

# **China's Maritime Strategy in the Middle East: Structural Realism, Economic Diplomacy, and Geopolitical Security Dynamics**

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## **Abstract**

This paper's aim is to provide a comprehensive examination of China's maritime geopolitics in the Middle East, exploring the interplay between neorealist strategies, economic diplomacy, and geopolitical security dynamics. While China's rise has been marked by economic prowess, this study takes into account John Mearsheimer's perspective as a structural realist, which argues that China's rise cannot occur peacefully. According to Mearsheimer, as China continues to accumulate economic power, it is likely to translate this into military might and seek dominance in Asia, similar to the United States' position in the western hemisphere. Considering these justifications, this paper explores China's strategy for emphasis on economic diplomacy outcome its maritime influence in the Middle East. It examines China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a venue for economic collaboration, the building of infrastructure, and diplomatic engagement that enables China to increase its reach and safeguard its interests in the region. To establish the theoretical underpinnings of neorealism and evaluate China's strategic intentions, the research adopts a mixed-methods approach that analyzes qualitative evidence, including policy documents, news articles, scholarly works, governmental papers and academic publications. The quantitative element assesses the impact of China's economic diplomacy activities and their consequences for regional security dynamics using Economic Indicators secondary statistical dataset, empirical evidence, and case studies. The findings reveal the intricate interplay between neorealist strategies, economic cooperation, and geopolitical security dynamics in China's maritime endeavors. this research deepens our understanding of China's role in the Middle East and its implications for regional stability and global power dynamics.

**Keywords:** china, geopolitics, middle east, maritime strategy, neorealism