

UDC 339.5 (510)(4+5)
Biblid 0543-3657, 66 (2015)
Vol. LXVI, No. 1158-1159, pp. 32–54
Original Scientific Paper

THE NEW SILK ROAD – CHINA'S NEXUS TO EUROPE

Sanja AREŽINA¹

Abstract: The Silk Road is a very important trade and cultural communication line connecting the two ends of the Eurasian continent – PR China and Europe. No great power was ever able to gain exclusive control over it, due to its complexity and excessive economic significance. Having lost its importance with the development of the maritime trade along southern Eurasian shores and with the discovery of faster and safer roads, it regained some of it after the end of the Cold War due to the logistics needs of number of countries that lay on it. Since various development initiatives have not started at all or have not been fully implemented, the latest Chinese ‘One belt, one road’ initiative, consisting of land and maritime routes, has attracted a lot of attention and has caused mixed reactions within the international community. The reason for this is the fact that its initiator is the state whose powerful rise as a regional power with tendency to become a global power and whose assertiveness in foreign policy started the ‘Chinese threat’ theory, coupled with doubts of friendly nations that the initiative covers not only benevolent promotion of mutual economic interests and the friendship of the people, but also some particular Chinese geopolitical calculations. However, many issues will have to be resolved before the project sees its completion. These issues do not depend only on strategic planning and promotion of the PR China but also on the willingness of other involved countries, on the current international situation, and on those actors who could benefit from its collapse. As the security situation in Eurasia is very complex and strategic competition for resources among the powers extremely tense, PR China will not be able to implement this project without active cooperation from Russia, the United States and European Union, or at least without securing their non-interference.

Key words: PR China, Europe, the Silk Road, Eurasia, “One Belt, One Road”, the Chinese threat, the great powers.

¹ Sanja Arežina, PhD. Research Fellow.

INTRODUCTION

The Silk Road is the name used for various Eurasian trade and cultural communication routes that have existed for more than 2000 years. In his book on the history of the Tang dynasty, historian Mark Edward Lewis claimed that there was not only one silk road but widespread network of silk roads on land and at sea. For many centuries these ancient roads represented the most important overland route connecting Europe and Asia. It started in the Chinese city of Xi'an, over Gansu and Xinjiang provinces through the countries of Central Asia to the Black Sea. It had two routes forking in Dunhuang, Uygur Autonomous Region. The north route crossed Lop Nur Lake, Kashgar, Khorasm, the South Caucasus, and then through Georgia (called Iberia at that time) to Byzantium and Rome. The south route ran via the oases of Khoton and Jarkend through northern Persia and Babylon to reach the Mediterranean ports of Antioch and Tyre (Lewis, 2009, 157, p. 165).

Control over the Silk Road was the cause of many wars between Rome and Byzantium with regional powers such as Persia and Parthia in which the existence of the route was even considered a state secret. In the period between 8th and 10th century the Arabs and Mongols took control over it, while in addition the trade between East and West via this road has promoted scientific and cultural exchanges. The Chinese have discovered the existence of the Silk Road by accident during the reign of Wudi Han (156-87 BC). With a goal of provision for the settlement of the northern steppes he sent his envoy Zhang Qian in Central Asia, who along the way discovered until then unknown countries of Central and Western Asia, and the existence of the Roman Empire (Simić, 2003, p. 26). Since then, this road facilitated the exchange of products between China and the West. It was then suspended until 1279, during the Southern Song dynasty, due to the displacement of the center of gravity of the Chinese state to the south and the construction of the new capital Hangzhou. During the reign of this dynasty the Chinese began to develop maritime trade with Southeast Asia and have particularly contributed to the development of maritime compass and advances in shipbuilding technology (Simić, 2003, p. 44). However, with the arrival of Yuan dynasty regular Far East trade links with Europe were re-established, and Chinese silk and porcelain were starting to arrive in Europe regularly via Silk Road, thus creating the demand that would induce many European traders to focus to the East (Simić, 2003, p. 46). With the development of the Eurasian maritime trade, the discovery of quicker and safer route to the Spice Islands and Asia around the Cape of Good Hope in the late 15th century by European explorers Bartolomeu Diaz and Vasco da Gama, and the discovery of America, this road was starting to lose its importance because maritime trade started to gain in importance (Gorshkov and Bagaturia, 2001, p. 51).

Silk Road has always been thought so large and complex that its economic strength and capabilities by far exceeded any contemporary government which used

it. Due to its unique nature, no government has had a monopoly over its creation and control. After the Cold War, numerous projects of revival of this road have been initiated by governments. The break through moment for its renewal was the break-up of the Soviet Union and the independence of Central Asian countries. The reason behind this shift was the logistic needs of several countries, primarily of few great powers. In 1995, the European Union launched its own plan based on the UN plan for the International Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), which was supposed to connect Europe, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and Central Asia.² The research was mainly funded by the European Union together with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank. The plan skirted Russia and Iran, and made a direct connection between the European Union and Central Asia with the aim of integrating the railway that was supposed to go from eastern to western Kazakhstan (Zuokui, 2014). In 1999, that plan was followed by other plan of construction the railway line China-Kyrgyzstan, which is supposed to be integrated with the railway network of TRACECA in Xinjiang. According to experts, that line represented the optimum economic line, but Russia and the United States were the main reasons why it did not come to life (Zhiping, 2014). However, project 'Silk Wind', which was initiated in the framework of TRACECA in November 2012 in Izmir, had a better chance of success because it went hand in hand with the American initiative for a 'New Silk Road'. Its main objective is to complete the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line whose realization is moved to the end of 2015 (Fedorenko, 2013).

The new plan for the Silk Road renewal was started in 1998 by the International Road Transport Union, and then the UN got involved with its first (2000) and second (2005) Silk Road Regional Project. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) also released their own plans (Zuokui, 2014). Another country that has initiated its own version of the Silk Road was Turkey. Turkey's Ministry of Customs and Trade has made public its goal of transport simplification, enhanced security, logistics and customs capacities as well as the renewal of the ancient Silk Road as a link between European and Asian Market at the 2008 International Forum on the Role of Customs Administrations on facilitating and Promoting Trade among the Silk Road Countries in Antalya.³ It has established cooperation between this project and the TRACECA at the forum in Batumi, Georgia. On that occasion, the participating forum states that were not

² TRACECA is an international transport program involving the European Union and 14 Member States of the Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian region.

³ Countries that are incorporated into the Turkish vision of the Silk Road are Azerbaijan, Georgia, India, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Syria, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, China and South Korea.

members of this European initiative are invited to become one by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (Bozkurt, 2012).

The Russian idea for a modern Silk Road is contained within the Eurasian Economic Union. On 18 November 2011 the presidents of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed an agreement that led to the creation of economic and political union on 1 January 2015, putting communication and transport infrastructure into the focus. A day later, on 2 January, Armenia joined, and Kyrgyzstan will become a full member in May 2015, after the ratification of the Accession Treaty.

In July 2011, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton introduced the US 'New Silk Road' plan in New Delhi during her stay at the second India-US Strategic Dialogue. This comprehensive strategy includes Afghanistan, Central and South Asia and its implementation requires constructing a trade and energy corridor linking Europe, the Indian Subcontinent and South Asia. Washington's intention is to dominate the development process of South, Central and West Asia, i.e. to maintain and intensify its influence in these regions after the withdrawal of the army from Afghanistan in 2014, in order to bypass Iran, and to reduce Chinese and Russian influence (IIP Digital, 2011).⁴

The latest initiative 'One Belt, One Road' proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013 was an extension of sporadic smaller projects which China implemented along the ancient Silk Road route in the previous period.⁵ This ambitious plan consists of land and maritime routes that start at Central and Eastern China and end in Venice, passing through Asia, Africa and Europe and all the seas and ocean along the way. The financing of the project will be done by new institutions - Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund, as well as through new mechanism that is yet to be established, and which will be under supervision of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Friends of Europe, 2014).

In addition to these major initiatives for the Silk Road construction there were numerous minor initiatives which did not receive as much attention as the Viking railroad, INOGATE, CAREC, SPECA, TAPI, etc. The reason for such a large number of projects lies in the geo-strategic location of the region through which the Silk Road should pass, but also in geopolitical rivalry between the US, Russia, the European Union and China in the field of energy and resources.

The newest China's Silk Road initiative from 2013 undoubtedly causes a lot of attention because of many reasons, but primarily because its initiator state is the first economic and second trading power in the world, the largest holder of foreign exchange reserves and US government bonds and which annually increases

⁴ The US Government identifies about 40 infrastructure projects that it considers important parts of the New Silk Road initiative.

⁵ The 'One Belt, One Road' term refers to the 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and one way to the '21st century Maritime Silk Road'.

expenditure on the military budget by 10-15 percent. Its potentially violent rise as a regional power with a tendency to become a global power, and assertiveness in foreign policy give reason to numerous theories about the 'China threat'. Also, those who are watching Beijing with sympathy and want to believe in its good intentions have doubts that behind this project lay not only the promotion of friendship between peoples and economic benefit for all participants, but also narrow geopolitical calculation. Neither the Chinese refusal to be called a superpower (instead modestly calling itself 'the greatest country-in-development') does not diminish the fears of its neighbors and other countries that the objective of this initiative is putting them into the geopolitical system designed by Beijing and built for Chinese interests. Therefore, no wonder that the Chinese initiative is seen as the Marshall Plan with Chinese characteristics, comparing it with the American plan after the Second World War and making parallels between the then rising power - United States - and the new rising power – PR China, where both countries rely on their economic power for the sake of foreign policy objectives (including the main goal – maintaining their own domestic economy). To lessen this kind of thinking the Chinese leadership, in its rhetoric almost always points out that the new Silk Road should contribute to the economic growth of neighboring countries, but also all others that are located along its way (Tiezzi, 6 November 2014). In order to dampen such thinking the Chinese leadership, in its rhetoric, always points out that the new silk road should add to economic development of countries on its way besides the connection it will bring to the two ends of Eurasia (Western Europe and China). Using its favorite phrase in foreign policy – win-win – it promotes a defensive security strategy combined with the attraction of a large market and represents its rise as a legitimate goal, especially when peace is both a goal and a prerequisite for this rise, the one that will not upset the current balance of power, but moreover will be useful to neighboring countries and the world community. So this project, in essence, becomes the Chinese response to the demands of the international community to engage as a responsible force (*Fūzheren De Daguo*) in solving global issues (Zoellick, 21 September 2005).

This paper consists of five parts. The first part will discuss the ancient Silk Road, its importance and new projects for its revival after the Cold War. As a Chinese New Silk Road Plan causes a lot of reactions of international community, some of them, and Chinese government's reactions will be discussed here. The second part will explain how cooperation between PR China and Europe grew from 1949 and how the fast Chinese development has caused European approach to change from ideological to pragmatic. The third part will explain the aims of the new generation of Chinese leadership with the initiation of the 'One Belt, One Road' project. A consistently high Chinese economic growth has increased its dependency on sea lines of communications for energy imports and commercial goods exports. China's intention to secure energy stability and further economic growth will lead towards the need of diversification of land routes. Thus the third part explains that creation

of land and maritime routes represent the optimal way of Chinese energy economic and security strategies' realization. This part will also cover the technical specifics of this routes and their financing. In the fourth part the author will describe the problems that China faces at the very beginning of the project implementation and suggests solutions to some of them, with special attention given to the last leg of the route that should pass through Europe. The last, fifth part, describes goals and intentions of Chinese authorities, possibilities for other countries that lie along those routes, and the overall progress of the project.

CHINA AND EUROPE - FROM IDEOLOGY TO PRAGMATISM

From the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese foreign policy towards Europe was based on an ideology and Mao Zedong's vision of international politics. During those years, China watched Europe through the 'leaning to one side' strategy (*Yibiandao*) i.e. through its relationship with the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc, and against the US imperialist states. Western Europe was perceived as an instrument in the hands of the United States, while the European integration process, which began in 1951 with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was regarded by Mao Zedong as evidence of the weakening of the American policy of helping integrate Western Europe in order to avoid the economic collapse of the capitalist system that the US had established in postwar Europe. However, the initiation of an ideological dispute with the USSR in the 1960s made China change its strategy from 'leaning to one side' to one where anti-imperialism (*Fan Di*) and anti-revisionism (*Fan Xin*) represent two fronts of the same struggle to which China would have to focus. According to Mao's theory of 'intermediate zones' (*Zhongjian Didai*), which was designed in 1946 and modified in 1963, as a theoretical explanation of the new strategy, Europe was supposed to represent one of the intermediate zones between the imperialist and socialist bloc. The lynchpin of the strategy was that Western Europe should be independent from the US, and together with China and developing countries (*Fazhan Zhong Guojia*) should cooperate against both the Soviet Union and the United States. However, despite the existence of bilateral relations with individual member states of the European Economic Community (EEC), only after the establishment of Sino-US relations in 1972 with the visit of President Richard Nixon and his adviser Henry Kissinger to Beijing, diplomatic relations were established between China and the European Community (EC) in 1975. After the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States, Beijing changed its strategy again, in 1979, to the 'one line' strategy (*Yitiaoxian*) in which Europe represented an important element of resistance against the Soviet Union. It was a remodeling of Mao Zedong's 'theory of the three worlds' (*Sange Shijie*), in which the 'first world' was composed of superpowers – the US and the USSR, the 'second world' was composed of developed countries such

as Japan and the European countries and the ‘third world’ (*Di San Shijie*) of non-developed or developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America, among which were the nonaligned countries such as Yugoslavia, but China as well (Tanjug Press, 1977). According to the new definition the second and the third world, together with the United States, should work together against the Soviet Union.

With Deng Xiaoping’s arrival as the head of China, ideology-based attitudes have changed and became more pragmatic. The relationship with other great powers was becoming balanced due to the necessity of stable foreign relations for the state primarily focused on a much-needed economic development. It was also developing a comprehensive cooperation with the European Union. The most important steps in that effort were signing the Trade agreement in 1978, and then the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation in 1985. However, the Tiananmen Square riots in 1989 led to deterioration in relations between Brussels and Beijing. All 12 EEC countries stopped the contacts at a high political level and suspended soft loans. Sanctions which referred to termination of military cooperation and arms and dual-use high technology exports to China were put into effect. However, most EC member states were too interested in the Chinese market, and the mutual trade, with the exception of arms and dual-use high technology, had been fully restored by 1992 (Babić, 2010, p. 435).

The importance and size of the economies and markets of the European Union and China have pushed them into more intensive cooperation. Therefore, for the first time, in 1995 the European Commission established a strategy for the development of relations with China. After the handover of Hong Kong (1997) and Macao (1999) the last opportunity for a direct conflict disappeared, both in geopolitical and in strategic terms. PR China and the European Union signed a ‘full partnership’ in 2001 which grew into a ‘Comprehensive Strategic Partnership’ in 2003 (Babić, 2010, p. 426). China was aware that a multipolar world can exist only with a united EU and a strong euro, aided with its foreign exchange reserves in its possession during the crisis of 2009, and in addition had stopped the strengthening of the dollar. Thus, at the same time, China had protected its export markets, sourcing of new technology and equipment and one of the largest sources of foreign investment (Babić, 2010, p. 459). It actively supported the Euro-zone through the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the European Financial Stabilization Mechanism. Through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) it gave assistance of some 43 billion dollars. Billions of China’s foreign exchange reserves were invested in European bonds, especially of those countries whose over-indebtedness threatened the survival of the Euro – Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Chinese investments in the Old continent for 2012 amounted to 69.3 billion dollars, and would reach 82.5 billion dollars by July 2013 (The Heritage Foundation, 2013, 2013b). From that amount, 10 billion dollars were allocated in 2012 for crediting of 16 Central and Eastern European countries. Also, China has increased its imports from

Europe, under contracts in Germany, Britain and Spain worth more than 15 billion Euros while trade with the European Union reached 560 billion dollars in 2013, a fourfold increase from 10 years ago. In that way, China is helping the EU to remain 'on its feet', reducing the possibility that itself suffers heavier losses, and at the same time trying to open a space for Chinese investments and influence European officials to loosen restrictions on arms and dual-use high technology exports that are needed for the Chinese armaments program (Diplomatic Courier, 2012). Meanwhile, the China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation was presented at the Summit, with a set objective that by the end of this decade the mutual trade should increase to 1,000 billion dollars (The Globalist, 2014).

ONE BELT, ONE ROAD

In the late 1970s China began to build its strategy of economic modernization with implementation of the 'reform and opening up' policy. The basic principles that led Chinese leadership then were 'It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice' and 'cross the river by feeling the stones'. Adopting the 'attracting investments' strategy, China prepared the ground for an extensive market reforms that followed agriculture decollectivisation, experiment with free markets and the inflow of foreign capital. A key aspect of the opening up policy and economic reform was the creation of special administrative zone, where it was 'experimented' with different models of economy organization and economic system. These 'special economic zones', 'coastal open cities', 'coastal economic free zones' and 'large rivers deltas' were located in the eastern, coastal part of China, or Rimland (Vuković, 2007). The development of the economy and concentration of industry in the coastal cities have produced a geopolitical need that historically dominantly land-oriented Chinese civilization significantly orients itself towards maritime interests and defines its thalassocratic needs. At the same time, the dynamic development and predominantly export-oriented economy, which brought a surplus in trade with almost all other countries in the world, have led the need for access to foreign markets and raw materials to become more pronounced and more necessary.

Although PR China reached the stage of oil self-sufficiency in 1963 (largely thanks to the development of Daqing oilfield in the northeast of the country), since 1993 it has again become a net oil importer whose growth of dependence on energy imports was constantly increasing (in 2012 it became the world's largest energy consumer, and in September 2013 the world's largest oil importer), and that made the geopolitical situation even more complex. Since its most important oil suppliers are Saudi Arabia, Angola, Iran and Russia, the main mode of supply is realized by sea. Bearing in mind that the most important sea route used by China - strategically important Malacca Strait - where the United States have a dominant position, it was necessary to diversify routes for energy imports. This 'bottleneck' in maritime

communications transports six times more oil than Suez Canal and seventeen times more than Panama Canal. Approximately two-thirds of the energy supply of South Korea passes through Malacca Strait, nearly 60 percent of Japanese and Taiwanese needs, while China imports about 80 percent of its crude oil through South China Sea, all of which makes Malacca Strait the vital clamp of two lines of Chinese thalassocratic action - towards the Pacific and Indian Ocean. Except for the energy transport, these communication lines are used for the export of Chinese products, and the need of protection and diversification of energy import routes is augmented with the need of protection of exports as a vital component of economic growth. As the most important objective of China's foreign policy is meeting the needs of the internal market by providing access to vital resources and the provision of overseas sales markets for local products, this strait has a very important place in the Chinese strategic planning, and often draws parallels with the security dilemma and discusses 'Malaya dilemma'. Its significance is perhaps best described in the statement of Beijing University professor Chen Shaofeng: 'Whoever controls the Strait of Malacca, effectively grips China's strategic energy passage, and can threaten China's energy security at any time' (2010, p. 7; Storey, 2006).⁶

In order to at least partially reduce dependence on strategic transport through that strait and protect core national interests, China has launched several projects with the aim of diversification of routes that are used for transportation of products and energy, much needed for its further economic progress. Primary need was to construct an oil and gas pipeline network for energy import. Among the projects that have already been implemented or are still in the planning and construction phase are Skovorodino-Daqing oil pipeline, then Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline, Central Asia-China gas pipeline, Myanmar-China oil and gas pipeline, Pakistan-China oil pipeline, Power of Siberia gas pipeline and Altai gas pipeline.

In addition to achieving energy security by diversifying energy delivery routes, it was necessary to find new ways to deliver Chinese products in order to maintain stable economic growth, but also for import of agricultural products to ensure food security for 1,3 billion Chinese. Therefore, the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, which China's President Xi Jinping proposed in 2013, is the optimal way for the realization of energy and economic strategy enacted by the new CCP leadership at the 3rd plenary session of the 18th CCP Congress that wants to reduce its dependence on maritime routes, especially for transport energy products that should not depend on a single logistic direction (Ze, 2014). Railway represents the optimal way to transport some goods that arrive faster than by sea transport and cheaper than by air (for example, mobile phones are small and lightweight with high prices and are suitable for air traffic, while laptop computers, which are larger and heavier, are suitable for

⁶ Some analysts name this situation as the 'China's Malay dilemma'.

railway transport), while large products with low prices (like TVs) are better suited to transport by sea (Zuokui, 2014).⁷

Although the Chinese leadership states that, when it comes to initiative, it means a joint, balanced and synchronized development of the countries involved in its implementation, it implies an increased cooperation in the reduction of geopolitical problems and security threats (terrorism). Within this framework, emphasis is placed on the ‘three no’s’ – no interference in the internal affairs of other countries, no to creation of spheres of influence and no striving for hegemony (Ze, 2014). Xinjiang Autonomous Region, which covers one-sixth of China’s territory and is located in the center of Eurasia, is one of the main points of instability. Beijing is confronted with violent riots and terrorist attacks in the region and is dealing with those threats with a dual strategy. First, the central government began a crackdown on those who are responsible for terrorist activities, which led to mass arrests and trials. Secondly, realizing that unemployment and poverty are among the main drivers of Uyghur’s dissatisfaction, efforts for promotion of the economic and social development in the framework of ‘Great Western Development’ (Opening to the West) started in 2000 as a way of resolving ethnic tensions in the region (Tiezzi, 19 November 2014; Ze, 2014). However, rather than decline of east-west development differences, as time passed it actually grew and now the unbalanced development of the country represents a serious problem. Therefore, one of the most important goals of the 18th CCP Congress was to ensure balanced overall development of the country and its relatively backward western regions.

Added to this should be the fact that the partial withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan and Iraq has left a vacuum that needs to be filled, and that represents a potential threat to countries in the region. As Islamic radicalism is becoming a serious threat as links of Uighur extremist organization to Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) increasingly show up. Several hundred Chinese citizens have joined ISIL in 2014 which became a major problem for China because it doesn’t want spillover effect from the region to its territory, and it also doesn’t want to be the exporter of such problems (Ekman, 2015, p. 2). In this regard, realizing that any escalation of violence in the region may have spillover effects, China wants to use a new silk road project primarily to strengthen security and economic cooperation with its neighbors.

New proactive Chinese approach to foreign policy, which is reflected in the ‘One Belt, One Road’ initiative, is the best indicator of the strategic guidelines of Chinese geopolitical orientation country and the continuation of ‘going out’ policy, which it implements worldwide for a decade and a half (Diplomatic Courier, 2012). The project

⁷ The big problem is the fact that containers come back to China half-empty even though they are full on route to Europe, which is a waste of resources and capital. It seems that European countries do not have adequate goods for such a large market or price-competitive goods to make an entry.

consists of initiatives for new ‘Silk Road Economic Belt’ promoted on 7 September 2013 in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, and ‘21st century Maritime Silk Road’ initiative promoted on 31 October 2013 in Jakarta, capital of Indonesia (Friends of Europe, 2014). They coincide with the two directions of China’s action in a geopolitical sense. The first is tellurocratic (Western, Eurasian), which is directed along two interrelated vectors - to the western provinces of Xinjiang and Tibet - which is motivated by the need for a stronger influence in the central part of Eurasia, very rich in resources necessary for the further development of China’s economy. ‘Silk Road Economic Belt’, envisaged as a new ‘Eurasian land bridge’, would start in Xi’an in central China before stretching west through Lanzhou (Gansu province), Urumqi (Xinjiang) and Khorgas (Xinjiang), near the border with Kazakhstan. The Silk Road then runs southwest from Central Asia to northern Iran before swinging west through Iraq, Syria and Turkey. From Istanbul, the land-based Silk Road crosses the Bosphorus Strait and heads northwest through Europe, including Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and Germany. Reaching Duisburg in Germany, it swings north to Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and from there the path runs south to Venice in Italy, where it meets up with the Maritime Silk Road. Another course of action is thalassocratic (Pacific and Indian), caused by the increasing needs of a strategic presence in the Eurasian Rimland and providing vital sea lines of communications by which China imports a large part of the raw materials necessary for its economy and exports goods to foreign markets. It is envisaged that the ‘21st century Maritime Silk Road’ will begin in Quanzhou in Fujian province, and also include Guangzhou (Guangdong province), Beihai (Guangxi) and Haikou (Hainan) before heading south to the Malacca Strait. From Kuala Lumpur, road heads to Kolkata in India, then crosses the rest of the Indian Ocean to Nairobi in Kenya. From Nairobi the Maritime Silk Road goes north around the Horn of Africa and moves through the Red Sea into the Mediterranean, with a stop in Athens before meeting with the land-based Silk Road in Venice (Tiezzi, 9 May 2014).

These two initiatives are long-term development vision that aims, as a part of the neighborhood policy, to create stability through economic development and cooperation. At the same time, they fit in the vision on the Chinese dream of President Xi Jinping (Weibin, 2013).⁸ Resources which China allocated for this

⁸ President Xi Jinping has mentioned his vision of the ‘Chinese dream’ at the Third plenary session of the 18th CPC Congress in November 2012, and which has since caused some interest in the West. Later on, and to avoid any speculation on its true meaning, he has clarified that it meant the realization of number of internal reforms set out in the 60 Points Program at the Third session, which include: relaxation of ‘one child’ policy to rejuvenate the nation, reduction of market controls (especially in water supply, energy, transport, telecommunication), reform of land ownership regulation, of personal address registration, opening of the government monopolies, fighting corruption etc. Its revolves about the idea of reducing inequalities in a country which sees its rise through middle class standard of living rise at the expense of the rural areas, while avoiding the ‘middle income trap’ and economic stagnation. Xi Jinping has summarized all of these efforts in four words: cooperation, development, peace and win-win results.

purpose will be placed through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank with initial capitalization of 50 billion dollars, as well as the Silk Road Fund – the new infrastructure and trade finance mechanism – with a capitalization of 40 billion dollars. In the future, it is expected that Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank will attract additional 50 billion dollars from private lenders. State Council will provide about 65 percent to Silk Road Fund, while the rest of that, i.e. 15 percent will come from the National Development Fund and two state banks – 15 percent from the Exim Bank, and 5 percent from the China Development Bank, with the possibility of its extension if necessary (ChinaFile, 2014).⁹ The project ‘One belt, one road’ should be completed, together with the finalization of the strategic diplomatic goals in neighboring countries, in the next 10 to 15 years, which would introduce a completely new geopolitical situation in Central Asia and, at the same time, lead to the fulfillment of the goals set by 18th CCP Congress (Zhiping, 2014).

OBSTACLES ON THE ROAD

While announcing the construction of this road, the Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out the five elements that should be achieved in order to reach full co-operation between the countries participating in the project. First, the initiative rests on improvement of political communication that would aim to harmonize development strategies in the common interest of all participating countries. Secondly, the need of improving transport infrastructure that would facilitate the possibility of further economic development of all stakeholders. Third, the economic belt would be based on the principles of free trade, aiming at the elimination of trade barriers, reducing investment costs and improving the overall quality of the potential market of nearly three billion people. Fourth, the initiative involves the introduction of local currencies as convertible for the use in transactions among members. The fifth element represents an increase of cultural integration at the level of representatives of businesses and companies in order to provide long-term support for further interaction processes (Tiezzi, 2015).

The leading group that will oversee the implementation of the plan has stated in its first statement that the ‘One Belt, One Road’ project represents ‘enormous and systemic task (...) that calls for strong leadership and coordination of domestic and foreign affairs’ (Tiezzi, 2015). At the same time, China is using this project to promote its five key foreign policy principles (respect for sovereignty and integrity, non-aggression, non-interferences, equality and mutual benefits, peaceful coexistence) to make the basis for a more unified Asian approach to international relations that differ from the Western-style meddling in internal affairs, i.e. through human rights as a tool.

⁹ The first CEO of the Silk Road Fund will be Jin Qi, Deputy Governor of the China’s Central Bank.

However, to achieve expected objectives and results from the China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation (that calls for the mutual trade to rise to 1 trillion dollars by 2020) Chinese will first have to implement some structural reforms within their own country in order to adapt the system to the future needs of the project. Also, it is necessary to solve the problem of the infrastructure that connects the western Chinese provinces to the eastern, more developed part, and with the adjacent neighborhoods in Central Asia. Some parts of the Eurasian continent through which the new Silk Road should pass link economic zone in east China with economic zones in Europe, are mostly geopolitically very sensitive. This primarily refers to the Central Asian and Central and Eastern European countries, which were part of the Soviet zone of influence during the Cold War. Moscow still has a strong influence in those areas, therefore it is of great importance for China that Russia is not against the implementation of this project. Unlike the land route of Silk Road whose construction will largely depend on Russia, the success of the implementation of the '21st century Maritime Silk Road' will depend on the two countries that are vital to China's freedom of navigation – the United States and India.

Central Asia represents an area with 60 million inhabitants that is rich in mineral resources, but is still underdeveloped. The wealth of this region in oil and gas, as well as its significant geographic position as ground nexus of European and Asian countries, attracts to the region the United States and Russia and other states that look to exploit these benefits in order to achieve its geopolitical and geo-economic goals. In such circumstances, the Central Asian republics take care of their individual national interests and develop various strategies such as preventing the domination of a single force in this area, seeking to balance between major geopolitical actors with the aim of maximizing benefits. So, they continue to consistently follow a policy of cooperation with every one of them. Also, the key for successful realization of New Silk Road project lies in Beijing's cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries which represent the 'Eastern Gate' for Chinese entry into Europe.

As the official position of the European Union is not yet defined due to the lack of a coherent policy, there is no clear framework for cooperation of CEE countries with China. However, this does not prevent officials from Brussels to look with skepticism and concern at the Mechanism for cooperation between China and the CEE countries (China + 16), seeing it as one in the series of Chinese attempts to enter into the European Union through the back door and divide it to the East and West. Obviously, the double standards exist in such a view, bearing in mind that most of the old member states have for decades developed political and economic cooperation with Beijing (Council of the European Union, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to inject new life into the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), which has worked for many years and can be an important platform for the new Silk Road which will serve as a new communication channel between China and the EU, and between

China and CEE countries. If one takes into account that negotiations on the signing of a single bilateral agreement on investment (Bilateral investment treaty - BIT) have begun at the end of March 2014, and should become a framework instead of the previous 25 separate agreements between individual Member States and China (Croatia and Ireland do not have a BIT with China, while Belgium and Luxembourg have single one), a more synergetic approach between the policies of the European Union and the Chinese initiative on building ‘Silk Road Economic Belt’ could be achieved (European Commission, 2014).

The level of economic development of Eurasian countries is vastly different. Some states are so undeveloped that their backwardness is very obviously a hindrance to the project. Also, there are large differences in terms of their social systems, cultures and religions. Therefore, it calls into question the model of cooperation that could be applied. Various models are being considered, including the ASEAN model, however, the level of economic development of the countries along the belt, the social conditions and their respective cultures require the new model of cooperation. It is necessary to pay attention to a variety of risks, legal environment and tax policies that exist separately from country to country. Although it may require special arrangements in terms of market entry and administrative conditions, primarily the need to strengthen coordination of all policies and development strategies of states along the belt, full integration in that aspect should not be a requirement. For example, the big problem is that Europe, China, Iran and Turkey use standard-gauge railways (in Turkey it's partly double-gauge), while Russia and Central Asian countries use Russian-gauge railways so the trains have to change their bogies several times when traveling from one to the other end of Eurasia (Zhiping, 2014). For all this, poor development of electrified railways further hampers progress in the development of freight transport on those routes.

Unlike some other Chinese funds that have a clear goal to serve the interests of Beijing and base investment decisions solely on the return of investment calculation as high as 20 percent, the Silk Road Fund is a multilateral and does not serve only Chinese interests. This indicates that the approval of projects under the construction of Silk Road will be stricter and will require consensus of all countries. Silk Road managers should develop an overall strategy and then take into account the advantages of each country in which the Fund operates, and exploit them. However, it should not put into focus only multilateral but also bilateral projects to set an example and incentive for other countries to join, including the inter-city associations and commerce chambers forming at the same time as the multilateral system of cooperation and networking.

When we add to this the problems that arise due to the existence of different ideas about strategies, methods and policies in countries through which the Silk Road should pass, one gets the impression that China will have to keep a very prudent and active foreign policy in the future. In order to align the interests of all stakeholders China will

need to engage a large number of experts who will deal with the analysis and the search for the most acceptable solutions for the implementation of the Silk Road plan. Seen from current perspective, a good regional cooperation is a key to the transition from the initial phase of road construction to the next level – the involvement of European countries. International railways that connect Chinese cities with Europe have already been built through Xinjiang. The Chongqing (China)-Xinjiang-Europe (Duisburg, Germany) line was set up in October 2011 and has promoted a number of new logistics models. Wuhan (China)-Xinjiang-Europe (Prague, the Czech Republic) line was set up in October 2012. Chengdu (China)-Xinjiang-Europe Express (Lodz, Poland) was set up in April 2013 and Zhengzhou (China)-Xinjiang-Hamburg (Germany) in July (Zuokui, 2014). Also, logistic corridors on Suzhou-Zabaykalsk-Warsaw (Poland) line started on 30 September 2013 while Yiwu (China)-Madrid (Spain) line that goes through Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany and France, started on 18 November 2014 (The Washington Post, 2014). Within the China+16 Mechanism, Serbia, Hungary and China have signed a multilateral Memorandum of understanding for the Belgrade-Budapest high-speed rail project. This line should be completed by the middle of 2017 and then should be extended on one side via Skopje towards Piraeus port where China has invested billions in port capacities, and on the other side via Vienna towards Hamburg and Rotterdam, from which Chinese goods could be transported further by sea (Blic, 2014).

However, there are several problems with the Piraeus port. First, promoting the Piraeus port as the main hub that connects the Chinese factories with consumers across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, China directly threatens several other ports: Rotterdam, Istanbul, Naples, Trieste, Rijeka and Kopar, which have since recorded a reduced turnover. Second, the whole Chinese concept of ‘21 Century Maritime Silk Road’ which rests on the idea that Piraeus will be its main hub could easily be threatened by the political situation in Greece after Syriza came to power. Even though former Greek Prime-minister Antonis Samaras has been abundantly clear that Greece will give a ‘support and actively participate in building a ‘21 century maritime silk road’, which was submitted by China’, the arrival of a new party Syriza to power stopped the further privatization of the Piraeus port, which was initially supported by the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Zuokui, 2014). The new government, with Alexis Tsipras at the head, pulled the offer to sell the remaining 67 percent of the port, worth 908 million dollars, to which several companies placed their bids: China’s COSCO Holding Co., Danish APM Terminals, American Ports America Inc., Philippine International Container Terminal Services Inc., as well as the Cartesian Capital Group and Utilico Emerging Markets Ltd. Of all of them most likely to become the owner was the Chinese COSCO, which already owns 33 percent of the port (World Maritime News, 2015; The Wall Street Journal, 2015). In addition to the announcement that further privatization of the Piraeus port will not continue, the new government has stated

that there will be no privatization of the port of Thessaloniki either, for which the Chinese have also been interested. In a situation where a ruling coalition includes parties with different views on this issue and without the possibility of achieving consensus, the Minister of shipping and maritime affairs happens to be one who is against further privatization of ports. However, during the negotiations with the Troika the new Greek government is increasingly starting to make concessions in contrast to its early hard line position, so it is quite probable that the position of the Minister of shipping and maritime affairs will be changed. Ministers of finance, development and competition have softer positions on this issue and it seems, according to some official statements, that they will continue with privatization, especially if the economic stakes are higher (China Daily, 31 January 2015). The latest statements by Deputy Prime Minister Yannis Dragasakis, that the privatization of the Piraeus port has not been interrupted and will continue after a short delay, which occurred due to changes in the board of directors of a public institution that owns shares of the harbor, speaks in favor of it. At the same time, he also confirmed that the new government is giving full support to the ‘One belt, one road’ initiative and its passage through not only Greece, but also through other parts of Europe (China Daily, 28 March 2015). The problem that China is facing not just about whether it will become the owner of a complete Piraeus port, but that many possible changes of government and the instability of some countries may cause a delay of silk road construction and whether it will therefore always have to have alternatives in reserve. Will China in the coming period still need to focus its attention on the purchase of another port, such as Kopar or Rijeka if they reach a good deal, or will the issue be finally resolved by purchasing the remaining 67 percent of the Piraeus port COSCO remains to be seen.

Still, the most important question that keeps the whole Silk Road project in the balance is the American reaction to the proposed Chinese initiative. In fact, Washington has still not made any official comments even though the initiative has been proposed at the end of 2013. It’s been a year and a half ago and it seems that the US administration, in the meantime, supplies information and looking in the direction in which the proposed initiative to go. Professor of Political Sciences in Belgrade, Predrag Simić called ‘new Chinese railway and maritime route a Chinese South Stream’, alluding to its importance (Politika, 2014). However, in light of how the Russian project completed because it hadn’t American support we cannot but wonder whether the same thing will happen again with the Chinese New Silk Road initiative. As the US remains the only global power its opinion is that their national interests exist all around the world. In the last ten years US have launched a war against Iraq and Afghanistan, presented their plan for a major Central Asia, a major initiative for the Middle East and the new Silk Road plan in order to achieve economic gains. When it comes to projects of other countries in which Washington had no part in, in most cases negotiations were brought to an end, agreements were signed

and money was invested, and then it was acted in accordance with the US interests. Examples include several African oil-rich states in which China has invested in previous years, and which have experienced political and economic crisis that culminated in armed conflicts (Nigeria, Sudan and Libya; Zakaria, 2009, p. 116). However, when it comes to Eurasia, all US attempts to provide economic alternatives to the Chinese leadership proved to be very weak. Due to endless negotiations the Transpacific Partnership which aims at circumventing Beijing still has not started. The effort to create a counterweight to India from China also remained fruitless because of New Delhi reluctance to make any kind of alignment with Washington that could be construed as containing Beijing. Silk Road plan, which was sponsored by the United States and which is aimed to link Central and South Asia through Afghanistan, does not lead anywhere (Lukin, 2015). Therefore, it seems that the two countries have no other choice but to continue to operate in the future within the symbiosis known as *Chimerica* (Ferguson, 2007).¹⁰ However, certain actions of American leadership, such as the support that US President Barack Obama gave to new Greek government, lead to the conclusion that the American interest in China does not allow entry into Europe, and therefore it is not implemented either Chinese Silk Road building project. Therefore, in order to counteract this development and to protect their own interests, the Chinese should in any business or investments, within the framework of this initiative, enter together with the US or possibly some Western European companies.

CONCLUSION

The 40th anniversary of establishing relations between China and the European Union, its biggest trading partner, will be marked in 2015, so the construction of new Silk Road may represent a new level of relations between the two economically developed regions of Eurasia. Recently presented China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation, which specified targets of increased mutual trade of up to 1,000 billion dollars before the end of the decade, is just one more reason why it is necessary to accelerate the construction of the land and maritime routes (The Globalist, 2014). During 2015 BOAO forum, the China's National Development and Reform Commission published action plan for 'One Belt, One Road' project, in coordination with Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Commerce, and has stated that the project 'is expected to change the world political and economic landscape through development of countries along the routes, most of which are eager for fresh growth'. At the same forum Xi Jinping has stated that the Beijing hopes for

¹⁰ The 'Chimerica' term, forged by Nial Ferguson and Moritz Schularick in late 2006, purported that Chinese savings and American excessive spending lead to the creation of goods in a way that has contributed to the global financial crisis of 2008.

the annual turnaround of trade between China and those countries to surpass 2.5 billion dollars within next 10 years (Tiezzi, 2015). However, due to many questions that need to be addressed, and do not depend only on strategic planning and promotion by China and the actors involved in the project itself, but also on the current international situation and those actors who in its (non)realization see certain interests, it will take more time than initially planned to complete the project. As the security situation in Eurasia is very complex and strategic and resource competition among the powers extremely tense, PR China will not be able to implement this project without cooperation with Russia and the United States, or at least without their non-interference. Political instability that exists in Eurasia generally has a negative impact on both sides of the existing and proposed logistic corridors. With the crisis in Ukraine the rivalry between the US and Russia increases, which then also increases the risk in this area, and the existing Chinese plan to invest in Crimea and Ukrainian logistics center seems uncertain and less than realistic.

When it comes to the project realization itself it will be implemented in stages and most likely with a combination of many models and with a focus on different strategic priorities of the various parties. The reason for this is the large differences that exist between the countries through which it should pass, so China as the initiator of the project is under an obligation to ensure close cooperation and coordination of all participants. Even though it is understood as a primarily infrastructure project since the underdeveloped road, rails and ports represent a bottleneck that inhibits further economic cooperation, 'One Belt, One Road' represents the Chinese vision of 'infrastructure network (transport, energy and communication) that should connect all Asian sub-regions and also the three continents - Asia, Europe and Africa' (Tiezzi, 2015). For the project to be completed in optimal period Beijing is encouraging Chinese banks to lend to the countries that are on the way of 'Silk Road Economic Belt', and along the '21 Century Maritime Silk Road'. It has already promised 1.4 billion dollars or infrastructure in Sri Lanka, over 50 billion dollars for infrastructure and energy in Central Asia (30 billion dollars for Kazakhstan, 15 billion dollars for Uzbekistan, 8 billion dollars for Turkmenistan and 1 billion dollars for Tajikistan), 327 million dollars for general assistance to Afghanistan, over 10 billion dollars for Central and Eastern Europe, etc. This money will be used for the construction of railway lines, highways, conservation of water reservoirs, power facilities. With the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Banks more money will be directed into infrastructure projects. *Chinese Times* estimates that astronomical 21.1 trillion dollars could be spent for the new Silk Road (The Nation, 2014).

As time passes, the implementation of the new (Chinese) Silk Road progresses. In the last six months a number of 'stopovers' have been included – Moscow, Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Jakarta (Indonesia) and Colombo (Sri Lanka). The interest in the Silk Road is high because each state has its own interests in its construction. Recently the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was on a visit to China and has

expressed his country's readiness to be part of the project. Likewise, regional partners (especially smaller ones as the Maldives) want to get Chinese help to build their infrastructure. In less prominent countries China perhaps represents the only source of international aid so these countries are easily interested in this project. Even countries that are in the focus of attention of other great powers (Central Asia, the countries of the Indian Ocean, Eastern Europe) are fighting for the attention of Beijing. In this way they create opportunities for a much larger interest of the great powers than they would under normal circumstances have. For example, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi challenged China's activities in the region so much more attention is paid to Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Therefore, all the countries involved in the project are in a win-win situation in some way (Tiezzi, 6 November 2014) - hosts states since they receive money for national projects under preferential conditions, and China since as the project initiator, shows with its proactive approach that it is becoming a responsible power that is capable of extending economic benefits to others in parallel to the fulfillment of its own national interests. Connecting every individual national development project into the wider regional vision by coordinating their policies, national goals and interests, China strives for much ambitious goal. It includes creation of the free trade areas (bilateral and regional) and a wider financial integration underpinned by the bilateral currency swap agreements. The basic goal, as stated at 2015 BOAO forum is 'promoting orderly and free flow of economic factors, highly efficient allocation of resources and deep integration of markets; encouraging the countries along the Belt and Road to achieve economic policy coordination and carry out broader and more in-depth regional cooperation of higher standards; and jointly creating an open, inclusive and balanced regional economic cooperation architecture that benefits all' (Tiezzi, 2015). However, the most important thing which this road will bring is that the leaders can show, with their support and participation in this project, that they are able to use contextual intelligence as a key skill that could convert resources into successful strategies of smart power used to achieve goals together with others.

REFERENCES

- Babić, B. (2010). Odnosi Kine i EU: geoekonomska osovina u razvoju [Relations between China and the EU: geo-economic axis in development]. *Međunarodni problem.* No. 62 (3), 418-462.
- Blic. (2014). Li: Kina podržava evropski put Srbije [Li: China supports Serbia's European path]. Accessed February 18, 2015 from <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Politika/520194/Li-Kina-podrzava-evropski-put-Srbije>.
- Bozkurt, A. (2012). Turkish minister says reviving Silk Road trade route remains Turkey's goal. *Today's Zaman.* Accessed April 01, 2015 from http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=299947.

- China Daily. (2015). China urges new Greek leaders to honor COSCO Piraeus contract. 31 January 2015, Available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2015-01/31/content_19457301.htm. Accessed 25 February 2015.
- China Daily. (2015). Piraeus port deal still alive, Greek deputy PM says. 28 March 2015, Accessed April 02, 2015 from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-03/28/content_19935378.htm.
- Diplomatic Courier. (2012). China's 'Going Out' Strategy. Accessed February 26, 2015 from <http://www.diplomaticcourier.com/news/regions/brics/952?showall=1>.
- Ekman, A. (2015). China: setting the agenda(s)?: European Union Institute for Security Studies. Available at: http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief_4_China.pdf. Accessed 08 April 2015.
- European Commission. (2014). Joint Statement: Deepening the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for mutual benefit. Available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-89_en.htm. Accessed 31 March 2015.
- Fedorenko, V. (2013). *The new Silk Road initiatives in Central Asia*. Rethink Institute, Washington DC.
- Ferguson, N. (2007). Not two countries, but one: Chimerica. *The Telegraph*, Available at: www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3638174/Not-two-countries-but-one-Chimerica.html, Accessed 26 February 2015.
- Friends of Europe. (2014). Deepening China-EU security cooperation along the 'Silk Road Economic Belt'. Available at: <http://www.friendsofeurope.org/global-europe/deepening-china-eu-security-cooperation-along-silk-road-economic-belt>. Accessed 11 February 2015.
- Gorshkov, T., & Bagaturia, G. (2001). Traceca – Restoration of Silk Route. *Japan Railway & Transport Review* No. 28, Available at: http://jrtr.net/jrtr28/pdf/f50_gor.pdf, Accessed 12 April 2015, p. 51.
- IIP Digital. (2011). Clinton Says India's Leadership Is Important for All Asia. Available at: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/07/20110720141544nehpets0.5934107.html#ixzz3Ww52dJrb>. Accessed 20 March 2015.
- Lewis, M. E. (2009). *China's cosmopolitan empire: The Tang Dynasty (History of Imperial China)*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Lukin, A. (2015). Mackinder Revisited: Will China Establish Eurasian Empire 3.0?. Available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/02/mackinder-revisited-will-china-establish-eurasian-empire-3-0>. Accessed 02 April 2015.
- Politika. (2014). Kineski zid na putu Srbije ka EU?. [Chinese wall on the Serbia's road to EU]. Available at: <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Politika/Kineski-zid-na-putu-Srbije-ka-EU.lt.html>. Accessed 25 February 2015.

- Simić, P. (2003), *Kratka istorija Kine*. [A Short History of China]. Beograd: NEA.
- Shaofeng, C. (2010). China's Self-Extrication from the 'Malacca Dilemma' and Implications, *International Journal of China Studies*. Institute of China Studies. University of Malaya, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Storey, I. (2006). China's Malacca Dilemma. *China Brief*. Vol. 6, Issue 8. Available at: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=31575&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=196&no_cache=1. 26 March 2015.
- TANJUG Press. (1977). Albanija protiv Titove posete Kini. [Albania against Tito's visit to China]. Crveni bilten. AFP. 2 September. f. 78. spec-1.
- The Globalist. (2014). China's Interest in Central and Eastern Europe. Available at: <http://www.theglobalist.com/chinas-interest-in-central-and-eastern-europe>. Accessed 29 March 2015.
- The Heritage Foundation. (2013). China's Steady Global Investment: American Choices. Available at: <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/07/china-s-steady-global-investment-american-choices>. Accessed 27 February 2015.
- The Heritage Foundation. (2013b) China's Global Investment Rises: The U.S. Should Focus on Competition. Available at: <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/01/chinas-global-investment-rises-the-us-should-focus-on-competition>. Accessed 28 February 2015.
- The Nation. (2014). China's New Silk Road. Available at: <http://www.thenation.com/article/193001/chinas-new-silk-road>. Accessed 02 March 2015.
- The Wall Street Journal. (2015). Greece to Proceed With Piraeus Port Privatization. Available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/greece-to-proceed-with-piraeus-port-privatization-1423573999>. Accessed 02 April 2015.
- The Washington Post. (2014). Map. The world's longest train journey now begins in China. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/11/21/map-the-worlds-longest-train-journey-now-begins-in-china>. Accessed 28 March 2015.
- Tiezzi, S. (2014). China's 'New Silk Road' Vision Revealed, *The Diplomat*, 9 May 2014. Available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/chinas-new-silk-road-vision-revealed>. Accessed 28 February 2015.
- Tiezzi, S. (2014). China's Prescription for Troubled Xinjiang: The New Silk Road, *The Diplomat*. 19 November 2014, Available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/11/chinas-prescription-for-troubled-xinjiang-the-new-silk-road>. Accessed 03 March 2015.
- Tiezzi, S. (2014). The New Silk Road: China's Marshall Plan?. *The Diplomat*. 6 November 2014. Available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/11/the-new-silk-road-chinas-marshall-plan>. Accessed 02 April 2015.

- Tiezzi, S. (2015). Where Is China's Silk Road Actually Going?. *The Diplomat*. Available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/where-is-chinas-silk-road-actually-going>. Accessed 08 April 2015.
- Vuković, N. (2007). *Logika imperije, Nikolas Spajkeman i savremena američka geopolitika*. [The Logic of Empire: Nicholas Spykeman and Modern American Geopolitics]. Beograd: Konras.
- Ze, S. (2014). 'One Road and One Belt' and New Thinking With Regard to Concepts and Practice. Chinese Institute of International Studies. Available at: http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2014-11/25/content_7394056.htm, Accessed 18 March 2015.
- Zhiping, P. (2014). Silk Road Economic Belt: A Dynamic New Concept for Geopolitics in Central Asia. China Institute of International Studies. Available at: http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2014-09/18/content_7243440.htm. Accessed 18 March 2015.
- Zoellick, R. B. (2005). Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?. Remarks as prepared for delivery to National Committee on US-China Relations, New York City. Available at: www.state.gov. Accessed 05 February 2015.
- Zuokui, L. (2014). The Role of Central and Eastern Europe in the Building of Silk Road Economic Belt. China Institute of International Studies. Available at: http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2014-09/18/content_7243192.htm. Accessed 10 April 2015.
- Weibin, G. (2013). Chinese Experience of Development. Lecture, Seminar *China's issues*. 16-31 November 2013. Beijing: Chinese Academy of Governance.
- World Maritime News. (2015). Privatization of Piraeus Port Back on Track?. Available at: <http://worldmaritimeweb.com/archives/151798/privatization-of-piraeus-port-back-on-track>. Accessed 02 April 2015.

Sanja AREŽINA

NOVI PUT SVILE – KINESKA VEZA SA EVROPOM

Apstrakt: Put svile predstavlja veoma značajan trgovinski i kulturni komunikacioni pravac koji povezuje dva kraja evroazijskog kontinenta – NR Kinu i Evropu. Usled njegove kompleksnosti i prevelikog ekonomskog značaja nijedna velika sila nikada nije uspjela da ima monopol na kontrolu nad njim. Izgubivši na važnosti sa razvojem evroazijske pomorske trgovine i otkrićem bržih i sigurnijih puteva on ponovo postaje aktuelan nakon kraja Hladnog rata usled logističkih potreba pojedinih zemalja da ga ponovo aktiviraju. Kako većina njih ili nije zaživela ili nije realizovana u punom kapacitetu, najnovija kineska inicijativa „Jedan pojas, jedan put“, koja se sastoji od kopnenog i pomorskog pravca, privlači veliku pažnju i izaziva brojne podeljene reakcije međunarodne zajednice. Razlog za to je činjenica da je njen

inicijator država čiji siloviti uspon u regionalnu silu sa tendencijom da postane globalna sila, kao i asertivnost u spoljnoj politici daju povoda brojnim teorijama o „kineskoj pretnji“, te i oni koji sa simpatijama gledaju na Peking želeći da poveruju u njegove dobre namere, imaju sumnje da se iza ovog projekta ne krije samo promovisanje prijateljstva naroda i ekonomska korist svih učesnika, već i određeni geopolitički proračuni. Međutim, kako bi došlo do njegove realizacije biće potrebno rešiti mnogobrojna pitanja koja ne zavise samo od strateškog planiranja i promocije NR Kine i aktera uključenih u sam projekat, već i od trenutne međunarodne situacije i onih aktera koji u njegovoj (ne)realizaciji vide određene interese. Kako je bezbednosna situacija u Evroaziji veoma složena, a strateško i resursno takmičenje među silama izuzetno napeto, NR Kina ovaj projekat neće moći da realizuje bez saradnje sa Rusijom, SAD i Evropskom unijom, ili bar bez njihovog nemešanja.

Ključne reči: NR Kina, Evropa, put svile, Evroazija, „Jedan pojas, jedan put“, kineska pretnja, velike sile.

Received: 15. 03. 2015.

Revised: 13. 05. 2015.

Accepted: 16. 06. 2015.