

Great Games in Small Seas: The significance of global power competition in regional sea politics

Panel Chairs:

Agha Bayramov, University Groningen

Dana Trif, Babes-Bolyai University

Discussant:

Dr. Tracey German, King's College London.

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Abstract:

Although the regional seas exhibit complex patterns of cooperation and conflict at all levels from the local to the global, they are often seen as a prime example of great powers' arenas. The notion of "Great Game" has been used as shorthand for competition in influence, military power, hegemony and economic profit, often referring to the oil and gas industries, transport and natural resources in the regional seas – for instance the Caspian Sea, Arctic, Black Sea, and South China Sea. The existing literature has paid systematic attention to the significance of the "Great Game" as an explanatory paradigm to assist in understanding political and economic developments in the regional seas. Despite the fact that the political landscapes of the regional seas have undergone some significant changes, the existing scholarship continues to rely on the "Great Game" as a powerful analytical tool facilitating better understanding of the role of great powers across the regional seas politics.

This panel will explore great power relations across the regional seas and seek to identify key determinants, with a particular focus on borders, energy, regional conflicts, domestic processes such as democratisation, and the role of external actors. We are also open to alternative approaches engaging with or questioning the Great Game narrative and its explanatory power. It thus seeks to directly contribute to established research on the resource rich regional seas like the Arctic, Caspian and South China Sea, but also seeks to add comparative and synthesizing perspectives as well as studies on other regional seas. Questions to be asked include: In analysis of different regional seas politics, is there an underlying common conceptual framework that can be explicated and generalized? What determines the politics of the regional seas? How does great power (competition or cooperation) affect political and economic developments in the regional seas? Which practices of security are emerging? We invite paper proposals addressing these and related questions connected to the regional seas from a theoretical, empirical, and/or normative perspective.

Please submit your paper proposal at the latest by 25 January 2018 to a.bayramov@rug.nl and dana.trif@fspac.ro. Your submission needs to contain the following information:

- Title of the Paper (no more than 20 words)

- Abstract of the Paper (no more than 250 words)
- Presenter's email address as registered in their MyECPR account
- Co-author's email address as registered in their MyECPR account
- Key words

Please submit all information in one document, either in Word or pdf format.