

Prospects of Development of the Russian Asia Railway System: Geoeconomic Aspect

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Abstract

That Russia is potentially great transport power becomes obvious if look to map of any route. The geographical position of the Russian Federation unequivocally specifies intended by nature the role of geobridge between the countries of Asia-Pacific Region and Europe. However, in construction engineering practice and feasibility study the construction of difficult and strategically important bridges is generally joins in wider concept of bridge crossing. The last includes not only actually the bridge(through the river, gulf, etc.), but also approaches to it, which construction in view of features of a relief and a configuration of new transport communications which have already developed and subject to construction not less difficult technically and not only economically expended, than building of the basic artificial construction.

Keywords : *Geobridge, Geoeconomic*

1. Introduction

If to develop the given analogy and to project it on a problem of reunion of Transkorean and Trans-Siberian railways, as well as in the first case, it becomes obvious that without the approach to the Russian geobridge from South Korea through the Transkorean railway the given bridge will essentially lose in the efficiency. Moreover, we assert that the missed benefits – political, economic, social and, perhaps, strategic, for Russia and South Korea, and also for the countries of Asia-Pacific Region will be essential. The given hypothesis is analyses in detail with use now within the framework of research projects of the Siberian Transport University (STU) and Institute of economy and the organization of industrial production of the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences passes now all-round check about use expert and an information technology. In the present report substantial statement of a problem and some preliminary results is short covered.

2. Prospects of Development of the Russian Asia Railway System

The starting point is the research setting to identify the expected relative effectiveness of competing alternatives very geobridge and approaches. Specifically, it is actually a bridge, figuratively speaking, the backbone of the Russian railway network of Asia from the Urals to the Pacific, which, if we continue the construction analogy, there is only the first stage of the bridge provided in the present Trans-Siberian and Baikal – Amur railway. With regard to approaches to the bridge, they are mainly formed by China and Kazakhstan, but because of different reasons not by Japan, the USA and South Korea. It is clear that in interests of Russia and, as it is represented, countries of beneficiaries (addressees of the future benefits) to provide (guarantee) the maximum traffic through the geobridge and to maximize a difference between expected results and expenses [1].

From the above it follows that, by identification, referred to the problem should be solved within the framework of large-scale international investment project. Therefore at its first stage, an identification of investment intentions of the parties interested in the project, technological variants of its realization (trace and constructive decisions of railway, lines, artificial constructions, rolling stock type and

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etc) should be considered simultaneously with the analysis of alternative institutional decisions of the project. Who are investors? In what shares and what potential benefit of each of them? What risk? What degree of an accessibility of participation in the project for foreign investment? How to carry out the government and private partnership with foreign investors? How to match domestic legislation, in particular the concession, with western models of organization of large-scale railway construction, etc.

In our opinion, the problem of interaction of foreign participants in general and South Korea in particular with the Russian natural monopolist - open joint-stock company «Russian railways» is a key problem. The «Russian railways» finishes now the third stage of the structural reform and transforms to operating holding (the state own 100 % of actions of the parent company) and intends to sell actions of the affiliated companies in the open market since needs of investments for updating of technological basis. «Russian railways», by our estimation, tries to find now effective model of interaction with a regulator of its activity – the state in a range «Russian railways»- a commercial railway carrier of cargoes and passengers - «Russian railways» non-commercial state corporation – the system integrator of economy and a country society».

Difficulty of the decision of this problem is known, and that up to the end it is not solved anywhere in the world indicates at least experience of Japan on reforming of railway corporation “Kokutetsu”. The more important clear statement of a problem in our case and in a projection to reunion of the Trans-Korean and Trans-Siberian railways if to understand the fact of their joining not purely technically as, for example, change of rolling stock truck, and institutional, as interface of mechanisms of railways management in Russia and South Korea. In such context, apparently, it is useful for our Korean partners to be clear with what alternative control mechanisms of the Russian railways they can to face and in advance to prepare variants of constructive cooperation with the account of specificity of the Korean railways management mechanisms. Below this question is consecrated in coordination with structural reform of railway transportation of Russia and with accent on strategic variants of possible continuations of reform in long-term prospect.

Structural reform of a railway transportation of Russia proceeded more than 10 years and was on an initial plan liberal: it was supposed to transform an organizational state monopolist - Ministry of Railways to certain market the arranged system of railway corporations on one of the western models. In pure form it could not be, so it has turned out the certain hybrid model more similar to German, than to North American. Nevertheless, evolutionary

character of transformations has been sustained, the single technical and technological core of the Russian railways was kept and dynamism of development created by the Russian Railway, positioning nowadays as operating holding with the organizational model structured by kinds of activity, is given. There was a known in world practice alliance between the state and the railway corporation, called «legal cartel» [3].

If the fact of a legal cartel to comment constructively, i.e. not as an incarnation of the former Ministry of Railways in the market incarnation, but as an alternative regulatory model, where a natural monopolist itself aspires to become regulated, the question arises: what next? What about the original source for rail reform in all countries of the world liberal attitudes “split”, “commercialize”, and most important of them - to encourage competition between “fragmented” in the interests of society? World economic crisis casts doubt on the correctness of these recipes on a global scale, the results we are considering reforms suggest the same in the all-Russian scale. Saving monopolist the Russian Railway, with some liberalization of railway transport, its survival under the state control, according to our estimation, it was strategically effective.

In this connection and in aspect interesting us, it is necessary to consider critically one of the strategic ideas of the World Bank experts directly participating in formation of the project of Ministry of Railways reforming at early stages. The idea is still relevant today, it is as follows. It is offered for the purpose of maintenance of an in-Russian competition of railways transportation at first to join in uniform system of regional railways, and then to divide system into vertically integrated companies competing on parallel lines from the lake Baikal to Moscow and further to the western borders of Russia. Established companies will jointly own the railroads to the east of Lake Baikal (like a bridge for several users) that, eventually, must ensure that internal competition on all way from Europe to Asia Pacific countries.

In long-term prospect after a construction of North Siberian railway, which building is included in strategy of railways development of Russia till 2030, and end of reconstruction of Baikal – Amur railway, which has already begun, and also buildings of the Polar railway, without it is impossible to develop oil and gas resources of Arctic Ocean shelf, we offer similar, but more effective on level of a competition, a variant of development of structural reform of a railway transportation of Russia, to the east of Ural Mountains. Indeed, the construction of North Siberian railway eliminates the problem of Taishetskyi neck, and reconstruction underloaded Baikal – Amur railway eliminates the problem of one variation of bridge



Fig. 1 Strategic alternatives of railway transport development in east of the ural

from Lake Baikal to the Pacific Ocean. The strategic choice, which a legal cartel faced, in our opinion, is what way to turn the holding open joint-stock company «Russian railways», dominating today in the Russian market of transport services, to the international carrier – the powerful competitor of the foreign companies in the world market [2].

The inertial alternative (in terms of prevailing in Russia trajectory of structural reforms) – on the market leaves the holding open joint-stock company «Russian railways» goes on the market and, relying on government support and (still potential) competitive advantages of cross-country and intercontinental carrier, occupies worthy for great transport power a market niche.

Not inertial alternative – legal cartel eventually self-liquidating, joint-stock company «Russian railways» is transformed into an association of vertically integrated railway companies competing on parallel lines 1, 2, 3 from the western to the eastern borders of Russia (see fig.).

3. Conclusion

Railways of South Korea under the alternatives described

in paragraph 11 receive not only railway access to Europe, but also to transcontinental railway across the Bering Strait into North and South America. It allows to the Republic of Korea to be not only great ship-building power, but also to become great railway power. Naturally, with the involvement of they own capital and technology in the implementation of relevant international railway projects, approximate (lower) level of future capital expenditures for which we estimated at \$ 500 billion.

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