_____

The Position of the New Security Concept in China's Foreign Policy – Case Study on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Slobodan **Popovic**[*]
University of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Ljiljana **Stevic**[**]
University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract

This paper analyzes the position of the New Security Concept (NSC) in China's foreign policy. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has been selected as a case study, because in the *China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept* the SCO has been announced as the best implementation practice of the NSC. This paper is made of three parts. The first part represents theoretical platform for explaining the NSC and the reasons why it was introduced by policy-makers of the Chinese Communist Party. The research relies on concepts offered by moral realism, relational theory and theory of institutional balancing. The second part tackles the institutional development of the SCO, as the framework for exploring by which manners and in which areas SCO's member states/partners deepen and strengthen their cooperation and in which areas the cooperation is lacking. The third part of the paper

tackles the practical nexus between the NSC and the SCO, focusing on *Peace Missions*, *Xiamen* and *Solidarity* – the SCO joint antiterrorist and military drills for countering geographical and cyber terrorism, separatism and religious extremism ("three evils").

Keywords: *relational theory, strategic credibility, "non-other", Shanghai Cooperation Organization, cyber security*

1. Introduction

We are witnessing that the contemporary world order is under great changes within which China is ambitiously striving to obtain the "role of partner" within the global governance. For decades China has not been an autarkic state in terms of what China understands as more equitable geoeconomic distribution of wealth and more secure geopolitical order. This shift in China`s foreign policy has been brought by economic, political, military and social results, ecological, and nationalistic challenges and further requirements of the policy of "reforms and opening-up". Thus, through the policy of "reforms and opening up" China abandoned the concept of self-sufficiency while understanding global order as a revolutionary space. It started to pursue more pragmatic course towards the international order and multilateralism. In that context one of the many Chinese ambitious aims is to create the atmosphere within which it will not be understood as "Other", that is, it will be perceived as "Non-Other" state that is not challenging and jeopardizing the international society. Following the logic and nature of this kind of objectives, China is using the tools offered by structural power (Mitrović, 2012: 21-25). Structural power is one of the tools that one country can use with the aim to create new or reshape the existing structures of the interstate (economic, political, security and

technological) relations. From the same perspective, China understands the new interstate relations as the platform for making global partnership network. Further, the global partnership network is the framework within which China will be in a position to use the other states' social power. Social power is defined as a power of creating legitimate norms, standards and values (Stefanović-Štambuk, 2010: 665). As the end of the Cold War brought the dismantling of the Soviet Union, bipolar world order structure has been replaced by U.S. undisputed power. Legitimately, USA acted from the position of power of the unique global super power creating international security, political and financial structure that will be in accordance with American strategic ambitions and plans abstracted in "Manifest Destiny". As one of the steps in the process of creating the "New World Order", USA selected the homogenization of the states. States which did not want to be homogenized under the Washington Consensus or did not support militaristic export of democracy were defined as "Other" – challengers and rogue states. Facing the unquestioned American power, China as a promising developing country that was affected by many internal turmoils, was pushed once again to change its understanding of domestic and international security. Besides losing its "balancing position" between the two blocks, Western and Eastern, China faced vacuum of power in Central Asia. The vacuum of power triggered competition for controlling Central Asian strategic assets such as oil, gas, rare earths minerals, and religion. With controlling strategic assets, external factor is in position to dictate institutional development, political and economic reforms of the Central Asian states. Regarding Chinese national interests, this was a great challenge. Namely, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, for the very first time Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan had to face domestic and international challenges as independent states. The geopolitical map

of Eurasia was redrawn and, thus, unfamiliar for the international community. China had to act towards this newly formed geographical and security map, if it wanted to preserve/defend its territorial sovereignty and sustain economic development. Namely, China's Xinjiang autonomous region is bordering with those newly formed states. But, the problem lays in the fact that Central Asian states could be the (additional) driving and (de)stabilizing force regarding the Uyghur's separatist ambitions in creating the so-called state of "East Turkestan". Having in mind that Central Asian states are linguistically and religiously more familiar with and biased towards Uyghur than the Han population, China considered this as a potentially great support of Uyghur's separatist ambitions. Parallel with securing its western borders, China was creating the position to reinforce and provide international legitimacy to its vertical and horizontal control over Xinjiang. Hence, China initiated and Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan accepted the Shanghai Five mechanism. The involved states realized that by resolving and preventing future territorial disputes and by reducing the military forces in the common bordering regions, they will be able to employ their resources for economic development and enhancing the people`s living standards. Thus, instead on arm race the budget spending could be directed towards non-military services and sustainable development (Mitrovic, 2011, 2019c). By establishing multilateral, besides bilateral cooperation, China made the very first step in presenting itself as "Non-Other" and integral part of the Central Asian economic, institutional, political and security transformation. Thus, Chinese ideas, values and norms would not be excluded as challenging elements. The Shanghai Five was created in 1996, and it was the germ of the SCO flourished in 2001, when Uzbekistan accessed as a full member state. As years were passing by, the Organization demonstrated its capacities in securing security in Eurasia and providing economic

development, by nurturing and making harmony in diversity. This SCO approach towards regulating interstate security and economic relations is defined as the "Shanghai spirit". Thus, China is insisting that the work of the SCO is not based on imposing the homogenization, but on creating the atmosphere within which the sustainability of the Organization and its member states will be grounded on finding the resolutions by respecting difference of national interests and finding harmony in diversity. On the other side, (colloquial speech) as for the Chinese core national interests, China behaves in the way that there is no room (there is no scope) for offering different perspectives, but Chinese, on resolving the issues. This was the factor that made public policy makers and representatives of academia to question the power, sustainability, openness and strength of the SCO. However, there is a list of countries that are waiting to become its member state (Mitrovic, 2019a).

2. Development of the New Security Concept in China's Foreign Policy

Introducing the New Security Concept (新安全观 – *xīn ānquán guān*) as the Chinese strategic, proactive, constructive, for some states assertive, choice and approach for pursuing multilateralism and joint securitization of security and economic development cannot be considered as a kind of *ad hoc*, short-term reaction to outside stimulus. It also reflects its overall assessment of the nature and trends of the international system and the international environment, its evolving concepts of national security, and its deepening understanding of the function of multilateral diplomacy under new circumstances (Wang, 2005: 160). In that context, the NSC is mirroring the evolution of China's identity positioning, strategic interests and relations with the

international community. Thus, the NSC not only came from practice but also reflects the steering of practice (Zhong, 2014: 142). By introducing the NSC, China started to gather the partners that will support its idea that the zero-sum way of thinking in international relations and Cold War mentality are obsolete and non-feasible tools in securing not just regional, but global security too. According to Qian Qichen we [international society] have to abandon the "Cold War mentality" and to develop global security order that is based "neither on military build-up nor on military alliances", but it is grounded on [constant searching for and building] "mutual trust and common interests" (Wang, 2005: 175). For the Chinese side, the security is relational concept. Relational theory is seen in the fact that China through the NSC is striving to harmonize national interests, and not to make homogenized military or security alliances. In that kind of international society, the relations between A and non-A will not be based on zero-sum game, instead it will be based on constant searching for new synthesis and symbiosis between different national interests, business praxis and security understandings (Qin, 2010). Understanding refers to both to mutual security relations and security context within which those relations are positioned. Having in mind, that China defines Western security concept as non-feasible and obsolete, it still to be seen whether Beijing is creating the atmosphere of harmonization of differences or create the harmonization that will be suitable for "wolf-warrior" diplomacy? This kind of thinking made some authors claim that by introducing this concept, China is diminishing the positive impact of the military alliances on the global stability on purpose (Shambaugh, 2005).

The NSC was accepted by the third Communist generation led by Jiang Zemin and it was incorporated in the *White Paper on China National Defense* from 1998 – within The International Security

Situation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 1998). After that, in 2002, China published document *China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept*. Namely, in China's view, the core of such new security concept should include mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2002). Regarding the abovementioned features of the NSC, the attention of our research will be focused on the methods China is using to implement those concepts in the Central Asian states. We hereby question whether China`s perception of interest could be harmonized with neighbors' perception? Whether the harmonization is conditioned with Chinese capital and surplus in foreign exchange reserves, labor in the cement and glass industry and contemporary arms? Does NSC represent Chinese efforts for creating security architecture based on the logic of complementarity or a charming offensive in creating its "Greater China Zone" sphere of influence? Xi Jinping in the "Diplomacy with Neighboring Countries Characterized by Friendship, Sincerity, Reciprocity and Inclusiveness" speech accentuated that "China`s diplomacy in this area [neighborhood] is driven by and must serve the Two Centenary Goals and our national rejuvenation [*Chinese Dream*]. To achieve these strategic aims, we must maintain and make best use of the strategic opportunities we now enjoy, and safeguard China`s state sovereignty, national security, and development interests." (Xi, 2013a) Besides that, Xi Jinping, during the Peripheral Working Diplomacy Conference, underlined, once again, the strategic importance of Chinese neighboring states. Hence, one of the Beijing's strategic goals is to raise the cooperation with neighboring states on the level that will reinforce China`s position and enhance the achievement of national interests (China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, 2013). Analyzing the speeches, it can be presupposed that stable and suitable environment has

tremendous importance for China's national interests and ambitions to develop the strategic credibility as the prerequisite in obtaining international authority. Such conclusion serves us as a helpful tool in making the distinction between power and authority, because it is possible for a state to increase its international power by promoting its material capability, but such promoted material capability cannot automatically promote its international authority when other states do not accept its leadership (Yan, 2019: 17). In that regard, Chinese neighborhood possesses two main characteristics. First, the neighborhood is the platform from which China can promote and wide the spectra of its global ambitions. Second, strategically stable and practical relations with neighboring states are prerequisites if China wants to be recognized and accepted as a legitimate world super power. Thus China is using neighborhood to expand its network of international partners hence its strategic interests' borders. Having in mind that China is facing China Threat Theory, China Collapse Theory, "wolf-warrior" diplomacy and many other discourses that are (un)objectively emphasizing negative impacts of Chinese development, was additional impetus for China to improve its international image and status and "partnership diplomacy" with the international society. A significant part in this process is given to the dominant and creative personality of Xi Jinping, the current Chinese president and CCP Central Committee's general secretary (Mitrovic, 2018: 19). Since Chinese diplomatic/ communicational/relational proactivity has not been the part of the homogenized Western community, Chinese security ambitions in Central Asia, particularly when the SCO was founded, were understood as Chinese assertive or even aggressive challenging the American efforts in spreading democracy supported by NATO military forces. American strategies of ideational, institutional or geographic spreading the NATO towards the East, Beijing perceives as an American ambition to create

the "Asian NATO" (亚洲版的北约 – *Yàzhōu bǎn de běiyuē*). The "Asian NATO" concept is "occasionally used in the context of PRC media and academic discussion suggesting that a U.S. goal is to link its allies and partners together into a NATO-like structure targeted at China" (Mitrović, 2001: 1; Wuthnow, 2018; Dai Xu, 2010; Wang, 2011; *Global Times*, 31st October 2013). Obviously, in such structure of interstate relations, Chinese space for maneuvering or manipulation of Central Asian strategic interests and assets will be contained. Apart from signing Partnerships for Peace with Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 1994, the very first result of the American-NATO ambitions in the Central Asia was achieved after September 11, 2001. Namely, USA, after declaring the War on terror, deployed NATO forces in Central Asia, all up to the Chinese borders. According to Professor Dragana Mitrovic, NATO is one of security threats (whose expansion to the East and to the borders with Afghanistan and China follows carefully) that makes China unhappy, but also pragmatic and flexible enough to adapt these changes. They think that the NATO expansion expresses the continuation of the Cold War mentality and the application of traditional security concepts that are dominated by the mentality of containment and balance of influence. Just before September 11, George W. Bush's administration, under the motto of fighting terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, strengthened strategic control over the belt from Southeast to Central Asia, directly entering the security zone of China, India, Japan and Russia (Mitrovic, 2019d). Xing Guangcheng, has emphasized four reasons for China`s opposing NATO geopolitical and military infiltration and penetration of region, beginning with emphasis that NATO's increased presence will generate an arms race. Second, closer military ties between NATO and the Central Asian states will not promote the elimination of ''hot spots'' in the region, but rather

aggravate military confrontation. Third, NATO's constant military exercises cannot help but cause concern and alarm in China. Fourth, some NATO members have provided secret support to nationalist separatist activities in the Chinese region of Xinjiang, which directly threatens China's security and stability (Xing, 2003: 110-111).

In regard to the claims that SCO was founded as Chinese response and reactions to the American presence in the Central Asian region, we have to underline that the SCO was founded in June, 2001, that is, before 11 September 2001. However, it could not be guaranteed that China will not use the SCO to prevent American further geopolitical, military, ideational and economic influence within Central Asian region, as it did during the 2005 SCO Astana summit. Thus, implementing NSC through the SCO practices, China is activating the strategic tools of institutional balancing towards USA. Institutional balancing perspective offers the insights that states are making new or using the already established institutions with the aim to pursue their (realist) interests, such as power, influence and authority, in the international system (He and Feng, 2019). Having in mind the strategic importance of the institutions, during the thirty eight years China has evolved into one of the most important, and sometimes the most important, participant in the existing structures, agreements and relationships at the regional and global level, as well as initiator, re-constructor and architect of many new ones, which are based on principles substantially different from the ones that had been dominant in the contemporary world order until recently (Mitrovic 2019b: 138; Mitrovic 2019e). Chinese behavior mirrored through the institutional balancing reflects not just Chinese belief that these institutions will enhance its position in global governance and enhance its acceptance as a benevolent global super power, bust as the basis of legitimacy in opposing the US ambition of single super power.

Following the logic of the institutional balancing through which China nurtures differences in terms of political values; Beijing was accused of promoting the Central Asian authoritarian political systems. Pursuing this kind of approach possesses two strategic importance matters for China. First, China does not want to be homogenized into Western prism, that is, it does not want its national interests to be defined by US criteria for sanctioning or awarding trusting partners. Second, it will use it as a strategic tool in preventing other states from shaping on the Western sphere of influence. Whilst China defends its national interests it does not want to be (mis)judged as a challenger. In that sense, China is trying to represent its proactive behavior as a complementary part of the global governance which can bring new developmental possibilities on the global level. As for the accusations that Beijing promotes authoritarian political systems, in the *National Defense Strategy of USA, 2018*, we can read that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model gaining veto authority over other nations' economic, diplomatic, and security decisions (Ministry of National Defense of the USA, 2018). Hence, in their understanding, China is blocking reforms and spreading of the universal democratic values in the Central Asian countries (Ambrosio, 2008). However, China is making USA and its allies anxious, because it possesses the requested level of financial, military, political and technological capacities of the structural power to offer the countries all around the globe the alternatives in regard to their development. On the other side, there are several arguments that rise the question whether China really pursues the course of nurturing differences and common learning from them. Firstly, when China implements projects on the territories of other countries there is are no public discussions whether those projects create benefits for domestic development and society. Secondly, China by defining Western approach to international security

as an obsolete and non-feasible approach in securing international security and global development produces the misunderstood impression that there is nothing positive to learn from.

3. Institutional Development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

As it was already mentioned, the SCO stems from the Chinese efforts to stabilize border areas with its new neighborhood countries, but as it will be seen in the institutional organization of the SCO there is no mechanism that tackles the question of unresolved territorial borders. At the very begging of the new age in Sino-Central Asian relations, China requested vast space of territory. According to Sebastian Peyrouse, China questioned 22 percent of the total surface area of Central Asia: it laid claim to a territory stretching from Semirechie to Lake Balkhash in Kazakhstan, almost all of Kyrgyzstan, and some 28,000 km^2 in the Pamir region of Tajikistan. However, with the opening of negotiations, the Chinese authorities toned down their claims and opted for a "good neighborhood" strategy with the new independent states. They agreed to reduce their territorial claims to "only" 34,000 km^2, chiefly out of a desire to secure allies in Central Asia (Peyrose, 2016: 14). But, guided by the strategic reasons, China softened its requests and approach in dealing with newly occurred states.[1] In that context, the first fruit born by the negotiation of the involved stakeholders was the multilateral arrangement which aim was to secure border areas through reduction of military troops and enhancing mutual military sincerity. In line with that China, Russia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan signed, in Shanghai in 1996, the Agreement on Confidence Building in Military Sphere in the Border Areas, which was the very first multilateral security agreement that China signed since its foundation in 1949 (Yahuda, 2003:

198). By signing the agreement five countries laid the foundation of the new type of multilateral cooperation, Shanghai Five mechanism, which possesses enormous importance to the Chinese side. During the next summit which took place in Moscow on April 24 1997, representatives, i.e. presidents of five states signed the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions. The 1997 Agreement was another confirmation of the involved stakeholders that all concerned states agreed to stabilize their border areas by establishing non-military zones and promising the exchange of military information (Iwashita, 2003: 262). Each subsequent summit of the Shanghai Five mechanism was dedicated to analyzing regional security situation, finding the solutions for overcoming traditional and non-traditional security challenges and improving national and regional economic conditions. Simultaneously, this means upgrading the institutional capabilities of the Mechanism. The Dushanbe summit held on July 5 2000 was the very first step in widening geopolitical and geo-economics relations of the Mechanism, because during that summit, Uzbekistan started cooperation with Mechanism from the position of the observer state (Mitrović, 2007b). Also, in July of the same year member states established the SCO Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Uzbekistan accessed to the Mechanism during the Shanghai summit held in June 2001. By common decision of the member states, the Mechanism was renamed the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization".

Institutional development of the SCO could be observed from several points of view. Firstly, it could be understood as the convergence and creation of synergy of sometimes insurmountable interests, strategies and goals of the member states. Secondly, the incremental institutional development of the SCO it could be observed as the (r)evolution of the capacities of structural and relational power of the SCO, and consequently of China. SCO strengthen its capacities of

structural and relational power by developing international cooperation with countries, institutions, forums and organizations all around the globe. This SCO empowerment is visible in the fact that it became the agenda setter and creator of some international rules. Namely, UN General Assembly by Resolution A/69/723 adopted the 2015 SCO International Code of Conduct for Information Security (UN, 13th January 2015; McKune, 2015).

The institutional and organizational structure of the SCO consists of two permanent bodies SCO Secretariat with headquarter in Beijing and Regional Antiterrorist Structure located in Tashkent. The SCO Secretariat is guided by General Secretary and five Deputy General Secretary. SCO Secretariat has thirty members. Each member state has representatives proportional to their budget giving to the Organization. In that vein, we can open the question about the "commerce of influence" and "imposing the influence" on the member states, although the decisions in the Organization are unanimous. According to the data available at the official web site of the SCO, the Secretariat coordinates the Organization's cooperation with observer states and dialogue partners in line with SCO regulatory and legal documents, works with states and the international organizations on the issues related to the Organization's activity and concludes agreements to that end with the consent of the member states. The Secretariat also works with non-governmental organizations within the SCO framework in accordance with the legal documents regulating their activity. In addition, it organizes and coordinates the activity of the SCO Observer Mission in presidential and/or parliamentary elections, as well as referendums (SCO Secretariat). Another Permanent body is the RATS. This SCO body, for Chinese side, represents, great victory for China. Namely, after the 11 September 2001, SCO besides fierce condemnation did not have any additional tool in appeasing situation and offering the solution. This

opened the channel for the USA to deploy its military in the bases in Central Asia. For that purposes America rented the Karshi-Khanabad Air Base located in southern Uzbekistan not far from Tajikistan and Manas Air Base situated just north of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The United States began leasing both Soviet-era bases during the run-up to the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. They are used primarily to station soldiers, refueling jets, and cargo planes. Each airfield houses roughly 1,000 U.S. troops and civilian contractors (Beehner, 2005). As it was already mentioned, China perceived this as a great challenge. Although China gave great contribution to the global War on terror Coalition[2] and recognized American role in stabilizing this part of the world, Beijing in cooperation with its SCO partners succeeded to create the structure of the interstate relations as a platform for amortizing the consequences and excluding the future American influence. Thus, RATS gives the opportunity to China to counter terrorism in accordance with its national interests and not in accordance with American blueprint.

Besides these two bodies, at the institutional level the SCO has been guided by the annual meetings of the Heads of State Council and the SCO Heads of Government Council. In such organizational and institutional structure, the Council of National Coordinators of the SCO Member States (CNC) acts as the SCO coordination mechanism. Furthermore, in the examination of the SCO`s ruling platform we cannot exclude the SCO Energy Club (founded at the proposal of the Russian President Vladimir Putin), SCO Business Club and SCO Bank Consortium. Regular meetings are, also, held by the ministers of foreign affairs, defense, emergency relief, economy, transport, culture, education, and healthcare; heads of law enforcement agencies and supreme and arbitration courts; and prosecutors general, representatives of youth and women. Having all this in mind, we can presuppose that SCO participants are developing the multi-vectoral cooperation (SCO

Secretariat (n.d.)). However, in some aspects member states could not create common ground for convergence of national interests. As illustrative example, the SCO Development Bank and the SCO Free Trade Area could be pointed out. Some member states are using the postponing of the SCO Development Bank and the SCO Free Trade Area as the tools in enhancing their position in the negotiations with China. We can presuppose that, some member states perceive the possible founding of the SCO Development Bank as the additional force in Chinese economic and financial expansionism. In the context of doubts towards Chinese aims, SCO member states are striving to protect their economies which are not competitive on the level of the Chinese economy. Although the SCO stems from the committees for territorial demarcation between China and its neighbors, in the institutional structure of the Organization there is no mechanism for resolving the still ongoing territorial disputes which exert the pressure on the stability, predictability and sustainability of the SCO. Apart from that, territorial disputes between the member states produce negative impact on the SCO international image, prestige and status. When India and Pakistan became full member states of the SCO, it was expected that SCO maritime potential will be activated. However, this was not the case. We are offering several arguments, that could be useful for understanding the case of non-activating the SCO maritime power. Firstly, we can employ the argument that the SCO does not possess the potential to challenge the American Indo-Pacific strategy and American maritime potential in this particular part of the globe. After that, we offer an argument which emphasizes Indian objection activation of SCO maritime potential, because it can open additional space for greater Chinese involvement in the Indian Ocean, beside already presence in strategically important ports. It remains unclear why this type of SCO cooperation has not been activated before India and Pakistan accession,

when considered that Russian territory reaches Pacific too and India and Pakistan had different status in the organization. There is also an issue of SCO and Turkey relations from the aspect of maritime geopolitical cooperation.

4. The New Security Concept in Practice –
The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Chinese
Partnership Development

In the document *China`s Position Paper on the New Security Concept* we can read that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), guided by the "Shanghai spirit" is the most successful case of the new security concept (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2002). According to the *Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO*, the "Shanghai spirit" is grounded on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, joint consultations, respecting cultural diversity and aspiration for collective development (SCO, 15th June 2001). Comparing these two concepts – "Shanghai spirit" and the NSC – we notice similar ideational values and praxis regarding the way of securing security and creating suitable environment. As it was previously said, the SCO and its initiator China and supporter Russia were accused that openness and respecting diversity as a tool in promoting democratization of the international order is a paradox, because they are not democratic countries. Sino-Russian joint actions make West feels anxious, because they are challenging the American ambitions in interconnecting continental with maritime Indo-Pacific security. The very first step in challenging American strategic interests was made during the 2005 SCO Astana summit. Namely, that Summit was the SCO response to American ambitions to reinforce its position in the Central Asian region by the methods of the "colored revolutions" and imposing Western democratic

homogeneity, which USA understand as a universal norm and tool in achieving the Manifest Destiny. According to the Declaration of the 2005 Summit given the completion of the active military phase of the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan, the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization deem it necessary for the relevant participating states of the antiterrorist Coalition to set a deadline for the temporary use of said infrastructure and presence of their military contingents in the territory of the SCO member states (SCO – Astana Declaration, 2005). As Professor Dragana Mitrović claims, the awareness of self-responsibility has been activated, as well as a self-esteem about problem resolving by own means and potentials (Mitrović, 2007a: 36). Rising the SCO self-consciousness, America perceives as a Chinese assertiveness towards USA national interests, and consequently global stability. If the SCO institutionalize its potentials given by power of its member states, it can give great impetus to achieving Xi Jinping's idea that Asian security should be provided through wise actions conducted solely by Asian people (Xi, 2013b).

The SCO, founded before 11 September 2011, was the pioneering international organization, which posed countering terrorism, separatism and religious extremism ("three evils") as its main objective and purpose. SCO is conducting this fight on both ideational and operational levels. The main features of operational level are anti-terroristic and military drills, which imposed the question of the militarization of the SCO. Did China change its attitude regarding military alliances? China objected to conduct military drills on bilateral level with Russian led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). However, this objection could not be considered as a fact that SCO is not an institutional framework that China uses for achieving military diplomacy or security goals.[3] For example, through common militaristic and anti-terroristic drills China foils Uyghurs' ambitions, supported by some

international actors in creating the so-called state of "East Turkestan" (Trailović, 2019; 2018). Paradoxically, external factors, in this concrete case SCO member states, are becoming involved in China`s national security. However, through common anti-terrorist drills and military exercises, member states and its international partners are working together to counter current and prevent future security challenges (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2018).

China participates in antiterrorist drills and military exercise on both bilateral and multilateral level. At the same time, China pioneered a joint military exercise among SCO members. The Chinese troops conducted a joint military exercise with the Kyrgyz forces in October 2002. On the side-lines of the SCO state leaders Moscow summit held in May 2003, SCO defense ministers signed a memorandum on joint military exercises to be carried out in autumn 2003 (Wang, 2005: 181). Based on this decision, then members of the SCO, except Uzbekistan, conducted two-phase anti-terrorist exercises in Kazakhstan and China, respectively. A total of 1000 representatives of five armies took part in the "Cooperation 2003" event. (Mitrović, 2007b). Regarding the Chinese humiliation during and after the "Opium wars", the other states` military presence on the Chinese territory is going far away from the SCO framework. Namely, it is the first large scale multilateral anti-terrorist exercise that the Chinese army has participated in, and it is also the first time that China has invited foreign armies into its territory (Wang, 2005: 181). In April 2006, ministers of defense of the SCO members decided to conduct "Peace Mission 2007" anti-terrorist and military exercise with participation of all the then six SCO member states. However, great challenge for this kind of SCO activity represented the "Peace Mission 2018", because India and Pakistan already became full member states. Guided by ambitions to create the common sense of security, all eight SCO member states took part in "Peace Mission 2018". The event

started on 24 August in Chebarkul, Russia, and it provides an opportunity to the military contingents of the all the eight SCO member nations participating in this exercise, to train in counter terrorism operations in urban scenario in a multinational and joint environment. The scope of the exercise includes professional interaction, mutual understanding of drills and procedures, establishment of joint command and control structures and elimination of terrorist threat in urban counter terrorist scenario. The Russian Army has the major participation of 1700 personnel followed by China with 700 and India with 200 personnel. The SCO Peace Mission Exercise is one of the major defense cooperation initiatives amongst SCO nations and will be a landmark event in the history of SCO defense cooperation (Government of India, 2018). Hence, this military exercise and anti-terrorist drill in great measure traced the course of the future SCO development and its global scale prestige. In the same context, it traced the course of the Chinese ambitions in making global partnership network in sense that it will not be relied anymore on economic and political features, but it includes strong and close military cooperation.

With aim to make its borders more stable and less porous, the SCO member states organized two-phase joint military drills named "Solidarity 2019-2021". The purpose of the first phase is to ensure that individuals and legal entities comply with the state border regime and the regime at checkpoints across the state border in the area covered by the operation. The measures planned within the framework of the operation are aimed at enhancing the parties' skills in countering the international terrorism, separatism and extremism, organized cross-border crime, as well as in preventing and suppressing criminal acts of the operation targets, as well as eliminating the root causes and conditions conducive to the commission of illegal activities in the covered areas (SCO RATS). It is still unclear how this exercise is

being conducted since member-countries do not have clearly marked territorial borders amongst themselves. Also it is to be seen whether implementation of this type of exercise will also instigate the process of mutual agreement on borders amongst member countries of the SCO.

The SCO countering of terrorism is not only focused on physical-geographic terrain. It also, includes the cyber space. In institutional development of the SCO, the question of cyber security has been raised since 2006, when presidents of the SCO member states signed the Statement by the Heads of Member States on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on International Information Security. In the subsequent years, the continuation of this trend in 2009 resulted in signing the SCO intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security. Namely, in this Agreement cyber security, that is, information security is defined as the status of individuals, society and the state and their interests when they are protected from threats, destructive and other negative impacts in the information space whilst cyber space is defined as a field of activities related to the formation, generation, transformation, transmission, use, storage of information that have an impact, among other things on individual and social consciousness, information infrastructure and information itself (SCO – Agreement on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security between the Member States of the SCO, 2009). According to this Agreement, cybercrime and information war is always targeted against state, its economic development and social stability, thus SCO nurtures and pursues *state-centric approach* in securing cyber security. In that sense, the concept of state sovereignty of China includes cyber sovereignty as well. According to the *International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace*, the cyber sovereignty is defined as the right [of individual country] to choose their own path of cyber development, model of cyber regulation and Internet public policies, and participate in

international cyberspace governance on an equal footing. No country should pursue cyber hegemony, interfere in other countries' internal affairs, or engage in, condone or support cyber activities that undermine other countries' national security (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2017). We understand that China does not see personal freedom and data protection equal to the informational state security, and considers it as the two separate concepts.

Passing the strategy on cyber security and sovereignty shows that the term is highly ranked on Chinese foreign policy agenda, particularly if we count Chinese Digital Silk Road and its investment for developing not just Central Asian, but global 5G telecommunication infrastructure. In the literature, there are several understandings on the Digital Silk Road. Some authors claim that Digital Silk Road is the portion of the BRI focused on enhancing digital connectivity abroad and furthering China's ascendance as a technological power (Cheney, 2019). Other authors claim that China sees the Digital Silk Road as a means to project its power abroad, which is facilitated by China's control over large amounts of data through the construction of digital infrastructure under the initiative (*ibid.*). After that, some representatives of academia offer the opinion that Digital Silk Road is in service of further internationalization of Yuan, creating China-centric digital infrastructure and promoting inclusive globalization enabled by cyberspace (Shen, 2018). With the aim to achieve the Digital Silk Road's goals and make the BeiDou satellite system more prestigious, China is investing its foreign exchange reserves and placing its industrial overcapacities. International Institute for Strategic Studies based in London gives us estimation that up to now China has been involved in more than 80 telecommunications projects like laying cables for building core information networks in the countries all around the globe. For that purpose, China invested more than US$70 billion (Bloomberg, 10th

January 2019; BBC, 15th May 2019). Having this in mind, any available source in protecting the telecommunication and information infrastructure is becoming necessitated. Thus, organizing the SCO Xiamen antiterrorist and military drills with focus on cyber terrorism represents a strategic need for Chinese stability, economic development and legitimacy of the Communist Party of China. The methods of conducting the SCO Xiamen anti-terrorist and military drills are defined in the *Cooperation Program to Combat Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism in 2013-2015*. As the years passed and their awareness on cyber security increased, the SCO member states organized three Xiamen antiterrorist military drills – Xiamen 2015, 2017, and 2019. Zhang Tao claims that the main purpose of the exercise is to improve the cooperation mechanism used to identify and prevent the use of the Internet for terrorism, separatism and extremism among SCO member states; the exercise also aims to help member states to exchange the legal procedures, organizational and technical capacity and workflow in combating terrorists who use the Internet to conduct activities of terrorism, separatism and extremism (*China Military Online*, 15th October 2015). It is still unclear what the level and volume of sensitive information exchange amongst the member countries are.

By conducting the joint antiterrorist and military exercises, SCO member states and its international partners are striving to create common sense on understanding the source and aim of the security challenges. If there is such a kind of the unanimous sense, there will be harmoniously made approach in dealing with security threats. If the common sense is based on constant finding the best solution and no on homogeneity, SCO demonstrates great transformative capacities in becoming one of the most important pillars for securing global security architecture.

5. Conclusion

Analyzing the introduction and development of the New Security Concept gives us many insights on the Chinese foreign policy behavior and manners of achieving strategically suitable environment which China perceives not exclusively suitable for its development, but for global development too. In achieving the mentioned goal, China relies on confidence building measures and partnership diplomacy. The global partnership network, China perceives as a prerequisite for improving its global image as "not an outsider anymore" in the international society and integral part of the global development. If international society accepts China as a non-challenging world power, Beijing acquires new sources for creating the structures of the interstate relations within the global governance that will speed up achieving the *China Dream* and *Two Centenary.* By making *China Dream* a reality, Beijing will be in a much better position to manage/manipulate global economic and security trends. According to Yong Deng, a state's power position in the international system defines its strategic situation and is in itself an integral part of the state's strategic thinking (Deng, 2001).

The very first step in Chinese ambitions of its activity in making suitable environment is the initiation of the Shanghai Five mechanism and after that the Shanghai cooperation organization. In making its first multilateral arrangement of cooperation, China followed internationalization of domestic security and domestication of international security (Blank, 2012: 100). For the very first time China expressed the wish to internationalize some of its domestic security and economic challenges. Simultaneously, China showed to international and regional partners that it possesses domestic capacities to shoulder a burden in securing global security and development. Having in mind that the SCO is guided by the "Shanghai spirit" grounded on mutual trust, benefit, respecting cultural diversity to name few of them, the

interconnectedness between the NSC and the SCO could be understood as a method of strategic credibility development in the Chinese ambitions to create suitable environment whilst it is trying to present existing and emerging diversities as a platform for learning from differences. This has enormous geopolitical and geoeconomic importance in regard to the Chinese foreign and domestic policy goals, because the SCO includes Central, South, East Asia, Middle East and Eastern Europe, that is, the regions which are affected by many crises. Simultaneously, these crises are jeopardizing their mutual relations by creating the atmosphere of mistrust amongst them. Thus, by pursuing the approach of openness and coordination, China is striving to create the atmosphere that will be suitable for harmonizing/manipulating mutual interests.

However, the SCO is facing many challenges. Firstly, SCO member states have different security expectations from the Organization. Differences in expectation are based on historical reasons, relations with USA and hierarchy of security priorities. Furthermore, great obstacle for the SCO is defined by the terms of unbalanced levels of economic development of the member states. Additionally, how countries perceive China's ambitions and national interests is another source which could destabilize and constrain the SCO.

At the end, we can conclude that China is laying a great foundation for promoting its interests, but whether China possesses requested level of diplomatic creativity and institutional capacity to be accepted as "Non-Other" or non-challenger in the international society is yet to be seen.

Notes

* Slobodan Popovic is a PhD candidate and Professor Associate on the subject of Geopolitics at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia. He obtained BA and MA from the Department of Regional Asian Studies at the same faculty. Besides that, Slobodan Popovic is a Junior Researcher at the Center for Asian and Far Eastern Studies at the same faculty. Slobodan Popovic as a scholar of the Italian Government spent 6 months at the Sapienza University of Rome (*Sapienza – Università di Roma*) where he was working with students in Italian language. <*Email: slobodan.popovic@fpn.bg.ac.rs*>

** Ljiljana Stevic, PhD, is Home Director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She has a BA from Belgrade Faculty of Philology and MA from Belgrade Faculty of Political Science. She earned her PhD at Banja Luka Faculty of Political Science. She attended Beijing Foreign Languages University for specialization in Chinese Language and Berlin Cultural Diplomacy Institute for specialization in cultural and public diplomacy, as well as London Chamber of Commerce School. Her research mainly concentrates on Chinese public diplomacy, cultural exchange and Chinese values as well as Chinese international affairs. <*Email: ljiljana.stevic@unibl.org*>

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the institutions they are affiliated with.

1. According to Taylor Fravel one state can change territorial claims due to crucial strategic and security objectives. He gives seven reasons why one state might follow diplomacy of "trade territorial concessions for direct assistance in crushing the uprising, such as (1) sealing borders; (2) attacking rebel bases; (3) denying refuge or material support to rebels;

(4) extraditing rebel leaders; (5) minimizing inadvertent escalation during hot pursuit; (6) providing assurances not to intervene; or (7) affirming their state's sovereignty over the region of unrest" (Fravel, 2005: 53-54).

2. China used this to rebut the suspects of its "alleged cooperation with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and its activities in directed against separatists in Xinjiang (especially against four leading groups that demanded independence in for "East Turkestan")" (Mitrovic, 2019d: 80).

3. One of the main features of the SCO military exercises and antiterrorist drills is that are made of armies and people of different language and religious affiliation which does not obstruct its efficiency nor create any problems to the efficient performance in creating/harmonization the common sense of security.

References

Ambrosio, Thomas (2008). Catching the 'Shanghai spirit': How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization promotes authoritarian norms in Central Asia. *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 8, pp. 1321-1344.

BBC (15th May 2019). The global internet is disintegrating. What comes next? *<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20190514-the-global-internet-is-disintegrating-what-comes-next>*

Beehner, Lionel (2005). ASIA: U.S. military bases in Central Asia. *Backgrounder*, 26th July 2005. New York: Council on Foreign Relations. *<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/asia-us-military-bases-central-asia>*

Blank, Stephen (2012). Kazakhstan's border relations with China (pp. 97-110). In: Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin and Clive Schofield (eds.), *Beijing's power and China's borders: Twenty neighbors in Asia*. New York: Armonk,

Bloomberg (10th January 2019). China's Digital Silk Road is looking more like an Iron Curtain. *<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2019-01-10/*

china-s-digital-silk-road-is-looking-more-like-an-iron-curtain>

Cheney, Clayton (2019). China's Digital Silk Road: Strategic technological competition and exporting political illiberalism. *Issues & Insights*, Vol. 19, WP 8 | July 2019 (Working Paper). Honolulu, Hawaii: Pacific Forum.

China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (30th October 2013). Important Speech of Xi Jinping at Peripheral Diplomacy Work Conference. (Source: Chinese Central Government's Official Web Portal, October 25.) *<http://www.cciced.net/cciceden/NEWS CENTER/LatestEnvironmentalandDevelopmentNews/201310/t20131030_8 2626.html>*

China Daily USA (9th May 2011). SCO members brace for terrorist threat. *<http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2011-05/09/content_12470514.htm>*

China Military Online (15th October 2015). SCO hosts first joint online counter-terrorism exercise in China. *<http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/ 2015-10/15/content_7130465.htm>*

Dai Xu（戴旭）(2010). 中国应给美国围堵行为划红线 (*Zhōngguó yīng gěi měiguó wéidǔ xíngwéi huà hóngxiàn*) [China should draw a red line against U.S. containment behavior]. 环球时报 (*Global Times*) (China), 2nd August 2010. *<http://world.people.com.cn/GB/12317779.html>*

Deng, Yong (2001). Hegemon on the offensive: Chinese perspectives on U.S. global strategy. *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3, pp. 343-365.

Fravel, M. Taylor (2005). Regime insecurity and international cooperation: Explaining China's compromises in territorial disputes. *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 46-83.

Global Times (China) (31st October 2013). Internal divisions and historical wariness mean 'Asian NATO' not on cards. *<http://www.globaltimes.cn/ content/821760.shtml>*

He, Kai and Huiyun Feng (2019). Leadership transition and global governance: Role conception, institutional balancing, and the AIIB. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 12, Issue, 2, pp. 153-178. Beijing:

Institute of International Relations, Tsinghua University.

Iwashita Akihiro (2003). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its implications for Eurasian security: A new dimension of "partnership" after the post-Cold War period. *Slavic Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 2, pp. 259-281. *<http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no2_ses/4-1_Iwashita.pdf>*

McKune, Sarah (2015). An Analysis of the International Code of Conduct for Information Security: Will the SCO states' efforts to address "territorial disputes" in cyberspace determine the future of international human rights law? (Citizen Lab, 28th September 2015. Toronto, Ontario: Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, University of Toronto.) *<https:// citizenlab.ca/2015/09/international-code-of-conduct/>*

Ministry of Defense of the United States of America (2018). Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American military's competitive edge. *<https://dod. defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (1998). *White Paper on China's national defense – the international security situation. <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/5/5.1.htm>*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2002). *China`s Position Paper on New Security Concept. <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ ceun/eng/xw/t27742.htm>*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China (29th November 2014). The Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs was held in Beijing. *<https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t12156 80.shtml>*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (2017). International strategy of cooperation on cyberspace. *<https://www.fmprc. gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zzjg_663340/jks_665232/kjlc_665236/qtwt_6 65250/t1442390.shtml>*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China (2018). Press release on the 15th Shanghai Cooperation Organization's Defence Ministers Meeting, SCO-China, 2018. <*http://scochina.mfa.gov.cn/eng/dtxw/t1565 935.htm*>

Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China (2010). *China`s national defense in 2010.* <*http://eng.mod.gov.cn/publications/2017-04/11/ content_4778206.htm*>

Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China (2015). *China`s military strategy.* <*http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/*>

Mitrovic, Dragana (1995). *Kineska reforma i svet* [China's reforms and the world]. Belgrade: Institut za ekonomiku i finansije (Belgrade: Institute for Economics and Finance).

Mitrović, Dragana (2005). *Strategijsko-bezbednosna pozicija Kine posle 11.septembra 2001. godine* [the strategic-security position of China after September 11, 2001]. Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku, Beograd. (Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Security Policy). <*https://bezbednost.org/ wp-content/uploads/2020/06/mitrovi_2005_strategijsko-bezbednosna_ pozicija_kin.pdf*>

Mitrović, Dragana (Митровић, Драгана) (2007a). ШОС – проблеми и перспективе развоја [Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – problems and perspectives of development]. *Српска политичка мисао*, број 3-4, стр.125-142. (*Serbian Political Thought*, No. 3-4, pp. 125-142. Belgrade: Institute for Political Studies.)

Mitrović, Dragana (Митровић, Драгана) (2007b). Шангајска организација за сарадњу – настанак, циљеви и домети нове безбедносно-еконсомке структуре Азије [aims and scope of new Euro-Asian security and economic structures – Shanghai Cooperation Organization]. *Српска политичка мисао*, број 1-2, стр. 219-242. (*Serbian Political Thought*, No. 1-2, pp. 219-242. Belgrade: Institute for Political Studies.)

Mitrović, Dragana (2011). PR China's border issues within the framework of modernization and opening up. *LiCCOSEC*, Vol. 17. Research Institute for World Languages, Japan.

Mitrović, Dragana (2012). *Međunarodna politička ekonomija* [international political economy]. Belgrade: Čigoja štampa.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2018). China's Belt and Road Initiative: Connecting and transforming initiative (pp. 17-34). In: Yu Cheng, Lilei Song and Lihe Huang (eds.), *The Belt & Road Initiative in the global arena: Chinese and European perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2019a). Aims and scopes of new Euro-Asian security and economic structures – Shanghai Cooperation Organization (pp. 87-95). In: Dragana Mitrovic, *From socialist modernization to Chinese Dream*. Belgrade: Institute for Asian Studies.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2019b). China's Belt and Road Initiative: Connecting and transforming initiative (pp. 137-152). In: Dragana Mitrovic, *From socialist modernization to Chinese Dream*. Belgrade: Institute for Asian Studies.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2019c). PR China's border issues within the framework of modernization and opening up (pp. 52-67). In: Dragana Mitrovic, *From socialist modernization to Chinese Dream*. Belgrade: Institute for Asian Studies.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2019d). The strategic security position of China after September 11, 2001 (pp. 76-86). In: Dragana Mitrovic, *From socialist modernization to Chinese Dream*, Belgrade: Institute for Asian Studies.

Mitrovic, Dragana (2019e). The Belt and Road: China's ambitious initiative (pp. 153-169). In: Dragana Mitrovic, *From socialist modernization to Chinese Dream*. Belgrade: Institute for Asian Studies.

Peyrouse, Sébastien (2016). Discussing China: Sinophilia and Sinophobia in Central Asia. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 14-23.

Pham, J. Peter (2006). Beijing's Great Game: Understanding Chinese strategy in Central Eurasia. *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 28, Issue 1, pp.

23-67.

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Defense (24th August 2018). Opening Ceremony Exercise SCO Peace Mission 2018. *<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=183039>*

Qin Yaqing (2010). International society as a process: Institutions, identities, and China`s peaceful rise. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 129-153.

SCO/Documents (15th June 2001). *Shanghai Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO*, 2001. *<http://eng.sectsco.org/documents/>*

SCO/Documents (2005). *Declaration by the Heads of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, 2005 Astana. *<http://eng.sectsco. org/documents/>*

SCO/Documents (2009). *Agreement on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security between the Member States of the SCO*, 2009. *<http://eng.sectsco.org/documents/>*

SCO RATS (The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of Shanghai Cooperation Organization). *<http://ecrats.org/en/news/7442>*

SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) Secretariat (n.d.), The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. *<http://eng.sectsco.org/about_sco/>*

SCO Secretariat. *<http://eng.sectsco.org/secretariat/>*

Shambaugh, David (2005). Return to the Middle Kingdom? China and Asia in the early Twenty-First Century (pp. 23-47). In: David Shambaugh (ed.), *Power shift: China and Asia's new dynamics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Shen, Hong (2018). Building a Digital Silk Road? Situating the Internet in China's Belt and Road Initiative. *International Journal of Communication*, no. 12, pp. 2684-2685.

Stefanović-Štambuk, Jelica (2009). Da li je diplomatija danas održiva [diplomacy: is it sustainable?]. *Međunarodni* problemi (*International Problems*), Vol. 6, Issue 4, pp. 641-677.

Trailović, Dragan (Траиловић, Драган) (2018). Економски развој и етнички сукоби: Случај Синђанга, НР Кина [economic development and ethnic conflicts: evidence from Xinjiang, PR China]. *Азијске свеске* (*Asian Issues*), Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 63-71.

Trailović, Dragan (Траиловић, Драган) (2019). Утицају међународних чинилаца на етничке сукобе у Народној Републици Кини [the influence of international factors on ethnic conflicts in the People's Republic of China]. Doctoral Dissertation. Belgrade: Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade.

United Nations General Assembly (13th January 2015). International code of conduct for information security. (Annex to the letter dated 9 January 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.) <*https://undocs.org/A/69/723*>

Wang, Jianwei (2005). China's multilateral diplomacy in the new millennium (pp. 159-200). In: Yong Deng and Fei-Ling Wang (eds.), *China rising: Power and motivation in Chinese foreign policy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Wuthnow, Joel (2018). U.S. 'minilateralism' in Asia and China's responses: A new security dilemma? *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 28, 2019 - Issue 115, pp. 133-150.

Xi Jinping (2013a). Diplomacy with neighboring countries characterized by friendship, sincerity, reciprocity and inclusiveness. In: Xi Jinping, *The governance of China*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

Xi Jinping (2013b). New Asian security concept for new progress in security cooperation. (Remarks at the Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, Shanghai Expo Center, 21 May 2014.) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 21st May 2014. <*https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t115995*

1.shtml>

Xing Guangcheng (2003). China's foreign policy toward Kazakhstan. In: Robert Legvold (ed.), *Thinking strategically: The major powers, Kazakhstan, and the Central Asian nexus*. Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy Studies in Global Security. (Cited in: J. Peter Pham (2006). Beijing's Great Game: Understanding Chinese strategy in Central Eurasia. *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 28, Issue 1, pp. 23-67.)

Yahuda, Michael (2003). Chinese dilemmas in thinking about regional security architecture. *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 189-206.

Yan Xuetong (2019). *Leadership and the rise of great powers*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zhong Feiteng (2014). Evolution of "neighborhood" concept and China's foreign strategies (pp. 141-167 (translated by Yang Yue)). In: Jinjun Zhao and Zhirui Chen (eds.), *China and the international society: Adaptation and self-consciousness*. Hackensack, NJ: World Century Publishing Corporation.