

SECTION-3:
ESSAY

Asian Journal of International Affairs (AJIA)

(A Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Journal and Indexed in NepJOL)

ISSN : 2822-1958

Volume 1, Special Issue, December 2021

<https://ksl.edu.np/subcenter/asian-journal-of-international-affairs>

Published by

Kathmandu School of Law

Suryabinayak-4, Dadhikot, Bhaktapur, Bagmati, Nepal

Email: ajia.journal@gmail.com, ajia@ksl.edu.np URL: <https://ksl.edu.np/>

Silicon Valley to Silk Road: Chimerica to Chiorld

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DOI: Available at NepJOL

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Manuscript Received: 18 August 2021

Accepted: 7 January 2022

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Md Abdur Razzak

Piter and Katrina are two Ph.D. fellows in Shanghai Jiao Tong University from America and Russia respectively. They disagree several times on different issues except Chinese rapid socio-economic development and its contribution to global investment. Here, development is the way to survive the future rather than improve the lifestyle that was achieved in the past. The world itself is the great witness of world wars (1st & 2nd), first development decade in the 1950s, second development decades in 1960s, Oil crisis in 1973 and 1979, and the end of the cold war in 1989. Diplomatically, America tried to control the world through the techno-driven geopolitical model. The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) highlighted a new dominating route to America and technically confirmed. American technological economic sectors backed by Silicon Valley fueled its economy and boomed new technology sector such as Microsoft, Apple, etc.

The USA dreamed of capturing the global market through Marshall McLuhan's concept of "Globalization". They described it as the worldwide movement toward economic, financial, trade, and communication integration aiming to launch a broader market. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other agencies fostered America's concept and the World Trade Organization (WTO), established in 1995. On the other hand, economically, China rose gently. Later on, it joined WTO (11 December 2001) and became a global economic giant. As a result, scholars predicted the global leader China and America jointly as a new phenomena "**CHIMERICA**" (China and America together). Fortunately, the global economy is reshaping and restructuring in every moment by the philosophy of cooperation and people-to-people connection. Looking back, several revolutions tried to lead the world such as religion, industry, politics, and technology. China is the first-ever country that innovated and practically exemplified to lead the world together by economic development such as One Belt – One Road (OBOR) that link continent, people, trade, road, and development policy. It is also known as Modern Silk Road, 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Silk Road Economic Belt, Information Silk Road, and Digital Silk Road. It became a fruitful issue while Chinese leaders Xi and Li Keqiang paid an important visit in Central and Southeast Asia in 2013. We know, the ancient Silk Road had no boundaries. For more than 15 centuries businessmen and travelers moved freely and used it among Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. China, initiated to rebuild as a global economic platform focuses on connectivity and cooperation among over 60 countries in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, where 2/3rd of Global population and 1/3rd of Global GDP directly involved. Moreover, the Silk Road is the Global symbol of peaceful development and mutual benefits of connected countries widely narrate as it will strengthen cultural communication, develop economic cooperation, build a community of common interest with mutual political trust, economic integration, and cultural inclusiveness. China has already established Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and New Silk Road Fund (SRF) to visible and sustain Silk Road initiatives.

Many countries have appreciated and joined in AIIB. It will also internationalize the OBOR and Chinese currency RMB. So, the impact of China specifically, the Silk Road on the global economy is vital and core to continue decade for a decade and that will be the most significant economic event to next generations. It is called “**CHIORLD**” (China-led World alternatively, an era of Chinese Globalization).

The OBOR is a win-win initiative that would benefit anyone who wants to join even India. It is firstly, a broad framework of connectivity and cooperation; secondly, facilities connectivity; thirdly, unimpeded trade; fourthly, business integration; fifthly, policy coordination; and finally, people to people connections. Hu Yi (2015), First Secretary, the People’s Republic of China in Denmark précised the beneficial links of OBOR in five main points such as (1) policy, (2) road, (3) trade, (4) currency, and (5) people. It will also be a milestone and iconic development powerhouse or hub to the existing regional or other multi-organizations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asia- Europe Meeting (ASEM), Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), China Arab-States Cooperation Forum (CASCF), China-Gulf Cooperation Council Strategic Dialogue (CGCCSD), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Some critics are interested in narrating OBOR in the light of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Surprisingly, OBOR is more than TPP even beyond of all networks.

In 1993, we should remember Samuel P. Huntington’s book “The Clash of Civilizations”. He directly argued that, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Islam would become the biggest challenge to western domination of the world. He warned about multi-cultural practices. The world failed to remember Huntington’s advice. As a result, the world has seen 9/11, incidents of Afghanistan, Iraq, and recently in Syria. The Silk Road is the true story of peaceful trade and a history of religious and harmonious cultural exchange that navigates multi-cultural practices. Knowing many cultures is a momentum to learn the balancing of adaptive and positive behavior that enables the global citizen to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday lives. It is the macro-level subsidy of OBOR.

China is not out of the global community and it also knows very well about peace promotion. Only economic development with a blended taste of politics and cultures is not enough to unite the globe. Recent media reports predict, without promoting peace, current conflict syndrome may be spread within the Asian territory in various forms and fashion and OBOR may be under threat. The Silk Road emphasizes cultural practice and exchange to handle this said situation. That is the reason for a multi-nation connected platform of Silk Road. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also suggested cultural harmony. The message from its headquarter in Paris is thanked by billions that “we can best counter extremism through inter-cultural and inter-religion dialogue”.

There are some challenges to the Silk Road and the OBOR such as Ownership, Agreement, Harmonization, Practice of Mutual benefits, and Exclusive Packages. These are measurable and addressable but critiques from non-friends are considerable issues. Asia is divided into many groups. This is the pick time to arrange a short global survey on OBOR. Connected nations can do it immediately. The outcomes will save OBOR from the critique of non-friends. Beneficial results in OBOR with the latest examples such as Pakistan, Kazakhstan, and Indonesia should be focused in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa that will be an attempt to quantify the Silk Road impact on the global economy. The new financial institutions like AIIB should maintain the global standard that attests to the financial clarity of Silk Road operation. China has already shown its welfare promise by building ports in Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Srilanka, Chittagong in Bangladesh, and Sittwe in Myanmar. OBOR should reserve a seat for India. If India join, it would be cheerful for china to show the CHIORLD phenomena quickly. A multi-national advocacy platform is now demanded to be created. They will work on youth generations worldwide even in India for announcing Silk-Road and the global benefits. The Indian trustworthy friends like Bhutan and Nepal can take charge to mobilize Indian youths.

Finally, OBOR is the legendary and iconic infrastructure of connectivity and the process of bringing the world together where every member nation can contribute to global peace and harmony that are needed in present perspectives. It is the memorable symbol of Multi-Nations Networking Nucleus (MNN) and the dynamic linkage of economy and cultures. We need to feel free for sustaining and fostering the OBOR by remembering and spreading its multiple “I’s/I⁶” (Immense Infrastructure, Inclusive Improvement, and International Interaction).