

CHINA'S TRADE AMBITION THROUGH BRI

Mike Natanael Norend Mandagie

International Relations, Faculty Of Social and Political Science, Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Jl. Mayor Jenderal Sutoyo, RT.5/RW.11, Cawang, Kec. Kramat jati, Kota Jakarta Timur, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta, 13630, Indonesia.

BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) is China's global infrastructure project and targets Eurasia, the Pacific and the Middle East. The focus of BRI is on seaports, airports and highways with the aim of creating new trade corridors. China wants to revive its silk route from the Taoist era. Based on data until 2021, there are 139 partner countries including Indonesia. The total investment until 2022 is 932 billion USD (Wang, 2022). Here we can see that since its launch, the happening started in 2015. BRI created a lot of polemics against the United States and western countries because they felt competed. Several airports and highways have been built. So from here, if questions arise about whether this project will continue or not, from here we can see that it is impossible to stop.

From the BRI blueprint, it can be drawn back to seapower and landpower. There are two main figures, Mackinder and Mahan. Mackinder gave the idea of geopolitics as we know it, he created the pivot area that whoever controls the pivot area will control the world. Mackinder has projected that the world's pivot area is in Eurasia. Whoever controls the heartland will control the world. The region outside Eurasia was not taken into account. His ideas became contradictory to Mahan's. Mahan knew that it is not heartland or pivot area that is not land/island, but water so whoever controls the water controls the world. So there are two different ideas. China actually collaborates heartland and rimland (Mackinder, 1904). So based on these two things, China is trying to control in the future that it can control the world so the grand design is world political control. The BRI blueprint contains land and sea connectivity in the region that became a pivot area in the initial geopolitical mapping, an idea about the centre of world control.

China's location is half in the rimland and half in the heartland. If we use the term expansion of power, then its expansion is towards the west. Countries with maritime interiors to the western region from China's geographical location are indo pacific, in the region the potential is very large in terms of market (China Internet Information, 2019). The market here is explained by the large population and the potential for large energy and natural resource wealth. Southeast Asia has a very large population. So the organic potential in these regions is very promising. Then, the partnership in BRI is projected to strengthen China's position on a global scale to control world trade traffic both from the waterways and the heartland.

Why did China then have the idea or re-initiate the concept of the silk route that once existed in the BRI policy. Xi Jinping did not want to repeat the mistakes of the Soviet Union, where the Soviet Union when it wanted to interact economically but was destroyed, so China did not want to repeat the same mistake as an isolationist ideology. Why did China initiate to the economy, because there is an element of economic considerations, so after the cold war it was a geopolitical turning point. That's why China improved himself by involving economic instruments as a very crucial variable, thus creating the term geoeconomics. Contemporary geopolitics is known as geoeconomics with economic elements. In the current era, we cannot

project power with military alone, it can backfire. Edward Ludwalg who gave a new idea of geopolitical theory became what we know as geoeconomics (Petsinger, 2016).

The logic of what geoeconomics can offer, in geoeconomics allows for technological modernisation including in the security sector. Currently, military spending uses money, to get money we must survive in the economy to get new defence equipment. With this economic strength, the state can organise a more strategic foreign policy. The asset is the economic power. The economic strength of a country can organise outside parties to be given international support. So the economic strength of a country can attract other countries to approach us and provide assistance. So there is political reciprocity. Then from this logic of geoeconomic logics implemented and compiled by China in the BRI concept, the focus is on shapping economic power through GDP projection, so China focuses on improving the income and economy of its country and BRI is a manifestation of China's power and security projections both regionally and globally. This projection is a tool for China in power and security. It can be said that in the past geopolitics was territorial expansion, getting new colonies was still justified, expansion must now be through trade and commerce.

The successful reform in this reform is in the agricultural system. China is famous for its agriculture, China can export rice, China successfully produces in the agricultural sector and can sell this so because the agricultural sector is promising, land reform is carried out to partial privatisation and land use rights are carried out. With China creating BRI, China has its own bank to counter the World Bank and to counter the westernised World Bank and Asian Development Bank. Here we see that what happened in China is the result of economic reforms implemented from the 1980s. In early 2000 China began to open / join multilateral trading there China is still following while trying to build its economy to produce similar from existing investors (Department of Commerce, 2023). Geoeconomics is the geopolitics of conflict between countries, geoeconomics is geopolitics with an economic element. Then geoeconomics is actually a tool to support geopolitics but the achievement itself before the final goal is security and power. China has a historical and political regarding the 1 China policy, the United States agreed to the 1 China policy, but recently the United States began to interfere in China's affairs in Taiwan. This triggered China to counter the United States. So China's power projection regionally is in the South China Sea, Taiwan then globally in the Asia Pacific, East Africa Coast and Indo Pacific.

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