The Reasons Why China's OBOR Initiative Goes Digital

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Abstract

With the development of the Internet, the traditional international politics was changed and somehow affect the China foreign diplomacy. The OBOR Initiative is one of the most typical ones in that change. In 2017, President Xi put forward the Digital Silk Road which indicates the OBOR initiative further goes digital.

According to the Netpolitik, the development of Internet bring new features to the international politics - increasing importance of the technology strength and influence of the non-government actors, intensification of interdependence and changing of the international agenda or rules.

Correspondingly, in those aspect mentioned in Netpolitik, to take advantage of the fast development of the Internet, China released the Digital Silk Road aiming to pursue great-leap development, reduce political resistance, create a good environment for cooperation and enhancing the right to speak in Cyberspace.

However, during that time, there are also some risks that China can’t ignore. Because of the characteristics of the Internet, the coverage and influence of the culture and religion conflicts, the ideology transformation, the cyber terrorism and cybercrime, data security and privacy are amplified.

How to balance the benefits and risks that digitalization and informatization brought is one of the most important issues that China has to face during OBOR initiative goes digital.

Keywords: One Belt One Road Initiative, Digital Silk Road, Netpolitik, Significances, Risks

1. Introduction

Since the second half of the 20th century, the Internet has gained rapid development and popularity worldwide. In 1996, the world only had more than 4000 Internet users, since then it is in a typical geometric figure to global expansion, the user doubled every six months, broadband and traffic also doubled, at present, there are more than 655 million Internet users all around the world. The rapid development of modern information Internet technology brought changes in all fields of human social life. Economically, E-business based on the Internet is regarded as a new engine of the world information economy, Information technology not only penetrates the service industries, such as wholesale, retail, banking, and securities but also provides an opportunity for the revival of manufacturing industry. Socially, it has also caused fundamental changes in people's social activities and ways of activities. In real society, the way of direct contact between people face to face will transform to Internet-based indirect communication. In the field of life, it has made people's online shopping, virtual tourism, interactive entertainment, telemedicine, distance education come true. It can be said that the network is taking human beings into an information network era with information network as the core resource.

Those effects will be further expanded, no one can predict how far the Internet will go. But one thing we can and have deeply felt was that network has entered the political life of human society, the network had begun to involve the "power" and "interest", and Netpolitik emerged as the times require.

"One Belt And One Road" is short for "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "21st Century Maritime Silk Road". September and October 2013, during a visit to central Asia and Southeast Asia countries, Chinese President Xi Jinping successively put forward the "One Belt And One Road" initiatives. On March 28, 2015, authorized by the state council, national development and reform commission, the ministry of foreign affairs, the ministry of commerce jointly issued "to promote to build the silk road economic belt and the 21st century the vision and action of the Marine silk road", to the specific planning. On May 14, 2017, President Xi Jinping held The Belt and Road International Cooperation Forum in Beijing, proposed to promote the big data, cloud computing, smart city construction, connected to the twenty-first Century Digital Silk Road, further enrich the connotation of “The Belt

and Road "initiative.

The development of science and technology in China has attracted worldwide attention. Based on the OBOR initiative, now, China put the digital element into the original initiative is no doubt an important signature that needs to be investigated. What does the Digital Silk Road mean? How does the physical Silk Road go digital? Why would China like to endow the OBOR initiative digital property? What's the challenges China is facing? These kinds of questions make me want to give a deep understanding so that we can better know what the motivation of China is and find the direction of cooperation between China and EU.

2. Problem Formulation

In this thesis, my main problem is: *Why China's OBOR initiative goes digital?*

Under this question, I have following subquestions to expand our study and make a better explanation for the reason why China's OBOR initiative goes digital:

- *What's the environment that OBOR initiative goes digital?*
- *How this environment influence the OBOR initiative?*
- *What will China get if the OBOR initiative goes digital?*
- *What are the risks that China faces during OBOR initiative goes digital?*

And after answer this questions, I will have my own qualitative judgement whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or disadvantages outweigh the advantages. And give a little comment on how Chinese government can do to reduce loses that the potential risks cause.

3. Methodology

Methodology refers to the background, theoretical, political and philosophical assumptions, of social research and their implications for the research and the use of a particular research method. (Kuada, J., 2012)

Within this paper, I use inductive approach to formulate my research and use the China Digital Silk Road as a case to study. And talking about data collection, I mainly use qualitative method, contain both first−hand data and second−hand data.

3.1. Research Design

In my thesis, the method I used is deduction. A deductive approach is concerned with "developing a hypothesis based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis". (Bryman, 2012) I choose the theory of Netpolitik to guide my research. Its main idea is that the development of Internet has changed the traditional international relations. And I choose the phenomenon that China's OBOR initiative goes digital to testify the hypothesis. Then I formulate my main question as – why China's OBOR initiative goes digital. To explain that, Firstly, I introduce the environment of the digitalization of OBOR initiative. And then I describe how the international relations were changed under this environment according to the Netpolitik. The changes of international relations brought benefits and opportunities for Chinese government to put forward the Digital Silk Road initiative. However, during that process, China also faces some risks correspondingly. And by qualitative analyze the opportunity and risks, I get a conclusion that advantages outweigh disadvantages. That's why China's OBOR initiative goes digital. And in the conclusion part, I also try to give some of my opinion on how China can reduce the risks. And my chapter division was concluded as follow:

The first part is the general introduction of the project, explaining the main structure and the problem formulation, narrowing down to the problem at hand, the subject of our research.

The second part is the methodology I used, which mainly are deductive approach and the empirical data as a part of the qualitative methodology to guide our research.

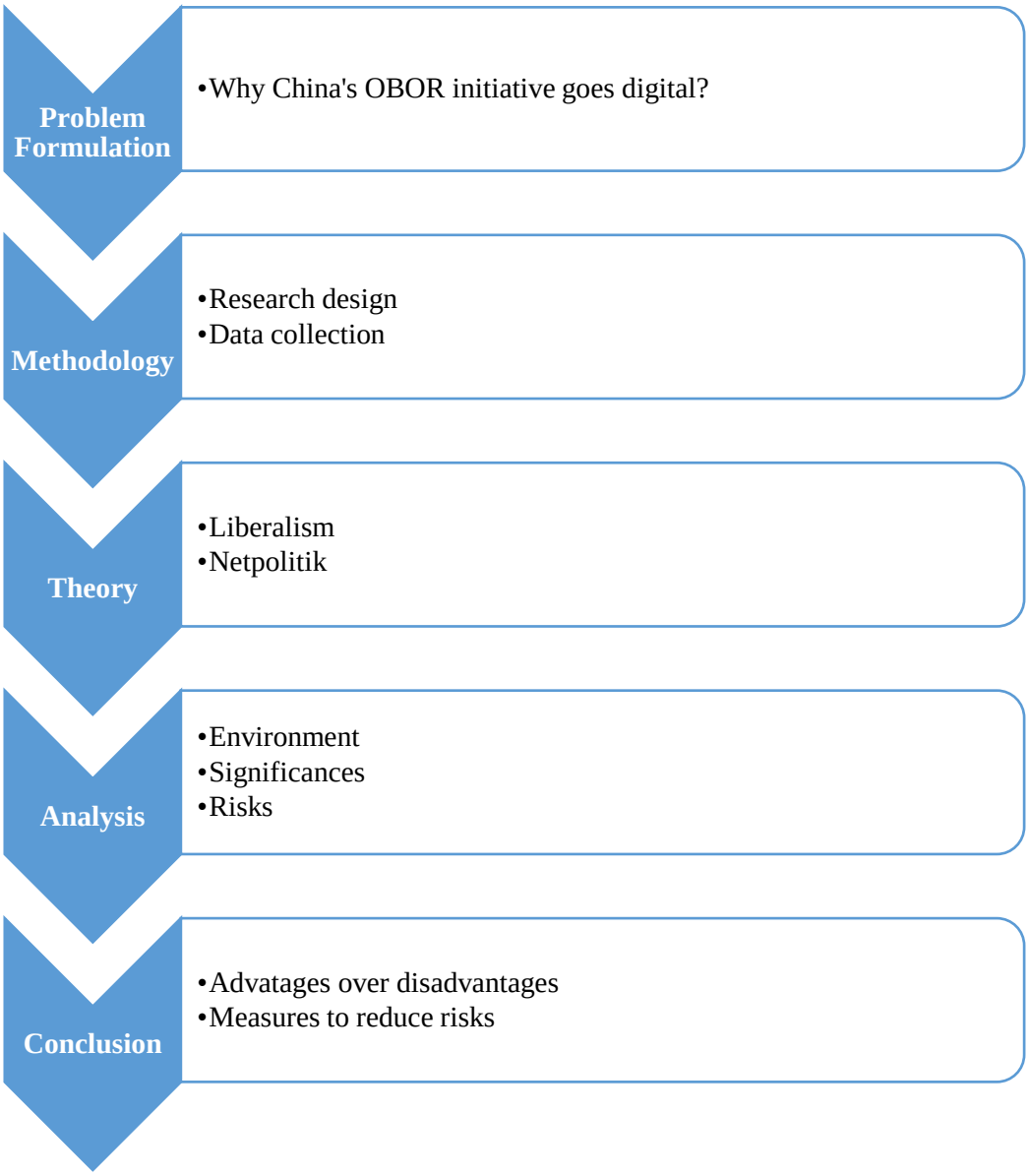
The third part is about the theory applied in this project. I mainly use liberalism and Netpolitik

theory to guide my analyse.

The forth part is the main part of the thesis, starting with describing the environment that OBOR initiative goes digital and the changing of international politics. And analyze the significances and risks of OBOR initiative going digital.

The last part, enclosing the analysis, will come to offer an answer to the problem under investigation, discussing the critical issues and drawing up the conclusions based on the findings illustrated by the project.

Research Design



3.2. Data Collection

In this thesis, I use qualitative and quantitative data in order to reach a deeper understanding of Internet diplomacy. Within the research paper, it exclusively uses secondary sources, including some materials in the Chinese version as relevant as possible ranging from books, journals, research reports to academic papers. As the topic of this thesis is about the Internet, online resource is also a good channel to explore useful information. Not only the data from the official websites are authoritative, some essays and articles written by academic scholars and reporters are also very helpful to obtain the updated materials. The reliability of this project will critically be examined by the use of numerous sources. The main resources in this project include books, journals, government reports, academic papers and online resources both in English and in Chinese. In the theoretical chapter, some of books and academic journals are mostly cited to illustrate the core assumptions of theories.

The document analysis within the qualitative method of research refers to the review of written documents that can take many forms, for example, textbooks, articles, notes, minutes of meetings, archives etc. The document analysis is going to be the only method of procuring data because of time constraints and limited resources. Through this, we are able to create an understanding of the policy-making processes and discover how and why they are shaped the way they are. An example of this is the research for OBOR initiative policies in China. Here documents are chosen mainly from three different resources. Firstly, we use official documents, e.g. reports from China Internet Network Information Center which is the administrative agency responsible for Internet affairs. Secondly, we use some academic literature - in this case, two documents - one written in Chinese, and the other written in English. Both of them focus on analysing Chinese OBOR initiative policy and strategy; they were read critically. Thirdly, news from the website Xinhua News was included. This is the official press agency of the Chinese government and it is the biggest and most influential media organization in China.

4. Theory

When considering the cyber power in relation to a theoretical approach on the grounds of International relations. It is defined as “the variety of power that circulates in cyberspace, which shapes the experience of those who act in and through cyberspace”. (Betz, D. and Stevens, T., 2011)

It means that the new Internet era has evolved from the traditional political scenario of the 20th Century, and brought a unified, globalized and fluid mechanism that can be used in different ways. As we will expose in the next chapter, with the examples of the Digital Silk Road, cyber strategies are becoming a very important subject nowadays.

4.1. Liberalism

When it comes to assessing International Relations issues, it is important to rely, at least broadly, on a specific theory. Theories help to position the issue, or the problem to be solved, on a narrower framework that will provide the tools for a successful understanding of the issues at stake. In this thesis, I analyze mainly based on the assumption and logic of Liberalism.

The assumption of Liberalism can be concluded as follows. Different from realism, liberals oppose the idea of the evil of human nature. On the contrary, liberalism believes that human beings are the existence of progress and the pursuit of perfection in life. Liberalism pays attention to human intelligence, and when it emphasizes intelligence, it is a foolish behaviour to destroy others. Therefore, for liberalists, the abolition of war is only another stepping stone for the development of human morality, which is indeed a guide to liberalism. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, NA.)[1]

It claims that no matter in the domestic politics or international politics, individual or group is one of the most important lines for the nation-states. The individual behaviour is based on interest and goal oriented, under certain conditions, they will try to pursue and promote the progress of the social order and individual welfare. As a result, individuals become the core of the liberal world political assumptions. Individual behaviour has a direct link with world politics. (Burchill, S., 1996)

In the meanwhile, in liberal theory, state (or representative of individual) is also the world's basic

[1] Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Liberalism, available at https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberalism/#Con

political actors, however, in the eyes of liberalist, state is not a unitary state as the understanding of realist, but a poly - archy state, that is to say, its policies and behaviours are accumulated by the preference of domestic social groups and individuals. Individual, bureaucratic institutions, individual interest groups and social groups from a competitive relationship. State policies and behaviours are only the results of the game and negotiation of the interests of domestic groups. When it comes to the state power. The liberalist believes that it should be limited, which realized by free trade and diplomacy. “Liberal states, founded on individual rights such as equality before the law, free speech and civil liberty, respect for private property and representative government, would not have the same appetite for conflict and war; peace was fundamentally a question of establishing legitimate domestic orders throughout the world” (Burchill, S., 1996)

Liberalism, attach importance to the role of social factors. Social factors here has two meanings, one is the level of domestic civil society, and the other is, with the development of international exchanges and mutual dependence, transnational civil society at the international level. Outside the state, social forces are also an important part of international political life, and they participate and promote the process of international politics. More importantly, civil society exerts a restrictive effect on the state from both domestic and international directions.

4.2. Netpolitik

Considering the fluidity and accessibility of the Internet, International relations are undoubtedly affected by the cyberspace. The new communication era has brought politics to a different scenario.

Network politics is a new kind of diplomacy which is different from real politics. 2002, the Aspen Research Institute in Colorado, held a three - day meeting to explore the significance of network politics and how the Internet can change the power of national, international and national security. From the reports generated by this conference, such as David Bollier synthesis, "NeNealTiTk" is a new diplomatic style, seeking to make use of powerful Internet capabilities to shape politics, culture, values and personal identity. But different from the real politics, the political non-rational problems, such as moral legitimacy, cultural identity, social values and public perception, try to promote the political interests of the country through a non-mandatory network political means. Internet politics

needs different resources rather than real politics, so its usability is different, which affects the implementation of diplomacy. The emergence of network politics and its interaction with real politics are not only limited to soft power, but also to the interaction of hard power.

In early 1998, David Rothkopf pointed out that a new era of realpolitik is the cyberpolitik; the state is no longer the only actors at the same time; the raw power can be offset by force or strong information. (Rothkopf, D. J. , 1998) David Bollier in his article *The rise of network politics: how the Internet is changing the way of international politics and diplomacy use N*etpolitik , which was defined as "a powerful force to the use of the Internet to shape the politics, culture, values and personal identity diplomacy form". (Bollier, D. , 2003) European scholars prefer to use Infopolitik (Plumridge, H., 2009) to express a new era of public diplomacy based on active international information exchange and free and unbiased information flow. The network politics and some other similar names, such as virtual Politics (Holmes, D. , 1999), Politics on the net(Bruce, M., Peltu, M., & Dutton, W. H. , 1999), etc..

However, Cyberpolitik, Cyberpolitics, Netpolitik or Infopolitik, no matter what it has been translated into, it expresses the influence of network information technology on the real world politics. In the field of international relations, Internet politics is the intersection of the national communication process and the formation process of virtual space, and the process of information network technology's impact on international politics. (Choucri, N. , 2000)

As David Bollier said, The Internet and other information technologies are no longer the peripheries of world affairs, but a powerful engine of change. The global electronic network not only reshaped the economy, but also changed people's values, identity and social practice. In addition, these changes occur not only within the borders of the state, but also in various unpredictable transnational communications. (Bollier D., 2003)

The Internet is becoming a major form of organization: the Internet reduces the cost of information transfer; improving the speed of information transmission; breaching the barriers to information acquisition and processing. The Internet has greatly reduced the cost of transmitting information, enabling people to bypass the traditional intermediaries whose power is controlled by information: national governments, diplomatic missions, transnational corporations and news agencies.

Therefore, non-governmental organizations (NGO), academic experts, scattered ethnic communities and individuals are making use of the Internet to create their global platforms and political influence. With the speed of information dissemination and the diversification of public information, the structure of international relations is undergoing great changes. (Bollier, D. , 2003)

In the netpolitik, it covered the influence on the area of democracy, diplomacy, governance and everywhere in the political theory. However, in my thesis, I will mostly focus on the part of how Internet influence the state power and why the Internet could make that happen.

This study assumes that cyberspace is a complex technical environment which is integrated and unified. It is through the use of new telecom network, connects users with a variety of content, integration and unity in its internal and surrounding environment for many different aspects of human activity. (Hill, Kevin, A., Hughes, & John, E., 1998) In international politics, this is an environment where is anarchism essentially based on the dissemination of knowledge without centralized control technology. (Newhagen, J. E., & Rafaeli, S., 1996) In addition, this is a cross-border process, but in any case, it is a global environment without borders. (Smythe, E., 1999).

Besides, what we should concern is that the Internet technology is a first and most important technology, which requires all types of users to access the technology infrastructure. Such access creates a digital divide between those who are able to connect to these processes and those who are not connected. The technology also allows for interactive, bilateral and even multilateral activities, rapid action and spanning the endless expansion. It also creates a spatial sphere that needs to adapt to the dimension of time and space. In this spatial sphere, we are talking about a dynamic environment of constant change and development, and it is difficult to predict what will happen even in the short term. (Naveh, C., 2007)

The cyberspace is relatively equal. Therefore, a user who has overcome the entry barriers (that is to say, across the digital divide and can access the Internet) has almost no ideology or other restrictions inside it. In that case, the leap forward development could be a possibility. To a great extent, the information revolution is in great favor of the developed countries. However, for the information underdeveloped countries, it is also an opportunity. Developing countries can achieve leap forward development in the wave of the information revolution by utilizing the advantage of late

development, so as to shorten the gap with developed countries and even go beyond some developed countries through a certain period of development. (Naveh, C., 2007)

With the development of cyberspace, the international actors are active at a different level - as individuals, national forces groups or communities, and actors at the level of the international system, such as international organizations, corporations, or diasporic communities. (Singer, J. D., 1961).

5. Analysis

In May 2017, Chairman Xi Jinping proposed at the Belt and Road Forum International Cooperation: "We must adhere to innovation to drive development and strengthen cooperation in the frontier areas of digital economy, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, and quantum computers to promote big data, Cloud Computing, Smart City Construction, connecting Digital Silk Road in the 21st Century." Since the construction of the “One Belt and One Road” initiative, the Silk Road has been upgraded from interconnection to the establishment of a regional digital economy. The “Digital Silk Road” has become an urgent task for the “One Belt, One Road” regional economic growth. (Xinhua, 2017)

On the 3rd December 2017, at the 4th World Internet Conference, relevant departments of China, Laos, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Thailand, Turkey, UAE and other countries jointly initiated the “One Belt and One Road” Digital Economy International Cooperation Initiative, opened a new chapter on the Digital Silk Road. (刘梦, 2017)

The concept of Digital Silk Road was first proposed by enterprises. In 2011, DHgate proposed building a 21st century online silk road and set up a global cross-border e-commerce platform. (李一丹, 2017) Subsequently, Alibaba and other Internet companies also continued to focus on the construction of the online silk road, to bring the products made in China to the international market. On the online silk road built by these Internet companies, products are bought and sold on a global scale, and the core is cross-border e-commerce.

As the State Council issued the 13th Five-Year national Informatization Plan, Cai Cheng from China information and Communication Research Institute made a detailed interpretation of the "Online Silk Road" in the Plan, and defines it in his article. The Online Silk Road, by Chinese and Belt and Road Initiative countries to strengthen the network interconnection and information exchange formed by the multi-field, multi-level information based on Internet plus economic zone. It can be seen that the government has expanded the connotation of the Online Silk Road to various applications related to the Internet, and attaches great importance to its economic value.

The initiative pointed out that the digital economy is an increasingly important driving force for global economic growth and is playing an important role in accelerating economic development,

increasing labor productivity in existing industries, cultivating new markets and new growth points for industries, and achieving inclusive growth and sustainable growth.

Initiatives include expanding broadband access, improving broadband quality, promoting digital transformation, promoting e-commerce cooperation, supporting Internet entrepreneurship and innovation, promoting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, strengthening digital skills training, promoting investment in information and communication technology, and promoting inter-city Digital economic cooperation, increase digital inclusion, encourage the fostering of transparent digital economic policies, promote international standardization cooperation, enhance confidence and trust, encourage cooperation and respect for independent development, and encourage joint peacebuilding, security, openness, cooperation, and orderly development. The cyberspace encourages the establishment of multi-level communication mechanisms. (刘梦, 2017)

According to the introduction, the initiative will strive to make new progress in five areas.

- Strengthen connectivity and making new progress in promoting the integration of the people.
- Accelerate the digital transformation and make new progress in the application of digital technology.
- Build a chain of innovation and make new progress in fostering innovation capacity.
- Strengthen policy alignment and make new progress in the release of digital economic vitality.
- Enhance exchanges and cooperation and make new progress in building a governance system.

5.1. The Development of the Internet has Brought Forth the Digitalization of OBOR Initiative

In the twenty-first Century, the speed of Internet information technology development is beyond everyone’s imagination. The rapid development of Internet declares the arrival of the information age. The idea of "global village" has become possible in this information age. The governments all over the world, especially in America and EU, have put forward some policies to cope with the development of the information age. And depends on the demographic dividend in China, government support, as well as the implement of OBOR Initiative, China has the unique advantage to put forward the cross board digital cooperation in the OBOR area.

5.1.1. The Fast Development of Global Networking Technology

In the early twenty-first Century, the G8 issued the "Okinawa Charter of the global information society". It claimed that information and communication technology is one of the most powerful driving forces of social development in the Twenty-first Century, and will soon become an important driving force for world economic growth. (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan. 2000) Based on this judgment, the international society for the universal development of information communication technology (ICT) of the national strategic and technological progress strategy, including the United States, European Union, Japan, South Korea and other countries, has developed a clear timetable, they will rely on information and communication technology as a strategic economic crisis, to stimulate economic development and new growth point of economic development. ICT refers to technologies that provide information through electronic communication, including Internet, wireless network, mobile phone and other means of communication. Developed countries have put the advantages of resources into the ICT field in order to obtain technical advantages. The most representative of them is the strategy of the German “Industry 4.0” and the "industrial Internet" strategy of the United States.

- The German “Industry 4.0”

The German “Industry 4.0” concept of industry originated from the Hannover Industrial Expo in Germany in 2011. The original intention was to improve the manufacturing level of Germany through new technologies such as the Internet of things. Driven by industrial and academic circles, in 2013, Germany incorporated the industrial 4 project into the ten major future projects of "High Technology Strategy 2020".

To achieve industry 4.0, German put forward the following plan. Firstly, build information physics system network, connect physical devices and the Internet, and make it have the functions of communication, control, autonomy and so on. So as to achieve the integration of the network world and the real world. Secondly, by building intelligent factories, realize the intellectualization of production processes, and apply advanced technologies such as human-machine interaction, intelligent management and 3D printing to the whole production process, so as to form an intelligent and networked industrial chain. Thirdly, achieve horizontal integration, vertical integration and end

to end integration. Thanks to that, cooperation between enterprises is smoother, the manufacturing process is more flexible, and digital engineering integration is more convenient. So as to maximize the realization of personalized customization.

The implementation of the industrial 4.0 strategy in Germany is to deal with the new technological industrial revolution. The breakthrough and development of information and communication, new energy, new materials and other fields are promoting a new round of science and technology and industrial revolution. Germany's technical sense of smell has always been sharp, and the 4.0 strategy of industry is to contend for the discourse power of the new technological industry revolution. The second goes to deal with external pressure. In recent years, the United States and other developed countries will revive the manufacturing industry as the strategic agenda. Emerging economies such as China in the manufacturing sector continued to be strong. German would like to rely on the Industry 4.0 to protect the traditional strength of the equipment manufacturing industry, make up the software and Internet technology weaknesses. The third is to improve the domestic innovation system and enhance the innovation ability of the enterprise. On the one hand, Germany tried to change the capacity of gradual innovation mode, enhance and make up for the shortcoming of radical technological innovation, and overcome the shortcomings of traditional innovation system. On the other hand, it pays more attention to the transformation ability of innovation results, fully excavates the potential economic value of innovation, and uses innovation to promote the industrial upgrading of the country.

- Industrial Internet

In November 2012, GE released the white paper *Industrial Internet: pushing the boundaries of minds and machine*, and proposed the concept of industrial Internet. Industry to the Internet to get data from smart devices and network, using big data storage, analysis and visualization analysis tool for operation, eventually provide intelligent information or to realize intelligent decision making. Industrial Internet can realize the virtuous circle between machine, data, system network and person. The machine in the industrial Internet is capable of learning and can cooperate with others. Big data analysis and intelligent connection between machines and people are the differences between industrial Internet and Internet of things. (Evans, P. C., & Annunziata, M., 2012)

Innovation is still the core of the industrial Internet, and the purpose is to remold the industrial pattern by utilizing information technology and transform the traditional manufacturing industry. The US uses tools such as system, software and Internet to rebuild the manufacturing industry from top to bottom with the help of big data analysis tools, which are contrary to the bottom-up thinking of manufacturing in Germany and information technology. In promoting the new round of industrial revolution, German industry emphasizes hard manufacturing of equipment manufacturing, while the United States focuses more on soft service. Because its software and Internet economy are well-developed, it can enhance industrial creativity by means of network and data power. (夷萍, 2015)

5.1.2. Information Technology Development in China

The return to industry has become the consensus of the major countries in the world, and the third industrial revolution has flourished. In order to conform to the trend of international development, China has issued a "China Manufacturing 2025" Strategy in time to fully deploy the strategy of making a powerful manufacturing power. Internet Plus in promoting industrial transformation and upgrading, improve the level of industrial development, promote the informatization of manufacturing industry is self-evident. In order to realize the informationization of the manufacturing industry, service, Internet Plus will use information technology to transform traditional industries, push things of Internet, big data, cloud computing technology is widely used in the industrial field. (马化腾, 2015)

At the third session of the Twelfth National People's Congress on March 5, 2015, Premier Li Keqiang put forward the plan of Internet Plus Initiative for the first time in the government work report. The concepts originated from the Internet industry has been promoted to the height of national action. Internet Plus Initiative is the representative of National People's Congress, Tencent Inc CEO Ma Huateng proposed to the National People's Congress in 2015. Ma Huateng believes that the Internet Plus Initiative is the use of the Internet platform, information and communication technology. (Wu, H., 2015) Combine the Internet and all walks of life, including the traditional industry, to create a new environment in the new area. Then, in July 1, 2015 the State Council issued " Guidance on Actively Promoting Internet Plus Action Plan "(《关于积极推进“互联网＋”行动的指导意见》), further defined the action requirements and development goals of Internet Plus Initiative. It proposed that the Internet plus initiative aims to further integrate the Internet innovation

into the economic and social fields, promoting technology progress, efficiency and organization reform, promote the real economy innovation and productivity, and form a new form of broader economic and social development on the basis of the Internet facilities and innovative elements. Focus on the urgent areas of transformation and upgrading tasks, the obvious areas of fusion innovation, and areas of concern to the people, the Guidance put forward eleven specific actions in the Entrepreneurship and innovation, Collaborative manufacturing, Modern agriculture, Smart energy, Inclusive finance, Public services, Efficient logistics, E-commerce, Convenient transportation, Green ecology, Artificial intelligence and clear departmental responsibilities. (State Council, 2015)

Besides, in the cooperation plan of OBOR initiative, it also includes a lot of Internet content. In the facilities connectivity, it is proposed to promote the construction of the communication trunk network such as cross border optical cable and so on, to improve international communication and intercommunication level and to smooth the information Silk Road. To accelerate bilateral cross-border optical cables, planning and construction of the intercontinental submarine cable project, improve the satellite information channel, expand the exchange of information and cooperation. In the unimpeded trade, put forward the innovation model of trade in trade flow, the development of cross-border electricity business and other new business formats. In people-to-people bond, proposed strengthening international communication and cooperation in culture media and actively use of the network platform and new media tools, creating a harmonious and friendly culture and ecological environment of public opinion. (National Development and Reform Commission, 2015)

As of December 2016, China's Internet population reached 731 million, equivalent to the total population of Europe, and the Internet penetration rate reached 53.2 percent. China's Internet industry as a whole is developing towards standardization and value-oriented. (China Internet Network Information Center, 2017)

According to data from the research report of iResearch, China’s cross-border e-commerce import and export transactions reached 6.3 trillion in 2016, and are expected to exceed 7 trillion in 2017 and reach 8.8 trillion in 2018. Therefore, under the circumstances of weak domestic economic development, cross-border e-commerce will be developed through the "Belt and Road Initiative." It is expected to create a new engine and new impetus for China's economic development. On the

whole, cross-border e-commerce has already emerged with very good signs and patterns. Both cross-border e-commerce companies have made useful explorations in terms of imports, exports, and imports and exports. China's representative platform, Tmall, Jingdong, Vipshop, Koala, etc. have also become industry representative platforms.

At present, China's domestic e-commerce model has gradually matured, and the corresponding facilities and technologies for logistics warehousing, payment, and settlement are also correspondingly complete. With the possibility of pattern copying and external output. The countries along the Belt and Road have great demand for infrastructure construction and business transactions. Therefore, along the way, we must increase the cross-border e-commerce retail business interface business development, but also increase cross-border e-commerce support for equipment exports, financial services and other support efforts.

From a global point of view, the German industrial 4.0 strategy, the Industrial Internet strategy, China Manufacturing 2025 Strategy will be healthy competition in the manufacturing sector, according to the size of the market, the momentum of development and development potential to predict, the three countries are likely to form a situation of tripartite confrontation in the high-tech manufacturing sector. (夷萍, 2015) China must grasp the third industrial revolution development opportunities. And the key is to grasp the development of ICT technology based on Internet technology, accelerate Chinese from "Made in China" to "Created in China, to lay a good industrial base, making China made have an active move in the third industrial revolution.

5.2. The Changing of International Politics by Internet influenced China’s OBOR Initiative

The development of the Internet is gradually subverting people's way of life at an incredible speed. The Internet, like the steam engine in Eighteenth Century and the electrical technology in Nineteenth Century, is epoch-making. The Internet provides a new space for people to break through the boundaries of the traditional region, and people gradually form a new way of life, social norms and ideological consciousness in this cyberspace, and create a network culture. The Internet has typical feature as followed:

- Decentralized and international. Internet connection all the countries and regions around the

world. People all over the world share the same information, provide global intercultural communication with unobstructed channels and space, people no longer restricted by regional and border and to share the same information. The world is more international in connection with the Internet.

- Open and relatively equal. The Internet is a virtual space, there are no regional and border restrictions, people don't have to be limited to the regional and national boundaries, can communicate with people from all over the world and communication, only need a computer connected to the Internet you can roam in the sea of the network, to enjoy the surf the Internet without space-time block. On the other hand, the Internet is an open platform. In the online world, everyone is equal and sharing information regardless of class or level. People who use the Internet to communicate with each other are also equal.

- Communication is bi-directional. In the Internet world, the communication of information is no longer the traditional one-way acceptance and publication, but the interaction. The sender of information can be an organization or a person. Everyone can use BBS on the Internet and E-mail to think about other Internet users to disseminate information. Netizens are no longer just the audience for information dissemination, but also the disseminators of information.

- Concealment. Another important feature of the Internet pays attention to the information security of users' personal, so the importance of the Internet communication is characterized by strong concealment, Internet communication between all the special medium to carry out via the Internet, so the whole virtual space is more like a world without the Internet.

With the characteristics of decentralized and international, open and relatively equal, bi-directional, concealment, the Internet has expanded into every corner of the world by geometric progression, permeating all aspects of human life and reshaping the political, economic, social and military forms of the nation's country.

According to the Netpolitik, which I have generally described in the chapter of theory, the development of Internet change the traditional international politics. The most typical aspect could be concluded as: the increase importance of technology; non-government actors make more influence; the interdependence between nation states intensified; and the weak countries somehow

is able to influence the international agenda or international rules. These factors also can be seen in the process of China's OBOR Initiative goes digital.

5.2.1. Technology Strength becomes more important

The Internet, first of all, is part of the key infrastructure of various countries, and then becomes an important part of the hard power of a country. The differences in the development level of information technology in various countries are leading to the formation of the digital divide. Besides, information spread through the Internet is still part of the soft power. If a country controls the flow of information, it is like controlling the ocean in another ear. Some scholars call this new imperialism "digital imperialism", and more often it is called information hegemony. According to this understanding, the control and use of information resources will become an important means for the state to participate in international politics, control or influence the international environment. It cannot only greatly expand the source of national strength, but also make good use of information technology to achieve a multiplier of strength.

Alvin Toffler points out that knowledge in the "information society" has become an increasingly important position, a knowledge-based very different power structure is emerging. (Alvin Toffler, 1990) He came to an important conclusion: knowledge itself is not only the most powerful source of power, but also the most important factor in force and wealth. This is the key to future power transfer. (Alvin Toffler, 1990) He believes that once the power centers of knowledge are established, the group of technocrats with the latest scientific and technological information and knowledge will be in a good position in the distribution of power. He concludes that the trend of modern society is that knowledge is increasingly becoming the mainstay of power. It can be said that in the age of network, which is good at mastering and using information resources to obtain information superiority, who can gain the strength advantage. (Alvin Toffler, 1990)

When the concept of "soft power" was put forward, Joseph Nye also proposed the concept of "power transfer", arguing that power was shifting from "capital rich" to "information rich". (Joseph S. Nye, 1990) Thomas L. Friedman argues that the primary role of the Internet is to make the world flat, so that anyone can get the same information anywhere, so that people can contact or trade with each other. This makes the international division of labor more effective and gives full play to the

comparative advantage of different markets and thus creates numerous economic opportunities. (Thomas L. Friedman, 2006)

With information and knowledge, of course, the one who is, won't naturally become a powerful person, he needed a strong media power, will their mastery of the knowledge and information under certain conditions into science and technology, public social opinion, and economic benefit. (Alvin Toffler, 1990)

That will cause two results: Digital Divide and Great Leap Development. When Digital Divide was overcome, the great leap development can be expected.

- **Digital Divide**

According to the definition of the OECD, "digital divide" refers to the gap between individuals, families, enterprises and regions of various social and economic levels in terms of access to information and communication technology and Internet activities. (Richard Joseph. 2001) This gap exists between different countries, as well as among different populations within a country.

The information revolution is a double-edged sword, it promotes the mutual dependence of world politics and economy, but also widened the gap between the power of information and the information weak. Because advanced information technology is mastered by information power, some countries' economies, especially the information industry, are restricted by other countries' economic development and expansion. The emergence of the digital divide has made the inequality between the information developed countries and the information poor countries more obvious. Between information haves and have-nots, there is a huge gap in the field of information technology, the gap is constantly expanding. That is to say, the information revolution not only eliminated the gap between rich and poor in international society, but also added a new form of "digital divide", thus exacerbating the weak dependence on the power of information. Not only did not form a powerful pattern of mutual benefit, but it made the unbalanced power structure more solidified. (Bellamy, C., & Taylor, J. A. 1998) The powerful countries on information collect different information from the world and make their own processing. And then through the network media quickly spread to the global Internet users, to influence the trend of international public opinion. But the weak can only passively accept, or cut the connection with the international internet. The

information flow of this imbalance leads to the social value of the weak countries on information eroded by the powerful. The developed countries also challenge the sovereignty concept of the information poor countries through the advantages of information technology, and the information revolution has expanded the inequality of the state sovereignty. The advanced information technology has been monopolized by the developed countries, which make the information poor countries be in a passive position in technology transfer and economic development. For example, computer chips and key software technology of information used in poor countries are monopolized by developed countries in information, which means that the information in poor countries is controlled by the developed countries. This insuperable dependency inevitably leads to part of the loss of state sovereignty. In the formulation of international rules, the developed countries also have greater power. Because the developed countries have strong economic strength and technological advantages, they always formulate relevant international rules according to their own interests. Information poor countries can only sacrifice their interests to adapt to the rules.

- **Great Leap Forward Development**

Though the information revolution and the development of internet caused the digital divide, it also gives an opportunity to release the great leap forward development. In the information revolution, the information developed countries rely on information technology advantage, won the national power especially soft power increase. To a great extent, the information revolution is in great favor of the developed countries. However, for the information underdeveloped countries, it is also an opportunity. Developing countries can achieve leap forward development in the wave of information revolution by utilizing the advantage of late development, so as to shorten the gap with developed countries and even go beyond some developed countries through a certain period of development.

The leap forward development means that the backward countries achieve the goals that advanced countries have achieved a relatively short time and at a low cost, even in the process of development, skip the stage that advanced countries have experienced. In the information technology revolution, thanks to the spread of technology, developing countries can skip over some of the technical research and development stages, direct access to advanced the information technology with less cost, such as skip the copper cable commune nication directly into the optical fiber communication stage in the informatization construction, wireless communications directly replace expensive wired

communications. So far, nearly half of India's population is illiterate, but India has seized the opportunity of information revolution and actively developed information industry. Now, it has begun to move forward to the developed countries. The information revolution has created the conditions for the backward countries to exert their post advantage and realize the great leap forward development of the economy and society.

5.2.2. Non-government actor makes more influence

The pluralism of the main body of political power is an important reason for the change of the internal structure of the state power. The subject of political power is relative to the object of the political power, and the subject of political power is the possessor and the envoy of the political power. The nature of the subject of political power determines the nature of political power, the purpose of the exercise and the effect of the exercise of political power. Network political power subject from the reality of society, can be divided into three levels. Firstly an individual in political life as a direct or indirect bearer of political power, which is the source of political power and the basic force, such as the netizen[2]. Secondly, political organizations, political groups, political party and political religious organizations for the realization of a common political goal, such as the network community. Thirdly, the political body formed by the appendages of the state power and the public rights, who override the society in the name of society and distribute and control the whole society with special coercion, at the core and key position in the subject of political power is of universal binding force to the whole society, such as the network state. The netizens are the basic components of the system of the main body of political power and the basis of the network political system. The network community is an important carrier of all kinds of value-oriented netizens for interest expression. And the network government is the core of network politics. These three are indispensable in the network politics, and are an organic whole.

In the bureaucratic hierarchy of industrial society, there is a strict hierarchy among the subjects of political power, and the development of information network technology strongly corrodes and waver this kind of power structure. The network tends to extend horizontally rather than lengthwise. The characteristics of lateral extension can effectively destroy the vertical bureaucracy hierarchy,

[2] The term netizen is a portmanteau of the words Internet and citizen as in "citizen of the net". It describes a person actively involved in online communities or the Internet in general.

and make the power of political actors in the cyber society more equal. The empowerment function of the Internet makes the general public, including the disadvantaged group and the marginal group, also has a certain discourse power. In theory, everyone on the Internet is the provider of political information, any Internet users, organizations can be established through web pages and log on the network forums and free dissemination of political information, which means everyone can become the subject of political power. In this environment, the power of tightly integrated individuals or minority groups may be fully revealed in the cyber society.

5.2.3. Interdependence is more intensified

The information revolution promotes the development of economic globalization. The development of information revolution and globalization has made the relationship between countries increasingly close. As Joseph Nye and Robert Keoghan said, the information revolution has made many countries' political process more close to the ideal model of interdependence. The Internet greatly shortens the time and space between countries and regions, and greatly reduces the cost and cost of economic exchanges, financial transactions and information transmission, and the global economy is more closely linked. At the same time, the developing countries are gradually transforming into the team of the market economy. The era of global market segmentation has ceased to exist, and the space of economic globalization is broader. Global economic integration of mutual development and interdependence is being formed worldwide. Since the United States has made use of the information revolution to grow itself, countries have begun to take the development of science and technology and economy as a top priority. At the same time, countries have reduced the blockade of technology transfer, and have intensified technological trade cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit. Some studies believe that the highly developed information technology has made the technology blockade extremely difficult, thus triggering the unprecedented diffusion of technology. Information technology is constantly promoting the accelerated development of international science and technology trade and exchange. The wide application of highly efficient Internet information technology has also promoted the globalization of international capital flows, financial liberalization and financial coordination. In the face of the volatility and risk of the global financial market, countries can only cope with the crisis by strengthening their cooperation and exchange in the financial market. Global infiltration of information revolution has brought the

development of multinational companies to a new stage. Nowadays, more than 40 thousand transnational corporations around the world control 40% of world production, 60% of World Trade and 60-70% of international technology trade. The global network formed by multinational corporations has become one of the most important characteristics of the world economic system, which has directly promoted the cooperation between countries and reduced the possibility of economic and trade policy confrontation between countries.

5.2.4. Developing countries can influence the international agenda or rules

The rapid and extensive dissemination of information has made the whole world contact with each other. The state and government are not only concerned with the security of the country, but the growing and diverse problems have affected the government's foreign policy. As Kissinger said, "an unprecedented, new agenda has emerged in front of us. The problem of energy, resources, environment, population, space and ocean utilization is in the same important position as military security, ideology and territorial competition which traditionally constitute diplomatic agenda. In international politics, although a powerful country plays an important role in the international agenda setting, has the advantage of a country's overall power, but does not mean that the country has advantages in all issues. In some of the field, the developing countries may also have advantages. Weak states can link this advantage to other vital issues and gain concessions or compensation from powerful nations.

In today's information era, the development of the Internet provides a broader platform for the weak change of agenda setting. Information has greatly increased its circulation through the network, and the state has lost a lot of power to control its own information. Those governments who want to improve their development level will not be able to hide their financial and political situation in the dark box of the country, and the dissemination of information will be more open and transparent. A weak nation can be carried out through the network information dissemination of a certain subject caused worldwide concern, the focus on network media and network media will greatly influence the global audience's understanding and views on these issues, format public opinion pressure, win the sympathy and support of other countries, thus promote the issue into the international agenda, achieve the goal of the country. Small and weak countries can attract people's attention through a network to achieve the goal of successful implementation of the agenda.

5.3. The Significances of OBOR Initiative Going Digital

Because of the development of Internet changes the international politics, Chinese government putting forward the Digital Silk Road strategy could take the best advantage of China's strength and take a dominant position during the development of Information age. In the following chapter, I will give some examples that China obeys the new feature of International politics as the Netpolitik assumed to push forward the Digital Silk Road. On this account, China will benefit from the process of OBOR initiative digitally, and that is, the significances of OBOR initiative goes digital

5.3.1. Enhance Technological Strength to Pursue Great-leap Development

On the one hand, China has overcome the digital divide currently. The conditions of domestic IT development are mature. "Internet plus" make the virtual world and the real world interactions come true. Where there is a network, it is the place where "Internet plus" can play a role, and the Internet has greatly changed the situation of excessive dependence on physical space. Technologies such as cloud computing, big data, mobile Internet and Internet of Things continue to develop and promote each other, providing a solid foundation for the development of digital economy. The related industries are rising rapidly, and the new service industry is developing vigorously, constantly producing new applications and new formats, and promoting the integration and development of traditional industries.

According to China Internet Network Information Center(CNNIC) *The 40th China Statistical Report on Internet Development*, as of June 2017, the number of netizens in China reached 751 million, and there were 19 million 920 thousand new netizens in half a year. The penetration rate of the Internet is 54.3%, which is 1.1 percentage points higher than that at the end of 2016. As of June 2017, the number of Chinese mobile Internet users reached 724 million, an increase of 28 million 300 thousand compared with the end of 2016. The proportion of Internet users in mobile Internet population increased from 95.1% at the end of 2016 to 96.3%. As of June 2017, China's netizens accounted for 26.7% of rural netizens, with a pattern of 201 million. By June 2017, the proportion of Chinese Internet users access to the Internet via desktop and laptop computers was 55% and 36.5%, and the use rate of mobile Internet was 96.3%, 1.2 percentage points higher than that at the

end of 2016; the use rate of tablet computers was 28.7%, and the use rate of TV online was 26.7%. As of June 2017, the total number of Chinese websites was 5 million 60 thousand, and the number of websites under the ".CN" website was 2 million 700 thousand. (China Internet Network Information Center, 2017)

China Internet User Quantity(ten thousnd) and Internet Penetration(%)

(Source: CNNIC)

The digital technology represented by the Internet is accelerating the deep integration with the economic and social fields, becoming an important driving force to promote the economic and social transformation of China's consumption to build the new competitive advantage of the country.

On the other hand, China would like to seek the great leap development by the Internet technology and digital economic. At present, the major economies of the world are accelerating the progress from the industrial society to the information society. If China does not seize the opportunity to achieve its own leap forward development, it may further widen the gap between the developed and the developed countries. Chinese should achieve economic development by leaps and bounds by "Internet plus the carrier. There are the following reasons.

First, the traditional economic development model is facing the bottleneck. Since the reform and opening up, China has achieved remarkable achievements and became the second largest economy in the world in 2010, but the extensive economic development for a long time has made China face the increasingly severe pressure of the environment and resources. China's excessive dependence on energy and external market leads to an increase in the vulnerability of the economic structure.

For example, China's oil import is increasing, and its dependence on external oil is increasing.

With the impact of the financial crisis and the post-financial crisis, the impact of the lack of export has begun to appear, domestic demand has not been pulled, low value-added products are overproduced, extensive development of energy consumption has made environmental problems more serious, and the sustainable green development has been imminent. "The Internet plus", provides the possibility to solve this problem. The internet-based service industry is in the ascendant, and domestic demand have been significantly stimulated, which indicates the direction for solving the current development dilemma.

5.3.2. Increase the Participation of Non – government Actors to Reduce Political Resistance

The "One Belt and One Road" initiative has been proposed for more than three years now. In the past three years, this initiative has won widespread acclaim from countries and regions along the route and has achieved great achievements in the capacity of cooperation. At the same time, in recent years, Chinese Internet companies represented by Alibaba, Huawei, and Didi have made great achievements in the field of Internet technology application and business model innovation. It can be said that China’s Internet sharing economy has walked in the forefront of the world.

Ma Yun, Chairman of Alibaba's board of directors, said that the “Belt and Road” has far exceeded the economic strategy of a country or region. Its mission is to make the world more innovative, more dynamic, more equal, and more inclusive. In his opinion, SMEs and young people in countries and regions along the “One Belt and One Road” can freely trade without any obstacles, which will bring about earth-shaking changes in the world economy. "One Belt, One Road" coupled with the world's e-commerce platform will bring new opportunities for SMEs and developing countries. In the future, as more countries respond and join, there will also be a new digital hub covering more trade routes, thus creating a global Digital Silk Road. (Sina, 2017)

All along, state-owned enterprises have been the forerunners of Chinese companies going abroad. From the Gwadar port of Pakistan to the Yachi railroad in Ethiopia, state-owned enterprises have topped the "Belt and Road" initiative, bringing with them the quality of China and its efficiency. In fact, the “cake” brought by the “One Belt and One Road” is large enough. It also requires more input from the social forces in the process of construction and requires the participation of various

types of enterprises.

As early as in 2013, Chinese Internet companies have taken the lead in opening up overseas exploration. Today, China has more than 6,000 Internet companies entering the overseas market, more than 10,000 products going overseas, and users in more than 200 countries around the world. It continuously exports China's leading technologies and business models. (Sina, 2017)

In fact, private Internet companies including Alibaba and Huawei have taken the lead in getting out of China and deploying overseas.

For example, after India announced its "discarded banknotes" last year, the "Indian version of Alipay" - Paytm, which was funded by Ant Financial, became the biggest winner, greatly facilitating the payment problem for the Indian people. In countries and regions along the “Belt and Road” such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Dubai and Europe, Alibaba Cloud has set up a data center, and its independently developed large-scale computational operating system “Flying Sky” also goes overseas and will be connected to millions of servers worldwide. Become a supercomputer and provide the community with computing power in the form of online public services. (Sina, 2017)

In addition, in April, AliExpress, Alibaba’s only B2C e-commerce platform for the global market, announced that its overseas buyers exceeded 100 million in more than 220 countries and regions. Overseas consumers enjoy more and more new "Made in China", and they are also subtly changing the local e-commerce ecosystem. (Sina, 2017)

In 2016, Huawei and the Bulgarian government discussed cooperative projects, including the installation of speed cameras, the construction of intelligent transportation systems, and safe cities. Huawei also assisted the Bulgarian government in popularizing broadband and providing 3G and 4G mobile Internet devices to provide more convenient communication services for the life of more than 7 million people in Eastern Europe. (Sina, 2017)

In the field of mobile communications, Chinese brands represented by Huawei have already broken the market pattern once dominated by foreign companies such as Apple and Samsung. In Africa, vast areas of rural areas have not been connected to electricity, and Huawei’s ultra-long standby mobile phones have become a favorite of local people. In the field of high-end machines, Huawei also gradually began to face up with Apple. Take the Southeast Asian market as an example. In

Malaysia, Huawei's high-end market share of more than $400 stalls exceeds 25%; in Thailand, Huawei's high-end market share of $400 or more stalls also exceeds 10%.(Sina, 2017)[3]

5.3.3. Intensify Interdependence to Create a Good Environment for Cooperation

On the whole, the Internet economy belongs to the service industry. Compared with trade in goods, the opening up of the service industry is more influenced by policies and depends on a stable external policy environment. For more than thirty years, China's reform and opening up has been mainly foreign economic cooperation or goods trade based on processing and manufacturing. This way of participating in international economic cooperation is relatively small influenced by external policies. However, with the gradual deepening of China's participation in international economic cooperation, especially from the transformation of goods trade to service trade, China will play a greater role in the policy and mechanism of world economic cooperation so as to better safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises. The Belt and Road initiative is the first Chinese international economic and social cooperation put forward comprehensive policy suggestions, to adapt to the new trend of Chinese participate in international economic and social cooperation, to provide good policy guidance and international cooperation mechanism for Chinese services out for Chinese Internet economy to the world. For a good external policy environment.

According to the state information center "The Belt and Road big data report (2016)" statistics, "The Belt and Road" initiative to May 2017 "The Belt and Road" summit, China's use of high-level visits and public diplomacy widely publicized "The Belt and Road" concept, currently has more than 100 countries and international organizations welcomed "a Take a road construction in our country, with many countries in the fields of multi-level communication and consultation on bilateral cooperation, cooperation agreement has been along with the more than 30 countries signed a joint "The Belt and Road". In May [1]2017 held "The Belt and Road" during the summit, China and nearly 20 countries and more than 20 international organizations signing cooperation documents, the relevant departments are expected to be along with national counterparts to jointly develop nearly 20 action plans, involving multiple areas of infrastructure, energy and resources, production, trade and investment cooperation etc.. The signing of an international economic cooperation agreement The

[3] http://finance.sina.com.cn/roll/2017-05-20/doc-ifyfkqiv6570958.shtml

Belt and Road "initiative since the intensive, contribute to China's Internet economy in overseas more friendly policy treatment.

Not only did we sign the agreement, but our country also led the establishment of the Asian infrastructure investment bank (from now on referred to as "Asia Investment Bank"). As of October 2016, Asia Investment Bank has 57 member countries, covering far more than Asia, and has become a worldwide development investment bank. Although the Asian investment bank is mainly focused on infrastructure investment, its investment scope also includes network hardware infrastructure investment closely related to the Internet economy, which is conducive to the Internet economy to go out of the country. In addition, in the BRICs Development Bank, China also has a large share of investment, which is also conducive to Chinese enterprises to carry out operational activities in the BRICs countries, and help the Internet economy move towards the BRICs countries.

5.3.4. Formulating the International Rules of Digital Economy to Enhancing the Right to Speak in Cyberspace

One of the reasons why the “One Belt and One Road” initiative has attracted significant attention in the world is that the “One Belt and One Road” initiative has highly focused on the development of underdeveloped countries. There are many developing countries along the “One Belt and One Road” route, including Iraq, Bhutan, Timor-Leste, Laos, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, which are lagging economic and social development. This is the most concentrated region in the world today, with the exception of Africa. Therefore, the "Belt and Road Initiative" proposed that these countries should be included in the international cooperation for interconnection, mutual development and common development, and it has aroused strong positive reactions throughout the world.

Today's world has entered the Internet era. Many of the above-mentioned underdeveloped countries are still in the pre-steam era. In this case, it is necessary to plan the mode and path of leap-forward development. The rise of the Internet economy has provided a powerful technical weapon for these underdeveloped countries to realize leap-forward development and to make up for the difference in their position.

Take communications as an example. Backward areas often have complicated geography, and some

areas are blocked by mountains, and communications are seriously lagging behind. If you follow the path of the developed countries in the west, first popularize telephone and telegraph communication, then popularize fixed broadband Internet communication, and finally popularize mobile Internet communication, and its investment cycle is extremely long. Nowadays, mobile Internet technology has developed very well. In backward areas, there is no need to go through the telephone and telegraph era and the fixed Internet era. It can directly enter the mobile Internet era. For people in backward areas, using mobile phones to access the Internet and communications is cheaper and more convenient than using traditional telephones and desktop personal computers to communicate online. Not only that, with the "curve passing" of mobile communications, backward regions can build Internet sharing travel systems through the Internet and other vehicles such as Didi, without having to invest a lot of resources to set up traditional taxi companies, and realize leaps and bounds with the help of mobile Internet communication technology.

Taking education as an example, the underdeveloped countries are often countries with poor infrastructure, education coverage and education quality. Under such circumstances, if schools are built one by one in villages and towns and qualified teachers are used to popularize education, their investments are huge, and their effectiveness is relatively slow. They even face complicated security risks. The construction of mobile Internet facilities in these regions and the implementation of online education through Internet facilities will have a multiplier effect. The development of Internet information dissemination technology and Internet-based Internet education has provided new ideas for popularizing culture and education in backward areas. Although this type of Internet education is still difficult to completely replace the school face-to-face teaching, the promotion of Internet education can improve the level of education in backward areas in a short period and effectively promote the leap-forward development of backward areas.

In this world, countries are a interdependent unprecedented extent to deepen the human life in the same village, living at the same time at the intersection of history and reality, become a community of destiny. - Xi Jinping's speech at University of International Relations in Moscow, March 23, 2013

（冯雪竹, 2015）

In recent years, with the development of the Internet, countries around the world have become increasingly interconnected and interdependent, becoming a community of Shared future. In virtual network space, people all over the world can cross national, regional, racial, ethnic, religious, social system and so on all kinds of tangible or intangible "borders", achieve global exchanges. This interactive relationship in cyberspace is of great benefit to the development of human society.

As the development of cyberspace, it is the inevitable trends that the physical silk road goes digital. With the deepen of interdependence, Digital Silk Road, which based on the construction of Internet hardware infrastructure, will make the internet a more efficient tool to make the *network effect*[4] spreading to a wider range.

5.4. The Risks of OBOR Initiative Going Digital

The Internet has become an iconic mode of information dissemination in the information age, and its rich and complex features have brought great impact on the international community. Because of the typical features of Internet - decentralized and international, open and relatively equal, bi-directional, concealment – there are also a lot of risks that China has to take during the OBOR initiative goes digital.

5.4.1. The Cultural and Religious Risks are Amplified

The ethnic structure of the countries along OBOR is complex and the culture is diverse. The OBOR across the Eurasian continent, and many regions are multi-ethnic countries. Especially in Southeast Asia, the ethnic structure is extremely complex. Because of historical and geographical factors, each nation has obvious cultural characteristics. Southeast Asia has many nationalities and rich languages. There are more than 90 ethnic groups in the whole region. There are 42 ethnic groups and 135 branches in Burma; Indonesia has more than 300 nationalities and branches; there are about 90 nationalities and more than 70 languages in Philippines; and there are 49 nationalities in Laos. (马

[4] Network effect: the two sides in the same market are interdependent, and economists refer to this phenomenon as the network effect or the demand-side economies of scale. Under the effect of the positive network effect, the value of the platform to any user group depends largely on the number of users on the other side of the network. The better the platform matches the user needs on both sides of the network, the greater the value.

昀, 2015) In some countries, there is no main body that occupies an absolute majority of the population, so the national issue is very complicated. Because of the transnational distribution of ethnic groups in various countries, various ethnic conflicts often cause turbulence or conflict between the domestic and neighboring countries. The diversity of national culture is not only the motive force of communication, but also a certain hindrance to the communication between countries and nations, and the cost of increasing economic cooperation. (马昀, 2015)

Besides, the OBOR area countries has many religions, and its beliefs show diversity. Asia is the birthplace of major religions in the world. According to ethnic regions, there are more than 300 religions in the world, of which Asia accounts for the largest proportion. The main religions originating in Asia include Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Shinto and Sikh religion. The religious differences among Asian countries are obvious, and the religious composition within each country is complicated. Taking Southeast Asia as an example, the religious composition of Southeast Asian countries is extremely complicated. Diversity has become the most significant feature of religion in Southeast Asia. There are several or even dozens of religions in most countries. The branches of religious schools are very complex and diverse. Different religions and schools often show exclusiveness. This makes social contradictions more complicated. Some countries have a dominant religion, for example, most of the people in Philippines believe in Catholicism; Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea believe in Mahayana Buddhism; most people in Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei believe in Islam; Singapore, Buddhism and Taoism dominate. Because of the different religious teachings and taboos, there is often a situation of discrimination in the country's religion in his country, which adds to the instability of the national relations in the region. Some religious extremists have also become the main force of international terrorism.

The OBOR area countries' status of religious belief

Country	Religions	State Religion
Azerbaijan	Islamic	NA
Pakistan	Islamic	Islamic

Bhutan	Buddhist	Buddhist
Russia	Orthodox, Islamic, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist	Orthodox
Philippines	Catholic, Buddhist	Catholic
Kyrgyzstan	Islamic	Islamic
Cambodia	Buddhist	Buddhist
Qatar	Islamic	Islamic
Malaysia	Islamic, Buddhist, Catholic	Islamic
Burma	Buddhist	Buddhist
Nepal	Hinduism, Buddhist	Hinduism
Saudi Arabia	Islamic	Islamic
Sri Lanka	Islamic, Buddhist	Buddhist
Tajikistan	Islamic	Islamic
Tailand	Buddhist	Buddhist
Turkey	Islamic, Orthodox	Islamic
Turkmenistan	Islamic	Islamic
Brunei	Islamic, Buddhist	Islamic
Uzbekistan	Islamic	Islamic
Syria	Islamic	Islamic
Iran	Islamic	Islamic
Israel	Islamic, Catholic, Jewish	Jewish
Indonesia	Islamic, Buddhist, Catholic, Hinduism	Islamic
EU	Catholic, Islamic, Catholic	

（Source：from the Internet open data）

According to the Netpolitik, cyberspace connects users with a variety of content, integration and unity in its internal and surrounding environment for many different aspects of human activity. (Hill, Kevin, A., Hughes, & John, E., 1998) When the OBOR initiative goes digital, this kind of risks – religion, culture and so on – will be wild spread through the Internet. If it is used by people who intent to, it will amplify the risks which are existing in the OBOR initiative.

5.4.2. Original Ideology is influenced

As an important information carrier of people's communication, the network is becoming the main place of free expression of various social consciousness. With the developing of the Internet, the rise of social media has brought new changes in the way of human communication and communication. The mode of information dissemination has been defended, the flow of information is unimpeded, the frequency of communication and communication of cultural exchanges in all countries is increasing, and we also face new problems of maintaining cultural security.

Traditional medium are mainly newspapers, books, magazines, radio, television, movies, publicity column, etc., which is a centralized, time and space restricted, top-down, one-way communication system. Among them, the party and government are the controller and disseminator of information, and the audience is the passive receiver of information.

However, in the Internet era, the pluralism, autonomy, interactivity, virtuality and anti-centrality of network communication have greatly impacted and challenged the traditional communication concept and communication system. Network communication is a kind of parallel, two-way, interactive mode of transmission, which makes information communication in qualitative leap in the way and ideas, and provides Internet users with equal opportunities and the freedom of information sharing platform of the communication. Netizens are no longer just passive recipients of information, but also creators and publishers of information. They do not have to approve and check through the party and government organs. They can independently make web pages, freely communicate and discuss, disseminate relevant information in various ways and express various opinions. Therefore, the ideological transmission of ideology in the network era is impacted by the superiority of ideological indoctrination. Traditional ideology, communication system and means of

communication also face great challenges.

As Alvin Toffler mentioned in Powershift, the world has left the violence and control time, money and the future of world politics rubik's cube will control in the hands of people with information of power. They will use the rights of network control and information distribution controlling in their hands, taking advantage of the powerful culture in the English language, to achieve the aims that violence, money can't conquer. (Toffler. A, 1990)

The western developed countries use their control and influence of information transmission, transfer their ideology, political system, values, culture and thought to all over the world. Because of the technical particularity of cyberspace, it is very difficult for sovereign states and governments to check and control the contents of transnational transmission and display as some countries usually do. Including China, Russia, OBOR domain for national ideologies and the concepts of value control means is single, lack of enough to face the new media management experience, which makes the international public opinion environment we are always at a disadvantage.

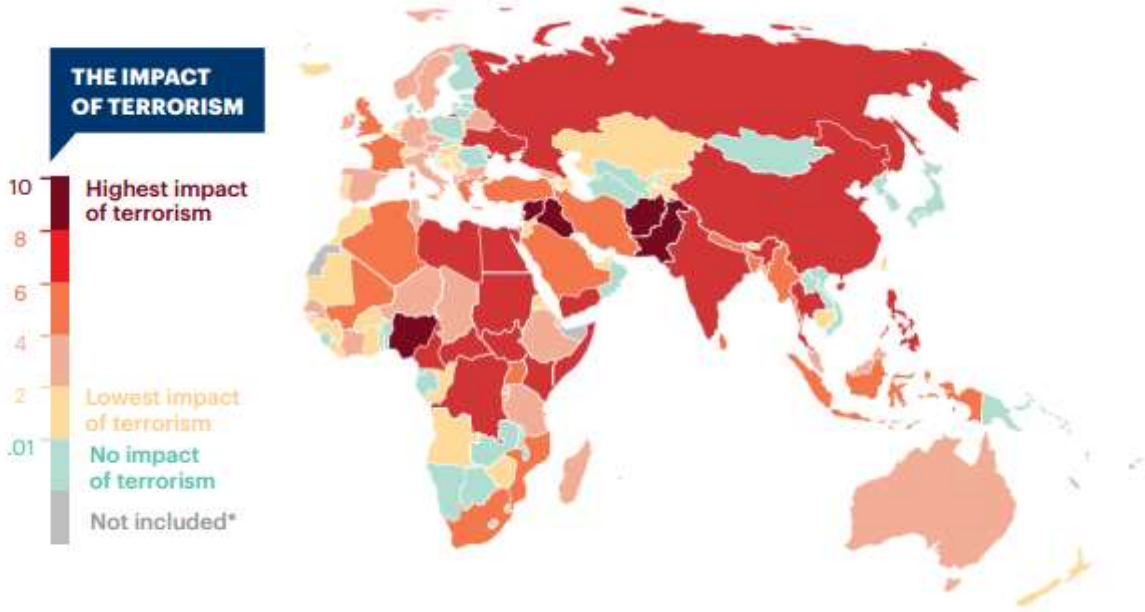
5.4.3. Cyber Terrorism and Cyber Crime are spreading

With the deeper cooperation of Digital Silk Road, the coverage and influence of cyber terrorism will increase. In recent years, the development of terrorism has become increasingly integrated with cyberspace. Terrorist forces use the Internet more and more frequently to disseminate the concept of terrorism, recruit fighters and supporters, disseminate terrorist information, and exert political influence. At the same time, terrorist forces have never given up attempts to launch cyberattacks on key information infrastructure and important network systems, bringing potential risks to Cyberspace Security. OBOR initiative covering Asia, Europe and Africa more than 60 countries, regional terrorism is active. Preventing and responding to cyber terrorism are important contents of The Belt and Road regional cooperation.

First of all, the primary influence of cyber terrorism is to boost terrorist forces and threaten regional peace and stability. The premise of OBOR initiative operating smoothly is a peaceful and stable geopolitical and environmental safety. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace global terrorism index data 2015, global terrorism index ranked among the top ten countries in almost all regions along OBOR Initiative. Among them, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria are

respectively in 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and India, Yemen, Thailand, Philippines, Ukraine, Egypt and other OBOR area countries are also in the top 20, which means that primary security threats and geopolitical barriers OBOR initiative faced are terrorism. (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015)

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
1	Iraq	10
2	Afghanistan	9.233
3	Nigeria	9.213
4	Pakistan	9.065
5	Syria	8.108
6	India	7.747
7	Yemen	7.642
8	Somalia	7.6
9	Libya	7.29
10	Thailand	7.279
11	Philippines	7.27
12	Ukraine	7.2
13	Egypt	6.813
14	Central African Republic	6.721
15	South Sudan	6.712
16	Sudan	6.686
17	Colombia	6.662
18	Kenya	6.66
19	Democratic Republic of the Congo	6.487
20	Cameroon	6.466
21	Lebanon	6.376
22	China	6.294
23	Russia	6.207
24	Israel	6.034
25	Bangladesh	5.921
26	Mali	5.871
27	Turkey	5.737
28	United Kingdom	5.613
29	Greece	4.976
30	Uganda	4.894
31	Bahrain	4.871
32	Nepal	4.791
33	Indonesia	4.755
34	Algeria	4.75
35	United States	4.613
36	France	4.553
37	Mozambique	4.386
38	South Africa	4.231
39	Iran	4.222



(Source: Institute for Economics and Peace)

Moreover, the most active terrorist organization Islamic state is the one who is the most adept at using the network support of terrorism. The Islamic state network supporters are mainly distributed in the OBOR area. According to a report from the Brookings Institution, from September 2014 to December, Twitter has at least 46 thousand active supporters of the Islamic States accounts. These accounts not only include the members of the Islamic States also have some no direct links with the Islamic States but are actively engaged in the transmission and dissemination of propaganda materials and recruitment of Islamic States. From geographical data, the most active users are distributed in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq and the United States. (Cole Bunzel, 2015) This shows that network integration has provided more space for terrorism, means that the long-term and persistent

worries about OBOR cooperation.

The direct effect of terrorism is the threat to the interconnection cooperation of OBOR initiative. As mentioned earlier, although there has been no terrorist organization to launch a large-scale network attack on key information infrastructure, it is clear that the terrorist forces do not exclude or give up such a choice, and will do their best to obtain corresponding network attacks. The overall protection of key information infrastructure and important network systems often requires huge capital investment and human support. In the countries and regions where the government has insufficient governance or the security prevention is not in place. Thus, the direct physical damage to the key information infrastructure is also a great concern.

China, which is facing the threat of terrorism, and also the victim of transnational network attacks, can play a leading role in promoting OBOR along the countries' cooperation to deal with cyber terrorism.

5.4.4. Data security and privacy are under threat

During the digitalization of OBOR Initiative, the data security and privacy in relevant countries are under threat. With the development of digitalization, the network space security is facing more complex and severe situation, especially when it comes to cross-board cooperation. At present, the OBOR area countries are facing problems of lack of open data, but also by the lack of data security problems, especially transnational data transmission bring the complicated relationship between the principles of traditional sovereignty, which constitute a challenge to data security protection.

Network space not only provides access to information circulation, but also provides information systems or platforms for the normal operation of modern industries. The power, oil, hydraulic, petrochemical and other industries in most countries are centralized and unmanned operations. Now there are over 3 million data collection and monitoring equipment in the world. If the system is manipulated, the devastating consequences are hard to recover. (杨文君, 2017)

With the expansion of new technology applications in countries and regions along the OBOR region, Cloud computing, big data, Internet of things, smart city construction and other aspects have been rapidly applied. However, the main force of cloud computing is mainly from the outside countries, which means that the deepening application of the e-government has brought a deep concern to

national security. The Prism incident in 2013, Microsoft, Google and Apple has been exposed many Internet companies involved, caused the world concern of cloud computing and data security in the Information age.

In conclusion, the problem of misuse of data, privacy, network fraud, stealing business secrets, even monitoring the data of other countries, endangering the security of other countries and other big data operation problems have occurred, making countries more concerned about the security of the digital age. Handling cross-border data flow and network space governance issues properly, balancing the open data sharing and maintain data security, the relationship between the two is the guarantee and basis that Digital Silk Road plays an important role in promoting the smooth development. (张耀军&宋佳芸, 2017)

6. Conclusion

According to what we analyzed in the thesis, with the development of the Internet, digitalization and informatization is the general trend of the world. Not only China, the US and EU also take actions. China could not wait if it doesn't want to fall behind. Besides, there are lots of opportunities that China has to push forward the OBOR Initiative goes digital. According to the Netpolitik, the development of Internet has changed the traditional international politics. The most obvious and most scholars mentioned is that the technology strength, non-government actors, interdependence and international rules. As I described in the first section of this chapter and the Netpolitik in theory chapter, we could believe that the situation that OBOR Initiative goes digital accord with the assumption of Netpolitik so that the analysis can be guided by it. According to the Netpolitik, I conclude the significance that OBOR Initiative goes digital as – to enhance technological strength, to increase the participation of non-state actors, to create a good environment for cooperation and to enhance the right to speak in cyberspace.

And by doing that, what could China get? Firstly, the Digital Silk Road will expand the scale of international trade through cross-border e-commerce and the improvement of the network level of countries. China will be the biggest beneficiary. (李一丹, 2017) As the "World Factory", China has the complete production system in the region, and the production cost and quality of various goods are competitive. With this advantage, Alibaba group has put the electric business platform to OBOR area countries and occupied the market in 48 countries. Chinese goods is popular in Russia, Asean countries, Arab countries. The construction of the Silk Road in China, Arabia and other countries will further expand the influence of Chinese commodities through e-commerce. (李一丹, 2017) While promoting international trade, the Digital Silk Road also contributes to the stability of international relations and the common prosperity of all countries, which is one of the reason that China accelerate the digital process.

Besides, Digital Silk Road will greatly help to promote OBOR initiative. The Digital Silk Road has both short-term effective e-commerce functions and long-term effective technological progress. The government and people of OBOR countries will give more support after they recognize its role in promoting the economy. With the increased level of economic development, countries will also have

more money into The Belt and Road construction, so as to better realize the common construction, which is an important goal of OBOR Initiative. The smooth construction and remarkable achievements of Digital Silk Road, also can let governments and people actively participate in the "The Belt and Road" construction, and then promote economic development through the construction of infrastructure and improve the level of interoperability.

According to Netpolitik, the development of Internet will give the opportunity for developing countries to change the international rules. With the help of digital of OBOR initiative, China will have the power and appeal to build the rule in the OBOR area. In the era of the legalization of the international community, the creation of international regulation is not only a reflection of the strength of a great country, but also the embodiment of its diplomatic ability. (姜志达, 2016) On the one hand, China builds the international rules in the OBOR area. The establishment and improvement of relevant international regulations are necessary to ensure the smooth development of OBOR. (姜志达, 2016) China stresses the role of existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms; not only take use of the sea platform, but also use land international road; put emphasis on the infrastructure construction. Depending on the OBOR Initiative to build infrastructure, strengthen connectivity, improve investment environment and trade conditions, and promote our own economic development.

And there are also risks China could not ignore. The digitalization of OBOR somehow will amplify the existing problem of OBOR, such as political, religious and cultural risks. And it also will bring some new challenges, which can be concluded as the cybersecurity risks.

To deal with that, what could China do? Firstly, to cope with the religious, cultural and ideology risks, China has rich experience in using big data technology to carry out network public opinion monitoring and analysis. Information should be widely collected from the Internet, local newspapers and newspapers, and scientific and objective research on the risks of relevant national governments. Before the occurrence of adverse political events, we actively sent early warning information to relevant enterprises and Chinese citizens working in the local area to guide relevant enterprises to minimize losses. If such a work government is not suitable for completion, measures should be taken to encourage civil institutions to complete. (张效羽, 2017)

And when it comes to the cybersecurity risks, as my point of view, it is inevitable during the development of cyberspace. And now we can see that it will amplify the risk of culture, religion and ideology conflicts, provide a hotbed for cyber terrorism and cyber crime, and threat the data security and privacy and so on. And with the developing of Internet technology, new challenges will keep coming. And I could not use the specific data to evaluate the risk and income. That is one of my deficiency of the thesis. However, it is known to all that the speed of development of internet is not be blocked by the existing and potential risks at all. And I believe it is also could be used to explain the OBOR initiative goes digital.

To cope with that, China should make full use of existing multilateral cooperation mechanisms and improve the bilateral cooperation mechanism to build cross-regional partners and cooperation mechanisms. The cross-regional cooperation partners and cooperation mechanisms will provide strong support for the construction of cyberspace governance in the region. In particular, it can make up for the deficiency of the research and development capability of China.

To establish the cross-regional cooperation mechanisms EU is a critical partner. Europe is the west end of OBOR initiative and many central and eastern European countries are also important members. After the financial crisis of 2008 and the European debt crisis, the development of Sino-EU relations came to a new height. Before China put forward the Digital Silk Road, EU had the Digital Agenda and Digital Single Market strategy. Though China and EU have some attempt of cooperation, it’s not enough as my point of view. With the pushing forward of the strategy, I believe there will be a great space for Sino-EU cooperation in the Internet field.

All in all, the benefits that China’s OBOR Initiative goes digital overweigh is risks, so that the government put forward the strategy and that’s the reason why the China’s OBOR Initiative goes digital.

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