

SHOULD WE FEAR CHINA?

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Abstract: *The People's Republic of China is, without doubt, the country with the most interesting evolution in the history of mankind. Its rise and expansion, on all levels, worldwide, no longer surprises anyone. China, with a large continental and oceanic territory (third after Russia and Canada), with significant natural resources and a population exceeding 1.4 billion (almost 19% of the Earth's population), through its economic development, ending up owning 16.5% of the world economy¹ has become the second economic power of the world and the third military power of nowadays, which allows it to defend its interests in its area of influence. Moreover, if it continues at the current pace, the sustained economic development of the People's Republic of China will make it reach the first place in the world economy in the medium term.*

Keywords: *China; economic development; world trade; Silk Road; Eurasia; yellow danger; international risks.*

Introduction

The World War II, the most destructive of all, hit in the most damaging way the countries of Europe, Far East and Extreme East. The Western Europe recovered relatively quickly with the not so disinterested support from United States, while China and Japan recovered on their own. First, the *Japanese miracle*² happened, then the rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC), that led to the expression *the yellow danger*. In

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¹ Analiza agendei – 26, „Cum să privim China – I”, *TRT România*, available at <https://www.trt.net.tr/romana/programe/2019/06/25/cum-sa-privim-china-i-1225128>, accessed on 19.12.2019.

² Corina Chiriacov, „Miracolul economic japonez”, în *Scrib*, available at <https://ro.scribd.com › doc › miracol-economic-japonez>, accessed on 22.12.2019.

the Extreme East and not only, Chinese are admirable people, being in the same time a fearsome military force.

Some of the French political and military analysts were considering that Soviet Union had a positive role in the defense of Western Europe, by acting as a roadblock in the event of a Chinese expansion, therefore as a limitation of the *yellow danger*³. There was even an undeclared war at the Soviet – Chinese border, in 1969, for the disputed Chinese territories.⁴ The Chinese pretext⁵ was the occupation of an island on the Ussuri River*. As they jokingly said, *Russia is neighbor with whomever it wants*⁶.

³ Horațiu Pepine, „România privește în ochi pericolul galben”, în *Deutsche Welle*, București, 26.nov.2013, available at <https://www.dw.com > românia-privește-în-ochi-pericolul-galben>, accessed on 23.12.2019.

⁴ Mihai Croitor, *România și conflictul sovieto-chinez (1956-1971)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Mega, 2009, pp. 228-229; p. 270; Mihai Croitor, Sanda Croitor, PDF, “Nikita S. Hrușciov și cheștiunea frontierelor în cadrul blocului comunist. Studii de caz: China, Iugoslavia, Polonia, România, Ungaria și URSS”, *ASTRA Salvensis - Revistă de istorie și cultură*, an VII, nr. 13/2019, pp. 172-173, available at <https://astrasalva.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/astra-salvensis-vii-2019-no.-13.pdf>, accessed on 14.01.2020; A. N. I. C., Fond CC al PCR-Secția Cămară, dosar 4/1963, f. 40 (documentul în cauză a fost publicat. See: „1963 februarie 26-27. Stenograma ședinței Biroului Politic al CC al PMR cu privire la disputele din CAER și alte divergențe românosovietice”, in Dan Cătănuș (editor), Între Beijing și Moscova. România și conflictul soviet-chinez, pp. 181-204.

⁵ Dr. Șerban Filip Cioculescu, “Relații ruso-chineze înainte și după Războiul Rece: aspecte politice, militare, economice”, în *Monitor strategic* nr.1-2/2011, p.15, București, available at <ispaim.mapn.ro > app > webroot > fileslib > upload > files>, accessed on 27.12.2019.

* In 1964, Mao requested China to give up territories taken in the 19th Century and even Kuril Islands to Japan, even though the soviet leader Nikita Hrușciov accepted the withdrawal of USSR from Manchuria and to give up on economic pressure in Western China, province of Xinjiang! Mao also mentioned the annexation by USSR of some territories from Germany, Finland and Romania. Some border incidents occurred in 1969 in a very serious form, with a death toll of more than 1,000 people. More precisely, on March 15th, the Chinese and Soviet forces collided on the Ussuri border, river with a changing course depending on the water flow and composition. The island of Zhengbao (Damansky) was the reason of the clash. The communist leaders Kosâghin and Ciu En Lai negotiated in the end a cease of fire. The Chinese rejected the Soviet proposals like a non-aggression pact and the acceptance of the thalweg principle to draw the disputed river border, in the zone of the great rivers Ussuri and Amur. What the Chinese communists could not accept was especially the continuation of Moscow ownership over the island of

1. Romanian – Chinese relationship

The Romanian foreign policy in the period of semi-independence of USSR (1964 – 1989), when the pressure from the East was at an all-time high and the risk of military reoccupation existed, became oriented towards a more peaceful and distant friend who, in the words of the poet, could not ask for *land and water*. One can remember the scarcity of the moments in the history of our country when a big world power declared the firm and unconditional support for the Romanian people, for the independence and territorial integrity of Romania.** Thus, the relationship with PRC was strengthened on multiple levels: economic, cultural, military and on information, while the Chinese Embassy in Bucharest was at the same level of importance as the Embassies of USSR and USA. In an example of military cooperation between Romania and China in the 70's, when USSR refused to sell us some categories of military technique, PRC offered us the technology, equipment and technical documentation in order to produce military technology for the national industry of defense.⁷

In the first months after the events of December 1989, the bilateral relations entered a stage of relative stagnation. The commercial trades dropped drastically, while the ongoing economic cooperation froze.

After October 1990, the bilateral relations were resumed, with some difficulties, identifying cooperation areas in the spirit of new geopolitical changes; the diplomatic contacts were multiplied, a normalization of the

Heixiazi (Bol'shoi Ussuriisk), that being a vital strategic point at the confluence of the two above-mentioned rivers. Also, the island of Tarabarov in the province of Heilongjiang and another one on the river Argun, in the province of Habarovsk.

⁶ Florin Nahorniac, "Cu cine se învecinează Rusia? Cu cine vrea ea! Ce facem dacă vrea cu România?" ziarul *Ștefan cel Mare*, nr.633/ 2019, available at <https://www.ziarulstefancelmare.ro/cu-cine-se-invecineaza-rusia-cu-cine-...>, accessed on 28.12.2019.

^{**} *China has been the only great power in the world actually willing to go to war against Soviet Union, in August 1968, in order to protect Romania in the face of the imminent and extrem danger of aggression and military occupation by the forces of Warsaw Treaty. "Romania can count in the defense of its independence on the support of Chinese people", declared Zhou Enlai, Prime Minister of the State Council on August 23rd, 1968.*

⁷ Petre Opreș, "Câteva programe militare românești din perioada 1970-1985. Contracte cu China și nevoia de submarine", în *Contributors.ro*, din 2 sept. 2015, available at www.contributors.ro › Romania și Rusia Sovietică, accessed on 28.12.2019.

reports occurred, based on international law principles, and the official visits were resumed as well, both at governmental and presidential levels. It is worth pointing out that the Chinese diplomacy moved its center of gravity for Europe to Belgrade and in 1999 it was *by accident* bombarded by the US Air Force⁸.

After 2000, as a result of the important visits in PRC of governmental delegations, the establishment and signing of multiple legal instruments took place, which will be the foundation of collaborations and new agreements for bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Between 2000 and 2004 there was the most fruitful period of the last 20 years. An augmentation of bilateral relations occurred, through continuous efforts in three areas: maintaining the intensity of high-level delegations and consolidation of political relationships; active development of trade and financial / economic cooperation; strengthening of cooperation and consultation in international business and mutual understanding and support in each party aspects of interest. Thus, "Romania became the most important Chinese partner in Europe"⁹. The statement belongs to the Chinese President Jiang Zemin, an openly-declared friend of Romanians, proficient in Romanian language and in love with Eminescu's poems.¹⁰

In 2004, during the visit of the Popular Republic of China President, Hu Jintao, in Romania, the Common Declaration between Romania and People Republic of China was signed, establishing *An Ample Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation*, while in November 25th 2013, during the official visit in Romania of the Prime Minister of the State Council, Li Keqiang, *The Joint Declaration by the Government of Romania and the Government of People Republic of China on deepening bilateral cooperation in the new circumstances* was adopted.

The Chinese immigration in Romania appeared after 1990 and increased quickly, establishing an important presence in Bucharest, but also

⁸ Adrian Mihai Diaconu, "Intervenția militară a NATO în Iugoslavia din anul 1999", *Buletinul Universității Naționale de Apărare „Carol I”*, iunie 2015, p. 146, available at <https://revista.unap.ro › index.php › revista › article › download>, accessed on 02.01.2020.

⁹ Adrian Năstase, "Evoluția relațiilor româno-chineze după 1989. Scurtă sinteză", *Blog*, available at <https://-adriannastase.ro/2013/11/27/evolutia-relatiilor-romano-chineze-dupa-1989-scurta-sinteză>, accessed on 02.01.2020.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

in other development centers of the country. The Chinese immigrants deal especially with commercial activities and services. They founded commercial stores, like “Dragonul Roșu”, which represents the core of the China Town Romania project, which will extend in the area of Bucharest – Dobroești – Voluntari – Afumați, by construction of the *China Business Center Romania* and a residential complex called *China Towers*.¹¹ Then, from the country Capital, some small investments migrated to other important economic areas of the country.

At the end of 2014, the ZTE Company, one of the largest producers of telecommunication networks in China, opened a services center. Then, another important investment in the mobile communications was represented by *Huawei Technologies*, which opened a regional center in Bucharest to ensure the technical support for Central and Eastern Europe, Northern countries and Western Europe.¹²

The People Republic of China expressed the intention to invest in the energy sector, especially to build the 3rd and 4th reactors in Cernavodă¹³, for which in 2019 a preliminary agreement was signed, [but] also to invest in the energetic plants of Rovinari and Mintia-Deva, agreement signed in October 2014¹⁴, in wind power projects, [but] also to build the hydro-electric power plant in Tarnița – Lăpușești, on the Warm Someș, but the construction contract is still unsigned.¹⁵

¹¹ Mihai Adrian, “China vrea în UE, cu escală la prin România”, *Jurnalul Național*, 17 iunie 2006, available at http://www.media.imopedia.ro/stiri-imobiliare/china_vrea..., accessed on 03.01.2020.

¹² Huawei a anunțat noul smartphone Mate Xs ... - Yoda.ro, available at <https://www.yoda.ro › smartphones › huawei-deschide-primul-sau-custome...>, accessed on 03.01.2020.

¹³ Gabriel Kolbay, “Cât de riscant e pentru Romania să construiască reactoarele 3 și 4 de la Cernavodă cu chinezii?”, *Ziare.com*, 9 mai 2019, accessed on 04.01.2020.

¹⁴ Acord Complexul Oltenia-China Huadian Engineering pentru un grup energetic la Rovinari și Mintia, available at <stiri.tvr.ro › acord-complexul-oltenia-china-huadian-engineering-pentru-un-...>, accessed on 04.01.2020.

¹⁵ Ministrul Energiei, Sper să semnăm contractual de construire a hidrocentralei Tarnița-Lăpușești anul acesta, *Media Fax*, 7 feb 2019, available at <https://www.mediafax.ro/economic/ministrul-energiei-sper-sa-semnam-contractul-de-construire-a-hidrocentralei-tarnita-lapusteri-anul-acesta-17867589>, accessed on 05.01.2020.

Another domain of interest for the Chinese investments is the transportation infrastructure, where they are considering the construction of a high-speed railroad on the Vienna – Bucharest – Constanta route, the project being in discussion phase with the Chinese part.¹⁶

In agriculture, the Chinese are interested in importing agro-alimentary products (especially meat, cereals and honey), as well as industrial equipment.¹⁷

Since 2004 and up to these days [2019], although the investments volume grew constantly and the cultural – scientific cooperation intensified, the investments of this big economic power in large infrastructure projects are yet to be seen.

2.Recent history

The Central China plateau was the second source of human civilization after Mesopotamia.¹⁸ The Chinese Empire was older than Roman Empire, while in Antiquity and Middle Ages it had commercial bonds with the entire Ancient World (Asia, Africa and Europe), bonds known in Europe as *The Silk Road**. However, the Chinese civilization and wealth attracted Mongols, Japanese and European conquerors and we believe that, at a smaller scale, of course, we can compare it with the Romanian fate.

After the death of the founder and ruler of PRC, Mao Zedong, the country went through many economic and social transformations, but maintained its political line. Mao created the most populated state in the world, that incorporated China, Manchuria, Interior Mongolia, Uyghuria and Tibet, with close to 1 billion yellow race inhabitants, the Chinese

¹⁶ Chinezii vor construi o linie de mare viteză în România, digi24, available at <https://www.digi24.ro> › Știri › Externe › Mapamond, accessed on 05.01.2020.

¹⁷ Îndrumar de afaceri pentru Republica Populara Chineză Ediția: 2018 Lucrare elaborată de Ministerul pentru Mediul de Afaceri, Comerț și Antreprenariat Biroul de Promovare Comercial Economică Beijing, PDF, available at imm.gov.ro › wp-content › uploads › 2018/11 › Indrumar-de-afaceri-Rep..., accessed on 05.01.2020.

¹⁸ Istoria omenirii-Antichitatea 1, available at <https://ro.scribd.com/doc/16614285/istoria-omenirii-antichitatea-1>, accessed on 05.01.2020.

* *A commercial bond between China and Europe that existed since the oldest times and was based on stock exchange, also facilitating the diplomatic and cultural contacts.*

language became the one spoken by the most people on the planet, the industrialization began and the living standard quickly doubled (a performance unmatched by other countries). Basically, from an average of a handful of rice per person per day it came to two handfuls of rice per day. For us it is somewhat hilarious, but in a country with a billion people starving that was a real performance.

People Republic of China managed to surpass, through ideology and strength, all the economic and social troubles, continued the industrialization, regained the British colony of Hong Kong in 1997, the Portuguese colony of Macao in 1999, tried to get the Island of Taiwan (Chinese Republic¹⁹). It fought USSR in 1969²⁰, fought in different countries supported by USA (North Korea 1950-1953, Vietnam 1961-1975 etc.), and nowadays it is fortifying an archipelago in the China Sea, creating a conflict with the riparian states and with USA.

People Republic of China became the second world economic power, in competition with USA, it has the largest gross domestic product (GDP), it is the second scientific power, the greatest exporter and the second importer, it has the largest army in the world,²¹ it has nuclear weapons, it is the third world military force and, as permanent member of the Security Council, has veto right in the UN.

With all these advantages, the Chinese expand globally, on all levels, but for now in a peaceful and mutually advantageous way – actually this is how all superpowers started.

One of the main advantages of the global expansion of Chinese economic phenomena is emigration that reached 50 million people²² and this is what the economies of receiving countries, as well as the economy of PRC, are counting on. This reached all the Earth meridians, especially in the developed countries, founding strong Chinese communities from where they

¹⁹ *Taipei Administration is officially known as Chinese Republic.*

²⁰ The Chinese-Soviet border conflict in 1969 refers to a series of armed conflicts along the border between the two countries due to breaking up the Chinese-Soviet relations in 1969.

²¹ Statistics show that PRC has over 4.5 million active and reserve militaries, being the most numerous armed force in the world, Top 10 cele mai mari forțe militare din lume, available at <https://media-top-10-cele-mai-mari-forțe-militare...>, accessed on 07.01.2020.

²² Dr. Radu Săgeată, PDF, *Emigrația chineză*, Introducere, p.1, Academia.edu, available at https://www.academia.edu/emigrația_chineză, accessed on 07.01.2020.

send to their countries important financial resources (almost 80% of the external investments in the Chinese economy is represented by the Chinese people with permanent residence abroad²³) and, not to be neglected, information about economic development of the countries they settled in. Actually, one can see that former Chinese emigrants or their descendants began to return to China as millionaires, developing businesses and contributing to creation of workplaces.²⁴

The Chinese acquired industrial objectives and natural resources around the world, while in their country they have multiple free economic zones for foreign investors. Their national currency, renminbi (yuan) became strong, while USA is the largest debtor of PRC. This *economic boom* though demands a continuous development, any stagnation generating a recession risk, with potentially catastrophic effects that extend on a global scale.²⁵

As such, PRC established a long-term economic strategy based on commercial trades and industrial production, agriculture and services, in order to sustain the permanent import – export flows, which after all is the basis of any country's wealth. The large production capacity of China placed the center of gravity of global production and trade from Atlantic to Pacific and consequently proposed a project for a new *Silk Road* to tie China to Europe and the rest of the world. In our opinion, we do not believe that this is about a movement from Western hemisphere to the Eastern one, because the Old World (Europe, Asia and Africa) is mainly located in the Eastern hemisphere, including China. Actually, the most intensive international trade used to be done from the West of Eastern hemisphere to the East of Western hemisphere (between Europe and America), while now it is more intensive between the East of Eastern hemisphere to the West of Western hemisphere (between Asia and America). Sometimes, the press insists with geographical inaccuracies, like Romania being an East European country when the geographical reality is that we are in Central Europe and Bucharest is in the middle of the distance between the East and

²³ *Ibidem*, p.8.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p.15.

²⁵ Iulian Chifu, „Alertă în 2019: China în depresie economică. Lumea în pragul unei noi crize globale. Pulsul planetei”, *Evz zilei.ro*, available at <https://evz.ro/alerta-in-2019-china-in-depresie-economica-lumea-in-prag...>, accessed on 05.01.2020.

the West of the continent (at least the scientific papers should use the correct terms).

3. The new Silk Road in the Old World and New World

In the Old World, in the Middle Ages, the trade happened between China and Europe with caravans and ships, on separate routes, generically named the Silk Road.

In 2015, China launched *Belt and Road Initiative*²⁶ (BRI) an evolutionary project consisting in two complementary concepts: *Silk Road Economic Belt*²⁷ meaning the land and rail corridors tying China to Western Europe, and *21-st Century Maritime Silk Road*²⁸ meaning sea routes tying China to Western Europe. These represent the development of an older Eurasian project, started in 2013, named *One Belt, One Road*²⁹ (OBOR) that unifies by *railroad* Central China with Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany, France and Great Britain (in 16 days) and by sea route that connects Eastern China with Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Portugal and Germany (in 36 days). This project replaced the failed Russian projects to tie London to Vladivostok by railroad, that is from Atlantic Ocean to Pacific Ocean, and the other smaller project, for a highway to circle the Black Sea.

The BRI Project developed the initial project and delivered a *road network* to cross China from the Yellow Sea to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Turkey and continue to Europe. Another

²⁶ Alexandra Buican, „Noilor Drumuri ale Mătăsi” (Belt and Road Initiative), *Capital*, 28 nov 2017, available at <https://www.capital.ro/romania-si-china-au-semnat-protocolul>, accessed on 05.01.2020.

²⁷ Richard Ghiasy and Jiayi Zhou, „Silk Road Economic Belt”, *Our work: Cooperation for Peace and Security*, available at <https://www.fes-asia.org/news/the-silk-road-economic-belt/>, accessed on 07.01.2020.

²⁸ Dr Lora Saalman, Richard Ghiasy, Fei Su, „New report on the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”, available at <https://www.sipri.org/news/2018/new-report-21st-century-maritime-silk-road>, accessed on 07.01.2020.

²⁹ Nouvelle route de la soie, *Wikipedia*, available at https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nouvelle_route_de_la_soie, accessed on 07.01.2020; Reacția stupefiantă a ministrului Energiei la declarațiile lui Klaus Iohannis, available at <https://www.b1.ro/stiri/economic/b1-romania-statele-unite-klaus-iohanis...>, accessed on 07.01.2020.

itinerary is towards Kazakhstan and Russia, another one towards Kazakhstan crossing the Caspian Sea, another one from Western China towards Iran, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan³⁰. The one towards Iran, Turkey and Europe is delayed because of UN sanctions on Iran. All these will form the *Asian road network* (with 6 highways having 4 and 6 lanes)³¹, which despite serving Europe as well is not funded by EU.

The Eurasian *railroad* that connects China to Western Europe,³² the longest railroad with over ten thousand kilometers, reaches Duisburg since 2011, Hamburg since 2013, Madrid since 2014, Rotterdam since 2015, Lyon since 2016, while since 2016 the route Germany – China is driven through in 12 days. The costs are 80% lower than airfare. Another railroad is in project phase and by 2026 it will connect London and Pekin in 48 hours. Also, China is involved in the construction of a railroad in Eastern Africa, to connect with the mineral resources in Congo and South Africa.

*Waterways*³³ will connect the three continents of the Old World, with ports in Gwadar, in Baluchistan (Pakistan), Reunion, Mayotte, Alat (Azerbaijan), on the Eastern coast of Africa and in the Mediterranean Sea. All these waterways will be guarded by military ships on the *pearl necklace* on the way (military bases) against piracy or possible naval blockades. Actually, the land networks (road and rail) have the role to free the sea

³⁰ Jean-Paul Larcon, Corinne Vadcar, PDF, „Les nouvelles Routes de la Soie - enjeux et opportunités économiques”, Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris Ile-de-France, June 2019; pp. 9-14; 15-19, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334416174..._Les_nouvelles_Routes_de_la_Soie_enjeux_et_opportunités_economiques, accessed on 08.01.2020.

³¹ Réseau routier asiatique, *Wikipédia*, available at https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Réseau_routier_a..., accessed on 08.01.2020.

³² Viorica Marin, „Noul Drum al Mătăsii ce leagă China de Marea Britanie”, *Adevarul.ro-international*, available at https://adevarul.ro/international/asia/noul-drum-matasii-leaga-china-marea-britanie1_586d0bed5ab6550cb8130e0b/index.html, accessed on 08.01.2020.

³³ Mathieu Duchâtel and Alexandre Sheldon Duplaix, „Blue China: Navigating the Maritime Silk Road to Europe.”, *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 23rd April, 2018, available at *Blue China: Navigating the Maritime Silk Road to Europe*, accessed on 09.01.2020.

traffic (the cheapest, but slowest) on one hand, and to be a strategic alternative to the sea transportation in case of crisis, on the other hand.³⁴

In the New World, the most crowded sea lines are between USA and China / Japan. China is designing also a land route (road and/or rail) to connect with America, passing through a Russian tunnel under the Bering strait, to Alaska and from there to connect to the USA and Canada transportation network.³⁵

At the Ministerial Forum China - CELAC, at Santiago, 2019³⁶, the Chinese declared that South America and Central America are parts of the natural extension of the Sea Silk Road.

In this titanic project, formed by multiple large projects, currently 144 countries participate from all continents, including Romania. Not only goods (industrial, raw materials, agricultural products) are transported, but also energy, telecommunications, *roads* are designed and built, as well as rails, bridges, tunnels, ports, airports, industrial parks, tourist, border and legal projects are in place, as well as non-material concepts.³⁷ This gigantism scares some small states that fear the partial loss of sovereignty by Chinese presence, debts and security forces. The total costs are estimated to thousands of billion euros and the funding through IMF and WB is avoided since these two represents mainly the interests of USA, which is not a promotor of this project.

³⁴ Jean-Paul Larcon, Corinne Vadcar, PDF, „Les nouvelles Routes de la Soie - enjeux et opportunités économiques”, partie 2, Opportunités sectorielles des nouvelles « Routes de la Soie », pp. 26-38, Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris Ile-de-France, June 2019; pp. available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334416174..._Les_nouvelles-Routes_de_la_Soie_enjeux_et_opportunités_economiques, accessed on 09.01.2020.

³⁵ La nouvelle route de la Soie et un tunnel sous le détroit de Béring l'intention Westphalienne de la Chine, Tunnel sous le détroit de Béring, Wikipédia, available at https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tunnel_sous_le_...; accessed on 09.01.2020.

³⁶ José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, „A new phase in China-Latin America relations: cooperation on science, technology and innovation”, Conference Paper (PDF) Available, June 2019 with 69 Reads, available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333915551...>, accessed on 10.01.2020.

³⁷ Jean-Paul Larcon, Corinne Vadcar, *Op.cit.*; „E-commerce et les Infrastructures numériques.”, pp. 38-42, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334416174..._Les_nouvelles_Routes_de_la_Soie_enjeux_et_opportunités_economiques, accessed on 10.01.2020.

One comment is necessary. The Chinese evolution is somehow surprising. The dictatorship of the unique Party, paradoxically combined with the market economy (strategy that was tried by us as well in the '70s, known as *trustees'* period, but abandoned as it could lead to social inequalities) generated an accelerated development and the economic need to expand on a global scale.

As a consequence, the President of the USA, Donald Trump, recently said, in his well-known style, that enemies of the USA are: Russia, China and EU³⁸, while the President of the Republic of France, Emmanuel Macron, replied that "enemies of EU are: Russia, China and USA³⁹ (and, maybe not entirely coincidental, in short time the riot of the *yellow vests* started and still continues nowadays). It is obvious that the two heads of state were not considering enemies in a military way, but as competitors for world supremacy, as all interested in politics and strategy would think, however nobody formulated this truth so bluntly.

In the world of great powers, there can be a very thin line from competition to war. It is just that none of the rivals is alone, the world is not bipolar or unipolar anymore, but multipolar. Every superpower or great power has a series of states that are friends or allies, that support their actions, but also moderate them when needed. We do not expect direct military actions, only declarations and demonstrations of force in terms of military, economics, commercials, financials, culture, etc., may those be direct or indirect. Let us not forget that also *the embargo, blockade or sanctions* are considered acts in the *state of war*. All these can escalate from the *cold war* state to *hybrid war* and eventually to *real war* and when we are talking about great powers that have nuclear weapons the danger is enormous.

³⁸ Bogdan Neagu, „UE încearcă să convingă China și Rusia să nu intre în jocul lui Trump de-a comerțul mondial”, *Euroactiv.ro*, 16 Iul 2018, available at <https://www.euractiv.ro/extern/trump-tusk-si-razboaiele-comerciale-11315>, accessed on 11.01.2020.

³⁹ Mihai Drăghici, „Emmanuel Macron, a replicat că dușmanii UE sunt: Rusia, China și SUA”, *Mediafax*, available at <https://www.mediafax.ro/externe/monitorul-apararii-emmanuel-macron...> accessed on 11.01.2020.

In this international context there is a medium- and long-term risk: an infiltration from one or the other in national economy and in society (including in our country), that will support the conflicts between competitors, with effects in the economy; we can be affected even if we do not actively participate in the battle between the big ones. There is the risk to be debtors to both of them, to have simultaneous contradictory interests, to be forced to act against our national interests, even to be like a foreign colony that has never been conquered by war, but by treaties and successive contracts signed by *axe handles*.

In our opinion, our political class has to be vigilant, to not waste the economic and financial opportunities of cooperation, yet not to create the risk of colonization either, through disadvantageous contracts, as it has happened before in the period of the *original democracy*. This wish can only be realized through a full integration in the European structures (as they are described in *Political guidelines for the next European commission 2019-2024*⁴⁰), through common legislation according to European Union and in agreement with it on all levels.

Conclusions

We can consider that the so-called *yellow danger*, even if it exists, does not target Romania directly and actually we would have an opportunity to develop by cooperating with PRC; however, the concrete ways of cooperation have to be well designed and clearly defined in order to be mutually advantageous, to avoid potential risks as it happened in the recent history of Romania.

Despite some difficult international situations, Romania's relationship with People Republic of China stood the test of time, even if sometimes differences existed, always counting on scientific, economic and cultural cooperation. Economic and commercial relationship continued to expand year over year, so that both countries enjoyed the results of a mutually advantageous cooperation.

⁴⁰ Von der Leyen Sets Out Green Priorities for the 2019-2024 European Commission, *Interreg Europe*, available at <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/news/6399/von-der-leyen-sets-out-green-priorities-for-the-2019-2024-european-commission/>, accessed on 12.01.2020.

The major risk would be a war between the great powers in which Romania could be engaged in the context of the military and political alliances that is part of and would stand to lose on many levels without a benefit perspective, as it happens today. It is a good thing though, that at least for now we have peace, international cooperation is working (even with some hard moments) and in the future, in the words of the poet, *what is written for us, we will happily accept it*.



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