

A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

Ömer Faruk KOCATEPE * Mehmet ŞAHİN**

Abstract

This article aims to analyze the bibliographic characteristics of Central Asian Studies, a subfield within Area Studies. While Area Studies is often perceived to have declined post-Cold War, the emergence of independent states in Central Asia has revitalized the field, generating research opportunities in development, state-building, and nation-building. Consequently, Central Asian Studies has become a growing area of inquiry in Area Studies. This novel bibliometric study utilized Biblioshiny for bibliometric analysis and Minitab for statistical analysis, examining seven area journals and 1770 articles sourced from the Web of Science Core Collection. Of the seven journals analyzed, two specialize exclusively in Central Asia, while the remaining five incorporate the region as a subfield within Eurasian Studies. The research aims to identify three questions which are bibliometric characteristics of Central Asian Studies, differences between region-specific journals and Eurasian journals as well as changing patterns in Central Asian Studies. The article also explores the limited international collaboration in Central Asian Studies.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bibliometric Analysis, Area Studies, Central Asian Studies.

ORTA ASYA ÇALIŞMALARININ BİBLİYOMETRİK BİR ANALİZİ

Öz

Bu makale, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde düşüşe geçtiği düşünülen Bölge Çalışmaları'nın bir alt alanı olarak öne çıkan Orta Asya Çalışmaları'nın bibliyografik özelliklerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkistan'daki bağımsız devletlerin ortaya çıkması, kalkınma, devlet kurma ve ulus inşa süreçlerinde yeni araştırma fırsatları yaratarak bu alanı yeniden canlandırmıştır. Nihayetinde olarak, Orta Asya Çalışmaları, Bölge Çalışmaları içinde büyüyen bir araştırma alanı haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışmada, bibliyometrik analiz için Biblioshiny, istatistiksel analiz için ise Minitab'ı kullanılmıştır. Web of Science Core Collection'dan taranan yedi alan dergisi ve 1770 makale incelenmiştir. Analiz edilen yedi derginin ikisi yalnızca Orta Asya konusunda uzmanlaşırken, diğer beşi Avrasya Çalışmaları içinde bölgeyi bir alt

* Dr., Millî Savunma Üniversitesi, omerfarukkocatepe@hotmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8647-4634>

**Doç. Dr., Millî Savunma Üniversitesi, KHO, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü, mesahin@alumni.bilkent.edu.tr, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0142-6666>

alan olarak ele almaktadır. Araştırma, Orta Asya Çalışmaları'nın bibliyometrik özellikleri, bölgeye özel dergiler ile Avrasya dergileri arasındaki farklar ve Orta Asya Çalışmalarındaki değişen örüntüler olmak üzere üç temel soruyu yanıtlamayı hedeflemektedir. Makale ayrıca, Orta Asya Çalışmalarındaki sınırlı uluslararası iş birliğini de incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bibliometrik Analiz, Bölge Çalışmaları, Orta Asya Çalışmaları.

Introduction

Although the origins of Area Studies date back to colonial Europe (Mehler & Hoffmann, 2011), it became one of the major interdisciplinary fields in social sciences, particularly after WWII. The United States academia overthrew European leadership in Area Studies and gave direction to a great extent. This shift was mainly driven by the nature of the Cold War. That is to say, due to the power politics between the US and the USSR, Soviet Studies became central for the former (Bonnell & Breslauer, 2004). As Khosrowjah (2011) asserts, the area studies were directed by the military imperatives and intelligence of the US government, especially in the early years of the Cold War. As a result, the number of publications in Area Studies skyrocketed in the US throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

At first, the Area Studies was to be expected an interdisciplinary field of humanities. As Tansman (2004) demonstrates that “the Area Studies can be understood as an enterprise seeking to know, analyze, and interpret foreign cultures through a multi-disciplinary lens, translation may be the act par excellence of area studies”. Indeed, the field was dominated by history, anthropology, and sociology throughout the 1950s and 1960s, while political science became the predominant theme after 1970s (Bonnell & Breslauer, 2004).

From this point of view, it is asserted that, in contrast to the Cold War era, the dissolution of the Soviet Union rendered Area Studies obsolete, primarily due to waning US government interest (Katzenstein, 2002). As a matter of fact, Comparative Politics supplanted Area Studies in US Political Science and International Relations literature in the post-Cold War era. Area Studies is also attacked by rational choice theorists in the US. Bates' (1997) seminal work criticized the field for its lack of formal theory and statistics, deeming it a-theoretical. Accordingly, the absence of formal methods confined the field to exceptionalisms, hindering the development of a globally recognized science. Thus, it is assumed that in the age of globalization, uniquenesses were already diminished, so social sciences are in need to focus on comparative politics through formal methods.

Nevertheless, Area Studies remains a significant field in social sciences despite the aforementioned criticisms, especially outside the US. Scholars in Area Studies defend the field for several reasons. First and foremost, Harbeson (1997) cannonades Bates by highlighting the significance of Area Studies for

achieving globally based study. Accordingly, in-depth knowledge of a specific region, gained through ethnographic, historical, and sociological expertise, is essential for gathering accurate data. Therefore, Area Studies is still necessary for advancing scientific research. Secondly, unlike the conventional wisdom, globalization does not necessarily diminish identities nor regional exceptions but rather may reinforce the attachment to national identity (Rodrik, 2011). In the end, globalization doesn't homogenously affect the world society but generates winners and losers. This leads differentiated reactions to globalization which in fact increases the need for area-based knowledge (Basedau & Köllner, 2007). Therefore, the main concern should be on bridging the gap between Area Studies and social science methodologies rather than isolating the field, as Acharya (2006) suggests.

The events in the post-Soviet region following the Cold War substantiate the continued relevance of Area Studies for political scientists and international relations scholars. Contrary to the liberal expectations, the region, and particularly Central Asia, has not fully integrated to the liberal international system as of the end of first quarter of the 21st century. Moreover, the aftermath of 9/11 heightened the region's significance due to its proximity to Afghanistan. As a result, the region is associated with geopolitics, energy and authoritarian structure after the Cold War. That is to say, Central Asia has unique features which raises attention of academic studies. In this context, the dissolution of the Soviet Union did not lead to the demise of Soviet Studies but rather opened new avenues for research (Basedau & Köllner, 2007; Bonnell & Breslauer, 2004).

Indeed, academic publications on Central Asian Studies have steadily increased since 2000s. Reflecting the Area Studies' multidisciplinary nature, the literature on Central Asian Studies encompasses a wide range of topics. It is also worth to note that Central Asian studies has two dimensions. It is a component of Eurasian Studies, while simultaneously establishing its own subfield, particularly driven by growing Turkish academic interest since the 2000s as well as ongoing debates about the region's identity: whether it constitutes a distinct region (Troitskiy, 2015) or part of Eurasia (Buzan & Wæver, 2003).

In any case, Central Asian Studies has flourished after the Cold War. Given the multidisciplinary nature of Area Studies, the literature on Central Asia encompasses a broad spectrum of fields, including archeology (Kendirbai, 2016), history (Golden, 2011), literature (Sarı, 2020), economics (Çetenak et al., 2023), and various other topics related to the region. Nevertheless, political science and international relations remain the dominant fields of inquiry within the Area Studies. In this regards, the literature on Central Asian Studies primarily focuses on debates concerning authoritarianism (Lemon & Antonov, 2020; Omelicheva, 2016), geopolitics and security challenges (Huasheng, 2009; Nourzhanov, 2009; Weitz, 2006), transition efforts in the early decades and failures (Dabrowski et al., 1995;

Lottholz et al., 2020), and energy politics (Auty, 2003; Radovanović et al., 2021).

Regarding bibliometric analyses, studies on Central Asian scholarly output and collaborations have emerged. Comprehensive analyses indicate that the region's publication count in Web of Science has risen, particularly in geology, environmental sciences, and ecology (Wang et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2019). However, Şahin and Candan (2018) highlight the insufficient collaboration between Central Asian scholars and their international counterparts, including within the Turkic world. Consequently, despite increased publication numbers, Ovezmyradov (2023) argues that Central Asia's relative contribution to global science remains limited and even stagnant. This contrasts with the performance of Russia (Fiala & Maltseva, 2023) and Türkiye (Al et al., 2023), two significant partners of the region, although Russia's scientific output has also plateaued since 2020. This study, however, seeks to shed light to the other side of the story, which is the bibliometric analysis of Central Asian Studies.

In this regard, this paper aims to examine research trends and international collaboration within Central Asian Studies, a subfield of Area Studies. To determine Central Asian Studies' position within the broader literature, a two-step analysis will be conducted. As previously mentioned, Central Asian Studies exists on two levels within the existing literature: as an independent field and as a component of Eurasian Studies. Therefore, bibliometric analyses of these two literatures will be conducted separately. The Web of Science database will be employed to explore Area Studies under “Web of Science Categories”, and for this reason, the analysis will be restricted to the ESCI, SSCI, and AHCI indexes to focus on research-oriented publications.

The main research questions of the study are;

1.What are the bibliometric characteristics of Central Asian Studies publications?

2.What are the difference between the Central Asia-oriented studies and Eurasian studies?

3.How has the Central Asian Studies been transforming?

1. METHOD AND DATA

The bibliometric data was collected from the ISI Web of Science database on August 12, 2024. While the researchers did not initially determine a specific starting year, their refinements in the Web of Science' search engine led them to include data as far back as 1981. Consequently, 1981 was established as the starting year for their analysis. To evaluate patterns in Central Asian Studies under Area Studies, only journals indexed in the specified Web of Science Categories SSCI-indexed regardless their Q rankings, were included. As a result, seven journals focusing on Central Asia

were identified. Of these seven journals, five are classified as Eurasian Studies journals, while two, namely *Central Asian Survey* and *Bilig*, are specialized in Central Asian Studies. To identify the Central Asian specific topics in the five Eurasian Studies journals, namely *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *Slavic Review*, and *Soviet Studies*, the search was narrowed by “Central Asia” or “Turkestan” or “Ferghana Valley” or “Kazakh” or “Kazakhstan” or “Kyrgyzstan” or “Kyrgyz Republic” or “Tajik” or “Tajikistan” or “Turkmen” or “Turkmenistan” or “Uzbek” or “Uzbekistan” on titles and abstracts. This narrowing was necessary as the research agenda of Eurasian Studies encompasses all former Warsaw Pact states, potentially compromising the reliability and validity of the analysis. It is also worth no note that only articles are taken as the unit of analysis. Data were processed using Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017), and statistical analysis was conducted with Minitab, a separate statistics program.

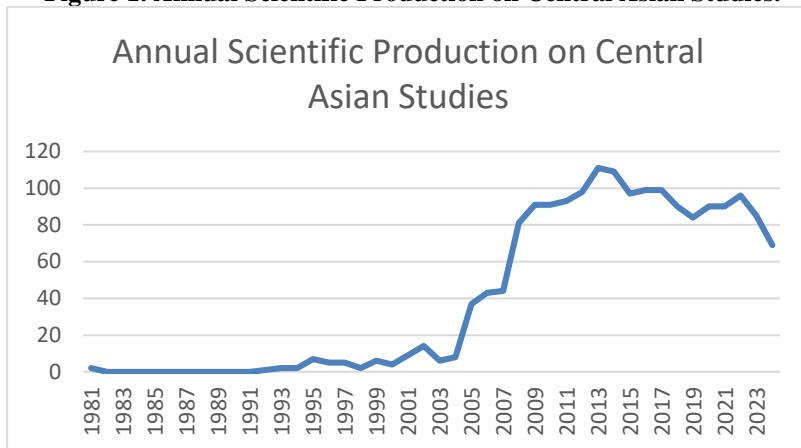
2. RESULTS

2.1. Descriptive Results

The seven aforementioned journals collectively contain 22804 document types, of which 65,7% are book reviews. Focusing on articles, a total of 6236 were identified. While 1310 articles originated from the two Central Asia-specific journals, the remaining articles were sourced from the five Eurasian Studies journals. Considering that these journals also cover non-Central Asian topics, a keyword-based refinement narrowed the dataset to 460 articles directly related to Central Asia. As a result, a total of 1770 articles were identified for the analysis. This indicates that Central Asian studies comprise only 9,3% of the total Eurasian Studies literature, suggesting it is a marginal subfield within this broader domain.

Nevertheless, the growing number of published articles indicates that the region continues to be considered important. The earliest identified article was published in 1981, and the annual growth rate of published articles is 8,58%. Figure 1 illustrates the annual number of published articles between 1981 and August 2024. As shown in the figure, publications on Central Asian Studies surged in the 21st century. While the total number of publications did not exceed 15 until 2005, the average annual publication count climbed to 84,85 by 2024. This surge is primarily attributed to the inclusion of two region-specific journals—*Central Asian Survey* and *Bilig*—indexed in WoS since 2005 and 2008, respectively. Importantly, however, similar growth patterns are evident in subgroups. Eurasian journals also exhibit increasing interest in Central Asia post-Cold War, in contrast to the Soviet era when only two articles were identified.

Figure 1. Annual Scientific Production on Central Asian Studies.



2.2. Leading Journals

Among the seven journals, *Bilig* is the leading publication on Central Asia with 735 articles, followed by *Central Asian Survey* with 575. This is expected given their exclusive focus on the region. Additionally, *Europe-Asia Studies* published 316 articles, *Eurasian Geography and Economics* had 75, *Post-Soviet Affairs* had 36, *Slavic Review* had 31, and *Soviet Studies* contributed two articles. Figure 2 illustrates the relevant sources on Central Asian Studies, accordingly 74% of articles were published in two region-specific journals while slightly more than one fourth of the them in other Eurasian journals where *Europe-Asia Studies* play the leading role among them. However, citation counts reveal a different picture. Table 1 presents the top 20 most cited journals among the seven relevant sources. As seen in the table, *Central Asian Survey* is the leading journal in citation, followed by *Europe-Asia Studies*. Despite having the most published articles in the field, *Bilig* ranks only 17th in citations. This is likely due to only 27% of its articles being published in English, compared to 63% in Turkish.

Bilig's bilingual format significantly impacts the structure of Central Asian Studies literature. The journal accepts both Turkish and English manuscripts. Notably, its 537 Turkish articles constitute 30% of the entire literature in the field, with the remaining 70% in English. Surprisingly, no Russian-language articles were identified in the literature, despite Russian being considered a crucial language in Central Asia due to its former status as the region's lingua franca.

Figure 2. Number of Published Articles on Central Asian Studies

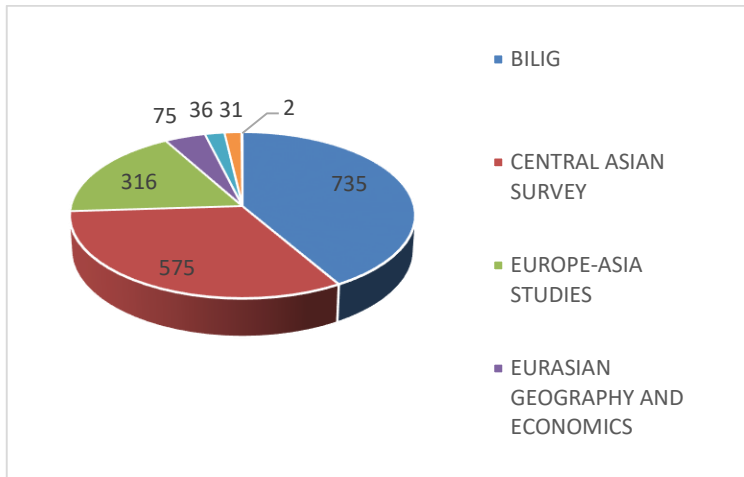


Table 1. Most Cited Documents in Central Asian Studies

Sources	Articles
Central Asian Survey	1274
Europe-Asia Studies	668
Thesis	488
Eurasian Geography and Economics	244
Communication	236
Nationalities Papers	234
Slavic Review	217
Post-Soviet Affairs	216
Journal of Democracy	215
World Politics	158
Problems post-Communism	153
Communist and post-Communist Studies	148
American Political Science Review	146
Comparative Political Studies	136
International Organization	132
Bilig	131
International Affairs	121

Democratization	116
Comparative Politics	106
İslam Ansiklopedisi	106

2.3. Country Productivity and International Collaboration

While 2050 authors are indexed across 1770 articles, 1285 of these are single-authored documents. This indicates that 27% of articles were produced through collaboration. However, only 10,17% of articles involved international collaboration, suggesting limited international cooperation within Central Asian Studies. Regarding country production, Biblioshiny calculates the nationalities of all authors, leading to inflated figures as it counts each author's nationality separately in multi-authored articles. Consequently, the total number of calculated nationalities exceeds the actual number of articles. Given the divergent results between Central Asian-specific and Eurasian journals, the research was divided into two sub-categories for further analysis.

Accordingly, Central Asian journals feature articles from 43 countries, while Eurasian journals represent 48. Table 2 presents the top 20 countries' contributions to each category and combined. Türkiye dominates Central Asian journal publications but is less prominent in Eurasian Studies, where the USA. and UK lead, followed by Germany and Kazakhstan in both groups. The USA. and UK occupy the second and third positions in Central Asian journals, respectively. Both tables indicate Kazakhstan's leading role among local countries in Central Asian Studies, with Kyrgyzstan also appearing in the top 20. Uzbekistan is represented in Central Asian journals. Overall, Central Asian Studies exhibits a geographically diverse authorship. Türkiye, with strong cultural and political ties to the region, holds the leading position, followed by the USA., UK, and Germany from the West, and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan regionally. Russia occupies the subsequent position. In essence, Central Asian Studies is popular both within the region and connected states as well as in Western academia. Notably, despite a shift in USA. academia toward comparative politics, the country maintains a strong second-place position. Türkiye's leading role can be explained by cultural ties, easy access to field research, relatively strong political and educational relationships.

Table 2. Most Productive Countries

Country	Articles (Central Asian Journals)	Country	Articles (Eurasia n Journals)	Country	Total
Türkiye	1379	USA	330	Türkiye	1391
USA	322	UK	223	USA	652

UK	255	Germany	60	UK	478
Germany	161	Kazakhstan	44	Germany	221
Kazakhstan	153	Russia	39	Kazakhstan	208
Kyrgyzstan	78	Hungary	31	Kyrgyzstan	92
Russia	44	Poland	31	Russia	83
Switzerland	38	Czechia	29	Netherlands	55
Netherlands	34	Canada	24	Canada	50
France	33	China	23	Czechia	48
Japan	29	Netherlands	21	Japan	45
Canada	26	Sweden	19	China	42
Uzbekistan	26	Belgium	18	France	41
Azerbaijan	23	Australia	17	Switzerland	41
Australia	19	Japan	16	Poland	37
China	19	Italy	15	Australia	36
Czechia	19	Kyrgyzstan	14	Sweden	36
Mongolia	19	Norway	12	Italy	32
Georgia	18	Türkiye	12	Belgium	31
Italy/Norway/Sweden	17	Finland/Israe	11	Hungary	31

When examining international cooperation, it becomes evident that collaboration is relatively limited. Figures 3, 4, and 5 present heat maps illustrating international collaboration in Central Asian journals, Eurasian journals, and overall, respectively. Notably, collaborations between Türkiye and Kazakhstan, as well as the USA. and the UK, are most common in Central Asian journals. Additionally, significant cooperation exists between the USA. and Kazakhstan, particularly within *Central Asian Survey* and *Bilig*. In contrast, Eurasian journals primarily demonstrate significant collaboration solely between Kazakhstan and the USA. Aggregating all collaborations reveals the USA. as the most collaborative country in Central Asian Studies. Kazakhstan and the UK emerge as the USA.'s primary partners in this domain. Kazakhstan also exhibits significant collaboration with Türkiye. Kazakhstan's increased collaboration can be attributed to its higher education reform and accession to the Bologna Process, both of which promote international cooperation. Still, the overall collaboration is limited in Central Asian Studies in general.

Figure 3. Heatmap of International Collaboration in Central Asian Journals

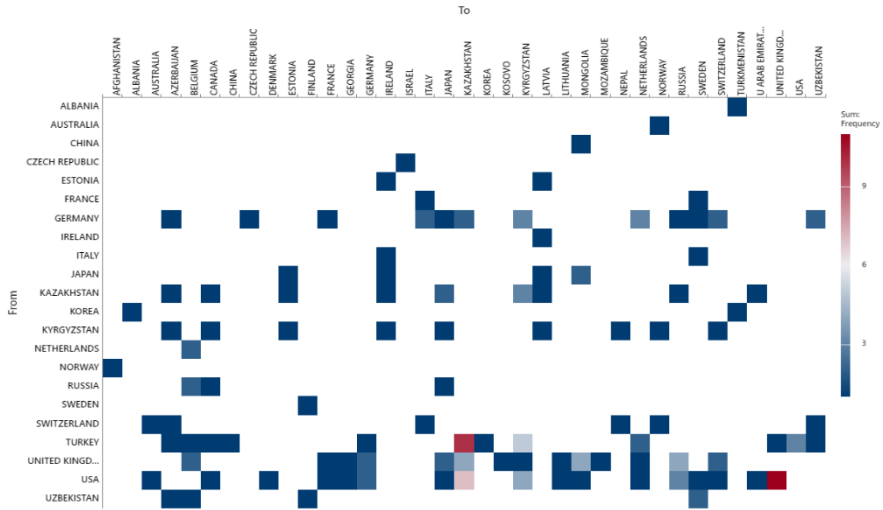


Figure 4. Heatmap of International Collaboration in Eurasian Journals

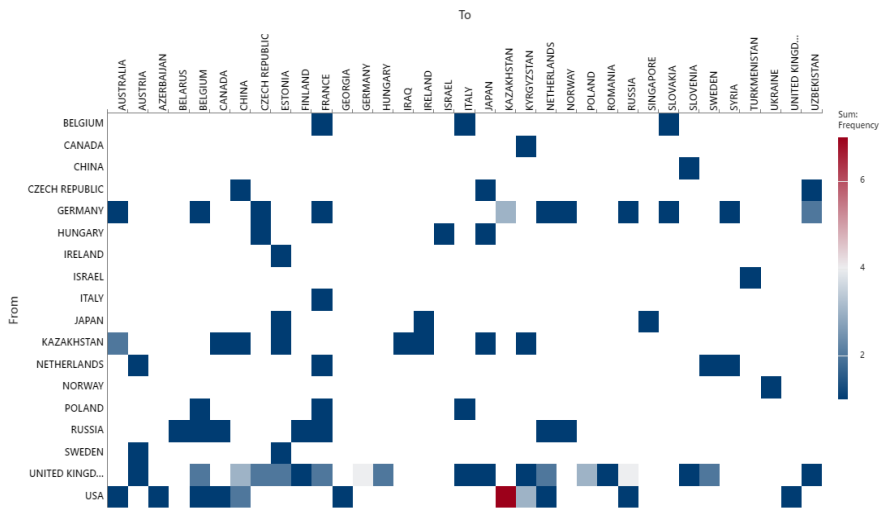
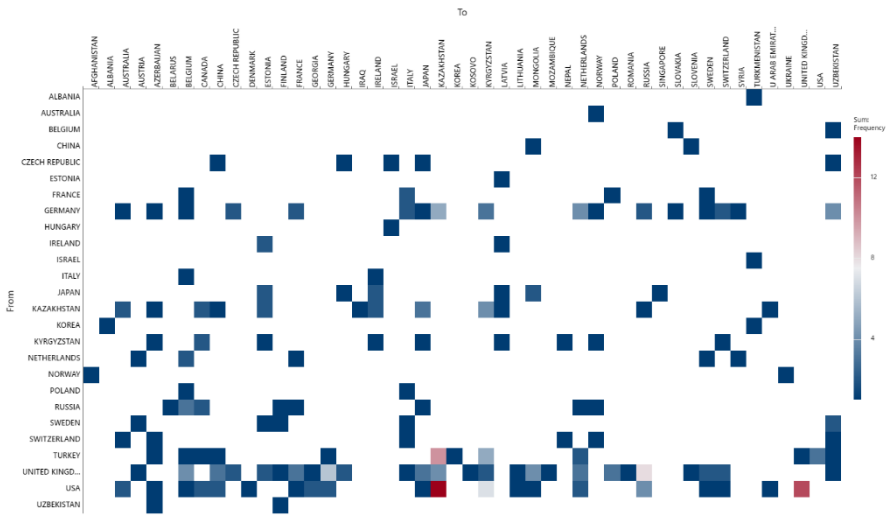


Figure 5. Heatmap of Total Collaboration in Central Asian Studies

2.4. Topics in Central Asian Studies

When focusing on research topics in Central Asian Studies, Biblioshiny outputs indicate a dispersed research agenda. Ironically, Central Asian journals, comprising 74% of the field's literature, exhibit a more focused agenda compared to Eurasian journals. Research in the two Central Asian journals can be categorized into two primary themes: 1) classical International Relations (IR) and Political Science (POLS) topics, such as state and security; and 2) post-Cold War IR and POLS themes, including identity and gender politics. Most relevant words in the two Central Asian journals are “politics” (34), “Central Asia” (22), “security” (19), “identity” (18), “state” (17), “power” (15), “policy” (14), “Russia” (13), “China” (12), “gender” (11). In contrast, Eurasian journals present variety of topics despite numerous less articles. While incorporating core IR and POLS themes, they also delve into region-specific topics like democratization, reform, and foreign direct investment (FDI). Most relevant words in the five Eurasian journals are “state” (23), “politics” (21), “Russia” (21), “democracy” (16), “power” (13), “Kazakhstan” (10), “Central Asia” (9), “policy” (9), “transition” (9), “identity” (8). Word counts reveal the dominance of IR and POLS within this subfield of Area Studies. While history and linguistic studies are also represented in Area Studies journals, topics from other disciplines are significantly less prevalent and less visible.

Biblioshiny also generates centrality and density metrics for the identified themes in the literature via thematic maps. Thematic maps visualize the intellectual structure and development of a research field using keyword co-occurrence analysis. They help identify key research topics, assess how

developed and cohesive each theme is, and reveal the relationships between themes. In this regard, centrality measures the interconnectedness of a theme, indicating its relevance, while density measures the theme's prominence within the literature (Cobo et al., 2011). Consequently, high centrality and high density themes are considered core to the field, while high centrality and low density themes represent foundational concepts. Conversely, low density and low centrality themes may be emerging or declining, and high density but low centrality themes suggest well-established but isolated topics. In this respect, thematic maps also reveal relevant topics in a broader way. Figures 6 and 7 present thematic maps of Central Asian Studies based on these criteria.

Figure 6 represents the thematic map of *Central Asian Survey* and *Bilig*. As shown in the figure, the two journals intensely focus on politics, identity, gender, state, and security. Three concepts—Türkiye, attitudes, and determinants—exhibit high centrality but moderate density. Notably, there are few niche or emerging/declining themes beyond "model" and "acculturation." The placement of "acculturation" in the low density and low centrality quadrant, along with "attitudes" in a borderline position, suggests a departure from cultural studies and a shift towards IR and POLS. Given the relatively recent indexing of these journals, the limited number of niche and declining themes is expected. The concept of "Türkiye" can be explained by *Bilig*'s intensive publication on Türkiye's relationship between Central Asia. On the other hand, Figure 7 reveals the thematic diversity within Eurasian journals. Core themes encompass a broader spectrum, including not only general concepts like state, politics, and identity, but also region-specific topics such as democratization, protests, and civil society. The map also highlights niche and emerging/declining themes like geopolitics, immigration, development, nationalism and opposition. This indicates that while region-specific journals maintain a focused agenda, the thematic landscape of Eurasian journals has evolved over time. This diversification, in fact, explains the limited international collaboration in Central Asian Studies. While the primary focus of the USA and the UK is on the prospects and challenges of Central Asia's integration into the liberal international system, Türkiye, which dominates the literature in *Bilig* in particular, concentrates more on politics, relations, and energy security. From this point of view, it can be claimed that there is a divide between Türkiye and USA/UK in the literature.

Figure 6. Thematic Map of Central Asian Journals

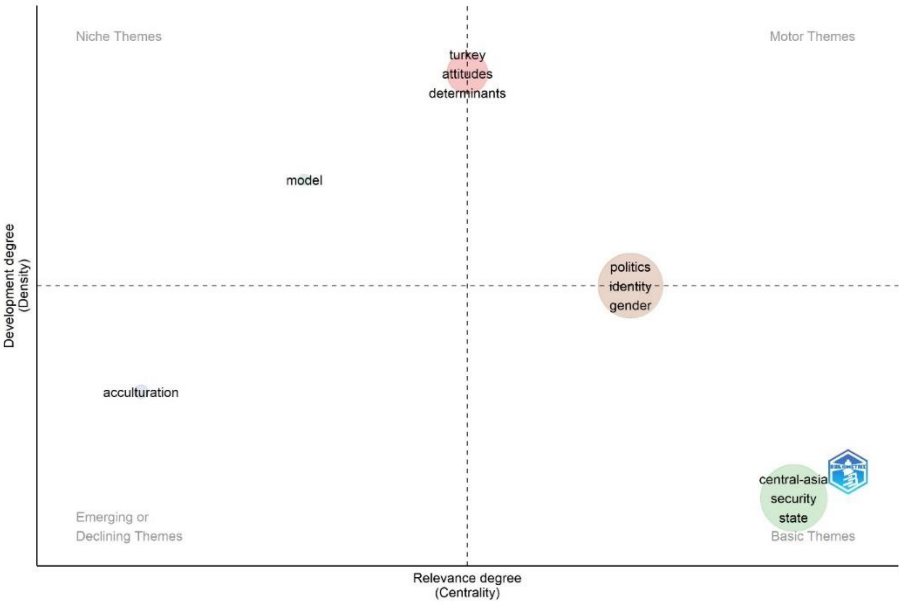
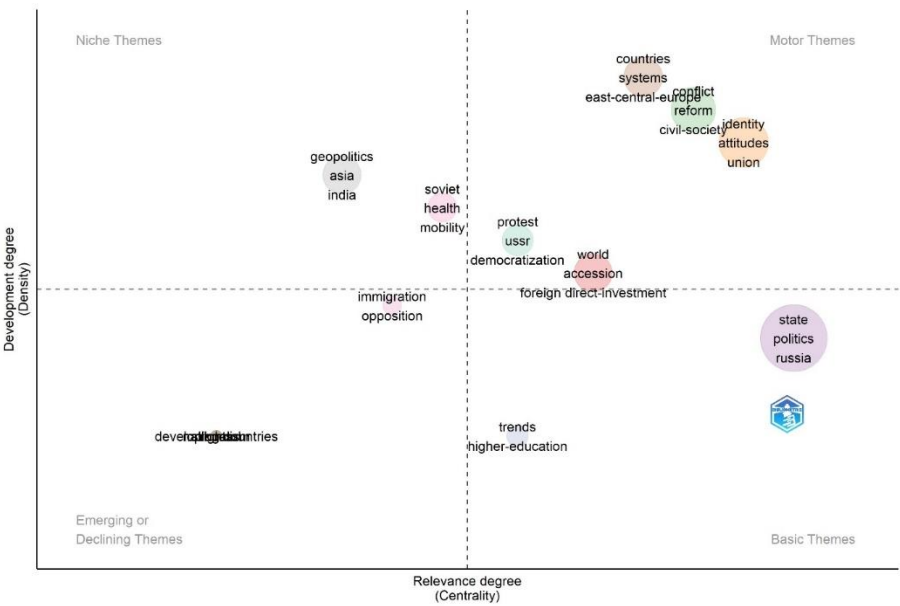


Figure 7. Thematic Map of Eurasian Journals



Conclusion

The article raised three questions in the introduction part. Regarding first question, the bibliometric characteristics of publication on Central Asian Studies, there is a growing literature in this subfield of Area Studies. However, the boost in literature is driven by political science and international relations despite the multidisciplinary characteristics of Area Studies. In this regard, Central Asian Studies has a tendency to become a subfield of political science and international relations instead of Area Studies.

Second question raised the question of differences between Central Asian journals and Eurasian journals. Bibloshiny output demonstrates several results in that respect. A comparison of Central Asian and Eurasian journals reveals distinct thematic focuses. Central Asian journals present a more concentrated agenda centered on politics, security, state, identity, and gender as core and foundational themes. Due to their relatively recent inclusion in indexing databases, these journals exhibit fewer niche or emerging/declining topics, with history and linguistics demonstrating diminished roles. In contrast, Eurasian journals showcase a broader thematic spectrum encompassing both general and region-specific issues. The fluctuating regional agenda and varying indexing durations of these journals contribute to a higher prevalence of niche and emerging/declining themes. Another key difference lies in the geographic origins of the authors. While Türkiye and Turkic states predominate in Central Asian journals, European nations are more visible in Eurasian publications. Notably, the US and the UK maintain significant presence in both journal groups. This finding challenges the notion of declining US interest in Area Studies, as the US remains a leading contributor to the field, ranking second in Central Asian studies and first in Eurasian studies. Therefore, it can be concluded that Area Studies remains a significant field of inquiry in Türkiye, USA, UK, Germany, and Kazakhstan despite the decreasing emphasis on history, anthropology, and cultural studies.

The third question explored the evolving patterns within Central Asian Studies. As previously discussed, the field is correlated with regional political developments but is more significantly influenced by the research agendas of knowledge producers. While Turkish-based articles tend to focus on stable topics like politics and security, Anglo-Saxon literature has undergone substantial shifts over the past three decades. Initially, the potential transition to multiparty democracy in the newly independent states prompted research on political "opposition". However, as authoritarianism consolidated, interest in opposition waned. Subsequently, the concept of "protests" emerged as a focal point, reflecting the region's experiences with colored revolutions and similar uprisings. In this regard, democracy-related topics such as "reform" and "civil society" also gained prominence as core themes in Central Asian Studies. Conversely, challenges associated with post-independence, including development, nationalism, and immigration, have received diminishing attention in the literature.

This bibliometric analysis demonstrates the continued prominence of Area Studies within the social sciences. Despite the prevailing notion that Area Studies, particularly in the USA, has become outdated, the data reveals a surge in Central Asian Studies. While the USA may not hold the leading position, its significant contributions to the field, particularly post-Cold War, are undeniable. Türkiye's substantial contribution to the field can be attributed to its strong cultural and political ties with the region. The country's proximity and shared cultural heritage facilitate extensive fieldwork and have attracted a significant number of Central Asian students, thereby stimulating research output. Additionally, an improvement is visible in Kazakhstan's performance as the local knowledge producer in the region. Kazakhstan is also one of the most collaborative country in the field just behind the USA. However, overall collaboration within Central Asian Studies remains limited. This can be attributed to divergent research agendas and varying securitization approaches among key knowledge producers. While Turkey prioritizes traditional security concerns like terrorism and international relations, the USA and the UK focus on challenges to liberal democracy. These differing perspectives hinder collaboration between Turkey and the Anglo-Saxon world.

However, Central Asian Studies demonstrates a risk inherent to Area Studies: becoming overly dominated by political science and international relations. While initially interdisciplinary, the field has increasingly narrowed its focus, with contributions from history, anthropology, and linguistics declining significantly. The prevalence of IR and POLS-centric themes such as power, identity, gender, democratization, and civil society has blurred the boundaries between Area Studies and Comparative Politics. Revitalizing Area Studies necessitates a renewed emphasis on incorporating perspectives from history and other social sciences.

Despite an increasing number of published articles, Central Asian Studies remains a relatively minor component of broader Eurasian Studies. Although the region constitutes a significant part of the post-Soviet landscape and offers substantial research potential, its less than 10% contribution to the overall literature reinforces the perception of a marginal and narrowly focused field. However, given the limited research conducted on the region globally, further investigation of Central Asian Studies is essential to determine whether it represents a unique case or can be explained within existing IR and political science frameworks.

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