

# Asiac XVII Annual Conference

Rome,  
Sapienza University  
14-15-16 December 2023



*Sapienza University of Rome  
Department of Political Sciences  
Piazzale Aldo Moro no.5 - 00185 Rome.*

**In collaboration with**



The annual conference of the Association for the Study in Italy of Central Asia and the Caucasus (Asiac), now in its 17th edition, aims to foster the scientific dialogue between scholars working on these areas, from Italy as well as from abroad. This year, the conference will host a special section dedicated to the topic of “Humans and the Environment in Eurasia”, in which contributors explore the role of the environment in Eurasian societies through the lenses of history, linguistics, sociology, politics, literature, art, or area studies.

The XVII ASIAC Annual Conference is organised by the Association's board of directors (Aldo Ferrari, Carlo Frappi, Frank Maracchione, Gabriele Natalizia, Giorgio Comai, Giulia Sciorati, Elisabetta Ragagnin, Velizar Sadovski, Anna Sirinian) in cooperation with Andrea Carteny, Sapienza University of Rome.

The conference is realized in cooperation with the Department of Political Sciences of Sapienza University of Rome, The International Association for Mediterranean and Oriental Studies (ISMEO), the Observatory on Central Asia and the Caspian, and with the support of Geopolitica.info.



## DAY 1 - 14 December 2023

**8: 30 - 9:00** Registration

“Sala Lauree”, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

### 9:00 - 9:30 Openings and welcoming addresses

“Sala Lauree”, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

Aldo **FERRARI**, *ASIAC and Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Maria Cristina **MARCHETTI**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Adriano **ROSSI**, *ISMEO*

Antonello **BIAGINI**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Luca **MICHELETTA**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Michelguglielmo **TORRI**, *Asia Maior*

### 9:30 - 11:00 Knowledge, power, society and the environment in Central Asia's Soviet and Post-Soviet Irrigated Agriculture

Special Section “Humans and the Environment”

Chair: Riccardo M. **CUCCIOLLA**, *University of Naples L'Orientale*

Room: “Sala Lauree”, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*The Cotton Disease. The White Gold Monoculture in Soviet Uzbekistan and its Implications*

Riccardo M. **CUCCIOLLA**, *University of Naples L'Orientale*

*Slow Violence and Silent Dissent After State Withdrawal and War: Soil Salinisation and the Agrarian Order in Southwest Tajikistan*

Irna **HOFMAN**, *University of Oxford*

*Gallows Humour for a Dwindling Sea: The Cotton-Water Nexus in Tajik Graphic Satire (1960s-1991)*

Flora **ROBERTS**, *Utrecht University*

*Shifting Knowledge Practices about Soil Salinization in Southern Kazakhstan*

Tommaso **TREVISANI**, *University of Naples L'Orientale*

**11:20 - 13:00** Humans and the Environment in contemporary Central Asia

Special Section “Humans and the Environment” (II)

Chair: Stefano **RAVAGNAN**, *OACC*

Room: "Sala Lauree", ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*Kazakhstan's Modern Nuclear and Environmental Considerations*

Nicole **ANSELMO**, University of Oxford

*The Environmental Approach in Uzbekistan, with Particular Regard to Italian Cooperation*

Alessandro **CARILE**, University of Trieste

*Pastoralism in Contemporary Kazakhstan: Property Relations and Inequality*

Roger **CREUS VILA**, University of Oxford

*The Priorities of Sustainable Development of al-Farabi KAZNU: Green University, Green Office, Green Campus*

Galiya **IBRAYEVA**, al Farabi Kazakh National University

*Implementing Sustainable Development Policies in Developing Countries: From One-Size-Fits-All Approaches to SDGs in Central Asia*

Serik **ORAZGALIYEV**, Nazarbayev University

13:00 - 14:30 **Lunch break**

**14:30 - 16:00 (A)** Names and Stories

Chair: Lorenzo **PUBBLICI**, *University of Naples L'Orientale*

Room: Hall no.8, 3rd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*The Names of the Jews and Jewish Names in Georgia*

Tamari **LOMTADZE**, Tbilisi State University

Tsira **JANJGAVA**, Tbilisi State University

Manana **MIKADZE**, Akaki Tsereteli State University

*Soslan and the Balsæg's wheel*

Paolo **OGNIBENE**, University of Bologna

*Changing Environmentalism and Social Critique in the Works of Chingiz Aitmatov*

Paul **WOODS**, Asia Graduate School of Theology – Alliance

**14:30 - 16:00 (B) Conflict, crises and wars**

Chair: Dina **SHARIPOVA**, *Nazarbayev University, Astana*

Room: Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*The implications of the war in Ukraine in the Caucasus region: towards a new balance of power*

Giorgio **CELLA**, University of Calabria

*Azerbaijan Amid the Ukrainian Crisis: Perceptions, Implications and Expectations*

Fidan **NAMAZOVA**, ADA University, Baku

*Human Rights situation in Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region*

Steve **SWERDLOW**, University of Southern California

*An alternative view on Kazakhstan's modern history*

Fabrizio **VIELMINI**, Webster University

16.00 - 16.30 **Coffee break**

**16.30 - 18.00 (A) Diasporas**

Chair: Aldo **FERRARI**, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Room: Hall no.8, 3rd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*How Many and Where? Data and Avenues of Research on the Caucasian Diaspora in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Turkey*

Fabio L. **GRASSI**, Sapienza University of Rome

*We Are Not Diaspora: Identity Negotiation Among Uzbeks in Sairam District*

Intizor M. **SAIDIKARIMOVA**, Nazarbayev University

**16:30 - 18:00 (B) China in Central Asia**

Chair: Jasmin **DALL'AGNOLA**, *George Washington University*

Room: Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*The Interplay of Russian and Chinese (Self)Perceptions in Kyrgyzstan*

Sara **BERLOTO**, University of Milan

Nicolò **FASOLA**, University of Bologna

*A Self-interested Economic Provider? Research on Central Asia in the People's Republic of China*

Frank **MARACCHIONE**, University of Sheffield

Bradley **JARDINE**, Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs and Wilson Center

*China's multiple multilateral initiatives in Central Asia – a critical assessment*

Elzbieta M. **PRON**, University of Silesia in Katowice

*Environmental Risks in the Implementation of Belt and Road Initiative: Case of Kazakh-Chinese Joint Manufacturing Enterprises*

Azhar **SERIKKALIYEVA**, Almaty Management University

*Health Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics: Tracing Discourses on Cooperation with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan during COVID-19*

Giulia **SCIORATI**, London School of Economics and Political Sciences

**18.00 - 19.00 ASIAC General Assembly (in Italian)**

Hall no.8, 3rd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

## DAY 2 - 15 December 2023

**9:30 - 11:30** Baku's Evolving Place in Azerbaijani Social Life: Urbanity, Wealth, and Societal Identities Since World War Two

Chair: Tsypylma **DARIEVA**, *Centre for East European and International Studies (ZOiS) Berlin*

Room: Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*Transforming Landscapes: The Azerbaijani Middle Class and the Politics of Change*

Cristina **BOBOC**, Ghent University

*Finding a Place in Post-War Baku: Social and Cultural Challenges of Integration for Baku's Migrants from the Village in the 1940s to early 1950s*

Heather D. **DEHAAN**, Binghamton University

*Leaving Home for a Better Future: The Environment and Rural-Urban Migration in Azerbaijan (late 1940s-1950s)*

Shalala **MAMMADOVA**, Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University

*Making Black City White: Oil, Wealth, and Spatial Inequalities in Baku, Azerbaijan*

Leyla **SAYFUTDINOVA**, University of St. Andrews

**11:30 - 13:00** Studying China in Central Asia – roundtable

Chairs: Frank **MARACCHIONE**, *University of Sheffield*

Giulia **SCIORATI**, *London School of Economics and Political Sciences*

Room: Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

Participants

Jasmin **DALL'AGNOLA**, *George Washington University*

Irna **HOFMAN**, *University of Oxford*

Frank **MARACCHIONE**, *University of Sheffield*

Elzbieta **PRON**, *University of Silesia in Katowice*

Giulia **SCIORATI**, *London School of Economics and Political Sciences*

Eva **SEIWERT**, *Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg*

David **TOBIN**, *University of Sheffield*

Azhar **SERIKKALIYEVA**, *Almaty Management University*

13:00 - 14:30 **Lunch break**

**14:30 - 16:00** Addressing the formal-informal dichotomy in the study of Central Asia: between access to resources and distribution networks

Chair: Madina **GAZIEVA**, *Dublin City University*

Room: Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*The Role of Labor Intermediaries in the Migration Corridor from Central Asia to the EU*

Giulio **BENEDETTI**, Stockholm School of Economics and Maastricht University

*The Role of the Socio-Cultural Context in Shaping Female Entrepreneurship: Insights from Kyrgyzstan*

Alberica **CAMERANI**, Dublin City University

*'They Self-Provision for Subsistence' – Livelihoods and Water Access Dynamics among Smallholders in Rural Uzbekistan*

Madina **GAZIEVA**, Dublin City University

*"One Can Always Find a Job". Understanding Unemployment in Central Asia: An Analysis of Labour Market Policies in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan*

Eugenia **PESCI**, University of Helsinki

*Navigating the Bazaar: Women's Experiences of Informal Work in Uzbekistan*

Binazir **YUSUPOVA**, Dublin City University

**16:30 - 17:30** The Black Sea area: Identities and Security in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine

Chairs: Andrea **CARTENY**, *Sapienza University*

Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

Participants:

Carlo **FRAPPI**, *Ca' Foscari University*

Giuseppe **MOTTA**, *Sapienza University*

Gabriele **NATALIZIA**, *Sapienza University*

Nicolò **RASCAGLIA**, *Sapienza University*

Alessandra **RUSSO**, *University of Trento*



**17:30 - 18:00** Pan-Nationalism in Eurasia: The Myth of Turan – Book Presentation

Chairs: Fabio L. **GRASSI**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Study room no.2, 2nd floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University of Rome

Participants:

Davor **ANTONUCCI**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Fulvio **BERTUCCELLI**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

Paolo **PIZZOLO**, *Sapienza University of Rome*

**DAY 3 - 16 December 2023**

**9:15 - 11:00 (A)** Conflict and Security in the South Caucasus

Chair: Carlo **FRAPPI**, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Room: Hall C, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University of Rome

*Escaping an Ideology and Resisting its Affective Disciplining: The Case of the No-War Movements in Azerbaijan*

Cesare **FIGARI BARBERIS**, Graduate Institute of Geneva

*Railroad to Peace? Implications of Opening the Yeraskh-Julfa-Meghri-Horadiz Railine between Armenia and Azerbaijan*

Mahammad **MAMMADOV**, Topchubashov Center, Baku

*Caucasus and the first Karabakh conflict in Giulio Andreotti's archives*

Daniel **POMMIER VINCELLI**, Sapienza University of Rome

*Managing Security in the Caucasus: Repercussions and Motives of Regional and Global Players in the Karabakh Conflict*

Simona **SCOTTI**, Independent Researcher

*Ontological Security, Collective Memory, and Narratives: Rethinking Russian–Armenian Relations throughout the Nagorno–Karabakh Conflict*

Leonardo **ZANATTA**, Corvinus University of Budapest

**9:15 - 11:00 (B) Economic diversification**

Chair: Frank **MARACCHIONE**, *University of Sheffield*

Room: Hall D, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*Connectivity between Landlocked Central Asian States to Land Linked Pakistan through Chinese Led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)*

Javaid **FAISAL**, Federal Urdu University

Michael **SPIES**, Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development,

Muhammad F. **SYED**, Federal Urdu University

*External resources, professionalization and accountability: Exploring self-regulatory practices in Georgian civil society*

Najmin **KAMILSOY**, Charles University

*The State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan (SOFAZ) in the Post-Oil Era: Will the “Wallet” Survive?*

Teymur **KHALAFOV**, University of Glasgow

*Structural Transformation through a Multi-Vector Geo-Economic Governance? BRI and Upgrading(s) of the Uzbek Gas Industry*

Lorena **LOMBARDOZZI**, The Open University

*Achieving Sustainable Development Goals within the Eurasian region*

Aleksandra **KHRAMOVA**, Eurasian Economic Commission

**11:00 - 11:20 Coffee break**

**11:20 - 13:00 (A) Memory, Modernity and Historical Legacy**

Chair: Velizar **SADOVSKI**, *Austrian Academy of Sciences*

Room: Hall C, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*Central Asian progressive thinker of the end of the 19th century: analysis of Ahmad Donish’s intellectual legacy*

Kamila **AKHMEDJANOVA**, University of Oxford

*Brothers beyond the Curtain: Representations of “Captive” Turkic Peoples in Right-Wing Press during the Cold War*

Fulvio **BERTUCCELLI**, Sapienza University and University of Bologna

*The Legacies of Environmental Colonialism in Post-Soviet Central Asian Culture*

Tamar **KOPLATADZE**, University of Oxford

*Memory Activism and the KGB Archive Documents: Crafting Gulag Truths in Tbilisi, Georgia*

Laura **MAFIZZOLI**, University of Manchester

**11:20 - 13:00 (B) Space and socio-political dynamics [hybrid]**

Chair: Alessandra **RUSSO**, *University of Trento*

Room: Hall D, ground floor, Political Sciences Department, Sapienza University

*Urban By Default? Exploring Almaty & Astana's Development as Cases of Kazakhstan's Political Development"*

Arina **DMITRENKO**, *University of Toronto*

*The Power of Water: Exploring Infrastructural Projects and Socio-Political Dynamics in Central Asia*

Eugenia **FABBRI**, *University of Bologna*

*Urban Space in Contemporary Armenia: Between Private, Public, and No One's*

Maria **GUNKO**, *University of Oxford*

Sarhat **PETROSYAN**, *urbanlab*

*Crowded and aggrieved: Housing crisis, acculturation gap and psychological distress between two generations in Kazakhstan*

Moldir **KABYLOVA**, *University of Nottingham*

*Understanding Women's Movements in Armenia (1991-2022)*

Olga **AZATYAN**, *Yerevan State University*

**15:30 – 17:30 Continuities and Discontinuities in Central Asia and the Caucasus.  
A Visual Approach to the Human Landscape – Special session**

Chair: Aldo **FERRARI**, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

Adriano **ROSSI**, *ISMEO*

Venue: National Central Library of Rome, Viale Castro Pretorio no.105, Rome

Room: Hall 1-2

*Central Asian Leniniana: Textual Iconographies of Vladimir Il'ič Lenin in Soviet Tajikistan*

Stefano **PELLO'**, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice*

*The project OSCOP. Observing South Caucasus' Historical Landscape: An Open Photo Archive*

Stefano **RICCIONI**, *Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz*

The conference will be held at Political Sciences Department of Sapienza University of Rome. Sapienza's Campus main entrance, in Piazzale Aldo Moro, is located approximately 1,500 meters away from Rome "Termini" central station. The Campus is easily reachable by Metro, being approximately 500 meters away from metro stops "Castro Pretorio" and "Policlinico" (Metro B). The political Sciences building (CU002) is marked in the University City map below.

The special session on Saturday afternoon will be held at the the National Central Library of Rome, located in Viale Castro Pretorio no.105 (at the Metro B "Castro Pretorio" stop, and walking distance from Sapienza's Campus)

