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**MECACCS**

**GRADskills Innovation Grant**



**Central Asia and Caucasus Studies in the UK: Focusing on  
Communities, Societies and States**

University of St Andrews

November 6-7, 2009

Parliament Hall, South Street

***Friday, November 6***

***9-9.30 am: Registration and coffee***

***9.30-9.45 -Opening remarks (Dr Sally N. Cummings, Founding Director of the Institute of Middle East, Central Asian and Caucasus Studies at the University of St Andrews)***

**9.45- 11am - Panel1: LOCALITY AND AUTHORITY**

*Panel chair: Mohira Suyarkulova*

*Discussant: Dr Stephanie Bunn (U of St Andrews)*

- **Otambek Mastibekov** (SOAS)

*The leadership and authority of Ismailis: a case study of the Badakhshani Ismaili community in Tajikistan*

- **Elmira Satybaldieva** (U of Kent)

*Aksakals and their implications for State domination in Kyrgyzstan: a qualitative study of local politics*

- **Rebecca Reynolds** (U of Glasgow)

*Homebuilding, homemaking and consumption of domestic space in rural Kyrgyzstan*

- **Yves-Marie Davenel** (EHESS, Paris)

*Cultural renaissance and civic integration in post-Soviet Kazakhstan: a case study on the Tatar minority*

**11-11.30 am coffee and tea break**

### **11.30-12.30 Panel 2: MORALITY, LAW AND SOCIAL ORDER**

*Panel chair: Alison Careless*

*Discussant: Dr Johan Rasanayagam (U of Aberdeen)*

- **Liam O'Shea** (U of St Andrews)

*Crime, deviance and social order in Kyrgyzstan*

- **Ieva Raubisko** (U of Oxford)

*'Our joy is gone': narratives of loss in the transient counter-terrorism zone of Chechnya*

- **Meri Avetisyan** (Armenian State Pedagogical University)

*Attitudes towards money, moral and law consciousness of post-Soviet people in Armenia*

**12.30-1.30 pm – LUNCH**

### **1.30– 2.45 pm --Panel 3: IDENTITY, VIOLENCE AND POPULAR MOBILISATION**

*Panel chair: Jeanne Féaux de la Croix*

*Discussant: Dr John Schoeberlein (Harvard University)*

- **Nurseit Niyazbekov** (St Anthony's College, U of Oxford)

*Preventing democratisation in Kazakhstan: changes in popular mobilisation*

- **Ahmed Fawaz** (U of St Andrews)

*Abkhazia: ethnic entrepreneurs and politicising identity*

- **Nino Kemoklidze** (U of Birmingham)

*Identity construction and ethno-national violence in Georgia*

- **Richard Berge** (UCL)

*Identity and state in the Caucasus: the way forward in IR*

**2.45-3.15 pm coffee and tea break**

**3.15-4.30 pm -- Panel 4: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES**

*Panel chair: Dr Wojtek Ostrowski*

*Discussant: Dr Sally Cummings (U of St Andrews)*

- **Kanykey Jailobaeva** (U of Edinburgh)

*The professionalization of NGOs : A new stage of NGO development in Kyrgyzstan?*

- **Saltanat Janenova** (U of Edinburgh)

*Public Service integration in Kazakhstan: Challenging the traditional bureaucracy*

- **Katarzyna Czerniecka** (SOAS)

*Security implications of EU's discourse and practical engagement in Central Asia*

**4.30-6pm - Keynote address by Dr Johan Rasanayagam (University of Aberdeen)**

***Authenticity and tradition: secular and non-secular discourses in Uzbekistan***

The story of modernity as the linear progress of an empirically founded scientific rationality, of the consequent disenchantment of the world and the decline or privatisation of religious faith has been comprehensively challenged. Similarly, a view which sees secularism as a separation of religion from the public conduct of political and economic life, as the confining of religion to the sphere of private morality, is too simple. A number of authors, among them Talal Asad, have argued that the secular and religion are not natural categories but are constituted within discursive projects to classify social space and shape populations. This paper attempts to decentre the concept of secularism from its historical roots in European Christianity. Building upon the discussion by the philosopher Charles Taylor of the development of the idea of the secular within that historical context, it takes the primacy of human agency and creativity as the starting point for comparing secular discourses within the projects of non-Western and non-Christian states. The discursive constructions of tradition and authenticity are central to this. While secularism in Western thought has often been framed within a narrative of the advance of empirical reasoning, scientific rationality, and the consequent liberation of the free, authentic individual from the constraints of tradition and communalism, in Uzbekistan the state secular

project locates authenticity within a local cultural and spiritual heritage which the individual is expected to embody. In Uzbekistan, the concept of tradition and cultural authenticity has become a tool of governance through which the post-Soviet regime seeks to regulate religious practice and manage its population. The paper also discusses alternative constructions of tradition in non-secular discourses, by Muslims who advocate a purification of Islamic practice from non-scriptural 'tradition', as well as that of converts to Christianity who make a distinction between authentic belief and traditional cultural practice.

## ***Saturday, November 7***

***10-11 am -- Uses of a PhD outside of academia*** by John Schoeberlein (Harvard University)

John Schoeberlein will discuss the career paths followed outside of academia by those who have advanced training in Central Asian studies -- including those who choose to combine applied work outside of academia with an academic career. His own experience includes work in international organizations and in international NGOs. The talk will address the variety of options (ranging from government and the private sector to NGOs and multi-lateral institutions), some of the considerations that should determine one's choice, and how to address some of the challenges in seeking such a path.

***11-11.30am - coffee and tea break***

**11.30-12.30 - Using your expert knowledge in journalism** by Shahida Tulyaganova

**12.30-1.30pm - LUNCH**

**1.30-3pm - Understanding Academic Publishing** by Peter Sowden (freelance editor)

Peter Sowden works as a freelance commissioning editor, commissioning for Routledge books in Asian Studies, including Central Asia, on the former Soviet bloc, including the Caucasus, and the Middle East. He also commissions some books in modern history for Boydell and Brewer, and has done ad hoc projects for the Publishers Association, ALPSP (the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers) and other publishers. He was Publisher and Publishing Director of Routledge 1987-99 and before that commissioning editor at Croom Helm 1977-87.

During this session Mr Sowden will talk about academic publishing in the fields of Central Asian and Caucasus studies in general as well as have a practical discussion of draft book proposals prepared by participants of the workshop in advance.

***3-3.30 pm - coffee and tea break***

**3.30-5pm -- PG community of students of CA&C: what are the ways forward? Planning session** (opening remarks by Mohira Suyarkulova, moderated by Jeanne Féaux de la Croix)

**5pm –Closing remarks** (Jeanne Féaux de la Croix and Mohira Suyarkulova)

**Location:**

Parliament Hall page: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/visiting/Virtualtours/ParliamentHall/>

Parliament Hall is under number 67 in the alphabetical index (coordinates - J3) on the University map: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/wwwmap.pdf>