

The Ancient Silk Road And The New Silk Road Of The 21st Century : Comparative Study

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Abstract. The world system consists of core, semi-periphery and periphery. Along the way, China experienced significant economic growth, attracting world attention. Since thousands of years ago until now there have been famous trade routes, namely the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road of the 21st century which have brought China to become the core of the world. This research aims to find out the comparison between the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road of the 21st century using historical research methods. The results of this research show differences and similarities between the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road of the 21st century in terms of the commodities used for activities, the Silk Road travel routes, the regions involved, developments in transportation technology and the impact on the world system.

Keywords: World System, Silk Road, New Silk Road, China, Comparison

INTRODUCTION

China has attracted a lot of world attention since the beginning of the 21st century because of its significant economic growth. When the world was hit by a crisis in 2008, China's economy continued to increase fourfold since 2001 (Brown, 2017) . After enjoying its economic growth, China then tried to seek influence in the international arena through a series of ambitious programs. One of them is via the New Silk Road (Miller, 2017) . Talking about the Silk Road, many people immediately focus on the Silk Road during the Han Dynasty, which was a famous large trade route that connected the eastern world with the western world. However, it turns out that this ambition that once existed still continues today. The actors are still the same, namely China.

The term 'Silk Road' is not actually found in ancient Chinese classical texts rather, it only gained popularity after being coined by a German geographer in the 19th century (Wang & Zhao, 2011) Before the term 'Silk Road' was coined in 1877 by the German explorer and geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen (1933-1905) in his book entitled "China", after that, the name "Silk Road" universally accepted and used by the world at large (Mishra, 2020) . Geographically, the silk route started from Central China to Xianjiang Province, Central Asia, West Asia to Europe and northern Africa (Bo'stonovich, 2023).

The Silk Road during the Han Dynasty was opened and developed gradually during the Han Dynasty through Zhang Qian's expedition. This expedition facilitated the Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) to establish relations from east to west (Zhang, 2024) . Zhang Qian's expedition mission established a trade route known as the Silk Road. According to the political and geographical distribution at that time, society divided the entire Silk Road into three parts from east to west: the eastern part, the central part, and the western part (Wang & Zhao, 2011).

Through the Silk Road, the Han Dynasty was able to interact with various different societies, cultures, beliefs and traditions. So the Silk Road was not only a route for exchanging goods, it also became a bridge for the exchange of important ideas. In trading activities, the Ancient Silk Road became a caravan route that transported rare animals, plants, leather, herbs, spices, jewelry from west to east in exchange for tea, porcelain and other goods. Through this caravan, the Han Dynasty also increased silk production for export to various

countries outside China. The Silk Road was an important route for diplomatic and trade relations between China and other countries such as Asia, Africa and Europe during the Han Dynasty (Mahfud, 2014) . Apart from silk, this route also transports precious stones and jewelry. the start of the Silk Road and the alliance negotiated with northern nomadic tribes for security reasons. This was the beginning of the market in Central and West Asia (Peters, 2021) .

Under President Xi Jinping's administration, China began to shift from a country that showed a more low profile image during the Deng Xiaoping era, to a country that showed more of its role in the international world. China's New Silk Road project is characterized by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project (Miller, 2017) developed and launched in 2013 by Xi Jinping, president of China and general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party. China's goal in designing this path is to consolidate its role as an international power and to overcome the external and internal challenges it faces (Abajyan, 2018) . Another goal is to foster cooperation between countries in Asia, Africa and Europe by building infrastructure that facilitates cross-continental trade between the three. (Dewi & Akbar, 2017) .

The project reflects the idea of "Chinese Dream, Great Revival of the Chinese Nation" expressed in President Xi's inaugural speech in 2012. China seeks to revive the ancient Silk Road and introduce it to the international world under the name "The New Silk Road: One Belt, One Road" (Dewi & Akbar, 2017) . This project was announced by President Xi, and there is no doubt that the New Silk Road is a product of the highest priority and will be implemented as a long-term goal of the Chinese government. The New Silk Road is also referred to as "One Belt One Road", which means a vast economic region that includes the land silk road and the maritime silk road. (Lee et al., 2015) . Through this project, China will build highways, railways, oil and gas pipelines, factories, additional flight routes, electricity, ports across Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Miller, 2017) .

To realize this project, three financial institutions have been formed to support funding for The New Silk Road. The three institutions are the Silk Road Infrastructure Fund, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and New Development Bank BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Although the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) is not directly involved in funding The New Silk Road, it will continue to support projects under the initiative and collaborate with the AIIB. These three institutions will receive investment from various countries to support the development of various infrastructure projects, including those related to The New Silk Road. China has an important role in establishing and investing in these three institutions to realize the development of this new silk route (Dewi & Akbar, 2017) .

The problem that will be answered in writing this article is how to compare the Ancient Silk Road with the New Silk Road of the 21st century in terms of the goals and commodities of the Silk Road, travel routes, technology used, economic policies and their impact on the existing system in this world. For comparative studies, no articles and research activities were found by the author. Scientific article written by Aimei Zhang in 2024 in the International Multidisciplinary Journal For Research and Development with the title "Han Dynasty's Maintenance and Construction of the Silk Road", in her writing it is explained that the exploration and development of the Silk Road during the Han Dynasty continued to be carried out for progress The Ancient Silk Road. One of them is by increasing efforts to face threats and challenges from external parties with military action. This article only focuses on the Ancient Silk Road during the Han Dynasty. Furthermore, research written by Albertina Dias in the Eurasian Journal of Economics and Finance in 2019 with the title "Perspective on the New Silk Road and World Dynamics" stated that the Silk Road was not only a place for exchanging goods but also a place for intellectual exchange. and ideas.

Based on these facts, examining the differences between the ancient silk route and the new silk route can help in understanding the course of trade, cultural exchange, and the development of society along the route. Silk roads, both ancient and new, both play an important role in the global economy so that we can understand changes in economic dynamics, trade and investment in the regions traversed by these two routes. After I checked several sources, I have not found any articles that examine the comparison between the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road so this article will be interesting and contain useful information.

METHOD

The research conducted in this article is qualitative research, utilizing the historical research method integrated with a comparative approach. This approach is employed to systematically compare the elements of the Ancient Silk Road and the 21st-century New Silk Road Qualitative research presents descriptive descriptions based on data and information obtained in the field (Aditia Muara Padiatra, 2020; Asmariati & Lestari, 2025; Nurbaity & Tundjung, 2023; Susilo et al., 2024). So, researchers carry out in-depth analysis and

examination activities of records and relics of the past which help in the historical research process. Based on the data obtained by researchers, it will be compiled into historical writing (Metha Jaya, 2020). There are several steps that researchers must go through in writing historical research, namely data collection/heuristics, source criticism/verification activities, interpretation/interpretation, and historical writing/historiography (Nina Herlina, 2020).

The first step is searching and collecting data and sources related to the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road. Through library study activities, the author ensures that the sources sought must be relevant sources both through print and online media. The second step is source criticism by analyzing the data and information that the author has obtained so that data is identified that can be used in research. The third step is interpretation by creating a narrative and organizing the data obtained regarding the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road. Next, the final stage is writing history or known as historiography (Aditia Muara Padiatra, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Commodities and Activity Objectives

Table 1. Differences in the Objectives of the Activities of the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road

Ancient Silk Road	New Silk Road
1) Initially opened for military strategy	Becoming the World Core, so this also includes efforts to control the countries below them which are usually referred to as semi-periphery and periphery countries.
2) Caravan place for carrying merchandise from West to East	
3) Enriching western and eastern people for their daily lives	1) Open Diplomatic Activities 2) Opening Trade Routes (not only for silk commodities but for science and technology) 3) Modern Transportation Routes 4) Modern Infrastructure Development
4) A place to promote civilization, including: promoting western techniques for increasing production output, Chinese silk weaving techniques.	
5) Opening diplomatic activities	
6) The spread of Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Nestorianism to the Korean peninsula, Japan and Asian countries along the Silk Road.	
7) The process of ethnic mixing, media and ways of spreading culture.	

(Source: Author's Analysis Results)

Historically, the Silk Road was an ancient network of routes that facilitated trade and the development of art, culture, religion, knowledge, and medicine, as well as improving relations between people and between countries (Tang et al., 2017). Before the Han Dynasty, the Ancient Silk Road was opened for military strategy and then changed to become more systematic and official during the Han Dynasty. Then it continued into trading activities, from these trading activities there were cultural and religious exchanges. Buddhism as the dominant religion in China today is a relic of the Ancient Silk Road (Deng, 2023).

The famous Silk Road commodity was Chinese Silk which was exported to the West. These silk archaeological remains are often found in clusters of tombs in rivers in the Katanjin area, Bolaili River, Wuer Suer River in the Xibin area, Wulagan River. This silk is thought to have been woven in the 6th century BC to the 5th century BC. The patterns on the silk cloth are shaped like clouds, geometric patterns, pictures of animals such as birds, written words of luck and pictures of hunting activities. The most famous silk comes from Shandong province. The royal family's clothing is made from silk donated by Xiangyi. Han imperial rule (Wang & Zhao, 2011). Trade on the Silk Road also included fruit and vegetables, livestock, grain, hides and skins, tools, religious objects, works of art, stones and precious metals. (Peters, 2021). Tea (*Camellia sinensis* L.) is also a product of the Silk Road which spread among northern Chinese and western peoples such as the Uighurs generally associated with the Tang Dynasty (7th to 8th centuries) (Lu et al., 2016). Camel Caravans were also part of the Ancient Silk Road in carrying commodities for trade. Long caravans of camels laden with silk lumbered across the desert to meet Western traders carrying bags filled with gold coins (Mishra, 2020).



Figure 1. Silk piece with woven Chinese characters “Wang Hou” (king and prince).
Source: Earliest Tea As Evidence For One Branch of the Silk Road Across the Tibetan Plateau on Scientific Reports

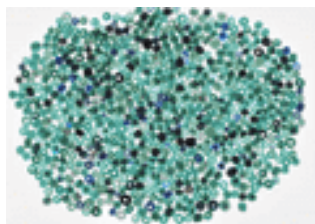


Figure 2. Pearl of Indo-Pacific Trade, Xiwan Road Old Casting Pipe Factory, Eastern Han Dynasty
Source: Journal of Sciences of Conservation and Archeology



Figure 3. Long truncated hexagonal biconic bead, Hengfu Road Bank Sanatorium, Western Han Dynasty
Source: Journal of Sciences of Conservation and Archeology



Figure 4. Glass ring in the shape of a corner wheel, Western Han Dynasty, Hepu Wenchang Tower MI 1987
Source: Journal of Sciences of Conservation and Archeology



Figure 5. Glass decoration, August 1978
Source: Journal of Sciences of Conservation and Archeology

The New Silk Road policy is a strategy that allows China to achieve its political goals by utilizing cooperation and investment in development projects with the countries involved. Through the broad scope of these policies, China aims to enhance its status as a great power in the international arena. Apart from fighting for national interests, The New Silk Road's policies were also influenced by geopolitical factors.

Geopolitics is the study of how geographical factors influence a country's behavior, including location, climate, natural resources, population, and topography which influence foreign policy and a country's position

in the global hierarchy. For geopolitical analysts, the relationship between geographic location, natural wealth, and political power is very important. A country can gain greater power than other countries if it has a strategic location and climatic conditions that support economic growth and political influence. China's dominance in The New Silk Road initiative is the key for this country to play a significant role in the international world, balancing the position of the United States (Dewi & Akbar, 2017).

Alfred Thayer Mahan emphasized that naval strength is the main factor in determining a country's strength. For him, a country that can control the seas will have significant dominance in international relations because of its ability to control extensive sea trade and transportation routes. Meanwhile, Sir Halford Mackinder in 1904 put forward his geopolitical concept known as "Heartland Theory". He stated that control of the "Heartland" (the central region of Eurasia that includes most of Eastern Europe, Russia, and parts of Central Asia) would provide control of the "World Island" (Eurasia) and, therefore, effective domination of the world. This statement highlights the importance of dominance over large land areas in determining global geopolitical power. Both concepts emphasize the importance of control over strategic areas in determining a country's influence in the context of international relations. Mahan emphasized maritime domination, while Mackinder highlighted the importance of control over large land areas. (Dewi & Akbar, 2017). The New Silk Road has three principles, including:

- a. The New Silk Road seeks a win-win situation for member countries.
- b. The New Silk Road has a policy that is open to any country wishing to become a member.
- c. The New Silk Road operates based on market-oriented rules and obtains government support where necessary (Lee et al., 2015).

Therefore, in the implementation of this new Silk Road, to support investment and financing for the New Silk Road to run well, China established three financial organizations, namely The Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB which already has 57 member countries), The New Development Bank (NDB) and the Silk Road Fund co-financed by China's foreign exchange reserves, China Investment Corporation, China Development Bank, and Export-Import Bank of China (Lee et al., 2015).

2. Silk Road Route

The ancient Silk Road route was opened through Zhang Qian's expedition, with missions to the West starting from Chang'an and Xi'an, passing through Gansu and Xinjiang, to Central Asia and West Asia, and connecting the Mediterranean countries. The road was named the "*Silk Road*". This route has three routes, namely South Road, Middle Road and North Road (Deng, 2023). During the Han Dynasty, border government institutions such as the Jiuquan Commandery, Wuwei Commandery, Zhangye Commandery, and Dunhuang Commandery were built in the Western Regions to more effectively manage and control transportation and trade activities along the Silk Road (Zhang, 2024).

There are two main silk routes, namely the northern route and the southern route and there are land and sea routes. During the Han Dynasty, land routes became an idol because the geographical conditions were more comfortable than sea routes. The northern route passes through Bulgar-Kipchak towards Eastern Europe-Crimean Peninsula, then towards the Black Sea, Sea of Marmara and the Balkans towards Venice. While the Southern route passes through Turkestan, Khurasan towards Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Antioch south of Anatolia, towards the Mediterranean Sea or through the Levant to Egypt and North Africa. The Silk Road routes included a vast network of strategically located trading posts, markets, and highways designed to simplify the transportation, exchange, distribution, and storage of goods. (Peters, 2021).

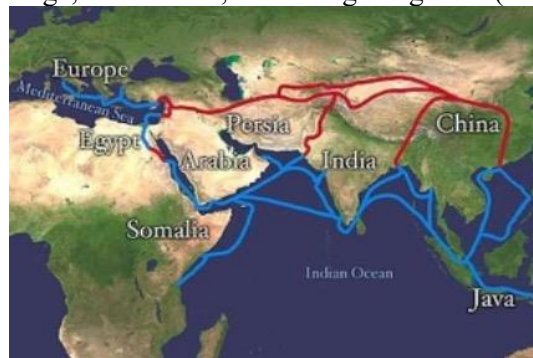


Figure 6. Routes of the Ancient Silk Road
Source: islamdigest.republika.co.id

Through the Han Dynasty Maritime Silk Road, Chinese goods represented by silk were sold to Southeast Asia, South Asia, and even the Mediterranean region. The Han Dynasty Maritime Silk Road connected two great empires, namely Han and Rome. The Lingnan region, as the initial port of the Maritime Silk Road in the Han Dynasty, was a bridge of exchange between China and the West (Song, 2019). Chinese silk to India passed through the northwestern mainland Silk Road, namely the southern Silk Road in the Western Region, which was divided into two routes after passing Pishan and Shache. Then they were transported westward to Darouzhi and Bactria, then southwest to Xuandu (Keli'er in present-day Pakistan) and Dardisthan (Kabul in present-day Afghanistan), southward to the mouth of the Indian river (Karachi in present-day Pakistan), and finally to Persia and Rome by ship (Wang & Zhao, 2011).

The New Silk Road policy is divided into two main routes, namely the land route known as the Silk Road Economic Belt, and the sea route known as The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. These two routes are planned to be connected to each other and equipped with modern infrastructure to increase trade between the continents involved. The first introduction of the Silk Road Economic Belt was made by President Xi Jinping during his visit to Central Asian countries such as Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. During the visit, President Xi Jinping presented five joint proposals to build a New Silk Road Economic Belt with the aim of strengthening relations between China, Central Asia and Europe. The five proposals include improving policy communication, strengthening relations, facilitating trade, monetary cooperation, and strengthening relations between communities (Dewi & Akbar, 2017).

The Maritime Silk Road of the 21st century will cross the South China Sea, Indian Ocean and Mediterranean, covering Southeast and South Asia and extending to sub-Saharan Africa. Land and sea routes ultimately connected China, across Asia and Africa, to Europe (Tang et al., 2017). There are five routes on the New Silk Road, three of which are land routes from China to Western Europe via Central Asia, the Middle East and Russia. The remaining two are sea routes through the South China Sea, Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. The land-based silk route was announced during his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013, and the maritime silk route, during his visit to Indonesia in October 2013 (Lee et al., 2015). Currently there are five New Silk Road routes including:



Figure 7. Five Routes of the New Silk Road
Source: Journal of International Logistics and Trade

- a. Line One, referred to as the Northern Line, passes through China, Kazakhstan, Russia and Central Europe.
- b. Line Two, referred to as the Middle Line, this line starts from Zhengzhou and Xian, China passing through Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Black Sea, Romania and Hungary.
- c. Line Three, referred to as the southern route, runs through Guangzhou, China to Vietnam, Malaysia, India and Sri Lanka.
- d. Line Four, called the maritime silk route which runs from Quanzhou, Guangzhou, China via Kenya to Greece.
- e. Line Five, also known as the Maritime Silk Route, moves from Tuongkok through Malaysia and Singapore to the South Pacific region (Lee et al., 2015).

3. Areas Involved

The Silk Road was the beginning of the meeting of advanced civilizations that lived at that time. The countries with advanced civilization at that time were Rome, India, Greece, Persia and China. To ensure the security of the Silk Road, the Han Dynasty attempted to ward off potential threats by establishing border forts

to ensure the smooth running of trade routes (Zhang, 2024). The famous military commander during the Han Dynasty was Wei Qing with the honorific name Zhongqing, who was a military strategist in the Western Han period (Zhang, 2024). The Silk Road during the Han Dynasty was inseparable from resistance between the Han Dynasty and the Huns to control the Hexi corridor which was an important gateway for trade and traffic on the Silk Road. Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty undertook two expansions of the Great Wall. In 102 BC, he extended the Great Wall of Qin from Lingju (now Yongdeng County, Gansu) westward to Dunhuang. In addition, to the west of Dunhuang, he built the Yumen Pass as the main defense gate in the northwest, thus extending the Great Wall of Han" from Dunhuang to Liaodong (Zhang, 2024).

During the Han Dynasty, diplomatic efforts were made to establish friendly relations with the Western Regions. By sending envoys and signing agreements. The initiative to send envoys to the Western Regions began when Zhang Qian's expedition was a proactive action taken by the Western Han to facilitate communication and interaction with the Western Regions (Zhang, 2024). India is one of the transit countries in the maritime silk trade. When deputy envoy Zhang Qian brought envoys from Dayuan, Kangju, Darouzhi, Bactria, Anxi, Sindhu, Khotan, and Wuni back to Chang'an, these regions began to exchange products directly with the Han Dynasty. After that, they sold Chinese silk to Rome (Wang & Zhao, 2011).

The regions involved in the New Silk Road Project include more than 60 countries with different political, economic, cultural and geographical conditions. These countries range from economically less developed countries to more developed countries and from highly religious countries to very liberal countries. Therefore, China will likely face serious challenges in opening new trade and transportation routes (Lee et al., 2015). Central Asia is one of the main focuses of The New Silk Road initiative. Various bilateral and multilateral meetings have been held through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to strengthen cooperation between China and Central Asian countries. China routinely maintains relations with Central Asian countries because they are close neighbors. Central Asian countries were chosen by China as the starting point for introducing The New Silk Road Policy (Dewi & Akbar, 2017).

As of 2016, more than 100 countries and international organizations have been involved in The New Silk Road initiative. China has negotiated agreements with more than 30 countries to jointly realize The New Silk Road, while more than 20 countries located on the route have collaborated with China in the industrial sector (Dewi & Akbar, 2017).

4. Technology and Transportation

The Han Dynasty government opened up the Han irrigation system from time to time. Outposts were also set up in the Hexi Corridor, allowing passing envoys and merchants to replenish food supplies, rest, and ensure their means of transportation were in adequate condition (Deng, 2023). After Zhang Qian's pioneering journey to the Western Regions, the Han Dynasty attempted to ensure the smooth route of the Silk Road by building many beacon towers and checkpoints from Dunhuang to Yanzhe (now Lop Nur). In 108 BC, the Jiuquan beacon tower was extended to Yumeng. In 101 BC (the fourth year of Taichu), after General Li Guangli led an expedition against Dayuan, Emperor Wu of Han built the Great Wall from Dunhuang to Yanzhe. Furthermore, to facilitate commercial trade the Western Han government built highways, transmitting stations, beacon towers, and other facilities within its territory to facilitate the delivery of central government decisions and strengthen communications between the central and local governments (Zhang, 2024).

The network of posts built by the Han Dynasty in the Gansu Corridor was the backbone of ancient routes connecting China and Central Asia, and the support and management of traffic, communications, trade, and diplomatic visits along them was essentially a state affair. The Han postal system was intended for contact with the outside world and quickly became an important tool for governance in Central Asia allowing the attraction of traders from the region. It also provided the basis for military and trade missions with envoys to outer regions (Peters, 2021). By the end of the Han Dynasty, the technology of iron smelting or iron tool making had spread from the Central Plains along the Hexi Corridor to Xinjiang and beyond via the early Silk Road (Zhu et al., 2023).

In the implementation of the New Silk Road, infrastructure development is also carried out which consists of six areas, including Road Construction, Maritime Network, Aviation Network, Oil and Gas Development, Electricity Transmission Systems and Internet Route Development. The form of implementation is roads and railways, such as the construction of the China-Pakistan Railway from Karachi to Islamabad, the Tajikistan to Uzbekistan highway which was carried out by the China Communication Construction Engineering Corporation. China is building a 417 km long road from the Chinese border to Vientiane which includes the construction of 154 bridges and 76 tunnels, this project requires 50,000 workers. This

infrastructure development will facilitate the economy between China and Southeast Asia (Miller, 2017). Construction of the Ethiopian Railway from Addis Ababa to Mieso by China Railway Engineering Corporation. Development on maritime routes can be seen in the operation of new port networks such as the Port of Colombo in Sri Lanka, the Port of Vinalines in Greece and the creation of new container shipping schedules between Shantou and the North Port of Manila and the North Port of Shanghai and Manila (Lee et al., 2015).

The New Silk Road also opened new flight routes including the Beijing-Addis Ababa, Beijing-Minsk-Budapest, Guangzhou-Sabah (Malaysia), Guangzhou-Krabi (Thailand) and Guangzhou-Nairobi routes. Construction of oil and gas pipelines including China-Russia, China-Kazakhstan, China-Myanmar, China-Russia and China-Myanmar oil pipelines. For the electricity network, China is building electricity transmission lines with Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam to support electricity for Hong Kong, Macau and the southern region of China. *China's State Grid Corporation* is also building electricity transmission lines with Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan and Pakistan. For information networks, China Unicom plans to build an internet connection infrastructure system in Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos as well as undersea cable lines connecting Asia, Africa and Europe (Lee et al., 2015).

5. Impact on the World System

The presence of the New Silk Road cannot be separated from the existence of the core countries that dominate the world. Based on the analysis carried out by (Lee et al., 2015), it is stated that China and Germany are the two main axes in the New Silk Road system along with Russia, India, Japan and Korea which are their subsidiary countries. Most countries in Asia show low centrality. The success of the new silk road policy depends on China's ability to unite the central countries. Here we can see that China is trying to expand its power and influence to realize its ambition to become a world power (Miller, 2017). To survive, the core country must continue to innovate so that it can hold strategic power before it is held by other countries (Dias, 2019). Before the New Silk Road arrived, there was the Ancient Silk Road which was an important part of the history of world trade and cultural exchange for more than 2000 years (Bo'stonovich, 2023).

In the Ancient Silk Road trade activities, technological developments in the clothing embroidery process also had an impact on increasing the silk production process, so that silk export activities became a source of wealth for the Han Dynasty. The Silk Road as a global route is an accurate alternative model of globalization and was an early form of trade-based capitalism that led to trade policies, significant capital formation, the introduction of financial norms and institutions, and, perhaps, most significantly, the spread of ideas, knowledge and technology transfer, not least massive innovation in a society based on paper and paper, as well as gunpowder (Peters, 2021).

The New Silk Road is estimated to receive nearly 1 trillion dollars in investment in the future. In this new silk road, economic interactions representing more than 40% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are projected to occur. The New Silk Road is a major program that is believed to have a significant impact on global trade. China alone has allocated about \$40 billion of its budget to invest in building roads, railways, pipelines and ports. The Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road proposals then became central elements of China's new infrastructure diplomacy under the leadership of Xi Jinping (Dewi & Akbar, 2017). Apart from injecting investment into the development of the New Silk Road project, the Chinese Government is also actively fighting for the promotion and development of the New Silk Road by increasing communication, consultation and practical cooperation with countries along the Silk Road route. In particular, President Xi Jinping often visits various countries and promotes the construction of the New Silk Road in international forums (Dewi & Akbar, 2017).

The main goal of the New Silk Road is to develop and strengthen relations between China and Europe. The New Silk Road policy will remain in effect until 2049, the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Therefore, the New Silk Road policy is a 30-year plan comparable to the post-1978 economic reform policy, which has fundamentally changed China's economy (Lee et al., 2015). This regionally massive project could impact more than 63 countries, accounting for 60% of the global population. The two routes of the New Silk Road have had a significant impact on trade in Europe, because the New Silk Road facilitates trade between China and Europe. The European Union is China's largest trading partner, while China is the European Union's second largest trading partner after the United States. This collaboration is not only in manufactured goods, industrial goods, vehicles and machines but also includes trade in services such as projects in maintaining the security of the trade process, cooperation in management and risk policies and partnerships in the fields of science and technology (Abajyan, 2018).

CONCLUSION

From comparative activities between the Ancient Silk Road and the New Silk Road of the 21st century, it can be concluded that these two routes have an important role in global history, economics and geopolitics. From a geopolitical perspective, the new Silk Road has led China to become the core of the world, inspired by the glory of the Han Dynasty with its Silk Road. The ancient silk road, with its rich historical and cultural heritage, has been a major trade route connecting East and West for centuries. Meanwhile, the new silk route shows developments in infrastructure and technology that present new opportunities in international trade, especially with the modern integration of land, sea and air routes. In terms of transportation, the New Silk Road has experienced rapid progress in various directions, including land, sea and air routes. Meanwhile, the ancient Silk Road at that time only had land and sea routes. For Commodities, the new Silk Road has focused on the technology sector.

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