

# ***Study on Choice of Pivot Country of China in the Building of “One Belt One Road”***

Yang Chen

International Business School

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics  
Kunming, China

Hongkun Li\*

Accounting School

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics  
Kunming, China  
1936710330@qq.com

Yongsong Liu

International Business School

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics  
Kunming, China

Lisheng Yang

International Business School

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics  
Kunming, China

Yunlong Duan

International Business School

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics  
Kunming, China

**Abstract—**The proposal and implementation of “one belt one road” initiative is of great significance to China. On the one hand, it expands the period of strategic opportunity, plans the new pattern of development. On the other hand, it optimizes the development of internal and external environment, and innovates the manners of government management. Meanwhile, “one belt one road” strategy also plays a considerable role in solving the problems and breaking the deadlocks in current new normal of economy. This paper focuses on considering the dual security challenge about choice of Pivot Country in building of “one belt one road”. combined with China’s reality, to avoid security risks, political and religious constraints can not be resolved, through effective co-ordination of domestic and foreign, which can promote sustainable development of China and the world.

**Keywords**—“one belt one road”; Pivot Country; China’s choice

## I. INTRODUCTION

“one belt one road”(B&R), born in the country’s economic and political environment of the strategic opportunities and risks coexist, is referred as the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” construction strategy [1]. From the two dimensions of time and space to study, “Silk Road Economic Belt”, “21st Century Maritime Silk Road” and B&R are presenting the concept has emerged [2]. Under B&R proposed by background, the “Silk Road Economic Belt” initiative has its historical and realistic background. That “Silk Road Economic Belt” is the need of the times, in new technology increasing today aimed at linking ancient maritime “Silk Road” with onshore “Silk Road” and linking the countries along yesterday, today and tomorrow. The combination of the various mechanisms in Southeast Asia, South Asia and inclusive development, which accelerate the pace of mutually beneficial cooperation in China, Europe and

Asia countries [3] and enhance trade and economic cooperation level to promote China as their fulcrum national industrial transformation and upgrading. On “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”strategic position, after full view of scholars Quan, etc. showed that inherited history, the Ocean, building maritime power as the goal—the expansion of China’s open to the Indian Ocean and Asia, Europe and Africa. From a global perspective, they think that economic diplomacy and cultural exchanges is a kind of means to build economic ties in the vast Asia, Europe and Africa region [4]. The economic ties are more closely linked to the world’s cultural cooperation, which enhances countries along the mutual reliance. So we need ensure maritime trade routes safe to expand our Geo-political and Geo-economic interests of the development space. It also illustrates the great power game around critical waters are the main factors of affecting China’s safety at sea. And China should look at long-term demand, enhance the strategic cognition, expand the management and control capability along the sea channel.

However, China’s B&R strategy also face diplomatic risks. Xue pointed that we need solve three problems to achieve success in this strategy. The first is the Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy fundamentally is not focused on containment, but rather reflects the defensive side of a hedging strategy. The second is how to get B&R along the country’s acceptance and cooperation. The last is how to avoid economic and political risks in China [5]. These risks will threaten China’s security, that is, the traditional security and non-traditional security. And the B&R initiative proposed by China is not security oriented, though it confronts a number of security challenges [6]. Tang, etc. evaluated the risks and challenges of facing B&R construction of politics, security, economic, moral and legal aspects [7]. These scholars proposed strategic planning to deal with risks and challenges

\* Corresponding author

of the construction from aspects such as concept, mechanism and policy [8]. According to the above, the paper focuses on discussing the choice of pivot country in building of B&R. Nevertheless, thinking about security is the base of correct selection of strategic pivot country.

Therefore, we should consider the dual security challenge, which has very important practical significance in steadily promoting the building of strategic pivot countries. It not only can strengthen the international capacity cooperation of key industries, infrastructure construction, but also it can promote tourism, cultural exchange. Last but not least, through avoiding security risks, political and religious constraints, B&R initiative can help the realization of China's industrial transformation and upgrading.

## II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHOOSING THE STRATEGIC FULCRUM OF “ONE BELT ONE ROAD”

### A. *The concept of the Strategic Fulcrum of B&R*

Generally, the Strategic Fulcrum is the key point to make and guide the overall and high-level plan. The Strategic Fulcrum of B&R refers to the countries which have regional influence on China and support the strategy of China, when China carries out the strategic development in the world or some regions. These countries not only have the cooperation of trade and economy between China, but also can survive the shocks from traditional and non-traditional threats to security, have a highly consensus on politics and policies, solve the international stress and develop the strategic cooperation relations for a long time with China.

### B. *The significance of choosing the Strategic Fulcrum of B&R*

B&R means China has achieved the strategic transitions on open-door to the outside world. It is important for China and the world. Building the corridor of Asia-Europe economic cooperation for opening-door to the West, combined with output of domestic capital and transfer of superior capacity remained, support an plat for Chinese enterprises to do investment and industrial cooperation, to build the global marketing network and to improve the competitive advantage of international cooperation and economic status. For the world, it promotes the development of economy of the countries besides, by building infrastructure and cooperating on trade with the neighboring countries such as Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and so on. In addition, the close reliable political relations can make sure the cooperation get the support. So whenever one is in trouble, the other can do a favor. With seeing China as a link, promoting the communication between neighboring countries and European countries, and enhancing mutual trust play an important part on promoting the world peaceful development, mutual benefit and win-win situation.

## III. THE SECURITY ISSUES ABOUT CHOOSING THE PIVOT COUNTRIES OF “B&R”

B&R widely revolves three continents: Asia, Europe and Africa. The belt across Asian-European continent can be

distinguished from near to far as core area, expansion area and radiation area. And the road through South-east Asia, South Asia, he Persian Gulf, The Red Cove, the west coast of the Indian Ocean can be divided into three parts: the Southeast Asia route, the South Asia and Persian Gulf route, and the Red Cove and west coast of Indian Ocean route. As operated in a wide way, the B&R is faced with traditional safety issues and non-traditional safety issues when it facilitates the regional cooperation. Traditional security, as the core of maintenance of the country's sovereign states, which is the military threat facing the country and threat the military factors of international security, and it involves political, military, diplomatic and other fields. Non-traditional security is the other security issues that except for military, political and diplomatic conflict of the survival and development of a sovereign state constitute a major threat. It contains information security, ecological security, terrorism, environmental pollution, ethnic and religious conflicts and high risk of infection diseases, etc.

### A. *Traditional safety issues*

Historically, Vienna System, Versailles System or Yalta System, their ups and downs showed on the Asian-European continent. At present, Asian-European continent has taken up 75% of the world population, 60% of world fortunes and 75% of world fossil energy. And two of the three economic centers (North America, the European Union and the East Asia) are located here, that is, the European Union and the East Asia. In addition, it has China, Russia, Europe and Japan, the four great powers and other great regional countries, such as India, Indonesia, Turkey and Iran. The collide of various cultures, respective geopolitical benefits and various religious system leads to a particularly complicated and fierce situation.

America carried out its strategies plan in China's neighboring countries according to Speaksman's Marginal political theory and strengthened its military power in the Asian-Pacific region and used the maritime territory dispute between China and neighboring countries to suppress China by supporting the relative neighboring countries and carrying out the offshore strategy. Russia always yoked Middle Asia into its power after the cold war. Although Vladimir Putin showed support to the silk road economic belt plan when he met the China's leader in the CICA Summit in May, 2014, Russia kept high alert of China, which caused bad effect on all-around cooperation between China and Middle Asia countries. In October, 2013, Abe Shinzo pointed that, “From Tokyo, through Istanbul to London, Japan would be the start of new Eurasian silk road and the keeper of geopolitics.” And Japan actively developed the diplomacy with Pacific Ocean nations and Indian Ocean nations, strengthen the military force and built a line to suppress China.

Historically, there are various disputes about the territory in the B&R area and how to solve them causes a direct effect on whether the strategy can be performed safely. We are faced with the following disputes: the maritime territory dispute between China and some southeast countries, the India-Pakistan tensions about the Kashmir after the Second World War, the border dispute between China and India and the territory dispute between Israel and Palestine.

As a result of domestic social class conflict, the religious problems and other complicated factors, there is political unrest in some countries. The weakness of politics and lack of a sense of common belonging leads to a discontinuity on the important domestic and foreign policies. For example, Kyrgyzstan claimed the active involvement in building the silk road economic belt, on the other hand, it claimed its withdrawal from the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway construction, which put the project into a difficult position. Along with the development of the B&R strategy, China has to enhance the regional investment, the foreign trade and human resources flow, but the political unrest in these countries will make it more difficult to choose pivot countries. At the same time, it will increase the cost and decrease the efficiency of cooperation to influence China's overseas benefits.

#### B. Non-traditional safety issues

After experiencing the global financial crisis in 2008, China highlights political and economic status in the world, and shrinks rapidly the gap in the total US economy. The sustainable growth of Chinese military spending and the rapid development of military technology promotes China's military power, which make the US military in Asia advantage is also being challenged. So the United States after following the "Asia-Pacific rebalancing" strategy build a "Indo-pacific rebalancing" strategy, and the South Asian countries, especially India, has also been incorporated to balance China's national strategy among.

Simultaneously, the new silk road plan was put forward by the Europe Union in 2009 and some strategies were planned, such as, building the Nabucco natural gas line, enhancing the communication of energy, trade, human resource and information between Middle Asia and neighboring countries, and investing actively to increase its influences among the Middle Asia area when keeping its own energy supplies. The interface of Europe Union can balance the influence of America and Russia in Middle Asia area but it can also complicate the situation and barricade the cooperation between China and B&R pivot countries.

As a result of the terrorist activities without borders and the influence of the international interaction, the implementation of B&R will also be subject to different levels of threat. Terrorist forces, ethnic separatist forces, religious extremist forces will increasingly become the largest non-traditional security threats in regional cooperation strategy. The change in the international anti-terrorism situation and regional safety caused the human flow, the blend of ideology, the decentralization of activities and organization in various regional extremist groups and strengthen its bond with international terrorist organization.

90% of the worldwide trade and 65% of the petroleum are completed through ocean transportation. And over half of the containers are transported across the Indian Ocean and 70% of the petroleum products are transported from Middle East to Pacific area via the Indian Ocean. So the safety risk on the seaway plays a significant role in the development of B&R. Moreover, the pressure of regional economic integration and

the interface of transnational criminals, those non-traditional factors will also cause effect on the choice of pivot countries.

In addition, some countries along the route not only worry the construction of large projects has side effects on the ecological environment, but also they believe that massive investment will change their traditional culture and their own way of life. Due to China in these problems is still at groping stage, along the countries to establish the B&R strategic cooperation with China have still many doubts. Despite these difficult conditions to solve these non-traditional safety issues, people believe that it is the key factors to realize the sustainable development in China, and establish cooperative diplomacy.

### IV. THE RESEARCH ABOUT HOW TO CHOOSE PIVOT COUNTRIES IN BUILDING THE B&R

China has achieved greatly after managing diplomacy so many years but got few reliable strategic partners. Due to the complicated international situation, China is more and more isolated. To facilitate stable neighboring situation and reciprocal partnership with neighboring countries, to secure safe ocean transportation and to keep sustainable development, the B&R strategy was put forward. Therefore, China can choose some pivot countries to develop cooperation first, then drive other countries through their influences and finally achieve the B&R strategy.

#### A. Practical origin: America's choices about pivot countries

America's history, it ever used pivot countries strategy to develop the relationship with those countries. Those countries were classified. The first ones, those owning military significance, for example, Philippines and Japan, which were the main allies in Asia Pacific area after the Second World War. America used the two countries to suppress the spread of communism in East Asia and the two countries became the barricade of China's rise. The second ones, those owning economic significance, for example, England, which was used to carry out the Marshall Plan after the Second World War and promoted America's long-term high-speed period of expansion during European reconstruction. The third ones, those owning cultural and ideological significance, for example, India, whose democracy offered a good example for developing countries and radiated the Indian Ocean area and surrounded China from the southwest.

About how to choose the pivot countries, America's start is different from China's. America owns more significance on international society and can choose pivot countries more freely, but China has to think more factors when it makes the choices and make greater efforts. But learning from the America's experience can provide significant reference when China makes choices based on its actual condition.

#### B. Preconditions for choosing pivot countries

How to choose the pivot countries should be related to China's actual conditions. At first, some countries with geostrategic importance, good politics and support and boost to the B&R strategy should be taken into consideration, for example, Kazakhstan in the Middle Asia, which is the gateway

of the economic belt and the bridge of Asia and Europe. Secondly, those countries should be taken into consideration, which have no significant benefit conflict with China, can solve the disputes to achieve reciprocal agreement and keep promises. For example, Sri Lanka, which is called “the pearl on the maritime silk road in the 21 century”. And its two big ports, Hambantota and Colombo, were the achievement of cooperation between China and Sri Lanka. Thirdly, China should share the common benefits with the pivot countries in the B&R strategy, so they will support each other and reach a mutual benefit. For example, the cooperation between China and Pakistan revolved around Gwadar port and China-pakistan economic corridor. Fourthly, China has enough resources and power to influence the pivot countries’ foreign policies and will not cause great pressure on each other. Fifthly, the process to develop pivot countries should be performed with a step-by-step approach and the cooperation can be slowly deepened in the process of interaction. For example, ICC held in Yunnan offered a wider stage for China and India becoming strategic partners in B&R strategy. Last but not least, the pivot countries can cause regional influence and show the leadership, besides, the benefit supplies, the long-term plan, the honesty, overall consideration of government and citizens, etc., these factors should also be thought about.

In the above premise, whether get the support and cooperation of along the countries is directly related to the success of B&R strategy. As a result, China can carry out early cooperation through the selection of strategic pivot countries, using regional influence to point with surface, which finally realizes B&R.

### C. Realize the way for choosing pivot countries

At present, China is actively developing the pivot countries for B&R strategy and has signed contract with Egypt, Korea, Belarus and other countries to facilitate the bilateral cooperation on infrastructure construction, trade, energy, finance, aviation, culture, media, technology, etc. On the one hand, China and Russia should strengthen the cooperation of within the framework in the United Nations, Group 20, the BRICS, the CICA summit, and promote the international political and economic order towards fairer and more reasonable direction. On the other hand, China and the EU countries should look at Chin-EU relations from the strategic perspective of the development. Combined with the two major powers to provide development opportunities for each other, to build the prosperity of the world development. At the same time, in order to further improve the level of cooperation of ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, both sides should establish new idea of cooperative security, sustainable security, and common security. The new idea aims at through dialogue and consultation to solve the existing differences of territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.

Finally, for the effective implementation of B&R, all localities and departments need to jointly development and common progress at home. First, along the provinces have clear the function orientation, industrial layout, resource integration. Second, we need to strengthen infrastructure construction, top-level design, and improve the quality of service. Third, China should strengthen the central, the eastern

and western regional cooperation, narrow the trade differences in the western region to promote peaceful development.

In conclusion, the building of B&R is moving along in high gear, which ensures China’s importance in the world politics and reflects China’s distribution about strategic benefits and its strategic influence limitation.

### V. SUMMARY

During the construction of the fulcrum national selection, B&R shows that China faces the reality of the situation. On the one hand, since from the 21 century, B&R strategic partnership is the “new normal” of Chinese govern relations with other countries. In order to face the world, B&R is a breakthrough in holding friendly relations with along the fulcrum countries, expanding our national markets and achieving win-win situation. While the development of technological innovation, the use of research and innovation platform, and the strategic layout of B&R to achieve industrial upgrading and enhance the international reputation of our country. On the other hand, the fulcrum of the national selection, China not only promote the development of countries along the pivot construction, but also establish friendly relations with the European countries, construct B&R Eurasian countries fulcrum compatible conducive to sustainable development. Finally, the world’s political space has a high degree of heterogeneity in individual regions or convergence at the center of gravity around the edge of the plate, it determines the order and direction of the evolution of international relations area, and plays geopolitical fulcrum role in regional or global geopolitics.

Therefore, strategic fulcrum choice in B&R firstly overcame geopolitical risks, choose a higher geopolitical strategy value, its situation can have a significant impact on China’s economic or security interests. China has also enough strategic tool for the exercise of influence countries to ensure strategic security interests. We should build a interact in controlling the relationship between our country and the fulcrum countries. According to the constructionists point of view, in the interaction, the state (actors) just try to get what they want, but also try to keep hope to generate self and otherness the concept. Only in the interaction of practice be China and B&R fulcrum countries possible for nations to find obstacles in the relationship governance, and make timely and effective solution. And China should actively work with countries and countries along the fulcrum Construction of “common security” concept and mode, and lay a solid foundation for deepening China and countries along the fulcrum as a strategic economic and trade cooperation.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work was supported by National Natural Science Foundation Project(71262016); National Natural Science Foundation Project (71663058), and National Natural Science Foundation Project (71663062).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Y.L. Tang, Y. Gong, and J. Han, "Implementation of One Belt One Road Initiative Facing Risk Challenges and Governance and Research Review," *Contemporary World & Socialism*, 2015, pp. 141-143.
- [2] H.Q. Liu, "The security challenges of ONE BELT, ONE ROAD and the choice of China," *Pacific Journal*, vol. 2, 2015, pp. 72-79.
- [3] Mohammad and El-Sayed, "Building a New Silk Road: China and the Middle East in the 21st Century," Trans. Sun Degang. World Affairs Press, 2014.
- [4] Y. Quan, J. Wang, and W.T. Liu, "The strategic concept and construction strategy of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road," *The International Trade*, 2014, pp. 6-8.
- [5] L. Xue, "Diplomatic Risks Facing China's Belt and Road Strategy," *International Economic Review*, 2015, pp. 69-72.
- [6] M.H. Zhao, "The Security Issues Concerning the One Belt One Road Initiative," *International Forum*, vol. 3, 2016, pp. 1-3.
- [7] Alexander Wendt, "Social theory of international politics," *Trans. Qin Yaqing*, Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2008, pp. 10-37.
- [8] Y.A. Dawood, "Reflections on power, politics, and partisan gerrymandering," *The Good Society*, vol. 13, 2004, pp. 31-35.
- [9] Y.X. Bai, and S.J. Wang, "Deep Background and Geopolitical Strategy of Silk-road Economic Belt," *China Reform*, 2014, pp. 67-68.
- [10] J. Xu, C. Gao, W. Li, and X.F. Hu, "To build China's peripheral security strategic pivot countries," *World Affairs*, vol. 15, 2014, pp. 14-23.
- [11] X.H. Mao, "The value and contribution of One Belt One Road in the course of global economic governance," *People's Tribune*, 2015, pp. 2-2.
- [12] M.H. He, and J.B. Zhang, "One Belt One Road strategy facing the obstacles and countermeasures," *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 2015.