

A Comparative Study on Economic Performance of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan from the Perspective of Neo-liberal Approach (1991-2010)

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Abstract

Neoliberal approach with the aim to promote development in different countries has particular implications. It can be cited as monetary and financial system reform, privatization, elimination of barriers to trade and foreign investment. Hence, from the beginning of the post-Soviet, Central Asian countries adopted different approaches towards economic reform and moved towards a free market with the objective of economic development. They have reached different conclusions. For example, while Uzbekistan had 5.2 percent of economic growth, Kazakhstan with 10 percent of economic growth was among the world top 10 countries in terms of the set. It had Two-thirds of economy in private sector, the most advanced country in the region in terms of economic reforms, size of government in this country is much smaller than Uzbekistan, while in all cases, Uzbekistan is the fourth or fifth among the five countries of Central Asia. We believe this difference in status between the two countries is because of early compliance of Kazakhstan's economy with neoliberal policies in relation to economic reforms and mismatch and delay in economic reforms in Uzbekistan. The aim of this paper is to examine political economy of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, based on the neoliberal approach.

Keywords: free market, Kazakhstan, Neoliberal approach, Prices, Private sector, Uzbekistan.

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Ranking and Formulation of Appropriate Strategies for Management of Caspian Geopolitics

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Abstract

Optimal management of Caspian Sea to reach sustainability and a cooperative peaceful use of resources is one of the most important issues in the region. This can help reduce political tensions and create a long-lasting security in considering the conflicts. The solution will be management strategies of Caspian Sea with its present status quo to reach cooperation between coastal states. To offer a multi-criteria decision method by reviewing the literature and research findings, we used SWOT method by consulting with experts and identified 8 strengths, 4 weaknesses, 5 opportunities, and 5 threats. The 10 best strategies were developed were by ANP method and uncertainty conditions. They were ranked by fuzzy. The approach applied in this research is a combination of cross-sectional and survey methods. The comparison of the questionnaire reveals that the suitable strategy is “systematic and shared resources management by the coastal states” and the second one is “focus on multilateralism”.

Keywords: Caspian Sea, coastal states, fuzzy ANP, management, strategy, SWOT.

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Consistency and Inconsistency of Russia's Transition to Democracy

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Abstract

Experience of double revolutionary upheavals in Russia during the 20th century which produced a new socio-economic regularity on one hand and changed the political system from monarchial to democratic republic and then soviet state and finally presidential republic at the end of 20th century on the other hand are treated as democratic movements. In this regard, crumbling of ex-soviet regime and blooming of new order has been behaved as mutation toward democracy. Hence, despite of various attempts on crossing toward democracy during the last century, Russia is oscillating between democracy and authoritarianism. The main question of this paper is that why the democratization process were ill-fated in Russia? The main hypothesis of this research emphasizes on polarity between elites and masses over the concept of democracy, political culture of Russia, security background of political elites, putinism and economic structure of the state.

Keywords: authoritarianism, democracy, political culture, Putinism, Russia.

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The Constructivist Confrontation of Russia and USA in Ukraine

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Abstract

The covert and clear rivalry of Russia and US after the cold war era has continued by now. The countries that have independent forms of Russia were one of the basic centers of rivalry between the two states. For US influence in the countries is in its great and long strategic interest that has tried to influence the NATO. But at the other hand, the manner of US is known as a threat for Russia and this country try to impede that. Ukraine in this context is a country with strategic - geostrategic and geo economic actor that is very vital for the two powers. It has been the causes of almost rivalry and conflict actions between them. In this research, we have examined the significance of Ukraine for the two great powers and conceptualize the roots of rivalry between them on Ukraine.

Keywords: constructivism, Identity, international role, Russia, Ukraine, United States.

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Sociological Strategies for Conflicting Approaches in Russian Foreign Policy

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Abstract

The Russian foreign policy toward various issues is often combined with complexity, ambiguity and conflicts. This fact was true at least in the history of relations between Iran and Russia, so that Russian face is depicted as an unreliable partner for the Iranian citizens and elites. With the importance of this issue, the study aims to answer this central question: what are the reasons for these complexities and conflicts in Russian foreign policy? The research hypothesis is that the conflicting sociological foundations in Russian society produces conflicts in foreign policy; The conflicts that appear in levels of socio-intellectual currents, political parties, and informal patronage networks reproduce conflicting approaches in foreign policy of Russia. The findings show that Russian foreign policy is in contention between the following conflicting foreign policy approaches: pro-western liberal, great power balancer, and nationalism in various forms of Russian ethnocentrism, pan-Slavism, regional hegemony and neo-imperialism. This research was conducted within the Constructivism approach in which foreign policy is influenced by internal process and Conflict and cooperation between different socio-cultural orientations.

Keywords: conflicting approaches, constructivism, culture, foreign policy, informal patronage networks, political parties, Russia.

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Analysis of the Effects of Competition between United States and Russia on Regional Convergence and Divergence of Central Asia, From 2001 to 2008

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Abstract

The collapse of the Soviet Union had unpredicted effects on its neighboring regions such as Central Asia. These conditions provided a situation for the powers such as United States and Russia to have a greater influence on Central Asia, and also to fill the absence of the power found by the collapse of Soviet Union. After September 11, 2001, United States of America, following the strategy of preventive action centered on the fight against terrorism and the threat of weapons of mass destruction, tried to have more direct influence on Central Asia. On the other hand, Russia, concerned about the risk to their relative position in the area, after a brief period of cooperation with the United States of America in the fight against terrorism, tried to stop United States from acting unilaterally in its own traditional sphere of influence. Accordingly, the authors try to analyze the effects of competition between United States and Russia on regional convergence and divergence of central Asia (after September 11, 2001) using the theories of Cantori and Spiegel. The research hypothesis is that the competition between the two powers in the area is responsible for the countries of Central Asia to tend toward one of these two powers for solving their problems and this delayed the formation of convergent regional agreements in Central Asia.

Keywords: Central Asia, competition, convergence, divergence, Russia, United States.

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The Turkey's Divergent Role in Iran-Azerbaijan Relations

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Abstract

The enormous changes in international system after the Soviet Union collapse led to a power vacuum and unprecedented competition of regional and trans-regional powers in central Asia and Caucasus. As a result of these phenomena, any actions by regional and international powers were viewed in the context of regional rivalries. Therefore, this fact brought several important obstacles in front of the expansion of Iran-Azerbaijan relations and at the same time led to reactions of other regional powers, including Turkey. The main goal of this article is to explain how Turkey's regional policy affected Iran-Azerbaijan relations. Turkey has had some common identity and mutual interest with Azerbaijan and so on its foreign policy towards this country put some important limitations in Iran-Azerbaijan relations. At the same time, Turkey's policy towards Iran brought more obstacles to Iran goal of expansion in its relations with Azerbaijan. This condition seems to continue because of the increase in Turkey-Azerbaijan relations. Therefore, there will be no important improvement in the coming years. This assumption will be studied from constructive points of view.

Keywords: constructivism, Iran-Azerbaijan relations, security, Turkey-Azerbaijan relations, United States.

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A Review of Russian Strategy towards the Crisis in Syria, 2011-2014

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Abstract

Russia as an important Trans-regional and revived power in the global scene has taken a different approach toward Syrian crisis from of Western and Arabian countries; a strategy that is based on steadfast diplomatic and military support from Assad regime. As a basic and core question, we ask why Russia has taken a strategy toward Syrian crisis different from that of Western and Arabian countries and which factors have pushed Russia to this path? The findings of this research show that the confrontation between Russia and west is in fact a conflict upon global order and the norms which can affect Russian regional and global interests in this crisis. Moreover, Russia's political structure and Russian elites' perceptions with regard to this crisis are considered as mediating variables which have transformed and translated systemic threats and pressures in the Syrian crisis upon Russia's foreign policy. These have pushed Russia to take a different path from the West. Our research methodology is descriptive-analytical and we have used library and internet sources for data collection.

Keywords: international system, Russia, Russia's Political Structure, Russian Elites' Perceptions, Syria Crisis, West.

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Russia and Central Asia: Drafting for Regional International Society

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Abstract

With the collapse of Soviet Union, Central Asian countries came into independence. The countries were neglected by Russia during the first years after their formation. This encouraged other regional and trans-regional powers to interfere in the region and try to maximize their interests. Shifting its foreign-policy process, Russia kept its eyes on look-east policy and tried to prevent others to increase their influence in the region. Russian long dominance on the region as well as historical interactions allows it to form a regional international society and catalyze integration between the country and Central Asian countries. Main question here is why Russia and Central Asian countries are able to constitute a regional International Society. It seems that cultural-historical relations between Russia and Central Asian countries in one hand and their increasing functional-economic interactions on the other hand, prepare them to form a regional international society. Cultural-historical relations will be studied in framework of joint historical experience, mutual migration, and spread of Russian language in the region. On the other hand, economic relationships and order-making process will be related in functional aspect. Assessing the hypothesis, we believe that English School theory of International Relation and descriptive-analytical method will be useful.

Keywords: Central Asia, Gemeinschaft, Gesellschaft, Regional International Society, Russia.

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The Role of Common Cultural Heritages in the Convergence between Iran and Republic of Azerbaijan

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Abstract

Of all the states that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan because of its characteristics such as geographical proximity, common cultural-historical heritages and same religious identity is a unique opportunity for Islamic Republic of Iran to advance its goals and expand its sphere of influence in Central Asia and Caucasus. But what happened on the ground, evolution has not initiated so friendly relationship between the two countries and in many cases it has been associated with the interaction of otherness and security. In addition to various factors, cultural structures, particularly the common cultural heritage, for its part in the development of the relationship between the two countries have played a strong role. This article is an attempt to examine the question, "can the common cultural heritage rather than cultural divergence and controversy, a be a mutual understanding between Iran and Azerbaijan to improve the convergence state? "In response to the application of the theory of "cultural constructivism" we indicated that a focus on the common cultural heritage role in the social construction of reality can form a collective identity based on the culture of the two countries and to integrate their function as a contribution.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, common cultural heritage, convergence, cultural constructivism, Iran, UNESCO.

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Economic Factor as a Means for Armenian-Turkish Conflict Transformation

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Abstract

The Armenian-Turkish conflict except the disagreement between the two countries has also developed in the regional and international levels. It is becoming the conflict of interests and competition of superpowers in regional and international sphere, which has its great influence on the complication of the process of the conflict between the two countries. Taking into consideration the disagreement between the two countries, it seems that this conflict doesn't have a political solution and any mechanism of the conflict resolution. Taking such situations as the experiment of the international conflict resolution into consideration shows that the conflict transformation will reflect the important results of each level for the two countries. In the study, we discussed the development of the economic relations as the strategy of conflict transformation between the two countries, the programs and events about the development of Armenian-Turkish economic relations in the period of post-Soviet Union, the activities of NGOs and economic Relations Commission.

Keywords: America, Armenia, conflict transformation, economics, track II diplomacy, Turkey, Russia.

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Influence Expansion Strategy in Putin's Foreign Policy

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Abstract

After collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia is faced with strategic vacuum in its foreign policy for a time. Thus, we were witnessing a period of unstable, inactive and reactionary policy-making in Russian foreign policy while the US was expanding its influence on the Russian periphery. But in Putin's administration, the Russian foreign policy has evolved dramatically. Putin put the influence expansion strategy as top priority of his foreign policy to globally revive Russia's historical power. According to the authors, neoclassical realism due to focusing on both domestic and systemic variables, is a proper theoretical framework for understanding strategic evolution of Putin's foreign policy. This research attempts to investigate the causes of strategic change in Putin's foreign policy through answering the following question: what are the important factors of the influence of expansion strategy and how they work? The main hypothesis of this study is that economic growth (mainly based on energy sector development) and Russia's internal cohesion are the major factors affecting the Russian leaders' perception of relative power which led to influence expansion strategy in Putin's foreign policy.

Keywords: foreign policy, influence, Putin, realism, Russia.

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The Role of Georgian Bagrati Clan in Fixing The Shah Safi's Power (1038-1052 A.H.)

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Abstract

The Bagratian clan was the oldest and the most legitimate in Georgia and Safavid was confident about them. During the reign of Shah Safi, the credit of Bagrati clan was increased due to their valuable service to the monarch and fixing his reign. In the beginning of the accession, he wanted set up the tent of her reign based on the new columb and overthrow old elements that was independent on Shah Abbas. To overthrow these old elements, he required to a vigorous, skilled and efficient agent for replacement. Bagrati clan has necessary elements and dependent on the old elites. Shah Safi could make conquests on the all interior plots, with assistance and recourse to Bagrati clan. The main purpose of this study is to find the answer of the following questions: Why Shah Safi rely on the Bagrati clan? Which are the reasons the Bagrati clan reached to the maximum power of their authority? What are the attempts of the Bagrati clan to conduct the affairs? What is the influence of Bagrati clan attempts on the disordering the balance of power? what the first Shah Abbas developed among three opponent groups (Turk, Tajik and Ghollar)?

Keywords: Bagratian, The First Shah Abbas, Georgia, Ghollar Aghasi, Sepahsalar, Shah Safi.

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Cooperation in Foreign Policy of Iran and Russia against East-West Axis in South Caucasus

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Abstract

Vacuum of power was one of the most important consequences of USSR Collapse. Regional and Trans-Regional countries have been pulled to south Caucasus to extend their influence on this region. Turkey and Israel thought alliance with Azerbaijan constitute East-West Pivot. This cooperation threatens common interests of Russia and Iran. Reaction of Tehran and Moscow creates North-South axis thought alliance with Armenia and attempts to affect influence of East-west axis. But interaction between Tehran and Moscow does not seem so sustainable. Thus, this question can be raised: What is the nature of Iran and Russia's cooperation in South Caucasus? What is the level of Iran and Russia's foreign policy interaction to deal with the East- west axis? "With the passing of more than two decades of Soviet Union dismantlement, Tehran and Moscow cooperation has not reached strategic level. Regional interactions of Iran and Russia has defensive nature with tactical function." This hypothesis will be tested by alliances and coalitions in realism theory.

Keywords: Alliance, foreign policy, realism, South Caucasus, strategic, tactic.

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