

## EXTERNAL POWERS IN CENTRAL ASIA: SCO'S ROLE IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER IN THE REGION

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**Abstract.** This article delves into the intricate web of external powers and their impact on the power dynamics within Central Asia, with a special focus on the role played by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Beginning with an overview of the historical context, the narrative traces the involvement of major external players, such as Russia, China, and the other members of the SCO. The emergence and objectives of the SCO are explored, shedding light on its evolution into a significant regional organization addressing security, economic, and political cooperation.

The article critically analyzes the power dynamics within the SCO, dissecting the influence of major external powers and the strategies employed by smaller Central Asian states to navigate these dynamics. Economic cooperation and infrastructure development projects promoted by the SCO are examined for their impact on the distribution of economic power in the region. The role of the organization in addressing security challenges, including joint military exercises and security cooperation, is scrutinized to understand its implications on the broader geopolitical landscape.

Challenges and criticisms faced by the SCO are addressed, offering a balanced perspective on concerns related to potential dominance by certain external powers and the organization's effectiveness in achieving its objectives. Looking towards the future, the article explores potential developments in power distribution within Central Asia and considers the broader implications of the SCO's role for regional stability and development. By providing a comprehensive analysis supported by data and examples, this article contributes valuable insights into the evolving geopolitical dynamics of Central Asia and the role of the SCO in shaping its future.

**Keywords:** Central Asia, external powers, geopolitics, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, historical context, power dynamics, power balance, security challenges, geopolitical influence, regional organizations, power distribution

### Basic provisions

The article on "External Powers in Central Asia: SCO's Role in the Distribution of Power in the Region" investigates the historical context of external powers' involvement in Central Asia post-Cold War. It delves into the emergence and objectives of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), emphasizing its role in addressing security, economic, and political cooperation.

The article scrutinizes power dynamics within the SCO, analyzing the influence of major external powers like China and Russia. It explores economic cooperation and infrastructure development initiatives promoted by the SCO, evaluating their impact on the distribution of economic power in the region.

Security challenges in Central Asia and the SCO's role in addressing them, including joint military exercises and security cooperation, are examined. The article addresses challenges and criticisms faced by the SCO, considering concerns related to the dominance of specific external powers and the organization's overall effectiveness.

Looking to the future, the article explores potential developments in power distribution within Central Asia, contemplating the broader implications of the SCO's role for regional stability and development. In conclusion, it emphasizes the ongoing significance of the SCO in shaping power dynamics in Central Asia and provides insights into potential future developments.

## **Introduction**

The geopolitical significance of Central Asia is multifaceted, emanating from its strategic location and rich resources. Situated at the crossroads of major civilizations, Central Asia holds a pivotal position connecting East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. This geographical centrality has historically rendered the region crucial for trade, cultural exchange, and military strategies [1].

Central Asia's abundance of energy resources, particularly oil and natural gas, adds a layer of global importance. The region's energy wealth attracts the interest of major powers seeking to secure access and exert influence over these vital resources. This geopolitical competition intertwines with the historical Silk Road and contemporary transportation infrastructure, making Central Asia a critical hub for trade routes. Security concerns amplify the region's significance. Its proximity to conflict zones, including Afghanistan, and the potential spillover effects on issues such as terrorism and drug trafficking underscore the global stakes in Central Asia's stability. The region becomes a theater for great power competition, with Russia, China, and the United States vying for influence to advance their geopolitical and economic interests. Water resources, especially through the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, further contribute to geopolitical complexities, impacting agriculture and regional cooperation.

Central Asia's cultural and ethnic diversity adds another layer to its geopolitical landscape. The mix of cultures, ethnicities, and languages introduces complexity in global engagement, as external powers navigate historical, cultural, and linguistic affinities.

The post-Soviet dynamics following the breakup of the Soviet Union have given rise to independent Central Asian states, introducing a new dimension to the geopolitical calculus [2]. The region's evolving relationships with former Soviet states and new global partners underscore its continued relevance in shaping global geopolitics. In essence, Central Asia's geopolitical significance arises from its role as a nexus of civilizations, its rich resources, strategic location, and the interplay of global powers seeking to assert influence in this dynamic and complex region.

## **Description of materials and methods**

The publication is grounded in an examination of existing literature concerning the establishment and operations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

in the contemporary global context. The study delves into the interests of key political actors in the Central Asian region. Employing political and economic analysis methods, the research explores the potential development of the SCO as an organization tasked with stabilizing and influencing the power dynamics among significant players in the region. The primary research methods selected for this study include comparative analysis and descriptive methods. These methods are applied to discern the nuances, correspondences, and discrepancies in the national interests of the Russian Federation, China, India, and Pakistan within the SCO framework. The publication provides an assessment of the SCO as a multifaceted organization in the international arena, offering predictions on the potential roles of Russia and China.

## **Results**

The examination of the data shed light on the distinct roles played by China and Russia within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and their impact on power distribution in Central Asia. Diplomatically, both nations were found to employ varied strategies reflective of their geopolitical interests. China's emphasis on economic diplomacy was evident, fostering economic ties through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In contrast, Russia exhibited a diplomatic approach rooted in historical alliances and security cooperation [3].

Economically, China emerged as a significant player, with its investments and trade agreements contributing substantially to regional economic development. The study identified a symbiotic relationship between economic partnerships led by China and the overall stability in the Central Asian region. Russia, leveraging historical ties, maintained economic influence through energy partnerships, thereby influencing power dynamics in a nuanced manner [4].

In the military domain, Russia's historical security alliances with Central Asian states persisted, impacting regional security dynamics. Meanwhile, China's military engagement, although growing, was observed to be more focused on addressing specific security concerns, such as counterterrorism, within the SCO framework.

Culturally, both China and Russia engaged in people-to-people exchanges, promoting cultural understanding and soft power influence. Quantitative analysis further underscored the economic dominance of China in the region, highlighting its pivotal role in shaping power distribution [4].

The results emphasize the intricate and multifaceted roles of China and Russia within the SCO, showcasing how their diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural endeavors collectively contribute to shaping power dynamics in Central Asia. The findings offer nuanced insights into the cooperative and, at times, competitive dynamics between these major powers, providing a comprehensive understanding of their impact on the regional landscape.

## **Discussion**

The historical context of external powers' involvement in Central Asia is a dynamic narrative marked by geopolitical rivalries, strategic maneuvering, and shifting alliances. During the imperial era, the Great Game saw the British Empire

and the Russian Empire vie for influence, recognizing the region's vast resources and strategic importance. The Soviet era solidified external control, with Moscow exercising authority over Central Asia.

During the Imperial Era in the 19th century, Central Asia became a focal point of geopolitical competition between the British Empire and the Russian Empire, a period famously known as the Great Game. This rivalry was spurred by the strategic importance of the region, situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia [5].

The British Empire, with India as its prized possession, sought to establish a buffer zone in Central Asia to ward off potential Russian expansion toward British India. Simultaneously, Russia aimed to expand its territorial influence and secure warm-water ports, viewing Central Asia as a gateway to achieve these objectives.

The Great Game was characterized by a complex interplay of diplomacy, espionage, and military maneuvering. Both empires engaged in subtle negotiations and intelligence activities while maintaining military forces on the fringes of Central Asia. Afghanistan, positioned between the two imperial powers, emerged as a pivotal battleground and buffer state.

Notable figures like Sir Alexander Burnes and Nikolay Przhevalsky played crucial roles in mapping unexplored territories and establishing alliances with local leaders. Treaties and agreements, such as the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, delineated spheres of influence, recognizing British control over Afghanistan and Russian influence in parts of Central Asia [6].

The legacy of the Great Game persists in the modern geopolitical landscape of Central Asia. The division of the region into spheres of influence during this era had lasting consequences, influencing the borders and political dynamics of contemporary Central Asian states. This period, filled with intrigue and diplomatic maneuvering, remains a significant chapter in the historical narrative of Central Asia's external involvement. The Cold War intensified global interest, turning the region into a battleground for ideological supremacy. Post-Soviet independence in 1991 ushered in a new phase, with Russia, the United States, and China actively seeking to establish or expand their influence. Central Asia's rich energy resources became a focal point, driving competition over control and transit routes [7].

The fallout from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reverberated across Central Asia, impacting stability and prompting external powers to engage in the region's affairs. China's rise as an economic powerhouse brought the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), leading to increased Chinese investment and influence in Central Asia.

Ongoing security concerns, including terrorism and extremism, have sustained external interest, particularly with the instability in neighboring Afghanistan. Central Asia's role as a buffer zone and its geopolitical significance continue to shape the involvement of external powers, creating a complex historical tapestry of strategic interests and regional dynamics.

*Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its emergence as a key player.* The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has emerged as a pivotal player in the geopolitical landscape of Central Asia since its establishment in 2001. Initially composed of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan,

the SCO's primary objectives centered around bolstering regional security, fostering economic cooperation, and promoting cultural and political ties [8].

Over the years, the SCO has expanded its membership, with India and Pakistan joining as full members in 2017. This enlargement broadened the organization's influence beyond its original Central Asian core. The SCO's impact extends across various dimensions, including economic cooperation, security collaboration, cultural exchanges, and political dialogue.

In terms of economic cooperation, the organization has been instrumental in supporting infrastructure projects, trade agreements, and investment programs. This has contributed to economic development within member states. The SCO has also established mechanisms for security cooperation, conducting joint military exercises and sharing intelligence through its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) to address common security threats such as terrorism, separatism, and extremism [9]. Beyond political and economic aspects, the SCO places emphasis on cultural and people-to-people exchanges to strengthen mutual understanding among member states. Regular political dialogue occurs through summit meetings where leaders discuss regional issues, formulate policies, and enhance diplomatic ties.

The SCO has played a role in facilitating diplomatic efforts to resolve long-standing border disputes among member states, contributing to regional stability. Its influence extends beyond Central Asia, with observer states and dialogue partners participating in its activities, enhancing its impact on regional and global affairs. The SCO's synergy with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) further solidifies its role in the economic development goals of member states. However, challenges and criticisms persist, including concerns about potential dominance by larger members, particularly China and Russia, in the organization's decision-making processes.

In summary, the SCO's evolution and expansion have positioned it as a significant force shaping regional dynamics in Central Asia. Its multifaceted approach to security, economics, and cultural cooperation reflects its commitment to fostering development and stability within the member states and beyond.

Over time, the SCO has undergone a notable expansion of its membership. In 2017, India and Pakistan joined as full members, broadening the organization's reach and influence. This expansion reflects a commitment to inclusivity and regional cooperation beyond its original Central Asian core [10].

The inclusion of Central Asian countries in the SCO is particularly significant due to the region's historical, cultural, and geographical ties. These nations, situated at the crossroads of Asia, have played a pivotal role in the organization's objectives, ranging from enhancing regional security to promoting economic collaboration and cultural exchanges.

The SCO's growth in membership signifies its evolving role as a platform for dialogue and cooperation not only among major powers like China and Russia but also among diverse nations in Central Asia and beyond. This collective engagement underscores the organization's commitment to addressing shared challenges and fostering mutual development in the broader Eurasian region.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has strategically positioned itself as a regional organization with a comprehensive approach to addressing the

multifaceted challenges and opportunities in Central Asia. One of the fundamental pillars of the SCO's role is in enhancing regional security. Recognizing the shared concerns related to terrorism, separatism, and extremism, the organization has instituted mechanisms for security cooperation. This involves joint military exercises, intelligence sharing through its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), and collaborative efforts to counter emerging security threats. The SCO's commitment to security aligns with its vision of creating a stable and secure environment in Central Asia [9].

In terms of economic cooperation, the SCO has played a pivotal role in fostering collaboration among member states. The organization supports a range of initiatives, including infrastructure projects, trade agreements, and investment programs. This economic dimension is crucial for the development of the region, creating synergies among diverse economies and contributing to sustainable growth. The SCO's emphasis on economic cooperation reflects its recognition of the interdependence of member states and the potential for collective prosperity through collaboration.

Moreover, the SCO has positioned itself as a platform for political dialogue and cooperation. Regular summit meetings provide leaders from member states the opportunity to discuss regional issues, formulate policies, and strengthen diplomatic ties. The political dimension of the SCO's role underscores its commitment to promoting understanding and collaboration among nations with diverse political systems and governance structures. The SCO's role as a regional organization is multi-dimensional, addressing security concerns, fostering economic collaboration, and facilitating political dialogue. Its comprehensive approach reflects a commitment to creating a harmonious and cooperative environment in Central Asia, where member states work collectively to overcome challenges and harness opportunities for the benefit of the entire region [2].

*Power Dynamics within the SCO.* The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) serves as a platform where power dynamics among member states are complex and dynamic, reflecting the diverse interests and geopolitical strategies of major players within the organization. China and Russia, as the largest and most influential members, play central roles in shaping the SCO's agenda. Their close collaboration in the political and economic spheres often influences decision-making processes, reflecting a shared interest in enhancing regional stability and countering external influences. While both countries contribute significantly to the SCO's initiatives, their partnership also introduces subtle competition for influence within the organization.

Simultaneously, the smaller Central Asian states, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, navigate these power dynamics to safeguard their own interests. These nations often seek to balance their relationships with China and Russia while pursuing economic and security benefits within the SCO framework. Their strategic positioning is crucial in maintaining a sense of regional autonomy and avoiding overreliance on any single external power. Economic cooperation is a key arena where power dynamics manifest within the SCO. China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) intersects with the economic

goals of Central Asian states, creating opportunities for infrastructure development and investment. Russia, historically influential in the region, maintains economic ties and security partnerships. The interplay between these major powers and the Central Asian states shapes the distribution of economic benefits and influence within the SCO [11].

Moreover, the SCO's structure provides avenues for dialogue and collaboration, allowing member states to assert their interests. While China and Russia may hold considerable sway, decisions within the organization often involve negotiations and compromises that reflect the diverse nature of the member states. In essence, power dynamics within the SCO are intricate, involving a delicate balance between the major players, China and Russia, and the smaller Central Asian states. The organization serves as a forum where these nations navigate their interests, cooperate on shared objectives, and manage the complexities of regional geopolitics to foster a collective approach to security, economic development, and political cooperation.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) operates as a forum where major external powers, notably China and Russia, wield considerable influence, shaping the organization's policies and strategic direction. China, as a global economic powerhouse, leverages its economic capabilities to exert influence within the SCO. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a flagship project led by China, intersects with the SCO's economic goals, providing member states with opportunities for infrastructure development and investment. China's economic influence is further solidified through trade partnerships and financial commitments, positioning it as a key player in shaping the economic landscape of Central Asia within the SCO framework [12].

On the other hand, Russia, with its historical ties to the region, maintains significant influence within the SCO, particularly in matters related to security. The organization often serves as a platform for Russian-led initiatives to address common security challenges, reflecting Moscow's strategic interests in countering terrorism and maintaining stability in Central Asia. Russia's historical, cultural, and military ties with Central Asian states contribute to its influence within the organization, allowing it to play a central role in shaping the SCO's security agenda.

While both China and Russia collaborate within the SCO, their partnership also introduces an element of subtle competition for influence within the organization. The balance of power dynamics involves navigating shared interests and occasional divergences, particularly in economic initiatives and regional security strategies. The smaller Central Asian states, while seeking to benefit from the economic and security opportunities provided by China and Russia, also aim to maintain a degree of autonomy in their decision-making processes within the SCO.

The influence of major external powers, especially China and Russia, within the SCO is substantial. Their roles in shaping economic initiatives, addressing security challenges, and influencing the overall agenda of the organization underscore the complex dynamics at play within this regional forum. The SCO serves as a platform where major powers collaborate, compete, and negotiate to advance their respective geopolitical and economic interests in Central Asia.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has been a driving force behind various economic initiatives and projects in Central Asia, aiming to foster regional development and cooperation among member states. One notable initiative is the SCO's focus on infrastructure development, aligning with the broader economic goals of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) led by China. The organization has supported and facilitated major transportation projects, including road and rail networks, to improve connectivity and trade within the region. Additionally, the SCO places emphasis on economic integration through trade agreements and investment programs, encouraging collaboration in sectors such as energy, agriculture, and technology. These economic initiatives not only contribute to the modernization and growth of Central Asian economies but also strengthen the overall economic interconnectedness among SCO member states. The organization's commitment to economic development reflects a shared vision of enhancing regional prosperity through collaborative projects that leverage the unique strengths and resources of each participating nation [13].

In addition to infrastructure development, the SCO has actively promoted economic initiatives and projects in Central Asia that extend to various sectors, including energy, agriculture, and technology. Energy cooperation, for instance, has been a focal point, with member states collaborating on the exploration and development of energy resources. This includes joint ventures in oil and gas exploration, as well as the establishment of pipelines and energy corridors that enhance the efficient flow of energy resources across borders.

Agricultural cooperation within the SCO framework aims to address food security concerns and boost agricultural productivity in the region. The organization facilitates the exchange of best practices, technologies, and expertise among member states, fostering sustainable agricultural practices and ensuring a more secure food supply. Moreover, the SCO has recognized the importance of technology and innovation for economic growth. Collaborative efforts in the technology sector involve sharing knowledge, research, and promoting joint ventures to advance technological capabilities in member states. This emphasis on technology serves as a catalyst for economic diversification and the creation of knowledge-based economies within the SCO. The organization's economic initiatives go beyond individual projects; they are part of a broader strategy to create a conducive environment for trade and investment. The SCO has worked towards reducing trade barriers, simplifying customs procedures, and promoting a more favorable business environment, thereby encouraging cross-border economic activities and partnerships [14].

Central to these economic endeavors is the recognition that member states possess complementary strengths and resources. By leveraging these synergies, the SCO aims to create a more interconnected and resilient regional economy. This collaborative approach aligns with the organization's commitment to fostering mutual economic benefit, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing the overall well-being of the people in Central Asia. In essence, the economic initiatives and projects promoted by the SCO form a comprehensive strategy that encompasses multiple sectors, contributing to the region's economic vibrancy and cooperation.



## **Conclusion**

The article discusses the economic initiatives and projects promoted by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Central Asia. The SCO, primarily focused on regional development and cooperation, has actively supported infrastructure projects, such as road and rail networks, to enhance connectivity and trade. In addition to infrastructure, the organization emphasizes economic integration through trade agreements and investment programs, spanning sectors like energy, agriculture, and technology. Energy cooperation involves joint ventures in oil and gas exploration, while agricultural collaboration addresses food security and boosts productivity. The SCO also prioritizes technology and innovation, fostering knowledge exchange and joint ventures to advance technological capabilities. Beyond individual projects, the organization aims to create a conducive environment for trade and investment by reducing barriers and promoting a favorable business climate. This collaborative, comprehensive approach underscores the SCO's commitment to leveraging the complementary strengths of member states for mutual economic benefit, contributing to the region's resilience and prosperity.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) maintains ongoing significance in shaping power dynamics within Central Asia. As a regional forum that includes major players like China and Russia, the SCO plays a pivotal role in influencing political, economic, and security dynamics in the region. Its emphasis on economic initiatives, infrastructure development, and trade agreements contributes to the economic integration of Central Asian states. Moreover, the organization serves as a platform for major external powers to collaborate and compete, shaping regional geopolitics. The SCO's focus on addressing shared security challenges, including terrorism and extremism, underscores its role in maintaining stability. As Central Asian nations navigate their relationships with larger powers, the SCO provides a framework for diplomatic engagement and cooperation, reflecting its ongoing importance in shaping the power dynamics that define the region. The organization's role remains crucial in fostering collaboration, managing competition, and contributing to the overall development and stability of Central Asia.

Looking ahead, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is likely to continue influencing Central Asia's geopolitical landscape with potential future developments. The organization could further evolve as a platform for addressing emerging challenges and opportunities, solidifying its role as a key player in the region.

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## **ОРТАЛЫҚ АЗИЯДАҒЫ СЫРТҚЫ КҮШТЕР: ШЫҰ-НЫҢ АЙМАҚТАҒЫ БИЛІКТІ БӨЛУДЕГІ РӨЛІ**

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**Аңдатпа.** Бұл мақалада Шанхай Ынтымақтастық Ұйымы (ШЫҰ) атқаратын рөлге ерекше назар аударып, сыртқы державалардың шатастырылған желісі және олардың Орталық Азиядағы билік динамикасына әсері қарастырылады. Тарихи контекстке шолу жасаудан бастап, баяндау Ресей, Қытай және ШЫҰ-ның басқа мүшелері сияқты ірі сыртқы ойыншылардың қатысуын қадағалайды. ШЫҰ-ның пайда болуы мен мақсаттары оның қауіпсіздік, экономикалық және саяси ынтымақтастық мәселелерімен айналысатын маңызды аймақтық ұйымға айналуына жарық түсіреді.

Мақалада ШЫҰ ішіндегі билік динамикасы сыни тұрғыдан талданады, ірі сыртқы державалардың әсері және осы динамиканы басқару үшін Орталық Азияның шағын мемлекеттері қолданатын стратегиялар талданады. ШЫҰ ілгерілететін экономикалық ынтымақтастық және инфрақұрылымды дамыту жобалары олардың өңірдегі экономикалық қуатты бөлуге әсері тұрғысынан қаралады. Ұйымның қауіпсіздік мәселелерін, соның ішінде бірлескен әскери жаттығулар мен қауіпсіздік саласындағы ынтымақтастықты шешудегі рөлі оның кең геосаяси ландшафтқа әсерін түсіну үшін мұқият зерттелуде.

ШЫҰ алдында тұрған сын-қатерлер мен сын-ескертпелер қарастырылып, белгілі бір сыртқы державалардың әлеуетті үстемдігіне және ұйымның мақсаттарына жетудегі тиімділігіне қатысты мәселелерге теңдестірілген көзқарас ұсынылады. Болашаққа көз жүгіртсек, мақалада Орталық Азиядағы билікті бөлудегі ықтимал өзгерістер зерттеліп, ШЫҰ рөлінің өңірлік тұрақтылық пен даму үшін неғұрлым кең салдары қарастырылады. Деректер мен мысалдармен расталған жан-жақты талдау жасай отырып, бұл мақала Орталық Азияның өзгеріп отырған геосаяси динамикасын және ШЫҰ-ның оның болашағын қалыптастырудағы рөлін түсінуге құнды үлес қосады.

**Тірек сөздер:** Орталық Азия, сыртқы күштер, геосаясат, Шанхай Ынтымақтастық Ұйымы, тарихи контекст, билік динамикасы, күштер тепе-теңдігі, қауіпсіздік мәселелері, геосаяси ықпал, аймақтық ұйымдар, билікті бөлу.

## **ВНЕШНИЕ СИЛЫ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ: РОЛЬ ШОС В РАСПРЕДЕЛЕНИИ СИЛЫ В РЕГИОНЕ**

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**Аннотация.** В этой статье рассматривается запутанная сеть внешних держав и их влияние на динамику власти в Центральной Азии, с особым акцентом на роль, которую играет Шанхайская организация сотрудничества (ШОС). Начиная с обзора исторического контекста, повествование прослеживает участие крупных внешних игроков, таких как Россия, Китай и другие члены ШОС. Рассматриваются возникновение и цели ШОС, проливающие свет на ее эволюцию в значимую региональную организацию, занимающуюся вопросами безопасности, экономического и политического сотрудничества.

В статье критически анализируется динамика власти внутри ШОС, анализируется влияние крупных внешних держав и стратегии, используемые небольшими государствами Центральной Азии для управления этой динамикой. Проекты экономического сотрудничества и развития инфраструктуры, продвигаемые ШОС, рассматриваются на предмет их влияния на распределение экономической власти в регионе. Роль организации в решении проблем безопасности, включая совместные военные учения и сотрудничество в области безопасности, тщательно изучается, чтобы понять ее последствия для более широкого геополитического ландшафта.

Рассматриваются вызовы и критические замечания, с которыми сталкивается ШОС, предлагая сбалансированный взгляд на проблемы, связанные с потенциальным доминированием определенных внешних держав и эффективностью организации в достижении ее целей. Заглядывая в будущее, в статье исследуются потенциальные изменения в распределении власти в Центральной Азии и рассматриваются более широкие последствия роли ШОС для региональной стабильности и развития. Предоставляя

всесторонний анализ, подкрепленный данными и примерами, эта статья вносит ценный вклад в понимание меняющейся геополитической динамики Центральной Азии и роли ШОС в формировании ее будущего.

**Ключевые слова:** Центральная Азия, внешние державы, геополитика, Шанхайская организация сотрудничества, исторический контекст, динамика власти, баланс сил, вызовы безопасности, геополитическое влияние, региональные организации, распределение силы

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