

SOUNDINGS



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Dominion, Trade and the Maritime Silk Road: A Review of the Issues

Geoffrey Till

Because of its utility as the safest and cheapest way of transporting goods and people, the sea has always been a basis - and many would say *the* basis - for trade. On the other hand, control of the sea can also be an important source of political and military dominion - the ability to influence, even determine, the behaviour of other people. This raises the issue of the complex relationship between trade and dominion, which both flow from the use of the sea.

The relationship between trade and dominion takes different forms across a spectrum that ranges from peace at one end to war at the other, including the grey areas between the two extremes. In this there are, maybe, four schools of thought on how trade and dominion relate to one another in times of peace, or near peace:

- The influential 19th century Manchester school led by Richard Cobden and John Bright through to Norman Angell with *The Great Illusion* of 1909 and their latter-day adherents, argue that trading and fighting, or even just threatening to fight, were antithetical. The more countries trade with each other, the less they are inclined to fight, especially if as trading entities they became more liberal and democratic. Because the Manchester school were essentially free-marketeters working to the ideas of Adam Smith, the trading activity they most had in mind was that conducted by private individuals or companies simply for reasons of commercial gain. The bigger the gap between the flag and trade, and the less that states interfere in trade, the more beneficial its consequences. If trade has any strategic consequences at all, they would be good and peaceful ones. It would indeed be a case of 'mutually assured production.'¹ Ideally, therefore, states should insulate economic from political activity and avoid using economic sanctions as a form of strategic leverage, because this distorts the market and undermines the compensating effect that economic inter-dependence has on international tensions.
- Sometimes, though, the state *has* to intervene. The British government of the 19th century for example was very reluctant to assume the burdens of empire, but were grumblingly pressured to do so by the exhortations of their entrepreneurial citizens. What led them to this was the fact that trade was not, and is not, conducted in a strategic vacuum. The behaviour of the representatives of other states, competing companies or just plain criminals of various sorts (not least pirates) adversely affected the conditions for trade and so required state action to restore, regulate and eventually to maintain the situation in which trade could flourish. The flag then follows trade.
- Moreover, Mahan made the point, as have countless others, that trade, and the economic power it generates, creates, in turn, the resources for military and naval strength. Once the Americans with their accumulated capital and industrial resources could afford and could build aircraft carriers faster than the Japanese navy could sink them, thoughtful Japanese began to realise that World War II was lost. It is not a great step from this for some to argue that trade advantages should be sought at least in part because they provide the means for strategic dominion. In this case trade might follow the flag as it did for the Portuguese when they first broke into the Indian Ocean in the later 15th century.
- A fourth angle on this complicated issue, though, is to argue that success in sea-based trade can in fact usurp the role of military power at sea in shaping the way that other people behave. Economic strength can provide useful levers in power politics, and is frequently used as such, not least because it is a much less incendiary than using military pressure.² All the same, that same military power may quietly contribute to the success of economic pressure by dissuading the victim from seeking non-economic counters to the economic pressure they are put under.

In the last three cases, trade and dominion are mutually supporting and their effects sometimes hard to distinguish - a point worth noting.

These complexities become clear when we look at one of the most significant developments in the 21st century understanding of the importance of sea communications, the much-discussed Chinese concept of ‘One Belt, One Road’ (OBOR). This idea, first proposed by President Xi Jinping in October 2013, is an integral part of the ‘China Dream’ of national rejuvenation through trade. This will involve China injecting huge effort and massive amounts of capital into the development of an intersecting set of rail, road and sea linkages across the Eurasian continent from one end to another. The all-important maritime component of this is the 21st century Maritime Silk Route (21MSR) which also extends the connectivity to the African continent.

This though is only the most discussed aspect of what is in fact a global phenomenon that is by no means restricted just to the Eurasian continent and adjacent waters. It includes considerable Chinese interest in the Northern Sea Route through the Arctic and a substantial interest in the Caribbean and Central and South America. This latter includes the possibility of developing a new canal through Nicaragua, new Twin Ocean east-west railways from Brazil to Peru and substantial investment in transport infrastructure in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean. This has attracted particular concern in the United States and amongst other states in the region.³ Taken together these projects around the world are staggering in their financial and industrial scale, ambition and possible consequence.

The use of the 21MSR label is a conscious Chinese effort to hark back to the old Maritime Silk Road by which Chinese silks and ceramics used to reach Southeast Asia, India, the Middle East and Europe from well before the Tang dynasty and up to the disruptive arrival of the Europeans in the Indian Ocean in the early 16th century. Thus, Hua Chunying from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The reason why China proposed the building of the maritime Silk Route is to explore the unique values and ideas of the ancient Silk Route...and achieve common development and common prosperity of all countries in the region.⁴

This ancient trading system between regions ‘below the wind’ and ‘above the wind’ was determined by the behaviour of the monsoons. Typically, ships would leave Guangzhou in October to December, pass through the Straits of Malacca and reach the Arab peninsula in February or March and Muscat or Basra soon after. After a stay of three or four months they would leave Arabia in September or October, returning back to Guangzhou in March of the following year.⁵ Part-and-parcel of this was a local trading system around Southeast Asia itself, operated by Arab, Chinese, Javanese and other Southeast Asian ships exchanging forest and sea products for Chinese metals and manufactures.⁶

The result of this settled, wind-determined trading system, the Chinese claim, was an era of peaceful commerce benefitting everyone and threatening no-one. Likewise, its modern equivalent, OBOR and 21MSR should not be seen as a tool of geopolitics; instead, it is an opportunity, not a threat.⁷ Thus, Premier Li Keqiang:

We stand ready to work with other countries to boost economic growth, deepen international cooperation and promote world peace through developing the ocean, and we strive to build a peaceful, cooperative and harmonious ocean.⁸

Accordingly Chinese capital and know-how will be invested in economic development in general and in ports and other transport infrastructure and specific ‘production hubs’ in particular. This will only be in partnership with host nations, and to their mutual benefit. Except for the involvement of the Chinese state in all this, the Manchester school would have sympathised with such aspirations.

Needless to say, this is not quite how the proposal is seen by the United States, India, Japan and other countries wary of taking China’s protestations of virtue at face value. They worry about this being likely to end in China’s securing of considerable political leverage over the countries receiving Chinese largesse. Trade then would become a means to unequal economic and/or strategic

advantage for China compared both to recipient countries and to those outside this new system altogether. Ultimately, it could prove to be another form of dominion. Even if that is not the primary aim, it could be a consequence. Since these countries already have their concerns about the future strategic consequences of a risen and more assertive China, this must be a matter for some disquiet.

The consequent debate about the relationship between trade and dominion has both a historical dimension and a much greater contemporary one. Both debates underline the complexity of the relationship between trade and dominion. As well as reviewing the current controversy about the project, it is worth looking briefly at the historical debate about trade and dominion in the era of the original Maritime Silk Road, if only because Chinese spokespeople make so much of it and in order to identify abiding issues.

Many Chinese commentators put forward interpretations of the workings of the historical Maritime Silk Road in ways that are also entirely consistent with the anticipations of the Manchester school. For them, the southern seas and the Indian Ocean provided a means for trade that was quicker, safer and often less susceptible to interference than land-based alternatives. The result was an economic system of sea based trade provided economic benefit to all and stability for the region. The famous Indian Ocean 15th century voyages of the Chinese Admiral Zheng He are held to exemplify the benign and non-hegemonic role of China in its partial, episodic monitoring of the trading system in the Indian Ocean and the southern seas.

It would be easy to dismiss such claims as simply the kind of ‘narrative’ that all countries build up from their own distinctive version of past events which in turn shapes their response to the present and the future, were it not for the fact that a respectable body of non-Chinese historians broadly concur with at least part of the basic proposition. For them the trading system in Southeast Asia was indeed effectively a free-trade zone between amorphous polities rather than states and was not simply ‘imposed’ on the locals by the Chinese (or the Indians for that matter) but grew naturally out of the interactions of all three.⁹ As such the Indian Ocean and the southern seas could well be seen simply as a non-territorial maritime trading space neither owned nor dominated by anyone.¹⁰ This all changed when the Portuguese arrived and imposed their *cartaz* system of state regulation backed by military force. Thus, the distinctly mercantilist attitudes of the 16th century Portuguese historian Joao de Barros:

It is true that there does exist a common right to all to navigate the sea, and in Europe we acknowledge the right which others hold against us, but that right does not extend beyond Europe, and therefore the Portuguese by the strengths of their fleets are justified in compelling all Moors to take out safe-conducts under pain of confiscation and death. The Moors and the Gentiles are outside the law of Jesus Christ, which is the true law which everyone has to keep under pain of damnation to eternal fire. If then the soul be so condemned, what right was the body to the privileges of our laws?¹¹

Other historians, however, consider the brutal arrival of the Portuguese and their subsequent regulation of trade through their having control of the sea as significantly less novel in the region. They point out instances of states, or at least proto-states, imposing their will by military means and seeking tightly to regulate trade in the southern seas to their own advantage. Punitive raids and bloody trade-related wars were not unknown, including some conducted by China itself. In sum, it has fairly been said that ‘the range of activities involving the East Asian maritime realm is huge, but the essential elements have always been transport, trade and warfare.’¹² At the very least, Chinese claims about the totally benign nature of Indian Ocean trading patterns in the pre-European past are not wholly persuasive.

The greater the doubts about this Chinese claim, the greater the need for caution in responding to the 21st century equivalent of the old silk road, China’s OBOR proposal, because exactly the same range of possible relationships between trade and dominion and indeed in the emerging balance of advantage between land and sea transportation, re-emerge in the contemporary debate. As already

noted, this is a gigantic project, in which a proposed maze of feeder rail, road, pipeline and sea routes supports the main two land and sea routes from China to Europe and Africa. Reputedly, China has reserves of US\$3.5-4 trillion to invest in this project, mainly through the agency of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) which it has set up for the purpose.¹³ The motivations behind, and the consequences of, this huge enterprise are the subject of endless debate.

Chinese commentators and spokespeople tend to stress the benign economic motivations behind the project. China's western lands, especially Xinjiang, need to be developed and the country has a surplus of capital, iron, steel cement and heavy machinery which can usefully be exported abroad to support the industries that produce them. In this sense the project with its huge infrastructure construction is a natural outflow of heavy development inside China (such as the recent completion of the extraordinary Qingshui River Bridge) and the need to provide employment for Chinese workers inside and outside the country. The result is represented as a 'new blueprint for global growth' offering 'a ride on China's economic express train' to its neighbours to the south, and west and indeed beyond.¹⁴ It aims to build bridges between regional institutions, not walls.¹⁵ Countries such as Pakistan and Indonesia, and countless others too, stand to benefit enormously from lavish Chinese investment in their land and sea transportation systems respectively, although it is sometimes hard to see how China can profit from this investment in straight commercial terms for the foreseeable future.¹⁶

It is this, plus concern about whether the AIIB will really work with existing multilateral financial institutions like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, not least in the maintenance of lending, environmental and anti-corruption standards that has led sceptics to wonder if the real motivations for this project - and its possible consequences - are not more strategic in nature. Amongst such possible old-fashioned, geo-political considerations might be:

- **A general desire to reshape the world.** It can be seen as a striking contrast to Deng Xiaoping's '24-character strategy' of the early 1990s which recommended a low profile and no bids for leadership. Now exulting in its economic strength, the argument goes, China is intent on reshaping the system. OBOR can be seen as entirely in line with China's conceptions for the future of Asia. 'In the final analysis,' President Xi has said, 'it is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia.'¹⁷ Nor is China alone in this for some of its major partners also share such aspirations. President Putin has spoken of the agreement to merge Russia's Eurasian Economic Union with the OBOR project, thereby reshaping Central and East Asia.¹⁸ Further afield, Brazil's President Rousseff: 'A new road to Asia will open for Brazil, reducing distances and costs, a road that will take us directly to Peru and across the Pacific Ocean...China and Brazil are playing a leading role in the construction of a new world order.'¹⁹
- **Winning friends and influencing people.** These investments often come in the shape of loans with interest. The immediate economic consequences for recipient countries may well be beneficial but still mean they remain indebted to China in a way that could influence their subsequent foreign policy behaviour or, as illustrated by Sri Lanka and Maldives, make it more difficult for them to retain sovereign control over Chinese activity in their countries. Some analysts speculate that this may be the consequence for much of Africa.²⁰ In difficult times, countries at the wrong end of specific asymmetric trade dependencies can also find this to be a source of negotiating weakness. Strengthening this concern is the fact that China has indeed resorted to economic leverage in times of difficulty. Thus, Chinese rare earth exports to Japan became difficult at one stage of the quarrel about the islands of East China Sea while during the Scarborough shoal incident of 2013, China suddenly found there to be something wrong with Philippine bananas. Moreover, The Philippines later found itself by-passed in the OBOR project.²¹ Such actions would have been roundly condemned by the Manchester school. The reverse is equally true - and much more conducive to their way of thinking, however, action to

improve trading levels can spin off into more agreeable political relationships too, easing quarrels and lowering tension.²²

- **Advantageous access to resources.** Chinese investment in Africa is often seen as a means of securely accessing the commodities needed for China's burgeoning industries. The 21MSR simply funnels these commodities to China. Pipelines across Central Asia do the same for oil and gas.
- **Energy security.** Like much of the rest of Northeast Asia, China remains highly dependent on oil from the troubled Middle East and the majority of its comes by sea through the Strait of Hormuz and the Malacca Strait. Investing in pipelines to the considerable oil and gas reserves of central Asia (and especially of Uzbekistan) diversifies China's energy supplies and reduces its vulnerability to local disruption, including piracy. Oil pipelines from Kunming to the Bay of Bengal or from Kashgar to Gwadar would substantially reduce China's dependence on the Malacca Strait for example.
- **Reducing strategic vulnerability.** In 2003, President Hu Jintao drew attention to what he termed as 'The Malacca Dilemma', in which at least 40 per cent of China's general trade came by sea through routes which could readily be controlled by possible adversaries.²³ Shifting the balance into greater access to road and railway linkages across the Eurasian land-mass would significantly reduce this vulnerability. From the perspective of the PLA Navy, investing in China's naval capability out of area would have this effect too. In 2015, the prestigious 'Blue Book' argued that China needed to investigate proactive ways to 'hedge against the risks of others states threatening China with sea-lane security.'²⁴ Accordingly the expanded Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean and the establishment of its first overseas naval 'base' in Djibouti increases wariness in India and the United States about China's long-term intentions - and their possible strategic consequences.
- **Building stability.** China has very real concerns about the international terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism it sees growing on and behind its western borders. One way of dealing with this might be investing in the economic development of Central Asia, as a means of reducing this long-term threat, even if it does increase the risk to Chinese personnel and local projects in the short term.²⁵ Chinese leaders have probably pragmatically concluded that their deep engagement in the world economy is inevitable and that these are risks they cannot ignore.

Reactions and Responses to the Project

The response that the Chinese project has received varies from country to country, depending in large measure on individual assessments of Chinese motivation, the credibility of Chinese promises and the likely short and long-term consequences for them. Their responses reflect exactly the same mix of strategic and purely commercial concerns as emerge from a closer look at the original Maritime Silk Road. For them too, trade and dominion seem inextricably intertwined. The nature of their response of course reflects the nature of their concerns.

Many Eurasian countries welcome the project because of the economic largesse it promises them or the benefits it seems to offer. This would include, if for rather different reasons and to different extents, Pakistan, Singapore and much of Southeast Asia, various African countries, Germany, France and the United Kingdom. While some of these countries may well harbour reservations privately, these are much more overtly articulated by other countries, most obviously Japan, India and the United States, which tend to more suspicious of the financial probity of the investment arrangements and of their strategic consequences.

At a practical level, these and other countries have hesitations which relate not so much to the idea behind the project, but more about the way it could be put into effect on the ground. Here, project delays, security concerns in unsettled areas like north west Pakistan, environmental worries and the suspicion that local populations will not be beneficially engaged in the building and maintenance of the transport infrastructure are common.²⁶

Accordingly, many countries will accept the idea of the OBOR project in principle but focus instead on the details of its implementation. In many cases this will be largely a matter of ensuring that the benefits and dependencies between sponsor and recipient are equitable and that the financial arrangements make economic sense and are consistent with global lending standards. Here, another key requirement is to ensure that the economic benefits and the economic dependencies really do go both ways, at least to a reasonable degree. Only then can recipients of large amounts of investment capital or industrial support be sure that such dependencies do not become a source of strategic leverage for China as the principle investor.

In contrast to countries which seek to mould the project from within there are some that also seek to do so from without. Japan, the United States and India for example are generally more wary of fully joining in the project, tend to emphasise the possibly malign strategic consequences of China's OBOR project and so react with a mix of alternative economic and military/political responses of their own.²⁷ These include generally smaller scale investment possibilities in transport infrastructure, the creation or determined defence of alternative financial structures in the region such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Asia Development Bank. For such reasons, the United States has been critical even of close partners such as the United Kingdom and Australia when they have entered into undertakings in support of the Chinese project, such as signing up for the AIIB or for entering into major port enterprises with China.²⁸

These responses to the project may also take a distinctly naval form. Thus, India generally concerned about China's naval growing presence in the Indian ocean area and alarmed about the surprise appearance of a PLA Navy nuclear submarine in a Chinese operated section of a Sri Lankan port has specifically warned: 'What we are beginning to see is the unfolding of China's desire to be a maritime power...If a submarine docks in a port where a submarine has never docked before from that country, it cannot be a development without repercussions'.²⁹ In similar vein, the announcement in November 2016 that China intends to create a 'naval base' in Djibouti re-awakened fears that China was indeed in the process of setting its much-discussed 'string of pearls' across the Indian Ocean in defence of its general trading interests in and across the area. Given that for years China has roundly condemned the establishment of such foreign bases as inherently aggressive, this reversal of view has caused some alarm in Delhi and elsewhere.³⁰

These repercussions will include still greater emphasis on the building up of the Indian Navy and its wider employment both inside and outside the Indian Ocean in support of the country's multi-alignment foreign policy objectives. If China can set up a web of partners across Eurasia and beyond, it clearly behoves India to do the same. These activities include the hosting of yet more collaborative naval events, such as the Indian Fleet Review of Vishakhapatnam in February 2016, naval exercises with other navies including the British and the French and a closer strategic relationship with Australia, Japan and the United States - as well as a determined effort to rally and maintain support and cooperation in the region.

The official US response has been muted but the analytical community has been quick to fasten on some of the strategic opportunities China's reliance on overseas trade coming across the Indian Ocean, through the Malacca Strait and into the South China Sea seems to present to the US Navy. This response has taken the form of advocating 'offshore control', a version of military and commercial blockade which could be implemented in the event of a serious crisis between the United States and China as an alternative to the much-discussed and more confrontational notions of Air-Sea Battle. Pressure on China-related shipping in and from the Indian Ocean, its advocates claim, would be more effective, less costly and much less escalatory than directly confronting Chinese naval and airpower in the western Pacific. Others, echoing Norman Angell, point however to the economic, legal and practical problems of instituting such a strategy in an age of maritime interdependency.³¹

Given the maritime dimension of OBOR, it is hard to not to associate it with, and to be concerned about, the apparently connected rise of the PLA Navy alongside all the other aspects of China's

burgeoning seapower, especially given Beijing's apparently greater inclination to use that power in the South and East China seas. The two developments may or may not be connected (although historical experience suggests they are) but the perceived increase in China's capacity to exert its strength and to defend its interests tends to reinforce suspicions about OBOR. Thus has resulted in a degree of strategic convergence between those countries with concerns about one or other or, indeed, both of these developments. Greater US naval engagement in the region aimed at building closer defence relations with India and other countries in the region could, for example, be seen as a way of countering a Chinese presence which is often regarded in at least some quarters in Washington with suspicion and in Delhi as being entirely natural, legitimate in itself but nonetheless unwelcome. Similar convergences can be detected in the reactive policies of Japan, Vietnam, Australia and The Philippines.

But, alongside this, there is another quite different set of reactions which is based on the notion that, like it or not, China is going to be a major player in the region and that realism dictates acceptance of this fact. Thus, engagements with, rather than against, China is seen as a better alternative especially if it leads that country into greater acceptance of the responsibilities that come with being a major stakeholder in the system. Recognition of a collective interest in maintaining the smooth working of the trading system throughout the Indian Ocean, from which all benefit, should act as a means of reducing international tensions. Through the evident and agreed need to defend it, trade could thus act as a restraint on possible policies of dominion just as the Manchester school said it would. Increased engagement with the PLA Navy through, for example, its increasingly integrated participation in the multinational naval counter-piracy mission off Somalia, could be seen as a model for constructive interactions analogous to the idea, discussed above, of helping mould OBOR from within rather than resisting it from outside.

Conclusion

It is evident that the relationship between trade and dominion is much harder to disentangle in the OBOR project than the Manchester school would have concluded. This contributes to the fact that much of the project is shrouded in ambiguity. Chinese motivations and the likely economic, political and strategic consequences of the project, were it to succeed, remain hotly debated. These are very substantial causes for concern, especially for countries like India which, for all the economic ties that connect them, remain wary of China's rise.

Moreover, the OBOR project remains inherently opaque in many of its practical details. There is still considerable doubt about what the project entails. Maps in the public domain of suggested rail, road, pipeline and sea routes vary widely; nor is it clear whether proposals further afield such as east-west railways in South America or Chinese interest in the Northern Sea Route are part of the main project or not, or on how well integrated and clearly thought out in Beijing the whole project actually is. The practical details of how the various schemes that make up the project, or which like the AIIB are designed to facilitate it, will actually work currently remain obscure and so a matter of continuing concern. One of the major difficulties is the project's capacity to reconcile the interests and differences in approach of states that vary in their basic complexion from developed to emerging economies on the one hand and from state-capitalist polities like China to free-market democracies like Australia, the United States or the United Kingdom on the other. Finally, recent perturbations in the Chinese economy itself raise questions about the reliability of future investment and the developing balance of interest between it and other economies, such as those of Southeast Asia.³²

Accordingly, it is not very clear how the many countries affected by OBOR should in the current state of knowledge, react to the proposal. Most seem to have adopted a cautious policy of signalling interest and conditional commitment as a means of finding out what exactly is envisaged and entailed while, hopefully, developing the possibility that they can help shape the project's future trajectory and workings, especially in terms of oversight, accountability and transparency. To do this effectively, though, they will need to be clear about the trade trajectory they wish to see and

about the possible consequences in terms of dominion that they can support. The more countries that follow this line of approach, the more untenable would seem to be a policy of outright resistance.

¹ For a sceptical view, see Barry Buzan, 'Economic structure and International Security: The Limits of the Liberal case', *International Organisation*, vol 38, Autumn 1984, pp. 597-624.

² Emre Peker, 'Russia levels Sanctions at Turkey', *Wall Street Journal*, 1 December 2015. This was a particularly interesting example of resorting to economic pressure, in response to a military act - in this case the shooting down by Turkey of a Russian aircraft.

³ Andrew Lumsden, 'Jamaicans must read China's record, not just its lips', Council of Hemispheric Affairs, Washington DC, 15 June 2015, www.coha.org/jamaicans-must-read-chinas-record-not-just-its-lips/; and Thomas David Alvarez, 'The Twin Ocean project: South America's Transcontinental railroad', Council of Hemispheric Affairs, Washington DC, 11 June 2015, www.coha.org/the-twin-ocean-project-south-americas-transcontinental-railroad/. The Nicaragua canal scheme, however, appears to have run into financial difficulty, see, Jonathan Watts, '\$50bn Nicaragua canal postponed as Chinese tycoon's fortunes falter', *The Guardian*, 27 November 2015, www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/27/nicaragua-canal-postponed-chinese-tycoon.

⁴ Quoted in Brahma Chellaney, 'China reinvents "string of pearls" as maritime Silk Road', *Nikkei Asian Review*, 29 April 2015, <http://asia.nikkei.com/Viewpoints/Perspectives/China-reinvents-string-of-pearls-as-Maritime-Silk-Road>.

⁵ Rong Xinjiang 'A Study of Yang Liangyao's Embassy to the Abbasid Caliphate' (in 785) in Victor H Mair and Liam C Kelley (eds), *Imperial China and its Southern Neighbours*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2015 p. 256.

⁶ Anthony Reid, *Charting the Shape of Early Modern Southeast Asia*, Silkworm Books, Chiang Mai, 1999, pp. 43,61, 70.

⁷ Liu Xiaoming (Chinese Ambassador to London), 'Take the new Silk Road as an opportunity not a threat,' *Financial Times*, 24 May 2015.

⁸ Quoted Liu Cigui, 'Reflections on maritime Partnership: Building the 21st Century maritime Silk Road', China Institute of International Studies, Beijing, 15 September 2014, www.ciis.org.cn/english/2014-09/15/content_7231376.htm.

⁹ Mair & Kelley, *Imperial China and its Southern Neighbours*, pp. 1-15, 140-160.

¹⁰ For this see, Cynthia Chou, 'Space, Movement and Place: The Sea Nomads' in Satish Chandra and Humanshu Prabha Ray, *The Sea, Identity and History: From the Bay of Bengal to the South China Sea*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2013, pp. 41-66; and Kenneth R Hall, *A History of Early Southeast Asia: Maritime Trade and Societal Development c. 100-1500*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2011.

¹¹ Richard Hall, *Empires of the Monsoon: A history of the Indian ocean and its invaders*, Harper Collins, London, 1996, pp. 188-190, 202.

¹² Geoff Wade, 'The Pre-Modern East Asian Maritime Realm' in Chandra & Ray, *The Sea, Identity and History: From the Bay of Bengal to the South China Sea*, p. 102. The operations of the Srivijaya empire in and around what is now Indonesia and the attack the Cholas from southern India made on it, may be regarded as examples proving the point. China's periodic maritime assaults on the Red river delta area of what is now Vietnam confirm the same pattern.

¹³ Andrew Browne, 'Can Beijing Sell Silk Road as a Marshall Plan Against Terror?', *Wall Street Journal*, 1 December 2015; Mark Magnier 'AIIB Moves cautiously Toward Launch', *Wall Street Journal*, 2 December 2015.

¹⁴ Li Keqiang, 'A new blueprint for global growth (Part 1 of 2)', *Jakarta Post*, 16 September 2015, www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/09/16/a-new-blueprint-global-growth-part-1-2.html; Alfred Romann, 'Initiative promises business bonanza', *China Daily*, 20 November 2015, www.chinadailyasia.com/2015-11/20/content_15347544.html.

¹⁵ Fu Ying (Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress), 'Can East Asia carry on momentum of regional cooperation?', *Straits Times*, 16 November 2015, www.straitstimes.com/opinion/can-east-asia-carry-on-momentum-of-regional-cooperation.

¹⁶ This is especially the case with the so-called 'China-Pakistan Economic Corridor' from Kashgar in Western China to the port of Gwadar on the Indian Ocean. Presentation by Dr Siegfried Wolf to the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 1 December 2015.

¹⁷ Xi Jinping, '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', Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21 May 2014, www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1159951.shtml.

¹⁸ Vladimir Putin, 'APEC: Towards open and equal cooperation', TASS, 17 November 2015, <http://tass.ru/en/politics/836957>.

¹⁹ 'China, Brazil link \$36b finance, trade and investment deals,' *Straits Times*, 21 May 2015; He Dongni, 'playing a bigger part on world stage', *China Daily*, 20 November 2015, <http://epaper.chinadailyasia.com/asia-weekly/article-7029.html>.

²⁰ Rob Edens, 'China's naval Plans for Djibouti: A Road, a Belt or a String of Pearls?', *The Diplomat*, 14 May 2015, <http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/chinas-naval-plans-for-djibouti-a-road-a-belt-or-a-string-of-pearls/>; Te-Ping Chen, 'Xi Expected to Pledge Investment in Africa on Trip', *Wall Street Journal*, 1 December 2015.

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- ²¹ Andrew Brown, 'China Bypasses Manila in Proposed "Silk Road"', *Wall Street Journal*, 10 November 2014.
- ²² Cai Hong, 'Business helping to mend relations', *China Daily*, 20 November 2015, <http://epaper.chinadailyasia.com/asia-weekly/article-7026.html>.
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SOUNDINGS