

## **CONTINUITIES & DISCONTINUITIES OF MARITIME SECURITY: A CASE STUDY OF GWADAR**

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### **Abstract**

*Temporal continuity of maritime security exists across two eras in the port city of Gwadar: 19th century British colonialism; and 21st Century Chinese presence in the Chinese-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This paper analyses this continuity and the difference between the two eras via three nodes: 1) infrastructure, 2) threat factors and 3) hegemonic power applications. The analysis emanates that infrastructural security transitioned from British telegraph lines and naval posts to CPEC port infrastructure; threat factors manoeuvred from local tribes and the Persian-British boundary during British Raj eras to Baluch nationalism and USA hegemony in the Indian Ocean during Chinese CPEC presence; hegemonic power moved from covert British expansionism and the Sultanate's maritime control to China's extraterritorial presence in Pakistan and liaison with the Pakistani armed forces to maintain healthy development. Hence, Gwadar's historical timeline mirrors a continuity in maritime security amidst infrastructural, threat, and consolidatory factors, where the colonial history of the region has necessitated China to adopt authoritative control measures as well. However, the exertion of these trends has seen a shift towards the localized measures of the British era towards a more globalized perspective in maritime security, reflected by the movement of power centres towards the national centre and the involvement of international actors. In these globalised times, it is stringently recommended that colonial skins of the past be shed in favour of Chinese cooperationism.*

**Keywords:** Coastal & Littoral Studies, Maritime Security, CPEC, Gwadar, Indian Ocean

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## 1. Introduction

Gwadar has been a port at the heart of maritime infrastructures throughout history. Located on the Makran Coast of Baluchistan, it has always been an important town due to influx and outflux of maritime movement. The littoral connection of the coast can be traced back to Arab arrival through the Gulf in the eighth century.<sup>1</sup> Yet over the centuries, the coast of Gwadar has seen several shifts of authority. In the eighteenth century, the city remained contended between the Khan of Kalat and Omani Sultans, until the British intervened and it became a part of the Omani Sultanate in the early nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

The city held high colonial interests up until 1891, when the British handed it to the Sultan of Muscat. Post-independence, it made its way back into South Asian ownership when it was acquired by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Recently though, the construction of Gwadar port and China's interests in the region started materializing with a Sino Pak agreement in 2002 and the initiation of the Gwadar Development Authority a year later – seminalizing a new era in the history of Gwadar. In 2015, the port became pivotal in the Chinese-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and a geostrategic point of high interest in the larger Chinese Belt and Road Initiative that links Eurasia and Africa through sea and land routes.<sup>3</sup> These two contingencies in time have several connections.

The paper explores these contingencies through the themes of **infrastructure**, **threat factors** and their resolution through authoritative power. Infrastructure is the first criticality in both these arrangements, consisting of telegraph lines and arms trade in the British era and transitioning to port infrastructure being developed during CPEC. Amongst threat factors, external and internal threats ranged from local tribes and contentions of the Persian-British Baluchistan boundary in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to local Baluch nationalism and USA-India presence in the Indian Ocean in today's era. Meanwhile, authoritative power has long been used as a mitigation whether it be covert British colonialist expansionism into Persian territory and the Sultanate of Oman's maritime control to maintain control of Gwadar. Today, authoritative power is seen in the form of China's extraterritorial presence in Pakistan and cooperative liaisons with the Pakistani armed forces to maintain the extent of this presence. These contingent elements are studied comparatively to show the presence of century old traditions in Baluchistan that have persisted yet changed at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. "Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope." *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

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<sup>3</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. "Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope." *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

## 2. Literature Review

The discourse on protection and maritime communities appears widely in the historical records of imperial interactions in the early modern world. Establishes a foundation for understanding the origins and development of contemporary maritime security and protection practices. Empires provided both internal and external protection, covering both their own subjects and outsourcing protection. Mechanisms for this protection ranged from safe passages and guarding physical infrastructure to the negotiations of treaties. The overlapping realms of sovereignty led to a form of legal pluralism in the littoral worlds<sup>4</sup>. The discourse of protection which began with empires helps understand the future of maritime security in Gwadar in relation to its colonial pasts, presenting the reasoning behind continued features of authoritative control and its evolution over time.

While the need for authoritative consolidation in the Gwadar region remains an age-old requirement for regional control, it is also vital to understand how Gwadar transitioned away from a colonial hegemonized littoral towards a more economic rather than political center during the CPEC region. The contingency between the colonial and the postcolonial and the roots of globalization itself can be traced back through a perusal of British imperial connections, especially across the Indian ocean. These imperial connections are explored in detail<sup>5</sup> “As is shown throughout this volume, from Zanzibar to Singapore, from Durban to Basra to Penang, the port cities of the Indian Ocean rim, with their hinterlands, defined the India-centered imperial web of the nineteenth century.”<sup>6</sup> The author links this imperial web to the birth of globalization, which helps comprehend the existence of a commonality between the current globalized and diversely economized CPEC project and its colonial predecessor in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Gwadar.

While maritime studies and littoral literature is lost to a multitude of regionally centered narratives in larger academia, numerous works of academic literature have analyzed the trends in Gwadar through a historical lens, depicting chronologies of development as well as politics. The historical significance of the Makran coast is highlighted, particularly focusing on the various polities that existed in the region during the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> The role of Gwadar under the Sultanate and indirect British rule is examined, challenging the notion of it being a borderland. Instead, through maritime connections, Gwadar is reimagined as a littoral center, positioned at the heart of imperial

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<sup>4</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. “Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope.” *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

<sup>5</sup> Metcalf, Thomas R. 2007. *Imperial Connections : India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920*. Berkeley: University Of California Press, Cop.

<sup>6</sup> Metcalf, Thomas R. 2007. *Imperial Connections : India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920*. Berkeley: University Of California Press, Cop.

<sup>7</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. “Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope.” *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

trade.<sup>8</sup> This narrative is further refined by examining the diverse polities of the 19th century, particularly through the perspective of Gwadar's maritime arms trade. Comparative accounts connect Gwadar's historical significance to its modern context, portraying it as a littoral center rather than a peripheral region.<sup>9</sup>

Several letters, reports and other correspondences serve as evidence of the colonial elements in Gwadar during the nineteenth Century. This includes letters between the government of India and Muscat in 1869, primary records from the settlement of the Perso-Kalat in 1871, letter and reports covering the construction of the Euro-India telegraph line and other administrative records containing letter and reports from the gulf during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Sourced from littoral archives largely collected and analyzed through the Qatar Digital Library, these records provide primary insights into the colonial roots of Gwadar from a comparative-historical perspective. The vast records of Gwadar in itself highlights the area as an important British colonial outpost. These sources give insight into how the colonial government carried out its activities in Gwadar.

In the modern era, the CPEC project defines Gwadar's political landscape. Farid (2020) describes the ocean as an inter-regional space in the context of CPEC. He looks at the varying geostrategic needs that shaped this political landscape and that kicked off the CPEC project in Gwadar - and the infrastructure that emerged as a result of it. The need to tackle US rivalry in the Indian Ocean once again places the littoral at a political pivot rather than a borderland, especially given the bloc-like contention against India's attempts at achieving sovereignty in the region<sup>10</sup>. Hegemonic activity is also present in the city. The colonial-postcolonial connection is highlighted by examining how perceptions in Balochistan continue to be influenced by colonial legacies, shedding light on the similar shadow cast over China's economic presence in the region.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. Infrastructure

#### 3.1 The Infrastructural History of Gwadar

Infrastructurally, Gwadar had several roles during the second half of the nineteenth

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<sup>8</sup> Jamali, Hafiz A. 2020. "Shorelines of Memory and Ports of Desire: geography, identify and the memory of oceanic trade in Makran Coast" Chapter 3 in *Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds*. Abingdon, Oxon New York, Ny Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

<sup>9</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2009. "The Myth of the Sultans in the Western Indian Ocean during the Nineteenth Century: A New Hypothesis." *African and Asian Studies* 8 (3): 239–67. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156921009x458109>.

<sup>10</sup> Hussain Fakhar et al. 2021. "China-Pak Strategic Entente with Respect to Search for Reciprocated Security through Gwadar Port." *Psychology and Education Journal* 58 (1): 3320–33. <https://doi.org/10.17762/pae.v58i1.1271>.

<sup>11</sup> Ali, Zahid and Noor Sanauddin. 2021 "The Perspective Of Native People Regarding Developmental Projects Of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) In Gwadar, Balochistan" *Political Economy Of Development Reform (Volume VI)*. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

century – rooting largely from a historical geostrategic relevance of the region. During the nineteenth century, Gwadar was primarily an enclave of the Sultans of Oman. However, Gwadar was also a place of interest for the Gichki family from Kech Makran. Meanwhile, the colonial Raj had also vested its interest in the area amongst a longer belt on the Makran Coast. Gwadar acted as an important observatory for the Colonial Raj in the Persian direction, as well as a station of the highly imperative Indo-European Telegraph Line<sup>12</sup>. Hence the Gwadar area was prime in terms of securitization requirements for the British, especially due to underlying threats of sabotage to the telegraph lines.

The telegraph lines, which were a key communication medium for the British Raj, were in fact the primary reason for British interest in the region in the first place. The first telegraphic lines in these areas were laid in 1863 when Gwadar was linked to Karachi. Telegraph offices were opened both at Gwadar and Pasni<sup>13</sup>. The telegraph line had been a project that connected Europe to Asia and held transnational value and required high maritime security. However, these telegraph lines were not an accidental placement in the century's old town; Gwadar also became a port of call for the steamers of British India Steam Navigation Company, while records also indicate that Makran hosted a high degree of agricultural and commercial civilization during this era<sup>14</sup>.

Even economically, Gwadar was an important node in enabling arms trade by the Sultan of Muscat, raising the Sultanate to the status of a maritime hegemon<sup>15</sup>. The port's role was essential in the illegal traffic of arms and ammunitions coming from Europe to the Gulf<sup>16</sup>. The Makran coast had become a focal node in trade activities across the Western Indian Ocean. This led to the famous saying: "If an ewe dies in Makran, ghee won't become expensive in Oman"<sup>17</sup>. The saying was meant to indicate an event that held an insignificant effect; if something happened in Makran, it would create a ripple in Oman unless it was something insignificant, like an ewe dying. This shows how the ocean and the Makran coast had been an interconnected space of relevance across this part of the ocean since colonial times.

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<sup>12</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2013. "Muscat and Gwadar: connections between seaboard communities during the XIX Century". *Omani Studies Center*.

<sup>13</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. "Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope." *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

<sup>14</sup> Azhar Ahmad. 2016. "Gwadar: A Historical Kaleidoscope." *Policy Perspectives* 13 (2): 149. <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.13.2.0149>.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2009. "The Myth of the Sultans in the Western Indian Ocean during the Nineteenth Century: A New Hypothesis." *African and Asian Studies* 8 (3): 239–67. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156921009x458109>

<sup>16</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2021. "Letter of Marque: the Gwadar Enclave of Ibadi Sultans of Oman and its interconnections with Asia". *Conference Paper*.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2009. "The Myth of the Sultans in the Western Indian Ocean during the Nineteenth Century: A New Hypothesis." *African and Asian Studies* 8 (3): 239–67. <https://doi.org/10.1163/156921009x458109>

### 3.2 Current Infrastructural Trends in Gwadar

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is being developed in the coastal region of Makran, is considered to be the flagship project of the Belt-Road Initiative (BRI). The \$46 billion project holds immense capital and is a crucial point for the Chinese megaproject that aims to connect the southwestern coastal city of Gwadar with the Chinese province Xinjiang, thus providing an alternative route to China for international trade<sup>18</sup>. The local infrastructure is dominated by special economic zones and top-of-the-line port infrastructures. CPEC is located at the heart of China's BRI.<sup>19</sup> Intended as a global infrastructural boost for China's economic relationships, BRI is meant to connect mainland China with the Middle East, North Africa and then Europe through channels of railway lines, roads and other infrastructure programmes. CPEC being a part of six of these corridors, China aims to project its economy and trade through the 21st Century Maritime Silk Route via the capitalization of this project<sup>20</sup>. This highlights the importance of the CPEC infrastructure in Gwadar.

Not only does CPEC highlight Gwadar's continual infrastructural relevance for global political/economic paradigms, the infrastructures in Gwadar have also been persistently transnational, whether it be the 19<sup>th</sup> Century telegraph line or the 21<sup>st</sup> century Belt and Road Initiative passing through the one port city in Makran. Building on the argument that the littoral occupies a central role in political, economic, and geographical significance, Gwadar's infrastructures underscore its importance. However, there has been a shift towards elements with broader international implications. The transition from the British telegraph line to the expansive and economically significant Belt & Road Initiative marks an upgrade in scalability and scope. Similarly, economic infrastructure has evolved from localized arms trade to global container shipping, reflecting the impact of globalization and economic growth driven by China's regional presence in Gwadar.<sup>21</sup>

## 4. Threat Factors

### 4.1 Historical Threat Factors in Gwadar

Given the critical infrastructures that Gwadar has held during both eras of concern, there have always been imminent threats. During the British era, the various overlapping factions of claim around Gwadar made it a highly politically active area. On the one hand was the internal balance of control between the Sultan in Muscat, the British colonial authorities, and the Khan of Kalat. On the other hand, there were external skirmishes carried out by local tribes as well as a contention of demarcation between the Persian and British territorial claims in Baluchistan. The local tribes had a negative perception of the colonial presence and were surging especially with a rise of Baluch nationalism during the

<sup>18</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

<sup>19</sup> *Belt & Road Initiative*, see Introduction

<sup>20</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

<sup>21</sup> Jamali, Hafiz A. 2020. "Shorelines of Memory and Ports of Desire: geography, identify and the memory of oceanic trade in Makran Coast" Chapter 3 in *Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds*. Abingdon, Oxon New York, Ny Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

late nineteenth century. Some letters trace these local skirmishes, such as attacks being made by the Kulleylee tribe<sup>22</sup>.

The Persian contention began when the British decided to extend their telegraph lines across Persian territory. On 24th January 1862 when Mir Faqir Mohammad Bizenjo signed a provision of protection for the telegraph line, the Persian military governor of Bampur, wrote letters to Sultan Al bu Sa'id of Oman and the Arab deputy in Gwadar, suggesting not to approve British telegraph lines prior to Persian approval<sup>23</sup>. When this advice was ignored, numerous raids followed by the Persians. Only in 1868 the Persian Government accepted to give up its rights of sovereignty over the oasis of Kech and on Gwadar as part of the Kerman province. British accounts show the high level of concern that the Persian factor created regarding the agreeable demarcation.

#### 4.2 Current Threat Factors in Gwadar

During the Chinese era, the threat factors have become slightly more nuanced and extra-spatial in terms of Gwadar. The major threat contention was felt externally: the US-Sino rivalry. This was highly relevant in Gwadar as it formed a critical part of China's economic presence in Asia. The origin of the CPEC project itself can be contextualized in the US presence in the Strait of Malacca and rivalry in the South China Sea.<sup>24</sup> Thereby, China had to look to Gwadar for hinterland connectivity. Gwadar yet forms part of the larger BRI littoral development that is also seen in ports such as Chabahar. This formation of a 'string of pearls' is seen by the US as a threat to their autonomy in the Western Indian Ocean, which is aided by US-India cooperation. While the string-of-pearls economic philosophy differs from the Raj's colonial political philosophy, there remains an extraterrestrial factor of threat in both eras.

Not only are there extraterrestrial threats, China also faces localized threats externally such as the Baloch insurgencies around Gwadar. There is a rise of Baluch insurgency under the nationalist umbrella of the Baloch Liberation Army, which is much akin to the local tribe skirmishes the British had faced earlier. However, given the high extent of cooperation, even this threat has covert elements of an international dynamic as it is claimed to be backed by India and Iran, which exacerbates the intensity of these attacks<sup>25</sup>. BLA and other insurgent groups in Baluchistan have expressed their

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<sup>22</sup> 'Abstract Of Letters From India 1869' [105r] (220/788), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/PS/20/CA9, in Qatar Digital Library <[https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc\\_100136851548.0x000015](https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100136851548.0x000015)>

<sup>23</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2013. "Muscat and Gwadar: connections between seaboard communities during the XIX Century". Omani Studies Center.

<sup>24</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

<sup>25</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

disapproval over the 'Western' route of CPEC, presenting a major local threat for the project. It is notable to see however, that China has not exerted the colonial trends that were exerted by the British Raj. Hence, these transgressions by local groups are better identified as a historical pattern of distrust for political authorities that roots from the British Raj and East India Company itself.

For China, the internal threat is more intricate in the form of the Pakistani state and armed forces. This is a faction similar to the Sultanate in Oman. In fact, China is seen to have a facet of colonialism going on in Gwadar, especially through the lens of local populace who perceive China in the light of the colonial predecessors and feel economically isolated in the midst of economic presence<sup>26</sup>. Gwadar's geostrategic position is highlighted by the existence of both internal and external threats, showing the primality of maritime security in the region. However, the recent concerns of US-Sino polarization factors were not present in the nineteenth century, rather the threats were spatially much more constricted to the littoral realm itself. Even the localized threats have diversified from local Baluch tribes to an externally backed Baluch Liberation Army, with alleged ties with India. This further reflects on the US-India alliance in the Indian Ocean and the internationalization of political blocs, showing how the threats factors are inclining towards globalization in recent times.

## 5. Securitization in Gwadar

### 5.1 History of Securitization in Gwadar

Threats require a strong narrative of securitization and apt mitigation given the criticality of the infrastructure in Gwadar. In the case of the British, there were two exceptional threat mitigations, both of which required hegemonic measures. The first was the British employment of the Sultanate of Oman as a delegate of autonomy. The Sultan had a vast realm that extended from the Zanzibar all the way to Makran during the nineteenth century. By this way, there was excellent prospect for hegemony building through the Sultanate, especially through maritime control in the Western Indian Ocean. This is because the sultanate had territorial claims to forelands on both side of this part of the ocean, giving it spatial authority between those two littorals. Baloch soldiers were found in Omani service as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>27</sup>. These troops were crucial to the consolidation of Omani power in Baluchistan and provided local protection for the Sultanate, and later indirectly the British.

Apart from delegation to the Sultan, the British also expanded its power locally. To mitigate the threat of Persian contentions, the British had taken an active-offensive

<sup>26</sup> Ali, Zahid and Noor Sanauddin. 2021 "The Perspective Of Native People Regarding Developmental Projects Of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) In Gwadar, Balochistan" *Political Economy Of Development Reform (Volume VI)*. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

<sup>27</sup> Nicolini, Beatrice. 2013. "Muscat and Gwadar: connections between seaboard communities during the XIX Century". Omani Studies Center.

approach by making covert expansion into Persian territory. This was done under the pretense of laying telegraph lines, gradually making territorial gains towards Persia, and regimenting its supremacy in the Makran coast. Later, when the Persians contended to the telegraph lines, the British used local power delegation, supplying arms and money to the Khan of Kalat to defend against imminent Persian attacks. This is represented in a letter addressed to the Khan: in the event of any unprovoked aggression being made upon his territory by Persia, that the Government of India is ready to aid his resistance by a supply of arms and money."<sup>28</sup> This shows how the British first used hegemonic power to expand covertly through its telegraph lines, and later demarcated through local influence.

## 5.2 Current State of Securitization in Gwadar

Coming forward over a hundred years, China has had to deal with the history of hegemonic necessities in Gwadar. Similar to the British use of the Sultan in Oman to concert local control, China has used Pakistan as a periphery for economic control in the region and the protection of mutual interests in Gwadar. This has particularly materialized through liaisons with the armed forces of Pakistan. Pakistan Navy has been part of various operation launched from Northern Arabian Sea which led to the downfall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The Navy is a part of Task Force-151 to combat the threat of piracy and has also conducted several other exercises with other nations - titled AMAN. It has deployed the Special Security Division (SSD) to counter threats to CPEC including the protection of sea lines of communication <sup>29</sup>(Farid 2020). Where the British had used local Baloch soldiers, employed through the sultanate, for the protection of Gwadar, China has had to form cooperations with the more systematized armed forces.

Just as in the case of the Sultanate for the British, China does not restrict its control to delegation in the form of Pakistan, but also acquires direct interests to securitize its project. One example is the use of authoritative cooperation on the other side of the littoral as well, province, an example similar to British covert expansionism. China has done this through the string-of-pearls strategy. China's String of Pearls strategy aims to connect the mainland China, to the Port of Sudan, through economic initiatives, which CPEC is just one part of<sup>30</sup>. Therefore, China is not relying on the CPEC project for its economic and political consolidation, much like the diversified imperial connections of the British. Even though China's expansionism is more strategized economically and less militaristic than British rule itself, it still reflects the need for hegemonic consolidation and cooperations to maintain regional relevance in Gwadar.

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<sup>28</sup> 'Abstract Of Letters From India 1869' [105r] (220/788), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/PS/20/CA9, in Qatar Digital Library <[https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc\\_100136851548.0x000015](https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100136851548.0x000015)>

<sup>29</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

<sup>30</sup> Farid, Faiza. 2020. "Necessity of Maritime Security in Gwadar Port Complex." *Polaris – Journal of Maritime Research* 2 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.53963/pjmr.2020.005.2>.

Threat mitigations have seen a parallel of top-down consolidatory measures across this 150 year gap in Gwadar. While the British openly employed colonial strategy through the Sultanate of Oman, China's presence in Pakistan has been much akin to colonial influence. Even though the area is sovereign under Pakistan (much like the Sultanate in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the country's armed forces are employed, China's socioeconomic capital in the region is vastly undeniable. Both China and Britain also employed offensive techniques to ensure maritime security. For British this meant covert meandering into Persian territory, while China is using littoral bases other than Gwadar to sediment its regional control and ensure continual presence. Hence, given the local postcolonial distrust of hegemony and historical exploitations, China has had to resort to authoritative methods in the region.

There are two differences observed, however, between the British approach to Gwadar's securitization and the Chinese approach. The first is seen in the form of methods of control; where the British employed covert expansionism and subordination of the Khanate and other stakeholders, China follows a more cooperative instead of hegemonic method of authority – joining hands with the armed forces in Pakistan. Secondly, while the British inculcated local power such as the Khan of Kalat, the presence of China is much more magisterial and overrides local factors. This, once again shows the delocalization of power and decision-making away from Gwadar to Islamabad and Beijing, exuding further the global trends that persist.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Concluding Remarks

The two case studies of Gwadar show several contingencies of varying design. These span across the types of infrastructure, threats, and subsequent hegemonic securitization to show that the current measures of maritime security are inherited from a historical culture. The extant of importance that Gwadar has held throughout history is seen by the mere frequency of activity that the region brought. Thus, Gwadar was not a mere port at the borderlands, rather it calls for a spatial reimagination of the littoral as a center of newly imagined bounds of sovereignty that go above and beyond the idea of a nation state. Both eras studied in this paper have highlighted the cruciality of Gwadar, showing that the CPEC is not a newfound project built on a fresh base, rather borrows from local colonial and precolonial influences that have been long present.

Nevertheless, there has been an evolution in the role of Gwadar. Even though the maritime hegemonies that define globalization in Gwadar have been a product of British imperial connections onwards from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, there has been in the extant in globalization in these trends. The infrastructure has become much more advanced and spatially aware, while the threats are now more delocalized than ever, actualized by international blocs rather than local rivalries. The hegemonies that were produced are also now much more magisterial in nature, with Beijing and Islamabad playing a role where

Muscat and the colonial Raj had once been the utmost hierarchical presence. These trends show that in the current world, while Gwadar is still running on the same existent precursors, the overall dynamic of maritime security is now much vaster in the spatial manner. This represent the rampant increase of globalization in the last few years and its ripples being felt in the maritime and littoral world of Gwadar.

## **6.2 Recommendation**

The colonial history of Gwadar, while framing the region for geopolitical and economic relevance and providing strong ground for development, has also led to some political infringements that are still affecting the region. Once such factor is presented in the form of local distrust in the Baluch region towards external authorities. The expansionist and covert strategies of the British Raj have embellished the viewpoint of local ethnicities towards the much less exploitative and more so cooperative presence of CPEC in Gwadar. This has also necessitated the need for Chinese stakeholders to participate in the hegemony in order to consolidate its control. However, in the long run, it is vital that Pakistani institutional stakeholders help the Baluch nationalities recuperate from the colonial experience and create the opportunity for more cooperative rather than hegemonic prospects for Gwadar.