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# INTERCONNECTIVITY is reshaping THE FUTURE

By Tamás Nánási-Kézdy – Előd Bodnár

NEW MAPS, NEW NETWORKS AND NEW FUSIONS CHARACTERISE THE NEW ERA MARKED BY EURASIA, AND THE MUCH MORE COMPLEX WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE TODAY, SAYS GEOGRAPHER NORBERT CSIZMADIA, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PALLAS ATHÉNÉ DOMUS MERITI FOUNDATION AND THE JOHN VON NEUMANN UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION.

*- We are increasingly talking about the emergence of a new supercontinent, Eurasia. Already in the 19th century, there were theories predicting the inevitable meeting and interconnection of Europe and Asia...*

- The Eurasian world order is not a vision for the future, as it has already started in 2013. China has launched the New Silk Road initiative (or BRI, that is Belt and Road Initiative) to shift the axis of development from the seas to the land, establishing its former interconnected Eurasian importance, both economically and culturally. The New Silk Road connects the easternmost part of Asia with the westernmost points of Europe through various economic and trade corridors and infrastructure developments. But the New Silk Road is not only about logistics development, it is also about com-

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mercial, cultural, digital, educational, green and health cooperation. This cooperation is much stronger than epidemics or armed conflicts could change it. The main reason for this is that our fast-paced world is now characterised by increasing interconnectivity, which was one of the key foundations for the creation of Eurasia.



Maps of scientific collaboration 2009/2018



Source: Olivier H. Beauchesne/Science-Matrix

- ***Why is this interconnectedness important?***

- Today we have to look at processes at a much more complex level. The explosive development of interconnectedness, of connectivity, has fundamentally rewritten the way we have understood it so far. Today, the world is connected by 1 million kilometres of undersea internet cables, 2 million kilometres of pipelines, 4 million kilometres of railways and 64 million kilometres of roads. These lines may not be visible on traditional maps, but in many ways they are more important than the borders that separate countries. The infrastructure network connecting us all is of greater importance at transcontinental level.

- ***The study and theory of interconnectedness is essentially the brainchild of geopolitical analyst Parag Khanna. To what extent does this new approach override previous geographical approaches?***

- Parag Khanna's book is a groundbreaking, very exciting book. Its message is based on three pillars.

On the one hand, the author starts from the assertion that globalisation is making interconnectivity increasingly important. On the other hand, Khanna argues that geography needs to be rethought, and a functional approach needs to be introduced alongside natural and economic descriptions. The third claim of the book is that competitive interconnectivity is the most important geopolitical driver.

- ***Could the conflict between Ukraine and Russia be linked to the intensification of the Eurasian process?***

- The interconnection and formation of the Eurasian supercontinent undoubtedly marks the end of the 500-year Atlantic era and the start of a new Eurasian era. Every change of era comes with a transition, and we are now part of it. It is already clear that a single-centred world is being replaced by a multi-centred one in the process of globalisation.



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