor was the difficulty of finding a common understanding with respect to terminological differences and contested concepts. Therefore, we made some efforts to reflect on the dominating patterns of Western scientific culture and on how to promote an exchange without preconceptions. For practical reasons we agreed on English as the working language.¹⁴

The panels addressed the following questions:

- Where are the strengths and deficits in state-, society- and globalization-oriented discourses on Central Asia with respect to peace research?

¹¹ In this context Eurasia encompasses the post-Soviet space and neighboring Afghanistan, China, Iran, Mongolia and Turkey.

¹² The following text is based on short unpublished papers prepared by the panelists for the conference. Relevant views are quoted explicitly.

¹³ Thirteen candidates had applied for a PhD panel and we selected three candidates from Central Asia currently working at European institutes and one European currently doing fieldwork in Central Asia. In addition, the conference was opened up to 25 guests (15 from four Central Asian states, five from European states and five from Belarus, Russia, the U.S., Belgium and Afghanistan).

¹⁴ Despite the language imbalance, we thought the translation of four different Central Asian languages and German would be too costly for this conference. A translation into Russian was seen only as a second-best solution. Given the described openness to Western academic markets, all Central Asian participants were fluent in English.

- How is the European concept of peace (research) perceived among Central Asian scholars? What are the differences between European and Central Asian perceptions?
- Which role do normative differences play in mutual perceptions and in discourses of difference?
- Which role do political and economic barriers play in (joint) peace research and how can they be overcome?
- Which different approaches to studying peace and conflict have been developed by Central Asian scholars?
- Is it possible to find a common basis between European and Central Asian researchers for cooperation in the field of peace research? What can we learn about prospects for peace research in and from Central Asia?

2 A multi-level approach to security, stability, order and peace in Central Asia

Most panelists appreciated the concept of the conference distinguishing different levels and looking at conditions, actors, norms and practices of peace in and with Central Asia. The speakers equally addressed research gaps and new methodological approaches as well as perceptions of cultural, normative and political differences between Europe and Central Asia. In the following we put together views on state-, society- and globalization-oriented discourses as well as on interfaces between them.

Weak states and securitization trends

Conrad Schetter (Bonn International Centre for Conversion) pointed to a basic challenge for peace studies in Central Asia. In his view, on the one hand, “the bulk of academic literature on peace in Central Asia is indebted to a state-centric research agenda, which is rooted in the IR-Realist school of thought and, hence, concentrates on thematic issues, such as security studies, geopolitics or border issues etc. One can argue that Halford Mackinder’s ghost is still alive and the international attraction to Central Asia (‘Silk Road phantasies’) is achieved by geopolitical thinking which ignores the role of societies in the region. On the other hand, reflections on prospects for peace in Central Asia are hardly possible without analyzing the role of the state.” Rustam Burnashev (Kazakh-German University, Almaty) made the picture even more complicated by drawing attention to Central Asian weak states in surroundings of no resistance, despite structural and cultural violence. He emphasized that this phenomenon is due to the fact that the regimes of such states permanently create “insecurity dilemmas”¹⁵. They use particular methods and strategies to avoid failure. At the domestic level, the political leaders of these states are eager to keep up neo-patrimonial patronage systems by breeding discord and competition among elites or security agencies, by manipulating ethnic and identity conflicts or democratic processes and by taking repressive actions against opposition. At the same time, they propagate national narratives to prevent regime failure (President Nazarbaev as the *National Leader* in Kazakhstan, the aims of national independence in Uzbekistan, of independence and neutrality in Turkmenistan or the constant reference to the civil war that shall never be repeated in Tajikistan). Such nation-

¹⁵ See Brian Job, *The Insecurity Dilemma: National, Regime, and State Securities in the Third World*, in: Brian Job (ed.), *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of the Third World States*, Boulder 1992: 11-36, here: 12-13.

building ideologies are quickly reflected in nationalist narratives and in contemporary history textbooks (Damira Umetbaeva, candidate for the PhD panel, Bishkek).

In line with these narratives, dominant domestic discourses in Central Asian states deal with the relevance and the broadening of state institutions in general and of security in particular. According to Burnashev, “the protection of the regime from a coup d’état is the priority and corresponding political activities are performed as non-transparently and non-publicly as possible (“security as silence”, Hansen 2000: 294). At the same time, we observe trends of “legitimization of state power” (Matveeva 2009) when ruling elites try to create an image of a regime effective in security provision. This kind of securitization is a remedy used by the regimes to strengthen their control of all spheres of life. The topic of foreign fighters, for example, is part of such a risk discourse and state securitization and is presented as a threat to national security. In Kyrgyzstan, foreign fighters are considered to be among the top security issues that should be resolved mainly with hard security measures. On the one hand, the public perception is that the state is the only institution that should be able to reduce radicalization, control mosques, and cut recruitment channels. On the other hand, a majority of the population understands radicalization merely as an inner-religious issue within the country and as a consequence of the low level of socio-economic development. It is rather pessimistic about the capacity of the state to fight religious radicalization and even more about improving the socioeconomic situation (Almakan Orozobekova, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle).

From an Uzbek perspective, a security model grounded in the principles of “self-sufficiency, equality, anti-supranationalism, equidistance, a primacy of bilateral relations as well as a policy of not joining any military-political bloc and not deploying military bases or facilities of other states on its territory” (Rustam Makhmudov, Economic Review, Tashkent) permits the safeguarding of national interests and provides a key role in the Central Asian region. In the view of neighbors and partners, however, this ideational posture delivers an image of an unreliable and arrogant state that often acts ambivalently, fluctuating, and in contradictory ways” (Azam Isabaev, IFSH Hamburg).

It became clear that securitization is understood differently in Uzbekistan. For Makhmudov “the society gives the government the right to use additional resources and the introduction of various protective restrictions. In this understanding, securitization means the total involvement of the society in confronting an existential threat”. Nevertheless, Isabaev deplores the Western securitization critique in which scholars increasingly tend to interpret security concerns as myths by arguing that the Central Asian regimes are interested only in rents, survival and legitimacy (Radnitz/Laruelle 2013). While discourses of danger prevent a deeper understanding of authoritarian patterns of power and security, Central Asian regimes are currently portrayed as charlatans who, under concerns about good security, disguise concerns about bad regimes. In Isabaev's view it is necessary to more properly distinguish between rent-seeking and targeted funding, governmental drug business, drug threats as such, the banner of radical Islam and radical Islam as such etc. .

Summarizing, reflections on prospects for peace in Central Asia are hardly possible without studying “state-oriented and state-originating discourses and their persistence as objects of research” (John Heathershaw, University of Exeter). However, for Shairbek Juraev (University of St. Andrews), “discourses that try to re-establish the centrality of the state to ensure

security lead to neglecting or downplaying the same state's central role as a source of insecurity for individuals." While Central Asian regimes' strategies and instruments have to be analyzed in a careful and differentiated manner, it must also be recognized that the state always can act as a source of security for the elites and insecurity for societies, in particular, for the opposition. The current trends in Central Asian authoritarian states will make it increasingly hard to conduct security studies in a way that would question or even challenge the state narratives.

Capacities for peace at the micro-level

During the second panel, speakers presented their views about societal discourses on local order, everyday agency and capacities for peaceful practices in different Central Asian regions. With respect to the above-mentioned discourses of danger and their persisting emphasis on ethnic conflicts, cross-border tensions and violence, the panelists were able to show that norms and practices of conflict containment are prevalent on the communal level. However, local frames mostly differ from liberal democratic values on inclusion, equality or women's rights. They also noted that the interaction with weak local state agencies is often problematic.

Khushbakht Hojiev (University of Bonn) confirmed the strong role of the informal communal order for norms and practices of peacebuilding in the *Jabbor Rasulov* district of northern Tajikistan. Using framing as a methodological tool, he focused on how everyday peace is produced and reproduced between Tajik-speaking and Uzbek-speaking communities through the interplay of narrative and practice. He discovered that communal peace is maintained through locally popularized frames of peaceful relations: a frame of a common past, a frame of common problems of livelihoods and a frame of a life in peace and harmony. These frames are reproduced and materialized through local practices and have contributed to establishing a common identity as well as everyday livelihood practices and inter-communal solidarity networks. Such infrastructures for peace flow beyond the in-group boundaries of Tajik and Uzbek communities. The framing is strongly influenced by customary institutions of elders as traditional mediators, kinship, patron-client relationships and the district self-administrations (Uzbek, Tajik: *mahalla*) that play strong roles in both ethnic groups.

Joldon Kutmanaliev (European University Institute, Florence) confirmed the strong role of informal community leaders in inter-communal non-aggression pacts and micro-level intra-communal policing of local neighborhoods during the 2010 violent riots in southern Kyrgyzstan. Here, the absence of the central state during the Osh crisis led to emerging anarchy on the local level. However, "non-aggression pacts between segregated ethnic neighborhoods negotiated by informal brokerage of local community leaders created a set of rules that reduced uncertainty, fear, and distrust and signified a credible commitment of ethnic leaders to the conditions of the pact". In-group policing by neighborhood-based community leaders and brokers enforced informal crisis management rules (abstention from violence, abstention from appealing to outsiders, holding back radicals, sanctions against violators).

Hojiev's and Kutmanaliev's findings are confirmed by research on everyday peaceful interactions in divided communities in Kazakhstan. In her ethnographic PhD project on ethnic differentiation, inter-ethnic relations and conflict of Uzbeks in different Central Asian

countries, Indira Alybaeva (candidate for the PhD panel, Almaty) identified coping strategies for tensions in relation to resource distribution between local Uzbeks and repatriating Kazakhs in Sayram, Kazakhstan. The state of the art on local societal capacities for peace encourages Damira Umetbaeva (candidate for the PhD panel, Bishkek) in her plans for a project on differences between Russian and Kyrgyz informal solidarity-safety networks, based on kinship, friendship, locality and/or profession of Russians in rural and urban Kyrgyzstan where the state often is not able to provide legal and effective provisions for social security.

Furthermore, local capacities for peace can be found in informal mediation and peace-building activities among women leaders in southern Kyrgyzstan. Given the background of a patriarchal social order, the family is seen as the nucleus of peace in the society where male and female perspectives are different, but complementary. Aksana Ismailbekova (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle) presented a paper co-authored by Nick Megoran on her ethnographic fieldwork in 2016, in which she analyzed communicative skills, strategizing tactics and negotiation techniques of women in informal peacebuilding practices. Imailbekova's interviews prove that, in their private domains, women leaders contribute to strengthening the role of men as leaders by empowering them and preserving their image as security providers in their communities.

Multi-local approaches

The third panel tried to relate globalization-oriented concepts and findings on trans-local agency in the Central Asian region to peace research. Schetter introduced the social order approach of the *Crossroads Asia* project.¹⁶ This concept “departs from the assumption that social order always exists. Social actors are navigating through their daily life by referring to the one or the other social order.” In multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork, the *Crossroads Asia* research network focused on conflict processes, such as migration or development in an actor's and perception-oriented bottom-up approach. It revealed how existing political conflicts at macro- and meso-levels are perceived at the micro-level and how interests, values and practices of local actors and institutions are interlinked with them. This non-normative approach concentrates on everyday practices, societal linkages and positionalities. In this concept, the state is not ignored, but is seen as just one order among other social orders.

Conceptually the *Crossroads Asia* approach is close to Susan Thieme's (Free University Berlin) “multi-local concept of mobility that moves beyond selective international labor migration to all kinds of movement, internally as well as internationally, and to broader issues of mobility, such as recruitment, transport and communication. This approach goes beyond a simplistic understanding of 'country of origin' and 'new destination country of work'.” Thieme provided a nuanced understanding of how people practice and experience increasing multi-locality and how this affects the livelihoods of men and women of different generations. In her view, a multi-local perspective bridges conceptual divides (rural-urban, national-international, migration for education or work) and places stronger emphasis on the protection of migrants and equal opportunities for mobility. However, it requires enhanced trans-local cooperation among actors involved.

¹⁶ Just Boedeker/Antia Mato Bouzas/Anna Grieser/Katja Mielke/Lutz Rzehak/Conrad Schetter/Martin Sökefeld, *Conflict Research on Crossroad Asia. A Conceptual Approach*, Bonn, 2012 (postscript 2014); <http://crossroads-asia.de/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/Concept_papers/Concept_Paper_Conflict_with_Postscript_.pdf>.

The examples of labor and student mobility in Kyrgyzstan (Thieme) and of Tajik migrant workers in Russia (Schetter) confirm the multi-local approach. Thieme demonstrated that “with increasing labor and educational mobility, livelihoods are less likely to be organized in a single place and instead take on a multi-local dimension. Structural settings and socioeconomic and political environments influence the way skills and knowledge can be applied. People have responsibilities in different places, sustain networks to maintain linkages and social structures, values and roles in families and communities change.” Her findings demonstrated how transnational networks are maintained and how cultural and social capital enriches migrants’ home countries.

With the example of Tajik migrant workers in Russia, Schetter placed the emphasis on the complex meshing of different levels. “The presence of Tajik migrant workers in Russia might be used by state authorities and media to stir hostility towards *Central Asians* by arguing that they take ordinary Russian workers’ jobs, despite the fact that they predominantly occupy niche positions in the labor market. However, even if merely perceived as competition for jobs, images of growing social inequality become popular and common. By contrast, the earnings from this low-paid, unskilled labor enable the preservation or even improvement of a certain living standard of the Tajik workers’ families back home and – complemented by further side effects (e.g. affording access to education) – also mitigate existing social differences in the medium- and long-term.”

Karolina Kluczevska (University of St Andrews) presented another multi-level view on the role of more than 30 international and non-governmental organizations (IO/NGOs) in Tajikistan, their interactions with the state and the population's perceptions of external actors. In her view, “maintaining the current status quo is in the interest of both the state and the IO/NGOs, because it guarantees the survival of and material benefits for both.” The views of the population on IOs/NGOs are, however, different. First, most people are not aware of their roles and identify them with a high standard of living for their employees. Only in rural areas may people who have received direct help from IO/NGOs know them. Second, while external actors prioritize security and (neo)-liberal values, many adult Tajiks hold the view that the economic privatization associated with external actors reverses the remains of the state welfare system. The presence of IO/NGOs is still perceived through Cold War lenses. Third, the individualism which is promoted by representatives of some IO/NGOs, differs from the local way of doing things. One of Kluczevska's interviewees, a young professional from the economic sector in Dushanbe, held the view that “this will only make us selfish. Our society is a collective society, we are bound to families, we have a collective way of thinking (July 2015)”.

Against this background, Kluczevska saw a diversity of actors, sources and dynamics of peace in the daily patchwork of diametrically different qualities of life, experiences, perspectives and expectations of the Tajik people. While IO/NGOs and the government are easy to grasp, these sources of peace are not directly visible and do not necessarily interact with politics. Everyday peace needs to be understood in the context of a broadly-conceived mobility. And: this everyday is political when people maintain peace by resorting to prosaic daily activities, such as the nostalgia for the past, the possibility of emigrating, migration, and waiting for migrants to come back. It is in this way that they address poverty, social injustice and abuses by no longer identifying either the state or IO/NGOs with change, but by mitigating sources

of discontent (with the political system, economic decline, corruption) and making changes on their own. As a result, the status quo is based on non-interference by different actors, and is maintained intact because actors on different levels are so “atomized”.

These findings are closely related to Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh's (Sciences Po Paris, Peace Research Institute Oslo, UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia) interest in the individual and the human security level. In her view, it would be misleading to assume that, because of a collectivist ethos, the individual factor does not exist in a post-socialist or Islamic country. Hafiz Boboyorov's (Bonn International Centre for Conversion) contribution equally confirmed that peace research has to open up to individual everyday multi-local strategies for survival in illiberal states and societies. In his analysis of everyday responses to existential risks resulting from transnational diffusion in illiberal contexts, Boboyorov uses Appadurai's (1996) concept of *Securityscapes*, according to which “shared visions about the continuation of life against existential threats (religious and nationalist movements, physical and sexual assault, human trafficking, emergencies in routine life related to health, unemployment, the future as fatality and extinction etc.) express themselves in a certain set of social practices (von Boehmcken/Schetter/Boboyorov et al. 2016: 6) The perspective of *Securityscapes* seeks to show how shared visions of existential endangerment become embedded, experienced and practiced in the spaces of daily life.” Boboyorov's findings demonstrate how the inhabitants of a downtown neighborhood of Dushanbe city shape their *Securityscapes* through languages, symbols, memories, identities and networks in an urban space. Among their security-making strategies are religious adaptation, mimicry, 'no identity' status, spatial proximity, mobility, escort, virtual mobility, trust networks and self-isolation. Similarly, Asel Myrzabekova's (candidate for PhD panel, Bishkek) studies *Securityscapes* with respect to changes in the family as an institution, in general, and to dating and marriage practices in Kyrgyzstan, in particular. She explores shared visions of in-/security related to aggression by religious institutions or radical nationalist groups and asks what kind of everyday practices and strategies couples use to minimize the defined insecurities and threats to their romantic relationship.

In view of the post-liberal search for localization and contextualization, Tadjbakhsh stressed that “concepts of peace and conflict studies that have been developed by Central Asian scholars may be less dogmatic, more organic and flexible. It may be a more real, expansive, everyday type of peace that does not debunk, react or answer, but just leads an everyday existence. From the perspective of individuals, peace encompasses many everyday desires that have to do with survival, well-being, but also dignity (peace of mind, lack of fear, food to eat, lack of worry about the future of children etc.)” Speaking on her broad experience with problems of interaction between local and external actors in peacebuilding in five regions of Afghanistan, she showed that liberal peace had failed to improve people's lives. In particular, it failed to address the unemployment of youth and of millions of returnees from Pakistan and Iran. With its moral basis of human rights and individualism, liberalism seemed to contradict the collectivist principles of duty, authority and justice embodied in tradition and Islam for Afghans. However, there would not necessarily be a clash of values unless practices of *othering* or *orientalizing* the local culture by international actors could be perceived as hampering the harmony in local societies. In the past, a *lack of shame* (Dari: *bihayayi*) by those actors often led to an increase of suspicion and resistance, followed by efforts at *preserving* Afghan values, traditions in the name of honor (Dari: *namous*, *ezzatz*) and Islam. For Tadjbakhsh, everyday hybrid peace is possible through better coordination between local

and external actors. “A hybrid model of liberalism within a collectivist context, devoid of selfish individualism, and modified to include social justice, Islamic values and respect for the elderly, seemed to be embraced by Afghans. The liberal peace project may not be as static, homogenized and hegemonic as it seems: it can be shaped and consolidated through the dynamics of interaction, if there is the will to modify it instead of abandoning it by blaming the misrepresented cultural factor.”

Elham Gharji (candidate for the PhD panel, Kabul) also hopes for continued external peacebuilding in Afghanistan. For him, initiating changes to improve local circumstances in conflict-affected countries is, however, not possible without certain regulatory institutional frameworks of governance. Leaving Afghanistan alone with so-called *good enough* structures where external actors failed to establish lasting stable structures has proved to be a very problematic dark side of hybrid orders.

Interfaces between multiple levels

Most participants appreciated the differentiation of state, societal and global trans-border levels. Schetter, however, emphasized that this differentiation did not go far enough. Future concepts would have to devote more energy to critical interfaces in multi-level analyses. “The disadvantage of having three focal perspectives is that the interfaces between them are ignored. To put it differently, a separation from state and society or between local and global creates intellectual boundaries, which limit research instead of enabling it. From a political science perspective, e.g., the modern state is easily seen as *formal*, and deviating social institutions are swiftly defined as *informal* or *traditional*, which entails a certain bias.”

Heathershaw addressed the interface of domestic and foreign levels of politics and preferred a trans-border research focus. “No longer should we think of authoritarianism as overseeing merely internal repression, and foreign affairs as being about strategic interests and geopolitics. Domestic politics also takes place overseas among the regime's opponents who have fled abroad. Foreign affairs also takes place at home as the great games of external powers are played out within domestic politics. Practices at the macro-level are strongly interlinked with conflicts at the micro-level.” Presenting findings from his book, *Dictators without Borders*, he gave an example of how to look at the state level in Central Asia from a trans-border perspective, by investigating offshore practices of Central Asian regimes. “Central Asian dictators operate *across* borders by subverting the very instruments of global governance that were ostensibly set up to keep them in check. Offshore accounts of business companies allow ruling elites to shelter the spoils of power within the international financial system and, in turn, to use these spoils to promote political goals at home and gain influence overseas” (Cooley/Heathershaw 2016: 3-4). The example of the *Deutsche Bank*, allowing financial transactions and maintaining the bank accounts of the ruling elite of Turkmenistan, demonstrates that dictatorships of Central Asian republics are extensively dependent on and supported by informal transnational networks with global reach. These kinds of transnational interactions allow us to understand that authoritarianism is not simply produced by local ruling elites, but is also significantly supported by outside sources and institutions.

Against the background of this trans-border perspective, Heathershaw criticized contemporary myths on Central Asia. The first is the view of Central Asia as “the distant heartland isolated from global influences and processes, beset by homegrown political repression and economic stagnation” (ibid., p. 4). Quite the contrary, external actors have considerably shaped political and economic developments in this region. Closely related is the myth of the Central Asian failure in liberalization. According to Heathershaw, it was the Western way of promoting deregulation that made *crony capitalism* possible. Contemporary difficulties in this region arise out of the coincidence of authoritarianism and capitalism (ibid., p. 9-11). As a third myth, Heathershaw identified “vulgar localism” that presupposes a clear cultural divide between the region and the outside world. In his view, neither the interfaces between the internal and the offshore spaces nor these myths have been studied sufficiently yet.

3 Repercussions of normative and economic divides

All panelists confirmed the contestation of liberal values in Central Asia and the limited influence of European peace studies concepts. Despite growing transnational influences, dominant authoritarian leaders responsible for order and stability are still widely accepted and the rejection of liberal peace concepts is legitimized as destabilizing interference in internal affairs.

For Kyrgyzstan, Orozobekova confirmed Lewis' (2016) findings on different perceptions of peace in Europe and Eurasia. She holds the view that “in Central Asia, specifically in the Kyrgyz Republic, *peace* is understood as the presence of three main elements: order coming from hierarchical authority, economic stability, and physical security. The state is seen as the entity that should provide the people with these fundamentals; to put it simply, the state is expected to be a source of order, economic well-being, and security. More importantly, the state is associated with a strong leader.”

For Kazakhstan, Irina Chernykh (Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies under the President) confirmed that conflicts are mainly considered a threat to stability that requires security political answers, not systematic research as in Europe. “The concept of *peace* as such is hardly used in academia. Some research centers in Kazakhstan, such as the *Association of Sociologists and Political Scientists*, the public fund *Strategy* and others conduct occasional applied research touching upon aspects of structural and cultural violence. However, they neither use peace research concepts nor relevant theoretical frameworks.” In Chernykh's view, we cannot yet speak of a build-up of systematic peace research in the academic community in Kazakhstan.

From an Uzbek point of view, Makhmudov argued that, a decade after independence, Uzbek politicians and scholars began to understand that many Western prescriptions did not work in a different historical and cultural environment such as Uzbekistan. He criticized a problematic global mixture of different cultures of legitimation and different strategies of modernization. “Post-modernism puts in jeopardy the fundamental liberal principles of rationalism and rational thinking. The name of the individual is transformed into anonymity and the death of the author. The real fact turns into an empty sign and the winning interpretation acquires the status of the fact, often ignoring the real cause-and-effect

relations. The audience changes into a manipulated object and this undermines the freedom of the individual and the freedom of choice, which logically follow from the independent critical thinking. This leads to negative liberty, the purification of the individual from any collective identities and supra-individual entities. The traditional paradigm, on the contrary, aims to protect the basis of nations and civilizations (classic family, binary gender identity) and makes states more resistant to the growing post-modernism pressure.” Against this conceptual background, Makhmudov recommended that foreign researchers abandon, at least temporarily, the universalism of the Western model and try to better understand the Uzbek model.

While for different reasons, Chernykh did not see much opportunities for joint peace research in Kazakhstan either. “Most research in the field of conflict and security is conducted by state-oriented institutions whose studies are classified and closed for political or commercial reasons. They do not affect academic or public discourses. These studies interpret stability as the security of the existing regime, an aim and a value in itself, which is not developing conceptually. Neither the Kazakhstani governmental nor other research centers in the country have achieved the necessary theoretical and methodological standards to be competitive internationally. Chernykh's view was, in a way, confirmed by Heathershaw for whom “collaboration with the state in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is just not possible and pure societal discourses appear limited. Even if we privilege the importance of local, familial and regional political identities and loyalties, the setting in which they play out is increasingly global.”

While the emphasis on normative differences and corresponding processes of distancing prevailed, a few scholars saw possibilities for looking at differences as a chance for productive discussions and practices. Juraev interpreted “disagreements and contradictions in the academic world as a necessity, not as a problem”. For Tadjbakhsh “objective criteria of whether the peace being built is able to stop violence, resolve conflicts, create livelihoods, restore dignity etc. are much more important than normative differences.” She encouraged Central Asian authorities to sponsor research as is done in Europe. Central Asian students should pick up cross-regional subjects and case studies on Western societies instead of simply working on their own societies while studying abroad.

In more practice-oriented discussions, economic divides between European and Central Asian academia came into view. Chernykh pointed to the fact that even if peace research were possible in Central Asia, its agendas would still overwhelmingly be financed by external donors on a grant basis. However, these grants do not allow for long-term studies and are, therefore, not sustainable. Juraev saw academic research as a “professional industry including a huge impact on schooling and training, in which Western researchers come to impose their views and agendas while Central Asian ones keep serving the state and reproducing the illiberal state machine.” Tadjbakhsh stressed that any study of different discourses on peace and conflict requires both an emancipation of Central Asian scholars and Central Asian state sponsoring. Nowadays, “state funding for academic research and tertiary education has diminished, making these dependent on the interests of international donors who hold the monopoly over knowledge production. Usually, European scholars partner with a Central Asian scholar through a European research grant to add some local flavor and empirical data.” Oriented towards bridging this economic divide, Tadjbakhsh recommended an emancipation of Central Asian scholars who “should be more responsible for agenda

setting in joint research with European/American researchers where the lead authors are Central Asians or Afghans, where the demand is made from them or their governments (as in Europe), and where Western students and interns can act as field workers and junior researchers. The language barrier needs to be lifted, journals made more accessible physically in the region and publications considered in mainstream languages of the region.”

4 Prospects for peace research in Central Asia

Summarizing, we address basic differences and barriers to academic exchange and give an outlook for possible innovative concepts and methodologies for joint peace research.

What easily unites European and Central Asian researchers is the appreciation of “negative peace” (Galtung 1969), the absence of violence as a minimum condition for individual/human security, communal order, societal and national stability. More difficult are shared answers to the question of how “positive peace” (ibid.) can be understood, constructed and sustained. Scholars from both regions quickly recognized different views and perceptions on the role of social conflict, on concepts of order and governance, on inclusion as a minimum requirement for justice, on the role of the individual and his/her basic rights, on the role of the community, of social unity and of elites in the state. Given the obvious normative, cultural and economic divides, still more questions arise about possible rules of interaction (respect of diversity, subsidiarity, bottom-up dialogues).

All these differences require intensive exchange. While the selected participants from Central Asia knew international concepts and discourses well, this is not yet the case in the broader academic arena of this region. Opening up to a broader peace research exchange is confronted by at least two barriers. First, independent research in Central Asia greatly depends on the degree of academic liberty under the respective illiberal regimes. Second - as in Europe - it depends on donors. The first barrier is particularly sensitive. In the panel discussions it quickly became clear that a public format in Germany neither allows for addressing political barriers to peace research in Central Asia in depth, nor can it – from a Central Asian cultural perspective – become a forum for critique of European concepts. Only a few Central Asian participants, who have lived and worked in Europe for a long time, are willing to critically discuss in public both Central Asian limitations and Western discourses, dominance or donor practices. Thus, future confidential expert work in small groups is needed to work on true joint concepts for peace studies.

Against the background of these barriers and preconditions, the conference allowed for a few preliminary conclusions on conceptual and methodological aspects, still dominated too much by the West:

- Future peace research in Central Asia can learn a great deal from state-oriented discourses about the relevance of leaderships and elites in many conflicts, but also about stability. However, it has to integrate the high relevance of authoritarian leaderships at the state-levels, the strength of social orders as well as the transnational character of conflicts. An all-too-broad interest in security and stability on the state-level runs the risk of neglecting the societal level. By contrast, society-oriented approaches often show deficits in integrating the state level as here, agency

for peace is primarily confronted with customary norms and practices of local actors and institutions for peace and with the socioeconomic problems of the population. Thus security studies meet state-oriented area studies, while peace research concepts meet society-oriented area studies. State-oriented discourses are either Western-dominated or – due to political reasons – support Central Asian governments. Critical area studies have the advantage of working with non-normative approaches. However, they have to find answers to the questions of agency. Post-colonial concepts and critical security studies have hardly taken root in the region.

- Society-oriented discourses can contribute a lot to the knowledge about local capacities for peace in non-democratic contexts. Comparative knowledge about perceptions of conflict and peace in Central Asia is of prime importance. In particular, local perceptions of how peace is created and sustained can help address cultural, religious and other normative dividing lines with Europe. At the same time, the role of the state at the local level is under-researched. On the micro-level, state and society are often worlds apart. In many cases, the state is not able to provide effective provisions for security, while local actors and institutions, providing everyday peace and acting politically, do not necessarily interact with the state administration. However, the number of cases in which weak state administrations still play a role in local stabilization should not be underestimated. Equally under-researched is the interaction of local and external actors. Most people are not aware of the role of external actors, who have overwhelmingly failed to improve people's lives and whose efforts to strengthen democracy and freedoms have been misunderstood and misused. Nevertheless, examples of hybrid agency of liberal actors and institutions within a collectivist context exist.
- Nowhere on this globe can the transnational level be excluded any longer from reflections on peace research. Conflicts at the macro-level are strongly interlinked with practices at the meso- and micro-levels. The focus has to shift from the territorial space to an actor's social space. Peace research has to be more interested in multi-local perspectives, including both criminal strategies of regimes, elites and external institutions profiting from transnational markets and individual and gender security strategies as everyday responses to existential risks.
- All levels are needed to investigate the mixture of liberal and traditional paradigms that intersect in hybridizations. A comprehensive approach integrating these multiple levels, cultures and orders, including critical interfaces, appears adequate for studying trans-local agency and infrastructures for peace in Central Asia. Here, we first have to take into account that hybridizations will confront us with the simultaneity of non-simultaneous conditions, norms and perceptions. Such mixtures of spaces, levels and actors are most complicated to analyze and greatly under-researched. Second, methodological questions have to be addressed. Schetter emphasizes that “we have to consider the ontology of key terms in vernacular discourse, starting with the question of which notions of peace are discussed in which social contexts. Furthermore, conflicts and practices for peace should be analyzed in view of fluid social orders. Finally, the typical expert interview might still be reasonable if research focuses on official state policies, but is, perhaps, not helpful at all to understand social figurations without distinguishing between formal and informal institutions. Here,

multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork and bottom-up methods that do not exclude the state might be more useful.”

Before European and Central Asian scholars can jointly apply such innovative peace research concepts, fractures and divides have to be overcome. The main fracture is the normative divide between liberal democracy and authoritarian governance. For the future, liberal concepts as such cannot be seen as a solution for Central Asia. Current Western-dominated discourses on and practices in Central Asia still have to be analyzed critically in relation to key aspects of peace in this region. Liberal approaches have to find new answers to questions of perceptions, contestation, agency and practices of peace in bureaucratic-authoritarian states and neo-patrimonial societies. However, creative and innovative European-Central Asian dialogues on prospects for peace studies can open up new perspectives for both sides.

Annex

Program

<p>1st day 13:30-15:00</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Dr. Wolfgang Zellner, Acting Co-Director of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Head of the Centre for OSCE Research</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>Dr. Anna Kreikemeyer, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Centre for OSCE Research</p> <p>Keynote speeches: Prospects for peace research in Central Asia: Views from Central Asia and from Europe</p> <p>Prof Dr. Rustam Burnashev, Head of Social Science Department, German-Kazakh University, Almaty Dr. John Heathershaw, Associate Professor at the Centre for Advanced International Studies at Exeter University</p>
<p>15:00-16:30</p>	<p>Panel 1: Prospects for peace research in Central Asia in view of state-oriented discourses of security strategies, discourses of danger and trends of securitization</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Dr. Parviz Mullojonov, Open Society Institute/International Alert Office in Tajikistan, Public Committee for Democratic Processes, Dushanbe Tajikistan</p> <p><u>Contributors:</u> Prof Dr. Irina Chernykh, Chief Research Fellow, Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies under the President, Astana Dr. Rustam Makhmudov, Economic Review, Tashkent Cand. phil. Shairbek Juraev, School of International Relations at the University of St. Andrews</p> <p><u>Discussant:</u> Dr. Arthur Atanesyan, Assistant Professor at the Department for Sociology Erevan State University</p>
<p>17:00-18:30</p>	<p>Panel 2: Prospects for peace research in Central Asia in view of society-oriented discourses of local and national actors and institutions for peace</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Esther Somfalvy, Research Fellow, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Centre for OSCE Research</p> <p><u>Contributors:</u> Dr. Aksana Ismailbekova, Senior Researcher, consultant to the international project <i>Informal Governance and Corruption</i>, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle Cand. phil. Khushbakt Hojiev, University Bonn; Dushanbe Prof Dr. Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, Lecturer in Human Security, Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po), Paris and Research Associate, Peace Research Institute Oslo</p> <p><u>Discussant:</u> Dr. Maria Louwe, research fellow, School of Culture and Society, Department of Anthropology, Aarhus University</p>

<p>19:30-21:30</p>	<p>Panel 3: Prospects for peace research in Central Asia: New approaches from European and Central Asian PhD students</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Prof Dr. Michael Brzoska, ret. Director, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy</p> <p><u>Contributors:</u> Cand. phil. Azam Isabaev, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Centre for OSCE Research Cand. phil. Karolina Kluczevska, Maria Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow, University of St. Andrews Cand. phil. Joldon Kutmanaliev, Department of Social and Political Sciences, European University Institute, Florence Cand. phil. Almadan Orozbekova, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology Halle</p> <p><u>Discussants:</u> Prof Dr. Heiko Pleines, Head of the Department of Politics and Economics, Research Center for East European Studies, University of Bremen Dr. Christine Smith-Simonsen, Director, Centre for Peace Studies, University of Tromsø</p>
<p>2nd day 9:30-11:00</p>	<p>Panel 4: Prospects for peace research in Central Asia in view of globalization-oriented discourses of transnational challenges</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Dr. Delia Rahmonova-Schwarz, senior Afghanistan Engagement Support Adviser, OSCE Vienna</p> <p><u>Contributors:</u> Prof Dr. Conrad Schetter, Director, Bonn International Centre for Conversion Dr. Hafiz Boboyorov, Senior Researcher, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, Dushanbe Prof Dr. Susan Thieme, Free University Berlin, Anthropogeography „Globalisation, Transformation, Gender“</p> <p><u>Discussant:</u> Dr. Florian Kühn, Assistant Professor, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg</p> <p>Panel 5: Final Discussion</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Dr. Beate Eschment, editor, online journal “Zentralasien-Analysen”, lecturer, Central Asia Institute, Humboldt University, Berlin</p> <p><u>Wrap up:</u> Dr. Anna Kreikemeyer, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Centre for OSCE Research</p>

List of participants

Abdullaev, Ravshan, School of Public Policy of the Central European University, Budapest
Alymbaeva, Aida, Max Plank Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle
Apbasova, Sona, Catholic University, Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
Atanesyan, Arthur, Yerevan State University
Barkava, Boris, University of Hamburg
Bayok, Anastasiya, Helmut-Schmidt-University/University of German Federal Armed Forces Hamburg
Boboyorov, Hafiz, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan, Dushanbe
Botirova, Gulzira, University of Hamburg
Bradley, Lance, *Studienkolleg* Hamburg
Brandenburg, Natalie, University of Kent
Brzoska, Michael, IFSH Hamburg
Burnashev, Rustam, Kazakh-German University, Almaty
Chernykh, Irina, Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, Astana
Dzardanova, Svetlana, OSCE-Academy, Bishkek
Ernst, Maren, Uplift-Aufwind e.V., Berlin
Eschment, Beate, Zentralasienanalysen, Berlin
Foryy, Dmitry, University of Siegen
Heathershaw, John, Centre for Advanced International Studies, University of Exeter
Hojiev, Khushbakht, University of Bonn, Dushanbe
Isabaev, Azam, IFSH Hamburg
Ismailbekova, Aksana, Max Plank Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle
Juraev, Shairbek, School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews
Karimova, Baktygul, University Zurich
Kayumov, Abdurasul, GFA Consulting Group GmbH, Hamburg
Kluczevska, Karolina, School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews
Konovalov, Vladislav, *Studienkolleg* Hamburg
Kreikemeyer, Anna, IFSH Hamburg
Kühn, Florian, Helmut Schmidt University, Hamburg
Kutmanaliev, Joldon, European University Institute, Florence, University of Tuebingen
Louwe, Maria, Aarhus University, Denmark
Makhmudov, Rustam, Economic Review, Tashkent
Makhmudov, Sardor, Osh State University
Marazis, Andreas, European Neighborhood Council, Brussels
Mejidov, Elvin, Helmut-Schmidt-University/University of German Federal Armed Forces Hamburg
Messow, Wolfgang, Buchholz
Mullojonov, Parviz, Open Society Institute/International Alert Tajikistan, Dushanbe
Orozobekova, Almakon, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle
Pleines, Heiko, Research Centre for East European Studies, University of Bremen
Plottka, Julian, Institute for European Politics, Berlin
Raevskaya, Anastasia, IFSH Hamburg
Rahmonova-Schwarz, Delia, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat, Vienna
Salimova, Hikoyat, HafenCity University, Hamburg
Schetter, Conrad, Bonn International Center for Conversion
Seifert, Arne, IFSH Hamburg
Smith-Simonsen, Christine, Centre for Peace Studies, University of Tromsø
Somfalvy, Esther, IFSH Hamburg
Sultanalieva, Nurzat, University of Tuebingen
Tadjbakhsh, Shahrbanou, Institute of Political Studies (*Sciences Po*), Paris
Tagieva, Tamilla, University of Kassel
Thieme, Susan, Free University Berlin
Tumenbaeva, Shirin, University of Mannheim
Wahidi, Sayed Maisam, IFSH Hamburg
Wienkötter, Bärbel, Cross Culture Program, Institute for Foreign Relations, Berlin
Zellner, Wolfgang, IFSH Hamburg

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Central Asia figures high on IFSH/CORE's agenda. Since 2002, our activities related to Central Asia include research, mediation and consultancy projects as well as publication. We have been active with projects in all of the Central Asian states except Turkmenistan and have worked with Central Asia experts of different scientific backgrounds. One of our co-operation principles is to follow a participatory approach in trying to learn as much as possible from local experts and preferring in-depth exchanges at local meetings. Most activities take place in the region itself and fieldwork plays a key role in the research process. We present current research results on Central Asia at international conferences and in peer-reviewed publications. Furthermore, we have worked with local partners to organize three international conferences (2007, 2008, 2016), workshops and several DAAD summer schools on issues of peace and conflict. Since 2013, the IFSH organizes the interdisciplinary Hamburg Central Asia Day. Since 2003, we have been active in academic teaching in Central Asia and Germany including the supervision of doctoral students of Central Asian Studies. Research fellows from Central Asia are encouraged to intern in Hamburg.

IFSH researchers are currently working on a range of topics concerning state and society in Central Asia, including

- **Eurasia Peace Research Exchange** (2017-2019) with CPS Tromsø and partner institutes in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine (Anna Kreikemeyer);
- **Concepts for civilian prevention of extremism and radicalization in Central Asia** (2017)(Frank Evers/Jeannette Klötzer/Arne C. Seifert/Esther Somfalvy);
- **Peace research in Europe and Eurasia. Between liberal universalism, local social order and hegemonic interests** (2016-2017, Anna Kreikemeyer);
- **The Afghanistan policies of the Central Asian states Tajikistan and Uzbekistan** (ongoing PhD project, Azam Isabaev);
- **Political institutions, parliamentary representation and elections** (PhD project concluded in 2017, Esther Somfalvy);
- **European Union – Central Asia Research Academies Network** (Lead in Horizon 2020 proposal 2017 (declined); Anna Kreikemeyer/Esther Somfalvy).

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