

First AESC Annual Convention Yeditepe University

Programme

27 April 2017

Venue: Faculty of Fine Arts Conference Hall

10:00 Opening by Dr. Bilgen Sütçüoğlu
Chair, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Yeditepe
University

10:20 Speech by Almula Türedi
Ministry for EU Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Directorate for Accession
Policy

10:40 Welcome by AESC President

11:00 **Academic Workshop No. 1:
The Changing Regional Geographies in Europe and its Eastern Neighbours**

Venue: Faculty of Fine Arts Conference Hall
Moderator: Selin Türkeş Kılıç (Yeditepe University)

The Black Sea Cooperation in the Context of Sub-regionalism and Inter-regionalism

Mukhtar Hajizada (Khazar University, Department of Political Science and International Relations) – AESC member

Abstract: The wider Black Sea area has been undergoing an integrative process since 1992. The initial plan to establish a regional cooperation between Turkey and the Soviet Union, gathered more adjacent countries in time, including the successor states of the communist bloc which led to the process of establishment of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in 1998. The Black Sea regionalisation process is influenced by different but three core regional actors. BSEC is a Turkish initiative in an area which is widely considered to be in Russia's sphere of influence. Moreover, the region is in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the EU, which has been bidding for a core role. This paper discusses the Black Sea regionalisation process in the context of the relationship among the three core actors: Russia, Turkey and the EU and aim primarily at an empirical assessment of what the EU has done to promote regionalism in the wider Black Sea area.

The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Opportunities and Limits in Three Decades

Itir Toksöz Bullens (Dogus University, Department of International Relations) - AESC member

Abstract: In the 1990s, right after the Cold war, in the midst of an unstable geography with an uncertain yet promising future, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) emerged as one of the earliest attempts at regional cooperation – integration in the post-Soviet space. Headquartered in Istanbul and originally founded by 11 members, today it has 12 members with the addition of 14 observer nations and 4 observer international organizations, as well as 8 sectoral dialogue partner countries and 8 sectoral dialogue partner organizations, covering not only the Black Sea region proper but also its extended hinterland. It also works together with related bodies and affiliated centers mostly in member states. Established in 1992 and became an international legal body in 1999, it has close to 3 decades of experience in facilitating cooperation across this geography. The organization aspired to inspire cooperation in several areas: from science to transport, from statistical data exchange to emergency response, from banking and finance to preventing criminality. All of these areas presented rich opportunities which were much needed and timely at the end of the Cold War, for a more peaceful region and for bringing the region's new countries closer with the international community and especially the West. The organization was especially important since it was not an attempt by Russia to reclaim power over its lost sphere of influence and could be seen as an attempt at establishing a functional organization based on European experiences.

Yet, today the world we live in is no longer the post-Cold war world of the 1990s. The initial enthusiasm for cooperation that gave birth to this organization seems to have slowed down due to the various economic and political difficulties the region's countries face in their relations with one another which would have been hard to predict at the time of the organization's inception. The same three decades witnessed the inclusion of some of the member states into the European Union and NATO, Armenian-Azerbaijani war, the troubles in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the Georgian-Russian war, Orange Revolution in Ukraine, Revolution of the Roses in Georgia, the Greek debt crisis, the Russian annexation of Crimea, Turkey's declining economic and political stability as well as other global events such as global economic crisis or the Arab Spring.

This paper will try to address the reasons why such an organization was deemed as important at the time of its birth yet argue that it has lost its relevance in today's world and the reasons of such a loss. Therefore, it will first look at its history and activities of the organization and then try to highlight how the above mentioned critical developments might have brought challenges to the *raison d'être* of the organization. The main argument of the

paper is that the state of the international environment (systemic level) is an important variable in the forging and sustainability of international cooperation.

Turkey and the Union for Mediterranean

Armağan Gözkaman (Beykent University, Department of International Relations) – AESC member

Abstract: Since the Barcelona summit of 1995, the European Union (EU) endeavours to develop a proactive vision for the Mediterranean region. The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) constitutes a significant framework that carries forward such efforts. It has the potential to play a leading role in responding to security concerns (including migration) and socio-economic challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region. Its significance comes also from being an important component of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Turkey's attitude towards the UfM is meaningful within the above-mentioned context. Turkey is not only inclined to actively support the initiatives involving the Mediterranean basin, but also places a particular emphasis on any EU-related regional project. Thus, the first part of the study will be allocated to Turkey's approach to the Mediterranean cooperation schemes. The second part will focus on the UfM by taking into account the possibility of rapprochement between Turkey and the EU.

13:00 Lunch break

14:30 **Workshop (continued)**

“The European Union Factor in the Attainment of Minority Rights in the Post-Soviet Space: The Case of the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine”

Filiz Tutku Aydın (Social Sciences University of Ankara) – AESC member

Abstract: This article aims to examine the role of the EU in the protection of minority rights of the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine. While EU supported the Crimean Tatars' attainment of their indigenous rights through offering financial aid and diplomatic support, its main influence was unintended. I argue that European Union has been a factor in the attainment of indigenous rights not because of European actions but because of the meaning Ukrainians – both elites and people – made EU a political goal during Euromaidan Revolution. This paper points out EU's major foreign policy deficiency as its lack of employing its potential soft power in its “Eastern Neighbourhood”, especially with regards to minority rights regimes, and presents a policy roadmap for encouraging the protection of minority rights in Eastern European Neighbourhood.

Tatarstan: A Meeting Point of Russian and Turkic Worlds*Aleksandra Yatsyk (Institute of Human Sciences, Vienna)*

Abstract: In this presentation, the question of how the imagined and discursively/culturally constructed 'Russian world' intersects and communicates with the 'Turkic world' as an adjacent – and in some respects alternative – civilizational construct is raised. The aim is to discuss the Russian world in situations of multiple encounters with Turkic world in regions that might be termed cultural borderlands and crossroads.

The extant literature is replete with analysis of the Russian world as allegedly a more or less homogenous ideological doctrine manipulated by the Kremlin. Yet, this approach leaves unaddressed a number of important questions – what are the boundaries of the Russian world and how they are constructed in social and geo-cultural terms? How the Russian world's machinery operates when it engages and gets in touch with other civilizational constructs, in particular with the Turkic world? What local practices and narratives these two world constructs have engendered? How are the Russian world strategies perceived locally, especially in regions with a strong Muslim identity, and what discourses unfold in result? This presentation particularly focuses on the Tatarstani political community as being drawn through practices of interaction with Moscow domestically and with global actors internationally.

People or Territories: The Geo-/ Biopolitical Dilemmas for Georgia and Ukraine*Andrey Makarychev (University of Tartu, Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies)*

Abstract: This presentation addresses geopolitics and biopower as two different yet mutually correlative discursive strategies of sovereign power in Russia. The analysis challenges the dominant realist approaches to Russia's neighbourhood policy by introducing the concept of biopolitics as its key element, which makes analysis of political relations in the post-Soviet area more nuanced and variegated. More specifically, I address an important distinction between geopolitical control over territories and management of population as two Russia's strategies in its "near abroad."

16:00 End of day one

16:30 AESC Advisory Board Meeting (for DESCnet representatives)

28 April 2017

10:00

**Academic Workshop No. 2:
Foreign and Security Policy Implications of Europeanisation in the Caucasus**

Venue: Blue Hall, Rectorate Building

Moderator: Andrey Makarychev (Tartu University)

**Securitization of Economic Integration Decisions: Armenia and the Eurasian
Economic Union***Seyit Ali Avcu (Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University)*

Abstract: The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) is an economic union of states which was established on May 2014 by the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, and came into effect on January 1, 2015. Armenia joined on January 2, 2015 and Kyrgyzstan joined on August 6, 2015. The Armenian government had been set to clinch a free-trade deal with the EU until, following talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in 2013 abruptly decided to switch to the Russian-led Customs Union, a precursor to the EEU. This paper discusses the shift in the Armenian policy from the EU to enhancing closer ties with Russia.

Europeanisation of Georgia: Security Concerns*Gvantsa Davitashvili (Shota Rustaveli State University)*

Abstract: This presentation aims to examine the changes in the national political systems of Eastern European countries of the EU that can be attributed to the development of European integration. The presentation approaches at substantial understanding of the theoretical framework of European Integration beyond the formal borders of the EU. Besides, the concepts, theories and methods of European Integration, the empirical aspects of EU's impact on its Eastern neighbouring states will be included in the analysis. EU scholarship has developed different scenarios and perspectives of external action of the Union; hence there remains domestically evolving factors, such as security challenges, to be discussed in this discourse. The presentation aims to open a debate regarding the applicability and limitations of European integration concepts in the context of security threats. In doing so, we will provide an ample room for discussions of the participants.

EU Related Challenges in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine: What are the Prospects once they Implement their Association Agreements?

Tamta Tsotskhalashvili (New Vision University)

Abstract: By signing the Association Agreements (AA) and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA), the European Union (EU) has made significant progress towards cooperation with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. According to the AAs/DCFTAs, these Eastern neighbour countries should still have to undertake important reforms to bring their economic and political systems closer to the EU standards, but it is unclear how the EU will reward their efforts. I argue that in the absence of the EU's strategic clarity towards the Eastern neighbourhood and 'enlargement fatigue', the EU's soft power reservoir is exhausting in its Eastern neighbourhood.

It is no surprise that for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine the EU membership is the main domestic policy goal; while the EU was never clear about the membership perspectives for the Eastern neighbourhood countries. The EU is reluctant to propose any serious offer to the Eastern neighbourhood countries which expect to be considered as candidate to EU membership. Especially, when there are few tangible incentives left after the EU have already granted them with visa-free travel in the EU.

Furthermore, the AAs/DCFTAs are based on positive conditionality approach, where EU promises closer relations in return for democratic reforms, including fighting corruption, promoting good governance and ensuring the human rights protection and the rule of law. However, the conditionality function does not work as effectively with the neighbour countries as it has worked with the potential membership countries since it does not motivate the partner countries to undertake expensive and hard structural reforms. The past experience of the EU enlargement clearly shows that membership perspective encouraged more political reforms and generated domestic pressure and presented. Thus, I argue that using the 'membership carrot' makes the EU stick of conditionality more effective and in the absence of further incentives the ongoing reforms might decline in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

It is no surprise, that the EU policy towards neighbourhood is very much influenced by another super power in the region, which is highly challenging the EU actorness. Thus, the EU's strategic objective of being surrounded by a ring of democratic and secure neighbours has not yet materialized. But, will the implementation of AA/DCFTA bring any added value in terms of regional security? The soft power instruments should not be underestimated in terms of transforming EU values and goals in the neighbourhood. But, it would only work together with the hard power instruments to provide adequate support to the partner countries in the neighbourhood against another super power.

I take the institutionalist explanation and argue that the effectiveness of the EU's external governance in Eastern neighbourhood is mainly shaped by the

EU institutions itself. In particular, I think that the more coherent, precise and binding the decisions of the EU institutions are, the more likely it will be materialized. However, I do not disregard the power-based explanation and especially, the influence and pressure of Russian politics in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood.

Therefore, I argue that the EU membership perspective is key to the EU's transformative power in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, and without it, the EU presence in the Eastern neighbourhood would be more like a status-quo than a 'transformative power'.

With Turkey against Russia? European Common Energy Policy

Seda Hanegelioglu (Yeditepe University)

Abstract: Several geopolitical and economic developments in the first decade of the twenty first century intensified Europe's sense of vulnerability in the area of its energy supplies. Until recently the European Union failed to develop a regional policy toward the Black Sea due to the region's geographic distance from its borders. The accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007, however expanded the Union to the Black Sea Coast. Undoubtedly, European Enlargement suggested not only new opportunities but also new threats, problems and security concerns.

The Russian Federation is the European Union's top energy partner. Therefore, the Russian oil and natural gas industries are key players in the global market, particularly in Europe and Eurasia. Turkey has the potential to decrease the EU's energy dependence on Russia, whereby can serve an energy provider to the Union.

It must be underlined that 2006 Ukrainian gas crises and the Georgian war were not a couple of accidents, but actions of a rational state trying to regain its previous international status of a great power, which has access in establishing and influencing other actors' policies. Therefore, these developments could be read as Russia's foreign policy from a realist framework. On the other hand, EU's foreign policy is aimed at promoting cooperation between states, thus can be better explained with the arguments of functionalist and constructivist theories.

This study aims to clarify EU's net energy importer status and its dependence on imported natural gas, as a main energy source. In addition EU's dependence on its periphery, in particular on Russia is noted. In the third part, the significance of the abundant Caspian hydrocarbon reserves for the EU's energy security is analysed. It highlights that these energy resources will enable the EU to diversify its energy supplies. At the end of the study importance of the Turkey as a regional energy hub potentials are noted.

The Parliamentary Election in Georgia 2016: A Policy Analysis Perspective*Oliver Reisner (Ilia State University)*

Abstract: On 8 October Georgia hold its eighth parliamentary elections since its 25 years of independence. The paper will discuss the pre-election period, specifics of the election campaign (including media coverage and public opinion surveys) and the results to assess the state of democracy in Georgia in October 2016. The author also attempts to provide an in-depth view of the condition of the electorate, political parties and civic actors. Thus, we might answer the question of ‘in fact, how sovereign the sovereign voter is?’ The presentation will proceed in a qualitative narrative analyses of the statements of the named groups of actors and rely on the survey data in a long term comparative approach as well as on Georgian media publications and FB debates to trace the differing understanding and interpretations of the pre-election period as well as the results. We will not look at procedural issues of the conduct of the elections since this investigated by the OSCE election observation mission that probably will be present.

14:00	Lunch break
17:00	General Assembly of the AESC
18:00	End of day two