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Roads to the West—Geopolitical Spectacles Make It Impossible To See the Solutions

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The following article by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder and President of the Schiller Institute, was [first published](#) in the April 18, 2019 issue of Beijing Review. It is reprinted in EIR with permission.

April 17—For the last several years or so, Western media and mainstream politicians have chosen to largely ignore the Belt and Road Initiative, which Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed in 2013. The initiative, consisting of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, efficiently addresses the infrastructure needs of developing countries, which the West simply pretended not to exist.

But, at a certain point it dawned on the Western establishment that China was not only building an enormous number of railway lines, ports, bridges, power plants and industrial parks in Asia, Africa and even in parts of Europe, but that the prospect of poverty alleviation offered by China instilled an unprecedented spirit of optimism.

China's Vision

China impressed the world by lifting more than 700 million people out of poverty over the last 40 years, constructing the world's best high-speed train network and becoming a leading space nation. It has now offered to share this experience with countries which were heretofore relegated to be the "Third World."

Leaders of these countries suddenly demanded to be treated equally by the West, rather than simply the recipients of development aid, which would mostly vanish in the pockets of non-governmental organiza-



The image is a screenshot of the Beijing Review website. At the top, it says "China's National English News Weekly Since 1958" and "BEIJING REVIEW". Below that, there are navigation links: "Home", "Nation", "World", "Business", "Opinion", "Lifestyle", "China Focus", "Dissidents", "Multimedia", "Columnsists", "Interviews", "Special Reports". The main heading is "World" and the article title is "Roads to the West" with the subtext "Geopolitical spectacles make it impossible to see the solutions". The author is "By Helga Zepp-LaRouche" and the date is "2019-04-17". The source is "Source: NO. 16 APRIL 18, 2019". The main image shows a freight train at a station with a sign that says "Intermodal". Below the image is a caption: "A freight train departs from a railway station in Dudelange, Luxembourg, for Chengdu in southwest China's Sichuan Province, on April 4 (XINHUA)". To the right of the image is a text block that repeats the article's main points. Below the text block is a small portrait of Helga Zepp-LaRouche. At the bottom of the screenshot, it says "China's vision" and "China impressed the world by lifting more than 700 million people out of poverty over the last 40".

tions.

In an obviously coordinated fashion, many leading think tanks on both sides of the Atlantic produced lengthy studies based around a foreseeable theme. They

declared that the motivation for the Belt and Road Initiative was an ill-natured attempt by China to replace the “rules-based system,” actually the Anglo-American imperialism, with Chinese imperialism and lure participating countries into a “debt trap.” They also noted that China is built on an authoritarian system and that there would be a competition of systems between the “liberal, open and social market economy” and the “state-controlled economy of China.”

Ironically, it was the same neoliberal critics who enthusiastically welcomed China into the World Trade Organization in 2001, sure that China would adopt the Western model of democracy and neoliberal economics.

Convinced of their own political and cultural superiority, these circles thought it to be a waste of their precious time to pay attention to such revolutionary concepts as a community with a shared future for humanity, presented by Xi and other Chinese leaders in hundreds of conferences and international gatherings to political leaders from all over the world.

Looking through their geopolitical spectacles and hearing through their colonial headsets, they completely dismissed the conception that China could be serious in presenting a new model of international relations, one that would put the concept of the one humanity ahead of narrow national interest. The reality that the future of existence depends on shaping a new era based on the common interest of humanity has escaped the proponents of the old collapsing world order.

Anybody who looks at the totality of Chinese policy and to what China has achieved in terms of poverty alleviation can only come to the conclusion that China means what it says.

The aim of Chinese policy is to create a new paradigm in strategic relations, whereby geopolitics is overcome through win-win cooperation, where international politics stops being a zero-sum game but instead where harmony prevails.

In this way, China is operating on the basis of Confucian philosophy, namely the idea that there can be only peace if there is a harmonious development of all. But it also carries out the principles of the Treaty of the



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The largest vessels are handled at the container terminal of the port of Sines, Portugal.

Peace of Westphalia, that all policy for peace must be in the interest of others.

EU Cooperation

The Silk Road spirit has also caught on in an increasing number of European nations, some of which have signed official documents with China to cooperate under the Belt and Road Initiative. EU member states from East, Central and South Europe, and also individual cities and regions in other parts of the continent have found it in their best interest to work with China to build new or modernize existing infrastructure, for which the EU’s austerity policy has provided no funding mechanism.

Ports like Piraeus, Trieste, Duisburg, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Sines have realized unprecedented economic opportunities to become hubs for the Eurasian land rail lines, which connected 56 Chinese cities with 49 European cities in 2018. They also have the potential to become centers for the trade routes of the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road.

From the standpoint of universal history, this growing integration of infrastructure as the precondition of industrial and agricultural development for all is both obvious and organic.

But it has already irked the forces in Europe of the old neoliberal paradigm, who would rather accuse China of disuniting Europe, as if this needed to be, rather than reflecting on the effects of their own policies. Unlike in China, there is no plan within the EU to alleviate poverty.

Nonetheless, the heavy artillery of black propaganda

against China was launched just before Xi's state visit to Italy in March and the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative. Unprecedented falsehoods and threats were uttered, accusing China of pulling Italy, a G7 country and founding member of the EU, away from the United States and stating that Italy would have no economic benefit from such cooperation and would suffer damage to its international image.

An Alternative Idea

It is obvious that some circles, who owe their privileges to the "liberal system of Western democracy," which increased the gap between the rich and the poor beyond the pain barrier for more and more people, cannot overcome their geopolitical point of view. But there is an increasing chorus of people, such as chief of the IFO Institute, a Munich-based research institution, and other members of the European Economic Advisory Group, who think that the fear of Chinese investment in Europe is exaggerated and that it is in Europe's interest to attract more Chinese investment, not less.

Many middle-level entrepreneurs in Germany also think that European countries must cooperate with the Belt and Road Initiative.

Italy, on the other hand, has the potential to become



Giulio Tremonti

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the model for cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. Former Italian Minister of Economy and Finance Giulio Tremonti cited Italy as the door to the heart of Europe and said it could be the driver of Chinese-European cooperation in the industrialization of the African continent. The Chinese engineering firm Power China and the Italian firm Bonifica have already signed a memorandum of understanding for the realization of the biggest infrastructure program in Africa, the Transaqua Project, a canal system bringing water from the tributaries of the Congo River to refill Lake Chad and benefit the development of many neighboring countries.

The only realistic way for the presently divided Europe to unify again will be to cooperate with China. Not only through win-win cooperation and in the joint development of third-party markets, but by bringing the rich heritage of European classical culture to the concert of nations. If European nations reconnect to their own cultural traditions, they don't have to worry about China, instead we will have a dialogue of the best humanity has produced.

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