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**Xingdong Ma**

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**The significance of the “One Belt and  
One Road” Policy on China's  
Geopolitical and Economic Strategy**

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**Author: Xingdong Ma**

**Supervisor: Mgr. Bohumil Doboř**

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## **Bibliographic note**

## **Abstract**

From the perspective of China, the OBOR policy does not only represents China's new efforts to integrate deeply into the world, but also can drive economic development of the countries along the route. It is also China's response to the expectations of the international community, demonstrating China's efforts to change the imbalance of world economic development and narrow the development gap between countries. What's more, through the implementation of OBOR policy, China can expand its influence in these countries along the OBOR policy and international scope. In some extent, it can also alleviate China's geopolitical and economic stress. At the same time, countries such as India and some other countries have doubts about the true intentions of China's implementation of the OBOR policy, causing the OBOR policy and even China to face many obstacles in the implementation of OBOR policy. This thesis attempts to analyze the significance of the OBOR policy to China's geopolitical and economic strategy and study the impact of the OBOR policy on China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

## **Keywords**

OBOR Policy, Geopolitical and Economic, Strategy, Significance

## **Declaration of Authorship**

1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.
2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.
3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.

**Prague 23 May 2019**

**Xingdong Ma**

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**Institute of Political Studies**  
**Master thesis proposal**



## Master Thesis Proposal

Institute of International Economics and Political  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Charles University in Prague

Date: 06.06.2018

<b>Author:</b>	<b>Xingdong Ma</b>	<b>Supervisor:</b>	<b>Mgr. Bohumil Doboš</b>
E-mail:	maxingdong1995@163.com	E-mail:	bohumil.dobos@gmail.com
Phone:	608264379	Phone:	
Specialisation:	IEPS	Defense Planned:	June 2019

### Proposed Topic:

The significance of the "One Belt and One Road" Policy on China's Geopolitical and Economic Strategy

### Registered in SIS:

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### Topic characteristics / Research Question(s):

My thesis will focus on the following general research question: How does the "One Belt and One Road" (OBOR) policy affect China's geopolitical and economic strategy? What's the significance and of the OBOR policy to expand China's influence in the countries along the OBOR? What difficulties will it encounter in this process?

The basic point of view of geopolitics theory is that the formation and development of global or regional political patterns are influenced or even constrained by geographical conditions. The Eurasian continent has a geographical advantage. In order to rise peacefully, China must first seek the support of Asian and European countries. I will discuss the historical and current background of the OBOR policy and start with the difficulties of the rise and development of great powers and elaborate on the multiple practical significance of the policy. To ensure the smooth progress of the OBOR policy, China needs to follow the logic of geopolitical and economic strategy adjustment. At the specific operational level, the following key issues must be addressed: defining China's national positioning and core interests in the current international system; assessing opportunities and challenges faced by the OBOR policy; Strengthen regional economic cooperation under the OBOR policy framework; properly handle the relationship between comprehensive promotion and key breakthroughs in the OBOR policy; build an international system that can support China's long-term sustainable development.

### Working hypotheses:

1. The OBOR policy will strengthen China's cooperation with countries along the OBOR, it can help build an international system that can support China's long-term sustainable development.
2. The OBOR policy can strengthen China's international discourse, achieving China's long-term plan for seeking a multi-polarization pattern.

### Methodology:

I will use the literature review method to extensively read and understand the literature in the field of the OBOR in order to comprehensively analyze the relevant academic views and summarize the historical background and practical significance of the OBOR Policy. In addition, this study will assess the current opportunities and challenges faced by the

OBOR policy based on the political, economic, and cultural exchanges between China and countries along the OBOR policy. Finally, by using the inductive analysis method, the paper summarizes the implementation status of the OBOR policy and its impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategies by reference to relevant information and experience.

**Outline:**

1. Introduction
2. The historical background of "One Belt and One Road" policy
3. The strategic direction of the "One Belt and One Road" Policy
4. The actual significance of the Implementation of the "One Belt and One Road" policy
5. Conclusions
6. References / Bibliography

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# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.The basic knowledge and background of the OBOR policy.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 <i>Definition of OBOR policy.....</i>	7
1.2 <i>Historical background of the OBOR policy.....</i>	7
<b>2. Methodology.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 <i>Comparative study.....</i>	10
2.2 <i>Source collection.....</i>	10
2.3 <i>Case study.....</i>	11
<b>3.Obstacles faced by OBOR Policy .....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 <i>South and Southeast Asian.....</i>	14
3.2 <i>Challenges in central Asia and Russia .....</i>	16
3.3 <i>The African countries and the Middle East Countries .....</i>	18
3.4 <i>Challenges in Europe.....</i>	19
<b>4. Empirical Analysis .....</b>	<b>20</b>
4.1 <i>Case of India.....</i>	21
4.1.1 <i>The structural conflict between China and India .....</i>	21
4.1.2 <i>India's guard against China have determined its opposition to the OBOR policy .....</i>	22
4.1.3 <i>India's dependence on China determines its hope to cooperate with China in certain areas.....</i>	23
4.2 <i>Case of Russia.....</i>	23
4.2.1 <i>The changing course of Russia's attitude towards the OBOR policy .....</i>	23
4.2.2 <i>Difficulties that cannot be ignored .....</i>	26
4.3 <i>Case of Saudi Arabia .....</i>	27
4.3.1 <i>China's status quo in promoting the construction of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia .....</i>	27
4.3.2 <i>The current cooperation characteristics of China and Saudi Arabia .....</i>	29
4.3.3 <i>China's Challenge in Promoting the Construction of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia .....</i>	30
4.4 <i>Case of Hungary.....</i>	32
4.4.1 <i>The basic factors for Hungary's active integration into the OBOR policy .....</i>	32
4.4.2 <i>Hungary's role in the OBOR policy.....</i>	33
4.4.3 <i>Potential impact factors on the OBOR policy in Hungary .....</i>	35
4.5 <i>Difficulties faced in the selected case countries .....</i>	36
<b>5. Suggested tactics to the Obstacles faced by OBOR policy.....</b>	<b>36</b>
5.1 <i>Defining China's national positioning and core interests in today's international system .....</i>	37
5.2 <i>Alleviating other countries' doubts about the OBOR policy.....</i>	37
5.3 <i>Strengthening regional economic cooperation under the framework of the OBOR policy .....</i>	38
5.4 <i>Pay attention to the relationship between comprehensive promotion and key breakthroughs in the construction of the OBOR policy.....</i>	39
5.5 <i>Strengthening China's new international relations with countries along the OBOR policy .....</i>	40
5.6 <i>Building an international system that supports China's long-term sustainable development .....</i>	42
<b>6.Conclusion .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>47</b>

## **Introduction**

Since the beginning of the new century, China's development achievements have attracted worldwide attention. China, with a population of more than 1.3 billion, is now the world's second-largest economy and has a vast market. China is also the country with the strongest purchasing power in the world. But China's political voice is not as strong as its economic strength. For example, China's voice in many international organizations such as the World Bank does not match its own strength (Yiping, 2016, pp. 314-321). At the same time, China, as a major exporter in the world, is a staunch supporter of economic globalization, because mastering economic leverage can be beneficial for enhancing China's political voice (Aoyama R, 2016, pp. 3-22). However, trade protectionism has risen in recent years, so China is trying to look for new ways to strengthen economic ties with other countries.

In September 2013, President Xi Jinping visited Kazakhstan and formally proposed the concept of the 'Silk Road' and 'Economic Belt' in his speech at Nazarbayev University. In the same year, during his visit to Indonesia, Xi Jinping announced the launch of the 'New Maritime Silk Road', which corresponded to the 'Silk Road Economic Belt'. They jointly made up the OBOR policy, with the main purpose of relying on the existing dual multilateral mechanism between China and the countries along the route and the existing and effective regional cooperation platform, to actively develop economic partnerships with countries along the route to jointly create a community of interests, a community of destiny (Yuan, Xintao, 2014, pp.5-9). The policy emphasizes the combination of economic measures and infrastructure engineering to promote the flow of goods, capital and culture by building transportation facilities such as railways, pipelines, and ports connecting China and countries along the route. Its coverage includes Asia, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, covering more than 60 countries and regions, and about 70 % of the world's population is included. As a policy that covers this wide area must jump out of a simple province or country concept and be analyzed from the perspective of geopolitics and geo-economics (Zeng Xianghong, 2015, pp. 12-23).

There is no doubt that the implementation process of OBOR policy is full of challenges and opportunities at the same time. If the OBOR policy can be successfully implemented, it will not only provide more opportunities for China's

economic growth and defuse domestic overcapacity, but also profoundly improve China's geopolitical status. Conversely, if the OBOR policy would be resisted by most countries along the OBOR policy route, it will create more severe surroundings for China and exert a very disastrous impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

According to the article released by Xinhua news agency in 2017 (Li Hua, 2017), we can conclude the main reasons for why China always sticks to implementing the OBOR policy are as follows: First, from the aspect of the world economic trend, at present, the overall recovery of the world economy is slow and tortuous, and global economic growth lacks motivation. A new round of technology and industrial revolution is still gestating. At the current stage, there is no substantial breakthrough in innovation in key technologies and business models, and it is difficult to form a strong new economic growth point in the short term. Both economic globalization and counter-globalization exist simultaneously. In order to promote the economic recovery of the country, many countries tend to take care of themselves, implement trade protectionism, and increase international trade friction. The world economy has entered a period of mediocre growth, and the OBOR policy can drive a new round of productivity revolution in Europe, Asia and Africa and promote the development of the world economy. Second, regarding the international mechanism, there is a serious vacuum in global governance. The OBOR policy is a feasible solution for China to improve global governance. Through the OBOR policy, China has promoted the banner of new globalization, even promoted the globalization version 2.0 in the world, and became the promoter of free trade and the defender of international rules. As the world's second largest economy, the largest industrial exporter, and the largest trading partner of more than 120 countries, China has injected new impetus into the promotion of new globalization and global governance through the OBOR policy. Third, at the stance of domestic development, China's economy has entered a new stage. The OBOR policy can help China cross the "middle-income trap" and share China's advantageous capacity and infrastructure construction capabilities with countries that are integrating into the policy. Driving economic growth along the OBOR policy will not only help the implementation of supply-side reforms, but also

improve the efficiency, transformation and upgrading of China's economy, and contribute to the rebalancing of the economy of these countries that along the OBOR policy route.

However, the degree of understanding and participation of the countries along the OBOR policy route for the OBOR policy is also very different and triggered complex feelings in various countries, including direct doubts about China's true intentions and concerns about the consequences of the implementation of the OBOR policy. 'If the successful implementation of the OBOR policy has any positive or negative impact on the country, what impact will it have on the international political order and economic order? If the policy implementation fails, what impact and result will it have?' These problems have aroused the concern of many countries. For example, EU countries have different opinions on the OBOR policy. Generally, it can be divided into two remarkable parts: Eastern Europe countries and Western Europe countries. Some Western European countries believe that China is pursuing economic aggression through the OBOR policy and doubt the sustainability of the OBOR policy (Tong Yan, 2017, pp. 30-31). However, by now, some European countries have close cooperation with China in the field of economy and politics. For example, Eastern European countries and China are trying to cooperate under the '16 + 1' framework, believing that the OBOR policy is a good opportunity and path that can help the region to boost economic development. In Southeast Asia, countries also have different views on the OBOR policy. For example, Malaysia began to actively integrate into the OBOR policy. However, after the domestic general election in 2018, the new prime minister gradually took control of the OBOR policy and stopped some large cooperation projects. But recently the prime minister expressed interest in the OBOR policy and decided to attend 'The Belt and Road Forum' for International Cooperation of 2019. However, in this area another country Cambodia is optimistic about the OBOR policy from beginning to end. The attitude of these countries undoubtedly shows the complexity of the implementation of the OBOR policy (Foo Shery, 2015). There is no doubt that the original intention of China to implement the OBOR policy is to strive to have a positive impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategy. However, due to the different attitudes adopted by various countries in the

implementation process, some are actively integrating into it, some are trying to be involved in it, and some have doubts and resist it, which has produced a more complicated impact on the OBOR policy. If China can handle these problems encountered in the enforcement process properly, this will be an excellent opportunity for China to enhance its status in international political arena. If these obstacles in front of OBOR policy are failed to cope with, it will probably bring many negative effects to China's geopolitical and economic strategy and even agitate the nationalist sentiment in some countries along the OBOR policy route and arise devastating backlash.

In order to enable the OBOR policy to continue and develop, China has established a financial framework that matches the policy. China also established a specialized financial institution, such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), New Development Banks (NDB), China Development Bank and the Temporary Silk Road Fund (SRF), which together provide adequate financial support for the implementation of the OBOR policy (Hutzler Charles, 2015). Among these financial institutions led by China, the AIIB and the SRF are the most eye-catching, however, the AIIB has caused suspicions about the geopolitical purposes of China. Although China announced that the main purpose of the establishment of the AIIB is to make up for Asia's shortcomings in infrastructure construction and to strengthen funding for infrastructure construction in Asian countries. However, the United States, Western Europe countries and some other countries do not believe what China said and they regard the AIIB as a competitor of the IMF (Swaine Michael D, 2015). And they deeply believe the target these financial entities originated by China is to achieve China's political goals, help China undermine the existing international order and try to establish a new international order that will be favorable for China. In fact, there are indeed many contradictions between China and the international financial institutions, such as the IMF. For example, the IMF has been asking China to implement more in-depth economic reforms and reduce corporate debt as soon as possible. However, compared to these international organizations, the Chinese government has a deeper understanding of domestic issues. According to China's current situation, the scenario of China is not eager to implement fierce reform measures, but tends to

solve problems slowly. At the same time, China is dissatisfied with the many mechanisms of the IMF (Jin Xinye, 2016, pp. 272-280). For instance, the IMF has not given them the corresponding status with the economic development of emerging powers such as China. Therefore, China has been calling on the IMF to reform and require it to create another more useful system that adopting a variety of strong currencies as it's foundation to operate, rather than rely on the current system founded in the primacy of the U.S. dollar and prevent things like the 2008 global financial crisis from reappearing. For a long time, China has come to be an outspoken critic of the IMB. Although the proposals that came up with by China has been welcomed by many countries, the IMB has still not taken effective substantive measures because of US obstruction. For the above reasons, countries around the world inevitably question the true intention of China to set up an AIIB. They are not sure whether China's main purpose is to simply develop the economy or to use the economy as a mean to build a new world order centered on Chinese consciousness.

According to the following questions: First, how does the OBOR policy affect China's geopolitical and economic strategy? Second, what's the significance of the OBOR policy to expand China's influence in the countries along the OBOR? Third, What difficulties will it encounter in this process? This thesis will concentrate on the three questions and provide a clear and complete structural framework for the analysis of the OBOR policy. This thesis will explore the policy from a historical perspective, and strive to find what benefits and harm that China can get from the implementation of OBOR policy and analyse what is the significance of the policy to China from the perspective of geopolitics, and draw some conclusions on the purpose and scope and implication and some other aspects. This thesis is divided into five parts. The first part is to introduce the definition, concept and historical background related to the OBOR policy; the second part is to describe the methodology used in the research process; the third part is to introduce the implementation status of the OBOR policy and the difficulties encountered; the fourth part is to select some specific countries as examples for analysis; the fifth part is to describe the future direction of the OBOR policy and the last chapter is to draw conclusions based on the analysis.

# **1.The basic knowledge and background of the OBOR policy**

## ***1.1 Definition of OBOR policy***

The OBOR policy can be defined as a kind of development strategy and pathway, it can provide a general development framework for these countries along this route. One basic focus of OBOR policy is infrastructure, and its main goal is through massive investment in infrastructure construction to promote economic development and cooperation along this route. This policy implies and stresses that China will play a very important role in international affair in the future and create a good cooperation pattern to achieve “win-win” consequence (Xin Hua, 2017).

Actually, the OBOR policy is divided into two parts: Silk Road Economic Belt (One Belt) and Maritime Silk Road (One Road). The common goal for them is to strengthen the cooperation among China and other countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. According to the conception of Silk Road Economic Belt, we can know that it can divided into three different routes. The north one goes through Central Asia, Russia to Europe. The middle one is starting from China, passing Central Asia to West Asia. The south one mainly connects China and South Asia and Southeast Asia, and even extending to India Ocean. The vast economic development potential of the three routes is huge. The Maritime Road is complementary plan, it starts from the Chinese coastal port through the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean, extending to Europe; It is also from the Chinese coastal port through the South China Sea to the South Pacific (Zhao Bingqiang, 2017).

## ***1.2 Historical background of the OBOR policy***

The OBOR policy is to borrow the historical symbols of the ancient Silk Road. The ancient Silk Road generally refers to the Silk Road on the land. However, in a broad sense, it is divided into the Silk Road on the Land and the Silk Road on the Sea. Moreover, the ancient Silk Road is not just a trade route with a single starting point and an end, but a trade route system composed of numerous routes (Tao Jian, 2015, pp. 23-25). In addition to the person Western Han Dynasty named Zhang Qian opened the official route to the central Asian, western Asian and the

middle East area named "Northwest Silk Road". There are also the other three routes: The Maritime Silk road starting from coastal cities such as Guangzhou, Quanzhou, Hangzhou, Yangzhou to Southeast Asian Countries, the Arabian Sea, and even far from the east coast of Africa; The "Prairie Silk Road", which goes north to the Mongolian Plateau and then travels west to enter Central Asia; The rugged "Southwest Silk Road" was from Xi'an to India. The reason for the ever-changing Silk Road is that with the dynasty's replacement and the evolution of economic policies, various trade routes have gradually declined, expanded and merged (Ren Hua, 2018). The ancient Silk Road is not just a trade route, but has complex attributes, including economic, geographical, historical and cultural factors. Thousands of envoys, soldiers, merchants, and monks travel, fight, trade, and continue pilgrimage through the Silk Road. The ancient Silk Road is probably the most meaningful, famous and longest trade route in human history (Felföldi, Szabolcs, 2009).

Although the ancient Silk Road contained a very wide range of countries, although it passed through different cultural backgrounds, but it still formed a huge and cohesive system. In previous time, it is clear that silk is the most important traded goods between ancient China and other countries on the ancient Silk Road, and even played a critical role of the currency to some extent (Li Bin, 2015, pp. 50-54). Of course, there are also existing other Chinese products on the Silk Road, such as tea, porcelain, spices and precious jade. Ancient China use these precious commodities to exchange for gold, garlic and other goods. As an important communication channel, it has undoubtedly established a similar system in the ocean. That is to say, the Maritime Silk Road is an inseparable part of the mainland network. Nowadays, China is striving to use the ancient Silk Road as a concept to strengthen the infrastructure through countries along the OBOR policy route, especially to strengthen the construction of transportation systems to facilitate the circulation of capital, goods and culture of various countries which are trying to integrate into the OBOR policy or have been involved into the OBOR policy.<sup>1</sup> That means China is now trying to build a comprehensive system resembling to ancient Silk Road, but it faces a large number of difficulties, such as infrastructure construction on the mainland route.

There is no doubt that the ancient Silk Road is a succinct chapter in the history of human culture. It is the aorta connecting China and other countries in the world, greatly promoting the circulation of culture, thought, capital, art and goods, promoting the flow of information between different countries and fostering the foundation for the spirit of innovation, for instance, through ancient Silk Road, compass, the technique of producing paper and some other advanced skills in that time were spread to other countries (Niu Yapeng, 2017, pp. 34-46). Nowadays, China's government often refers to these functions of the ancient Silk Road when implementing the OBOR policy, but the current version is an optimized version. They emphasize that linking countries' transportation routes is beneficial to every country and even individuals, because it will not only accelerate the circulation of products, but also expedite the flow of information and communication between people, which will help to learn new knowledge and culture and create an innovative atmosphere.

The reasons for the gradual decline of the Silk Road in the Middle Ages are as follows: First, the collapse of the Yuan Dynasty caused a power vacuum, which in turn affected the stability of Central Asia. Second, the Ming Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty implemented the sea ban policy and supported agriculture and suppressed Business development. Third, in the 14th century, the spread of several infectious diseases caused many businessmen to abandon these adventures, and the rise of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 14th century also cut off trade between China and the Mediterranean countries. Various historical reasons indicate that the ancient Silk Road is destined to be disintegrated (Bai Du, 2013).

## **2. Methodology**

The OBOR policy is considered an important symbol of China's foreign policy. There are two main arguments for the OBOR policy. Some scholars and countries believe that the OBOR policy is a great opportunity to expand relations with China in the field of politics and economy. Other countries and scholars believe that the joint construction of the OBOR policy is a one-way cooperation road centered on China. Most importantly, with the deepening of the OBOR policy, its geopolitical and economic risks as well as negative cognition have also attracted

more and more attention. Some scholars have claimed that the OBOR policy is not a new thing, but a fairly successful public relations project (Jiang Yunan, 2015, pp. 20-28). How does the OBOR policy affect China's geopolitical and economic strategy? What's the significance and of the OBOR policy to expand China's influence in the countries along the OBOR? What difficulties will it encounter in this process?

This chapter identifies the methodology of the OBOR policy research, and on this basis, analyzes the research questions of this thesis. The methodology selected in this thesis includes qualitative and quantitative. The combination of research methodology allows me to study the research questions in more detail.

## ***2.1 Comparative study***

This thesis adopts the comparative research method in the writing process. Firstly, I divide the countries along the OBOR policy into four macro regions, and summarize the difficulties faced by the OBOR policy in these regions based on politics, economics, infrastructure construction and other factors. Secondly, I choose India, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Hungary as the research objects, respectively summarize the implementation status of the OBOR policy in these countries and compare the attitudes of different countries towards it. At the same time, I also compare the attitudes of these countries towards the OBOR policy at the beginning with the current attitude towards the OBOR policy.

## ***2.2 Source collection***

This thesis mainly explores the impact of the policy on China's geopolitical and economic strategies by studying the implementation status of the OBOR policy in countries along the route. In addition, this thesis will talk about the difficulties faced by the OBOR policy and the implementation status in some countries along the OBOR policy. To this end, this study will be based on case study and comparative study method, combined with the evaluation of literature and media platforms, to conduct research. In addition, the study will use charts and maps to better explain the arguments in this paper when necessary.

Therefore, the thesis will be based primarily on secondary sources such as academic papers, articles in professional journals, books and existing data, as well

as other archive texts and information. The study will also use articles published in the newspaper, as mass media such as The New York Times, Bloomberg or China Daily have discussed the development of the new Silk Road and its impact. In addition, it will use official documents, such as policy documents and official statements from the Chinese government, to enrich the project from different sources.

First, Ngai, Joe, Kevin Sneader and Cecilia Ma Zecha believe that the OBOR policy, widely seen as an ambitious initiative. It focuses primarily on national interests but promises long-term benefits for all participants. China recognizes that in a globalized world, only such multilateral solutions can be applied to cooperation and cultural interaction between distant regions. On the other hand, we must consider the geopolitical significance of the maritime silk road, especially for southeast Asia, as it is an important part of China's geopolitical strategy and diplomacy. In the region, the greater strategic goal is to work closely with Asian countries to strengthen China's influence in the political and economic fields of the region to counter the hegemony of the United States (Ngai Joe Kevin Sneader Cecilia Ma Zecha, 2016).

Third, Hou Limin thinks that for China, the “OBOR” policy is essentially a geo-economic cooperation project, but it must be acknowledged that geo-economics and geopolitics cannot be completely separated. Because some countries have deep-rooted strategic doubts about China, they have focused on geopolitical factors when considering the OBOR policy and treated the OBOR policy with a zero-sum thinking model of geopolitical competition. This is the biggest problem faced by the OBOR policy. If China can handle this problem well, it will greatly enhance China's international status. If this problem cannot be handled correctly, it will have a great impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategy (Hou Limin, 2017, pp. 85-89).

### **2.3 Case study**

Because the OBOR policy involves many countries, I cannot analyze the implementation status and problems of the OBOR policy in all countries in this thesis. In order to explore the difficulties encountered in the promotion process of

OBOR policy promotion and the attitudes of these countries towards it, I can only use the case study method and select India, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Hungary as typical representatives among these countries for in-depth study.

As one of China's most staunch partners in central and eastern Europe, Hungary responded positively to the OBOR policy at the very beginning of its release. It has carried out many projects of cooperation with China under the OBOR policy; Under the pressure of economic development, Russia is in urgent need of cooperation with China. Meanwhile, it fears that China's rapid expansion of influence through OBOR policy will bring negative influence on itself. Therefore, Russia represents the countries of central Asia and Russia district and limited participation in the OBOR policy; As a neighbor of China, India has always regarded China as a strong competitor, so it has always rejected the OBOR policy. What 's more, India also represents south and southeast Asia; Saudi Arabia, as a representative of the West Asia and African countries, has a friendly relationship with China and has taken relative positive actions in response to the OBOR policy (Li xiao Li Junjiu, 2015, pp. 34-48). According to the above statement, we can know that the countries we selected are representative and covers a wide range.

In addition, the basis of selection of the four countries are the theories of Enrico Cau and Huang Yiping. According to the viewpoint of Enrico Cau (Enrico Cau, 2017, pp. 39-47), the area along the OBOR policy can be divided into four parts: South and Southeast Asian; Central Asia and Russia; The African countries and the Middle East Countries; EU members which are involved in the OBOR policy. India is located in South and Southeast Asian, Russia belongs to the part of Central Asia and Russia, Saudi Arabia is located int Middle East region, Hungary belongs to the part of EU members which are involved in the OBOR policy. In addition, from the perspective of Huang Yiping (Huang Yiping, 2016, pp. 314-321), according to the attitudes of different countries to the OBOR policy, these countries can be roughly divided into three categories: active participation countries, limited participation countries, and apparent opposition countries. Hungry is the country that actively integrates in to OBOR policy, Russia and Saudi Arabia are limited participation countries, India is apparent opposition country. In this paper, I will combine these academic ideas as a reference basis and taking the macro

geographical region and the attitude of different countries towards OBOR policy as the basic conditions for selecting countries. In addition, I also consider factors such as national influence, friendship with China, and economic development. Finally, I selected Hungary, Russia, India and Saudi Arabia as the research objects.

### **3.Obstacles faced by OBOR Policy**

According to the “One Belt, One Road” network, as of March 27, 2019, China has signed cooperation documents related to the OBOR policy with 125 countries and regions and 29 international organizations. In particular, during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Italy, the OBOR policy cooperation document signed with the Italian government has played a positive role in the implementation of the OBOR policy.

In terms of infrastructure, the construction of interconnection and intercommunication under the framework of the six major economic corridors has been accelerated, and significant progress has been made in the construction of some key projects. In the direction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the China-Pakistan cross-border bus that from Lahore to Kashgar in 36 hours was opened (Khalil Ahmad Bilal, 2017); The construction of the main bridge of the Mekong River Bridge was completed in the direction of the China-Indochina Economic Corridor; In the direction of China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, the main project of the Chinese side of the first cross-border railway bridge between China and Russia was completed, and the second-line project of the Sino-Russian crude oil pipeline was officially put into operation (Zhongping, 2016). What’s more, China's overseas port layout has achieved full coverage on six continents.

In terms of trade development, China's trade with countries along the line continued to grow at a relatively fast pace in 2018, especially with the growth of import trade. According to data released by the Ministry of Commerce, in the first three quarters of 2018, the two-way trade volume of China's commodity imports and export along the OBOR policy reached 0.9 trillion US dollars. It accounted for 27.3% of China's total import and export volume, an increase of 0.8 percentage points over the same period in 2017 (Zou Jialing, 2018, pp. 15-20).

In terms of investment, China's investment in countries along the OBOR policy has experienced a significant growth this year after several consecutive years of decline. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce of China, from January to September 2018, Chinese enterprises invested 10.87 billion dollars in non-financial loans in 55 countries along the OBOR policy, an increase of 12.3% year-on-year, accounting for 13.1% of the total amount, mainly to Singapore, Laos, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia, Southeast Asia remains the main destination for Chinese foreign investment (Ma Hui, 2018, pp. 4-7).

Although the OBOR policy has achieved good results, it still faces many difficulties in the future. For example, the leaders of the Indonesian opposition party advocated "opposing the OBOR policy" in the general election also got strong support from ordinary people; Russia's strong influence on Central Asian countries; European countries have questioned the true intentions of the OBOR policy and the debt trap problem, which have created enormous challenges to the implementation of the OBOR policy (Chu Yin, 2018, pp. 43-46).

Although China is positively optimistic about the OBOR policy, but the promotion of the OBOR policy will not be smooth and even encounter plenty of huge challenges. According to the viewpoint of Enrico Cau, the area along the OBOR policy can be divided into four parts:

- (1) South and Southeast Asian
- (2) Central Asia and Russia
- (3) The African countries and the Middle East Countries
- (4) EU members which are involved in the OBOR policy

I will refer to Enrico Cau's viewpoint of regional division to study the difficulties faced by the OBOR policy.

### ***3.1 South and Southeast Asian***

The OBOR policy faces many challenges in this region, including engineering technology, political culture and other factors. First, since infrastructure construction is a key project of the OBOR policy and an important material condition to promote this policy, all parties attach great importance to it.

The OBOR policy aims to establish a sound transportation system in this region. Besides ports, railways are the most important transportation tool. Because compared with other modes of transportation, railways are of low cost, large transportation volume and fast transportation speed, therefore, railways are important tools to accelerate the circulation of capital, information and goods (Saran S, 2015). In addition, the combination of ports and railways is a common mode of transportation. Due to their high flexibility, huge capacity, low energy consumption and high security and reliability, integrated tools are widely regarded as the key factors for trade integration in the ASEAN region because they can process goods in batches. An efficient and integrated region-wide railway network can be a driver of domestic demand, employment and economic growth. Therefore, the most difficult problem to solve at present is that countries in the region adopt different rail standards, which brings great technical problems in the construction of smooth transportation system (Wenmu, 2015). As we know, there are four standards of width of railway in the world, China adopts the common one, the width of railway is 1435 mm, but most of countries in southeast Asia adopt relative narrow width of railway is 1000 mm, however, in India, Pakistan and some other countries, they adopt more broad railway width is 1676 mm. Because of the different standards adopted by these different countries, it's a very tough problem for the future of OBOR policy in this region ( (Liu Yanjie, 2017, pp. 12-18).

In terms of geopolitics, because the transportation system is initiated by China, and China has undertaken major financial and technical problems in the construction process, China will be responsible most for the management of the transportation system. However, this railway system will cross the territory of many sovereign countries, which will cause dissatisfaction and uneasiness in other countries. They are worried that China will gain excessive political and economic influence and thus threaten their national security (Liu Yongjiang, 2015, pp. 30-35). And because the Malacca Strait are controlled and governed by Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia for a long time, what's more the United States also deploy soldiers in this region, it is very difficult for China to find a way to break through the Malacca Strait. As the leading force in the region, the United States has a large number of allies including India, Philippine, Singapore and son on in the region,

and the United States may encourage them to fight against China. Moreover, due to historical reasons and ideological reasons, the countries in the region have a strong alertness against China (Bi Haidong, 2016). For example, Malaysia expressed interest in the OBOR policy, but also expressed concerns about the lack of a dispute resolution mechanism for it. Malaysia is concerned that if there is a dispute, China may use its military and economic strength to dominate the small country. Moreover, this sentiment is also transmitted to other countries (Srinivasa Prasad, 2017).

Another very important problem is that in one country in this region, the different political leaders and parties hold different attitudes toward China government and OBOR policy which will have different effects on it. For example, in Malaysia, the former prime minister Mohammad Najib Abdul Razak holds a friendly and positive attitude toward OBOR policy, during his presidential period, China and Malaysia attained a variety of project collaboration under the framework of OBOR policy (Zhu Li, 2016, pp. 20-28). But when the incumbent prime minister Perdana Menteri came in to power, he breached some big agreements signed before. In addition, some countries in this region have territory dispute with China, and it will affect the cooperation among OBOR policy, such as Vietnam. What's more, some little countries' foreign policies in this region are affected by big countries nearby. For example, the triangular relationship between China, Sri Lanka and India, China's investment enthusiasm in Sri Lanka is high, but India's attitude is rather vague, which has a significant impact on Sri Lanka's attitude. Indeed, up to now, India has not participated in the OBOR policy, it is still unclear what specific measures it will take, and even whether to launch a concrete boycott of the OBOR policy, similar to the previous one that India initiated the establishment of an alliance against China, including the United States, Australia, and Japan (Wang Zhao, 2016, pp. 68-74).

### ***3.2 Challenges in central Asia and Russia***

In terms of infrastructure, the region faces similar problems to the Pacific Ocean area and Southeast Asian region, such as different track standards and concerns about territorial sovereignty. Geopolitics is more of a problem than

infrastructure. China's relations with Russia, China's relations with the five central Asian countries and other comprehensive issues including extremism, terrorism and separatism. Historically, central Asia has been Russia's sphere of influence (Yang Chuang, 2015). After the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States and the European Union strengthened their ties with countries in the region through economic assistance and security cooperation, and their influence in the region also increased, but Russia is still the dominant country in this region. However, the region is full of political and security issues. As the region sandwiched between major powers, many central Asian countries have adopted hedging strategies, but they also should take full account of the political and military influence of neighboring Russia when they decide to take some actions (Sheng Rui, 2017, pp. 19-26). As we have seen before, though China-Russia relations have improved a lot over time, more and more cooperation is carried out between the two countries, but that is not because they actively to cooperate with each other rather than there is more and more evidence that can prove the cooperation between the two countries are facing common threats, therefore, this kind of cooperation is fragile. At present, many scholars believe that the OBOR policy in some extent can improve the influence and reputation of China in this region which will generate a negative impact on Russia. What's more, the members of Eurasian Economic Union that dominated by Russia are also the important partner of OBOR policy, it will generate contradiction between the two organizations which are led by Russia and China respectively (Li Xiujiao, 2016). However, according to the difference of the two organizations, several potential challenges can be generated, including:

1. Central Asian countries have a relatively large dependence on Russia's economy and protection. Russia's attitude has a great impact on Central Asian countries and can affect their attitude towards the OBOR policy.

2. Central Asian countries realize that if they are too close to China and Russia, they will affect the EU and US economic assistance in the region.

3. Due to the different levels of economic development and territorial disputes in Central Asian countries, the implementation of the OBOR policy is difficult to satisfy the countries in the region.

4. Although the external environment is pushing China and Russia to achieve their geopolitical and economic goals, analysts and authorities believe that the relationship between the two may deteriorate. If this happens, it will cause significant harm to the implementation of the OBOR policy (Feng Guoming, 2017, pp. 33-37).

5. EEU is a regional initiative led by Russia, and OBOR policy includes many partners but is exclusively led by China. The incompatibility between these two initiatives may be the source of differences between Russia and China, especially as Russia continues to be vigilant about the potential risks of China's invasion within its sphere of influence.

### ***3.3 The African countries and the Middle East Countries***

China has a long-term cooperative relationship with Africa and has a broad and deep political foundation in Africa. The key project of the OBOR policy is infrastructure development, which is very popular with Africa, which lacks a comprehensive railway transportation network can connect all the countries in African continent together (Xue Li, 2017). However, in this case, the implementation of the OBOR policy is not without challenges. While welcoming Chinese investment, many countries on the African continent are worried that the Chinese model will increase the level of sovereign debt to China and have a negative impact on its sovereignty, because such events may allow China to use its economic power to guide public policies in these countries and expand China's political influence in these countries, this trend is becoming more and more obvious in the Asia-Pacific region and other places where China's influence is growing (Zou Zhiqiang, 2015).

From the perspective of most western scholars, because of fearing that China's economic influence will turn into political influence, some African countries are considering and choosing between the Chinese model and the Western model (Chen Mo, 2017, pp. 11-13). As for the western model, African countries can hardly get affluent funds, because the surveillance is strict. What's more, they also should observe the rules that enacted by western countries, but some rules are prejudiced and intervene internal affair of these countries, it's not acceptable for

some countries (Hadrian Richard Javad, 2017). In one word, because there are many strict constraints, the opportunities and quantities for obtaining funds are relatively rare. However, China has relatively few investment restrictions and can provide a large amount of funds. Due to the imperfect legal system in African countries and loose surveillance of China government, it's easier to lead to the abuse of funds, which has damaged China's image in the hearts of African people. In addition to these features, other challenges in Africa have something in common with other regions discussed so far, including security risks, investor return on investment (ROI), and uncertainty in corruption (Han Mei, 2017).

### **3.4 Challenge in Europe**

At first, most European countries hold suspicious even opposite attitude toward the OBOR policy, but after a period of wait and see, some European countries began to be attracted by it and understand the benefits and potential opportunities of the AIIB and the OBOR policy to the EU countries. Afterward, many European countries, including several staunch U.S. and NATO Allies such as Italy, Britain, Germany, France and others, joined the AIIB and expressed positive views on OBOR policy (Fu Zhuo, 2016). In particular, Central and eastern European countries strongly supported the OBOR policy and took active measures to align it. On January 7, 2017, the first "silk road train" from China arrived at Baggin station in London, marking the official extension of OBOR policy to the European continent. The countries that have responded positively to the OBOR policy are not only members of the EU, but also members of NATO, for example, Hungary is a typical country. For this reason, the participation of these countries in AIIB has provoked the United States, which has raised doubts about whether the EU and the United States are on the same page. The scope and relevance of OBOR have also aroused some vigilance within the EU, which is concerned that the increasingly close relations between central and eastern European countries and China under the framework of OBOR policy and "16+1" will have a negative impact on the EU, widen member states' differences on the existing problems of the EU, thereby weakening its political and economic foundation and affecting its core values (Zhou Hong, 2017, pp. 33-41). For example,

Germany, as a major country within the EU, has been playing a leading role in promoting integration between central and eastern European countries and the EU, and China's OBOR policy may generate negative impact on the plan. Moreover, China's advances in high technology are eroding the interests of countries such as Germany, which could provoke a backlash. The main reason for this caution is that, despite China's emphasis on the economic aspects of the initiative, it is clear that the OBOR policy has moved beyond pure economics and is likely to have geopolitical spillovers (Liu Zuokui, 2018).

In current stage, there are still a large number of people doubt that whether the OBOR policy may become a win-win agreement between China and the EU if it is properly managed by the EU. Undoubtedly the successful implementation can significantly reduce time and transportation costs compared to before. More traditional shipping of the EU can enjoy simplified and safe access to Central Asia and land access to the Asia Pacific region, a unique opportunity for the EU to expand its high-end manufacture export portfolio, manufacturing, and get better access to privileged, cheap, terrestrial energy routes (Meng Yuzhu, 2017).

## **4. Empirical Analysis**

At present, China and other countries have different viewpoints for the OBOR policy. From the perspective of China, there are two main problems: First, how to pass the concept of the OBOR policy in a more acceptable way to the countries along the line; the second is to examine how foreigners view the OBOR policy and how the Chinese government should respond to and resolve these difficulties (Liu Jixin, 2017, pp. 33-39). From the perspective of other countries, there are also two main research questions: The first one is what the real purpose of China's policy of launching the OBOR policy; What benefits and losses will be brought to the country by the OBOR policy. Undoubtedly, these issues must be faced in the analysis of a particular country.

This chapter selects India, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Hungary as typical countries for analysis. India, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Hungary are all countries with greater influence on a regional scale. By analyzing the attitudes of these countries towards the OBOR policy and the implementation of the OBOR policy in

these countries, we can more accurately know why do India, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Hungary have different attitudes toward the OBOR policy? What difficulties does the OBOR policy face in the implementation of these four countries? How does the OBOR policy affect these countries? More importantly, by analyzing the implementation of the OBOR policy in these countries, it can provide a more accurate and specific reference for China's geopolitical and economic strategy adjustment.

## **4.1 Case of India**

### **4.1.1 The structural conflict between China and India**

The historical grievances were mainly because of the Sino-Indian war of 1962 and its far-reaching consequences. The Sino-Indian border war broke out in 1962, and the result was a fiasco of India and the collapse of the Nehru government. In order to shirk responsibility, Nehru blamed the cause of the war on China's betrayal and the creation of public opinion by Nehru government in the country has made Indians generally have a deep sense of hostility and distrust of China. After the Sino-Indian war, India turned to the Soviet Union, which had a bad faith with China. China supported Pakistan to restrict India (Lin Minwang, 2015, pp. 24-35). The structural contradictions and distrust of China were further deeply framed in India people's idea. To this day, many Indians, especially many military and political dignitaries, are still worried about the 1962 war and are hostile and vigilant against China (Christophe Jaffrelot, 2016).

There are a large number of major practical contradictions between China and India that are difficult to resolve, which further strengthens India's hostility and distrust of China. First of all, there are a large number of territorial disputes between China and India. The territorial issue has affected the nerves of the two countries. The frequent "cross-border conflicts" in the Sino-Indian border areas have made China and India maintain high vigilance against each other. Secondly, on the issue of UN reform, India hopes to become a permanent member of the Security Council. However, China hopes that the Security Council will remain stable and not eager for major reforms (Chen Yongsheng, 2015, pp. 15-19). This makes India feel that its resistance is mainly from China and is very dissatisfied with China. Finally, in

India-Pakistan relations, India has always hoped that China will reduce its assistance to Pakistan and support India in sanctioning Pakistan within the UN framework. However, China-Pakistan relations are solid and India's proposal to sanction Pakistan has been vetoed by China. India is very dissatisfied with this (Siling, 2015).

India's big desire to become an influential country in the world has determined that it regards China as a competitor. Based on this, India regards South Asia and the Indian Ocean as its sphere of influence, and even introduces policies that require South Asian countries to give priority to seek help from India, otherwise it can be regarded as a kind of behavior to offend India (Wang Yigui, 2017). In order to hold the countries of South Asia, India has also tried to influence Nepal and other countries through "unequal cooperation" that is conducive to small countries. In this context, India is very fearful of a competitive power that is eroding its own sphere of influence. Therefore, India has a strong psychological and against China and is full of anxiety and dissatisfaction with China's contacts with South Asian countries (Tewari M, 2017).

#### **4.1.2 India's guard against China have determined its opposition to the OBOR policy**

India does not believe in China's sincerity and doubts that there is an ulterior motive behind the OBOR policy. First, India suspects that the OBOR policy is only China's own plan. In fact, it does not benefit other countries as claimed. Second, India suspects that China will create a China-centered international order through the OBOR policy and marginalize India. Third, India suspects that China has eroded its influence through the OBOR policy. India believes that the OBOR policy covers places of great concern to India such as Southeast Asia, Central Asia and Pakistan, and complains that the OBOR policy large-scale development in these sensitive areas threatens India's interests (Jaishankar D, 2017).

From a security perspective, India sees the OBOR policy as an imminent challenge. First, India opposes the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor under the framework of the OBOR policy. It believes that this construction plan has passed through the disputed areas of India and Pakistan in Kashmir,

infringing on India's sovereignty and deteriorating the geopolitical security situation of India (Gao Huiping, 2015, pp. 13-19). Second, India is worried that the construction of the Maritime Silk Road along the OBOR policy may lead to China's establishment of a military base in the Indian Ocean, which poses a huge challenge to India's security. India has always suspected that China is planning to build military bases in Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar and Pakistan, and does not believe any explanation (Bhadrakumar M. K, 2017).

#### **4.1.3 India's dependence on China determines its hope to cooperate with China in certain areas**

India is fighting the OBOR policy for threat perception and competitive mentality, but it depends on China in many areas such as cheap manufacturing products and electricity and hopes to cooperate with China. India seeks to cooperate with China mainly on its urgently needed projects that may not be defined as under the framework of the OBOR policy. For example, India supports and participates in BRICS mechanisms; supports and participates in AIIB; supports China's proposed Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) construction plan; supports and participates in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and so on. This shows that China and India still have overlapping interests in some aspect (Kantha A. K, 2017).

## **4.2 Case of Russia**

### **4.2.1 The changing course of Russia's attitude towards the OBOR policy**

The OBOR policy was proposed in the second half of 2013, when Russia and the European Union argued for Ukraine. At that time, the EU used the Eastern Partnership Program to actively call on Ukraine to sign the Association Agreement at the Vilnius Summit at the end of 2013, while Russia strongly hoped that Ukraine will join the Eurasian Economic Union it advocated. Russia and the EU are simultaneously exerting pressure on Ukraine. Russia hopes that Ukraine will not sign an agreement with the EU to force the EU to slow the expansion of the integration process to the east Europe. Russia's deep-seated strategic considerations

are based on the establishment of the CIS region and the integration of the legacy of the Soviet Union to maintain the traditional sphere of influence, and the active struggle for the status of a world power (Zhang Ning, 2015). Therefore, the OBOR policy concept put forward by Chinese leaders at this time also caused the doubts of Russian think tank experts and government officers. Their first reaction was that China wanted to use another integration plan that bypassed Russia to take a giant offensive westward march from the east of Eurasia to the former Soviet Union, especially to expand its influence in central Asia (Lelik Anna, 2017). So even if the Ukraine crisis had erupted and Russia's economy had not yet taken a big hit, they would still be skeptical about the OBOR policy. For example, in March 2014, Sergei Lujanin, deputy director of the Far Eastern Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, said that for Russia, in the context of the Ukrainian crisis and Western sanctions against Russia, the task of realizing the Customs Union is particularly urgent (Presbitero Andrea, 2016). What Moscow is looking forward to is not Beijing's implicit criticism or the idea of the OBOR policy to stimulate its Eurasian integration project, but real political support. There is no doubt that the different programs of China and Russia on Eurasia reflect the different views of China and Russia on the integration of Europe and Asia.

However, with the continuation of the Ukrainian crisis and the deterioration of relations between Russia and the West countries, the international oil price plunging, and the sharp depreciation of the ruble have caused the domestic and international situation facing Russia to become very serious (Pan Qi, 2016, pp. 27-34). At this time, the tone of the questioning and criticism of the OBOR policy in Russia has gradually decreased. With Russia actively shifting its diplomatic strategic direction to the East, Chinese and Russian leaders actively deepening bilateral cooperation on a strategic level, and China patiently interpreting the OBOR policy to Russia, then Russia showed their understanding on the OBOR policy. On January 30, 2015, the Chinese Embassy in Russia held a seminar on the OBOR policy. The Chinese personnel explained the "Silk Road Economic Belt" to the Russian side in detail. The two sides discussed this, and the communication deepened mutual trust and understanding. For example, Professor Yuri Wakimovich Tafrovs of the Russian People's Friendship University has a strategic

concept of the OBOR policy and praised President Xi Jinping as an outstanding geopolitical master. In an article entitled "geopolitical master -- Xi Jinping", he analyzed the OBOR policy proposed by Chinese leaders from the perspective of the game between China and the United States in the Asia-Pacific and geopolitical competition. He pointed out that Chinese leaders proposed to build the "silk road ,economic belt" and the "21st century maritime silk road" in response to the United States' plan to Counter the TPP in the economy and the "Asia-Pacific re-balancing" strategy in the military and politics to curb China. Although the two silk road concepts are located in different parts of Eurasia, they have a common purpose -- to neutralize or weaken the attempt of the United States to besiege China. Of course, the silk road would have a harder time achieving this goal by sea, since the U.S. military and economic power still dominated the sea, while the land silk road had promising prospects. China has established good partnerships with central Asian countries to build transport infrastructure and expand trade and industrial presence in the region (Huijun, 2018). Collaboration with Russia is of great significance. Russia is the most important place for the "Silk Road" to reach its destination, Western Europe.

The leaders of China and Russia communicated during the meeting in Sochi in February 2014 and the summit meeting in Shanghai in May. Russian leaders expressed support for the OBOR policy concept advocated by China. At present, the Russian official's attitude towards the OBOR policy is more hopeful to seek cooperation with China's OBOR policy project from the EE that a regional integration framework advocated by Russia. It is true that Xi Jinping's project is very ambitious and has long-term development prospects, reflecting the speed and nature of the rise of China's geopolitical status as a growing emerging superpower. The realization of the "OBOR policy is clearly recognized as the long-term task of China's Eurasian strategy. On the other hand, it is clear that the project has not yet destroyed the other two projects – the SCO and the development of the EEC. At the same time, China's OBOR policy is still only conceptual, unlike the SCO and EEU, it cannot be institutionalized (Yongfen, 2016).

#### **4.2.2 Difficulties that cannot be ignored**

In addition to the Russian government's current public support for the OBOR policy, the true thinking of Russian think tank experts who have an important influence on Russian official decision-making cannot be ignored. It is even clear that many people in Russia will still consider the OBOR policy as a serious challenge from the East and is a potential threat to the Eurasian integration project advocated by Russia. In fact, Russia and China have serious threats of conflicts of interest in Central Asia, because the OBOR policy is often positioned as an alternative to the Eurasian integration advocated by Russia. Obviously, due to the current confrontation with Western countries, Russia has no more disposable resources to fight against China (Ren Mengzheng, 2018). Therefore, an effective method must be found to reach an agreement. In February 2015, the director of the Russian Council for International Affairs, Andrei Kortunov, said in an interview with the Russian media that all the neighbors in China were anxiously watching her rise and were very afraid of China's external expansion.

Russia's attitude towards the OBOR policy and Russia's current active development of Sino-Russian relations all contain Russia's deep strategic considerations. Mirzayan, a researcher at the Institute of American and Canadian Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, naturally revealed in an article commenting: In the near future, China's position in international affairs may will become even foremost in the East Asian region and the Middle East. This may be a problem for Russia, but fortunately, the cooperation between Russia and China does not have any kind of dependence. The Russian side does not have to unilaterally please China like a small partner. Moscow has a chance to choose. Therefore, the closer Russia-China relations seem to be more important Russia is for Beijing's competitors in East Asia (first Japan, Vietnam and South Korea). Indeed, in theory, Russia does not have to indulge in an unbreakable friendship with China. Otherwise, the above countries will regard Russia as a partner forever lost and seek other helpers to contain China. But the problem is that Russia is basically an irreplaceable partner in the complex issue of containing China (Fan Aijun Bai Yuzhu, 2015).

The Russian side has always had doubts about the OBOR policy. Many Russian experts believe that the OBOR policy is a Eurasia regional integration project proposed by China that is different from the EEU. This poses a threat to Russia's own interests, especially Russia's interests in Central Asia. Therefore, Russia intends to use the EEU as a whole to negotiate and seek cooperation with the OBOR policy, and to avoid China's use of different opinions between Russia and other countries in the CIS region to take various breakthroughs. The region has an infiltration effect especially in Central Asian countries. Therefore, Russia has recently organized member states of the EEU to conduct group consultations on participation in China's the OBOR policy project cooperation. It can be found that the Russian side is generally satisfied with the agreement between the EEU and the OBOR policy and is relieved about the potential "threat" of the OBOR policy for the time being (Kirill Vyshinsky, 2018). But the key question is how do the two projects achieve docking? Therefore, the author believes that with the continuous advancement of the OBOR policy, serious questions about how the EEU and OBOR policy will achieve docking will finally surface.

### ***4.3 Case of Saudi Arabia***

#### **4.3.1 China's status quo in promoting the construction of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia**

In June 2008, China and Saudi Arabia established a strategic and friendly relationship. In January 2012, China and Saudi Arabia decided to further enhance the level of bilateral relations within the strategic framework. In January 2016, the two countries upgraded bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership. In the context of China's promotion of the OBOR policy and Saudi Arabia's acceleration of national transformation, the complementary economic structure, the compatibility of foreign economic strategies, the enhancement of political mutual trust and the improvement of cooperation mechanism between China and Saudi Arabia have laid a solid foundation for deepening bilateral cooperation in various fields (Wang Yue, 2017).

The first aspect is the cooperation mechanism. At present, China and Saudi Arabia rely on the multilateral cooperation mechanism under the OBOR policy

cultural exchange and cooperation mechanism under the Ministry of Culture of China, and the bilateral cooperation mechanism under the framework of the China-Saudi High-level Joint Committee to carry out cooperation in various fields. First, the cultural exchange and cooperation mechanism under the Ministry of Culture of China has promoted the deepening of humanities exchanges and cooperation between China and Saudi Arabia within the framework of the OBOR policy (Zhao Hanhan, 2015). In December 2016, the Ministry of Culture of China released the OBOR policy Cultural Development Action Plan (2016-2020) of the Ministry of Culture, which comprehensively planned China and the outside from the areas of cooperation mechanism, cooperation platform, brand effect and foreign cultural trade, comprehensive planning the goal of China with the outside world to build a community of Shared future with integrated cultures, to enhance mutual learning among civilizations of China and Saudi Arabia and hearts are interlinked, promote bilateral cultural exchange, cultural diffusion, the cultural trade innovation development and improve the mechanism of the platform from the areas including cooperation mechanism, the cooperation platform, the brand effect and the foreign culture and trade and other fields (Luzyanin S S Sazonov, 2015, pp. 35-46). Second, The China-Saudi Arabia high-level joint committee has provided institutional guarantee for synergism, coordinating and promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields between the OBOR policy and the "Vision 2030" of Saudi Arabia that aiming at carrying out an extremely large-scale rectification of the Saudi Arabian economy and to solve the problem of rising deficit rates in the country caused by the current low oil price environment (Fang Yi, 2018). In August 2016, the two countries established the China-Saudi Arabia high-level joint committee. The China-Saudi High Commission has six sub-committees, namely the Political and Diplomatic Sub-Committee, the OBOR policy major investment cooperation project Sub-Committee and the Energy Sub-Committee, the Trade and Investment Sub-Committee, and the Culture, Technology and Tourism Sub-Committee, Subcommittee on Security Cooperation and Subcommittee on Military Cooperation. It covers political, diplomatic, economic, trade, energy, cultural, security, military and other fields. Since the establishment of the China-Saudi High Commission, the

two countries have jointly held several meetings of the High Commission and the Sub-Committee (Yang Xiaomei, 2015).

### **4.3.2 The current cooperation characteristics of China and Saudi Arabia**

From 2000 to 2015, Saudi Arabia has become China's largest crude oil supplier for 16 consecutive years and has become China's largest trading partner in the Middle East for many years. In 2017, bilateral trade volume between China and Saudi Arabia reached US 50 billion, up 18.3% year-on-year. Among them, China's imports from Saudi Arabia reached US 31.8 billion, up 34.4% from the previous year; China's exports to Saudi Arabia reached US 18.2 billion, down by 2.3%. In 2017, China invested US 80.79 million in Saudi Arabia and Saudi Arabia invested US\$150 million in China. China signed 124 contracts for new projects in Saudi Arabia, with a new contract value of US 2.928 billion and a turnover of 6.344 billion (Ma Wei, 2018). Up to 2017, more than 140 large Chinese-funded enterprises contracted cooperation projects in Saudi Arabia, covering energy, minerals, ports, roads and bridges, communications and other fields. Currently, the cooperation between China and Saudi Arabia presents the following characteristics:

First, the high-level interaction between China and Saudi Arabia is frequent. In January 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Saudi Arabia and established a comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries, marking the important situation in which the two countries have placed each other in the development of their foreign relations. At the end of August of the same year, the then Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad · Ben Salman visited China and co-chaired the first meeting of the China-Saudi High Commission with the then Vice Premier of China, Zhang Gaoli, and attended the G20 Hangzhou Summit held in early September. In March 2017, Saudi King Salman visited China and held talks with President Xi Jinping. In August of the same year, Zhang Gaoli visited Saudi Jeddah and co-chaired the second meeting of the China-Saudi Arabia High Commission with Muhammad bin Salman in Saudi Arabia. In February 2019, Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman visited China again and signed many bilateral documents (Zou Zhiqiang, 2016). The frequent interaction between the high-level

leaders of China and Saudi Arabia laid the foundation for strengthening strategic cooperation, increasing political mutual trust, deepening the development strategy, and promoting pragmatic cooperation in various fields.

Second, energy trade leads China-Saudi Arabia trade. From the perspective of trade structure, China's main commodities imported from Saudi Arabia are crude oil and petrochemical products. The main commodities China exports to Saudi Arabia are mechanical and electrical products, textiles, daily necessities, etc. The economies of the two countries are highly complementary (Yang Yanhong, 2018).

Third, the cooperation in infrastructure construction between China and Saudi Arabia continued to advance. Saudi Arabia's international construction engineering contracting market is huge, and most of the large domestic construction projects are contracted by foreign companies. Chinese companies are at the global leading level in overseas engineering contracting, and their outstanding capabilities in cost control, on-time delivery, engineering quality, and operation management are widely recognized, and they have independent innovation patent technologies in high-speed rail and other fields. In 2015, Saudi Arabia joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. By 2017, China and Saudi Arabia have identified the first batch of 30 key projects for capacity and investment cooperation, with a total value of approximately US\$55 billion, of which 8 projects have started construction and 22 projects are in the preliminary work. In recent years, the two countries are exploring the “tripartite cooperation” model of introducing third countries to participate in infrastructure projects (Wang Huaiqing, 2018).

#### **4.3.3 China's Challenge in Promoting the Construction of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia**

In recent years, Saudi Arabia's major adjustments in its internal affairs and foreign policy have raised the country's risks in the political, economic, and security fields. These risks pose a real challenge to China's promotion of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia.

In the political arena, China's challenge in promoting the OBOR policy construction in Saudi Arabia is mainly to ensure the policy continuity of China-Saudi cooperation and balance China's relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran. First,

Saudi Arabia's future political situation depends on whether the Crown Prince Muhammad can establish a new political foundation faster than his political opponents including the older generation of princes and interest groups within the royal family, may still gather and use all kinds of forces against him. Secondly, the Middle East is the intersection of OBOR policy. Saudi Arabia and Iran, both of which are regional powers, are important energy importing countries and trading partners of China. The GCC countries are concerned that once Iran gains significant gains from the OBOR policy, Saudi Arabia's role in leading regional order will be weakened (Yang Wenlin, 2016). In Saudi Arabia's view, a more prosperous Iran will threaten its neighboring Arab countries. Therefore, it is the key to China's promotion of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia to minimize the involvement of geopolitical games and agent competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In the economic field, China's challenge in promoting the construction of the OBOR policy in Saudi Arabia lies mainly in how to cope with the domestic economic transformation pain in Saudi Arabia while maximizing the strategic docking of China and Saudi Arabia. The main direction of Saudi economic transformation can be summarized as: resource allocation changes from relying on government intervention to relying on market regulation; government fiscal revenue changes from relying on oil revenue to expanding non-oil revenue; industrial structure from excessive dependence on oil economy to new energy diversified areas such as mining and mining; the source of investment has changed from relying on domestic capital to attracting foreign investment; labor employment has changed from relying on foreign nationals to localization.. These demands from the Saudi government must be faced and resolved by the Chinese government (Jeddah Tan Banglin, 2018).

In the security field, China's challenge in promoting the OBOR policy construction in Saudi Arabia is mainly to prevent terrorist attacks and the threat of cross-border attacks by Houthi troops against Chinese citizens and enterprises in Saudi Arabia. In the form of terrorist attacks, improvised explosive devices, shootings and cross-border artillery shells and missile attacks have been the main types of domestic attacks in Saudi Arabia in recent years. In terms of regional distribution, Qatti in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia is a high-incidence area

for improvised explosive devices and shooting; the three provinces on the southwest border of Saudi Arabia and the capital Riyadh are the main targets of the cross-border attacks by the Houthi armed forces, and Chinese enterprises are stationed in these areas (Yang Fang, 2017).

## **4.4 Case of Hungry**

### **4.4.1 The basic factors for Hungary's active integration into the OBOR policy**

Hungary attaches importance to developing bilateral relations with China and has a strong willingness to deepen the pragmatic cooperation between China and Hungary. This is one of the solid foundations for Hungary's active integration into the OBOR policy. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1949, relations between the two countries have developed in an all-round way and leaders have exchanged visits. After the European debt crisis, as one of the most seriously damaged countries, Hungary gradually turned its attention to the East, especially China. Hungary is China's largest investment destination in Central and Eastern Europe, and China has become Hungary's largest trading partner outside the EU. Especially since the release of the OBOR policy by China government, Hungary has been responding positively. As the first European country to sign a memorandum related to the OBOR policy with China, Hungary has the willingness to participate in the OBOR policy in the areas of infrastructure, production, trade and economic cooperation (Feng Min, 2016). In recent years, the Hungarian Railway Project and the opening of direct flights from Beijing to Budapest are examples of the steady development of Sino-Hungarian relations and the willingness of the Hungarian side to cooperate strongly with China.

The Chinese and Hungarian governments have certain consensus on the understanding and cognition of the world political and economic structure. This is the second solid foundation for the development of bilateral relations. Since the current Prime Minister Orban took office, Hungary has been firmly supporting the idea of a multi-polar world and economic globalization. Orban has said that emerging countries already have strong competitiveness and voice, and now they need to use the new order to describe these changes (Qu Ruxiao, 2016). Although

European countries now play an important role in the global political economy, the trend of world multi-polarization and economic globalization is imperative and irreversible. Therefore, strengthening cooperation with China is one of the important decisions under the trend of Hungary.

#### **4.4.2 Hungary's role in the OBOR policy**

First, Hungary's own location advantage determines that it will play the role of China's gateway to Europe and promote the smooth flow of the OBOR policy. Hungary is located in Central Europe. Since ancient times, it has been the only way for all ethnic groups in the East to enter Europe. Hungary has also been one of the important distribution centers for Chinese goods in Europe. In the last century, many Chinese clothing and footwear exported to Hungary were resold to neighboring countries such as Ukraine and Romania (Lin Yueqin, 2015). After Hungary joined the European Union, it has built various new wholesale centers for economic and trade exchanges with China and Asia. The Asian Center, which invests US 200 million, is an important logistics center for Asian and Chinese products in Central Europe. In addition to the Asian Center, Budapest has also established a Chinese mall that also serves Chinese investment and wholesale distribution services. Hungary's status as the most important distribution center for Chinese goods in Central and Eastern Europe is basically established.

The Hungary-Serbia railway project will provide strong support for Hungary to connect China, southeast Europe, central and Western Europe, and promote the infrastructure connectivity under the OBOR policy. At a summit in Belgrade in 2013, China, Hungary and Serbia jointly proposed the railway project. The railway will be an important extension of the China-Europe land-sea express line. After the completion of the railway, Chinese goods will be able to enter the central European markets such as Hungary and Poland directly through the Hungary-Serbia railway after arriving at the port of Pireus port in Greece, and then transfer to Western Europe. In 2014, the four countries signed the framework agreement on customs clearance facilitation and cooperation among China, Hungary, Serbia and Macedonia, with a view to simplifying and coordinating customs procedures and reducing the inspection rate of ports. Therefore, the

successful implementation of this project is not only the connection of transportation infrastructure such as ports, roads and railways, but also the connection of port infrastructure (You Nan, 2015).

Third, the effective docking of Hungary's economic and foreign policy has promoted the policy communication of the OBOR policy. In 2011, the Hungarian government proposed the "opening to the east" strategy in its economic and foreign policy. The strategy is to boost domestic economies by focusing on the rising economies of the east and working more closely with them. Since its proposal, Hungary has actively carried out various types of cooperation with China, Russia, India and other emerging economies. Prime minister Orban have paid many visits to China. At the same time, China is also strengthening cooperation with central Asia and Europe to seek opportunities for common development (Shen Xiaoquan, 2015). It can be seen that the development plans of China and Hungary coincide in the new era and help each other. The two countries can not only discuss economic development strategies, but also share the fruits of development in a better and more efficient way.

Fourth, cooperation with Hungary in the financial field of RMB internationalization is the highlight of Sino-Hungarian cooperation in recent years, effectively promoting the financing of the "Belt and Road Initiative" initiative. In 2013, the People's Bank of China and the Hungarian Central Bank signed a bilateral currency swap agreement between China and Hungary, with a swap size of 10 billion yuan. In 2014, the Bank of China opened a branch in Hungary. In 2015, the branch became the Hungarian RMB clearing bank and the only RMB clearing bank in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2016, Hungary issued 1 RMB billion in bonds in China, the first RMB bond issued in Central and Eastern Europe. This financial cooperation are new highlights explored by China and Hungary in recent years. They are in line with the needs of China's RMB internationalization and the willingness of the Hungarian side to strengthen cooperation with China. On the one hand, the scale of economic and trade investment between China and Hungary needs to be supported by corresponding financial services. On the other hand, promoting the renminbi to become a local reserve currency is also an important step in the internationalization of the RMB (Li Lingjie, 2016).

Fifth, the civilization exchanges between China and Hungary have been close, which has promoted the commonwealth of the OBOR policy. In the field of science and education, Hungary has a population of less than 10 million, but now it has four Confucius Institutes. In terms of tourism, in May 2014, Hungary led the formation of the China-Central and Eastern European Countries Tourism Coordination Center with a view to promoting China's travel to Hungary and other Central and Eastern European countries. Moreover, Hungary is also promoting the facilitation of visa procedures for Chinese tourists. In terms of overseas Chinese, Hungary is the country with the largest number of Chinese in Central and Eastern Europe (Liu Zuokui, 2016). Although the cooperation in the field of humanities exchange is not as reliable as the economic and investment investment, humanities exchanges are an indispensable part of China-Hungary relations, effectively promoting the commonwealth of the people of the two countries. This is to deepen political mutual trust and expansion. Economic and trade investment cooperation provides a strong guarantee.

#### **4.4.3 Potential impact factors on the OBOR policy in Hungary**

Central and eastern Europe has long been a sensitive region from the perspective of traditional geopolitics. The EU and the US have doubts and vigilance about China's promotion and implementation of the OBOR policy in Hungary and other CEE countries. On the one hand, both the US and the EU suspect that China is covering up the political intentions behind its economic activities, and that it will increase the obstacles for CEECS to participate in the implementation of the OBOR policy. For example, the EU has tightened restrictions on the fiscal deficits and public debt ratios of central and eastern European countries. As a result, many countries have had to abandon the cooperation approach of government debt financing for large-scale project construction, thus slowing down the pace of OBOR policy construction (John Macri, 2019). On the other hand, from the perspective of Chinese scholars, Hungary as a member of the European Union, the EU is concerned that with the increasingly close cooperation between Hungary and China, it will have a demonstration role in Central and Eastern European countries and have a negative impact on EU integration.

#### **4.5 Difficulties faced in the selected case countries**

China's OBOR policy still has many problems in the implementation of these countries, which will greatly affect the degree of recognition of the other countries toward on the OBOR policy. First of all, as of now, China's OBOR policy is only a framework, and there is no systematic system of rules, which is likely to cause misunderstandings in other countries. This problem exists in Russia, India, Hungary, and Saudi Arabia. For example, some political parties and politicians in India have expressed doubts about the transparency of the OBOR policy. Second, China has territorial disputes or other forms of contradiction with some countries along the OBOR policy, such as India. These factors lead to the fact that these countries do not have close diplomatic relations with China, resulting in suspicion or even resistance to OBOR policy. Third, although in China's view, the OBOR policy is helpful to countries along the route. However, the OBOR policy may conflict with the interests of other countries in the implementation process. For example, some scholars and officials in Russia believe that the OBOR policy may erode Russia's influence in central Asia. That is to say, China has not been able to clarify the core interest demands of all parties in the OBOR policy, which requires China to clarify its international status, the international status of OBOR policy and the interest demands of all parties in the following time (He Zhongdong, 2017). Fourth, China's OBOR policy still lacks authority at the present stage, and its own theoretical system has not been well constructed. As a result, some people are still very unfamiliar with it and cannot understand some propositions of the OBOR policy.

#### **5. Suggested tactics to the Obstacles faced by OBOR policy**

The OBOR policy is a reconstruction of China's original geopolitical and economic strategy in order to overcome the dilemma of the rise of great powers on the basis of drawing lessons from its own history. As a grand strategy under the new situation, the logic thinking of China's geopolitical and economic strategy reconstruction under the OBOR policy should be carried out in the following framework: first, define China's core national interests in the new era. Second,

identify the key elements that threaten China's core national interests. Third, the implementation of the OBOR policy should be promoted in an appropriate way, so that countries along the belt and road can better understand the OBOR policy.

### ***5.1 Defining China's national positioning and core interests in today's international system***

Defining China's position in today's international system requires consideration from three dimensions: self, other, and interaction between self and others. From the perspective of self-identification, China's national positioning depends on China's rational assessment of its own strength, traits and diplomatic advantages. From the perspective of the others demands, China's national positioning needs to be integrated with the expectations of other members of the international system or the international order. From the perspective of self-interaction with others, China's national positioning cannot be separated from its interaction with major world powers and key regional powers (Robert S. Ross, 2012). In light of these dimensions, China should position itself as a responsible emerging and developing country in the international system and order, an advocate and participant of a just and reasonable new international political and economic order, and a practitioner of the concept of human harmony and harmonious coexistence among civilizations. Positioning based on the countries, China's core interests is in an increasingly integrated into the global political and economic system in the process of peaceful development for both the political, economic, military, culture, technology, diplomacy, such as comprehensive strength of the new world power, rather than to challenge the us-led international order and its top power hegemony (Campbell C., 2017).

### ***5.2 Alleviating other countries' doubts about the OBOR policy***

The smooth progress of the OBOR policy needs to slow down the doubts of major powers and countries along the route to China's strategic motives. This requires China to clarify the logical relationship between the OBOR policy and the

current world order. China needs to use concrete action to prove to the world that the promotion of the OBOR policy is a process in which China is based on the principles of openness, tolerance, cooperation and win-win, and constructively integrates into the current world order dominated by the US with the attitude of as an emerging and developing country. Its nature is normal political and economic interactions, not a new version “Marshall Plan” that challenges the US political, economic, monetary and financial hegemony or the development of new global regulations. The intention is to expand new space for China's reform, opening up, and peaceful development, rather than launching a "new cold war" with the US at the regional and global levels. Its role is to supplement the system vacuum and order vacuum left by the US along the OBOR policy countries, rather than challenging the current world order of freedom, openness, stability and democracy (Li Feng, 2016). Historical experience proves that the stability of the Central Asian (East) order directly affects the stability of the world order. The problem is precisely that although the world order dominated by the hegemonic power is a universal arrangement, it cannot penetrate into the interior of Eurasia. This is evidenced by the intervention of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union in Central Asia and the Middle East, as well as the interventions and consequences of the US in recent years. Therefore, it is only the mainland countries that can afford to restore the historical responsibility of the region, and it is a mainland country with a marine nature. Obviously, the implementation of China's OBOR policy will help to provide a regional institutional arrangement through strategic cooperation between China and the United States, maintain peace and stability in the region, and promote peace and stability in the world order.

### ***5.3 Strengthening regional economic cooperation under the framework of the OBOR policy***

In the traditional sense, regional economic cooperation takes place between geographically adjacent. It is a functional cooperation between members based on the same or similar preferences and the goal of achieving common welfare enhancement. Communication, economic and trade exchanges, monetary and financial cooperation, and non-governmental exchanges are reflected in the

relationship of "circle." Under the framework of OBOR policy, especially the regional economic cooperation around the New Asia-Europe Continental Bridge, China-Mongolia-Russia, China-Central Asia-West Asia, China-South-South Peninsula, China-Pakistan, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar, and the six-major international economic corridors have broken through the narrow category of "circle." Breaking through geographically adjacent or similar boundary constraints, covering functional, institutional, and strategic diversified cooperation willingness and demand motives, encompassing different races, ethnicities, cultures, religions, political systems, economic systems, and values. The concept of regional economic cooperation under this spatial pattern no longer applies to traditional functional interpretations (Luo Zeyu, 2017). This requires China to study a broader theoretical system to promote the implementation of the OBOR policy in countries along the route.

#### ***5.4 Pay attention to the relationship between comprehensive promotion and key breakthroughs in the construction of the OBOR policy***

The construction of the OBOR policy is a systematic project. It requires China to consider both the land (Silk Road Economic Belt) and the sea (21st Century Maritime Silk Road) to comprehensively promote the interconnection and construction of countries along the route. On the other hand, given the important strategic fulcrum significance of some countries along the route, China has the need to adopt a key breakthrough strategy in order to win the largest output with the least cost in the "Belt and Road" construction. The direction and targets China need to break through are Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and Russia. In China's large peripheral strategic layout, the strategic significance of Southeast Asia is that it is the primary region for the construction of China's maritime Silk Road, and it is also China's realization of foreign industrial transfer, diversification of export markets, complementing diverse domestic demand, and breaking through US strategic containment (Zheng Zhilai, 2015). An important area to ensure the safety of energy transportation. The strategic significance of South Asia is that it is an

important strategic pawn fulcrum for China to overcome the “Malacca dilemma” of energy transportation.

The strategic significance of central Asia lies in the fact that it is the only route along China's land silk road, an important base for the acquisition of energy and resources, an important partner in the field of non-traditional security, and another strategic corridor connecting west Asia. Russia's strategic significance lies in that it is an important source of China's overseas energy imports, a partner hedging against the us strategic containment, a stakeholder in the construction of the silk road in central Asia, a key node of the new Eurasian land bridge, and the terminus of the China-Mongolia-Russia economic cooperation corridor (Denisov, 2015). In spite of this, the key breakthrough strategy still faces two major challenges. First, the OBOR policy with economic ties has not solved the tension between China's indigenous beliefs and the surrounding regional culture, especially the Islamic culture. Second, China's authority as a great power in the neighboring region is still facing the problem of incomplete. Its neighboring order is still in a period of turbulent integration, and countries along the belt and road are still suspicious and wary of China's role in the regional order. Therefore, how to reconstruct the new type of international relations with the countries along the OBOR policy has become a major subject that China has to think about.

### ***5.5 Strengthening China's new international relations with countries along the OBOR policy***

The features of the OBOR policy are “communicating, building and sharing”. Its smooth progress cannot be separated from the reconstruction of new international relations between China and countries along the route. In order to reconstruct this new relationship, China needs to coordinate five aspects of thinking: First, bid farewell to the "Chinese model" of self-centered intellectual production, and effectively strengthen the research on politics, economy, human, history, religion and some other aspects to compensate for China's serious shortage of intellectual production and perceptions of these countries. Second, while continuing to pay attention to national exchanges at the bilateral level, China should attach great importance to the construction of rules and systems at the multilateral level

(An Guojun, 2017). The focus is on international law rather than domestic style, building a stable psychological expectation for China and countries along the route, reducing the risk of exchanges and cooperation, improve the efficiency of various connectivity cooperation mechanisms and platforms. Third, the correct handling of the relationship between China's status and responsibilities as a big country is based on the principle that China should work with countries along the line to address the needs, problems, and solutions in the construction of the OBOR policy to leave some important initiatives to other countries, you can wait for it, properly 'mobilize' in waiting, and thus increase the cooperation initiative and enthusiasm of other countries." Fourth, properly handle the relationship with the strategic fulcrum countries or regions and find a good point of interest for each other. For Southeast Asia, China can build an "upgraded version" of China-ASEAN Free Trade Area as a platform for cooperation, and provide preferential loans to ASEAN as a means of cooperation to resolve China's diplomatic difficulties in the sovereignty dispute over the South China Sea and the US's "return to Asia-Pacific" Strategic containment (Joshi M, 2017). For South Asia, China's focus is not to touch the dream of India's "big country" that has been doing since independence. In the process of building the Maritime Silk Road, China can seek broad consensus with India on issues such as jointly safeguarding the security situation in the Indian Ocean region, cooperating to deal with non-traditional security challenges such as piracy and terrorism, and sharing dividends on military and economic cooperation. For Central Asia, China can focus on the resource endowments of the five Stan countries, the importance of building the Silk Road economic belt, the closeness of political and economic exchanges with China, and the degree of friendship with Chinese natural and legal persons, China should promote cooperation with Central Asian countries in a focused, planned, step-by-step, sub-area, and hierarchical manner. For Russia, China's focus is not to touch Russia's bottom line thinking that Central Asia regards its "sphere of influence", and actively seek the feasibility of the strategic link between the OBOR policy and the Russian-led EEU.

## ***5.6 Building an international system that supports China's long-term sustainable development***

Since 1992, especially since China joined the WTO in 2001, it has become China's established strategic policy by fully integrating into the world market and seeking long-term sustainable development. In view of this, the main goal of China's OBOR policy is to build a regional and even global capital control system through the reconstruction of geopolitical and economic strategy to support China's long-term sustainable development. Within this system, there is a need for RMB (related derivative financial products and tools) that is widely recognized, accepted and used by countries and regions along the line, a broad and deep domestic financial market, and a domestic commodity market with huge consumption power, a development concept with universal value and strong military mobilization and delivery capabilities (Tewari, M, 2017). Otherwise, it is impossible to support long-term sustainable growth of economic and military power by relying on its own savings (prepared). There is no such precedent in history. Of course, the establishment of such a system will certainly be a long and arduous process. During this period, not only will it be strongly confined and contained by US hegemony, but China will also have greater courage in the reform of political, economic and financial systems.

## **6. Conclusion**

There is no doubt that the OBOR policy will have a huge impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategy. Compared with China's previous foreign affairs policy, the OBOR policy is more active and aggressive. The formulation of this policy not only has a deep historical background, but also has a wide range of practical considerations. It is a major strategic adjustment made by China in response to changes in the political and economic situation at home and abroad, and to crack the dilemma of development and rise of the great power.

However, from the third chapter, we can know that there are still uncertainties about the positive significance of OBOR policy for China's geopolitical and economic strategy. First, due to ideological differences, some countries along the OBOR policy question China's real purpose. For example, India

questions the transparency of the OBOR policy. Second, due to China's imperfect investment review system in the countries along the OBOR policy, some Chinese investment has been corrupted by officials in these countries, and it has not benefited ordinary people, which has led to opposition and condemnation from the people of some countries. This has had a negative effect on the establishment of a good image of China, which has led to the implementation of the OBOR policy has been hampered in these countries. Third, due to the replacement of the leaders of the countries along the OBOR policy, the implementation of the OBOR policy will be affected. For example, after the replacement of new government leaders, Pakistan and Malaysia have stopped some projects under the framework of the OBOR policy, which will not only damage China's investment, but also affect the implementation of the OBOR policy and China's geopolitical and economic strategy layout. Fourth, the "debt trap" advocated by some countries will also make government leaders and ordinary people resent the China's OBOR policy. Fifth, some countries believe that the real purpose of the OBOR policy is to expand the economic influence of China among the countries along the OBOR policy and then manipulate the politics of these countries. All of the above factors are problems facing the OBOR policy, which will not only have a negative impact on the implementation of the OBOR policy, but also have a negative impact on China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

At present, China is facing the most difficult period since the reform and opening up. The US has regarded China as its number one competitor and has attempted to unite its allies to curb China's development. The geopolitical and economic situation facing China is more dangerous. China has eased geopolitical and economic pressure to some extent by implementing the OBOR policy. In the third chapter, I explain the difficulties faced by the OBOR policy. In the fourth chapter, I have analyzed the implementation of the OBOR policy with countries such as India, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Hungary as examples. Through the analysis of these two chapters, we can know that how the OBOR policy affect China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

As a regional power and a world military power, Russia does not want to see an overly powerful China around it. Moreover, its leading EEU and China-

sponsored OBOR policy have conflicted to some extent, and Central Asian countries have always been Russia's sphere of influence. Russia does not want China's influence in Central Asia to be too strong. Therefore, Russia was skeptical about the OBOR policy in the beginning. However, with the continued sanctions imposed by the US and the EU on Russia, Russia's economic development continues to decline, the implementation of the OBOR policy can provide investment for Russia. This will undoubtedly help strengthen the cooperative relationship between China and Russia, strengthen the mutual trust between the two, and reduce the geopolitical pressure of China to a certain extent. It has positive significance for China's geopolitical strategy. At the same time, Russia, as an important oil producer, can provide China with oil resources. Moreover, as a petroleum-oriented country, Russia is underdeveloped in many industrial fields, and China can provide Russia with the products it needs and help to effectively solve the problem of overcapacity in some areas of China.

As an ally of the US in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia has always followed the pace of the US. But now, Saudi Arabia is carrying out reforms. Its 2030 vision and China's proposed OBOR policy have many areas of cooperation, which will undoubtedly help strengthen cooperation between the two and enhance China's influence in Saudi Arabia. For example, in the oil field, although the Chinese government has paid more and more attention to the development of an environmentally-friendly economy in recent years, energy such as oil is still necessary for economic growth, and the gap between limited reserves and huge demand can only be solved by imports. The countries along the OBOR policy that are rich in energy are an important source of supply for China to overcome energy consumption constraints. Saudi Arabia, as a country rich in oil resources, can provide oil resources for China. In the field of infrastructure construction, China has accumulated more experience, and there is overcapacity in industries such as steel and cement that are closely related to infrastructure construction. Countries along the OBOR policy have serious supply shortages in the field of infrastructure construction. The construction of the OBOR policy will help realize the connection between supply and demand in China and countries along the route. In recent years, high-level visits between China and Saudi Arabia have undoubtedly illustrated that

the relationship between the two is heating up. This undoubtedly shows the positive impact of the OBOR policy on China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

As a Central and Eastern European country, Hungary has a good relationship with China in history. Over the years, China-Hungary political and diplomatic relations have also maintained a good state. Under the "16+1" meeting mechanism, high-level mutual visits have been frequent. Moreover, Hungary is also the first country to actively respond to the OBOR policy. In addition, Hungary's policy of opening up to the east is highly compatible with China's proposed OBOR policy and there are many opportunities for cooperation in many fields. In the context of the OBOR policy, China's trade and investment in Hungary has also entered a new historical stage. Because of the smooth implementation of the OBOR policy in Hungary, Hungary's economic development has also benefited a lot from it. Countries such as Serbia saw the benefits of the OBOR policy for Hungary and are also preparing to actively integrate the OBOR policy. This is undoubtedly the victory of the OBOR policy for China's geopolitical and economic strategy.

India, a south Asian power, has long viewed China as a strategic rival. India has been vocal in its opposition to the OBOR policy since it was proposed. However, what the Indian government refuses is only the title of the OBOR policy. From the practical perspective, India actually participates in the OBOR policy, for example, India joins the AIIB. Therefore, India is unlikely to accept the concept of the OBOR policy but will not reject the cooperation content and actual interests under the OBOR policy. At this stage, this is good for China.

In current stage, China's economic space is bound to be squeezed. With insufficient domestic demand in China, the downward pressure on China's economic growth has increased. In this context, the implementation of the OBOR policy is conducive to close complementary economic and trade cooperation between China and countries along the OBOR policy, so as to expand market space for the export of Chinese goods. At the same time, in response to the changes in the international situation, China is aiming to shift low-end labor and capital-intensive manufacturing to the developing countries along the OBOR policy line, in order to make the necessary market space for the domestic economic structure to shift to advanced manufacturing.

In addition, the OBOR policy is a major strategy for China to build a new pattern of opening up to the outside world. Its significance to China's geopolitical and economic strategy lies in: on the one hand, under the framework of the "silk road economic belt", the northwest is no longer the object of support and poverty alleviation in the traditional sense, but an open frontier and outreach core area of strategic significance. This role connects it closely with central Asia and west Asia as a "community of Shared future" and "community of Shared interests" in political and economic security. The construction of the "silk road economic belt" can not only provide opportunities for the common development of China, central Asia and west Asia in the economic sense, but also enhance the mutual understanding of the people in the cultural sense, so as to provide a relatively stable neighborhood for China. On the other hand, it helps to balance China's geopolitical and economic strategies. One of its important meanings is to effectively avoid the maritime containment of the US, and its maritime ally Japan. By developing the regional economic integration cooperation with the countries along the OBOR policy to the west, it can provide a strategic hedge for the export of Chinese commodities. More importantly, China is expected to closely cooperate with oil and gas-rich countries such as Saudi Arabia and Russia and open up new land and sea transportation lines to ensure China's political and economic security.

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