

Dr FRANK MARACCHIONE, SOAS University of London

Department of Politics, International Studies

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RESEARCH INTERESTS and FIELDWORK

Knowledge production and normative agency in the Global Majority; Political economy of South-South cooperation (China-Central Asia, South Asia, South America); Everyday political economy, grassroots norms, public opinion, machine learning (topic models, AI).
Fieldwork: PRC (Beijing, 2016/2023), USA (Washington D.C., 2022), Uzbekistan (Tashkent, Jizzakh, Sirdaryo, Karakalpakstan, 2022/2023/2024/2025), Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek, 2022), Argentina (Buenos Aires, 2025), Kazakhstan (Astana, Almaty, 2025), Italy (various, 2025).

CURRENT POSITION and ROLES

SOAS University of London (2026-2027) **London, UK**

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow, UBEL DTP, Department of Politics and International Studies – To write a manuscript from my PhD.

The University of Kent (2024-2026) **Canterbury, UK**

Postdoctoral Research Associate, School of Economics, Politics and IR, ESRC project on knowledge production on Global China in the Global Majority (with Dr Jamie Gruffydd-Jones)

Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute, Sheffield (2021-present) **Sheffield, UK**

Member of working group for “SPERI Presents...” podcast.

British International Studies Association (BISA, 2026-present) **UK**

Co-convenor of East Europe and Eurasia working group.

The Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs (2022-present) **Washington, DC**

Non-resident fellow, working on China-Central Asia relations

ASIAC - Italian Association Study of Central Asia and Caucasus (2021-present) **Italy**

Board member, co-editor of journal *Studies on Central Asia and the Caucasus*

FUNDING, GRANTS AND AWARDS

ESRC UBEL DTP Postdoctoral Fellowship (2026-2027) £166,320

Research fellowship - Leibniz Centre for Regional Geography, Leipzig (declined) £4,320

ESRC White Rose DTP Pathway Award (2019-2024) £105,765

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ITACA Italy Central Asia project (team grant, 2024) €12,000

External support for fieldwork in Uzbekistan, PRC (sources on request, 2023) £9,500

Summer Schools “The Rise of China” and “Zhelezka” (2023) £1500

Turing Scheme and Department funds for language training in Uzbekistan (2022) £480

Scholarship for Fieldwork Abroad, Department of Politics, University of Bologna (2016) £2,700

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

The University of Sheffield (2024), PhD Politics and IR

Thesis title: *Amir Timur in Shanghai: Locating agency in Uzbekistan-China relations*

Funded by: *Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) - White Rose DTP*

The University of Sheffield (2020), M.A. Social Research, Distinction

The University of Bologna (2017), M.A. International Relations, Distinction (110/110)

Ca' Foscari University of Venice (2014), B.A. China Studies, Merit (102/110)

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Journal articles

Maracchione, F. and Jackson, J. (2026). The globalisation of Chinese automotive companies: South-South offshoring and global production. *Review of International Political Economy*. [Submitted].

Maracchione, F. (2025). Decentring narratives of (de)globalisation and crisis: Uzbekistan's 'everyday' political economy amidst Russia's war in Ukraine. *Globalizations*, 1-22.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2025.2533666>.

Maracchione, F. (2025). Uzbekistan in the Global Majority: A protagonist of reglobalisation? *Studies on Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.36253/asiac-3579>.

Maracchione, F. & Jardine, B. (2024). 'Central Asian Studies in the People's Republic of China: A Structural Topic Model', *Central Asian Survey*, 43(3), 307-326.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02634937.2024.2314083>.

Maracchione, F., Sciorati, G. & Combei, C.R. (2024). 'Changing Images? Italian Twitter Discourse on China and the US during the First Wave of COVID-19', *International Spectator*, 59(2), 77-94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2023.2299452>.

Indeo, F. & Maracchione, F. (2024). 'The Italy-Central Asia 5+1 format in a comparative analysis with China and the US', *Studies on Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.36253/asiac-2416>.

Maracchione, F. (2023). 'Multivectoral? A quantitative analysis of Uzbekistan's foreign policy communication at the United Nations', *Eurasiatica*, Ricerche 2022. <http://doi.org/10.30687/978-88-6969-667-1/009>.

Maracchione, F. (2022). 'Relations between the People's Republic of China and Uzbekistan in the 21st century: agency and China's security and economic role in Central Asia', *Oriens.Uz*, 2(26). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7336738>.

Special issues

Maracchione, F., Sciorati, G. and Galelli, B. (2025). (Eds). Special issue: "Beyond the Silk Roads: Navigating the complexities of Central Asian relations with the People's Republic of China". *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*. On editors' request, in development.

Edited chapters

'Making Competitors Great Again: The C5+1 and Central Asia's relations with the United States from independence to Donald Trump'. In: Berkofsky, A. and Beretta, S. (2025). (Eds). *Central Asian International Relations*. Springer. (Forthcoming).

'Energy geopolitics in Central Asia'. In: Dian, M. and Diodato, E. (2024). *Geopolitica dell'Asia Orientale*. Rome: Carrocci. (With C. Frappi).

Book reviews

Maracchione, F. (2026). Rhetorical Powers: How Rising States Shape International Order: Sasikumar Sundaram. Columbia University Press, 2026. *International Affairs*. (Forthcoming).

Maracchione, F. (2022). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Exploring New Horizons: Sergey Marochkin & Yury Bezborodov (eds). Routledge, Abingdon/New York, 2022. pp. 262. £120. ISBN 9780367772802. *Asian Affairs*, 53(4), 956–958.

WORK IN PROGRESS

[Omitted]

POLICY AND ACADEMIC IMPACT

Calls for evidence, policy reports, briefs

Maracchione, F. (2025). Engaging plural China. Call for Evidence for the UK Government's China Audit. London: Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Commons, [UK Parliament](#).

Neafie, J., Maracchione, F. (2024). *Beyond the Silk Road: Navigating the Complexities of Central Asia's Opinion of China*. Central Asia Barometer.

Maracchione, F. & Sciorati, G. (2024). 'The 2024 meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation'. *China and Indopacific*. Obs. for International Politics, Italian Parliament.

Maracchione, F. (2023). 'The energy crisis as a structural limit to agency'. Energy security, 8. Italian Parliament.

Maracchione, F. and Lemon, E. (2023). *Chinese-Russian Engagement in Central Asia Amidst the Ukraine Conflict*. London: Global Partner Governance. For: UK FCDO, UK CSSF. Available on request.

Professional presentations (including invited lectures)

SOAS University of London. "Geopolitics and Critical Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus". Lecture for the module "Central Asia and the Caucasus II" Dr. B.Dave.

USTA Mentorship. "Everyday Political Economy". Online workshop for Central Asian scholars.

Ca' Foscari University of Venice. "Domestic Drivers of China's Globalisation". Guest lecture for the Master's degree module 'Chinese language 1' led by Dr Beatrice Gallelli. Department of Asian and North African Studies, Venice, Italy, December 2025.

CapsUnlock/Soros Foundation Kazakhstan. Seminar on China-Central Asia relations. Invited presentation on Central Asia's public opinion on China; chairing of political economy panel. November 2025. Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Nazarbayev University, School of Public Policy. Public seminar "Central Asia beyond the Sino-European Silk Road(s): emancipatory policymaking from connectivity to liberation". Invited presentation during period as visiting researcher. 19 May 2025. Astana, Kazakhstan.

St Antony's College, University of Oxford. Public seminar "Colonial echoes, Uzbekistan's

voice". Topic: my PhD research. 10 February 2025. Oxford, UK.

London School of Economics, LSE IDEAS China Foresight Workshop. "The Future of Central Asia's Economic Security: Considerations on Debt, Value Chains, and Labour at a Global Political Crossroads". Invited presentation. 23 January 2025. London, UK.

Institute for Regional and Strategic Studies, President of Uzbekistan. Invited presentation. "New Central Asia: Challenges and Opportunities in the Era of Global Transformation". October 2024.

US Department of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs. Invited presentation: "China's activity in South and Central Asia". 24-26 April 2024. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

OSCE Academy, Invited participation: "The View from the West: How is China in Central Asia seen in the US and Europe". 27-28 June 2023. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

United Kingdom FCDO, Presentation of the findings for report, "*Russian Engagement in Central Asia Amidst the Ukraine Conflict*". 23 February 2023. Online.

'What do current and future trends in Central Asia mean for CSSF and UK programming in the years ahead?' – UK FCDO/CSSF: Partner Days. 24 January 2023. Online.

PUBLIC AND ACADEMIC DISSEMINATION

Op-eds/essays

Maracchione, F. (2025). The 'New Normal' Is Not Deglobalization, It's Reglobalization. *The Diplomat*, 28 October 2025.

Maracchione, F. (2023). 'Licorice and leather: Spotting Chinese soft power in rural Uzbekistan', *Eurasianet*, 22 March.

Podcast episodes or series

SPERI Presents... *Ground Level: Everyday International Political Economy*. Forthcoming.

SPERI Presents... *New Thinking in Political Economy: Episode* "Towards a Political Economy of organised violence: war, technologies, labour, and (re)production". Forthcoming, 2025. Recorded roundtable at the BISA 2025 conference.

What Do Central Asians Think About China? *Majlis Podcast*. RFE/RL. Dec2024.

Interviews and media (selected)

'China Continues Its Steady Expansion Into Central Asia On The Sidelines Of Big Summits'. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. September 2025.

Global interactions of the People's Republic of China in the Global South and East. *PORTADA24*, Buenos Aires, Argentina. April 2025. In Spanish.

Without Moscow's participation. Preparations for the construction of a railway from China have begun. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, June 2024. Also in *Kyrgyz* and video in *Kyrgyz*.

'How Does China Study Central Asia?'. *The Diplomat*. March 2024.

'How has China boosted its presence in Kazakhstan as part of the Belt and Road Initiative?'. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*. October 2023.

'Central Asians Balance Benefits, Risks of China's BRI'. October 2023. *Voice of America*.

'Uzbek protests at Radio3 Mondo. July 2022. *Radio3*. Audio.

'The climate crisis heats protests up: bloodbath in Uzbekistan'. July 2022. *Der Standard*.

Blog posts (selected)

Sciorati, G. and Maracchione, F. Lessons in public diplomacy from Italy's COVID-19 response. *EUROPP Blog London School of Economics*, 21/10/2024.

Maracchione F. 'The need for long term and contextualised research on China's relations with Central Asia', *Global Partners Governance*, 16/02/2023.

Maracchione F. and Edwards, R. 'Activist coalitions, state-sanctioned forced labour, and top-down reform in Uzbekistan's cotton sector', *Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute Blog*, 08/09/2021.

Maracchione F. 'Our Vaccine: The Political Significance of the Uzbek-Chinese Vaccine', ISPI Commentary, *Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale*, 29/03/2021.

Presentation, and chairing at academic conferences (selected, from 2024)

'Beyond post-Soviet transition: the political economy of Central Asia', BISA British International Studies Association, Brighton, June 2025; [Convenor and participant].

'SPERI Presents... LIVE: The global impact of China's technological leadership and offshoring: Towards a second China shock?', BISA British International Studies Association, Brighton, June 2025; [Convenor and participant – live podcast].

'Beyond the Temporal Exception: Continuities Underlying Crises', EISA European International Studies Association, Bologna, Italy. 25-29 August 2025; [Section chair].
 'Conjuncture, Longue Durée, and Interactive Multiplicity in the Politics of 2025', EISA PEC, Bologna, Italy. 25-29 August 2025; [Roundtable participant].
 'Colonial echoes, Uzbekistan's voice: historical narratives as spaces for agency', ESCAS-CESS. Lisbon, Portugal. 9-11 January 2025. [Panel participant].
 'Recentring Relations and Plurality', ISA-International Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, 3-6 April 2024; [Panel chair].
 'Managing information, narratives and identities in Ukraine and Russia', BISA-British International Studies Association, Birmingham, June 2024. [Panel chair].

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE, PROJECT MANAGEMENT, AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

Senior (Lead) Researcher and leadership roles

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Analysis and Programming Unit, Italy (December 2025-Present). Research on Uzbekistan-based Chinese-funded production.
Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Analysis and Programming Unit, Italy (December 2024-March 2025). Research on Italian foreign policy during Uzbekistan's liberalisation.
Central Asia Barometer (May-Oct2024), Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Researcher (consultant): Regression analysis on public opinion in Central Asia based on CAB survey. Co-coordinated 2 RAs in a team of 5 researchers.
Global Partners Governance, London, UK (Sep2022-Feb2023). Senior Researcher (consultant). Co-led group of 4 RAs doing fieldwork interviews on China-Russia and War in Ukraine; Policy reports on elections in Bangladesh, human trafficking in Sudan. Funded by: British CSSF and FCDO.

Visiting Researcher or research assistant

Ca Foscari University of Venice, December 2025. Visiting researcher working on local perceptions of Chinese and American presence in Italy.
University of World Economy and Diplomacy, June 2025. Visiting researcher working on China's role in Uzbekistan, focusing on investment, business and civil society.
Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan, May 2025. Visiting researcher working on China's role in Kazakhstan, focusing on civil society perspectives.
Escuela de Gobierno, Universidad Austral, Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 2025. Visiting researcher working on China's role in Argentina, including economic and political relations.
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Sheffield, May-August 2024, RA for Dr P. Nabuco Martuscelli. Interviews with students and teachers on decolonisation in International Studies in the UK.
University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Visiting Fellow, May-July 2022. Researching local elite perspectives on China-Uzbekistan relations.
Institute for European Russian and Eurasian Studies, George Washington University, Washington DC, USA, Visiting scholar, January-April 2022.
Renmin University of China, Beijing, People's Republic of China, Visiting researcher, September-December 2016.

Administrative roles (UK only)

Member of the EDI committee. Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Sheffield. 2021/2022. Worked on University-wide reform of Ethics Policy for fieldwork.
 Member of the Research committee. Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Sheffield. 2020/2021.
 Member of the Departmental MA Committee. Sheffield Methods Institute, University of Sheffield. 2019/2020.

Reviewer: New Political Economy, Review of International Studies, Journal of International Development, Foreign Policy Analysis, Information, Communication and Society, Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, Europe-Asia Studies, Humanities Social Sciences Communications, Central Asian Survey, Asian Affairs.

Convener

SPERI Doctoral Research Network, SPERI - Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute, University of Sheffield (2021-2024)
 ChiNESS – Graduate conference in China studies in the North of England (University of Sheffield, 2022)
 'Bridging the Gap: Innovative Methods For Text Analysis in Politics and IR' Seminar at Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Sheffield. April 2021.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Qualifications

Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) - Advance HE (September 2023)

Teaching Assistant

University of Sheffield, POL119 Introduction to Global Political Economy, with Dr Natalie Langford, Spring-Summer 2024

University of Sheffield, POL126 The World's Wicked Problems (International Relations), with Dr Zeynep Kaya and Dr Dean Cooper-Cunningham, Autumn 2022-23

George Washington University, Central Asian Politics, "China's role in Central Asia", with Professor Marlene Laruelle, March 2022. (Guest lecture).

University of Sheffield, POL120 Analysing Politics, with Dr Liam Stanley, Autumn 2021-22

University of Sheffield, SMI105 Data Visualisation, with Dr Mark Taylor, 2021-22

University of Sheffield, SMI105 Data Visualisation, with Dr Alexandra Anderson, 2020-21

University of Sheffield, EAS6347 Contemporary Chinese Business and Management, with Dr Christina Maags, Autumn 2020-21

University of Bologna, Political Science, with Professor Daniela Giannetti, 2018-19.

Supervision

University of Sheffield, BA International Relations and Politics, Anvar Whitlock, 2023-24.

Topic: The Qosh Tepa Canal and water management in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

LANGUAGES

English (fluent); Italian (native); Mandarin, Spanish, Russian (advanced); German (upper-int).

REFERENCES

- Dr Bhavna Dave, SOAS University of London, bd4@soas.ac.uk (ESRC Postdoc Mentor)
- Dr Matthew Bishop, University of Sheffield, m.bishop@sheffield.ac.uk (PhD supervisor).
- Prof John Hobson, University of Sheffield, J.M.Hobson@sheffield.ac.uk (Internal examiner).
- Dr Cemal Burak Tansel, Newcastle University, burak.tansel@newcastle.ac.uk (External examiner).
- Professor Marlene Laruelle, George Washington University, laruelle@gwu.edu (Supervisor, visit in DC).
- Dr Edward Lemon, Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs, edwardlemon@oxussociety.org (President of the association, research lead).
- Prof Andrew Hindmoor, University of Sheffield, a.hindmoor@sheffield.ac.uk (SPERI Director)
- Dr Jamie Gruffydd-Jones, University of Kent, j.j.gruffydd-jones@kent.ac.uk (P.I., postdoc).