

Central Asia's Regionalism Dilemma: Which Silk Road?



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Although rich in energy, water and mineral resources, Central Asia has remained doubly remote: not only in terms of its geography, but also due to the lack of attention in the literature. However, just as in the once Great Game disputed by the British Empire and the Russian Empire, the region is once again central in the dynamics of competition and cooperation involving regional and extra-regional actors. Indeed, today's New Great Game involves visions of Central Asian regionalism that don't always converge. Faced with different regionalist projects, namely the US Silk Road, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union, Central Asian States try to balance their own interests vis-à-vis great powers' views and goals for the region. In this sense, this paper aims to analyse what is at stake regarding regionalism, while attempting to understand which competing project seems to be more interesting for the sake of the region's path towards development.

Keywords: US Silk Road, Eurasian Economic Union, Belt and Road Initiative, Central Asia, Regionalism

Biography:

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Recent publications: Duarte, Paulo. A 'Soft' Balancing Ménage à Trois? China, Iran and Russia Strategic Triangle vis-à-vis US Hegemony. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*. (with Papageorgiu, M. & Mamad, E.). 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23477970231152008> Duarte, Paulo. "The Soft Power of China and the European Union in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative and Global Strategy". *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* (2021): 1-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2021.1916740>. (with Ferreira-Pereira-L.C.) ORCID: 0000-0003-1675-2840